Lucas Murrey

Hölderlin's Dionysiac Poetry

The Terrifying-Exciting Mysteries

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To Richard Seaford and Bernhard Böschenstein.

ὣς φάτο· βάματι δ' ἐν πρώτῳ κιχὼν παῖδ' ἐκ νεκροῦ
ἅρπασε· καιομένα δ' αὐτῷ διέφαινε πυρά.

Preface

To explain how the present work came into being and name those without whom it could not have existed one would have to also explain, in a sense, how an American from southern California came to write about a German poet, in particular a southwest German poet preoccupied with (his fantasy of) ancient Greece. This is not to say that I intend to give (even a brief) history of the crooked line that connects—somehow?—skateboarding and surfing under an eternal sun to a scientific exploration of a dark Greek demigod and his potential (courtesy of the modern German identity crisis) to help our species confront nuclear catastrophe and global warming. Instead, I shall simply sketch the time when a few unique persons and ideas who and which enabled the following study made their respective epiphanies.

This story begins after my youth dissolved not only into the low-lying, stratus clouds of San Francisco, on the east shore of whose bay I completed my undergraduate degree (at UC Berkeley), but also into that final, fateful breath of youthfulness: an affliction of Reiselust that allowed me to abandon my home state. And why not? California had, after all, killed the electric car (again) and done nothing (while corporations like Enron did everything).

But my European wild was a leap into an (exclusively) unconscious style of experimentation. The thoughts must have been, in some sense, brewing, if even today I can still scarcely discern an outline of their emergent shapes. Like the origin of a sound at night, these nascent creatures refuse to come forth. Perhaps there was a moment when a certain idea announced itself—for instance, when I was traveling back from Oxford to fetch the things that I left my uncle's flat in Eaton Square—or that one late Spring evening when I (drunkenly) could no longer find my way back to the flat in Le Marais. Was it the absence of family at this time from which these intellectual patterns arose? Or was the absence of family itself the cause of their stubborn refusal to appear?

If this remains unclear, one thing can be clarified—and with no little irony. The real magic of the idea (and person) that first came to me, like an enchanting apparition from a dream who had managed—somehow?—to escape into and remain within the waking-world—and this means the first clear boundary for thinking that I, for all my previous learning, actually learned—, was (communicated by) one who is rightly considered incapable of clear communication. While mistakenly work-

ing on a Masters degree at Williams College in the first years of our poor century, I succumbed to the seductive psychoanalytic powers of Jacque Lacan, in particular Lacan's gestures to the peculiarity of how we as a species see. This includes, among other things, the power of seeing to enhance (and destroy) love—and by love I mean community and nature.

Like an inexperienced, arrogant young general (of what army?) who is unaware that the gods had already fixed his tragic fate, I rushed home to southern California to revel in the glory of this revelation. Academically things were, in fact, not that bad—or, at least, they did not seem bad, at first. At UCLA John McCumber who for a second seemed like a kindred (fellow Scottish) thoughtful American, suggested (absolutely) that Lacan's concept of seeing could not be separated from what is, for John, the oceanic influence of the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. For did not Heidegger already point out in the early 1940s—for instance, in his work on Anaximander's Saying—that seeing is always already concealed within the seen? Fine. Avant-garde—forward troops, from French psychoanalysis to German philosophy![1] This was exciting, for the history of our insight into the magic of seeing exists.

But the intellectual (and spiritual) transition was not without its problems. Something was wrong—and rapidly getting worse. Not only was it unsettling that the father of the governor (of the home state to which I returned) had been a Nazi—to say nothing of the fact that the good people of California had elected a movie star-governor with a uniquely transcendental reputation (for smoking marijuana at Muscle Beach in Venice, Los Angeles), unprecedented historical cataclysms were devouring the horizon line of everyday (digital age) common sense. As basic human rights vanished after September 11th, 2001, my country (without my—or anyone else's—consent) and its long-standing junior partner (Britain) declared war and began its illegal (and immoral) invasion of Iraq.

So whatever happened to all the happiness that I had hoped to share with my family who, once again was so close and so distant? What was I to make of my grandmother's remote house in the mountains? And what would these places become now that I had set out on a journey that would lead not only from French psychoanalysis to German philosophy and poetry, but, finally, to early historic Greece and beyond? Unreachable seemed the names of my youth: Malaga Cove, Manhattan Beach and all the other places that my father and I had haunted along the Californian coastline: Rincon, Rocky Shores, Pleasure Point, Sunset Cliffs, San Elijo. It is hard not to enjoy the unwritten names that surfers assign to the shape of waves: Boneyard, The Hook.

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[1] Although I continue to believe in the potential of psychoanalysis (and psychology and psychiatry) to improve our earthly place in the cosmos, because it tends to repress history and (with tragic irony) knows nothing of the history of money and its lethal visual cultural, this discipline and practice has been, more or less, exploited by money-tyrants and the "legal-systems" over which they rule. For this reason, which has nothing to do with Heidegger, I quickly moved beyond Lacan into a more historical, if still at times still psychoanalytic in spirit, perspective of socio-politics.

But where were these places now? Yes, I could recall the seascape of *Short Sands* in Oregon from somewhere deep within my childhood—and even fragments of the magical forest through which one must pass to reach its icy, northern wave—, but this name was not only distant, it was as if it never existed. What was this strange absence of the name alongside the growing power of its meaning?

To understand the visual essence that underlies even the letters on this page—and perhaps to initiate already my escape from the peculiarity of Heidegger's Hellenic spirit—I found myself in dialogue with Barry Powell, the classicist who has gestured to Homer's invention of an unparalleled, cataclysmic visual media around 800 B.C.E. But how was alphabetic writing related to the names of lost places? And what does it mean to make visible a spirit of a lost essence and behold this image of estrangement? And what about the places that we haunted that had no names, despite (or perhaps because of) the unique shape of their waves?

Tragic loves and friendships—and the spleen of a doomed search to rescue family—an enchanting, heart-breaking time whose meaning is still revealing itself: I remember attending (although at the time not understanding the depth of) Edward Said's lecture at UCLA in 2002, that is, just before Said's untimely death in the autumn of 2003. Was this the one that he dedicated to she who standing defenceless before a Palestinian home, was "bulldozed into death" by Israeli bulldozers?

It is quite possible that this book could never have been written. It could have been an endless cycle of tragic love and tragic friendship—exchanging, for instance, Los Angeles for New Haven (and surfing for squash). But the nameless keystone of my arch refused to collapse. The storm initiated in Freiburg after I discovered the swastika emblazoned on Max Kommerell's Dichter als Führer from 1928 and which, if only slightly, subsided during my desperate return to Montpellier in the Spring of 2008—this was the time just after I (definitively) gave up on Heidegger: a change that, because of an obdurate Heideggerian advisor in the Philosophy department at Yale, I had to keep quiet—gave way to a new cycle of experience—one in which I still find myself today: the time when this book came into existence.

Not only to complete my abandonment of the Nazi philosopher, but to descend, humanely and scientifically, into the mystical depths of Greece, I found myself in 2009 communicating with Richard Seaford, to whom (alongside another) this book is dedicated. Exacerbation of the *Holocaust* (*Benjaminian*) *Industry* at Yale since the the financial crisis of 2008, specifically the (perverse) ritualisation of an aggressively pro-Israeli *Weimar Culture* in the German department, made Connecticut easier to leave than my home state. I arrived in Germany just in time—of course—for another enchanting, heart-breaking Ereignis. In this phase of time the text continued…

But to bring this oblique and rambling (and alas sentimental) prefatory remark to a conclusion I should say, finally, that which should be said: to distance myself from the Nazi Heidegger whose "philosophy" I was still ostensibly analysing while a Ph.D. student at Yale until the late Spring of 2011, I had began to (carefully) shift the focus of my thesis to what this modern philosophical tyrant calls the poet of poets: Friedrich Hölderlin, in particular Hölderlin's retrieval of Dionysian Greece.

(Heideggerians, among others Germanophiles, may not like this work, because it is not simply about a German poet). By the autumn of 2010 the Hölderlinian scholar Bernhard Böschenstein, to whom (alongside Seaford) the present work is dedicated, gave a lecture, Hölderlins Dionysus—Versuch eines Gesamtbildes, in my honour.[2] And soon thereafter, by mid-2011—why did this take so long?—I found myself beginning a dialogue with Noam Chomsky, to whom (among a few others) my second, forthcoming monograph, Nietzsche: The Meaning of Earth, is dedicated.

All of this is simply to say that the ideas preserved in the alphabetic letters that follow, by virtue of those mentioned above, are the survivors of a stormy voyage to a place beyond our monetised (and visualised) society of species destruction. Without my family, these colleagues and friends, this dangerous crossing could not have been. Thank you.

22 April 2014 Lucas Murrey
Lüneburg, Germany

[2] Not my words. This is something Böschenstein himself acknowledged.

Acknowledgment

I am thankful to the *Hölderlin-Archiv* at the *Württembergische Landesbibliothek* in *Stuttgart* for the use of their image of Hölderlin's translation of *Bacchae*—and all those: family, friends and colleagues who supported this work.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

Abstract This chapter introduces the German poet Friedrich Hölderlin whose songs combine traditional (Christian) and modern (global) impulses around 1800. But it also transcends this familiar image of Hölderlin by turning to his interest in ancient Greece, as seen through the poet's translations of tragic plays such as Euripides' *Bacchae* and Sophocles' *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone*. These translations represent a literary retrieval whose profound socio-political meanings Hölderlin scholarship has neglected. But such neglect is to be expected. The potential of mystery-cult from which tragedy arises, in particular its power to confront the new visual media of money that is invented in early historic Greece has only recently, through the work of the classicist Richard Seaford, become clear. To set the stage for a new understanding of the Hellenic spirit of Hölderlin's poetry: its application of the esoteric and nuanced experience of estrangement in the tragic play to that of modern time, this chapter introduces, following Seaford (and Mikhail Bakhtin) the concept of a *chronotope*: a coincidence of time and space. This conceptual enhancement is thus preparatory for our descent into the (almost impenetrable) darkness of mystery-cult that shall lead, in turn, to a new understanding of what is, for many, the most challenging artworks of modern time: Hölderlin's late hymns.

Keywords Friedrich Hölderlin · Poetry · Dionysian Greece · Mystery-cult and its socio-political potential · Chronotopes

1.1 Hölderlin's "Terrifying-Exciting Mysteries"

The title of this book—*Hölderlin's Dionysiac Poetry: The Terrifying-Exciting Mysteries*—is unexpected. What does it mean? Where does it come from?

The easy answer is a German poet, Friedrich Hölderlin, who invokes the "terrifying-exciting mysteries"[1] during the *French Revolution* at the end of the eighteenth century.

[1] *Friedrich Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, ed. Jochim Schmidt (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag 1994) p. 50. All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

L. Murrey, *Hölderlin's Dionysiac Poetry,* DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-10205-4_1

But this hardly helps. What are the "mysteries" to which Hölderlin refers? Why does this German poet invoke them at this time? And why must they be two things instead of one? Why not just "terrifying"—or, better still, why not simply "exciting"?

To answer these questions we must descend, alas, into the depths of Hölderlin's poems—arguably the most challenging works of art in modern time—and illuminate a spirit that ceaselessly conceals itself.

But let us be clearer. There are two reasons why the place to which we must set out on a journey is a lightless continent of sorts. Firstly, Hölderlin's poems represent an unfamiliar mosaic of modern and ancient impulses. On the one hand, he declares around 1800 that a new, global time that transcends "the gods of the west and orient […] is now awake with the sound of arms"[2] (V 22–23). On the other hand, the poet clings to his traditional Christian faith. "For too much,/O Christ! I hang on you"[3] (V 50–51), he confesses until the end.

But what makes Hölderlin's enduring attachment to Christianity truly complex is his love of Greece. Only in his poetry do we come across Christ reinvented as "the brother of Heracles" (V 51) and "the brother also of the Evier"[4] (V 54). "Evier" names the Greek god Dionysus. This brings us to the second, more important reason why an investigation of Hölderlin's "terrifying-exciting mysteries" is exceptionally challenging.

As we shall see, Hölderlin's most powerful, later poems begin with *As when on a holiday…*, which he composes around 1799/1800. This poem has its origin in numerous Pindaric odes and, in particular, the opening of Euripides' tragic play *Bacchae*—both of which Hölderlin translated in 1799. As I have shown, because they are unaware of the opening out of Dionysus' mystery-cult in tragedy, Hölderlin scholars have neglected the socio-political power at the heart of his retrieval of Greek poetry.[5]

But this is easy enough to understand. As Richard Seaford notes, "[t]he fundamental fact that Euripides' *Bacchae* reflects mystery-cult in numerous details has been entirely missed by all interpreters of *Bacchae*, for instance recently by Jean Bollack (2005)".[6] Given that Bollack's influence on Greek tragedy extends not only to classical scholars, but also to modern literary scientists and philosophers, Seaford speaks to a critical absence. "It is striking", he goes on, "that in a book subtitled *Hölderlin's Mythenkonzept Dionysos* Maria Behre (1987) manages to ignore

[2] *Friedrich Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, ed. Jochim Schmidt (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag 1992) p. 239.

[3] Ibid. p. 348, 345.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Lucas Murrey, *Tragic Light and Language: An Exploration of the mystical depths* (*and limits*) *of Hölderlin's* "*second Bacchus*". Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, New Haven (2011).

[6] Richard Seaford, "*Hölderlin and the Politics of the Dionysiac*" (*forthcoming* 2015) ft. 1.

Euripides' *Bacchae* in her detailed analyses of both ['As when on a holiday…' and 'Stuttgart']".[7]

The goal of the present work is to illuminate the neglected socio-political power of mystery-cult in tragedy that, in turn, finds its way into Hölderlin's poems. As we shall see, patterns of ritual that appear in tragic plays such as *Bacchae* and Sophocles' *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone*—both of which Hölderlin also translates—inspire a new style of song that remains unparalleled modern literature and poetry.

But before we depart on this journey, because mystic initiation has been overlooked not only by modern, but also ancient literary scholars and philosophers, we first turn to a new perspective of antiquity through which we can better see Hölderlin's "terrifying-exciting mysteries".

1.2 Chronotopes

As Seaford points out in *Cosmology and the Polis: The Social Construction of Space and Time in the Tragedies of Aeschylus*, the concept of a *chronotope*, which describes a coincidence of spatial and temporal forms, comes from the Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin.[8] Given his insight into the unity of religion and art in Greece, Seaford differentiates his understanding of *chronotopes* from the more abstract understanding that we find in Bakhtin (who contrasts "actual chronotopes" or "real-life chronotopes"[9] with "created chronotopes").

This language of spatio-temporal form illuminates ritual in the tragic play, which is understood as a struggle of opposing forces. On the one hand, there is the power of mystic initiation with its prehistoric roots. On the other hand, there is the relatively new power of money that erupts already in early historic Greece. Seaford

[7] Ibid. ft. 2. I shall address the (rather shocking) absence of relevant socio-political reflection by Hölderlin scholars in a later work. Nevertheless, I should point out that this scholarship (which, incidentally, tends to be dominated by men), because of its focus on isolated editions, isolated texts and (heroised) male interpreters—from the Nazi Martin Heidegger to the German-Jew Walter Benjamin to, more recently, a slew of pro-Israeli/anti-Palestinian "scholars"—, has utterly neglected Hölderlin's adaption of the ancient battle against money tyrants and the lethal visual essence that their monetised brains unleash.

[8] Richard Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis: The Social Construction of Space and Time in the Tragedies of Aeschylus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2012), 1. As Seaford notes, Bakhtin defines a chronotope as "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature", and continues: "This term is employed in mathematics, and was introduced as part of Einstein's Theory of Relativity. The special meaning it has in relativity theory is not important for our purpose; we are borrowing it for literary criticism almost as a metaphor (almost but not entirely). What counts for us is that it expresses the inseparability of space and time (time as the fourth dimension of space)." *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, ed. and trans. Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press 1981), p. 84.

[9] One such "real-life chronotope" is for Bakhtin constituted by the agora. *The Dialogic Imagination*, Holquist p. 131.

refers to these forces as "aetiological and monetised chronotopes", respectively, and deciphers tragedy as a battleground of "competing chronotopes".[10]

The meaning that Seaford gives to the word *chronotope*, I would like to further note, has its roots in his insights into the satyr play from the mid−1970s.[11] Investigation into the drama with which a trilogy of tragic plays culminated led to the construction of a new picture of the "highly traditional"[12] *Bacchae*.[13] As we shall see, Hölderlin's translation of *Bacchae*, though more or less neglected until now, is exceptionally significant. The language of *chronotopes* shall thus inform the structure of this investigation.

1.3 Summary

In Sect. 1.1 I elaborate Seaford's concept of tragedy as "competing chronotopes". What I call the *Dionysiac chronotope*, which has its source in mystic initiation (Chap. 2), does battle with the *visualised chronotope*, which emerges with money (Chap. 3). To illuminate the struggle in which the *Dionysiac* and *visualised chronotopes* are engaged on the tragic stage, the *Dionysiac chronotope* is divided into three spatio-temporal (sub)forms consisting of the (1) *unlimited*-(2) *near-death*-and finally (3) *limited chronotope* (Chap. 2). Important shall be the place that each spatio-temporal form occupies within an ordered timetable of successive space-times.

The succession of sub-*chronotopes* that compose the *Dionysiac chronotope* is then set against the temporal formlessness of the *visualised chronotope* (Chap. 3). This contrast illuminates the tension witnessed in tragedy. Whereas the *visualised* spatio-temporal form seeks to overcome the *Dionysiac chronotope* by absorbing its temporal precision into its temporal chaos, the *Dionysiac* space-time responds by absorbing the temporal formlessness of the *visualised chronotope* into its ordered timetable of sub-spatio-temporal forms, in particular into its *unlimited chronotope*.

Part I concludes (Chap. 4) by casting light on the language of the *Dionysiac chronotope*, which consists of a transition from (1) *unlimited*-to (2) *near-death*-to finally (3) *limited language*. Whereas the opposing *visualised language* that accompanies money seeks to silence *Dionysiac language* through linguistic abstraction, *Dionysiac language* neutralises *visualised language*, in turn, by absorbing its linguistic formlessness into its ordered transition of (sub)languages, specifically into its *unlimited language*.

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[10] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis*, pp. 118–121.

[11] Richard Seaford, "*Some Notes on Euripides' Cyclops*", CQ 25 (1975) 193–208; and Seaford's "*Euripides' Cyclops 393–402*", CQ 26. pp. 315–316 (1976).

[12] Richard Seaford, *Dionysus* (London and New York: Routledge 2006) p. 41.

[13] Seaford's picture has remained in contrast, for example, to that which we see in the works of Jean Bollack *Les Bacchantes*. (Paris: Editions de Minuit 2004); *Dionysos et la tragédie. Commentaire des Bacchantes d'Euripide* (Paris: Bayard Culture 2005).

Following a summary of the alienation of individuals from ancient to modern time in Part II (Chaps. 5 and 6), Part III moves to Hölderlin's renewal of *Dionysiac* and *visualised chronotopes*. Chapters 7 and 8 describe the poet's retrieval of the *Dionysiac chronotope* to resist the *visualised chronotope* before, during and just after his translation of *Bacchae* in 1799. Chapter 9 explores Hölderlin's renewal of a Dionysian space-time in his translations of *Oedipus the* Tyrant and *Antigone* and the time after. Because at the heart of this experimental return to Greece is a renewal of *Dionysiac language*, Chaps. 10 and 11 turn to the poet's retrieval of *Dionysiac language* to resist the alienation that accompanies linguistic formlessness in the present. Hölderlin's perversion of Greece, that is, the tragic absorption of his Hellenic retrieval into the poet's Nationalism, Christianity, hyper-abstract reflections and mental-illness, is the theme with which this study concludes (Chaps. 12, 13 and 14 and a Coda).

Part I
Dionysiac and Visualised Chronotopes

Chapter 2
The Dionysiac Chronotope

Abstract Before approaching Hölderlin's poems, Chap. 2 returns to Greece by articulating three successive forms of space and time. Together they represent a secret experience of ritual that the ancient Greeks cultivated. Further, they harness a socio-political potential that is made public with the invention of tragedy. Although indirectly, the chapter implicitly hints at the relevance of this historical transition for Hölderlin whose songs are rooted in his translations of tragic plays. The sufferings of individual isolation and near-death experience that are redeemed by earthly and communal joy are projected onto the public stage. The chapter concludes by turning to one of the most striking, concentrated instances of this double-transformation in the opening verses of the tragedy that Hölderlin translates just before he composes his most meaningful poems: Euripides' *Bacchae*.

Keywords Mystery-cult · Tragedy · Unlimited chronotope · Near-death chronotope · Limited chrontope

Hölderlin's poetry is inseparable from Greek tragedy. To understand his poems we must therefore first understand the tragic play.

As we have noted in the *Introduction*, for Seaford tragedy is a combat zone of *chronotopes*, in particular a struggle between *aetiological* and *monetised chronotopes*. On the one hand, the *aetiological chronotope* represents an opening out of mystic initiation. To illuminate this process, we first consider its origin in ritual.

Being consecrated into mystery-cult re-enacted aetiological myth. The drumming heard during initiation into Dionysus' cult, for instance, re-enacted the lightning and thunder that accompanied Dionysus's birth.[1] The isolation of the initiand in the Eleusinian mysteries, to give another example, re-enacted the isolation of the goddess Demeter in search of her lost daughter Persephone over land and sea.[2]

Critical to the re-enactment of aetiological myth is its timetable of ordered events. The first phase of initiation included the resistance of the individual initiand to ritual.[3] The initiand's increasing isolation culminates in crisis and death. Crisis and death are then transformed into joy. What makes the temporal structure of ritual

[1] Seaford, "Hölderlin and the Politics of the Dionysiac".

[2] Ibid.

[3] I return to this and the following phases of mystic initiation more thoroughly below.

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meaningful is that, similar to all religious and socio-political perspectives, it generates a mentality, that is, an everyday world-view. Because the *aetiological chronotope* reflects initiation, it "embodies the transition from one kind of space and time to another, seen from the perspective of the conclusion."[4]

Given its presence in tragedy, the *aetiological chronotope* represents also an opening out of mystic initiation. In contrast to the rituals celebrated in Dionysus' mystery-cult, the *City Dionysia*[5] to which the tragic play belongs is a public holiday.[6] Consider the traces of mystic initiation found in tragedy. One thinks of the isolation and *near-death experiences* to which Dionysus and his maenad-choruses temporarily succumb in *Bacchae*[7] (V 547–549, 604–609) and the joyous torch-lit procession with which the *Eumenides* culminates[8] (V 1021–1046). These traces that compose the *aetiological chronotope* gesture to a double-transfiguration. Alongside the timelessness of the mythic transition from death to rebirth to which they gesture is its historical shift from private to public socio-spheres in Greece during the second half of the sixth century B.C.E.

But what gives the *aetiological chronotope* its depth is its confrontation with another spatio-temporal form that also emerges in the early historic era. As Seaford points out, ancient Greece was the first civilization in history to be pervaded by money.[9] Already in the sixth century B.C.E. Athenian external trade spikes when Peisistratos introduces coinage and precious metal from Thrace.[10] By the end of the century, Athens is feverishly exploiting its silver resources at Laurium.[11] This leads to a new (and unlimited) experience of money. Already by Aeschylus' lifetime coinage is being hoarded throughout the Mediterranean in places as remote as Egypt and Sicily.[12]

Because money demands a perception of its worth that is projected onto the present and future (as well as onto all places), the spatio-temporal form that emerges alongside money—what Seaford names the *monetised chronotope*—represents an

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[4] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 5.

[5] "Dionúsia tà astiká". Thucydides 5.20, in *Thucydides*. *History of the Peloponnesian War, Books V and VI*, ed. C. Smith (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1992) p. 40.

[6] This is clear in the political dimension of tragedy. See Anton Bierl, *Dionysos und die griechische Tragödie. Politische und* "*metatheatralische*" *Aspekte im Text* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag 1991) p. 20.

[7] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1994) p. 314, 317.

[8] Aeschylus, *Eumenides*, in *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoedias*, ed. D. Page (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1972) p. 285.

[9] This is a critical argument, as money in historic Greece is different from that which we see in previous civilisations (such as those in the Near East). See Richard Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004) pp. 3–4, 10, 30, 95, 113, 136, 132, 178, 321.

[10] Herodotus, 1.64, in *Herodotus*. *The Persian Wars, Books I-II*, trans. A. Godley (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2004) p. 74. See also *Ath. Pol.* p. 15.

[11] See Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* p. 98, 110, 140.

[12] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 57.

experience that has no clear spatial or temporal limit. The vanishing of times and places that accompanies this historical transition—one thinks of an impersonal exchange of stamped coins replacing a more personal exchange (where one can not only see the abstract picture on a coin, but also potentially touch, hear, smell and taste that which is being exchanged)—signifies a cataclysmic transformation through which a homogenised and abstract style of experience quickly comes to dominate human life.[13]

That this historical move into an impersonal world (relative to earlier, prehistoric times before the seventh century B.C.E.) brings with it a danger is made clear when we consider the socio-political egoism that it unleashes. As soon as money emerges, "transactors are opposed to each other in that in principle each tries to obtain maximum advantage for himself."[14] Because money is potentially unlimited—both in its potential for exchange and accumulation, individuals whose everyday life-worlds are ruled by it desire (whether consciously or not) an unlimited mass of money.

The historical unleashing of this unlimited desire leads to a terrifying figure who the Greeks name *túrannos*. One thinks of Peisistratos who is described as using money to obtain and "root his tyranny"[15] in the sixth century B.C.E. That the *túrannos* is frightening and horrific new figure is shown in how this individual, like the essence of money, knows no limit, for instance, even in regard to the killing of his own kin. Having been lured to "acquire enough money to rule the whole of Greece", the tyrant Polycrates murders one brother and banishes another before he falls from power in the late sixth century B.C.E.[16]

As we should expect, the Greeks struggle with the unlimited essence of money. Solon in the sixth century B.C.E. is disconcerted by the absence of a *térma* (limit) in wealth,[17] which leads to enslavement from debt, among the many other (negative) things. Because a poet can be lured from one city to another by higher fees, language finds itself caught up in a nihilism of sorts. Pindar imagines the "voice silvered for a wage" (V 41–44).[18] And while pre-*monetised* professionals such as poets are altered by precious metal, new professionals such as philosophers emerge and struggle with money's unlimited and abstract essence.[19] Aristotle, for instance,

[13] It is significant that barter was much more rare than we tend to imagine. See David Graeber *Debt: The First 5000 Years* (Brooklyn, N. Y.: Melville House 2011).

[14] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 57.

[15] Herodotus, 1.64, in *Herodotus*. *The Persian Wars, Books I-II*, Godley p. 74.

[16] Herodotus, 3.39, in *Herodotus*. *The Persian Wars, Books III-IV*, trans. A. Godley (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000) p. 52.

[17] Solon, Fragment 13.71–3, in *Greek Elegiac Poetry, From the Seventh to the Fifth Centuries B.C.*, ed. D. Gerber (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999) pp. 132–133.

[18] Pindar, *Eleventh Pythian Ode, in Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, ed. H. Maehler and B. Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* (Leipzig: Teubner Verlaggesellschaft 1987), 100. See also the reference to Demokedes of Kroton in Herodotus, 3.131, in *Herodotus*. *The Persian Wars, Books III-IV*, Godley p. 162.

[19] See Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* pp. 175–291.

likens the self-generating spirit of currency to "offspring" who are similar to their parents.[20]

But for reasons that shall eventually become clear, philosophy in Greece is not where we witness the preeminent confrontation with socio-political danger of money in Greece. Similar to philosophers, tragedians also struggle to understand the unlimited essence of money. Aeschylus, in the oldest extant play, *Persians*, describes the Athenian silver resources recently discovered at Laurium as "a spring of silver, a treasury in the earth" (V 238).[21] In *Agamemnon* the unlimitedness of money is conceived of in terms of the sea (V 958–962).[22]

But in contrast to its contemporary disciplines such as philosophy, Greek theatre does not simply reflect on the spatio-temporal form of money by way of metaphor. As the first part of this chapter shall show, tragedy constructs the *aetiological chronotope* to battle the *monetised chronotope*. The (unlimited) accumulation of precious metal and insatiable egoism that is characteristic of the frightening "turann"—a word that occurs over 170 times in tragic plays[23]—culminates in a transgression of the sacred. We have noted Polycrates' real kin-killing. Isolation from kin, fellow humans and the gods is expressed on stage as the abuse of ritual, that is, as the perversion of the ordered timetable to which ritual belongs. Oppositely, when threatened by the tyrant, traces of mystic initiation absorb his unlimited egoism "into its aetiological crisis".[24] In the performance of the tragic play,

> it is the aetiological chronotope that prevails. Tragedy derives from polis ritual, and continues to be performed alongside it. *Oresteia*, like the *Demeter Hymn* and *Bacchae*, concludes with the foundation of polis cult.[25]

But given tragedy's brief lifespan, the tension between the *aetiological* and *monetised chronotopes* must be taken serious. In Sophocles' *Oedipus the Tyrant*, the chorus, despairing before the celebration of excessive profit (kérdos), *hubris* and impiety, cries out, "if such actions are honoured, why should I dance?"[26] (V 895–896) The tyrant in *Antigone*, Kreon, projects his desire for gain onto Teiresias (V 1062, 1056).[27] And in *Bacchae* the *túrannos* Pentheus (V 776) projects his desire for mon-

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[20] Aristotle, *Politics*, 1258b, in *Aristotle, The Nicomachaean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2003) p. 50.

[21] Aeschylus, *Persai*, in *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoedias*, p. 10.

[22] Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, in *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoedias*, p. 172; See also Richard Seaford, "*Tragic Money*", JHS 118 (1998) pp. 123–131.

[23] This is in contrast to the word "hero" which scarcely occurs in Athenian tragedy. See Richard Seaford, *Ancient Greece and Global Warming: The Benefits of a Classical Education, or: Learn from the Past to Live in the Present* (Exeter: Credo Press 2011).

[24] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 132.

[25] Ibid. p. 120.

[26] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, ed. H. Lloyd-Jones (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1990) 155. For the critical, if neglected, theme of money in *Oedipus the Tyrant*, see verses p. 380, 388–389 and 873–874 also in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones pp. 135–136, 154.

[27] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 226, 225; Seaford, "*Hölderlin and the Politics of the Dionysiac*". That these lines do mean this is demonstrated by Seaford, "*Tragic Money*", JHS pp. 131–137.

ey onto the blind prophet (V 255–257)—and even asks to spy on the maenads in the mountain wild in exchange for an enormous amount of gold (V 810–812).[28]

As we shall see, the concept of tragedy as battling *aetiological* and *monetised chronotopes* is helpful for understanding the tragic play. But given that the object of this inquiry is finally a modern German poet and his relation to tragedy, we introduce two new *chronotopes* to clarify the nuanced socio-political potential through which Hölderlin's poetry ascends, namely the *Dionysiac* and *visualised chronotopes*. Similar to the *aetiological chronotope*, the *Dionysiac chronotope* represents an opening out of the three phases of ritual mentioned above. To demonstrate this unveiling, the rest of the chapter describes the *Dionysiac chronotope* as a composition of three successive (sub)spatio-temporal forms.

2.1 The Unlimited Chronotope

The *unlimited chronotope* describes an experience of space and time during the first phase of an individual's initiation into mystery-cult (which is characterised by the initiand's resistance to ritual). What makes this *chronotope* unlimited is that, during this moment, the limits of space and time that were previously familiar to the individual's identity (ego) begin to collapse, and thus become limitless.

Initiation "into the great mysteries", as Plutarch notes, first involves,

> wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness, and then before the consummation itself all manner of terrible things, shuddering and trembling and sweating.[29]

Important to the *unlimited chronotope* is the estrangement of how the initiand senses his or her environment. Unable to look upon the dreadful apparitions, *phasmata* and *deimata*,[30] such as the "night-monster", *Émpousa*[31] (who appear during the first phase of mystic initiation), frightened initiands close their eyes in horror.[32] By alienating the sense organ of sight through which the initiand *organ*ises experience, the first

[28] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 302, 324–325; Seaford, "*Hölderlin and the Politics of the Dionysiac*".

[29] Plutarch, Fragment 178, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, trans. F. Sandbach, vol. 15, *Fragments* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1969) pp. 316–319.

[30] Origen, *Against Celsus*, 4.10, in *Orgien. Contra Celsum*, ed. H. Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1953) 190. Idomeneus, in *Die Fragmente der Griechischer Historiker*, ed. F. Jacoby (Berlin and Leiden: Brill Press 1923–1958) p. 338.

[31] Idomeneus, in *Die Fragmente der Griechischer Historiker*, Jacoby 338. See also verse 293 from Aristophanes' *The Frogs*, in *Aristophanes. Frogs, Assemblywomen, Wealth*, trans. J. Henderson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2002) p. 64. For the relation between mystery-cult and Aristophanes' comedy, see Ismene Lada-Richards' *Initiating Dionysos: Ritual and Theatre in Aristophanes' The Frogs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1999).

[32] See the collapsed, self-blinding figure who is kneeling downward in the left of the flagellation scene at the Villa of the Mysteries, in *The Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii: Ancient ritual, Modern*

phase of ritual estranges the individual's relation to space and time, which suddenly appears formless (that is, without limit).

On the one hand, the staged dis*organ*isation of the *unlimited chronotope* is a re-enactment of aetiological myth. The "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness" re-enacted, for instance, the isolation of Demeter in search of Persephone over land and sea in the Eleusinian mysteries. The loss of a familiar style of seeing, as when a mother loses sight of her daughter, is connected to the potential danger of the eyes that can lead to isolation and individual death. Just before Persephone is abducted by Hades and carried off into the darkness of the underworld, the youthful maiden is mesmerised by the beauty of the narcissus flower whose magical appearance for all "to see"[33] (V 10) evokes—through its association with Narcissus—unlimited (self-isolating) egoism and death.[34]

In Dionysus' mystery-cult the potential danger of the eyes to disconnect a person from his or her environment was expressed in the fatal attraction of the youthful demigod to his reflection in the mirror.[35] The "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness" (as well as "all manner of terrible things, shuddering and trembling and sweating") that describe the initial phase of ritual refer also to the re-enactment of Dionysus' struggle with the Titans—something that occurs after he discovers the mirror that they deviously planted in the forest.[36] As we shall see in Part III, the mythic representation of the

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muse, ed. E. Gazda et. al. (Ann Arbour: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology and the University of Michigan Museum of Art 2000), p. 96 (Colour Plate II).

[33] *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, in *Homeri Opera*, ed. T. Allen, Tomus V, *hymnos cyclum fragmenta margiten batrachomyomachiam vitas continens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2008), p. 2.

[34] For the myth of Narcissus and its relation to mystic cult, see S. Eitrem, "*Narkissos I*", in *Paulys Realencyklopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, vol. 16 (Stuttgart 1933–1935), p. 1721, 1726.

[35] In his *Commentary on Plato's Phaedo* Olympiodorus writes in regard to the tragic myth of the god stumbling across a mirror in the forest that "Dionysus, when he put his image into the mirror, followed it and in this way was divided up in the universe." *Olympiodori Philosophi in Platonis Phaedonem Commentaria*, ed. W. Norvin (Leipzig: B.G. 1913), p. 111, 4–19. After noting the curious power of a mirror to "seize a form", Plotinus points out that "Dionysus [had seen his soul] in a mirror" and was therefore "cut off" from his "intellect [noûs]". *Plotinus, Ennead*, 4.3.12, in *Plotinini, Opera*, ed. P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer, vol. 2, *Enneades IV-V* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1977), pp. 27–29. Plotinus also gestures to the danger of the eyes as expressed in the myth of Narcissus that (among other such ridding stories) leads to blindness and individual death. Plotinus, *Ennead*, 1.6.8, in *Porphyry on Plotinus, Ennead I*, ed. A. Armsrong (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1995) pp. 254–258. See also Plotinus, *Ennead*, 5.8.2, in *Plotinini, Opera*, ed. P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer, vol. 2, *Enneades IV-V* 269–271. In mentioning the mystic mirror, *lúchnos*, among the sacred *symbola* that the initiates cultivated, Clement of Alexandria gestures to the mythic mirror that lures Dionysus into his tragic fate. Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus*, 2.19, in *Clement of Alexandria*, ed. G. Butterworth (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1982), pp. 44–45. See also Nonnus of Panopolis' *Dionysiaca*, 6.194–199, in *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques*, éd. et. trad. P. Chuvin, vol. 3, *Chants 6–8* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1992), p. 53.

[36] See Callimachus, Fragment 643, in *Callimachus*, ed. R. Pfeiffer, vol. 1, *Fragmente* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1987) pp. 430–431. Pausanias notes that Onomacritus "composed *órgia*

potential danger of the eyes to lead to tragic individual death that shall be most relevant for our study of Hölderlin concerns Dionysus' mother Semele. Desiring to look upon Zeus' unmediated immortal essence, Semele is incinerated by a lightning flash.[37]

On the other hand, the secret re-enactment of the estrangement of seeing (and space and time) in myth during the first phase of ritual is opened out onto the public stage. In *Bacchae* the tyrant Pentheus, after seeking to look upon Dionysus' female initiates (V 810–812), is blinded by "two suns"[38] (V 922)—a visual frenzy that has its source in the use of mystic mirrors re-enacting the one that Dionysus comes across in the forest.[39] Like Dionysus in myth, Pentheus is hunted down and succumbs to dismemberment and a gruesome individual death. *Oedipus the Tyrant* similarly stages the danger of the eyes to lead to isolation and tragic death. After declaring that he alone shall illuminate the dark past, *egò phanò*[40] (V 132), the tyrant succumbs to blindness and self-dismemberment. *Antigone* also culminates with the

[mystic initiations] for Dionysus and made the Titans the agents of his sufferings". Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 8.37.5, in *Pausanias. Description of Greece, Books VIII.22-X*, trans. W. Jones (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2010), p. 86. Diodorus claims that the things revealed in the Orphic hymns and introduced in mystic initiations and rituals agree with the myth of Dionysus' dismemberment at the hands of the Titans and of the restoration of his limbs to their natural state. Diodorus, *Bibliotheca historica*, 3.62.8, in *Diodorus of Sicily, The Library of History*, trans. C. Oldfather, *Books II.35-IV.58*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1994), p. 288. When Plutarch refers to "certain destructions and disappearances" that "the cleverer people […] construct" to stage mystic initiation, he points out that such performances correspond to "the story about the Titans". Plutarch, *Moralia*, 389a and 364 f., respectively, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, trans. F. Babbit, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2003), 222–23, 84–7. See also Nonnus of Panopolis' *Dionysiaca*, 6.200–211, in *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques*, Chuvin, vol. 3, Chants 6–8 53; Herodotus, 2.42, 2.61, 2.132, 170, in *Herodotus. The Persian Wars, Books I-II*, Godley 326, 346–48, 432–34, 84–86; Isocrates, *Busiris*, 11.39, in *Isocrates, Opera omnia*, ed. B. Mandilaras, vol. 2 (München und Leipzig: K. G. Sauer 2003) p. 281. Here we also come across the mystic re-enactment of Dionysus' fatal attraction to his image in a mirror. Apuleius notes that the toys, *crepundia*, with which the Titan's lured Dionysus away to his death at the hands of the Titans was central to mystic initiation. Apuleius, *Apology*, 55, in *Apulei Apologia, Siue pro se de Magia Liber*, ed. H. Butler and A. Owen (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung 1967). See also Seaford, *Dionysus* 74. That the *crepundia* used by the Titans to which Apuleius refers were associated with the sacred *symbola*, including the mystic mirror, *lúchnos*, used in mystic initiation is then shown by Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus*, 2.18, in Clement of Alexandria, Butterworth pp. 42–43. The mystic mirror is also significantly mentioned in the prescription for ritual on a fragment of papyrus from the third century B.C.E. See Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 58.

[37] As we shall see, the myth of Semele's death that accompanies Dionysus' birth is present both in Pindar and throughout *Bacchae*. For the mystic rehearsal and harnessing of Semele's death, which in mystery-cult was called "Semele's birth-pain for her son Dionysus", see Inscription 44, in *Choisir Dionysos: Les associations dionysiacques, ou, La face cachée du dionysisme*, ed. A.-F. Jaccottet, vol. 2, *Documents* (Zürich: Akanthus 2003), pp. 90–91.

[38] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 325, 330.

[39] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 123.

[40] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 126.

tyrant Kreon, as if modelling a mystic initiand before *phasmata* and *deimata*, recoiling from light as the presence of death devours him (V 1332).[41]

As we shall note, the reckless desire to see that leads to isolation and individual death is significantly linked to an individual's projection of inauthentic images. Whereas Pentheus falsely pictures the maenads "in the thickets, like birds, held in the most pleasant nets of sex"[42] (V 957–958, 685–688), Oedipus falsely declares that he "never saw"[43] (V 105) the previous ruler of the land (that he in fact murdered and saw).

To summarise, the *unlimited chronotope* describes the alienation of the familiar limits of space and time that mystic initiands suffered during the first phase of ritual, and which is then adapted to characterise tyrants in tragedy. In both cases, a style of seeing that is peculiar to an isolated and obdurate individual ego leads to the tragic loss of one's relation to his or her environment.

2.2 The Near-Death Chronotope

In his account of mystic initiation, Plutarch compares the "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness" to the "soul on the point of death":[44] "all manner of terrible things, shuddering and trembling and sweating" culminate in an experience of dying from the perspective of the initiand. This means that all the sense organs (ears, mouth, nose, hands and eyes) through which an individual *organ*ises experience undergo a radical alienation. The second phase of mystic initiation, which refers to the complete absence of spatio-temporal form, we call the *near-death chronotope*.

Similar to the *unlimited chronotope*, the *near-death chronotope* gestures to a re-enactment of individual death as experienced in myth. Isolated initiands who suffered that which they "had never suffered before"[45] re-enacted Persephone's descent into Hades, Dionysus' dismemberment and Semele's incineration during Dionysus' birth (to mention just a few). Also like the *unlimited chronotope*, the *near-death chronotope* gestures to an opening out of that which was secretly performed in mystery-cult onto the public stage.

We have briefly mentioned the *near-death experiences* to which the isolated Dionysus and his maenad-choruses succumb in *Bacchae*. As we will see, the projection of the initiand's experience of dying onto the *túrannos* in tragedy represents a new

[41] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 237.

[42] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 332, 320.

[43] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 125.

[44] Plutarch, Fragment p. 178, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, ed. F. Babbit, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1999) pp. 316–319. Here "uncompleted" means "unlimited", as in that which opposes the ends (*tel*-), that is, limits, of death and mystic ritual.

[45] Gold leaf from Thurii in southern Italy, in Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 55.

socio-political critique. We have also gestured to Pentheus who, after being "put out of his mind"[46] (V 850) like an individual succumbing to death during mystic ritual, is murdered by kin.[47] The mindlessness and death that plague the tyrants Kreon and Oedipus at the end of Sophocles' tragic plays similarly have an unprecedented socio-political significance.

2.3 The Limited Chronotope

But most haunting in Plutarch's account of mystic initiation is that which occurs during the third and final phase. After "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain uncompleted journeys through darkness"—after "all the terrible things, shuddering and trembling and sweating", "[t]he soul on the point of death […] is met by a wonderful light [φῶς] and received into pure places and meadows, with voices and dancing".[48] This last phase of ritual, when the newly born mystic sheds his or her isolated (and unlimited) ego in death and joins "company with holy and pure persons",[49] gestures to *the limited chronotope*.

Similar to the *unlimited-* and *near-death chronotopes*, the *limited chronotope* looks back to the re-enactment of aetiological myth. The magical light with which initiation culminated is linked in the Eleusinian mysteries, for instance, to the return of Persephone. This coincided, significantly, with the revelation of an ear of corn and thus re-enacted Demeter's gift to humankind.[50] In Dionysus' mystery-cult, the epiphany of a mystical "light", *φῶς*, was associated with wine: the sacred "drink from the mixing bowl",[51] and was doubtlessly caught up in a re-enactment of Dionysus' resurrection and induction into "mystic initiations", *teletás*, by Rhea.[52]

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[46] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 327.

[47] Also significant shall be the (perverted) mystic near-death experience in the earthquake scene in *Bacchae*.

[48] Plutarch, Fragment p. 178, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, ed. F. Babbit, vol. 4 pp. 318–319.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Seaford, *"Hölderlin and the Politics of the Dionysiac*"; See *The Homeric hymn to Demeter*, ed. N. Richardson (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2002) pp. 26–30.

[51] Demosthenes, 18.259–260, in *Demosthenes, On the Crown*, ed. H. Yunis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001) pp. 90–91. Here the gift of wine presented to new initiates appears at the centre of a list of sacred, many times secret (if also ridiculed by the lawyer Demosthenes) events. These include reading books, performing various actions by night, placing fawnskins on initiands, purifying them, smearing them with mud and bran, raising them up from the purification while telling them to say "I escaped the bad, I found the better", priding oneself on delivering the greatest ululation (a style of howling), by day leading through the streets the cultivated *thiasoi* crowned with fennel and while poplar, squeezing fat-cheeked snakes, raising them over one's head, shouting "Euoi Saboi", dancing to the cry of "Hyes Attes, Attes Hyes" (a language of ambiguous meaning), being greeted by the old woman as "Leader and Instructor and Basket-bearer (kistophoros), Winnowing basket-bearer (liknophoros)" and receiving as payment various cakes.

[52] Apollodorus, *Library*, 3.5.1, in *Apollodorus, The Library*, ed. J. Frazer, vol. 1, *Books I-III* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1995) p. 326. Critical is the fact that wine in ritual is new not only

to the newly initiated. Wine is new in itself that is, Dionysiac mystic initiation is inseparable from the (cosmic) invention of wine. See fragment 646a in *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, ed. R. Kannicht and B. Snell, vol. 2, *Fragmenta adespota, testimonia volumini 1 addenda, indices ad volumina 1 et 2* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht 1981) pp. 217–218. This is suggested further in the satyrs who, being frequently present during the transformation of nature into primeval forms of culture, bear witness to the first ever extraction of wine from grapes. Consider, for instance, Sophocles' satyr-play *Dionysiskos* ("Little Dionysus") where satyrs express their delight when the infant Dionysus invents wine. The epiphany of wine in ritual is thus linked to its epiphany in myth, that is, when Dionysus is himself first inducted into the mysteries of wine by Rhea. This is a secret event that takes place not only after the god has been resurrected and purified, but also after Dionysus has been dismembered and succumbed to death. As shall gradually become clear, death and rebirth are critical in mystic initiation, in particular the fact that living mystics identified the dead as reborn with Dionysus in an earthly afterlife. See Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, 11.21 and 8.7, in *Apuleius, The Golden Ass: Being the Metamorphoses of Lucius Apuleius*, ed. W. Adlington and S. Gaselee (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1977) pp. 354–357, 572–577. There is no lack of evidence that wine drunk in ritual gestured to Dionysus' salvation of humankind. In *Bacchae* Teiresias pairs Demeter and Dionysos as "the two first things among humans": Demeter nourishes mortals "with dry" food and Dionysos gave mortals the "liquid drink" of wine to relieve their sufferings (V 274–283). *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 303. See also Plutarch, *Moralia*, 68, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, ed. F. Babbit, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1960) pp. 358–364; and Plutarch, *Moralia*, 716, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, ed. W. Helmbold, E. Minar and F. Sandbach, vol. 9 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1993) p. 716. Consider further the mystic formulae of one of the two gold leaves from Pelinna in Thessaly from the fourth century B.C.E.: "Now you died and you came into being, thrice blessed one, on this day./Tell Persephone that Bakchios himself freed you./Bull, you jumped into milk./Quickly you jumped into milk./Ram, you fell into milk./You have **wine** as your blessed (eudaimon) honour (?)./And below the earth there await you the same rituals as the other blessed ones", cited in Seaford, *Dionysus* 55. Emphasis added. Reference to Persephone, rebirth and wine alongside a feast with dancing and music occurs in verses pp. 503–518 of Aristophanes' *The Frogs*, in *Aristophanes. Frogs, Assemblywomen, Wealth*, Henderson pp. 92–94. Such texts referring to wine drunk by initiates in the next world are complemented by a Dionysiac visual culture e.g. the Ohio vase where a satyr in the underworld appears with the name *Oinops* ("Wine-face") and the Apulian vase-paintings where wine flows miraculously from grapes without mortal labour in an earthly paradise. See Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 79, 81. Plato, who in the *Republic* refers to the consumption of wine by mystics in Hades, in particular to their "eternal drunkenness", points out further in the *Phaedrus* that, through the "right kind of madness", Dionysiac ritual releases initiates from sufferings both of this world and of the next. *Plato, The Republic, Books I-V*, trans. P. Shorey, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2011) pp. 128–30; and *Plato, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, trans. H. Fowler, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2005) pp. 466–468, respectively. Pherecrates gestures to an unlimited supply of wine in the afterlife. Pherecrates, Fragment p. 113, in *Fragments of Old Comedy*, ed. C. Storey, vol. 2, *Diopethes to Pherecrates* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2011) p. 472. And as the Theban maenads remind us in verses pp. 686–713 of *Bacchae*, wine in ritual provided a taste of the (ecstatic) afterlife. *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* pp. 320–321. All of this leads to the following conclusion. Given Dionysus' power to dissolve the boundary between water and wine—see Plutarch, *Life of Lysander*, 28.4, in *Plutarch, Lives*, ed. B. Perrin, vol. 1, *Theseus and Romulus, Lycurgus and Numa, Solon and Publicola* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1998) p. 312—, as well as the associations of wine with blood, in particular the blood of the god himself—see Achilles Tatius' *The Story of Leucippe and Cleitophon*, 2.2.1–3, in Achilles Tatius, Leucippe and Clitophon, ed. T. Whitmarch (Cambridge: Oxford University Press 2001) p. 20; and Timotheos, *Fragment 780*, in *Poetae Melici Graeci*, ed. D. Page (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1962)—, and the myth of Dionysus' dismemberment

But the rebirth of a spatio-temporal form embodied in the luminous epiphanies of bread and wine that the *limited chronotope* describes is linked also to the making-public of that which was keep secret in mystery-cult. If most clearly shown by the satyr-play with which cycles of tragedy culminated,[53] traces of this final phase of initiation were projected into the tragic play itself.

At the beginning of this chapter we noted the torch-lit procession with which the *Eumenides* concludes. Blood flowing from Oedipus' eyes with Jokasta's corpse lying on the ground (V 1276–1281)[54] evokes not only fertilising liquids of incestuous sexual union, but also rain falling to earth[55]—and thus gestures to the re-establishment of a vertical (cosmic) axis. In *Antigone* the *unlimited space-time* peculiar to the tyrant collapses while the chorus imagines Dionysus on the mountain peaks of Parnassus as "chorus-leader of fire-breathing stars" (V 1144–1145).[56] The heavenly light of stars, enhanced by the earthly light of torches, intermingle and contrast the tragic images that Kreon cannot bear to look upon.

Of exceptional significance—both historically and for our study of Hölderlin—is *Bacchae*'s opening out of the *limited chronotope*. The chorus of female mystic initiates fall to the ground as a thunderbolt and earthquake shatter Pentheus' house (V 585–603).[57]

To summarise, the *Dionysiac chronotope* describes an experience of space and time that arises from three successive spatio-temporal experiences: the transition from the *unlimited-* to the *near-death-* to finally to a *limited* space-time. This movement represented, firstly, secret "uncompleted journeys through darkness" that re-enact, for instance, the tragic blindness to which Dionysus and his mother Semele tragically succumb. Secondly, it gestures to "[t]he soul on the point of death"—when all spatio-temporal forms familiar to an individual ego are radically estranged. This is illustrated by Dionysus' dismemberment and Semele's incineration. And thirdly, this transition of space and time represented rebirth, as when the mystic initiand "is met by a wonderful light [φῶς] and received into pure places and meadows, with voices and dancing". This re-enacted, for instance, Dionysus' resurrection and the subsequent induction of the joyous wine-god into mystic initiations.

But on the other hand, the *Dionysiac chronotope* describes the making public of this secret transition in tragedy. This is shown in the torch-lit procession with which the *Eumenides* concludes; the projection of Dionysus as "chorus-leader of

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that reflects the creation of wine out of crushed grapes—Diodorus, *Bibliotheca historica*, 3.62, in *Diodorus of Sicily, The Library of History*, Oldfather, *Books II.35-IV.58*—it is clear that the drinking of wine in mystic initiation was caught up in a re-enactment of the god's original (mythic) rebirth. Through this secret experience the being of an isolated mortal transitioned into that of an immortal spirit rooted in earth and community.

[53] Richard Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988), pp. 1–2.

[54] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 170.

[55] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 332.

[56] Sophocles, *Antigone*, *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 229.

[57] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 316.

the fire-breathing stars" at the end of *Antigone*; and the metaphor of rain falling to earth implicit in the blood descending from Oedipus' eyes with Jokasta's corpse lying on the ground at the end of *Oedipus the Tyrant*; and, as shall be of particular interest to this study, the epiphany of Dionysus in *Bacchae* where his ascending mystic initiates greet the god as the "greatest light [φῶς]"[58] (V 608).

Given its link to mystery-cult, the *Dionysiac chronotope* represents a rehearsal of death and the joyful knowledge that prefigures the blessed state of initiates in the next world. In Athens thousands of citizens were initiated at Eleusis and believed that everyday well being was derived from ritual.[59] The change from individual isolation to communal belonging thus had a real socio-political meaning. When we hear of the ancient mystic initiate who "keeps company with holy and pure persons, and surveys the impure, uninitiated mass of the living as they trample on each other [i.e., on the ground]",[60] the "mass of the living" stepping on one other names those disorganised individuals whose unlimited egoism and inauthentic images contrast with the "democratic god [Dionysus] par excellence".[61]

We should note that the egalitarian spirit of mystery-cult made public in theatre is also caught up in an experience of primal synaesthesia. We have noted the connection between the dangerous (unlimited) desire *to see* in myth and cult (Semele, Dionysus) and the *reckless individualism* of tyrants on stage (Oedipus, Kreon and Pentheus). We have also noted the rebirth of seeing through the epiphany of "a wonderful light [φῶς]" in mystic initiation and tragedy. When we consider the sacred meanings associated with the taste and scent of wine, the feel of fawnskin, and the sound of music, dancing and song (which we elaborate in Chap. 4), the rebirth of *Dionysian seeing* witnessed in mystery-cult and tragedy is inseparable from an experience of synaesthesia wherein the eyes are re-integrated into a relationship with the other sense-organs of the body in a way that is less dominant.

This means, in other words, that the *Dionysiac chronotope* implies the transition of an isolated, individual body (that is tyrannised by a similarly isolated and individual style of seeing) into a more democratic style of physical *organ*isation. *Unlimited eyes* are *limited*—and thus enhanced—by the renewed and sharpened presence of touching, tasting, smelling and listening. The suffering initiand/tyrant is finally "put out of his mind" (V 850; 1B) so that his or her mind can literally be transfigured (from the outside-in). This does not mean that the *Dionysiac chronotope* does not itself cultivate a style of mindlessness and ecstasy. Quite the opposite: the power of standing outside of oneself—the original meaning of *ékstasis*—is precisely what mystic transition seeks. The person who by virtue of his or her renewed democratic

[58] Ibid. p. 317.

[59] Seaford, "*Hölderlin and the Politics of the Dionysiac*".

[60] Plutarch, Fragment p. 178, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, trans. Sandbach, vol. 15, *Fragments* pp. 316–319.

[61] This phrase is from H. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion I, Ter Unus, Isis, Dionysos and Hermes, Three Studies in Henotheism*, vol. 6, *Studies in Greek and Roman Religion* (Leiden: E. J. Brill 1990) p. 167.

(physical and spiritual) wholeness acquires the power to complement the communal body and spirit to whom he or she belongs.

But this raises the question. How are we to conceive of the source from which the *Dionysiac chronotope* and its transformative self-abandon come? "The soul on the point of death", as we have noted, "is met by a wonderful light [φῶς] and received into *pure places and meadows*".[62] The final phase of ritual re-enacted the time in myth when Dionysus' is resurrected, purified and inducted into mystic initiations.[63] But in what way can we understand the purity that is associated both with the wine-god and these "places" that he redeems? How can an *unlimited* dis*organ*isation be re-*organ*ised through the *limit* of magical meadows?

Critical to ritual was the ascent of chthonic symbols that connected humanity to the invisible—and hence secret—powers of the earth and heaven. When Demeter's unlimited melancholy is limited through the return of Persephone, the goddess bestows bread upon humankind. But it is not only that which sustains human life that mystically ascends from the darkness below. The "revelation of the gift of corn" celebrated in the Eleusinian mysteries coincided with "the announcement […] of the birth of a child".[64] This means that humankind itself, as illustrated by the vase painting of a daughter given leave "to return to the light by passing [upward] through a crack in the earth",[65] arises from a subterranean (cosmic) world hidden beneath mortal feet.

In Chap. 4 we consider Dionysus as the god of music and dance. But the leader of enchanted limbs (free of gravity) makes his epiphany only after he has fallen to the ground and succumbed to dismemberment. The implicit ascent from out of earth's darkness gestures to the source from which the kinetic energy of being (that we witness in ritual) derives its power, namely the chthonic spirit that individual eyes cannot see, calculate and control. As we shall note in the next chapter, blind seers such as Tieresias and the old Oedipus *see* precisely by virtue of how they integrate that which cannot be seen. Light in ritual is enhanced by the darkness from it comes.

Significant here is also the natural origin of myth. Grapes growing under burning suns correspond to Dionysus' birth in thunder and lightning. The picking of grapes from the vine, reminiscent of Dionysus' second birth from Zeus' thigh (V 94–98, 284–289),[66] and the crushing of grapes and flow of their blood-like liquid correspond, in turn, to Dionysus' dismemberment and death as a prince. The resurrection

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[62] Emphasis added.

[63] Apollodorus, *Library*, 3.5.1, in *Apollodorus, The Library*, Frazer, vol. 1, *Books I-III* p. 326.

[64] See *The Homeric hymn to Demeter*, Richardson p. 26.

[65] *A City of Images: Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece*, ed. C. Bérard et. al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1988) p. 116.

[66] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 295, 303; Pindar, Fragment 85, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, ed. H. Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* (Leipzig: Teubner Verlaggesellschaft, 1989) p. 86; *Homeric hymn to Dionysus* (V 5–8), in *Homeric hymns, Homeric apocrypha, Lives of Homer*, ed. M. West (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2003) p. 26; Apollodorus, *Library*, 3.4.3, in *Apollodorus, The Library*, Frazer, vol. 1, *Books I-III* 320. Herodotus, 2.146, in *Herodotus. The Persian Wars, Books I-II*, Godley pp. 452–454.

and purification of the god along with his induction into "mystic initiations" gesture finally to the secret rebirth of sunlight in the darkness of the mouth that mystic experienced as a divine being (in the fiery taste of wine).

The transition from *isolated seeing* to a *geocentric* (and *communal*) style of *seeing* is expressed in *Bacchae*. The absence and wandering of Dionysus (and his image) combines with the transformative effect of the lightning flash, which is elaborated throughout the play. In the first song that the mystic chorus sings, significantly a dithyramb, they narrate Dionysus' birth and Semele's death by Zeus' thunderbolt (V 88–95).[67] During their third song, also a dithyramb, the mystic chorus repeats the story of Dionysus' ambivalent birth and Semele's tomb catches fire with the "flame that once Zeus' thunderbolt left" (V 597–598).[68] Pentheus' house is then destroyed by a mystic thunderbolt and earthquake, and the trembling initiates arise and greet the god as the "greatest light [φῶς]" (V 608). The lightning-flash associated with Dionysus' tragic-joyous birth is thus transformed and adapted to express a transition from the isolated eyes of the *túrannos* to the communal eyes of the mystic (who has now been integrated into earth's dark spirit).

The movement from the *tragic seeing* of the tyrant to *Dionysian seeing* in *Bacchae* is further connected to a new style of socio-politics. Whereas the mystic chorus explains that initiation involves "joining the soul to the *thiasos*"[69] (V 73) and exhibit miraculously cohesive movement—as when the maenads on the mountainside are "raised like birds"[70] (V 748)—, Euripides' tragedy makes it clear that Dionysus is a democratic god of the *pólis* (V 37, 206–209, 421–423, 430).[71] As the blind prophet points out, Dionysus "wants honours in common from all, and to be magnified while distinguishing nobody"[72] (V 208–209). Teiresias proceeds to say that there are "two first things among humans": Demeter, who provides bread, and Dionysus, who introduced wine (V 274–280).[73] The coincidence of the wine-god with "the liquid/moist drink of the grape" (V 279) is linked to Dionysus' mystical resurrection (V 290).[74]

But that which shall be most relevant to our investigation of Hölderlin's poetry in Part III is the socio-politics of *the Dionysiac chronotope* that appears, in a very compact form, in *Bacchae*'s opening lines. Dionysus introduces himself as the son of Semele "delivered by a lightning-bearing flame"[75] (V 3). The god then sees the "tomb" of his "thunder-stricken mother" and "the ruins of her house, smoulder-

[67] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 295.

[68] Ibid. p. 316.

[69] Ibid. p. 294.

[70] Ibid. p. 323.

[71] Ibid. p. 293, 300, 309–310.

[72] Ibid. p. 300.

[73] Ibid. p. 303.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid. p. 291.

ing with Zeus' still-living flame" (V 6–9).[76] Later in the play, Dionysus presents himself to Pentheus disguised as a wandering priest of Dionysus (V 464–466).[77] The homecoming to which the god gestures at the beginning of Euripides' tragedy, in other words, has still to be fulfilled. *Bacchae* is, in an important way, a story of homecoming. And to overcome the homelessness that the resentful tyrant has normalised, Dionysus makes his epiphany. The god has come to initiate the whole city by revealing the socio-political power of his "mystic initiations", *teletás* (V 22).[78]

The force of *Bacchae*'s opening lines is singular in western literature (and drama). As they make clear, "the cohesiveness of mystic initiates could serve as a model for the cohesiveness of the polis as a whole".[79] Given that mystics were careful to exclude "anyone who does not dissolve hostile civil conflict and is not at ease with the citizens" (V 354–359),[80] Dionysus' declaration that he has come to found his "mystic initiations" (V 22) in the first verses of *Bacchae* is thus a moment of exceptional tension. This brings us back to the terrifying new figure of the *túrannos* against whom the god positions his earthly and communal spirit. But how are we to understand the *unlimited individualism* that compelled ritual to reveal itself on the public stage?

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid. p. 312.

[78] Ibid. p. 292.

[79] Seaford, "*Hölderlin and the Politics of the Dionysiac*".

[80] Aristophanes, *The Frogs*, in *Aristophanes. Frogs, Assemblywomen, Wealth*, Henderson p. 74.

Chapter 3
The Visualised Chronotope

Abstract Clarifying the point with which the previous chapter culminates, Chap. 3 begins by returning to Seaford's concept of a monetised chronotope. To enhance this idea, the monetised chronotope is placed within its historical context, namely alongside the emergence and transformation of a visualised chronotope that first appears with Homer's invention of alphabetic writing around 800 B.C.E. This abstract, visual essence, when it combines with that of money, produces what we can call—to borrow a phrase from Noam Chomsky—early historic "media control". Confronting this new lethal danger to their world, the Greeks absorb the unlimited nature of the new visual media of money into the unlimited chronotope of mystery-cult that is, for this purpose, opened out on the public stage. One thinks of the blindness to which the money-tyrants such as Pentheus, Kreon and Oedipus succumb.

Keywords Monetised chronotope · Abstraction · Loss of earth · Visualised chronotope · Unlimited chronotope

3.1 Seaford's Monetised Chronotope

To understand the terrifying figure to whom we gestured at the end of the last chapter, this chapter begins by returning to the experience of space and time that emerges alongside money in early historic Greece—that which Seaford names the *monetised chronotope*.

As we have seen, the invention of money is something with which not only Greek politicians, poets and philosophers such as Solon, Pindar and Aristotle struggle (2). More important is the struggle with money in Greek tragedy where traces of mystic initiation are adapted to confront the new money-tyrant (2). On the one hand, this is to be expected. The introduction of precious metal unleashes an individualism that only the powers of community and nature can regulate and limit.

Nevertheless, the problem that accompanies the introduction of money into human life is deeper than we may want to believe. Seaford gestures to this psychic underlayer when he speculates about the transfer of the *code of reciprocity* in relations between individuals (or groups) in prehistoric Greece, for example in the

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distribution of spits, to the invention of coinage (perhaps to pay mercenaries) in the seventh century B.C.E.[1] Of particular interest is that, during its first 50 years, coinage was made of electrum, and the earliest known electrum coins were either Lydian or Greek (from Greeks living near Lydia).[2]

In fact, the geographical connection to Lydia is relatively insignificant. As electrum soon gives way to gold and silver coins in Lydia and silver coins in Greece, it is the Greeks and not the Lydians who distribute the new technology of money.[3] This invites the question: Why is money first invented by and introduced into human life by the early historic Greeks during the seventh to sixth centuries B.C.E.?

As we have seen, money is already being hoarded in places as remote as Egypt and Sicily within Aeschylus' lifetime (2). By the end of the sixth century B.C.E. several Greek cities are minting silver coins.[4] As this chapter shall show, it is no accident that the birthplace of tragedy—Athens—aggressively enforces the exclusive use of its coins throughout this vast territory.[5] "Athens was receiving tribute in the form of precious metal from numerous 'allies' in the Aegean, *de facto* subjects of the first ever monetised empire, within which Athenian coinage eventually became dominant."[6] Whatever money is, within an astonishingly short amount of time, it is everywhere. This brings us back to the question: What is it about money that makes it so powerful in human history?

By superimposing an abstract value (issued by a "state" authority) onto a natural material, that is, the metal of the metal coin, money renders the value of natural material irrelevant. This opens up an abyss between a visual sign and intrinsic worth, and the abstract image (of the coin) now has more value than the material (earthly metal) upon which it is inscribed. This explains the rapid shift from silver to bronze coins that occurs as soon as "the psychological ground had been prepared by lesser (or similar but temporary) disparities between value and content."[7]

But to understand the meaning of this elision between image and earth, we have to turn to the practical, everyday experience of money. Because precious metal is stamped by a "state" authority with an abstract, visual picture that ensures that it can be redeemed in all futures and places (regardless of its colour or its intrinsic value as a metal), it is soon counted instead of weighed.[8] The emergence of money, in other words, concentrates abstract calculations that, insofar as they no longer correspond to the weight of silver or gold, have no relation to nature. This helps us to better formulate our question concerning the nature of money. What is it about the unlimited, abstract essence of money that is no longer linked to nature that is so powerful?

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[1] Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* pp. 146–47, 134, 130.

[2] Ibid. p. 132, 130.

[3] Ibid. p. 130, 128.

[4] Ibid. p. 130.

[5] Ibid. p. 142.

[6] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 57.

[7] Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* p. 145.

[8] Ibid. p. 136, 132–133, 126.

Let us return to the unlimited experience of space and time that accompanies the *monetised chronotope* "and the self-sufficiency of money that contrast with earlier instruments of social integration such as kinship, ritual, reciprocity, and sacred space."[9] For Telemachos in the *Odyssey* space and time consist "of *itineraries*, of sequences (or networks) of places each of which provides hospitality and confirms positive reciprocity".[10] After the monetisation of Greece in the early historic period, a journey through space and time is reduced to "an *area* within which precious metal is becoming generally acceptable in payment or exchange (i.e. as money)."[11] Within a relatively brief historical time, a "powerful abstract substance" consumes the boundaries of spatial and temporal forms that had been rooted in vertical (cosmic) axes. This leaves "in the imagination the paradox of an unlimited abstract territoriality", one that encompasses not only "all geographic space", but also, "beyond that, the whole cosmos."[12]

But does this answer our question concerning money? Seaford deciphers the socio-political cataclysm that emerges from the invention of money in early historic Greece. In place of reciprocity, human life is suddenly ruled by the *monetised space-time* that, in turn, leads to the insatiable egoism of tyrants who embody its unlimited potential.

But questions remain. How are we to understand the abrupt reduction of human life to the visual media of money and its abstract, alienated spirit? As we have seen, coinage opens up a chasm between (abstract) picture and (earthly) meaning. The visible sign is not only isolated from the intrinsic worth of the material upon which it is inscribed, money also places the abstract value of the sign above the natural value of its material. This caesura between picture and earth is then concealed, normalised and forgotten (reified) through the pressure that is placed on the (hysterical) necessity of articulating its inner (disconnected and unlimited) dynamic. The *monetised mind* of an individual in a society that is ruled by money is fundamentally subjected to an experience of quantities that have nothing to do with the substance upon which they are seen. The new (ancient) population of humans ruled by money in early historic Greece, in other words, automatically forgets the meaning of nature. The (homogenised) image now has more meaning than the earth (through which it emerges).

But how can we make sense of this sudden reduction of human life and earth to images, numbers and calculations that (automatically) repress nature? This makes the historical transition of our species into a monetised world difficult to question, to say the least. And why are the Greeks the first to distribute this terrifying and "powerful abstract substance"?

[9] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 57.

[10] Ibid. p. 61.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid. 62.

3.2 The Visualised Chronotope

To answer the questions formulated above, I would like to enhance Seaford's concept of the *monetised chronotope* by way of introducing another spatio-temporal form—the *visualised chronotope*—. The *visualised chronotope* is inseparable from the emergence of money in early historic Greece. In fact, the Greeks would never have been able to distribute their invention of precious metal, which they do with lightning speed throughout the Mediterranean (and beyond), if a similarly unprecedented (and unlimited) *visual culture* that predates money's emergence in the seventh century B.C.E. did not exist. In an important sense that has never been discussed (or even acknowledged), it is through the *visualised chronotope* that the *monetised* space-time catches fire.

To begin, let us first focus on how money changes everyday life. As we have noted, its invention opens an abyss between the sign that is stamped onto the coin and the intrinsic worth of the metal upon which the sign is stamped (3.1). And as we have also noted, a monetised society conceals this gap between abstract image and earth through its (obsessive) projection of value onto money and its potentially unlimited accumulation (3.1). That which is *ethical* and *good* is perversely transformed into that which represses the earth. Obsessive counting of abstract numbers that know nothing of nature quickly comes to dominate everyday human existence. Consider the vast amount of coins that are found in Greece just after money appears at the end of the seventh century B.C.E.[13]

But what makes this historical shift so powerful (and terrifying) is the way in which it is caught up in how we as a species *see*. This has to do with the unique affinity of the eyes to transcend the ears, hands, mouth and nose in the perception of numbers that are no longer in balance with nature. Because the eyes have a privileged relation to abstract numbers and calculations (that, significantly, tend to exist in the form of visible texts), the introduction of money and its *visualised* spatio-temporal experience allows the eyes to acquire a new, unlimited power (that is, illusion of moral superiority) over the body's other senses.

Let us return to an "area within which precious metal is becoming generally acceptable in payment or exchange (i.e. as money)" (3.1). This "area" gives rise to the "paradox of an unlimited abstract territoriality" encompassing not only "all geographic space", but also, "beyond that, the whole cosmos." (3.1) The (ghostly) absence of a limit that accompanies money is connected to how the chthonic spirits within this territory are rendered meaningless. When we speak of precious metal being hoarded in remote places like Egypt and Sicily in Aeschylus' lifetime, we are speaking not of a new community of humankind where money and its exchange bring isolated people together, but instead of isolated individuals as distant as those in Egypt (for instance, in the Greek settlement of Naukratis) and those in Sicily instrumentalising the potential power of the eyes in their pursuit to acquire more money (over and against one another).

[13] Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* 126.

As we should expect, the rupture that accompanies the introduction of the *visualised chronotope* into human life gives rise to a new religious crisis. In particular, the reduction of space and time to that which the eyes can see, calculate and control for profit represents a cataclysmic break with the *Dionysian seeing* that, as we have just seen, was cultivated by the prehistoric Greeks. To understand the religious crisis along with its socio-political implications, let us consider how the Greek world was originally rooted in a series of cosmic (vertical) axes.

On the one hand, the Greeks trace their cosmos back to earth, *Gaîa*, the primal being through whom the gods ascend. "Earth wide-breasted, the ever-sure foundation of all the/Deathless ones who rule the snowy peaks of Olympus" (V 117–118).[14] On the other hand, earth is herself touched by *Cháos* (V 116),[15] and from this original formlessness, which she significantly embodies (V 119), primal spirits issue forth (with an almost incomprehensible, dazzling darkness and light): *Tártaros* (V 119), *Éros* (V 120), *Érebos* (V 123), *mélainá te Nùz* and *Aithér* (V 124).[16]

Critical to Greek religion is how deep within the recesses of the dark *manía* that haunts this unique coupling of form and formlessness is an epiphany of life (and light). To ease her loneliness, the "eldest of beings"[17] (V 1–2) brings forth her "first born"[18] (V 126) *Ouranós*. The birth of *the first earthly other* and his image quickly gives way to a new form of concealment. Aeschylus speaks of the glowing love of "holy heaven"[19] and the rain that impregnates his bride from above. This coupling between earth and heaven shows that procreation, for the ancient Greeks, is inextricably tied to the concealing of that which makes its epiphany. Earth gives rise to the "Sky" who then "covers her on every side" (V 127–128).[20]

This cycle of light and darkness repeats, and this includes the dramatic centre that such cosmic repetition implies. When Earth bears the Titan children to *Ouranós*, the father "conceal[s] them in a secret place in *Gaîa* […] and would not let them come up into the light [pháos]" (V 156–159).[21] The transition from dark to light recurs with the return of Kronos. "But vast Earth groaned within, suffering, and she conceived an evil and cunning wile" (V 159–160).[22] The procreative rain that fell from the first father is replaced with the castrated sex of the Sky which, after being tossed into the sea and arising from its lightless depths, gives birth to Aphrodite: the

[14] *Hesiod, Theogony*. *Hesiodi, Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum*, ed. F. Solmsen; *Fragmenta Selecta*, ed. R. Merkelbach and M. West (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1990) p. 10.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] *Homeri Opera*, Allen, Tomus V, *hymnos cyclum fragmenta margiten batrachomyomachiam vitas continens* p. 89.

[18] *Hesiod, Theogony*. *Hesiodi, Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum*, Solmsen; *Fragmenta Selecta*, Merkelbach and West p. 10.

[19] Aeschylus, *Fragment 44*, in *Die Fragmente der Tragödien des Aischylos*, ed. H. Mette (Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1959) p. 17.

[20] *Hesiod, Theogony*. *Hesiodi, Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum*, Solmsen; *Fragmenta Selecta*, Merkelbach and West p. 10.

[21] Ibid. p. 12.

[22] Ibid.

immortal maiden whose beautiful form originates in the formless, surging foam that gathers about mutilated sex (V 188–192).[23]

That the Greeks conceived of the cosmos through an aetiological myth that includes cycles of darkness and light becomes clearer when we consider the "youngest"[24] (V 137) hero of the Titan children who castrates his father at his mother's bidding, and then degenerates into the tyrannical father that he himself conquered. "The myth of Kronos and Rhea", as Walter Otto notes,

> repeats the heaven-and-earth myth with different concepts and names. Like Uranos who does not let his children come to light, but instead, as soon as they are born, conceals them in the womb of earth, Kronos devours his own right after birth; and again it is the youngest, Zeus, who comes to be the saviour.[25]

Having received Rhea's youngest in Crete, Earth "took [Zeus] in her arms and concealed him in a remote cave beneath the secret places of holy earth [gaías]" (V 482–483).[26]

But in the battle between the old gods and new unlimited dismemberment is limited. In contrast to the unstable generations preceding them, the Olympians establish a time of relative stability. The reason for this is that the new gods who raise their kingdom high above the earth (and who are inseparable from Apolline light) remain rooted in a cosmic (vertical) axis. Zeus' "unspeakable flame"[27] (V 701, 697–698) connects not only heaven and earth, but also mortals and immortals. This is illustrated perhaps most strikingly by the lightning flash that not only incinerates Semele, but also brings forth "a splendid son"—a preeminent Greek demigod who has an unparalleled power to transform the tragic event: "joyful Dionysus" (V 940–941).[28]

For the prehistoric Greek—Dionysus appears no later than the thirteenth century B.C.E. in Greece[29]—the luminous cosmos is rooted in depths (of the earth) that eyes cannot penetrate. This is clear in *Greek sacred law*[30] that maintains the inviolable relation "between deities and specific locales".[31] As Thomas Palaima points out, a

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[23] Ibid. p. 13.

[24] Ibid. p. 11.

[25] Walter Otto, *Die Götter Griechenslands, Das Bild des Göttlichen im Spiegel des Griechischen Geistes* (Frankfurt: Klostermann 2002) p. 45.

[26] *Hesiod, Theogony*. *Hesiodi, Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum*, Solmsen; *Fragmenta Selecta*, Merkelbach and West p. 25.

[27] Ibid. p. 34.

[28] Ibid. p. 45. See also Apollodorus, *Library*, 3.4.3, in *Apollodorus, The Library*, Frazer, vol. 1, *Books I-III* p. 320.

[29] Thomas Palaima, "Die Linear-B Texte und der Ursprung der hellenischen Religion: *di-wo-nu-so*", in *Die Geschichte der Hellenischen Sprache und Schrift, Vom 2. Zum 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.: Bruch oder Kontinuität* (Altenburg: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft 1998) p. 216.

[30] Lupu (2009).

[31] Palaima, "Die Linear-B Texte und der Ursprung der hellenischen Religion: *di-wo-nu-so*", in *Die Geschichte der Hellenischen Sprache und Schrift, Vom 2. Zum 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.: Bruch oder Kontinuität* p. 206.

god or goddess of prehistoric Greece "*has power* at site X or in sphere X."[32] The essence of a journey, whether from religious sites or human dwellings, is thus composed "of *itineraries*, of sequences (or networks) of places each of which provides hospitality and confirms positive reciprocity" (2).

With the introduction of money and the *visualised chronotope*, the dazzling image of Olympians rooted in the darkness below begins to disappear. Already by the fifth century B.C.E., precisely when the historic Greeks are busying inventing a word for coinage and currency—*nomisma*[33]—Greek religion is undergoing a crisis. One thinks of Socrates who in Aristophanes' *Clouds* declares that, "the gods are not *nomisma* (currency/coinage) with us" (V 247–248).[34]

As Polycrates' kin-killing—and as Pentheus' dismemberment at the hands of his mother (2.2)—show, unlimited individual desire for money creates conflict even among kin. Such reckless individualism also creates conflict with the sacred. The autonomous possessor of money living in an unlimited *visualised* territory no longer rooted in unseen powers below can dispense with ties based not only on kinship and reciprocity, but also those based on the gods. In answer to Socrates' claim that the gods cannot be reduced to money, Strepsiades asks: "What do you swear with? Iron (coins) as if in Byzanztium?"[35] (V 249–250)

Because a new style of *tragic seeing* that is abstracted from the earth comes to dominate everyday life, the Greeks can no longer organise their communities according to places rooted in the mystery of a cosmic (vertical) axis. As Seaford notes, "the growing pervasiveness of money which loosens local ties and obligations, homogenises all citizens as transactors, and so facilitates the universal loyalty to a single urban centre."[36] By the end of the sixth century B.C.E. several Greek cities—the precursors to modern cities—are minting silver coins (3.1).

One of things that shall be important for our analysis of Hölderlin's poetry and its socio-politics is the potential evil spirit of the eyes to enforce the legitimacy of money (and its implicit unlimited egoism) onto all other places.[37] When we speak of the prehistoric social practice of reciprocity being "transformed by monetisation and the polis to produce a very different cosmos, systematic and largely impersonal",[38] we are speaking also of the communal power of earth that is being transformed (and repressed) by *a new visual culture*. Reduced to abstract and autonomous monetary units seen with the eyes, humans no longer have a vision of community beyond that of a new urban impersonality. At the centre of this amorphous mass (of impersonality) is the *turannos*. This is something we have seen. The egoism implicit in monetised societies in which there is no limit to how much money individuals can

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 142.

[34] Aristophanes, *The Clouds*, in *Aristophanes. Clouds, Wasps, Peace*, trans. J Henderson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1998) p. 40.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 69.

[37] This is something to which I shall return.

[38] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 58.

accumulate and exchange gives rise to the new figure of the tyrant (2) who is a commonplace in Greek historiography and philosophy from Herodotus onwards.[39] The displacement of earth-bound gods by unearthly (self-proclaimed godlike) mortals who kill their kin and cut themselves off from the sacred represents a shift to both *monetised* and *visualised leadership*.

As we shall show in the next section, when Peisistratos uses money to obtain and "root his tyranny"—and when the Polycrates murders his brother to "acquire enough money to rule the whole of Greece"—, the visual abstraction that accompanies monetised society, that is, the split between image and nature within its profiteering heart, is being extended to mystery-cult. Mystic initiation is quickly reduced by individuals seeking to increase their wealth to a picture that is then absorbed into the new experience of (unlimited) *visualised* space and time. But as we shall also see, the original spirit of Greece embodied in Dionysian ritual resists the (unlimited) essence of monetised and *tragic seeing* through the opening out of its earthly light onto the public stage.

3.3 The Unlimited Chronotope

To make the description of the *visualised chronotope* clearer, this chapter concludes by returning to the *Dionysiac chronotope*, in particular to the first of its three (sub) spatio-temporal forms, the *unlimited chronotope*.

As we have seen, the initial phase of mystic ritual to which the *unlimited chronotope* gestures staged the loss of individual identity (2.1). Isolated initiands were subjected to "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness" (2.1). During this experience, the spatial and temporal limits that were familiar to an individual who suffered "all manner of terrible things, shuddering and trembling and sweating" vanished (2.1–2.2). The mystic initiand succumbed to "the aetiological crisis" and its harnessing of "unlimitedness and cyclicality (deferral of completion)".[40] As we have also seen, the agony that this isolated individual underwent belonged to the programmatic re-enactment of myth (2.1–2.2). The loss of one's way in "certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness" re-enacted, for instance, Demeter's search for her daughter across land and sea.

But what shall be critical to this study of Hölderlin is how the mystic disorganisation of individual space and time is connected in myth to the loss of seeing. The "darkness" through which anxious initiands journey represents, in the Eleusinian mysteries, the protracted absence of Persephone's image (for which her mother's eyes search in vain). The blinding and incineration of Semele similarly links the reckless desire to see to mortal blindness and tragic individual death, here in Zeus' lightning-flash that Dionysus' mother longs to behold (2.1–2.2). In Dionysus'

[39] Seaford, "*Hölderlin and the Politics of the Dionysiac*".

[40] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 9.

mystery-cult, the dismemberment and devouring to which *wánax zagreús* succumbs at the hands of the Titans occurs after the youthful king hunter comes across a mirror in the forest into which he gazes—and thus loses a sense of his environment and well-being (2.1–2.2).

The fatal attraction of an individual to an isolated image of himself or herself in a mirror was central to mystery-cult. The "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness" that the initiand suffered may well have re-enacted, among the many other episodes of his myth, Dionysus' flight from and death-struggle with the Titans (2.1–2.2). Mirrors found in the tombs of initiates[41] as well as those mentioned in prescriptions for Dionysian ritual[42] testify to mystics re-enacting the moment when Dionysus "put his image into the mirror, followed it, and in this way was divided up".[43] The mental fragmentation that initiands suffered—and which corresponded to the physical fragmentation and suffering of the demigod—was thus tied to the tragic loss of seeing. When the senses and their familiar spatio-temporal forms were turned "upside-down"[44] (V 602–603) during the first phase of ritual, the *manía* to which the initiand succumbed was linked to a re-enactment of *narcissistic seeing* that culminated in blindness and individual death. Similar to the Titans, terrible apparitions, *phasmata* and *deimata*, such as the "night-monster", *Émpousa*, blinded—and this means *limited*—the (*unlimited*) individualism and seeing of the initiand (2.1–2.2). We have gestured to unhinged and frightened individuals who covered their faces and eyes with their hands in horror and fell to the earth.

As we shall see, it is the opening out of such visual fragmentation and blindness that gives the *unlimited chronotope* a new, mysterious power. We have gestured to the transferring of Dionysus' fatal attraction to his image to tragedy. After seeking to look upon the maenads in private, Pentheus is hunted down and dismembered (2.1–2.2). We mentioned also Oedipus' self-isolating (*visualised*) declaration that he alone shall illuminate a dark past—*egò phanò* (V 132)—an individual desire to see that similarly leads to blindness and dismemberment (2.1–2.2). This is the same fate that Kreon suffers (2.1–2.2). But to be more specific about how the visual fragmentation and blindness of the *unlimited chronotope* confronts the visual culture underlying money in early historic Greece, let us return to the origin of tragedy.

The tragic play seeks to limit the unlimited egoism of money-tyrants and rescue the spirit of community (2, 3.1). But what does this have to do with the place where tragedy comes into existence? As we have also noted, "the growing pervasiveness

[41] Funerary gold leaves inscribed with mystic formulae along with mystic mirrors that identify the deceased as initiated have been discovered recently, for example, in Olbia north of the Black Sea. Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 79.

[42] Papyrus fragment from the village of Gurôb "containing prescriptions for ritual". See Seaford, *Dionysus* 58. That the mirror is one of sacred symbola of mysticism is also suggested by Clement of Alexandria. (2.1), ftnt. 34.

[43] *Olympiodori Philosophi in Platonis Phaedonem Commentaria*, ed. W. Norvin 111, pp. 4–19.

[44] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 317. That Pentheus in this episode in *Bacchae* reflects the mystic initiand shall become clear by the end of this part of the study.

of money […] loosens local ties and obligations, homogenises all citizens as transactors, and so facilitates the universal loyalty to a single urban centre" (3.2). The geocentric communities of Greece are quickly consumed by cities minting masses of coins ruled by pictures that sustain their abstract value (3.2). At the (metallic) heart of this monetary, visualised empire is Athens. "The Acropolis, with its store of money, is the centre of power that extends homogeneously throughout the monetised world."[45] Following its enforcement of the exclusive use of its coins throughout this unlimited territory, "Athens was receiving tribute in the form of precious metal money from numerous 'allies' in the Aegean, *de facto* subjects of the first ever monetised empire, within which Athenian coinage eventually became dominant." (3.1)

But the Athenian *pólis* is originally formed to protect an agricultural landscape that defined itself by rituals and sanctuaries.[46] This means that Athens' transition into a monetised urban centre witnesses a collision. The birth of drama during the re-organisation, expansion and establishment of *The City Dionysia* in the second half of the sixth century B.C.E. is caught up not simply in Athens' access to abundant supplies of silver from Thrace and Laurium within its territory, but also in its harnessing and adaption of pre-monetary spirit of Dionysus' mystery-cult, in particular the "aetiological crisis"—or what we have called the "unlimited chronotope" (of the *Dionysiac chronotope*), which is made public to purify this new socio-political threat.

To form an understanding of tragedy, without which an understanding of Hölderlin's poems is impossible, one has to understand the competition of new images of leadership that are internal to the development and performance of the tragic play. On the one hand, we see the tyrant infiltrating the spirit of ritual as soon as it becomes public. The financing and control of festival by men of money already in the sixth century B.C.E., in particular by the *choregos*, "chorus-leader"—who did not belong to the chorus, but who provided the money to equip and train the chorus and who by the fifth century B.C.E. and are making "paradramatic" public appearances[47]—, gives rise to a new, *monetised artist* of sorts: the paid composer or performer who both belongs to the thiasos (as *exarchos*), but who is nevertheless often identified with the mythical king to whom the chorus is opposed.[48] The opening out of ritual to the public is influenced by those who seek to homogenise (and tyrannise) its pre-monetary (anti-tyrannical) impulses.

On the other hand, the chthonic spirit of Dionysus, as shown by the arrival of the god's image at his public sanctuary,[49] resists the visual essence of money. Not only did the public Dionysian choruses who, although performed by male citizens, represents marginal groups such as women, slaves and old men, oppose money-tyrants, but the god himself rises up to destroy the egoism that results from the *monetised*

[45] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 119.

[46] Ibid. p. 64.

[47] Ibid. p. 109, 111.

[48] Ibid. p. 110.

[49] Ibid. pp. 78–79.

chronotope. In *Bacchae* both Pentheus and Dionysus struggle to be the focus of the pandemic festival. Seaford draws attention to how the *aetiological crisis* of ritual (to which my *unlimited chronotope* gestures) is transferred to tragedy to express "the unlimitedness and cyclicality (deferral of completion) of the monetised chronotope". As we have seen, pre-monetised mythical figures appear on the Athenian stage with monetised problems. Pentheus, Kreon and Oedipus each project his desire for individual gain (kérdos) onto others (2). Faced with the unlimited monetary individualism of the tyrant, the Dionysian chorus cries out that, "if such actions are honoured, why should I dance?" (2)

Complementing Seaford's insight—and which shall be essential for an understanding of Hölderlin's poetry—I suggest that the pre-monetised mythical figures who suddenly stand before us on stage with monetised problems are *pre-visual mythical figures* who suddenly have *visualised problems*. The split between abstract sign and earth that accompanies money gives rise to a new culture of (unlimited) visual abstraction. "The monetisation of Athens too, manifest already in the crisis confronted by Solon had at the time of the Kleisthenic reform recently been accelerated by the introduction of coinage".[50] Seaford goes on to note "that this was a factor in the new political importance there of number, as of the (abstract) monetised chronotope."[51] Athens is not only the centre of a new cosmos of money and abstraction, but also the centre of a new cosmos of abstract numbers and calculations (for a visible profit)—a new cosmos of *tragic seeing* (3.2).

The blinding and death in pre-visualised myth—as illustrated by Dionysus' fatal attraction to his image in a mirror and subsequent dismemberment, as well as his mother Semele's reckless desire to see which similarly leads to horrific individual death—is adapted for the theatre to absorb the *visualised chronotope* that accompanies money and its unlimited abstractions that are disconnected from the spirits of earth and community. The money-tyrant Kreon, like the mystic initiand, succumbs to an all-consuming image of death. "May it come that I never see tomorrow's light!"[52] (V 1332), he cries. Suffering from a similarly all-consuming picture of death (as well as a frightful image of incest implying, incidentally, unlimited sexual desire), Oedipus succumbs to visual fragmentation.

Perhaps most striking is the concentration of *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* that we come upon at the turning point of *Bacchae*, when the Pentheus falls under Dionysus' spell:

> DIONYSUS: Ah!
> Do you wish to see them [the maenads] sitting together on the mountains?
> PENTHEUS: Very much so, and I would give an enormous weight of gold to do so.[53]
> (V 810–812)

[50] Ibid. p. 70.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 237.

[53] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 325.

The novelty of the phase "I would give much money for that" is indeed astonishing. But also astonishing is the *perverse style of seeing* that is connected to the tyrant's unlimited desire for money. This impulse is neutralised by the *unlimited*- and *near-death chronotopes*, as shown in Pentheus' subsequent visual confusion, dismemberment (implicit blindness) and death.

To summarise, the *unlimited chronotope*—the first of the three sub-spatio-temporal forms that compose the *Dionysiac chronotope*—is adapted to absorb the *visualised chronotope*. Through this absorption, the *tragic seeing* that accompanies the *monetised chronotope* can be, in turn, transformed into a programmatic (Dionysian) experience of space and time. In the last chapter we saw how tragedy tends to culminate with the foundation of *pólis* cult, as illustrated by the torch-lit procession with which the *Eumenides* concludes (2). The timelessness of *monetised* and *visualised* urban centres ruled by tyrants is neutralised by the temporal structure of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and its creation of an earthly paradise.

Important for our study of Hölderlin in Part III will be how, through its absorption into the *unlimited chronotope*, the *visualised chronotope* is transfigured into *Dionysian seeing*. The potential danger of the individual eyes seeking money to alienate earth and community is re-integrated into subterranean powers below that sustain communal life. In *Oedipus the Tyrant*, the metaphor of rain falling to earth in the blood flowing from Oedipus' dismembered eyes with Jokasta's corpse lying on the ground implicitly intermingle with pictures of Dionysus making his epiphany "[w]ith the blaze of his gleaming torch" (V 214–215).[54] In *Antigone*, the darkness that consumes Kreon is contrasted with the magical intermingling of celestial light and the terrestrial glare of torches. Dionysus is pictured on the mountain peaks of Parnassus as "chorus-leader of the fire-breathing stars". In *Bacchae*, Pentheus' desire for money and private visual pleasure is contrasted with the blind prophet Tieresias who leaves the city and honours Dionysus with ritual in the mountain wild. Here too the absorption of the *visualised chronotope* and subsequent transition to *Dionysian seeing* recurs. Images of isolation, dismemberment and tragic death (to which the *visualised chronotope* that accompanies the money-tyrant succumbs) implicitly contrast with the geocentric "light [φῶς]" that Dionysus' embodies when he appears to his thiasos (2.3).

Also critical to the picture of Dionysian redemption is the lightning-flash. Just before Dionysus makes his epiphany to his mystic initiates, Pentheus' house is destroyed by mystic thunder and lightning while Semele's tomb catches fire with the "flame that once Zeus' thunderbolt left" (2.3). When Dionysus arrives to initiate the *pólis* into his mystery-cult in the opening lines of *Bacchae*, the lightning-flash of pre-monetary and pre-visual myth is adapted to neutralise the dis*organ*ising nature of the tyrant (whose appetite for money and seeing is insatiable).

[54] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 129.

Chapter 4
Dionysiac Language

Abstract To conclude Part I and move forward to Hölderlin's poetry we illuminate (and listen to) the inner core out of which ritual constructs its socio-political potential: *Dionysiac language*. The manifestation of three linguistic moments: *unlimited-*, *Near-Death-* and *limited* language are brought to light (and sound) to show their transition to a public (Greek) stage. Of particular importance is the understanding that tragedy is a battleground of languages. The tragic play witnesses the collision of the language of the new visual media of money and the pre-monetary language of earth and community. Given the particular relevance of this tragedy to Hölderlin's songs and translations, the chapter ends by taking a close look at Euripides' *Bacchae*.

Keywords Unlimited language · Monetised/visual language · Near-death language · Limited language · Dionysiac language

One final point remains to be clarified about tragedy we before begin to make our way to Hölderlin. The *Dionysiac chronotope* discussed in the previous two chapters is rooted in *Dionysiac language*. As this chapter shows, *Dionysiac language* is a linguistic experience out of which the heart of ritual comes forth. In fact, that the mystic re-enactment of myth was concentrated in spoken and sung language is implied in the original meaning of the word "myth". Similar to *lógos*, *múthos* originally means "to say" and "to speak", as when Homer recalls how Agamemnon "spoke", *múthoi*[1] (V 33), to Briseis' father in the opening lines of the *Iliad*. The re-enactment of myth in mystic initiation (enhanced by music, gesture and theatrical performance) re-enacts the *birth of the voice*. Language is here not only the form through which ritual represented itself, but also the content of its final representation.

But *Dionysiac language* refers also to the adaption of the secret language of mystery-cult for the public stage. To understand this transformation we must keep in mind the rise of *monetised* and *visualised languages* at the heart of the emergence of the new visual media of money. In contrast to the language of ritual, the visual language of money has no prehistoric roots. The introduction of precious metal

[1] Homer, *Iliad*, 1.33, in *Homeri Opera*, ed. T. Allen and D. Monro, Tomus I, *Iliadis Libros I-XII* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007) p. 2.

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ruptures the everyday linguistic experience in Greece. At first the Greeks have no word for money.[2]

The vast numbers of coins that flood the Mediterranean from the early sixth century B.C.E. (3.2) nevertheless force the Greeks to quickly formulate a language to make sense of their new money-culture. No later than the fifth century is there a word for coinage, *nomisma* (3.2). And *nomisma* is at the centre of a religious crisis. Following Socrates' claim that "the gods are not *nomisma*" (3.2), Strepsiades asks: "What do you swear with? Iron (coins) as if in Byzanztium?"[3] (3.2) The introduction of money signals a new language that not only fails to question, but also reinforces the dangerous individualism peculiar to the tyrant.

The financing and media control of festival by men of money creates the *monetised artist*—the paid composer or performer who both belongs to the thiasos (as *exarchos*) and who is often identified with the mythical king to whom the thiasos opposed (3.3). That a linguistic experience ruled not by *Dionysiac*, but *monetised* and *visualised language* was present during the birth of tragedy is further shown in the "tension between those who follow communal tradition and those who promote a new kind of individual control."[4] As Seaford notes, "when the dancing-places were being occupied by pay-receiving (*misthophoroi*) pipe-players and chorus-members, the choruses began to accompany the pipe-players." In response to this reversal of socio-political power (pipe-players traditionally accompanied the choruses), the first writer of satyr-plays, Pratinas,[5] composes a song whose dithyrambic style battles the pipe (*aulos*) with the words: "Mine, mine is Bromios (Dionysus) … Let the *aulos* be second in the dance, for it is subordinate."[6]

As we will see, tragedy is a struggle of languages where the *visualised language* of money-tyrants is absorbed into *Dionysiac language*. *Dionysiac language* names the adaption of ritual's secret language to confront the visual language of money on the public stage. Similar to the *Dionysiac chronotope*, *Dionysiac language* is constructed out of an ordered timetable of three particular linguistic experiences: (1) *unlimited-* (2) *near-death-* and (3) *limited languages*. Through this temporal structure, this unique linguistic expression invokes a geocentric deity who rescues a fragmented community from (unlimited) individual greed and visual abstraction. Consider the mystics who begin to cry out to their god in public: "Hey look! Here is the tossing of hand and foot for you, ivy-haired lord of the triumphant dithyramb; hear my Dorian dance-song".[7]

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[2] Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* p. 141.

[3] Aristophanes, *The Clouds*, in *Aristophanes. Clouds, Wasps, Peace*, Henderson p. 40.

[4] This is a paraphrase of the report preserved by Athenaios. See Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 107–108.

[5] Seaford, "*The Hyporchema of Pratinas*", Maia 29 (1977–78) 81–94. See also Bierl, Anton, "Tragödie als Spiel und das Satyrspiel. Die Geburt des griechischen Theaters aus dem Geiste des Chortanzes und seines Gottes Dionysos", in *Aufgang. Jahrbuch für Denken, Dichten, Musik*, vol. 3, *Kind und Spiel*, hg. v. José Sánchez de Murillo und Martin Thurner (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2006) p. 121.

[6] Cited in Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 108.

[7] Ibid.

4.1 Unlimited Language

On the one hand, *unlimited language* refers to the first linguistic phase of initiation that is understood as the initiand's resistance to ritual. What makes this experience of language *unlimited* is that, in this moment, the linguistic limits familiar to an isolated individual begin to disappear.

As we have noted, initiation began with "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness" (2.1). This re-enacted, for instance, Demeter's search for her daughter, as well as Dionysus' fleeing the Titans following his discovery of the mirror that they planted for him in the forest (2.1). Critical to this re-enactment is the "riddling language used to confuse and intrigue the initiand".[8] When Plutarch refers to "certain destructions and disappearances" that "the cleverer people […] construct" to stage "the story about the Titans",[9] we thus have to consider the *linguistic destructions and linguistic disappearances* that the initiand (mostly likely while being distracted by a mirror) underwent.

On the other hand, *unlimited language* describes the opening out of initiation's secret language to the public. The visual media of money calls forth a *visualised language* that legitimates individual greed. When Polycrates murders his kin in the late sixth century B.C.E. to "acquire enough money to rule the whole of Greece" (2), language is an instrument that sustains his limitless egoism. To confront this *unlimited language*, the older language of ritual is adapted for socio-political expression in the theatre. One thinks of Kreon in *Antigone* who is stimulated and confused by riddling language that he (like a mystic initiand) resists. "What are you saying?"[10] (V 248), the tyrant asks the messenger as he becomes increasingly perplexed and agitated.

Of all the things to understand about tragedy, its staging of how *visualised language* gradually succumbs to *Dionysiac language* is among the most deceptively simple. This is illustrated by the gestures to Dionysian singing and dancing that recede before the *visualised language* of the tyrant with which *Antigone* begins. Following its invocation of Dionysian choruses and their nocturnal dance and song (V 148–154),[11] the chorus is abruptly interrupted by forthcoming language of the "new ruler" of the "land"[12] (V 155–161). At this instant an abstract, monetised concept of "space", *chóra*, eclipses the terrestrial one of *chthonic* choruses circling the earth, *elelíchthon*. This temporary repression of *Dionysiac language* by *visualised language* continues in the absence of Antigone's wedding song and her marriage to death without burial rites (V 813–816).[13] By the end of the tragedy, however,

[8] Seaford, *Dionysus* 52. See also Plutarch, *Moralia*, 389a, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* Babbit, vol. 5 p. 222–223.

[9] Plutarch, *Moralia*, 389a, 364f, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* Babbit, vol. 5 pp. 222–223, 84–87.

[10] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 193.

[11] Ibid. p. 189.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid. p. 216.

linguistic absence culminates in a polarisation of pure and impure languages. To cleanse the *pólis* from the polluted, *visualised language* of the tyrant, the chorus invokes the purifying spirit of Dionysus' dancing and singing (V 1115–1153)—a gesture reinforced by the chorus' preceding condemnation of the tyrant Lykourgos for silencing Dionysiac choruses (V 963–965).[14]

The *visualised language* that emerges from the tyrant's "diseased mind"[15] (V 1015) is tied to inauthentic images. We have noted Kreon projecting his desire for gain onto Teiresias (3.1). When the blind prophet explains that the gods are rejecting sacrifice because the altars are polluted with the flesh of Polyneikes carried there by birds (V 1016–1020), the tyrant accuses Teiresias of "import[ing] electrum from Sardis" (V 1038–1041).[16] Kreon also projects his instrumental use of language for money onto the messenger, who he claims has "sold [his] soul for silver" (V 322, 241–242, 244).[17] As it becomes clear that his self-isolating language cannot overcome the language of community, the linguistic violence of the tyrant increases. Kreon renounces the sacred language of the chorus (V 282–283),[18] and the idle chatter of the messenger (V 320) disgusts him (V 316).[19]

In *Oedipus the Tyrant* we see another opening out of ritual's initial language. Like Kreon, Oedipus is stimulated and confused by riddling language. "But what of the oracle?", he asks while puzzled by the messenger's response. "So far your words neither encourage nor unsettle me."[20] (V 89–90) Inseparable from this linguistic caesura is that of the "oracle" (V 711, 977), and a mysterious, divine voice (V 715), telling of a "threefold highway"[21] (V 716). Oedipus's (arrogant) self-confidence in his own language is systematically undone, as when he innocently wonders "[w]hat sort of purification"[22] (V 99) shall liberate the city from the plague of death it is suffering.

Because the linguistic resistance of the initiand to ritual is elaborated to absorb the language of tyrants, *Oedipus the Tyrant* can be understood alongside *Antigone* as staging *visualised language* that succumbs to *Dionysiac language*. Despairing before the celebration of excessive wealth (kérdos), *hubris* and impiety that the

[14] Ibid. pp. 228–229, 222. Here the chorus' condemns the "insanity", *manías* (V 959), of Lykourgos who sought to extinguish "bacchic fire", *eúión te pûr* (V 964), and murder Dionysus' "god-inspired", *enthéous* (V 962–963), initiates. For Dionysus' epiphany to King Lycurgus, see Homer, *Iliad*, 6.132–140, in *Homeri Opera*, Allen, Tomus V, *hymnos cyclum fragmenta margiten batrachomyomachiam vitas continens* pp. 123–124.

[15] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 304. This is taken from the description of Pentheus in *Bacchae*, but as it shall become clear, the concept of a "diseased mind" applies just as well to other money-tyrants such and Kreon.

[16] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 225.

[17] Ibid. p. 196, 193.

[18] Ibid. p. 194.

[19] Ibid. p. 196.

[20] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 124.

[21] Ibid. p. 158, 148.

[22] Ibid. p. 124.

túrannos exhibits, the chorus cries out: "if such actions are honoured, why should I dance?" (1) The "insolent words" (V 884) of the tyrant temporarily displace the chorus' Dionysian singing and dancing, *choreúein* (V 896).[23] This repression of *Dionysiac language* with *visualised language* is made clear at the beginning of the play. Just before Oedipus' language begins to dominate the play, the chorus appeals to "intoxicated Bacchus" (V 211), accompanied by the maenads (V 212), and whose name is inseparable from the "earth", *gaia* (V 210).[24] *Dionysian seeing*—the chorus imagines Dionysus drawing near with a "blazing, shinning torch" (V 213–215)—recedes with *Dionysiac language*—the bacchic cry *eúion*[25] (V 211)—into the background as the *visualised language* of the tyrant consumes the foreground of the tragic play.

The false confidence that Oedipus places in his eyes (2.1, 3.3) is significantly connected to his false confidence in his language. This is concentrated in the tyrant's name, which Oedipus ritualises as a name of limitless praise (V 7–8).[26] But the "saying" (V 72) that the tyrant confidently seeks in order to save his urban centre (V 64)—and to which his individual identity, *egó* (V 60), and soul, *psyché* (V 64)[27] have been reduced—gives way to linguistic (and visual) misidentification. Oedipus falsely declares that he "never saw" the previous king (2.1). As his inauthentic language increases—he later says in regard Laius' death: "I heard it also, but no one saw who did it."[28] (V 293)—the familiar limits of the tyrant's language are in this way systematically dis*organ*ised. The *visualised* speech of the money-tyrant, we might say, is gradually blinded.

In *Bacchae* we come across another opening out of the initial language of ritual. Like Oedipus and Kreon, Pentheus is stimulated and confused by riddling language, in particular by the riddling language of Dionysus who has disguised himself as an itinerant priest from eastern lands (2.3). "He is with me," Dionysus tells the tyrant, "since you are a godless man you do not see him."[29] (V 502) The language of Pentheus is further estranged when the concealed god accuses him of "not" being in his "senses" (V 504), not knowing why he lives, what he is doing or who he is (V 506).[30] Dionysus points out that the tyrant's name, which means "sorrow", *pentheús*, "fits" him "well for misfortune"[31] (V 508).

As we have noted, the *unlimited chronotope* turns the spatio-temporal limits familiar to an individual distracted by a self-isolating visual experience "upside-down" (3.3). After desiring to spy on the maenads in exchange for an enormous

[23] Ibid. pp. 154–155.

[24] Ibid. p. 129.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid. p. 121.

[27] Ibid. p. 123.

[28] Ibid. p. 132.

[29] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 312.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

money payment (V 810–812; 2, 2.2, 3.3), that is, after reducing the spirit of mystery-cult to money, Pentheus is blinded by "two suns" (V 922; 2.1)—a visual-frenzy that recalls the use of mystic mirrors in ritual (2.1, 3.3). The mystic mirror and riddling language that were experienced in the first phase of ritual "gave an obscure image [and linguistic expression] of what was subsequently revealed".[32] Whereas Pentheus succumbs to an ocular hysteria in *Bacchae*, an event that is elaborated when the tyrant later appears dressed like maenad (V 822),[33] *visualised language* is turned "upside-down". Grasping for words to support his tyranny (V 269–270),[34] Pentheus is heard "gnashing his teeth in his lips"[35] (V 621).

Similar to *Antigone* and *Oedipus the Tyrant*, *Bacchae* stages the absorption of *visualised language* into *Dionysiac language*. Here the temporary absence and wandering of Dionysus' speech is striking, in particular how it combines with the transformative effect of the lightning flash. We have heard the mystic chorus' narration of Dionysus' birth as his mother was destroyed by Zeus' thunderbolt in dithyrambic songs throughout *Bacchae* (2.3). When the chorus sings of Dionysus' ambivalent birth for a second time, Semele's tomb catches fire with the "flame that once Zeus' thunderbolt left" and the house of the tyrant is destroyed by a mystic thunderbolt and earthquake (2.3). Following the lightning-flash, trembling initiates shed their "solitary isolation", arise and cry out to Dionysus as: "O greatest light of the joyful-crying bacchanal [euíou]" (V 608–609).[36]

Bacchae presents the struggle between the tyrant and Dionysus as a *struggle of languages*. Pentheus tells Dionysus' he wants to buy a private view of Dionysus' female initiates who are secretly performing their sacred rites (3.3). This reduction of mystery-cult to money and private visual pleasure inseparable from the inauthentic images that plague Pentheus' imagination. After the tyrant projects his unlimited desire for money onto Teiresias (2), he (perversely) describes Dionysus' female initiates "in the thickets, like birds, held in the most pleasant nets of sex" (V 957–958, 685–688; 2.1, 3.3).

Inseparable from these false pictures is the tyrant's linguistic violence. Pentheus, who is heard "breathing great arrogance" (V 640),[37] refuses to acknowledge the spirit of earth before him. "Where is he?" he asks while looking upon Dionysus, "To my eyes he [Dionysus] is not clearly in evidence."[38] (V 501) *Dionysiac language* responds by naming the tyrant who refuses to perform libations to Dionysus a "godfighter" (V 45) and "a bloody giant, hostile to the gods" (V 555).[39] Important is how the tragic play stages the protracted battle of *Dionysiac*- and *visualised lan-*

[32] Seaford, Dionysus p. 123.

[33] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 326.

[34] Ibid. p. 303.

[35] Ibid. p. 317.

[36] Ibid. p. 317.

[37] Ibid. p. 318.

[38] Ibid. p. 312.

[39] Ibid. p. 293, 314.

guages. The linguistic "rage" of "the blood-thirsty man" (V 540–555), as witnessed in Pentheus' denigration of Dionysian dance, *chóreue* (V 511), crescendos after the tyrant hears that "some stranger has come, a sorcerer" (V 234) and demands that the magician be bound (V 505). Pentheus threatens to enslave and sell the god's *thíasos* (V 511–514).[40] Already at the beginning of the play the money-tyrant threatens to cut off Dionysus' head (V 266–228).[41]

But as we have seen, the *visualised language* of Pentheus is rendered powerless when it stumbles across the riddling language of the god. To summarise, *unlimited language* describes the estrangement of the *visualised language* of initiands during the first phase of ritual and tyrants in tragedy. In both cases, language that is peculiar to an obdurate ego alienated from earth is systematically deconstructed.

4.2 Near-Death Language

The linguistic resistance of the initiand that is opened out in theatre culminates in what I shall refer to as *Near-Death language*, which names the second linguistic event in the ordered timetable of (sub)languages that compose *Dionysiac language*. In this moment, the *unlimited language* of the initiand/tyrant succumbs to *the language of dying*.

As we have noted, Plutarch compares the "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness" to "[t]he soul on the point of death" (2.2). When the "terrible things, shuddering and trembling and sweating" give way to an experience of dying (from the perspective of isolated initiand), the language of this individual transforms is reduced shrieks of horror and, finally, silence. Frightened utterances of initiands before terrible apparitions, *phasmata* and *deimata*, in particular the "night-monster", *Émpousa*, invoked, among other things, the voice of Dionysus' as when he was dismembered and devoured by the Titans (2.1, 3.2).

But the mystic chorus staged *the language of tragic myth* not only through the terrified voice of the initiand. To facilitate the transition from *unlimited-* to *Near-Death language*, "the cleverer people [who] construct[ed linguistic] destructions and disappearances" (4.1) harnessed the language of death by re-enacting the terrifying sounds linked to Semele's and Dionysus' tragic fates. One thinks of the drumming heard during initiation that re-enacted the lighting and thunder to which Semele succumbs (2). Mystics who performed the "pure mysteries" carefully re-created the vocal sounds of "Semele's birthpain for her son Dionysus".[42] One thinks also of the mystic festivals of Ariadne "in which sacrifices were made in her honour [and] one of the young men lies down and simulates the labour pains of the woman

[40] Ibid. p. 314, 313, 301, 312.

[41] Ibid. p. 301.

[42] Inscription p. 44, in *Choisir Dionysos: Les associations dionysiacques, ou, La face cachée du dionysisme*, ed. A.-F. Jaccottet, vol. 2, *Documents* pp. 90–91.

with writhings and screams."[43] The beating and "terrifying sounds" of a drum (as of "subterranean thunder")[44] that we come across in ritual dramatises the *near-death chronotope* and *language* into a re-enactment at whose centre is Semele's dying voice.

Among the noises that unsettled the initiand in mystery-cult,[45] the "terrifying bellowings" to which we just referred (made by the "bull-roarer")[46] called forth the sound of a "wailing bull".[47] Given Dionysus' transformation into a bull during his death-struggle with the Titans,[48] the piercing sound of the "bull-roarer" in ritual shaped the language of the initiand into that of the dying demigod. Linguistic fragmentation is caught up in a performance of Dionysus' dying voice. Following his fatal attraction to his image a mirror, the youthful king hunter, *wánax agreús*, and "loud shouter," (V 1),[49] succumbs to tragic silence.

Similar to *unlimited language*, *Near-Death language* represents an opening out of that which was secretly heard in mystery-cult onto the public theatre—into, we might say, the public ear. In myth the infant Dionysus is suckled by a goat; in one version by a maenad named "goat", *Eriphe*.[50] Dionysus occasionally takes the shape of a goat.[51] Mystic initiates imitated his satyr-chorus and their goat-like feet by covering themselves in goatskins, costumes that are inseparable from wine-bearing vessels made of goatskin. But the strongest link between Dionysus who as "Zagreus" appears as the son of Hades (and sometimes even Hades himself)[52] and the goat is through the song performed at goat-sacrifice.[53] *Tragodós* names the "song", *odé*, of the "he-goat", *trágos*. Greek tragedy thus names the making public of Dionysus' sacrificial song to absorb the new (tragic) language of money and visual abstraction.

The adaption of individual horror in ritual for tragedy—consider Cassandra's prophesy of "young creatures like phantoms of dreams"[54] (V 1215–1216) reminis-

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[43] Plutarch, *Theseus*, 20, in *Plutarch, Lives*, Perrin, vol. 1, *Theseus and Romulus, Lycurgus and Numa, Solon and Publicola* p. 42.

[44] Aeschylus, *Edonoí*, Fragment p. 72, in *Die Fragmente der Tragödien des Aischylos*, ed. H. Mette p. 26.

[45] One thinks of hierophants who struck grand metallic discs while Kore was being called upon, *tês Kóres epikalouménes*, in the Eleusinian mysteries. See Richardson p. 25. See also Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* pp. 42–43.

[46] Papyrus fragment from the village of Gurôb "containing prescriptions for ritual". See Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 58. See also Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* 42, ft. 125.

[47] *Die Fragmente der Tragödien des Aischylos*, ed. H. Mette 26.

[48] Nonnus of Panopolis, *Dionysiaca*, 6.204, in *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques*, Chuvin, vol. 3, *Chants 6–8* 53.

[49] *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus*, in *Homeri Opera*, Allen, Tomus V, *hymnos cyclum fragmenta margiten batrachomyomachiam vitas continens* p. 86.

[50] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 65.

[51] Ibid. p. 24.

[52] Ibid. p. 77.

[53] Ibid. pp. 89–90.

[54] Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, in *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoedias* p. 181.

cent of the *phasmata* and *deimata* (and the *Émpousa*)—as well as the description of Agamemnon's body which, slaughtered liked an animal,[55] succumbs to "spontaneous spurts of blood"[56] (V 1385–1386)—signifies the transference of an unpredictable linguistic rupture. In the tragic play the sudden death of language manifests itself in the repetition of vowels. Io cries out in *Prometheus*:

â â, è é (V 565–566),
è é (V 598)

and

oì, è é (V 602).

This succession of vowel-shrieks coincides with the name of she from whom they issue forth: *ió* (V 742).[57] In the oldest extant tragedy, *Persians*, choral "sounds of woe" (V 1076):

aiaî aiaî (V 673, 1039),
oioioî (V 955, 967),
ò ò<*ò*>(V 985),
iò ió (V 1005),
oioî oioî (V 1068),
iò ió […] *aîa* (V 1070, 1073)

and

ioà (V 1072)

"escort" (V 1076) those of the tyrant Xerxes:

ió (V 908, 975),
eè eé (V 977),
iè ié, iò iò (V 1004),
ioà (V 1071)
and *iè iè* […] *iè iè* (V 1074–1075)

into tragic silence.[58]

For Hölderlin's poetry it is the descent of *the tragic voice* against the rebirth of *Dionysiac language* in *Antigone*, *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Bacchae* that is of interest. The *visualised language* of Kreon, who projects the transformation of his "soul" into "silver" onto others (4.1), gives way to a similar succession of vowel-cries. This dismemberment of the building blocks of language occurs alongside the tyrant's impending blindness. Consider the whirlwind of dust that arises from earth (V 434) and, together with the blinding midday sun (V 444), incites a succession of wails.[59] *Tragic language* and the transition from light to darkness here evoke the

[55] Homer, *Odyssey*, 5.397, 5.411–412, in *Homeri Opera*, ed. T. Allen, Tomus III, *Odysseae Libros I-XII* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 98–99.

[56] Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, in *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoedias*, p. 187.

[57] Aeschylus, *Prometheus*, in *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoedias*, pp. 310–311, 316.

[58] Aeschylus, *Persai*, in *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoedias*, p. 41, 27, 40, 37–39, 35.

[59] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones pp. 200–201.

spherical shape of the mirror in initiation and its tie to individual death. The disorganisation that plagues the scene with the messenger gestures to a rupture between the physical senses of the tyrant and his soul. After being asked if the pain he suffers (after hearing the message) stings him in his "ears or soul?"[60] (V 317), Kreon responds by projecting his resentful (*visualised*) language onto the messenger. "Why do you seek to calculate this?"[61] (V 318)

But the riddling language of the (messenger and) chorus (4.1) finally conquer the *visualised language* of the tyrant (who recalls a mystic initiand "foaming at the mouth" with "distorted eyes").[62] As the play proceeds—and as it exposes Kreon more and more as a machine of self-centred language—the words of the tyrant are gradually reduced to vowel-shrieks. When he learns that he has lost not only his son, but also his wife, the Kreon screams *aiaî aiaî* (V 1267).[63] Linguistic disorganisation is linked to the dis*organ*isation of the eyes. The tyrant's abandonment of sight in the succeeding verses: "May it come that I never see tomorrow's light!" (3.3), coincides with his turn away from (his own tyrannical) *unlimited language*.

In *Oedipus the Tyrant*, *unlimited language* also succumbs to *Near-Death language*. The excessive wealth (kérdos), *hubris* and impiety of the *túrannos*—as well as his self-isolating desire to visualise the dark secret of the past (2, 2.1)—is concentrated in Oedipus' name—which the tyrant advertises (promotes) as a name of limitless praise (4.1) just before setting out "to master all things with his will"[64] (V 1522). But the confidence that Oedipus places in his language and eyes is deconstructed. Just as the language of initiand succumbs to "trembling [and] sweat", Oedipus' words become tremulous and agitated. The tyrant claims (again and again) that he "never saw" the king (father) that he unknowingly murdered, and indeed saw (2.1, 4.1). Oedipus is unaware when he speaks the truth. While observing that all the citizens of his city are sick, the tyrant declares that no one is as sick as he (V 59–61).[65]

Similar to Kreon's language, the language of Oedipus, after reducing reality to that which his self-isolating eyes can see, calculate and control, transitions into *near-death language*. This shift is prefigured by the absorption of the tyrant's (noble) desire to light up the past (2.1) into a (sick) "indefatigable flame" (V 176) that is associated with "countless dead" (V 179) who, similar to Polyneikes in *Antigone*, "lie in the field/[u]nmoured"[66] (V 180). The incalculable presence of death and *tragic language* is concentrated in the picture of "swift-winged birds", *órnin* (V 175–177), a metaphor of an unlimited number of souls making their descent into the underworld.[67] This recalls the language of Antigone who is heard lament-

[60] Ibid. p. 196.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 105.

[63] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 234.

[64] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 179.

[65] Ibid. p. 123.

[66] Ibid. p. 128.

[67] Ibid.

ing over the body of her unburied brother with the shrill cry of a "bird", *órnithos* (V 422–425).[68]

The final transformation from *unlimited-* to *near-death language* occurs at the end of the play. Oedipus who sought to light up the past alone—*egò phanò* (V 132)—shrieks a succession of vowels, *ioú ioú* (V 1182), when the horrific truth of his identity is revealed. Then he declares: "O light! [phôs] for the last time I see you now!"[69] (V 1183) The self-inflicted dismemberment (of eyes and language) is followed by Oedipus' tragic vowel-wails, *aiaî aiaî* (V 1308), which he cries out upon learning that his wife/mother has been found "hanging by the neck in a twisted noose of swinging cords" (V 1264–1265).[70] Through its association with the Dionysian myth of Erigone,[71] this is an image, we may note, that is inseparable from Dionysian *tragic silence*. The name of the tyrant who was "best among humans"[72] (V 46) is mortally wounded. No longer "glorious"[73] (V 40) in the eyes of others, the name "Oedipus" is reduced to a tragic sound and image that the organs of the (geocentric) communal body of the chorus refuse to *organ*ise. Too gruesome to look upon (V 1213–1221, 1297–1306) and too grievous to hear (V 1205–1211), "Oedipus" names finally "sadnesses", *pentheîn* (V 1320).[74] This brings us back into the (horrific) orbit of *Bacchae*.

In Euripides' tragedy the transition from *unlimited* to *near-death language* occurs in two places. On the one hand, it takes place when Pentheus is absorbed into a mystic re-enactment of Dionysus' tragic fate. That the tyrant doubles for *wánax agreús*, the youthful king hunter who, following his fatal attraction to his image a mirror, succumbs to dismemberment at the hands of his kin (2.1), becomes clear when the "keystone" of the tyrant's dwelling is "torn asunder"[75] (V 587–588). Like a mystic initiand, Pentheus runs "feverishly this way and that"[76] (V 625). The restless spirit of the tyrant, described as "in a flutter", *epotetoi* (V 214; 1268), reflects the madness that is symptomatic of initiands who face death in mystery-cult (V 332, 326, 359)—one thinks also of the "softness" (V 969), that is, the breaking apart, of Pentheus' soul into pieces.[77]

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[68] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 200.

[69] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 166.

[70] Ibid. p. 171.

[71] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 20, 30.

[72] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 122.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid. pp. 167–68, 172.

[75] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 316.

[76] Ibid. p. 317.

[77] Ibid. pp. 300–302, 332. The projection of the trembling initiand is also reflected in *Bacchae* at the end when Kadmos asks Agaue if her "soul is still quivering?" (V 1268). Ibid. p. 345. For the relation of "fluttering and its underlying anxiety" in Greek tragedy, in particular Euripides' *Bacchae*, see Richard Seaford, *"The Fluttering Soul"*, in *Antike Mythen: Medien, Transformationen und Konstruktionen*, ed. Ueli Dill and Christine Walde (Berlin: de Gruyter 2009) pp. 406–413, and Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 114.

The absorption of tyrant into Dionysian dismemberment is prefigured in the "wailing", *ololúzo* (V 689), of "horned" animals heard just after "lady earthquake" causes the "sacred plain of earth", *chthonòs*, to tremble (V 585)—and the stone pillars of Pentheus' palace to crumble (V 591–559).[78] Succumbing to "a light frenzy", the tyrant recognizes Dionysus in the form of a "bull" (V 920–922), to which the god responds: "Now you see what you ought to see" (V 1124).[79] Just before Dionysus incites his maenads to chase Pentheus "like a hunted hare" (3.1), the chorus calls upon him to "appear as a bull" (V 1018).[80] The *visualised language* of tyrant—which is in the process of being absorbed into the *unlimited language* of the mystic initiand, that is, he who (unconsciously) re-enacts Dionysus' tragic fate in myth—succumbs to *Near-Death language*. This is illustrated by the diphthong of vowel-sounds that Pentheus' mother Agaue cries out when she recognises the bloody head of her son that she has been holding in her hands, *éa* (V 1280).[81]

Also (horrifically) striking is the transition from *unlimited-* to *Near-Death language* that occurs in regard to Dionysus' birth. When the chorus of mystics sing of the his birth for the second time, Semele's tomb catches fire with the "flame that once Zeus' thunderbolt left" and Pentheus' house is destroyed by a mystic lightning flash and earthquake. The opening out of the mystic "fiery light of thunder"[82] (V 594–595) to battle the *visualised language* of the tyrant is seen in a shift from *unlimited-* to *Near-Death language*. Following the dissonant "tramping of feet" (V 638) that is audible inside Pentheus' house and the loss of the tyrant's "heart and soul" (V 610),[83] in particular when Pentheus "breathes out his soul"[84] (V 620) and is heard "gnashing his teeth in his lips" (V 621; 4.1), he succumbs to succession of vowel-shrieks: *éa éa* (V 644). As in *Antigone* and *Oedipus the Tyrant*, *Bacchae* couples the death of the *visualised language* of the tyrant with the loss of seeing. Just before Agaue's unhappy vowel-cry *éa* and her declaration that she "see[s] the greatest grief"[85] (V 1282), Pentheus' father Kadmos declares that he "cannot look upon"[86] the incalculable grief before his eyes (V 1244).

To summarise, *Near-Death language* describes the second of the three (sub)linguistic events that together compose *Dionysiac language*. The *unlimited language* of the obdurate (isolated) ego in ritual and insatiable money-tyrant on stage cry out a succession of *tragic vowels* and succumb to *deathly silence*.

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[78] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 320, 316.

[79] Ibid. p. 330.

[80] Ibid. p. 334.

[81] Ibid. p. 346.

[82] Ibid. p. 316.

[83] Ibid. p. 317.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid. p. 318.

[86] Ibid. p. 345.

4.3 Limited Language

The third of the three (sub)linguistic events that together compose *Dionysiac language—limited language—*is also, as we should expect, caught up in the re-enactment of myth. Here we return to the timeless, but unfamiliar story of Dionysus, in particular to the relation of this god to music, dance and language.

Significantly, Dionysus is always associated with music and dance. The pregnant Semele upon hearing a flute is compelled to dance, and of the child in her womb dances with her.[87] All the immortals dance and sing to celebrate Dionysus' birth.[88] And when he is delivered to the *númphas* of the mountain wild,[89] baby Dionysus is surrounded by divine nurses who perform the mystic dance, *mustikòn orchésanto*, about the orphan in a hidden cave.[90]

But the god of music and dance[91] establishes his relation to joyous tones only after he conquers individual death. Following Zeus' punishment of the Titans (by blasting them with his thunderbolt), Dionysus is restored to life from his heart, which had been preserved by Athena (2.1).[92] Having been purified and inducted into the mysteries of "the liquid/moist drink of the grape" (V 279; 2.3), the god takes up the identity of a wandering priest, making his epiphany to various peoples and lands (V 13–22) and reveals his earthly power—which is soon recognised as "unparalleled"[93] (V 273, 775–777) throughout the Hellenic world. At the centre of Dionysus' power to establish his mystery-cult and set mortals, animals and lands to

[87] Nonnus of Panopolis, *Dionysiaca*, 8.26–30, in *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques*, Chuvin, vol. 3, *Chants 6–8* p. 121.

[88] Philodamus of Skarpheia, hymn composed for Delphi mid fourth century. See Walter Otto, *Dionysos, Mythos und Kultus* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2011) p. 88.

[89] Apollodorus, *Library*, 3.4.3, in *Apollodorus, The Library*, Frazer, vol. 1, *Books I-III* 320. See also Nonnus of Panopolis, *Dionysiaca*, 14.159, in *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques*, éd. et. trad. P. Chuvin, vol. 6, *Chants 6–8* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1994), p. 30. Vase painting also testifies to this event, as Hermes presents baby Dionysus to the nymphs and Papposilenus at Nysa on a white calyx-crater by the Phiale painter. See *A History of Greek Vase-Painting*, ed. P. Arias (London: Thames and Hudson 1962) p. 367 (and Plates XLIII and XLIV) pp. 192–194; see also vase painting from Palermo in: *Mon. d. 1st*, II, 17. In one instance Hermes saves the child from his first foster-mothers, the daughters of Lamos, and gives him directly to Ino. Nonnus of Panopolis, *Dionysiaca*, 9.49–53, in *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques*, éd. et. trad. P. Chuvin, vol. 4, *Chants* pp. *9–10* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1985), pp. 35–37.

[90] Oppian, *Cynegetica*, 4.246, in *Oppian, Colluthus, Tryphiodorus*, ed. A. Mair (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1963) p. 180.

[91] One thinks of Dionysus "Melphómenon (Minstrel)". Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.2.5, in *Pausanias. Description of Greece, Books I-II*, ed. W. Jones (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2004) 10; one thinks also of Dionysus *Choreía*. Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.2.5, Ibid. p. 350. See also Lucian, *The Dance*, 15, in *Lucian, The Dance,* trans. A. Harmon, vol. 5. Harvard University Press 2001) p. 228.

[92] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 112.

[93] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 303, 324.

dance is his mystic chorus (V 20–22).[94] And at the centre of the mystic chorus is Dionysus' joyful "call"[95] (V 23–24), the Dionysiac cry, *euai*.

Important is how the mythic cry of Dionysus is caught up in a linguistic transition that transcends the language of mortality. Consider the name-changes that coalesce about Dionysian myth. All those who are intimately related to the god, must "give up or supplement [their] old mortal name[s] when"[96] they become immortal. Semele, who "died in the thunder/Of the lightning-flash" while giving birth to Dionysus, "lives among the Olympians"[97] (V 25–26) as "Thyone"[98] (V 99). "Thyone" names the mortal woman Semele who "has been received into the circle of immortality."[99] Ariadne, who is also inseparable from the horror of individual death, undergoes a similar linguistic transition. "[D]eathless and ageless",[100] the "queen of the Dionysian women"[101] comes to be associated with the immortal essence of beauty—to which the name of her cult in Cyprus "Ariadne Aphrodite"[102] testifies. Dionysus is himself no less "rich in names"[103] (V 1115), appearing, as he does, under the titles "the initiate", *ho bákchos* (V 491),[104] and "mystic", *mústes*[105]—names that give he who conquers death an inalienable bond with all those who he leads.

The linguistic transfiguration of identity witnessed in Dionysus' myth draws attention to how the god of "music" and "dance" presides over the rebirth of language, in particular over the transition from *tragic* (4.2) to *joyful vowels*. We have noted the Dionysiac cry *euai*. Dionysus is himself called "the joyous call", *Eúios*, a name that arose from his "echoing shouts of joy", *euoî*.[106] The nucleus of spoken and sung language—the pure sound of vowels that cannot be seen, calculated and

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[94] Ibid. p. 292.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Otto, *Dionysos, Mythos und Kultus* p. 67.

[97] Pindar, *Second Olympian Ode*, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* p. 8.

[98] Pindar, *Third Pythian Ode*, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* p. 64.

[99] Otto, *Dionysos, Mythos und Kultus* p. 67.

[100] *Hesiod, Theogony. Hesiodi, Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum*, Solmsen; *Fragmenta Selecta*, Merkelbach and West p. 45.

[101] Otto, *Dionysos, Mythos und Kultus* p. 55. Euripides in *Hippolytus* names Ariadne the bride of Dionysus, *Dionüsou dámar* (V 339), in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 1, *Cyclops, Alcestis, Medea, Heraclidae, Hippolytus, Andromacha, Hecuba* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1991) p. 222.

[102] Plutarch, *Theseus*, 20, in *Plutarch, Lives*, Perrin, vol. 1, *Theseus and Romulus, Lycurgus and Numa, Solon and Publicola* p. 42.

[103] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 228.

[104] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 312.

[105] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 8.54.6, in *Pausanias. Description of Greece, Books VIII.22-X*, trans. Jones pp. 166–168.

[106] See Otto, *Dionysos, Mythos und Kultus* p. 86.

controlled[107]—is linked, on the one hand, to the transformation from individual isolation to community. Consider the metamorphosis of the youthful demigod alone in the forest (who is mesmerized by his reflection in a mirror) into the luminous, immortal leader of a singing mystic chorus. On the other hand, the inner core of language is rooted in nature and that which grows out of the earth, as illustrated by Dionysus' costuming of himself with the "sacred fawnskin"[108] (V 137–138, 24) and his associations with the grapevine.

Although we can only touch upon this important issue here, through its tie to nature and community, the nucleus of these vowel-sounds (upon which all language rests) brings us into the mystic orbit of creation, that is, the enchanting images that magically arise from invisible sounds. That such *linguistic creation* is related to pro-*creation* is suggested by Dionysus' second birth from Zeus's thigh (V 94–98, 284–289),[109] an epiphany that concentrates male sex and motherhood.[110] As we have seen, Dionysian myth harnesses the transition from isolated eyes and deathly silence—one thinks also of Ariadne abandoned by Theseus on Naxos[111]—to the joyous cry of community and earth. In myth eyes and language are reborn. Consider again the "magical light [φῶς] and […] pure places and meadows, with voices and dancing" (2.3) where "Dionysus ascended and later brought up Semele",[112] and the rebirth of burning suns (in the darkness of the mouth) in the fiery taste of wine (2).

Dionysus' relation to *the rebirth of language* is at the heart of the third and final phase of mystic initiation. After "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain uncompleted journeys through darkness"—after "all the terrible things, shuddering and trembling and sweat", "[t]he soul on the point of death […] is met by a wonderful light (φῶς) and received into pure places and meadows, with *voices and dancing*"[113] (2.3). Plutarch's account of ritual accents the ecstatic *voices* with whom it culminates. To understand mystic initiation, we must therefore understand "the cleverer people [Dionysian initiates]" who "construct certain [linguistic] destructions and disappearances, followed by [linguistic] returns to life and rebirths" in their staging of ritual (and this means the *returns to life and rebirths* that are "in keeping with the aforesaid transformations" of Dionysus' myth).[114] The final phase

[107] Here I am not saying that one cannot invent an illusion that one can see and reproduce the sound of vowels as alphabetic writing does. This is something to which I shall return in a later study.

[108] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 297, 292.

[109] Ibid. p. 295, 303.

[110] For phalloi revealed to blinded initiands, see the two figures in the right of the east wall of Room 5 in the Villa of the Mysteries. *The Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii: Ancient ritual, Modern muse*, ed. Gazda et al. xiv, 134 (Fig. 12.5).

[111] Ovid, *Ares Amatoria*, 1.525–64, in: OV 143–44. Epimenides suggests that Dionysus and Ariadne were lovers already in Crete. See Scholia Apollodorus, 3.997, in *Scholia in Apollonium Rhodium* ed. C. Wendel (Berlin: Weidemann 1935) pp. 244–245.

[112] Plutarch, *Moralia*, 565–566, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* ed. B. Einarson and P. de Lacy, vol. 7 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1994), pp. 278–292.

[113] Emphasis added.

[114] Plutarch, *Moralia*, 389a, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* Babbit, vol. 5 pp. 222–223.

of initiation stages the mythical rebirth of Dionysus' voice. Critical is the unity of the thiasos, which "seems to require the presence of the deity, perhaps even of the deity *possessing* the souls of the group."[115] The third phase of ritual is therefore inextricably tied to the mystic re-enactment of joyous voice of the god.

Because mystics (who are often imagined in texts and material culture as dancing satyrs and maenads)[116] unified themselves with their earthly spirit, the song they secretly performed was connected to nature. The "fawnskins"[117] (V 696), masks[118]—some of which were made from the wood of grapevines and fig-trees[119]—and the "drink from the mixing bowl"[120] that re-enacted Dionysus' induction into "the liquid/moist drink of the grape" (V 279; 2.3) thus related the rebirth of language to earth's (visually impenetrable) subterranean power.[121] But initiation "stages the anxiety of death that leads to the bliss of the next world."[122] This means that when the initiand drank the secret of earth embodied in wine, he or she transcended the horror of individual finitude,[123] and the self-isolating egoism from which such horror can spring. "Now you died and you came into being, thrice blessed one, on this

[115] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 33.

[116] Inscription p. 113, in *Choisir Dionysos: Les associations dionysiacques, ou, La face cachée du dionysisme*, ed. A.-F. Jaccottet, vol. 2, *Documents* pp. 203–204. See also Lucian, *The Dance*, 15, in *Lucian, The Dance,* trans. A. Harmon, vol. 5. 228. Plato, *Laws*, 790d-e, in *Plato, Laws, Books VII-XII*, trans. R. Bury, vol. 11 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2011).

[117] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 320. Demosthenes, "On the Crown", 18.259–260, in *Demosthenes, On the Crown*, Yunis p. 90. For further references to post-initiands who dress up (and down) as maenads, "pans, sileni and satyrs" during mystic initiations—Plato, *Laws*, 815c, in *Plato, Laws, Books VII-XII*, R. Bury, vol. 11 92—see the frescos from Villa of the Mysteries. M. Nilsson, *The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age*. (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1957) pp. 68–73. *The Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii: Ancient ritual, Modern muse*, ed. Gazda et al. Note the figure to the left in east wall of Room 5 (Colour Plate I).

[118] In regard to Simon, Seaford notes that, "the participants [of mystic initiation] are sometimes clearly wearing satyr-masks." Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* 8, ft. 25. For the masks of mystery-cult, which can also be exceptionally great in scale, see A. Frickenhaus, *Lenäenvasen, Zweiundsiebzigstes Program zum Wickelmannsfeste, der Archaeologischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin* (Berlin: Georg Reimer 1912) 3, Nr. 1. For the familiar image of Dionysus' mask placed upon a column or pillar, see Fig. 12 in *A City of Images*, Bérard et al. 153. For the centrality of the mask in ritual drama, see F. Lissarrague, *Un flot d'images: une esthétique du banquet grec* (Paris: A. Biro, 1987) 20, 53. For Dionysus' epiphany in the form of a mask set on a clothed pole or pillar during the secret female rite at the Anthesteria, see Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 47.

[119] On Naxos, for example, there were masks of Dionysus Bakcheus and Meilichios made out of the wood of grape vines and fig trees. See Otto, *Dionysos, Mythos und Kultus* p. 82.

[120] Demosthenes, *Against Neaeras*, 73, in *Demosthenes, Orationes*, ed. W. Rennie, vol. 3. Oxford University Press 1991) 317 (1369).

[121] B. Kramer, *"Zwei literarische Fragmente aus der Sammlung Fackelmann"*, Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik, 34 (1979) 11.

[122] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 75.

[123] For the link between wine and the mystic initiand's liberation from death, see verses pp. 279–283 from *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* 303. See also Plutarch, *Moralia*, 68, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* ed. F.

day",[124] reads a mystic formulae inscribed onto a gold leaf from Pelinna in Thessaly: "Tell Persephone that Bakchios himself freed you./[…] You have wine as your blessed honour (?)./And below the earth there await you the same rituals as the other blessed ones."[125]

The conquering of death in ritual links the resurrection of language to an enchanting place "below the earth". Mystics who died in their youth were imagined as having escaped to the vines of Hades and pictured as Dionysus' young companions in choral songs and dances.[126] In this otherworld, wine flows magically from uncrushed grapes.[127] The ordeal of death is transformed into an underworld whose terrors are now encircled by laughter (V 278–311).[128] Even Persephone, queen of the dead, appears with an invitation to a feast with wine, dancing and music (V 503–518).[129] Given that ritual "embodies the transitions from one kind of space and time to another, seen from the perspective of the conclusion" (2), the fundamental mood-change that reunites the "earth-born race"[130] (V 538–539) of mortals with the immortal powers of nature is an act of "remembrance".[131] Through ritual the human being remembered his or her transcendent, "native place" in the earth.[132] At the heart of this homecoming is the mystic ululation *euoî*[133]—a succession of joyous vowels that appear on mirrors found in the tombs of initiates.[134] This Dionysiac nucleus of

Babbit, vol. 1, pp. 358–364. Plutarch, *Moralia*, 716, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* Helmbold, Minar and Sandbach, vol. 9 pp. 108–110.

[124] Gold leaf from Pelinna in Thessaly from the fourth century B.C.E. Cited in Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 55.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Inscriptions 112, 180 and 23, in *Choisir Dionysos: Les associations dionysiacques, ou, La face cachée du dionysisme*, ed. A.-F. Jaccottet, vol. 2, *Documents* pp. 58–59.

[127] For (implicitly visual) evidence of wine that miraculously flows from grapes, see O. Taplin, *Comic angels: and other approaches to Greek drama through vase-paintings* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), plate 5. See also Plutarch, *Moralia*, pp. 565–566, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* Einarson and Lacy, vol. 7 pp. 1104–1105; *Plutarch, Moralia,* ed. B. Einarson and P. de Lacy, vol. 14 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1967) pp. 134–140; *Plutarch, Moralia*, Sandbach, vol. 15, *Fragments* pp. 316–319.

[128] Aristophanes, *The Frogs*, in *Aristophanes. Frogs, Assemblywomen, Wealth*, Henderson pp. 62–70. Plutarch, *Moralia*, pp. 565–566, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* Einarson and Lacy, vol. 7 pp. 278–292.

[129] Aristophanes, *The Frogs*, in *Aristophanes. Frogs, Assemblywomen, Wealth*, Henderson pp. 92–94.

[130] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* 314.

[131] "*mnamosúnas*". From a gold leaf found in Hipponion, southern Italy, that dates to c. 400 B.C.E. Cf. M. Marcovich, *"The Gold Leaf from Hipponion"*, Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 23 (1976) pp. 221–222.

[132] Epitaph for Sositheos spoken by a satyr guarding his tomb. *The Greek Anthology, Hellenistic Epigrams*, ed. A. Gow and D. Page (Camrbidge: Cambridge University Press 1965) 256, 5 f. (1611 f.).

[133] Demosthenes, "On the Crown", 18.260, in *Demosthenes, On the Crown*, Yunis 90.

[134] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 79.

language inspiring a centre against disintegration echoed in "mystic symbol[s]"[135] and *signa et monumenta*[136] that the initiates concealed in secrecy and silence.

But *limited language* names also an opening out of the linguistic ecstasy with which ritual concluded. This is clearly seen in the satyr-play (2.3) where Dionysus' initiates staged the discovery of inventions such as fire, springs of water and wine that sustain communal life.[137] Such revelations—consider the satyr-chorus who witnesses the hero as he discovers the secret of how to restore the wind[138]—gestured to Dionysiac "sounds of good omen", *eúphámos*[139] (V 8–9, 13–14). This we hear in the succession of ecstatic vowels from Sophocles' satyr-play *Ichneutai*:

â â â (V 156),
ioù ioú (V 464),[140]
û û û û (V 131)

and

û û û […] *â â* (V 176),[141]

where the voice of the initiate dissolves into that of his god.

But to understand the "different key" in which the satyr play "plays",[142] one must return to the tragic tone of the cycle of tragedies with which it was preceded. As we have seen, in the tragic play the *Dionysiac chronotope* prevails over the *visualised chronotope* (2, 3). Tragedy remains bound to Dionysus' myth and cult. This is demonstrated by the plays that were repeatedly performed at the *City Dionysia* such as *Semele* and *Bacchae*, Polyphrasmon's trilogy about Dionysus and Lykourgos from 467 B.C.E. and by Spintharos' tragedy *Thunderbolted Semele*.[143] The spirit of Dio-

[135] Plutarch, *Moralia*, 611d, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* Einarson and Lacy, vol. 7 p. 600.

[136] Apuleius, *Apology*, 55, in *Apulei Apologia, Siue pro se de Magia Liber*, Butler and Owen. While speaking of his careful conservation of "signs and monuments" given to him by priests in initiations, Apuleius accents how those who have been initiated conceal at home their symbols (and linguistic rituals) which they venerate in silence and secrecy away from profane people.

[137] One thinks, for instance, of Aeschylus' *Prometheus Pyrkaieus* and Sophocles' *Dionysiskos*. See Euripides, *Cyclops*, in: Seaford Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* p. 37. See also verses pp. 704–710 from *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 321.

[138] Here I am thinking of Aeschylus' lost satyr play *Proteus*. See Euripides, *Cyclops*, in: Seaford Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* p. 2.

[139] Theocritus, *Idyll*, 26, in *Theocritus*, ed. A. Gow, vol. 1, *Introduction, Text and Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2008) p. 214. And that the birth of language, song and music was itself a critical theme is suggested in Sophocles' *Ichneutai* where satyrs delight in the first ever revelation of a lyrical sound from a dead tortoise.

[140] Euripides, *Cyclops*, in Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* p. 68, 80.

[141] Sophocles, *Ichneutai*, in *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, ed. J. Diggle (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2006) p. 50, 52.

[142] F. Lissarrague, *"Why Satyrs Are Good to Represent"*, in: *Nothing to do with Dionysus?: Athenian Drama in its Social Context*, ed. John Winkler and Froma Zeitlin (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990) p. 236.

[143] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 92.

nysus presides over tragedy regardless of "whether or not [Dionysus] himself appears in them and whether or not we choose to call them Dionysiac".[144] One thinks also of Aeschylus' tragedies *Semele*, *Pentheus* and *Bacchae*[145]—Aeschylus whose works were said in ancient times to be "full of Dionysus".[146]

As we have seen, the tragic play stages the absence of *Dionysiac language* (which temporarily moves into the background during the main action of the play) while the *visualised language* of the tyrant (which moves into the foreground) is systematically, if gradually, estranged (4.1–4.2). The rebirth of the voice in mystic initiation—significantly related to what the Greeks called "playing-the-goat" (*tragízousi* described the changing voice of adolescent boys during puberty)[147]—is thus adapted to describe the death and rebirth of the voice in theatre. The dying *visualised voice* of an insatiable money-tyrant is absorbed into the emergent "echoing shouts of joy" that inspire geocentric communality.

In *Antigone limited language* begins to return after such linguistic events as (1) Kreon's displacement of Dionysian song and dance, (2) the wailing associated with a spherical and blinding (mystic mirror-like) midday sun, and (3) the deathly silence of Antigone's absent wedding song (4.1). At this point the *visualised language* of the tyrant who reduces the "soul" to "silver" comes undone. To cleanse the *pólis*, the chorus invokes a picture of Dionysus on the mountain peaks of Parnassus as the "chorus-leader of the fire-breathing stars" (2.3, 3.3), as well as Dionysus' mystic voice. "Rich in names", born from Semele in Zeus' mystic lightning flash (V 1115–1117, 1136–1139), Dionysus' presence in "distant Italy", "Eleusis" and "Thebes"[148] (V 1117–1125) gestures to the global potential of the voice of the "democratic god par excellence" (2.3). Following the chorus' invocation of springs of water (V 1125) and shores covered "with many-clustered vines" (V 1122–1133), they invoke the "immortal words" (V 1134) of the god and name him "guardian of nocturnal speech"[149] (V 1147–1148). The *visualised vowels* of the money-tyrant who shrieks *aiaî aiaî* (V 1267; 4.2) are (implicitly) absorbed into the emergent *Dionysiac vowels*, as when the chorus, after its projection of "bacchic fire", *eúión te pûr* (V 964), cries out *iò* (V 1146).[150]

In *Oedipus the Tyrant limited language* follows upon the bird-like (and thus shrill sound of) unlimited corpses descending into the underworld (4.2). The chorus sings of Dionysus' song and bacchic cry *eúion* (V 211; 4.1). But as the tragedy proceeds, the *visualised language* of Oedipus temporarily eclipses *Dionysiac language*. Despairing before the celebration of excessive wealth (kérdos), *hubris*

[144] Ibid. p. 97.

[145] Ibid. p. 91.

[146] Plutarch, *Moralia*, p. 715, in *Plutarch, Moralia,* Helmbold, Minar and Sandbach, vol. 9 p. 100.

[147] See Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 152.

[148] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 228.

[149] Ibid. p. 229.

[150] Ibid. The vowels of the chorus here are also caught up in a *near-death experience*. In contrast to the *dying vowels* of the tyrant, however, the *near-death linguistic nucleus* of the chorus transitions into *Dionysiac language*.

and impiety that the *túrannos* exhibits, in particular Oedipus' "insolent words", the chorus cries out, "if such actions are honoured, why should I dance?" (2, 4.1). This enables the dramatic end. When the tyrant wails *ioú ioú* and *aiaî aiaî* (1308; 4.2), *Near-Death vowels* are (similar to *Antigone*) implicitly absorbed into the *emergent Dionysiac vowels* such as *eúion*. The vocal "sadnesses", *pentheîn* (V 1320, 4.2) that the name "Oedipus" finally names, shall dissolve, like blood transfigured into rain, into the ecstasy of a communal cry.

Limited language also occurs in *Bacchae*. Pentheus' "rapid tongue"[151] (V 268) is systematically deconstructed by (and implicitly absorbed into) the "joyful call", *ololúzo* (V 689; 4.2), for instance, that awakens the *bákchais* (V 691). Fountains of water and wine leap out of stone and locked-up earth; milk bubbles up from dark soil, and honey drips down ivy thyrsoi (V 704–710).[152] The chaos of the *visualised language* of the tyrant, which reduces mystery-cult to money and private visual pleasure, is contrasted with the *limited language* of Dionysus' initiates who cry out in a "united voice"[153] (V 725). Whereas Pentheus' abstract "words" make "no sense"[154] (V 269), the *Dionysiac language* of "mouth[s]" that have been purified with "sacred cleansings"[155] (V 69–77) exhibit miraculous order and unity (V 693).[156] "The whole of the mountain wild and its animals" along with the *pólis* is set to dancing (V 724),[157] and "nothing" is left "unmoved" (V 726–727).[158]

Similar to *Antigone* and *Oedipus the Tyrant*, *Bacchae* absorbs *Near-Death vowels* into *limited vowels*. Let us return to Dionysus' invocation of the mystic thunderbolt and earthquake to shatter Pentheus' house (2.3, 4.1–4.2). At this time, the *túrannos* exhibits symptoms of the isolated mystic initiand undergoing the first two phases of initiation, in particular the transition from *unlimited-* to *Near-Death chronotopes* and *languages*. While running "feverishly this way and that" (V 625), Pentheus "breathes out his soul" (V 620) and is heard "gnashing his teeth in his lips" (V 621; 4.1–4.2). The mystic lightning-flash that Dionysus calls forth is connected, on the one hand, to the *Near-Death vowels* to which the tyrant (who aggressively seeks to murder the spirit of earth and community for money and private visual pleasure) succumbs: *éa éa* (V 644; 4.2).

On the other hand, the lightning flash of *Bacchae* is connected to the transition from *Near-Death-* to *limited chronotopes* and *languages*. The chorus of maenads (similar to Pentheus) exhibits symptoms of isolated mystic initiands. Fearing imprisonment and death, each individual member falls to the ground in "solitary desolation" (2.3). But in contrast to the tyrant who is unable to transition into a language

[151] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 303.

[152] Ibid. p. 321.

[153] Ibid. p. 322.

[154] Ibid. p. 303.

[155] Ibid. p. 294.

[156] Ibid. p. 321.

[157] Ibid. p. 322.

[158] Ibid.

of earth and community, the *unlimited- and Near-Death language* of each initiate is redeemed by *limited language*. Dionysus makes his epiphany to the maenads, telling them to stand up, take courage, and stop their trembling (2.3). "O greatest light [φῶς] of the joyful-crying bacchanal [euíou]" (V 608–609), they cry out in unison. "How gladly I looked on you in my solitary desolation." (2.3, 4.1).

As we have noted, tragedy absorbs *visualised vowels* into *Dionysiac vowels*. The dying voices of tyrants such as Kreon and Oedipus, embodied in the repetition of tragic shrieks,

aiaî aiaî

and

ioú ioú

are inextricably tied to the rebirth of ecstatic vowels, to which the Dionysian chorus gestures when it sings of the bacchic call,

eúion

and

iò

(also implicit in "bacchic fire", *eúión te pûr*). *Bacchae* betrays the same transition from *unlimited* to *limited vowels*, where language has the power to call forth a new world. While suffering paroxysms of despair, mystics cry out to Dionysus to come (V 553–570).[159] The god then makes his epiphany, but first in the form of sound, that is, as a singing voice:

ió
hear my voice, hear it,
iò bacchae, iò bacchae (V 575–577).[160]
Who is here, who?

the chorus responds:

From what interior did the voice of the joyous calling one [Euíou]
call us?[161] (V 578–579)
[I]ò ió, I call,

Dionysus responds,

son of Semele and Zeus[162] (V 580–581).

The chorus of mystics then dissolves into the sound and being of the god they invoked:

iò ió master master, come now to our
thíasos, ô Brómie Brómie.[163] (V 582–584)

[159] Ibid. p. 314.

[160] Ibid. p. 315.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Ibid. pp. 315–316.

Both Dionysus *Euíou* and his *euíou*-singing chorus express socio-political liberation and wholeness through the repetition of ecstatic vowels *iò iò*. Only after this vocal identification is complete is the power of seeing is reborn. "[T]he fiery light of thunder" (4.2) follows the mystic chorus' joyful call,

â â (V 586)[164]

Dionysus reveals himself as "the greatest light", but only after he "cries out in victory indoors"[165] (V 606–607). *Visualised vowels* that are alienated from earth and community such as Pentheus',

éa éa

are absorbed into *Dionysiac vowels*

â â, *iò ió*
and
euíou

—a linguistic centre that re-*organ*ises the *organ* of sight into a more democratic relation to the other sense-organs.

As we shall show in Part III, the *Dionysiac language* that appears in *Bacchae*'s opening lines inspires the socio-political potential of Hölderlin's poetry. But to understand these first verses, we must first understand the play's ending, and this means Dionysus' lost speech that (most likely) announced the foundation of his cult in Thebes.[166] *Near-death vowels* such as Agaue's shriek *éa* most likely yield to *Dionysiac vowels* facilitating the image of a geocentric community.

At the core of *Bacchae* is the unprecedented tension between, on the one hand, an egomaniac obsessed with money (and its visual culture) and, on the other hand, the communal spirit of earth. To resolve this tension, that is, "for this reason", Dionysus "take[s] on mortal form"[167] (V 47–49) and appears "in the city"[168] (V 769) with an "army of maenads" (V 51). Similar to the conclusion of the play, the opening lines of Euripides' tragedy are spoken by Dionysus. The first verses of *Bacchae* thus introduce *Dionysiac language* as the keystone of its theatrical arch, in particular the implicit unity of earth, image and sound that *Dionysiac language* cultivates—precisely what is missing when an individual sees, calculates and controls, for instance, numbers in world ruled by unlimited money.

First relating his epiphany to his mythic origin, Dionysus announces: "I, son of Zeus, have come to this land of Thebes, Dionysus, born from Semele, who succumbed to the lightning-bearing flame."[169] (V 1–3) But, as we have seen, this homecoming is uneasy. This becomes clear as the god who has "taken a mortal form"

[164] Ibid. p. 316.

[165] Ibid. p. 317.

[166] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 54.

[167] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 293.

[168] Ibid. p. 323.

[169] Ibid. p. 291.

(V 4) and who stands "at the fountains of Dirke and the water of Ismenos" (V 5) surveys,

> the tomb of [his] thunder-stricken mother
> near the palace, and the shards of her house,
> still smouldering from the flame of Zeus' fire,
> the eternal violence of Hera against [his] mother.[170] (V 6–9)

The tragic myth of Semele (of an isolated individual who recklessly desires to see Zeus' timeless spirit—here we may note the continuation of Hera's spirit of revenge, as when the goddess incites the Titans to plant a mirror in the forest to distract Dionysus)[171] that was cultivated in ritual is adapted for a new socio-political problem.

After praising Cadmus' transformation of his tragic birthplace into one of sacredness, Dionysus celebrates his embodiment of earth's enchanting mystery. Still near the springs of water, the wine-god calls attention to his epiphany of "the cluster-bearing leaf of the vine" encircling Semele's gravestone (V 10–12).[172] Dionysus then connects the spirit of earth—he mentions also the "fawnskin" with which costumes himself (V 24)[173]—to the democratic impulse that he and mystic chorus initiate: "having already set [eastern] lands to dance and established my mystic initiations there", he declares, "I have come to this Hellenic city first […] so that I shall be visible as a god to mortals."[174] (V 13–19)

The language of Dionysus in the opening lines of *Bacchae* culminates in *limited language*. Following his announcement that he and his mystic chorus have set various peoples and lands "dancing", *choreúsas*, and "founded his mystic initiations", he declares that he has revealed himself to the Hellenic world, which has fallen prey to tyrants such as Pentheus, through his "ecstatic cry", *anolóluxa* (V 24).[175] The word *anolóluxa* prefigures the *Dionysiac cry* later in the play, as when the "joyful wail", *ololúzo* (V 689; 3B), of "horned" animals is sounded by maenads (3B). *Limited language* with which ritual secretly concluded is opened out to the public stage to battle the *unlimited language* of money-tyrants.

To conclude, *limited language* describes the third and final of the three (sub) linguistic events that together compose *Dionysiac language*. *Dionysiac language*,

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[170] Ibid.

[171] Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus*, 2.18–19, in *Clement of Alexandria*, Butterworth pp. 42–44. See also Nonnus of Panopolis' *Dionysiaca*, 6.170–173 and 6.194–199, in *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques*, Chuvin, vol. 3, *Chants 6–8* 52–53. Hera is also known to have instilled a madness, *maínomai*, in Dionysus just before his death and which is therefore linked to his self-absorption in the mirror. Plato, *Laws*, 672b, in *Plato, Laws, Books I-VI*, trans. R. Bury, vol. 10 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1994) p. 154. See also verse 3 from Euripides' *Cyclops*, in Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* p. 63. Apollodorus, *Library*, 3.4.3, 3.5.1, in *Apollodorus, The Library*, Frazer, vol. 1, *Books I-III* p. 320, 326.

[172] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 291.

[173] Ibid. p. 292.

[174] Ibid. pp. 291–292.

[175] Ibid. pp. 292.

in turn, forms the inner core of ritual. Given its conquering of *visualised language*, it can perhaps be thought of as the central nervous system of sorts of the *Dionysiac chronotope*. Tragedy, as we have seen, is a battleground of *Dionysiac* and *visualised chronotopes* (2, 3) where the earthly synaesthesia of Dionysus conquers the insatiable eyes of money-tyrants (that have become alienated from earth or community). As we shall show in Part III, Hölderlin retrieves the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *Dionysiac language* to battle the modern, concentrated form of this ancient perversion during a time of unprecedented socio-political experimentation, upheaval and innovation.

Part II
The Time After

Chapter 5
Visual and Linguistic Nihilism

Abstract Although unprecedented in its harnessing of the secret powers of community and earth, tragedy is tragically conquered by the real tyrants of history (in Greece and after). Abstract disciplines that emerge from money and its accompanying visual essence such as philosophy initiate in an important, if still unacknowledged primal manufacturing of consent: the first intellectual betrayal of western civilisation. Loss of the Dionysian spirit and its linguistic nucleus then increases not only during the Roman Empire, but also with the advent of Judeo-Christianity. By Medieval time, Christian theology and humanism reinforce a still more abstract, alienated concept of humankind. Coupled with the *depoliticalisation* and (literally) demonisation of Dionysus is the erasure of any trace of the god's socio-political potential to confront money as a lethal visual media.

Keywords Philosophy · Roman empire · Judeo-christianity · Christian theology · Humanism

5.1 "Sweet Songs with Silver Faces"

Having described tragedy as a battleground of *Dionysiac* and *visualised chronotopes*, in particular a struggle of *Dionysiac* and *visualised languages*, we can begin to approach Hölderlin's poetry. At first glance, a leap from ancient Greece in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E. to modern Germany in the late eighteenth century would seem to repress thousands of years. But the time since the invention of money has been more concentrated (and homogenised) then we may prefer to think.

Thus far our story has been concerned with the Greeks. As we have shown, they were the first to invent money and its lethal visual culture (Sects. 3.1, 3.2). And it is Greek religion, in particular the pre-monetary and pre-visual roots of mystery-cult, that battles the ensuing alienation of individuals from nature and each other (Sect. 3.3). The potential danger of the eyes to disconnect a person from his or her environment (as implicit in the adaption of mythical figures such as Persephone, Semele and Dionysus) is opened out onto the stage (Sect. 2.1). Now the man of money—a tyrant estranged from his earthly place in the cosmos—succumbs to blindness and death—as

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illustrated by Kreon in *Antigone* and Oedipus in *Oedipus the Tyrant* (Chap. 2). Pentheus in *Bacchae* is an excellent example. The tyrant tells Dionysus that he would pay precious metal to see his female initiates on the mountain wild (Sects. 2.1, 3.3). Pentheus is then programmatically blinded by "two suns" (V 922, 2.1)—a clear reference to the (fatal) mirror used in mystic initiation—and, being absorbed into Dionysian myth, hunted down and dismembered by kin (Sect. 3.3).

Essential to the absorption of the monetised eyes of the money-tyrant—the *visualised chronotope*—into the primal darkness of ritual that has been opened out on the theatre—the *Dionysiac chronotope*—is how this neutralisation occurs on the level of language (Chap. 4). The linguistic experience of initiation is transformed to battle the new one that sustains money—and the perverse style of seeing that accompanies a *monetised* mind (Chap. 4). Tragedy is finally the conquest of *visualised language* by *Dionysiac language* through its founding of a new linguistic nucleus that is rooted in earth and community (Sect. 4.3).

But the Greek stage belongs to the stage of history. This brings us out of Greece into the greater story of western (and global) civilisation. This means that whereas *Dionysiac language* conquered the *visualised language* of theatrical tyrants, it is itself conquered by the *visualised language* of real tyrants of Greece and the time after.

We have noted the *choregos* who makes "paradramatic" public appearances and the *monetised-artist* often associated with the mythical king who the chorus opposes (Sect. 3.3). As the ancients knew, the birth of tragedy during the second half of the sixth century B.C.E. (Sect. 3.3) is caught up not only in the creation of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language*, but also in tyrants consolidating their power.[1] The detachment of mystic initiation from its origin in mystery-cult quickly perverts and degrades it into visual spectacle. While tragedy arises in the second half of the sixth century B.C.E. Peisistratos loans money to Athenian farmers in the countryside to placate them[2] after being escorted into Athens by a tall young woman who he has carefully costumed as the familiar (local) goddess Athena.[3] As we shall see, the tragic play is haunted by the reduction of ritual to a superficial image of itself. This is something to which the display of tribute money at the theatre during the *City Dionysia* (sent to Athens from a new, vast territory across the Mediterranean) gestures.[4]

Tragedy's tragic absorption into the new visual culture coalescing about money is tied, significantly, to the loss of *Dionysiac language* (Chap. 4). After all, the invention of a public language of community coincides with the assimilation of money into ancient Greek. The word for coinage and currency, *nomisma*, is invented in the fifth century B.C.E. (Sect. 3.2, Chap. 4). But this normalisation of precious metal gives rise to linguistic nihilism. Already in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E.

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[1] This was clear to the ancients. See Thucydides, 6.59, in *Thucydides. History of the Peloponnesian War, Books V and VI*, Smith pp. 284–85.

[2] *Constitution of the Athenians* (attributed to Aristotle) p. 16.

[3] Herodotus, 1.60, in *Herodotus. The Persian Wars, Books I–II*, Godley pp. 68–70.

[4] Isocrates describes this as a long-established practice. Isocrates, *Peri Eirenes*, 8.82, in *Isocrates, Opera omnia*, Mandilaras, vol. 2 pp. 214–215.

poets such as Simonides compose for a wage, are obsessed with money and produce a vast number of genres to satiate their numerous clients.[5]

Given that gold draws poets restlessly from city to city (Sect. 2.1), the submission of language to the Pan-Hellenic glory of tyrannical families quickly uproots the memory that the voice is rooted in a particular place. The full Pindaric verse from the fifth century B.C.E. to which we referred (Chap. 2) reads: "Muse, it is your task, if you have contracted to provide your voice silvered for a wage, to set it in motion at different times in different ways" (V 41–44).[6] Pindar, to whom the Athenians were said to have awarded 10,000 drachmas,[7] proceeds to a metaphor of prostitution and concomitant promiscuity. "The Muse was then not avaricious nor a working girl (ergatis). Nor were sweet songs with silvered faces sold […]"[8] (V 6–8)

By the time of *Antigone* in the early 440s B.C.E. and *Oedipus the Tyrant* in the late 420s B.C.E., *Dionysiac language* is facing an increasingly hostile environment. The (rapid) marginalisation of the chorus and decline of the satyr play is seen in the absence of a satyr play already by the time of Euripides' tragedy *Alcestis* a in 438 B.C.E. as well as in the "frequent, agitated choral passages"[9] that plague his later satyr play *Cyclops*. In fact, it is this loss, ironically, that makes *Bacchae* "highly traditional".[10] When the power of *Dionysiac language* in this tragedy (Sect. 4.3) appears on stage around 405 B.C.E., language throughout the ancient world has already degenerated into a passive tool for money-tyrants. One recalls the self-devouring spirit of the Peloponnesian War.

5.2 From Greek Philosophy to Christian Theology

It is tempting to believe that the *Dionysiac chronotope*, given its communal and earthly spirit, is rescued by the noble spirit and eternal truthfulness of philosophy. Plato's grief following the death of Socrates in 399 B.C.E. is transfigured into a (dialogic) search to limit the corruption of Athenian socio-politics. It is significant that, precisely while Solon searches for a *térma* (limit) in wealth in the sixth century B.C.E. (Chap. 2), Pythagoras invents the word "philosophy".[11] This prefigures the opening out of the "love" of mystic "wisdom" in tragedy. One thinks of gestures to the

[5] See Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 115.

[6] Pindar, *Eleventh Pythian Ode*, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* p. 100.

[7] See Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 113. Although this is no doubt an exaggeration, the basic point remains.

[8] Pindar, *Second Isthmian Ode*, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* pp. 142–143. On money as promiscuous see Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* pp. 155–157.

[9] Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* p. 17.

[10] Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 90.

[11] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 1.12, in *Diongenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. R. Hicks (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2000) p. 12. See also

Dionysian "love of the pipe", *phílaulos* (V 965),[12] in *Antigone* and persons who, by virtue of their Dionysian restraint, are considered "wise", *sophós* (V 641),[13] in *Bacchae*.

Pythagoras' metaphysics of number, which reflects the new dominance of money in society,[14] is rooted in overcoming unlimitedness with ritual. Pythagorean marriage integrates a limiting (the male as number one) of the unlimited (embodied in the female as number two) through its cult of (communal) *threeness*.[15] Seaford notes that this Pythagorean transition from unlimited cyclicality to mystic limit is reflected in the tragedies of Aeschylus, as when "the unfathomability of Zeus' mind reconciles his completing omnipotence with the horrors of the monetised chronotope" in *Suppliants*.[16] Plato who writes tragedies as a young man[17] develops a Pythagorean ontology wherein the limit (peras) controls the unlimited (apeiron).[18] The fusion of the finite with the infinite produces a divine "third thing" that "puts an end to the conflict of opposites".[19] Similar to Dionysus, "this goddess" brings salvation in countless spheres, notably in health and music.[20] Plato's student (who singles out *Oedipus the Tyrant* as the preeminent tragic play)[21] also takes the Pythagorean two columns of opposites as evaluative.[22] "Bad", Aristotle says, "is of the unlimited, as the Pythagoreans surmised, and good is of the limited."[23]

But philosophy does not arise as an elaboration of the potential of Dionysian socio-politics. Quite the opposite, philosophy emerges from the unlimitedness of money that creates an unconscious imagination that sees the universe as ruled by

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Fragment p. 87, in *Die Schule des Aristoteles, Texte und Kommentar, Herakleides Pontikos*. ed. F. Wehrli (Basel: Schwabe & Co. Verlag 1969) p. 31.

[12] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 222.

[13] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesu* p. 318.

[14] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 291.

[15] Ibid. p. 309, 285–86, 301.

[16] Ibid. p. 313, 296, 324.

[17] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 3.5–6, in *Diongenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. Hicks p. 282.

[18] Plato, *Philebos*, 25d–26c, in *The statesman, Philebus*, trans. H. Flower trans. Lamb, *Ion*, trans. Lamb, vol. 8 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2006) pp. 250–252. See also *Philolaos of Croton, Pythagorean and Presocratic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993) p. 106.

[19] Plato, *Philebos*, 25d–26c, in *The statesman, Philebus*, trans. H. Flower trans. Lamb, *Ion*, trans. Lamb, vol. 8 pp. 250–52.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1452a25, 1452a33, in *Aristotle, Longinus, Demetrius, Poetics, On the Sublime*, ed. S. Halliwell, trans. W. Fyfe, revised by D. Russell, *On Style*, trans. D. Innes, based on W. Roberts (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2005) p. 64.

[22] W. Burkert, *Weisheit und Wissenschaft: Studien zu Pythagoras, Philolaos und Platon* (Nürnberg: Hans Carl Verlag 1962) p. 45. Seaford insightfully suggests that this may help to explain the absence of hot-cold/wet-dry. Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 291.

[23] Aristotle, *The Nicomachaean Ethics*, 1106b29 (Book 2.6.14), in *Aristotle, The Nicomachaean Ethics*, Rackham p. 94.

an abstract, singular and unlimited substance.[24] Consider the water of Thales, the unlimited (apeiron) of Anaximander, the air of Anaximenes and the One of Parmenides.[25] Nevertheless, philosophy has its origin not only in the *monetised*, but also the *visualised chronotope*. To show this, we turn to the generation of philosophers after the death of Anaximander, in particular to Aeschylus' contemporary Herakleitos.

Similar to the metal of a coin that is ruled by its abstract image, the cosmos, for Herakleitos, is ruled by an abstract picture of fire: a raging, uprooted light that, being (like money) exchangeable for all things, the philosopher compares to gold.[26] The homogenised style of exchange that is built into presocratic philosophy—consider also Anaximander's concentration of necessity (chreōn) and debt (chreos) as well as Herakleitos' saying that "[t]he way up and down is the same"[27]—is linked to a new theoretical vision of space and time.

Western philosophy begins—let us not forget—not with a sound (nor a smell, or taste or sense of touch), but instead with an image of the cosmos. This reduction of the universe to a distancing picture upon which the eyes can fixate coincides with the birth of isolated intellectuals. Parmenides imagines his uniqueness (as the philosopher who knows) as the isolation of the mystic initiand.[28] The conceptual, fiery soul of Herakleitos has no relation to gods and humans.[29] This suggests not only the difference between philosophy and tragedy, as when the cosmic cycles of the *Orestia* transcend the unlimited oppositions of Herakleitos through the establishment of a mystic limit,[30] but also the similarity of the philosopher and tyrant. Presocratic cosmology consists largely of the thoughts of individuals who (similar to Pentheus, Kreon and Oedipus) are no longer mediated by any context or tradition of (social) performance.[31]

Classical Greek philosophy of the fourth century B.C.E., which we can think of as beginning when Aristokles burns the tragedies of his youth[32] and normalises the

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[24] This thesis has been put forth by Richard Seaford (at least implicitly) since the late 1990s. See, for instance, Seaford, "*Tragic Money*", JHS pp. 119–139. For its (explicit) argument, see Richard Seaford, *"Monetisation and the Genesis of Philosophy"*, Ordia Prima (2004) p. 2. The main work is Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind*.

[25] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* pp. 59–64, 331.

[26] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. H. Diels and W. Kranz, 6th ed. (Berlin: Weidmann 1951) B90, cf. B30, B45. Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* pp. 231–265.

[27] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Diels and Kranz, B60, B80, cf. A22.

[28] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 331.

[29] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Diels and Kranz, B30. "[T]he kosmos, the same for all things, was not made by god or man but always was and is and will be an ever-living fire". As Seaford notes, "fire in some way underlies the constant transformation of opposites into each other. The soul, which is composed of cosmic fire, has no spatial limits (B45)." Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 59.

[30] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 259.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 3.5–6, in *Diongenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Hicks p. 282. Anyone who doubts that Plato's youthful break with poetry re-

visualised chronotope from which presocratic philosophy descends. For Plato who presumes that coinage helps the state[33] and, similar to Simonides, invents another genre of writing (the philosophical dialogue), human existence is a mere reflection of the Eternal Forms. This timeless origin of mortality is a perversion of mystery-cult. The mystic meadow of the Dionysiac afterlife (Sects. 2.3, 3.3) seems to reappear somewhere in the sky in Plato's dialogue.[34] Although the philosopher seeks to limit the unlimited, he relocates the *Dionysiac chronotope* in *visualised* abstractions that (like coins) are disconnected from earth.

Buried within this philosophical perversion is Plato's estrangement of seeing from ritual. In mystic initiation seeing that is at first caught up in individual isolation transitions into that which is rooted in community. The night-monster and phantoms yield to the epiphany of a magical light and its earthly synaesthesia (Sect. 3.3). But in Platonic philosophy seeing is harnessed to model the other senses to remember abstract Forms. Socrates provides the proof for his vision of the "previous existence" of "our souls" (that is, the time "before they took on this human form")[35] that experience is to be denigrated. Because our senses can only recollect superior Forms, they are inadequate.[36] This derangement of "the most blessed of mysteries"[37] into an afterlife of souls "independent from our bodies"[38] begins, significantly—and this is something, incidentally, that the tradition of philosophy has never noticed—when the philosopher turns to the eyes. "This thing that I *see* seeks to be like some other thing that exists, but fails […]",[39] Socrates explains to Simmias.

Aristotle who authors the first philosophical exploration of the birth of tragedy also understands the unlimited as bad. But Plato's student (who also presumes that coinage helps the state)[40] fails to grasp the tragic play as a battlefield of *Dionysiac* and *visualised* experiences. It never occurs to Aristotle, for instance, that the

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mains at the centre of his philosophy should return to books 3 and 10 of the *Republic* where the philosopher makes it clear that tragic poets, who he denigrates into mere imitators who fail to know the truth, shall be exiled from the ideal city.

[33] Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* p. 131. Plato's personal wealth (as well as the funding of Aristotle's *Lúkeion*) has still to be explored.

[34] Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247c–248b, in *Plato, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, Fowler, vol. 1 pp. 474–478. As Seaford notes, the defining mystic vision in Plato's *Phaedrus* is of what is above the sky. Seaford, "*The Fluttering Soul*", in *Antike Mythen: Medien, Transformationen und Konstruktionen*, Dill and Walde p. 413.

[35] Plato, *Phaedo*, 76c, in *Plato, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, Fowler, vol. 1 p. 266.

[36] Ibid., 74e–75d, PL I pp. 260–262.

[37] Plato, *Phaedrus*, 250b, in *Plato, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, Fowler, vol. 1 p. 484.

[38] Plato, *Phaedo*, 76c, in *Plato, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, Fowler, vol. 1 p. 266.

[39] Ibid., 74d, in *Plato, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, Fowler, vol. 1 p. 258. Translation amended and emphasis added.

[40] Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* p. 131.

saturikon (satyr-play-like) tragedy "became solemn (ajpesemnuvnqh)"[41] from the monetisation of Dionysiac performance.[42] The unconscious imagination of Aristotelian philosophy formalises Plato's relocation of the Dionysian limit in an abstract visual ontology. This is clear in Aristotle's theory of knowledge where he explicitly raises "seeing" above all the other senses.[43]

That the alienation of eyes from the spirit of Dionysian synaesthesia (Sect. 2.3) is caught up in the alienation of individuals from nature is shown when Aristotle celebrates the wonder with which philosophy begins. Although he praises the sun, stars and moon, the earth is never mentioned.[44] Philosophy strips the picture of "fire-breathing stars" in *Antigone* (Sect. 2.3) of its earthly magic. No longer enhanced by the light of circling torches, stars that have lost their pulsating breath are now reduced to cold and distant points of light. Aristotle also praises an isolated, dominant ruler on the order of Agamemnon.[45] This brings us back to the affinity of the philosopher to the tyrant isolated from gods and kin. Because philosophy neglects community and earth, Hölderlin's retrieval of the philosophical potential of the tragic play in his poetry offers a unique attraction to modern philosophers who seek to cure the schizophrenic spirit of their discipline.

To summarise, ancient philosophy culminates in the derangement of the *Dionysiac chronotope* into an abstract Neoplatonic afterlife. Ecstasy that integrates the body into an earthly paradise (Chaps. 2, 4) comes to repress all that is physical. Plotinus in the third century A.D. associates Bacchic movement (anabakcheuesthe) with the "longing to be with yourselves, in gathering yourselves together apart from the body".[46] This perverse shift of the *Dionysiac chronotope* to an isolated vision of individuality (which mirrors the relocation of a coin's metal to abstract worth) looks forward to theologians of Christianity. Like Socrates, St. Augustine in the early fifth century A.D. invokes "the eyes of the flesh in the light of the earthly sun"[47] only to denigrate seeing as an inadequate sensation of a Christian afterlife. To the saint, "the most intense illumination of physical light seemed, in comparison to the sweetness of the life to come, not worthy of comparison, nor even of mention."[48]

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[41] Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1449a18–21, *Aristotle, Longinus, Demetrius, Poetics, On the Sublime*, ed. S. Halliwell, trans. W. Fyfe, revised by D. Russell, *On Style*, trans. D. Innes, based on W. Roberts p. 42.

[42] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 107.

[43] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1.980, in *Aristotle, Metaphysics, Books I–IX*, trans. H. Tredennick (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2003) p. 2.

[44] Ibid., 1.982b, in *Aristotle, Metaphysics, Books I–IX*, trans. H. Tredennick p. 12.

[45] Ibid., 1076a3–5, in *Aristotle, Metaphysics, Books X–XIV*, trans. H. Tredennick (Cambirdge: Harvard University Press 2006) p. 174. Here Aristotle refers to a verse from Homer's *Iliad* (2.204) where Odysseus stresses Agamemnon's leadership. See also Aristotle, *Politics*, 1254a, in *Aristotle, Politics*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2005) pp. 16–20.

[46] Plotinus, *Ennead*, 1.6.5, in *Porphyry on Plotinus, Ennead I*, ed. A. Armsrong p. 244.

[47] Augustine, *Confessions*, Bk 9 (4.10), in *Augustine, Confessions, Books IX–XIII*, W. Watts (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1997) p. 20. Translation amended.

[48] Ibid. (10.24) in *Augustine, Confessions, Books IX–XIII*, Watts 48. Translation amended.

The perversion of mystery-cult in ancient philosophy and early theology complements the persecution of Dionysus in Rome and Christianity. On the one hand, the suppression of Dionysiac associations in Italy by the Roman state already in 186 B.C. demonises (and thus depolitises) the "democratic god par excellence" (Sect. 2.3).[49] Despite Dionysus' presence in Italy already in the fifth century B.C.E., the Romans regard him as an alien god.[50] On the other hand, while plagiarising the *Dionysiac chronotope* to reinforce its ethereal (abstract) *vision* of a "kingdom […] not of this world",[51] Christianity concentrates Rome's invention of Dionysus as an alien divinity. God's warning to Saul on the road to Damascus in the first century: "It is hard for you to kick against the goads"[52]—which is lifted from *Bacchae* when Dionysus warns Pentheus to "not kick against the goads, a mortal against a god" (V 794–795)[53]—and Justin Martyr's claim in the second century A.D. that Dionysus, in imitation of Christ, ascended to heaven after his dismemberment[54] coincide with oppression. In the late second century A.D. Clement of Alexandria repeats the demand of the monetised (and visualised) tyrant Pentheus to the mystic: "Throw off your headband! Throw off your fawnskin! Be sober".[55]

About the time of Plotinus in the third century A.D. the Christian Tertullian declares that, because the theatre belongs to Venus and Liber (the Roman copy of Dionysus), it is a church of the devil, *ecclesia diaboli*.[56] This separation of art from religion that sees the mask as diabolical[57] is another separation of art from politics. Just before St. Augustine's condemnation in the late fourth and early fifth centuries of the "unclean spirits" of the Greek gods on stage,[58] two Christian clerics are punished for attending a recitation in Laodicea around 340 A.D. for those initiated into Dionysus' secret rites.[59] This is followed by the emperor Theodosius' outlawing of paganism in 391 A.D. and looks forward to the prohibition of transvestism and the wearing of tragic and satyric masks in 691 A.D. by the Council of the Church in Constantinople.[60]

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[49] Livy, *History of Rome*, Book 39. See also Seaford, *Dionysus* pp. 59–60.

[50] Ibid.

[51] "Kingdom of God", *basileía toû theoû* (Mark 14:25; Luke 22. p. 16, 18), that "is not of this world [kósmou]." (John 18:36)

[52] 26.14.

[53] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesu* p. 324.

[54] Justin Martyr, *Apologies*, 1.54, in *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, Apologies*, ed. D. Minns and P. Paruis (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2009) pp. 218–224.

[55] Clement of Alexandria, *Proptrepticus* 12, in *Clement of Alexandria*, Butterworth pp. 250–62.

[56] Tertullian, *De Spectaculis*, xxv, in *Tertullian, Apology, De Spectaculis*, ed. T. Glover; *Minucius Felix*, ed. G. Rendall (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1984) pp. 288–90.

[57] Seaford, *Dionysus* 5, p. 104.

[58] Augustine, *The City of God*, 2.26, in *Augustine, The City of God, Against the Pagans, Books I–III*, ed. G. McCracken (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2006) p. 248.

[59] Sozomenos, *History of the Church*, 6.25, in *Sozomène, Histoire Ecclésiastique, Livres V–VI*, éd. J. Bidez (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2005) pp. 364–72.

[60] Seaford, *Dionysus* pp. 126–27.

For the (Hölderlin-inspired) German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, early Christendom is "the vampire of imperium Romanum".[61] Nietzsche describes the crusades as an "elevated form of piracy".[62] But here we consider the abstract unconscious of Christian theology (and early Humanism) that flourishes just after the crusaders set out in search of "riches",[63] in particular the new pressure it places on numbers and homogenised space-times. Consider the quantities that have meaning only in regard to God for Aquinas in the thirteenth century[64]—or Meister Eckhart of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries for whom "God is equally 'near' to all creatures".[65] One thinks also of Petrarca whose ascent up mount Ventoux in the first half of the fourteenth century culminates in a homecoming "from things corporeal to what is incorporeal".[66] Medieval Christian desire for money leads to a celebration of numbers and spatio-temporal forms whose perverse homogenisation (disconnectedness from earth) allow God to be "equally near to all" his (disembodied, unearthly) "creatures".

Critical to the death of the *Dionysiac chronotope* in ancient Greece and early medieval Christendom is that at the centre of this loss is the loss of *Dionysiac language*. We have noted the birth of philosophy out of *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes*, for instance, in the eerie gold-coloured, unlimited fire that rules the Herakleitean cosmos. As we should expect, the unconscious imagination that sees the universe as ruled by an abstract, singular and unlimited substance—the water of Thales, the unlimited (apeiron) of Anaximander, the air of Anaximenes and the One of Parmenides—gives rise to a similarly abstract, singular and unlimited God. "The remote self-sufficient deity first proposed by Xenophanes" in the late sixth and earth fifth centuries B.C. "is—like the Parmenidean universe of unchanging abstract value—merely a projection of the illusion of monetised self-sufficiency."[67]

We have also noted the affinity of the philosopher who isolates himself in unlimited (*visualised*) thoughts with the tyrant who isolates himself in (inauthentic) images that support his desire for money. Just after Xenophanes' pictures his timeless and lonely God, Herakleitos implicitly links the tyrant-philosopher (himself) to this tyrant-God through a new concept of language. Similar to money, Herakleitean fire is "concrete and yet somehow contains the abstract logos, which already in the fifth century could mean monetary as well as verbal account."[68] The difference discussed

[61] Nietzsche, The Antichrist, 58, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, vol. 6, *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner*, ed. G. Colli and M Montinari (Berlin, de Gruyter 1999) p. 245.

[62] Ibid. p. 249.

[63] Ibid.

[64] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 1.11.2, in *St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica*. trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Christian Classics Press 1981) pp. 46–47.

[65] Meister Eckhart, Predigt 36: "Scitote, quia prope est regnum die (Luc. 21, 31)", in *Meister Eckhart, Deutsche Predigten und Traktate*, hg. J. Quint (Hamburg: Nikol Verlag 2007) p. 324.

[66] Petrarca, Francesco, "The Ascent of Mount Ventoux," in *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, ed. E. Cassirer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1971) p. 39.

[67] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 331.

[68] Ibid. p. 58.

above between Herakleitos and Aeschylus is a difference of language. Whereas the *Dionysiac chronotope* reveals its psychic neural system of *Dionysiac language* in spoken language on stage, the *visualised chronotope* tends to produce *visualised language* by reducing words to images of inauthentic, timeless concepts. Thus the frozen-like ideas in the texts of Plato and Aristotle (one thinks of *Cratylus* and *De interpretation*) that say nothing about linguistic experience that is limited to community and earth.[69] Classical Greek philosophy reduces language to the visualisations of a lonely tyrant-philosopher who exists either with an isolated God/Form(s) or a cosmos where the original Greek gods have fled.

Christ's vision of a timeless "kingdom […] not of this world" centuries later concentrates this linguistic uprooting. The experience of words connected to an earthly paradise (Sect. 4.3) is erased by the image of the *Holy Ghost* who descends to give language to his chosen apostles below.[70] This reversal of the mystic ascent out of earth's darkness into the light (Sects. 2.3, 4.3) facilitates two perversions. Firstly, the history of the Greek language is neutralised and thus lost to a timeless Hebraic-inspired language, as when the Greek word *xristós* combines with the Hebrew *Jeschua* in the name *Jesus Xristós*.[71] The absorption of the horned spirit of Dionysus into that of the prince of darkness and Hell—the phantasmagoria of "Satan" (like "Jesus" a Hebraic name)—further demonstrates how the alienation of language from earth and community coincides with an alienation of language from time.

Secondly, the reduction of language to an image of the ethereal (abstract) *Holy Spirit* who descends from a metaphysical realm above facilitates the depoliticalisation of Dionysus. We have noted the early Christian theologians who ignorantly repeat the language of Pentheus in *Bacchae*. We have also seen those who attend recitations of Dionysus' mystery-cult punished by Roman and Christian law. At the centre of this prohibition is a negation of *Dionysiac language*. The heart of mystery-cult is the ecstatic singing (of vowels) out of which a new image of earth comes forth (Sect. 4.3). Dionysus *Euíou* and his *euíou*-singing chorus express liberation and unity through the repetition of ecstatic vowels—*iὸ iὸ* in *Bacchae* (Sect. 4.3). By the late seventh century A.D., however, the Council of the Church in Constantinople prohibits the naming of "detested Dionysus"[72] and thereby ensures the absence of the "democratic god par excellence" (Sect. 2.3) in the works of Aquinas, Meister Eckhart and Petrarch.

[69] That an oral linguistic experience limited to earth and community was critical to Dionysian Greece before Plato and Aristotle is shown in Sect. 4.3.

[70] Acts 2:1–31.

[71] Palaima, "Die Linear-B Texte und der Ursprung der hellenischen Religion: *di-wo-nu-so*", in *Die Geschichte der Hellenischen Sprache und Schrift, Vom 2. Zum 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.: Bruch oder Kontinuität* p. 209.

[72] Cited in Seaford, *Dionysus* pp. 126–27.

Chapter 6
Wakers-of-the-dead

Abstract Chapter 6 is the last preparatory chapter before turning to Hölderlin's poetry. In it we consider the failure of the Renaissance, despite its interest in Greece (and even Dionysus), to retrieve the Dionysiac chronotope (and language). This is made worse by the hyper-rationalisations of the Enlightenment whose most sinister forms represent the emergence of modern (intellectual) "media control". Important here shall be (1) the abrupt leap to industrialised energy capture and (2) the monetised individual greed upon which this leap, for all its creativity, rests. But before turning to Hölderlin's songs and translations, one final stop is necessary: The new mood of Romanticism and its (understandable) need to retrieve a pre-industrial, more natural past to battle the estrangement of modern time. Although, like all romantics, Hölderlin's experimental voyage to capsizes, the chapter concludes by drawing attention to his forthcoming socio-political significance for us today.

Keywords Renaissance · Enlightenment · Industrialisation · Romanticism · Wakers-of-the-dead

6.1 The Renaissance and Enlightenment

The rebirth of Greece in the *Renaissance* invites us to anticipate a rebirth also of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language*. One thinks of Michelangelo's sculpture of *Bacchus* and Titian's painting of *Bacchus and Ariadne* in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, respectively. The humanist philosopher Marsilio Ficino in the late fifteenth century evokes the *holy madness* of Dionysus,[1] the mystic's "transform[ation] into the beloved god",[2] and the drink that incites a "bacchic frenzy", *debacchantur*.[3] One thinks also of Ficino's student Lorenzo de' Medici who in the late fifteenth century sings of the beauty of "Bacco e Arianna".[4]

[1] Ficino, Marsillio, *On Love* (1494). Cited in Seaford, *Dionysus* 135.

[2] "Preface" to Ficino's translation of the *Mystical Theology* by "Dionysius the Areopagite" (1492). Seaford, *Dionysus* 134.

[3] Seaford, *Dionysus* 134.

[4] Ibid. 133–134.

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But the rebirth of Greece in the *Renaissance* has more to do with the (unconscious) imagination of the time than Greece itself. This becomes clear when we look more carefully at Michelangelo and Titian's paintings. For the first time, the charisma of the god (now drawn by exotic cheetahs) combines with seemingly infinite calculations that evoke individualism. Ficino's interest is in that of a wine-god whose earthly ecstasy has been diluted by Plato's *Phaedrus* and Plotinus' projection of abstract unity.[5] We have noted the mystic meadow that appears as if to be floating in the sky—as well as the "gathering" of the self "together apart from the body" (2.2). Tied to such disembodied, visual abstractions is that to which the name of Ficino's student (who dramatized the mythological floats in the Florentine Carnival procession with "Bacco e Arianna"), gestures: the banking family de' Medici.

To understand that which follows medieval Christendom we have to place Christian theology, philosophy and Humanism against the background of stronger *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes*. Petrarch's ascent up mount Ventoux in the first half of the fourteenth century occurs against the protracted descent of the Byzantine Empire, a decline that culminates in the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Trade routes to Asia via land are now replaced by those (to "the East Indies") across the sea. The desire for money significantly supports the invention of visual technologies that homogenise the earth into a still more unlimited, *visualised* territory. Consider the revival of interest in the production of more accurate maps in the fifteenth century led by Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli, the Italian mathematician, astronomer and cosmographer who inspires Christopher Columbus to seek the East by sailing West.[6] Consider also in the birth of the telescope in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[7] This new visual technology allows Galileo, following his discovery of the moons of Jupiter—named the *Medicean planets*—to support Copernicus' displacement of a geocentric world-view with that of an actual image of heliocentric cosmology.[8]

The "rising of the sun"—to use Giordano Bruno's description of Copernicus[9]—invites a picture of the human being not only as disassociated from nature, but also

[5] See Seaford, *Dionysus* 135.

[6] J. Gadol, *Leon Battista Alberti: Universal Man of the Early Renaissance* (University of Chicago Press, 1969) 193. *Toscanelli* was rumoured to have been the author of the chart that first encourages Columbus to set sail in the opposite direction.

[7] See A. van Helden, *The Invention of the Telescope. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 67, Part 4 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1977). Van Helden concludes that the telescope was discovered first in the Netherlands, not long before September 1608. See also E. Rosen, *The Naming of the Telescope*. Henry Schumann, New York, 1947).

[8] Galileo, *The Starry Messenger*, in *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*, trans S. Drake (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1957) 28.

[9] Brunno, *The Ash Wednesday Supper*, in *Giordano Brunno, The Asch Wednesday Supper*, trans. E. Gosselin and L. Lerner (Hamden, Archon, 1977) 86–87. See also H. Blumenberg, *Die Genesis der kopernikanischen Welt* (Frankfurt, Suhrkamp: 1975) 453–502. In line with Aristotle, Galileo sees the universe first as something that is "continually open to our gaze". Galileo Galilei, *The Assayer* (1623), in *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*, Drake 237–38.

as the source of abstract visual measurements. This is clear in Leon Alberti's insistence on the relativity of appearance to man, in particular his rehabilitation of Protagoras's claim that "man is the mode and measure of all things […]"[10] Here "man" names the origin of mathematics from which not only an image of the cosmos, but also images themselves come forth. This is illustrated by the following statement by Nicolaus of Cusa—like Alberti a friend of Toscanelli—who celebrates Aristotle's privileging of sight while himself turning to Protagoras:[11]

> And if the Pythagoreans,[12] and whatever others, had reflected in this same way, they would have seen clearly that mathematical entities and numbers (which proceed from our mind and which exist in the way we conceive them) are not substances or beginnings of perceptible things, but are only the beginning of rational entities of which we are the creators.[13]

We have noted the Pythagorean transition from unlimited cyclicality to a mystic limit in tragedy (5.2). Taken with Alberti's *Della pittura*, Cusanus' *De Beryllo* (*On Intellectual Eyeglasses*) suggests that the *Renaissance* is the "dawn"[14] of a time when the human becomes the self-isolating origin of abstract entities that, in turn, produce pictures that are disconnected from nature.

From here it is short step to the unconscious of the seventeenth century that pictures modern men as "the masters and possessors of nature".[15] For Descartes, who in his early notebooks celebrates the use of mirrors to make tongues and chariots of fire appear as well as optical tricks that would delight and surprise their unsuspecting spectators,[16] modern man must proceed from mathematical entities and numbers to mechanical models. "I should like you to consider", he points out,

> that these functions (including passion, memory and imagination) follow from the simple arrangement of the machine's organs every bit as naturally as the movements of a clock or other automaton follow from the arrangement of its counter-weights and wheels.[17]

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[10] Alberti, *On Painting*, in *Alberti, Leon Battista, On Painting*, trans. J. Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966) 55.

[11] Nicholas of Cusa, *De Beryllo*, in *Nicholai de Cusa, Opera Omnia*, ed. K. Bormann and H. Senger, vol. 11 (Hamburg: Meiner, 1988) 7–8.

[12] Here Pythagoras is not to be confused with Protagoras.

[13] Nicholas of Cusa, *De Beryllo*, in *Nicholai de Cusa, Opera Omnia*, Bormann and Senger, vol. 11 64.

[14] Another name that Bruno gives to Copernicus. Brunno, *The Ash Wednesday Supper*, in *Giordano Brunno, The Asch Wednesday Supper*, Gosselin and Lerner 86–7.

[15] Descartes, *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason* (1637), in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, ed. E. Haldane and G. Rosse, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973) 119.

[16] Descartes, *Opuscules* (1619–1621), in *Oeuvres de Descartes*, éd C. Adam and P. Tannery, vol. 10, *Physico, Mathematica, Compendium musicae, Regulae ad directionem ingenii, Recherche de la verité, Supplément a la coorespondance* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1964) 215–216.

[17] Descartes, *Traité de l'homme* (1648), in *Oeuvres de Descartes*, éd C. Adam and P. Tannery, vol. 11, *Le Monde, Description du corps humain, Passions de l'ame, Anatomica, Varia* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1996) 202.

Because the organs of nature are mechanical, mechanical models allow us to "understand how all the motions of the other animals can come about […] We can also explain how in ourselves all those operations occur which we perform […]"[18]

The birth of science and rationality during the *Enlightenment* is caught up in a mechanistic model of the cosmos. Offray de La Mettrie' *L'homme machine* of 1747 (which is far from a rejection of Descartes) concentrates Cartesian thought. Such thinking, along with the industrial technology that it accompanies—consider James Watt's and Matthew Boulton's engine pumping 60 ft of water from a mineshaft in 60 min in 1776—reduces nature to a non-living machine whose parts (unlimited resources) exist exclusively for humans to exploit. This exploitation is tied to the construction of modern pictures, as shown by the astronomer peering through a telescope. Although the darkness of earth (from which the hollow metal tube of the looking glass is made—one thinks of a lead mine in Derbyshire, England) is no less essential to the telescope's construction, the individual using the visual technology thinks only of the images beyond the earth upon which he or she gazes.

For reasons that shall become clear in the final parts of this study, it is fashionable to regard the philosophy of Immanuel Kant as a break with the *Enlightenment*. The *Critique of Pure Reason*,[19] which Kant publishes in 1781 (just a few years before the first powered cotton mill is unveiled in England in 1785) is seen as a revolutionary gesture against the arrogance of thought that, in presuming to know things are they really are, legitimates, for instance, rapid industrialisation. For the German philosopher, we are limited to how we as humans create appearances in our minds. The universal spirit of Kantian philosophy intervenes in the homogenised and visualised space-time to which traditional philosophy tends to reduce human life.

But to understand the historical progression of space-time in the late eighteenth century we have to understand how the secularism of the *Enlightenment* is a function of an all-too-Christian spirit. We refer not simply to Descartes' vow to make a pilgrimage to the Virgin of Loreto to God for the gift of his method[20]—an act of faith that follows Galileo's celebration of the "divine grace" that led him, "with the aid of the spyglass which [he] devised", to discover "four wandering stars not known or observed by any man before us".[21] At issue is how such intellectual and visual abstractions unite with a *Christian nucleus*. Galileo understands his heliocentric picture of the cosmos as a move away from that of a geocentric one, that is, from *diabolocentrism*. Modern humans who reduce experience to visual media thus remain, in a sense, within Christian resentment toward earth's unmastered mystery. Galileo's mastery of *diabolocentrism* in the seventeenth century would certainly please Tertullian who condemns Dionysus' theatre as the church of the devil, *ecclesia diaboli* (5.2).

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[18] Descartes, *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* (1619), in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, ed. E. Haldane and G. Rosse, vol. 1 38.

[19] *Kant, Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, hg. H. Klemme (Hamburg: Meiner, 1998).

[20] See J. Maritain, *The Dream of Descartes together with Some Other Essays*, trans. M. Andison (New York: Philosophical Library, 1944) 15.

[21] Galileo, *The Starry Messenger*, in *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*, Drake 28.

The replacement of magic and demons of the medieval world with optical illusions and mathematical calculations betrays the concentrated anti-*Dionysiac nucleus* of early modern time. This is clear when we consider the origin of Descartes' mechanical models. The "mathematical entities and numbers" out of which modern technologies such as the steam engine and telescope are created "proceed", as Cardinal de Cusa pointed out, "from our mind and […] exist in the way we conceive them". One can argue that God gives to man an image of these numbers (just as much as one can argue that man creates a picture of such abstract entities himself). Consider a quantity of money applied to a *braccia* of silk. Nevertheless, the spirit of earth embodied, for instance, in a mulberry silkworm gives humankind an image of numbers that lead to industrial machines and visual technologies that, in turn, do violence to earth in an unregulated modern money system. The secular spirit of the *Enlightenment* is not so much a break with Christianity as a deepening of the Christian resentment of nature.

The lingering *anti-Dionysiac nucleus* supports the rapid progression of technology. This is demonstrated by the widely held perspective of those such as Joseph Glanvill, who in the seventeenth century understand inventions like the telescope as part of an effort to regain what humanity lost with Adam's Fall.[22] The *Dionysiac chronotope* cultivates a style of seeing that is rooted in earth's invisible interior. This we witnessed in the epiphany of a magical light, φῶς, in *Bacchae* and the starlight enhanced by circling torches in *Antigone*'s "fire-breathing stars" (2.3). In contrast to this ancient terrestrial style of seeing, Descartes turns, in his *Rules*, to mathematics and mechanical models as a way of freeing individuals from diabolic appearances that the eyes cannot calculate. What Nietzsche calls a "depotentiation of appearance as appearance"[23] while speaking of Raphael can be understood as a gesture to Alberti's mathematically informed pictures.

Nietzsche discerns that Kantian philosophy, like the swift progress of money and science, "is finally a theological success".[24] This becomes clear when we look carefully at one of Kant's most attractive philosophical gestures. In his *Critique of Judgment* from 1790 he deepens his concept of experience by turning to a work of art, that is, to what Kant calls an aesthetic idea. An aesthetic idea is that which reveals itself as a gift of nature to a genius who then translates this revelation into an

[22] J. Glanvill, *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (1661 facsimilie reprint) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931) 5.

[23] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 4, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, hg. G. Colli and M. Montinari, vol. 1, *Die Geburt der Tragödie, Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen I-IV, Nachgelassene Schriften 1870–1873* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999) 39. Although Nietzsche speaks positively about Rafael's *Transfiguration*, that the *Renaissance* witnesses a loss of Dionysian potential (and further unleashing of reckless Apollonian culture) is a critical, if episodic, theme in *The Birth of Tragedy*.

[24] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, 10, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Colli and Montinari, vol. 6, *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner* 177.

expression of beauty in a way that resists previous styles of thought.[25] As an original creation, the artwork is something that "can never be proved and derived from what went before", that is, from "what is already present and available."[26] Given that a genuine work of art can never be created by some solitary genius for himself, but exists necessarily for others,[27] the riddling (and inexhaustible) essence of the beautiful is linked not only to nature, but also community.

Attractive as they may seem, these gestures to beauty, earth and community remain radically abstract. Nieztsche refers to Kant's concepts as sacrifices to a "Moloch of abstraction."[28] He goes on to see Kantian philosophy as plagued by a nihilism, decadence and destruction that are rooted in Christianity. "What destroys faster", Nietzsche asks, "than to work, think and feel without inner necessity, without profound personal choice, without *pleasure*?"[29] For many, Nietzsche's claim that Kantian thought is a "recipe […] for idiocy"[30] is offensive. But we must grant Nietzsche that like all philosophers who came before and after Kant (Nietzsche himself included), he fails to suspect the invention of money and its visual culture as the precondition of philosophy's historical emergence.

That Kant is typically ignorant of the origin of his discipline—and this is precisely why we should take Nietzsche's claim that Kant "became an idiot"[31] serious—is shown when we consider the Kantian concept of a *noumenal* realm that haunts and underlies all sensible phenomena. Because we cannot know "things-in-themselves" (things as they truly are), the productive imagination—as the ground of all our concepts (the *Einbildungskraft*)—that points to a gathering together of some manifold that gives us our most basic experience surpasses our understanding. But the construction of such an abstract ground to which we can only grope for with inadequate symbols,[32] conceals a deep and ancient perversion of history and thinking. "To separate the world into a 'true' and a 'seeming' one, either in the manner of Christianity, or in the manner of Kant (who was a wily Christian at last)"[33] conceals the forgetting of the past—and this means the repression of the monetised source of philosophy.

Because Kant represses history with hyperabstractions, he is unaware of the unconscious forces that reside in the word *noumena*, which derives from the Greek

[25] Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, par. 49, in *Immanuel Kant, Kritik der Urteilskraft*, hg. H. Klemme (Hamburg: Meiner, 2001) 201–209.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., par. 50, in *Immanuel Kant, Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Klemme 209–210.

[28] Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, 11, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Colli and Montinari, vol. 6, *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner* 177.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, "Einleitung", and pars. 49, 57 and 59, in *Immanuel Kant, Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Klemme 8–43, 201–209, 236–46, 253–57.

[33] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 6, *"'Reason' in philosophy"*, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Colli and Montinari, vol. 6, *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner* 79.

noûs, and means things apprehended by the mind. When Plato describes Dionysus succumbing to the madness that Hera imposes on him (when the youthful demigod is distracted by a mirror before he is dismembered and devoured by the Titans), he says that Dionysus "was torn apart in the intelligence of his soul", *diphoréthe tes psyuchés tèn gnómen*.[34] After noting the strange power of a mirror to "seize a form", Plotinus points out that "Dionysus [had seen his soul] in a mirror" and was therefore "cut off" from his "intellect [noûs]".[35] And Proclus, in his commentary on Plato's *Cratylus*, claims that the *noûs* is Dionysiac and that to tear apart its natural unity is to repeat the unspeakable crime of the Titans.[36]

The *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* transform thought into hyper-abstractions no longer linked to earth. Plato's elaborate periphrasis—which departs from the physical spirit of *diaphoréo* witnessed in *Bacchae* when animals and the tyrant Pentheus are dismembered (V 739, 746, 1210)[37]—complements his projection of the mystic meadow floating in the sky (5.2). This means the perverse vision of an "intelligent region", *noúmena*,[38] to which the Forms belong. For Plotinus, when Dionysus is "cut off" from his "intellect [noûs]", he is cut off from that part of himself that is cut off "from the body" (5.2). Soon after Proclus speaks of a Dionysian *noûs* in the fifth century A.D., the Christian church leaves no doubt that the transcendental soul and mind of man have nothing to do with the (earthly) "detested Dionysus" (5.2).

Despite its episodic associations with the chthonic spirit of the wine-god, *noûs* arises with philosophy as a consequence of the homogenising force of money from the sixth century B.C.E. Consider Paremenides' demand that an individual must "look equally [homos] with your mind [noûs] at absent things firmly present"[39] already in the early fifth century B.C.E. From here the unearthly *noumenal* realm of Christianity and the unconscious of Kant's *Einbildungskraft* quickly emerge.

Although the work of art is a translation of a gift of nature, nature is still thought by the German philosopher as a creation of the Christian God. For this reason, Kantian philosophy is as effective in questioning the Christian underpinnings of (unlimited) rationalism as Cesare Cremonini is in questioning the visual culture of new visual media like the telescope, as when Cremonini refused to look through Galileo's telescope in the sixteenth century.[40] Intellectual dishonesty is burying oneself in abstract thought while extensions of visual media that know only profit (and

[34] Plato, *Laws*, 672b, in *Plato, Laws, Books I-VI*, Bury, vol. 10 154.

[35] Plotinus, *Ennead*, 4.3.12, in *Plotinini, Opera*, Henry and Schwyzer, vol. 2, *Enneades IV-V* 27–9.

[36] Proclus, *Commentary on Plato's Cratylus*, 44d. Cited in Seaford, *Dionysus* 115.

[37] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* 322–23, 343. Plato mentions the Titans in Laws, 701c, in *Plato, Laws, Books I-VI*, Bury, vol. 10 248.

[38] Plato, *Republic*, 508c, in *Plato, The Republic, Books VI-X*, trans. P. Shorey, vol. 6 (Camrbdige: Harvard University Press, 1999) 102.

[39] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Diels and Kranz, B60, B80, cf. A22. Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* 251.

[40] See H. Kuhn, *Venetischer Aristotelismus im Ende der aristotelischen Welt: Aspekte der Welt und des Denkens des Cesare Cremonini (1550–1631)* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996).

hence nothing of community)—consider the telescope, the microscope as well as other visual models of quantification such as the clock, scale and thermometer—seek the "truth" of a Christian paradise through their "corrections" of nature. "For 'appearance' means here reality once more, only a select, strengthened and corrected reality […]".[41]

That Kant deepened philosophy's estrangement is shown in his failure to confront the single most concentrated transformation that our species has experienced—one that transcends even the agricultural breakthrough circa 10,000 B.C.E. As we have seen, while the philosopher busies himself with unreal "chimeras",[42] water is really being pumped from mineshafts and cotton mills powered by steam. This brings us not simply into the orbit of England's unique endowment of coal and engineers and entrepreneurs (who invent technologies to increase profits from the Atlantic trade), but also into the orbit of something else—something that is far more difficult to imagine.

Harnessing fossil energy for steam in the eighteenth century is the breakthrough that enables the West to burst through the hard ceiling of agriculture's energy capture and population limit. The leap from one to 15 million hunters and gatherers to the 200 million farmers on the planet by the time of Christ quickly leaps to 500 million by 1492, and then one billion already by the late eighteenth century. New resources from abroad coupled with modern energy result in an unprecedented flood of power. This mania of new energy creates more of everything, in particular more food and people—an increase in the number of humans living on earth facilitated by medical marvels that conquer disease, lower infant mortality and increase life expectancy.

But this is not simply a flourishing of humankind, as it is usually characterised. This is the flourishing of a perversion of humankind that is no longer in balance with nature. Agricultural societies like the Roman and Han Empires captured heat by burning coal 2000 years ago. Ancient Egypt and China discovered that if water was heated to a boil its steam could drive pistons. What is critical is therefore the style of using fossil fuel that emerges in the eighteenth century, specifically the transformation of heat into motion. Without this cataclysmic transformation, the coal-driven ships, railroads and machines that replace human labour and enable the West to initiate its time of (seemingly unlimited) global domination would never have been possible. And at the core of this almost unfathomable change are two terrifying phenomena that philosophers such as Kant are not clever enough to identify.

Firstly, the late eighteenth century witnesses the industrialisation of the *monetised chronotope*. With the emergence of fossil fuel energy capture human beings become still less aware of capitalism's internal dynamic of necessary and unlimited

[41] Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 6, *"'Reason' in philosophy"*, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Colli and Montinari, vol. 6, *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner* 79.

[42] Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, 11, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Colli and Montinari, vol. 6, *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner* 177.

self-expansion and how the values it produces are different in kind from those of previous eras.[43] Consider the businessman who starts in Liverpool with a boatload of textiles or guns. He sails to Senegal and exchanges them at a profit for slaves. He then carries the slaves to Jamaica and trades them again for a profit for sugar, which he brings back to England to sell for more profits before buying a new consignment of finished goods and setting off to Africa to repeat the potentially unlimited cycle of profit.

Think also of the Bostonian who takes rum to Africa and swaps it for slaves, bringing the slaves to the Caribbean and exchanging them for molasses, and then bringing the molasses back to New England to make more rum. Finally, consider those who carry food from North America to the Caribbean where sugar-growing land is too valuable to waste growing food for slaves; who bring sugar there and then carry it to Western Europe, and finally return with finished goods for North America.[44] Important is how this system of users looks forward to our global culture, for instance, to our billion plus Facebook users (to say nothing of those using them at the NSA via Google) today—and never does it glance backward to our ancestors who farmed, hunted and gathered.

This brings us to the second phenomenon that the eighteenth century witnesses which philosophy has still to confront: the industrialisation of the *visualised chronotope*. With the rise of fossil fuel energy capture human beings become still less aware of the internal dynamic of necessary and unlimited self-expansion that accompanies an visual culture that is disconnected from earth and community—and how the values that this *cosmic visualisation* produces are different in kind from those of previous eras. The reduction of experience to money in early historic Greece requires an abstract culture that isolates individuals from one another (3.2). But with the leap in population by the eighteenth century a new (unlimited) mass of humans are ruled by money. This means that the *visualised* space-time that is inseparable from the *monetised chronotope* expands, for instance, in the expansion of mass bureaucracies and mass cultures whose homogenising socio-political forms invites a new breed of industrial money-tyrants.

The familiar image of progress in the eighteenth century is indeed learned, stimulating and persuasive. But this picture is misleading in a way that is disastrous. The visual culture that accompanies fossil fuel energy capture underlies a brave new world of blinkered, wealthy men and women who wilfully exploit the resources of earth to serve money's internal dynamic of unlimited self-expansion. The eighteenth century witnesses the prototype of our present "self-destructive culture of the unlimited".[45] For the first time humans begin their transition into what we now recognise as modern, familiar lifestyles. The ancient magic of earth—and by this we mean the unfathomable internal pressure and heat below that cannot be separated from the

[43] See Richard Seaford's response to Ian Morris' *Tanner Lectures* from 2012 (*forthcoming*).

[44] For the difference between ancient and modern styles of colonisation, see A. Graham, *Colony and mother city in ancient Greece* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964).

[45] Seaford, *Ancient Greece and Global Warming: The Benefits of a Classical Education, or: Learn from the Past to Live in the Present*.

cosmic creation of fossil energy sources (for instance, in anaerobic decomposition, a transformation that takes millions, sometimes more than 350 million years) is appropriated for the immediate (and unthought) gratification of multinational corporations. With this unprecedented power it has been all too convenient for us to ritualise a more or less Judeo-Christian picture of earth as a dead machine whose parts God has given us to exploit in our ceaseless quest for the (abstract) light of paradise.

6.2 Romanticism

In one of the most haunting, if less well known, descriptions of *Romanticism*, Nietzsche writes:

> Vain people value a piece of the past as soon as they are able to relate to it (especially if this is difficult), yes they would even want, if it were possible, to wake the dead. But because vain-ones are always many, the danger of historical studies as soon as a whole time lies before them is by no means small: too much energy is wasted on all sorts of resurrections. Perhaps this is best way to understand the entire movement of *Romanticism*.[46]

For Nietzsche, this image of romantics (as useless necromancers) is relevant to his time, and he even applies it to himself. In regard to his youthful, Wagnerian-inspired search to resurrect Dionysian Greece for modern Germany (in *The Birth of Tragedy* from 1872), he asks himself: "But, dear sir, what in all the world is romantic, if not *your* book?"[47]

But Nietzsche did not mean that romantics are all those who believe in resurrections. Belief in the redeeming power of Dionysian Greece, for instance, does not make one a romantic. The aforementioned "[s]elf-criticism" from 1886 culminates in the ecstatic laughter of Zarathustra, who Nietzsche names "that Dionysian fiend".[48] A few years later he speaks of how "the Dionysian condition must grow again."[49] "I promise," he writes in 1888, "a *tragic* time."[50] Being opposed to *Romanticism* does not deny the meaning of redemption, in particular the redeeming power of Dionysus. This is not the problem.

The problem, instead, is *inauthentic* redemption. This is what Nietzsche associates with our industrial society. The problem with modern life is that it is saturated

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[46] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Dawn*, Book Three, 159, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, hg. G. Colli and M. Montinari, vol. 3, *Morgenröte, Idyllen aus Messina, Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999) 145.

[47] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Attempt at a Self-Criticism*, 7, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Colli and Montinari, vol. 1, *Die Geburt der Tragödie, Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen I-IV, Nachgelassene Schriften 1870–1873* 21.

[48] Ibid. 22.

[49] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 4, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Colli and Montinari, vol. 1, *Die Geburt der Tragödie, Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen I-IV, Nachgelassene Schriften 1870–1873* 313. The potential danger of Nietzsche's language shall be addressed in my second, forthcoming monograph *Nietzsche: The Meaning of Earth*.

[50] Ibid.

with romantics looking for cheap fixes to temporarily sooth themselves. Concealing one's frail ego from its truly precarious state of isolation is the danger—one that Nietzsche significantly comes to associate with his ex-mentor and friend:

> I also do not underestimate it; it has its magic. The problem of redemption is itself a worthy problem. There is nothing about which Wagner has thought more deeply than redemption: his opera is the opera of redemption. Someone or other always wants to be redeemed with him: sometimes a little man, sometimes a little woman—this is the problem.—And how richly he varies his leitmotif! What rare, what profound modulations! Who, if not Wagner, teaches us that innocence prefers to redeem interesting sinners? (the case of *Tannhäuser*) Or that the eternal Jew is himself redeemed, settles down, when he marries? (the case in *The Flying Dutchman*) Or that old, corrupted women prefer to be redeemed by chaste youths? (the case of *Kundry*) Or that beautiful maidens like it most to be redeemed by a knight who is Wagnerian? (the case in *Die Meistersinger*) Or that married women also enjoy being redeemed by a knight? (the case of *Isolde*) Or that "the old God", after having compromised himself morally in every respect, is finally redeemed by a free spirit and immoralist? (the case in the *Ring*) Allow yourself to be mesmerised by this peculiar, final profundity! Do you understand it? I—beware of understanding it…[51]

Romanticism is a problem of unreal revivals that lies buried within the mechanised heart of our time. But because so "much energy is squandered on all sorts of resurrections", a society of "interesting sinners" is doomed to reveal its inauthentic spirit. Consider the *Totenerwecker* gathered in the audience at Bayreuth in July 1876: Kaiser Wilhelm, King Ludwig, the emperor of Brazil and, of course, the demagogue Wagner, all of whom glimpsed the void of everyday modern life when a mechanism failed and, in place of *Walhall*, a stage manager with rolled up sleeves made an unexpected epiphany.[52] Because of its unrealistic *wakings-of-the-dead*, *Romanticism* leads to redemption trouble.

This is not to say that *Romanticism* is a joke. Even the late Nietzsche would not deny Wagner's potential to touch upon that which is meaningful, even in regard to Dionysian Greece, as when he confesses that, "to the close of the *Eumenides* I remained in a state of ecstasy from which I have never really returned to become fully reconciled with modern literature."[53] *Romanticism* "has its magic", as Nietzsche rightly notes. And among its magical powers is its global potential. Because of this, we must distance the concept of *Romanticism* from its familiar, narrow-minded definitions, as when the abstract concept of *Romantik* is neatly opposed in German literary historiography to that of *Klassik* (*Classicism*), which tends to refer to Johann Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, Wilhelm von Humboldt and a few other figures in the final decade of the eighteenth century. Such intellectual compartmentalisations,

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[51] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Case against Wagner*, 3, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Colli and Montinari, vol. 6, *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner* 16–17.

[52] This poignant (and charming) episode was related to me by Camille Gajewski who came across it while writing her B.A. thesis and attending lectures on music history and Indian art at Yale University. See Gajewski, Camille, "*I Saw Him See Me*: The Language of the Lenaia Vase as Visual Epiphany", B.A. thesis, Yale University (2010).

[53] Wagner, *Mein Leben, 1813–1868*, in *Richard Wagner, Mein Leben, 1813–1868*, hg. M. Gregor-Dellin (München: List Verlag, 1994) 356.

although familiar and convenient, fail to see the fundamental event that transcends nationalism to which *Romanticism* implicitly gestures, namely the trauma that our species begins to suffer since its rapid transition from an agricultural to a fossil fuel society. *Romanticism* is a concerted response to the alienation of humans from nature and themselves since the eighteenth century. Everyone is feeling it, regardless of one's race, gender, age or nation-state.

This universal (negative) response expresses itself in a growing discontent with abstract philosophy such as that issuing forth from the "spirit of Königsberg"[54] that fails to confront this serious loss. As Johann Hamann writes in his *Metacritique on the Purism of Reason* in 1784: "No human, not even the philosopher, can unfold the fingers".[55] Hamann's criticism of Kant arises in no small part from Hamann's spiritual journey to Greece. For early romantics willing to transcend the transcendental spirit of modern scientific rationalism and Christianity, antiquity appears within the void of modern life like a mystic star. As if prophesising the rebirth that shall follow the estrangement of humans from nature and themselves, Hamann celebrates Bacchus and Ceres (the Roman counterpart to Demeter) in 1762.[56] One imagines Teiresias in *Bacchae* warning Watt and Boulton just before the revelation of their steam engine in 1776: "For two things, young m[e]n, are first among humans": "Demeter, who provides bread, and Dionysus, who introduced wine […] And do you laugh at [them?]" (V 274–280, 286).[57]

But let us heed Nietzsche's warning. There is a danger that accompanies *Romanticism*. Romantics such as the demented Hamann run into redemption-trouble. For reasons that shall become clear by the end of this study, *Romanticism* fails to transcend the modern intellectual prison from which it so desperately flees—often times it (unconsciously) multiplies its shackles. Thus the definition that we shall use for *Romanticism*: a journey into the past to redeem the unease of our transition into a fossil fuel society, but one that remains superficial. And in seeking to conceal its lack of depth, romantics posture—mostly by way of invoking ahistorical, distracting phantasms—as if the critical process (the journey) had not been broken off before it was completed. A romantic, in other words, is someone who conceals the capsizing of his or her voyage beyond the alienation of modern life to community and earth.

Given its lack of socio-political unity, the emergence of modern German city-states is unusually intense, forward-looking and greedy.[58] It is not insignificant that

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[54] Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, 11, in *Nietzsche, Friedrich, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Colli and Montinari, vol. 6, *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner* 177.

[55] Johann Hamann, *Metakritik*, in *Johann Georg Hamann, Sämtliche Werke*, hg. J. Nadler (Wien: Herder Verlag, 1949–1953) 289.

[56] Johann Hamann, "Aesthetica in nuce", in *Hamann, Johann Georg Hamann, Ausgewählte Schriften*, hg. H. Eichner (Berlin: Nicolaische Verlangsbuchhandlung Beuermann, 1994) 11.

[57] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* 303.

[58] Because this study is focused on Hölderlin, what I call *German Romanticism* plays the key role. Nevertheless, my new definition of *Romanticism* and of the figure of the *romantic* as a creative, but

Hölderlin grows up without a father and with a selfish, monetised mother who abandons her son to isolation and mental illness.[59] The formless spirit of the modern German state manifests itself in two distinct ways (one good and one bad) in regard to *Romanticism*. On the one hand, German romantics tend to journey further into the unexplored territory of Greece. On the other hand, however German romantics pervert this past to legitimate their phantasms of German cultural and linguistic superiority. As the young Ludwig Curtius—who during one festive evening in February 1903, has to "tear [Alfred] Schuler out of his rapture and lead him off stage [as h]e really felt he was Orphic"[60]—reminds us, the insights of German *Romanticism* are wasted on all sorts of inauthentic resurrections. The elaborate, tailored costumes of that "romantic" evening—its silver helmets and lyres of tortoise shell and horn and the Attic landscape crowned with the acropolis into which the Munich court theatre had been transformed[61]—can be traced back to an ahistorical image of Greece (ironically) titled *The History of the Art of Antiquity* from 1764.

In this work Johann Winckelmann, who the classicist Curitus regards in 1927 as the first modern German humanist, "seeks not simply knowledge, but life; not simply erudition, but the freedom of a new mankind".[62] The search for "the freedom of a new mankind" means, however, an experience that is exclusively Greek and German. "German humanism took over the Greek world from Winckelmann as an artistic revelation just as much as it took it over as a scientific object".[63] This brings us to the identity crisis that modern Germany suffers. Whereas other countries like France and England develop organically in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries out of the Italian *Renaissance*, Curitius argues, the *Renaissance* was stifled in Germany for 200 years. When it finally makes its epiphany, the *Renaissance* is different: "with the others, it is Roman; with us, it is Greek […]".[64]

This is not to say that the German backlash to fossil fuel energy capture does not return to nature. This much is clear from the atmospheric tones of Goethe's well-known "Wander's Nightsong" from 1780:

> Over all the hilltops
> Is rest,
> In all treetops
> You feel
> Hardly a breeze;

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finally problematic response to fossil fuel energy capture would be, I think, suggestive for other movements as well. One thinks of Wordsworth, Byron, Keats, Shelly, Chateaubriand, Dumas, Hugo, Gautier and Stendhal, to name just a few.

[59] See J. Laplanche, *Hölderlin et la question du père* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1961). This important issue is something to which I return in the CONCLUSION.

[60] L. Curtius, *Deutsche und antike Welt, Lebenserinnerungen* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1950) 252.

[61] Ibid.

[62] L. Curtius, "Die antike Kunst und der moderne Humanismus" (1927) in *Humanismus*, hg. H. Oppermann (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970) 50.

[63] Ibid. 53.

[64] Ibid. 51.

The little birds grow quiet in the forest.
Just wait, soon
You also shall rest.[65] (V 1–8)

Although I translate *Hauch* as "breeze", it also means "breath". As "breath" *Hauch* evokes *heiliger Hauch*, "sacred breath", and this means the "holy breath" of God (given to humankind by the "Holy Spirit", *Der heilige Geist*).[66] The rustic eight lines that Goethe etches into the wooden panelling of the hunter's cabin on the Kickelhaln mountaintop to which he ascended in early autumn suggests that German *Romanticism* represents a synthesis of earth and Christianity.

But for these "interesting [German] sinners"—Goethe included—nothing is equal to Greece. The "subterranean spring" that ascended from an "underground source" of Hellenism and "broke forth with elemental power"[67] into modern Germany did so first as a poetic phenomenon. Winckelmann "belongs," Curtius claims, "to the proximity of [Friedrich] Klopstock".[68] The German resurrection of Greece is tied to the *hellenisation* of the German language—the submission of German poetry to Greek poetry). One thinks of Klopstock mimicking the dactylic hexameter of Homer's *Iliad* in his epic *Messias* whose first three songs appear already in 1748. But, as the second version of Klopstock's *Vingolf* from 1767 reminds us, the German resurrection of Greece witnesses, in the end, the willful *germanification* of Greek culture—the submission of Greece to Germany.

This brings us to the alluring abyss of (German) *Romanticism*. To their credit, German revivers of the dead did not deny the "large gap in western religious experience"[69] that Christianity and modern life create through their marginalisation of Dionysus' mystery-cult. Consider Schiller's "The Gods of Greece" from 1788. At the centre of the poem (the first line of the eighth strophe) is an invocation of Dionysian seeing and language. "The evoe of the lively thyrsus-swinger"[70] (V 57) recalls the chorus of Sophocles' *Oedipus the Tyrant* who picture Dionysus drawing near with a "blazing, shinning torch" while they sound his bacchic cry "eúion" (V 211; 4.1). Schiller's "interesting [co-]sinner" Goethe "snaps and snarls about

[65] Johann Goethe, Sämtliche Werke, hg. D. Borchmeyer, vol. 1, Gedichte 1756–1799 (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985) 65. Apparently the earliest version gives way to the first, if not authorised by Goethe, printing in 1803, and finally to that which the author oversees in 1815. See Johann Goethe, Sämtliche Werke, hg. D. Borchmeyer, vol. 2, Gedichte 1802–1832 (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985) 1072.

[66] *Pneuma hagion* is the Septuagint's translation of biblical Hebrew for "holy spirit".

[67] Curtius, "Die antike Kunst und der moderne Humanismus" (1927) in *Humanismus*, Oppermann 50.

[68] Ibid. 50.

[69] Email from Richard Seaford to Lucas Murrey, 19 April 2010.

[70] *Friedrich Schiller, Sämtliche Werke*, hg. K. Harro, vol. 1, *Gedichte* (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1988) 163.

Christianity between the years 1788 and 1794".[71] Goethe even goes as far as to proclaim that, "Christianity was a terrible bugbear to the new-born pagan […]".[72]

But because this return to the earthly spirit of Greece is a consequence of the crisis that accompanies Germany's abrupt transition into a fossil fuel society, German *Romanticism* represses ancient Greece with modern, often times German-Christian phantasmagoria. As Eliza Bulter notes in her study from 1935 (that should be titled *The Tyranny of Germany over Greece*), Goethe "never at any time believed in the gods of Greece".[73] Instead of catching an ingenious glimpse of a new language of earth and community, the Titan of German letters caught a cold. The (imagined?) near-death experience Goethe suffers reveals, in turn, his enduring Christian core. The "new-born pagan", as Bulter notes, is heard "crying out to Christ in his delirium […]".[74]

Similar to Goethe, Schiller's relation to Greece is disappointingly superficial. The popular claim "that ancient Greece was an unattainable ideal"[75]—which conveniently legitimates not only Schiller's abstract Kantian aesthetics, but also the fact that the great German poet, in contrast to Hölderlin, never learned Greek—masks how Schiller failed to fathom the mysteries of the ancient world. We have defined the romantic as someone who conceals the capsizing of his or her voyage home to community and earth. Consider Schiller's (romantic) exultation: "Beautiful world, where are you?"[76] (V 89). This is not a great modern poet coming to terms with time's destructive power. This is a preeminent romantic letting himself off easy instead of finishing his homework.[77] Like all romantics, Schiller could not conceal the truth. Consider the image we have of the "interesting sinner" sitting "in his box as if turned to stone" during the first performance of his "mentally defective" *Bride of Messina* on 19 March 1803, that is, while his artificial "lightning" is mystically absorbed into the real lightning that made its epiphany that evening.[78]

This brings us to Hölderlin. Because Greek tragedy is something that "Goethe declined to face and which Schiller never quite understood",[79] when we turn to Schiller's "dearest Swabian"[80] the story changes. Unlike his contemporaries, *Hölderlin excels in Dionysian Greece*. This basic difference in temperament is no doubt related to the bitter gap between Schiller (and Goethe) and Hölderlin. One

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[71] E. Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany: A study of the influence exercised by Greek art and poetry over the great German writers of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries* (Camrbdige: Cambridge University Press, 1958) 118–19.

[72] Ibid. 119.

[73] Ibid. 148.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid. 239.

[76] *Schiller, Sämtliche Werke*, Harro, vol. 1, *Gedichte* 164.

[77] It is significant that Schiller's aesthetics tell us more about an abstract Kantian *Vorstellungskraft* than about Greece or Greek tragedy.

[78] Cited in Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* 98, 197.

[79] Ibid. 310.

[80] Ibid. 214 (Cited in).

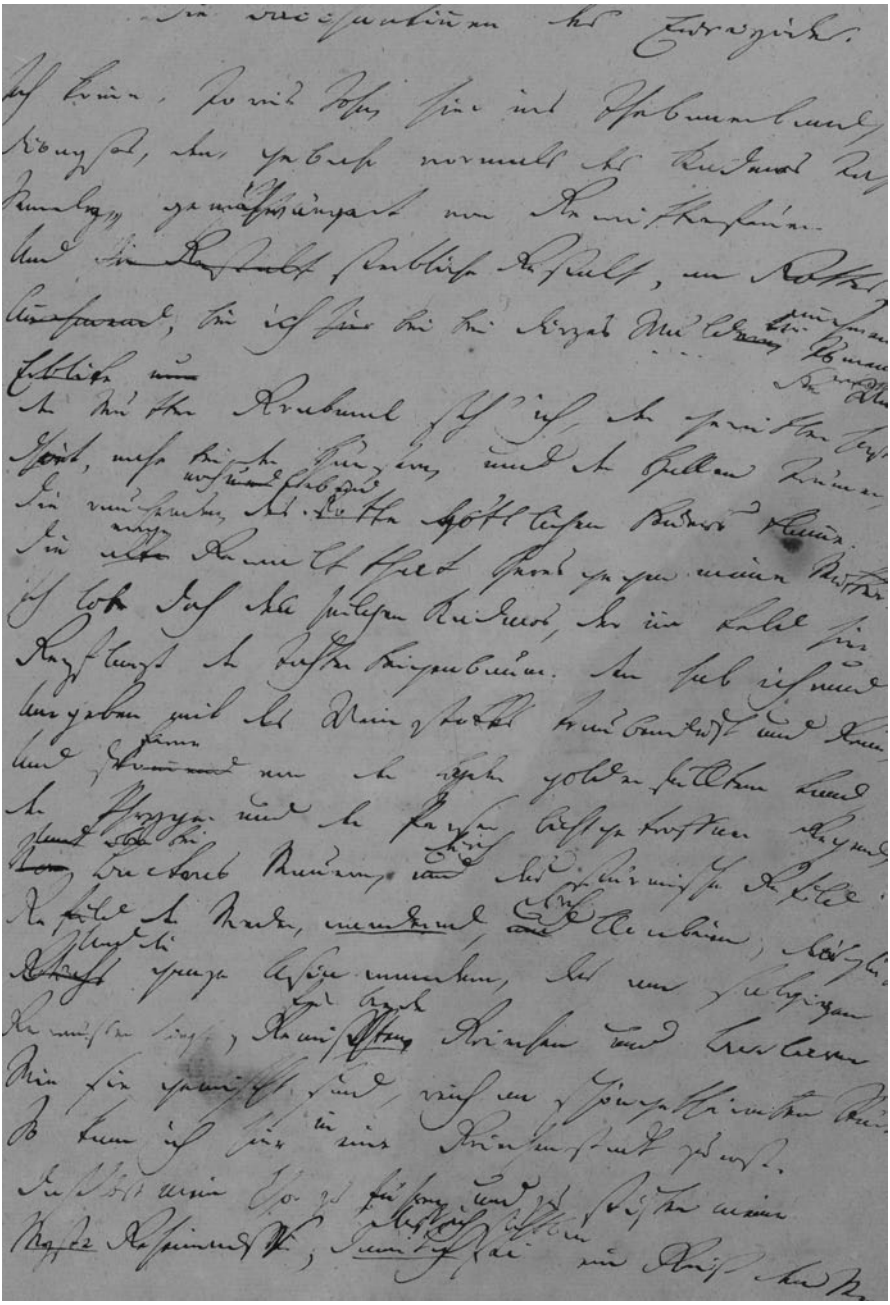
thinks of the afternoon that Hölderlin spends with Schiller while not recognising Goethe for hours.[81] One thinks also of Schiller's resentful ejaculations of laughter when he is presented with Hölderlin's translation of the fourth chorus of Sophocles' *Antigone* (in Johann Voss's report to a friend from a letter from 1804).[82]

This is not to say that Hölderlin is not also a (German) romantic. As we shall see, he too conceals his incomplete picture of Greece with the unfortunate modern spectres of Nationalism, Christianity and hyper-abstract thought. Nevertheless, the isolation of this unique poet within German *Romanticism* must be emphasised, as here something new occurs. Hölderlin journeys further into Greece than any other writer (or artist) in German history. For the first time since we began our transition to a fossil fuel society in the eighteenth century, we hear the chorus of *Antigone* invoking Dionysus to come over the slopes of Parnassus or the sounding sea-channel to purify with dance the violent pandemic of *pólis*. The retrieval of mystery-cult that is projected into the tragic play, in particular the battle of *Dionysiac* and *visualised chronotopes*, now gives rise to what is arguably the most beautiful (and challenging) poetry since ancient Greece. This means that this romantic *par excellence* has still to be studied. And it is to this most "interesting sinner" to whom we now turn.

[81] Butler 213.

[82] Ibid. 236 (Cited in). This disregard significantly follows Schiller's lack of interest in Hölderlin's idea for a journal, *Iduna*, in 1799.

Part III
Höderlin's Retrieval of Dionysiac and Visualised Chronotopes



Chapter 7
The Dionysiac Chronotope (Pre-1799–1799)

Abstract We begin our exploration of Hölderlin's poetry by looking at his early epistolary novel *Hyperion*, his attempt to write a tragic play, *The Death of Empedokles*, and his early epigrams (such as *Sophokles*). These works are complemented by reflections in essays such as *On Religion* and *Becoming in Perishing*. Nevertheless, the key to the birth of Hölderlin's poetic voice lies in his translations, already at this time, of Greek tragedy, something that is further enhanced by his rendition of several Pindaric songs. To investigate this historical experience of poetry, the chapter turns to Hölderlin's translation of (1) Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus, (2) various odes by Pindar, and (3) the first 24 lines of Euripides' Bacchae. Now the power with which Hölderlin confronts competing Dionyisac and monetised/visualised chronotopes, as articulated in Part I, begins to become clear.

Keywords *Hyperion* · *Empedokles* · *Oedipus at Colonus* · Pindar · *Bacchae*

7.1 Before *Bacchae*

It is easy to see Hölderlin in the cultural and literary context of the time to which he belongs. Born in 1770 in the town of Lauffen on the winding Neckar River, he grows up in the idyllic southwest German landscapes sheltered from the recent shocks of modernisation. In 1788 the youthful student enrols in the *Tübinger Stift*, a theological seminary that counts among its students Johannes Kepler who in the early seventh century deepened the relation between the telescope and science.[1] Despite the Protestant urgings of a strict mother, Hölderlin shares a distaste for the ministry for which he and his roommates Georg Hegel and Friedrich Schelling ostensibly prepare themselves. This means that although he is a student of theology, Hölderlin turns to contemporary philosophy and, in particular,

[1] What is significant here is not that Hölderlin composed an ode "Kepler" in 1789—*Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 72–73, 540—, but instead that, as *Dichterberuf* from over a decade later in 1800/01 makes clear, the poet's retrieval of Dionysian Greece distanced him from the dangers of early modern science and visual technologies such as the telescope, and their questionable relation to the individual egoism that accompanies money.

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Greek literature, a passion fired by the French Revolution and its loosening up of at least a Christian spirit that had fused with mercantilist tyrannies. 1.5 million Germans living along the Rhine river are secularised in March 1789, thus kindling the dream of an independent German state and religion.

After graduating from the *Tübingen Stift* in 1793, we find the youthful poet, whose songs such as *Hymn to Freedom* and *Hymn to the goddess of Harmony* are inspired by his Swabian countryman, entering Schiller's orbit in Jena. After a brief, if impassioned, confrontation with the idealist philosophy of Johann Fichte, the struggling poet accepts the position of a house tutor in late 1795 with the Frankfurt banking family of Jakob Gontard. Ideals of beauty, freedom and antiquity soon intermingle. An unexpected trip incited by the Napoleonic wars of 1796—the same year that Hölderlin's ex-roommate Hegel dedicates the poem *Eleusis* to him[2]—opens out the poet's forbidden love for Susette Gontard, the wife of his financially-minded employer, and introduces Hölderlin to the kindred, Dionysian spirit of Wilhelm Heinse. From 1797 to 1799 Hölderlin dedicates himself to his epistolary novel *Hyperion* (in the vein of Jean Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloise* from 1761 and Goethe's more recent *The Sorrows of the Young Werther* from 1774 and *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* of 1796–1797) as well as a tragedy, *The Death of Empedocles*, where the presocratic philosopher revels his self-isolating, tyrannical spirit and hurls himself into the flames of mount Etna.

But alongside this familiar story one sees Hölderlin initiating a form of art whose socio-political force transcends the cultural and literary contexts of the late eighteenth century. For the first time, philosophy is understood as having its origin in art, in particular in poetry. We have noted Plato's alienation of impure poets from the realm of pure thought (5.2). In *Hyperion*, however, the Greeks are able to transform themselves into "a philosophical people" precisely because they are first a "poetic, religious people".[3] "Without poetry," Hyperion points out, "they would never have been a philosophical people!"[4] This links philosophy to a mystical being inseparable from "the secret source of poetry".[5] When wisdom "springs forth from poetry", Hyperion proceeds, it springs forth "from an infinite godlike being."[6] And because this divine spirit is conceived of as "a communal godhead", the poetic foundation of philosophy opens out "a communal sphere" where "every human lives equally":[7] a democratic socio-politics significantly caught up in an emotional experience of gratitude. Through its secret tie to poetry, philosophy is rooted in the act of being "*thankful*"[8] to an enchanting being who establishes a world. "The

[2] *Hegel, Georg, Werke*, hg. E. Moldenhauer and K. Markus, vol. 1, *Frühe Schriften* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986) pp. 230–233.

[3] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 91.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid. pp. 565–566.

[8] Ibid. p. 552.

eccentric path"[9] of isolated, individual life leads, in other words, to a sacred, egalitarian community that is "poetic at heart."[10]

Hölderlin's revolutionary concept of an aesthetic, religious experience from which philosophy issues forth is tied to the performance of Greek myth. In *On Religion*, the same treatise where he concludes that "all religions are in essence poetic", Hölderlin speaks of theatrical "representation", in particular of "dramatic myths" and "the staging of myths".[11] As we have just seen, Hegel dedicates his poem "Eleusis" to Hölderlin in 1796. And as we have seen in Part I, Eleusinian and Dionysian mystery-cults transfigured individual emotions of perplexity and grief into those of communal joy and thanksgiving when mystic initiands re-enacted the myths of Dionysus and Demeter (2.1).[12] When we consider how Hegel's friendly, poetic gesture to "Eleusis" of 1796 is followed by a communal call for "a new mythology" one year later in 1797 in what is now known as *The Oldest System-Program of German Idealism*[13]—a text that seems to have been co-authored by Hegel, Hölderlin and the youthful, precocious Schelling—it is clear that Hölderlin's new concept of art and poetry as a religious experience with intellectual force is linked not simply to the retrieval of myth, but also to the re-enactment of myth.

Interest in the socio-political power of "the staging of myths" quickly leads to Greek tragedy. This is evident in Hölderlin's translation of a fragment from Sophocles' *Oedipus at Kolonus* from 1796 to 1797, which he completes while he searches for an Eleusinian-inspired "new mythology".[14] The revelation of sacred "soil" (V 3), the song of "[t]he returning nightingale" (V 7), the "choruses of Muses" (V 28), the "heavenly scent" (V 16) of the narcissus and the "gold-gleaming crocus" (V 21), and the image of "golden Aphrodite"[15] (V 29) all evoke a Dionysian paradise. In particular, these enchanting phenomena gesture to the organic synaesthesia bound to the democratic spirit of Dionysus' mystery-cult (2.3). Through their renewed tie to earth's life-giving darkness, eyes are re-integrated into the body's other sense organs, that is, into the communal power of the body to organise discrete sensations of hearing, smelling, touching and tasting into an earthly *organ*isation of space and time.

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[9] Ibid. p. 177.

[10] Ibid. p. 568.

[11] Ibid.

[12] See also W. Burkert, *Homo Necans: Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen* (Berlin: de Gruyter, Berlin, 1997) p. 316; and G. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Princeton: Prinecton University Press, 1961) pp. 263–264.

[13] *Hegel, Georg, Werke*, Moldenhauer and Markus, vol. 1, *Frühe Schriften* pp. 234–336.

[14] Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* significantly mentions the Eleusinian mysteries. See verses 1050–1053. Sophocles, *Oidipous at Kolonus*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 401. Aeschylus apparently revealed secrets of the Eleusinian mysteries in his lost tragedy *Oedipus* (T93, Radt). As Seaford points out: "Another lost play that may have contained the absorption of Theban cyclicality into an Attic aetiological chronotope was his *Eleusinians*, which dramatised the events leading up to the burial (denied them by Thebes) of the famous seven heroes, at Eleusis." Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* 335, ftnt 61.

[15] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 675.

But that Hölderlin's turn to tragedy gestures to the *Dionysiac chronotope* (4.1) is clear in the following verses that celebrate the liquid spirit of the divine being about which the chthonic afterlife coalesces:

> The never-diminishing sleepless springs,
> That wander from the waters of Cephisus,
> But always and everyday
> Come with fertility over the fields
> With pure currents of rain
> Upon the bosom of earth[.][16] (V 22–27)

A few verses earlier the reference to Dionysus is still more direct. The chorus sings of the nightingale "[u]nder the green coppice/Sheltered by dark ivy,/And the god's inviolate foliage/Full of fruits, lightless,/Unmoved by any storms."[17] (V 8–12) "[T]he reveller/Dionysus always comes here" (V 11–12), it continues, "[d]welling among the divine nurses" (V 13).[18]

Hölderlin's gesture to a Dionysian space-time implicitly calls attention to *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes*. This is clear when we consider the blind Oedipus to whom the chorus speaks. On the one hand, the wretched, desolate Oedipus looks back to his unlimited individualism and tyranny, in particular to his desire to accumulate money and to *visualise* the dark secrets of the past (2, 3). On the other hand, the wandering, blind Oedipus to whom Hölderlin turns has begun to see anew. Earlier in the play the fallen tyrant envisions a mystic sign of "earthquake, thunder or the lightning of Zeus"[19] (V 95). In contrast to Oedipus the tyrant who blindly lights up the past alone—*egò phanò* (V 132; 2.1–2.2)—, the blind Oedipus clearly foresees, illuminates the communal power of lightning and takes care to limit his words. Just before the verses that Hölderlin translates, Oedipus tells Theseus he shall not speak of the mysteries (V 623–624).[20]

The vision of mystic lightning, given its tie to the sound of thunder—Oedipus says: "thunder shall lead me to Hades"[21] (V 1460–1461)—re-integrates the sense organs of seeing and listening. This physical unity coincides with the coupling of heaven and earth. Thunder appears from above, out of the *aither* (V 1456), and, during Oedipus' disappearance, from Zeus below the earth, *chthonios* (V 1606),[22] a sound that evokes the subterranean roar of earthquakes. The coincidence of sense-experience, gods and humans—Theseus' final prayer is delivered at the same place where Zeus' thunder ascends from the earth (1654–1655)[23]—is connected to the founding of a geocentric community. The cosmic (vertical) axis marks the end (limit) of Oedipus' unlimited wanderings, as when he arrives at the sanctuary of the

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Sophocles, *Oidipous at Kolonus*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 361.

[20] Ibid. p. 383.

[21] Ibid. p. 417.

[22] Ibid. p. 424.

[23] Ibid. p. 425.

"daughters of earth and darkness" (V 40).[24] The establishment of a permanent hero-cult "without the pain of old age" (V 1519) shall benefit society because it is rooted not in monarchy, but in the democratic (and *synaesthesiac*) spirit of earth. When Theseus invites Oedipus to his royal house, the fallen tyrant refuses the monarch and says, "this is the place" (V 643–644).[25]

As we have seen, the tyrant in tragedy is often a projection of the isolated mystic initiand who succumbs to a near-death experience in ritual (2.1–2.2). In contrast to tyrants such as Pentheus whose dismemberment and death in *Bacchae* suggest the horrific failure to complete mystic initiation (2.1–2.2), the blind Oedipus stands simultaneously before death and a Dionysiac paradise. Whereas Pentheus recoils from mystic lightning in horror, Oedipus embraces its transfiguring power, and in this way limits his limitless "wanderings and exhausting runnings around and certain anxious uncompleted journeys through darkness". The fragment of tragedy to which Hölderlin turns thus opens out the secret program of mystery-cult where the mystic initiand appears on the cusp of redemption, and this means the time when *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* are absorbed into and neutralised by the *Dionysiac chronotope*.

Hölderlin's retrieval of the socio-political power of mystery-cult in 1796–1797 is something that we should expect. In his "Fragment of Hyperion" published by Schiller in 1794 Hölderlin transports his reader to "Mt. Kithairon"—the same mountain wild where Dionysus exposes Pentheus' desire to reduce mystery-cult to an isolated picture that can be purchased in *Bacchae* (3.3). Hölderlin invokes "mystic sayings"[26] (V 8), and looks forward to the Dionysian mystical spirit of *Oedipus at Kolonus* a few years later. As we have noted, when he returns to *Hyperion* in 1797–1799, poetry is conceived of as a divine being and both as the secret source of philosophy. Just before this passage, Hyperion exclaims "I speak the mysteries" while gesturing to "godlike beauty", rebirth and a "beginning" when "the human and his gods were one".[27] *Dionysian seeing* (2.3, 3.3, 5.2), as witnessed in the "fire" that rises "out of the dark cradle where it sleeps",[28] is linked to the philosophical potential of the "democratic god par excellence" (2.3). "For everyone has his mysteries," Hyperion learns from a kindred spirit, "his secret thoughts; they have been mine; ever since I began to think."[29]

But what makes Hölderlin's revolutionary concept of art powerful is how he applies the *Dionysiac chronotope* to his own time. As we have seen in Part I, Dionysian space-time battles *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* by absorbing their unlimited egoism and seeing into a *synaesthesiac* space-time limited by earth and community (2, 3). But as we have subsequently seen, *monetised* and *visualised*

[24] Ibid. p. 358.

[25] Ibid. p. 384. See also Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 334.

[26] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 199.

[27] Ibid. p. 90.

[28] Ibid. p. 50.

[29] Ibid. p. 155.

chronotopes conquer the *Dionysiac chronotope* and become concentrated in a new world of Christianity, abstract philosophy and mechanistic science whose exploitation of nature knows no limit (5.1). To resurrect the *Dionysiac chronotope* one therefore would have to absorb the tyranny of post-Dionysian spatio-temporal forms into a new chthonic, earthly spirit. And this is precisely what we find in Hölderlin's early work. Hyperion's confession that, because of his "immature attitude", he became "tyrannical towards nature"[30] (V 1–3) takes up the modern alienation of individuals from earth and themselves. Hyperion's longing for a kindred "spirit" that coincides with "rays" of "light" that gather together in a mysterious "mirror"[31] could even be understood as evoking the individual isolation that is associated with the mystic mirror.

What is beyond question is that Hölderlin sees his journey home from a state of estrangement as the journey of the isolated mystic initiand who reappears on the tragic stage. "So I came to the Germans […] like the homeless, blind Oedipus at the gates of Athens, where the grove of the goddesses receive him; and the beautiful souls greet him—".[32] But here the re-enactment of mystical redemption breaks off. "How different it was for me!"[33] Hyperion complains:

> Barbarians from time immemorial, they [modern Germans] have become more barbaric through industry and science and even through religion, profoundly incapable of any divine emotion […] dull and lacking harmony, like fragments of a tossed out vessel.[34]

Money, abstract philosophy and dogmatic Christianity, all of which seek to eradicate the *Dionysiac chronotope* (6.1), paralyse the sacred. The voyage home of the blind initiand Oedipus/Hölderlin capsizes on "industry and science and even […] religion". "It is a hard word, but I say it nonetheless, for it is the truth," Hyperion continues, "I can think of no people more torn apart than the Germans. You see craftsmen, but no humans, thinkers, but no humans, priests, but no humans".[35] Even the mystical experience of dismemberment centred on Dionysus (2.1) seems as if to be present in the metaphor of the German people "like shards of a thrown out vessel". "[I]s this not like a battlefield", Hyperion says, "where dismembered hands and arms and all body-parts lie cast about while their life-blood drains into the sand?"[36]

The early Hölderlin absorbs the *monetised chronotope* into the mystical spirit of Greece. We have noted the disappointing position of a house tutor that the poet accepts in late 1795 with the Frankfurt banking family of Gontard. We have also noted the birth of Hölderlin's forbidden love of his employer's wife, Susette Gontard, kindled by the Dionysian Heinse. We know that Hölderlin suffered personally

[30] Ibid. p. 209.

[31] Ibid. p. 71.

[32] Ibid. p. 168.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

while working for his money-minded, tyrannical employer. The transformation of "Susette" into "Diotima"—the name of a mystical priestess from Greece who appears in Plato's *Symposium* and which Hölderlin chooses for his secret love—can thus be read as the neutralisation of the *monetised chronotope* by the earthly, communal spirit of the *Dionysiac chronotope*.

The retrieval of Dionysian space-time aims to transform the terror that accompanies *le Cult de la Raison*, in particular the abstract thinking of the mechanised life-world born from a new fossil fuel society. As we have seen, by the time Hölderlin turns to *Oedipus at Kolonus* in the late 1790s, de La Mettrie's *L'homme machine* of 1747 has been rapidly followed by the transformation of burning coal into motion in Watt's and Boulton's steam engine of 1776 and the first powered cotton mill of 1785 (6.1). For Hölderlin, who is writing while Alessandro Volta, through his experimentation with galvanic cells of metal, is unlocking a potentially unlimited flow of electricity, it is clear that the money-driven progress of abstract thought, philosophy and science represent a new challenge to the human being, now imagined as the wandering mystic initiand. A person, Hyperion declares, degenerates into "a beggar" (like the blind Oedipus) "when he reflects".[37] Further, the threat of abstract thinking and a mechanised life-world, to the sacred is expressed in his essay *On Religion*. Hölderlin implores us to never forget "that more than a machine process, that a spirit, a god, is in the world".[38] And that religion refers to the Dionysian spirit of Greece and in no way simply means dogmatic Christianity is something that the archon Kritias and the priest Hermokrates in *The Death of Empedokles* make clear.

It may seem radical to claim that the virulent conflict between nature and culture in the early Hölderlin is seen through the lens of the *Dionysiac chronotope* retrieved to battle the concentrated *visualised chronotope* that underlies modern money, science and dogmatic Christianity. But we have to keep in mind that Hölderlin's references to Dionysus, although explicit, are oft difficult to identify, and have been overlooked by Hölderlin scholars. As Seaford notes, Hölderlin,

> sometimes evokes the Dionysiac even where Dionysus is not mentioned, as for instance when he writes in his novel *Hyperion* "the moments of liberation, when the divine bursts open the prison, […] when it is for us as if the unchained spirit […] returns to the halls of the sun."[39]

This gesture to Dionysus emerging from a dark prison cell in *Bacchae* to make his epiphany to his initiates as a magical "light [φῶς]" (2.3) is preceded by another one of Hyperion's "mystic sayings": "We are like fire that sleeps in the dry branch or coal".[40] As we have seen, while turning to the "terrifying-exciting mysteries", Hölderlin turns to "fire" that magically rises "out of the dark cradle where

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[37] Ibid. p. 16.

[38] Ibid. p. 565.

[39] Seaford, *Dionysus* 138. *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 61.

[40] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 61.

it sleeps". The transition of the flame that joyfully "consumes its material"[41] to lightless ash is likened to that of the living to the dead. "It is the same with us. That is the quintessence of everything, what the way of the terrifying-exciting mysteries tells us."[42]

The early Hölderlin who distances himself from the threatening visual culture that accompanies money, science and dogmatic Christianity gestures to what I have called the *Dionysian seeing* (2.3, 3.3, 6.2). Although progressive, his poetry does not blindly celebrate westernisation and its tendency to uproot experience and make it abstract, as embodied in the spirit of the steam engine and its product of mechanised motion. Instead, the poet neutralises the source of modern energy with a pre-modern energy culture. The burning of "coal" that generates unlimited machine-power is thus absorbed within the ancient burning of wood from a time that is limited by agriculture. The "fire that sleeps in the dry branch or coal" implicitly reconnects estranged seeing with a redemptive turn to earth and community.

The transition from mystic blindness to *Dionysian seeing* is also witnessed in *Empedokles* where the self-isolating (and hence blind) tyrant-philosopher is redeemed by the flames of Mount Etna. In this tragedy "the eyes" are "fixed upon that which remains"[43] (V 653–654). From a late poem to which we shall return we know that when speaking about "[t]hat which remains" (V 59), Hölderlin is speaking of "love" that "sedulously fixes the eyes"[44] (V 58). And from a late poetic fragment, *The Titans*, we are reminded that "it is not for nothing/that the eyes are fixed on the soil."[45] (V 60–61) Once again, the virulent conflict between nature and culture in the early Hölderlin, as illustrated by Empedokles, culminates in a transition from eyes that know nothing of earth and community and mystic blindness to *Dionysian seeing*.

But of all this can be understood as a preparatory phase for an art whose harnessing of the socio-political power of ritual shall be still more unprecedented. Hölderlin's experiments in applying the *Dionysiac chronotope* to modern time lead him back to Greek tragedy, in particular to one of the richest sources of mystery-cult. Early essays like *Becoming in Perishing*[46] and epigrams such as *Sophokles* where "the most joyful" (V 1) magically arises from "sadness", *Trauer*[47] (V 2)—here *Trauer* evokes the German word for tragedy, *Trauerspiel*—look not only to the lightning to which Hölderlin's *Oedipus at Kolonus* looks. Visual redemption that coincides with the birth of a cosmic (vertical) axis occurs also in *Bacchae*. Just before Dionysus reveals himself as a beautiful "light", Pentheus' house is destroyed by a thunderbolt from above and earthquake from below. And as we shall see, the lightning to which Hölderlin's blind Oedipus looks itself looks to another more

[41] Ibid. p. 50.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid. p. 384.

[44] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 362.

[45] Ibid. p. 392.

[46] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 1197.

[47] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 221.

powerful visual transformation. The blind tyrant recedes as the original hero of "mysteries" that belong to "everyone" makes his epiphany at the centre of Hölderlin's poetic imagination.

7.2 *Bacchae*

To understand Hölderlin's poetry after 1800—arguably the most challenging, beautiful and powerful art in modern time—we have to first understand his return to Dionysian Greece in 1799. This includes, on the one hand, his translation of several odes by Pindar and, on the other hand, his translation of the opening lines of *Bacchae*.

As we have noted, Pindar struggles with the invention of money. "Muse, it is your task," the poet sings with ambivalence, "if you have contracted to provide your voice silvered for a wage, to set it in motion at different times in different ways" (2, 2.2). The ambivalent relation of the poet to money was further seen in the 10,000 drachmas that he received as a gift from the Athenians as well as his use of prostitution and concomitant promiscuity as metaphors of the poetic voice in a time of money: "The Muse was then not avaricious nor a working girl (ergatis). Nor were sweet songs with silvered faces sold […]" (2.1).

But the *monetised chronotope* in Pindar's odes contrasts with the *Dionysiac chronotope*. The *thirteenth Olympian ode* wonders when "the graces of Dionysus first come to light?"[48] (V 18–19) In his lost dithyrambs Dionysus is celebrated for his love of flowers, trees and succulent fruits.[49] Other fragments recall the "Cadmean woman" (V 12) Semele and the "highest father" (V 11) Zeus,[50] the instant when Dionysus was snatched from mortal flames and sewn into Zeus' thigh,[51] and the older Dionysus who sets herds of animals dancing.[52] Pindar's poetry also illuminates the relation between myth and ritual. According to byzantine scholars, when he speaks of "mystic initiations that liberate" from suffering, Pindar is gesturing to Dionysus' mystery-cult.[53] Consider the following fragment, tied to the Eleusinian mysteries, where seeing ascends out of earth's darkness:

> For whoever Persephone shall forgive for the ancient wrong [péntheos],
> she restores in the ninth year their souls to the upper sunlight; from them arise

[48] Pindar, *Thirteenth Olympian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* 44.

[49] Pindar, Fragment 75, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* 84. See also Pindar, Fragment 153, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* 128.

[50] Pindar, Fragment 75, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* 84.

[51] Pindar, Fragment 85, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* 86.

[52] Pindar, Fragment 70b, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, ed. H. Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* pp. 75–77.

[53] Pindar, Fragment 131a, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, ed. H. Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* 119. See also Seaford, *Dionysus* p. 119.

> glorious kings and men who for the rest of time
> they are called holy heroes by mortals.[54]

Hölderlin's retrieval of Pindar's poetry in 1799 is twofold. On the one hand, he stumbles across the *monetised chronotope*. This is clear in his translation of the verses 63 through 66 of Pindar's *eleventh Pythian ode* just noted: "O Muse, it is yours, if you/have bound yourself to wages, to provide/The silvered voice, at different places/In different ways abundantly."[55] (V 63–66) This is not to say that Hölderlin self-consciously offers a critique of the birth of *monetised* space-time. His reference to the invention of money in the verses above is still more unconscious than Pindar's original reference thousands of years before him. On the other hand, and what shall be critical to this study, Hölderlin nevertheless refers to that which is caught up in the origin of money. As we have seen, the *monetised chronotope* is inseparable from the *visualised chronotope*: the reduction of space and time to an abstract visual culture that knows nothing of earth and community (3.2).

This is something to which the early Hölderlin implicitly gestures, for instance, in his reference to the blind *Oedipus at Kolonus* seeking to redeem his unlimited, destructive monetary desires. As we have seen, the blindness to which money-tyrants such as Oedipus, Kreon and Pentheus succumb re-enacts the blindness to which mystic initiands succumb in mystery-cult, which is itself a re-enactment of the blindness of mortals and immortal in myth (2.1). We have also noted the blindness to which the youthful Dionysus succumbs following his absorption in a mirror that he discovers in the forest, as well as the blindness to which the maiden Persephone succumbs as she disappears into a dark, earthly abyss following her absorption in the mesmerising narcissus flower—itself another reference to the lethal danger of eyes in myth (2.1).

But it is the tragic story of Semele and her fatal desire to see that shall be of unique importance to Hölderlin. In his translation of Pindar's *third Pythian ode* we recall "the ivory-armed one", and the moment when "Zeus the father/Came into the longing bed of Thyone."[56] (V 176–177) The forbidden love between the mortal and immortal is quickly poisoned by Hera's spirit of revenge (4.3).[57] Hera appears to Semele disguised as an old crone and questions the authenticity of her lover. In reference to the incinerating lightning-flash to which Semele succumbs after demanding Zeus to make the glory of his godhead visible, Hölderlin's translation of Pindar recalls "one of the three daughters" of Cadmus who was "[s]eparated through sharp suffering/From her share of happiness" (V 173–176).[58] Pindar's *second Olympian ode* also takes up the myth of Semele and the tragic individual death to which her

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[54] Pindar, Fragment 133, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, ed. H. Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* pp 119–120.

[55] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 761.

[56] Ibid. p. 730.

[57] Apollodorus, *Library*, 3.4.3, in *Apollodorus, The Library*, Frazer, vol. 1, *Books I-III* 320.

[58] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 730.

reckless seeing leads. After hearing of "the richly-throned/Daughters of Cadmus, who suffered/Greatly" (V 39–40), we turn to "[t]he sorrow" (V 41) of she "[w]ho died in the thunder/Of the lightning-flash long-haired/Semele" (V 45–47).[59] As we shall, the recurrence of Semele's tragic myth in Hölderlin's translations of Pindar open up a critique of the spatio-temporal form that underlies the *monetised* and *Dionysiac chronotope*s (3.2).

This brings us to the second of the two spatio-temporal forms that Hölderlin retrieves. Whereas he touches upon *the monetised* and *visualised chronotopes*, Hölderlin also resurrects the *Dionysiac chronotope*. Semele's death in Pindar's *second Olympian ode* witnesses a transition from *tragic seeing* and mortality to immortal communality: "The sorrow/But falls heavily/On greater good./She lives well among the Olympians/She who died in the thunder/Of lightning, long-haired/Semele" (V 42–47).[60] The following verses further testify to the spirit of "mystic initiations that liberate" from suffering: "but/Pallas loves her [Semele] for all time/And Zeus the father most of all; also he loves her/The son, the ivy-crowned one."[61] (V 47–50) The danger of eyes that know no limit and lead to individual death is transfigured into an *synaesthesiac* experience of seeing that is rooted in earth and community, as suggested by the image of Dionysus as a deathless, loving son crowned with interlocking evergreens.

No less important than his translations of Pindar's odes is Hölderlin's return to and translation of *Bacchae* in 1799. As we have seen, Euripides' tragedy offers a singularly clear instance of the *monetised chronotope*. The *túrannos* Pentheus projects his desire for money onto Teiresias and reduces Dionysian ritual to precious metal (2). This reduction of experience to money is further tied to the reduction of earth and community to an abstract image that leads from aggression and madness to finally blindness and death (3). We noted the perverse image that Pentheus projects onto Dionysus' female initiates after seeking to spy on them, in particular how the money-tyrant falsely imagines the maenads "in the thickets, like birds, held in the most pleasant nets of sex" (V 957–958, 685–688; 3.3, 4.2).

But most important is how such visual and psychic aggression, which are significantly linked to physical aggression—Pentheus threatens to cut of Dionysus' head (4.1)—succumbs to the transformative mystic thunderbolt and earthquake that shatter the house of the money-tyrant (2.3). After he seeks to purchase a private picture of the maenads performing their secret rites on the mountain wild of Kithairon, Pentheus is "put out of his mind" (V 850) and blinded by "two suns" (V 922), a visual frenzy that recalls the mystic mirror in Dionysian ritual and myth (2.1–2.2). Being absorbed into Dionysus' tragic myth, the *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* that Pentheus embodies are, in a sense, hunted down and dismembered (2.1–2.2).

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[59] Ibid. 696. Pindar, *Second Olympian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* 8.

[60] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 696.

[61] Ibid.

Hölderlin's translation of *Oedipus at Kolonus* around 1796 and his epistolary novel *Hyperion* from 1797 to 1799 gesture to a blind tyrant/wandering mystic initiand seeking to redeem his violence against nature and community. His subsequent translations of Pindar that retrieve the tragic myth of Semele, in particular its expression of eyes that know no limit lead to blindness and death, link the mythic and theatrical figures of Semele, Pentheus and Oedipus to one another. Semele's "sorrow", *pénthos*[62] (V 26), which Hölderlin translates as *Jammer* (V 41),[63] evokes the "sadness" of tyrants whose eyes know no earthly or communal limit. Dionysus points out to *Pentheus* that his name "fits" him "well for misfortune" (4.1), and the chorus at the end of *Oedipus the Tyrant* declares that the name "Oedipus" names finally "sadnesses", *pentheîn* (V 1320, 4.2).[64]

All of this is important because it is precisely the fateful "sorrow", *pentheús*, to which the *visualised chronotope* leads in the tragic myth of Semele that Hölderlin returns to in his translation of *Bacchae* from 1799.[65] In the opening verses Dionysus first refers to his tragic birth:

> I come, Jupiter's son, here to the land of Thebes,
> Dionysus, born from Cadmus' daughter
> Semele, pregnant with the fire of thunder and lightning [Gewitterfeuer]"[66] (V 1–3).

The melancholy god turns to his "mother's gravestone", a remembrance of she who was struck by "thunder and lightning [gewitterhaften]" and, next to it, "the ruins of the halls"[67] (V 6–7). The force of this tragic image since antiquity should not be underestimated. The wreckage of Semele's house in Thebes remained a wonder to see even after Christianity had taken hold of the ancient world.[68] The enduring presence of "[t]he smouldering, still living divine fire's flame"[69] (V 8) opens up the sorrowful remembrance of the spirit of revenge that incited Semele to recklessly seek to see Zeus' reveal himself. Dionysus interprets the haunting picture of the still-cooling-

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[62] Pindar, *Second Olympian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* 8.

[63] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 696.

[64] Here we might also note the "lament", *pénthos* (V 1225), *Jammer* (V 1244), to which the messenger refers at the beginning of the fifth act in *Oedipus the Tyant*. ocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 168; and *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 838, respectively.

[65] Although not as important as *Bacchae*, it should be noted that Hölderlin translated a fragment from Euripides' *Hecuba*, which engages the problem of redeeming the uncared for dead, in 1796. B. Böschenstein, *"Übersetzungen"*, in *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer (Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler 2011), p. 273.

[66] Ibid. p. 690.

[67] Ibid.

[68] *Aelii Aristides quae supersunt omnia*, Bd. 1, p. 72.

[69] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 690.

flames from the mystic thunderbolt as a sign of "[t]he eternal, violent act of Hera against my mother."[70] (V 9).

But *Bacchae* also expresses the *Dionysiac chronotope*, in particular its overcoming of *tragic seeing* with *Dionysian seeing*. The tyrant's use of money to create perverse pictures of reality that estrange community and earth is ruptured by the thunderbolt and earthquake that brings his royal house down (2.3). *Tragic seeing* is then redeemed by *Dionysian seeing* through the epiphany of an enchanting "light", φῶς, that reacquaints the eyes with the hands, mouth, nose and ears, that is, a more democratic relation to the body's other senses. That such synaesthesia is connected to socio-political change is suggested by the founding of Dionysus' permanent *pólis* cult at the end of *Bacchae* (2.3).

Bacchae's uniquely clear expression of the *Dionysiac chronotope* appears in compact form in its opening lines (2.3). And it is this concentrated revelation of the power of earth and community to overcome self-destructive eyes to which Hölderlin is attracted. Alongside his retrieval of the *visualised chronotope* is therefore that of a chthonic and communal spatio-temporal form. After recalling Semele "pregnant with the fire of lightning- and thunder", Dionysus celebrates the earthly place where he was born: "by the Dirkean forests" and "Ismenos' waters"[71] (V 5)—a recollection that itself recalls the forestry, flowing Dionysian paradise to which Hölderlin's *Oedipus at Kolonus* gestures: "The never-diminishing sleepless springs,/That wander from the waters of Cephisus" and the "pure currents of rain/Upon the bosom of earth".

The terrestrial element of the *Dionysiac chronotope* to which Hölderlin's translation gestures—the wine-god goes on to declare that he has "encircled" (V 11–12) Semele's memorial "[w]ith the vine's scent of grapes and green"[72] (V 12) and costumed himself with "the fawnskin" (V 24)—is interestingly tied to a mistranslation. This occurs when Dionysus transitions from a mood of melancholy that is associated with isolated seeing and death to one of redemption. Following his remembrance of "[t]he eternal, violent act of Hera" in "[t]he smoking, still living divine fire's flame", Dionysus "praise[s] holy Cadmus, who planted a fig-tree/In the field here for his daughter."[73] (V 10–11) In his translation, Hölderlin confuses the ancient Greek word *sêkos* (V 11),[74] which names "an enclosed, sacred place", with another ancient Greek word, *sykê*, which names "fig-tree" (V 10).[75] As we shall see in the next chapter, this concentration of an enclosed, sacred place with the primal work of humans and nature reappears in the "fig-tree", *Feigenbaum* (V 16), quietly growing "[i]n the [enclosed] courtyard"[76] (V 16) of Hölderlin's *Memento*.

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 291.

[75] Böschenstein, *"Übersetzungen"*, in *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer pp. 274–275.

[76] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 360.

Cadmus' monument to Semele gestures to the communal spirit of public works and the permanence of mystery-cult. This brings us to the other element of the *Dionysiac chronotope* that Hölderlin's translation of *Bacchae* highlights. Although Dionysus makes it clear that his epiphany in Greece following his journey to the east represents a homecoming—and although the god explicitly says that he has come "here to a Greek city first" (V 20), that is, "[f]irst to Thebes here in the land of Greece"[77] (V 23), it is clear that Dionysus sees the revelation of and initiation into his mystery-cult as an event that is open to all peoples, whether they are Greek or not.

Following the democratic spirit of Dionysus in Aeschylus' satyr-play *Theoroi* who declares that "[n]obody neither young nor old is willingly absent from my choruses",[78] the chorus of Euripides' *Bacchae* proclaim that it is Dionysus who "gave the pain-removing delight of wine equally to the wealthy man and to the lesser man" (V 421–423).[79] Earlier in *Bacchae* Teiresias notes that, "it is from everybody that he [Dionysus] wants to have honours in common, and to be magnified while distinguishing nobody" (V 209–210).[80] Both of these democratic qualities of *Dionysiac chronotope* are foreshadowed by Dionysus' declarations that it is the *pólis* as a whole to which he brings his cult (V 39–40) and that he will display his divinity "to the Thebens" (V 48) so that "the whole land will dance" (V 114).[81] Such egalitarian gestures are themselves foreshadowed in the play's opening lines that Hölderlin translates. Dionysus implies that his mystery-cult is "for both Greeks and barbarians/As they are mixed" (V 18), a communal spirit that is accented by the cohesiveness of his mystic "chorus"[82] (V 21).

At the heart of the *Dionysiac chronotope* that Hölderlin's translation of *Bacchae* retrieves is a movement from *tragic* to *Dionysian seeing*. In contrast to the myth of his incinerated mother—and in contrast to the blind Oedipus/mystic initiand on the cusp of death just before the transition into a Dionysiac paradise, the Dionysus of Hölderlin's *Bacchae* has completed the mystic transition from visual isolation, dismemberment and death to the modelling of an earthly afterlife (2.3). Dionysus' arrival at Thebes limits his wandering and opens up a cosmic (vertical) axis of community and earth. At the centre of this limit is a new style of seeing. "I came here first to a Greek city," (V 20) Dionysus declares, "[t]o lead my chorus myself and to establish my/Mystery-cult, so that I shall be *visible* to humans as spirit."[83] (V 21–22) This shift from *tragic seeing* to *Dionysian seeing* in the opening lines of

[77] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 690.

[78] Cited in Seaford, *Dionysus* 28.

[79] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 309.

[80] Ibid. 300.

[81] Ibid. p. 293, 296.

[82] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 690.

[83] Ibid. Emphasis added.

Bacchae implies the dissolution of selfish eyes into a synaesthesia of sorts. The visual epiphany of Dionysus—the moment when the god becomes "*visible* to humans as spirit"—is inseparable from the "scent of grapes", the taste of wine, the feel of "fawnskin" and the melody of his chorus.

On the one hand, Hölderlin's retrieval of the revolutionary founding of Dionysus' "mystic initiations", *teletás*[84] (V 22)—which he translates first as *mysteries*, "Mysterien", then as *secrets*, "Geheimnisse" and finally as *secret*, "Geheimnis"[85] (V 22)—looks back to the "mystic sayings" and the "terrifying-exciting mysteries" of *Hyperion* from 1794 to 1796–1797. Importnat is *Hyperion*'s reference to *Dionysian seeing* in *Bacchae*. The "the moments of liberation, when the divine bursts open the prison" (5.1) and Dionysus makes his epiphany to his trembling mystic initiates as a magical "light", *φῶς* (2.3), includes now the time when Dionysus declares to the *pólis* that shall become "visible to humans as spirit".

But as we shall see in the following section, Hölderlin's retrieval of Dionysus' "secret", *Geheimnis* (V 22), also looks forward to poetry with unprecedented sociopolitical force. *Bacchae* is the richest literary source of mystic initiation,[86] and this richness is compacted into its initial verses (2.3). The thunderbolt merely imagined in the Pindaric dithyramb now destroys the house of the money-tyrant and his with it his unlimited eyes in Euripides' tragedy. Unlike the homeless, blind Oedipus, the wandering Dionysus of *Bacchae* realises the political significance latent in his myth to conquer the new visual culture of money. "[F]or this reason I will demonstrate to him that I am a god", Dionysus declares, "I will lead my army of maenads […] and this is why I have taken on mortal form."[87] (V 47–55).

To conclude, we should note that Hölderlin is influenced by the Dionysian spirit of *Bacchae* more than Hölderlin scholars have noted. It remains unclear whether or not he translated more than its first 24 lines. The tonal structure of the first poem that Hölderlin composes after this translation *As when on a holiday …* betrays an uncanny resemblance to that of Pindar's *seventh Olympian ode*. As we have seen, Hölderlin translated several of Pindar's *Olympian* and *Pythian odes* also in 1799. Nevertheless, a translation of the *seventh Olympian ode* has never been found. The striking similarity of *As when on a holiday …* to Pindar's *seventh Olympian ode* thus invites us to think that Hölderlin's engagement with Pindar's odes transcends his translations that we have episodically uncovered during the last two centuries. The same may well be true of his relation to *Bacchae*. As we shall now see, this is clear when we turn to Hölderlin's poetic *oeuvre* after 1799.

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[84] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 292.

[85] *Hölderlin, Friedrich, Sämtlich Werke, Frankfurter Ausgabe*, hg. D. Sattler, vol. 17, *Frühe Aufsätze und Übersetzungen* (Basel, Frankfurt: Stroemfeld/Roter Stern, 1991) pp. 628–29.

[86] For the richest visual source of mystery-cult, see the frescos of the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii. *The Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii: Ancient ritual, Modern muse*, ed. Gazda et al.

[87] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 293.

Chapter 8
The Dionysiac Chronotope (1799–1802)

Abstract Having examined Hölderlin's early poems and translations of tragedy (and Pindaric song), this chapter turns to the poet's adaption of the Dionysian spirit to produce a new style of poetry in the present. Gestures to a mystical transition from (unlimited) individual greed for money (and its visual underpinnings) to an experience of seeing that is rooted in earthly communality (2–3) are themselves transformed into a socio-political critique in modern time. This profound criticism that Hölderlin elaborates in his songs from 1799 to 1802 is linked, for instance, to an image of monetised tyrants who appropriate modern visual media to exploit nature's resources for individual profit.

Keywords Hölderlin · Visual media · Money · (Unlimited) individualism · Dionysus

The poems that Hölderlin composes after his Pindar and *Bacchae* translations are permea.ted with Greek myth. *The Archipelago* celebrates the victory of "festive Athens" (V 271), the "springtime of Greece" (V 272) and "the sea-god"[1] (V 289) Poseidon. *Bread and Wine*, originally titled *The Wine-god*,[2] transports us to,

> […] where the open sea rustles
> At Parnassus and snow glistens on Delphic rocks,
> There to the Olympian land, there on the mountain wild of Kithairon,
> Under the pine-trees there, under the grapes, from which rustle
> Thebes down there and Ismenos in the land of Cadmus,
> From there he comes and points back the coming god.
> Sacred Greece! you house of all that is heavenly […][3] (V 49–55)

The Greek myth to which Hölderlin returns is often times aetiological, which places us in the register of *aetiological* and *Dionysiac chronotopes* (2). In *Nature and Art or Saturn and Jupiter* we recall the original, law-giving power of Zeus (V 1–4), and that of his father Kronos (V 25–28).[4] The most striking invocation of aetiological myth is the first poem that Hölderlin composes after his *Bacchae* translation, *As*

[1] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt pp. 262–263.

[2] *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer p. 328.

[3] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 287.

[4] Ibid. pp. 297–298.

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when on a holiday…, a few strophes of which he writes on the back of the same page on which he translates Euripides' tragedy:

> So it fell, as poets say, for she desired
> To see the god made visible, his lightning-flash on Semele's house
> And the divinely-struck one bore,
> The fruit of thunder and lightning, holy Bacchus.[5] (V 50–53)

But this return to Greek myth is balanced by the poet's search for "a new mythology" (7.1). The invocation of Dionysus' birth in thunder and lightning in *As when on a holiday ...* is followed by Hölderlin's demand that "poets" (V 57) in the present "stand bare-headed" (V 57) like Semele "under god's thunder and lightning" (V 56) and offer "the heavenly gifts/Wrapped in song to the people" (V 59–60).[6] The "[p]recious springtime of Greece" (V 272) in *The Archipelago* is tied to the rebirth of myth: the coming of "our autumn"[7] (V 272–273). *Bread and Wine* retrieves "the wine-god's holy priests" (V 123) to picture "poets"[8] (V 122) in the present.

Hölderlin is also concerned with the construction of German myth. Inspired by Dionysus' declaration that he has come to induct the *pólis* of Thebes into his mystery-cult in the opening lines *Bacchae*, the German city *Stuttgard* is imagined as a newly initiated mystic devotee. "For crowned with holy leaf the city already rises/ Its celebrated, gleaming priestly head./Beautifully she stands and holds the staff of vine […]"[9] (V 75–77) Other elegies such as *Homecoming* reinvent "the Alps" (V 1) as an "incalculable workshop" (V 17) of "bacchic" (V 8) space-time that underly sleepy German villages and German landscapes such as "blissful Lindau" (V 59) and "the beautiful valley of the Neckar."[10] (V 69) Odes such as *Heidelberg* continue the transformation of German cities into a Dionysian paradise where "all around" (V 26) is "green with ivy"[11] (V 26–27). And not only do German cities absorb Greek myth. *To the Germans* proclaims "the mountains of German/Land are the mountains of the Muses."[12] (V 35–36)

The Wandering, a hymn that begins by with the invocation of "[b]lissful Swabia" (V 1) and neighbouring lands with the bacchic ecstasy "[o]f a hundred streams [Bächen]" (V 11),[13] turns to the "[l]and of Homer"[14] (V 79) only to return, finally, to those of Germany. From here the poet invites the "graces of Greece" (V 99): "if the trip is not too far,/Come to us, you lovely ones!"[15] (V 101–102) In *The Rhine* the ivy

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[5] Ibid. p. 240.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid. p. 262.

[8] Ibid. p. 290.

[9] Ibid. p. 284.

[10] Ibid. pp. 291–293.

[11] Ibid. p. 242.

[12] Ibid. p. 236.

[13] Ibid. p. 324.

[14] Ibid. p. 326.

[15] Ibid. p. 327.

of Dionysus is the "dark ivy" (V 1) of the German "forest"[16] (V 2) below the Alps. Similar to Dionysus in *Bacchae*, the flowing spirit of the "demigod" (V 31),[17] "[w]andering quietly through German lands" (V 85), founds German "cities"[18] (V 89). In *Germania* the painful absence of the "[g]ods who have fled"[19] (V 17) is redeemed by the balmy presence of a new German "priestess" (V 110) who, during her "holidays" (V 109), "gives advice everywhere/To kings and peoples."[20] (V 111–112)

This is not to say that Hölderlin's Greco-Germanic mythology represses the present. Quite the opposite, Hölderlin's poems are inseparable from contemporary events. In the *Introduction* we noted the global potential of the French Revolution that echoes in *As when on a holiday ...* where a new time transcending "the gods of the west and orient […] is now awake with the sound of arms" (V 22–23). This opens up Hölderlin's nationalism to an international stage. One thinks of the "genius of the people"[21] (V 25) prophesised in *To the Germans* who looks forward to the French hero *Rousseau* who grasped "the language of the gods."[22] (V 32)

But what is most contemporary about Hölderlin's poems is their critique of reckless egoism that alienates nature and human life. In particular, his songs confront the desolation that results from such tyranny. In *Bread and Wine* the poet sadly confesses that he has often thought that it would be "better to sleep, than to be without companions" (V 120): "Thus waiting and what to do and say meanwhile,/I do not know and why poets in a desolate time?"[23] (V 121–122) In *The Vocation of the Poet* the loss of earth and humanity is connected to the modern tendency to reduce nature to abstract pictures and numbers. "Too long already has everything sacred been useful/And all the powers of heaven squandered, misused"[24] (V 45–46). Exploitation of nature is associated with "a clever race"[25] (V 48) and the invention of new visual technology. Being "thankless" (V 47) to earth and community, greedy individuals with unhinged eyes presume to know natural phenomena and the cosmos upon which they "sp[y]" (V 50), as when they peer through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[t] and/Nam[e] the stars of heaven with names."[26] (V 51–52)

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[16] Ibid. p. 328.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid. p. 330.

[19] Ibid. p. 335.

[20] Ibid. p. 337.

[21] Ibid. p. 236.

[22] Ibid. p. 238.

[23] Ibid. p. 290.

[24] Ibid. p. 306.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid. pp. 306–307. Hölderlin's Dionysian-inspired critique of the telescope, we should note, despite its potential relevance to modern visual culture, has been overlooked. See, for instance, U. Stadler, *Der technisierte Blick: Optische Instrumente und der Staus von Literatur. Ein kulturhistorisches Museum* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2002). Although Stadler's work claims to represent a comprehensive picture of German literature and the technologised view, Hölderlin's critical relation to the telescope in The Poet's Vocation, is never mentioned.

In the first section of this chapter, we noted that Hölderlin's earlier work contrasts being "*thankful*" to a Dionysian deity who establishes a democratic "communal sphere" with the "selfish attitude" of industrialists and scientists who are "tyrannical towards nature" (7.1). Although modern humans "tear apart" the natural world, these "clever ones" are no match for "the springs of earth and the morning dew [that] refresh the grove".[27] As this chapter shall show, in *The Poet's Vocation* this critique becomes more focused. The unlimited egoism of money, science and dogmatic Christianity is tied to *the unlimited visualisation of the cosmos* through the rapid development of technologies like the telescope—something that Hölderlin doubtlessly experienced as a student at the *Tübinger Stift* through the spirit of Kepler (7.1).

But this raises the following question: If at the heart of Hölderlin's poetry is a critique of the alienation that accompanies the *visualised chronotope* in the present, then how are we to understand its place within the poetic arc of Hölderlin's revival of myth?

As we have seen in Part I, tragedy is a battleground of competing spatio-temporal forms. On the one hand, there is the egoism of the tyrant and his *monetised* (and *visualised*) being. On the other hand, there is the *aetiological*/*Dionysiac chronotope* of the chorus and its democratic, and hence revolutionary, earthly spirit. And as we have just shown, Hölderlin harnesses the patterns of mystery-cult that are opened out onto the Greek theatre. The poet's attraction to socio-political power of the "staging of myths" (7.1) culminates in his translation of the richest literary source of the *Dionysiac chronotope*, namely Euripides' tragedy *Bacchae*.

But given its link to visual technology, Hölderlin's retrieval of the *visualised chronotope* combines the alienating visual culture of monetised Greece, Christianity and the *Renaissance* into that of his own *enlightened* present. For the first time in the history of art and literature, the socio-political potential of the *Dionysiac chronotope* is elaborated to absorb the modern *visualised chronotope*. In Hölderlin's poetry, two competing space-times from ancient Greece are concentrated into a singular poetic space-time where modern visual alienation is redeemed by a Dionysian vision of earth and community.

On the one hand, the desolation of the present is buried within "the staging" of this compact "new mythology" (7.1). The global spirit of the French Revolution in *As when on a holiday…*—"the acts of the world" (V 30)—is preceded by a Dionysiac paradise that is disguised as a rural German landscape. "[T]he field" (V 1) that the "countryman" (V 2) goes out "to see"[28] (V 1) evokes "the fields" (V 25) of *Oedipus at Kolonus* that drink the "sleepless springs,/That wander from the waters of Cephisus" (V 22–23, 5.1) and, still more strongly, the sacred "field" (V 10) to which Dionysus refers in *Bacchae* where "holy Cadmus […] planted a fig-tree" (V 11) for Semele (6.2). The epiphany of a transformative, "magical light [φῶς]" out of darkness that is central to mystery-cult and *Bacchae* returns in "[t]he cooling

[27] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, Hyperion, *Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 170.

[28] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 239.

lightning-flashes [that] "fell out of the hot [summer] night" (V 3) and which were accompanied by "distant sounding thunder" (V 4).[29]

> The first strophe ends in quiet Dionysian ecstasy. The "river" (V 5) rediscovers the natural limit of "its shore"[30] (V 5),
> And the fresh soil flourishes
> And from heaven freshening rain
> Drops on the grapevine and gleaming
> In the quiet suns stand the trees of the meadow.[31] (V 6–9)

But this tone of Dionysian joy gives way to a mood of isolation and melancholy in the second stanza. The image of "fresh soil" that "flourishes [grünt]" (V 6) and glistening "grapevine [Weinstock]" (V 8)—still another reference to Hölderlin's *Bacchae*: the "grape-scent of the grapevine and greenery [des Weinstocks Traubenduft und Grün]"[32] (V 12) with which Dionysus encircles Semele's memorial—recedes as we come upon a solemn picture "of poets" (V 16) who "appear to be alone"[33] (V 17).

The sleepy atmosphere with which the second strophe ends awakens to "the spiritualisation" (V 26) of the third strophe: The new "day" (V 19) that has been growing invisibly "under the plants"[34] (V 15). Desolate darkness is interrupted by another epiphany of light. "A fire kindled in the souls of poets"[35] (V 31) repeats the lightning that "fell" out of the dark summer night. As we have noted, the revolution for which the community of poets patiently "waited"[36] (V 19) is tied to the subterranean powers of earth that eyes cannot see, calculate or control. Insofar as it opposes a tyrannical "master" (V 11), "divinely beautiful nature" (V 13) kindles a Dionysian "holy ray" (V 47) that connects, as it does in *Bacchae*, "heaven and earth" (V 42) and "gods and humans" (V 48).[37] This sets up the final drama of the poem where Hölderlin harnesses the socio-political potential of "the staging" of Dionysus' birth. The transition from Semele's unlimited eyes and death to the birth of the god models the transition of "poets" (V 57) in a desolate, modern time to the founding of a world.

The Greek-inspired myth of Germany where present-day desolation becomes almost invisible appears in several of Hölderlin's songs. As we have seen, in the

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Hölder*lin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 690.

[33] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 239.

[34] Ibid. "[…] die Begeisterung […]", "Jetzt aber tagts!", and "[…] unter den Pflanzen […]", respectively.

[35] Ibid. p. 240.

[36] Ibid. p. 239.

[37] Ibid. pp. 239–240. "[…] kein Meister […]","[…] die göttlichschöne Natur", "[…] von heiligem Strahl entzündet," "[…] Himmel und Erde […]", and "[…] Götter und Menschen […]", respectively.

elegy *Stuttgard* the modern German city with its "gleaming priestly head" (V 77) and "vine-staff" (V 78) mirrors Thebes at the end of *Bacchae* as a newly born mystic devotee. As if to complete the cycle of mystic initiation, Hölderlin transfigures egoism and isolation into luminous and chthonic communality:

> Only one thing matters for the day, the fatherland and into the sacrifice's
> Festive flame everyone throws his own.
> Therefore the communal god rustling crowns our hair,
> And wine dissolves our selfish sense, like pearls.[38] (V 29–32)

The Dionysiac paradise "green with ivy" (V 27) that we saw in the ode *Heidelberg* seems as if to follow the shattering of Pentheus' royal house in *Bacchae*. Only after he invokes the "fated fortress" (V 22) once "torn apart" (V 23) by an epiphany of lightning and thunder does the poet greet "the eternal sun"[39] (V 24) and vibrant, pulsating earth that still encircle the staggering structure.

But as we have seen, Hölderlin's poems remain connected to the present. And it is the unmistakable sign of disenchantment with modern life chiselled into the centre of his Greek-inspired "new mythology" (5.1) from which these songs derive their unique place in art and socio-politics. The "[p]recious springtime of Greece" (V 272) in *The Archipelago* fated to return "when our autumn comes" (V 272–273) is preceded by the poet-initiate, *der Geweihtere* (V 221), seeking to limit his endless "wanderings"[40] (V 211) through a modern time of unlimited egoism and isolation. No longer connected to "[o]ne spirit all together" (V 240),

> [e]ach individual is nailed alone
> To his own affairs, in the din of his workplace
> Hearing only himself and caught up in an insane labour,
> With a violent hand, restless, but always and forever
> Bringing about nothing, like the Furies, from the toil of his hands.[41] (V 242–246)

The threat to human existence by money and modern industrialisation is absorbed into the *Dionysiac chronotope*, which bears the fragrant scent of Eleusis. Individualism alienated from earth and community is transformed a "flowering land" (V 263),

> […] where upon sunny plains
> Noble corn and fruit ripens, there at the festival wreathed
> Happily the pious ones the pious ones also, and upon the hill of the city gleams,
> Humane dwelling, the heavenly halls of joy.[42] (V 263–266)

The myth that "the mountains of German/Land are the mountains of the Muses" (V 35–36) in *To the Germans* is haunted by mortal isolation in the present (V 18–20).[43] In particular, the poet has still to witness "the act" (V 6) that, "like the beam of light that comes out of dark clouds" (V 6), shall liberate present-day Germans "lack-

[38] Ibid. p. 282.

[39] Ibid. p. 242.

[40] Ibid. p. 260.

[41] Ibid. p. 261.

[42] Ibid. p. 262.

[43] Ibid. p. 236.

ing-in-action" (V 4).[44] The radiant image of "free/Clear spiritual joy" (V 39–40) gives way to a bleak picture of individual finitude. Hölderlin accents that which "a mortal eye" (V 44), despite its efficiency in "seeing and counting" (V 42) the "number of years" (V 42) that belong to an individual life, cannot see, namely the transcendent "years of peoples" (V 43).[45] This implicitly fuses the horror of individual eyes that repress communal time with the horror of industrial compartmentalisation that is inseparable from modern capitalism, for instance, in the "nail[ing]" of "[e]ach individual […] to his own affairs, in the noise of his compartment" (V 242–246).

As we have noted, the ode *To the Germans* leads to *Rousseau*. This means that the "desolate shores"[46] (V 47) upon which *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* shatter return in the visual desolation about which Hölderlin's hymn *The Rhine* coalesces. The poet's invocation of Rousseau leads to a mystic transition from *tragic* to *Dionysian seeing*. This becomes clear when we consider the cycles of light through which Hölderlin's creates "a new [aetiological] mythology" of the German river. The dark shade of "ivy" (V 1) in the first line of the hymn contrasts "the golden midday" (V 2) that descends to a "secret [Geheim]" (V 8), earthly "source"[47] (V 3) below. Descending rays of sunlight give way to a "lightless" (V 49) abyss "within the mountains,/Deep under its silvery peaks"[48] (V 16–17). In "the coldest abyss" (V 22) occurs a ritual transformation. On the one hand, the experience of the nascent demigod who seeks "liberation" (V 23) from a "place" (V 28) that "was terrible"[49] (V 29) resembles "the staging" of mythic despair that is opened out in tragedy (2). "[F]or he lightless/Writhed in the shackles,/The frenzy of the demigod […]"[50] (V 29–31) recalls the dark tone of mythical events like youthful Dionysus struggling for his life against the Titans, and the adaption of such gruesome death-struggles and dismemberments to theatre. One thinks of Pentheus devoured by kin, Oedipus cutting out his eyes and Dionysus shackled within a dark cell in *Bacchae* (2).

On the other hand, this image of absolute darkness is transfigured into a cosmic (vertical) axis of light whose epiphany limits the unlimited restlessness and despair of the suffering godlike being (5.1). The German river (V 33) emerges after a "ray of light" (V 52) greets "the newly born one"[51] (V 53). This coincides with the demigod's implicit unity of mortals and immortals and heaven and earth: as a son of "Mother earth" (V 25) and "the thunderer, who conceived him"[52] (V 26)—a clear reference to Zeus who both fathers and mothers Dionysus (2.3). Now that the

[44] Ibid. p. 236. "Aber kommt, wie der Strahl aus dem Gewölke kommt,/Aus Gedanken vielleicht, geistig und reif die Tat?" and "Tatenarm und gedankenvoll!", respectively.

[45] Ibid. p. 237.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid. p. 328.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid. p. 329.

[52] Ibid. p. 328.

unlimited suffering has been limited, "[t]he feely born Rhine"[53] (V 33) may set out "[w]andering quietly through German lands" (V 85) and, like Dionysus in *Bacchae*, found German "cities" (V 89).

But in the tenth strophe we stumble across visual desolation. While meditating on "demigods" (V 135), Hölderlin turns to "Rousseau" (V 139) and his speech "from holy abundance/As the wine-god, whimsically divine" (V 144–145) and who "without law gives the language of the purest"[54] (V 146). Thinking of the recent public burnings of Rousseau's *Émile* and *Contrat social*, Hölderlin declares that the epiphany of Dionysian speech is "[u]derstandable to the good ones, but justly/ Strikes the heedless ones with blindness/The unholy slaves […]"[55] (V 147–149) The critique of money and rapid industrialisation and their association with isolated, individual eyes now includes Hölderlin's earlier criticism of Christian dogma. Whereas Hyperion declared Germany to be filled with "priests, but no humans" (7.1), the poet of *The Rhine* gestures to a godlike being, "as the wine-god" Dionysus in *Bacchae*, who battles against the unlimited egoism and its symptom of religious dogmatism.

The violent "blindness" (V 148) to which Hölderlin refers absorbs the inauthentic vision of dogmatic Christianity into the *Dionysiac chronotope*. This is clear in the transition from the absence of the godlike "stranger"[56] (V 149) to the following strophe: "Where the ray does not burn,/In the shadow of the forest/At Lake Bienne in fresh green […]" (V 161–163), among the enchanting "tones" (V 164) of "nightingales"[57] (V 165). Concentrating Rousseau's *Rêveries* from Lake Bienne[58] and the nightingale's song from the Dionysiac paradise glimpsed in *Oedipus at Kolonus* (7.1), Hölderlin transfigures the suffering of mystic blindness into a "more mild light"[59] (V 169).

The cosmic (vertical) axis of heaven and earth is reasserted through "the wedding of humans and gods" (V 180), which alongside "flowers [that] rejoice/In the unthreatening glow"[60] (V 179–180), completes the final cycle of light. The recurrence of the *Dionysiac chronotope* is further accented in Hölderlin's evocation of Socrates as the "wise one" (V 206) who "is capable/From midday to midnight/And until the morning gleams/To remain awake at the feast."[61] (V 206–209) Gesturing to Plato's *Symposium*, the source of the poet's magical "Diotima", Hölderlin reinvents the philosopher as a guardian of mystic knowledge, where mystic knowledge includes the transition from the Christian dogmatism and blindness of modern time

[53] Ibid. p. 329.

[54] Ibid. p. 332.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] In regard to Rousseau's corresponding statement in the 5. Promenade der *Rêveries* du *promeneur solitaire* during his brief stay at Lake Bienne (1765): "One enjoys oneself like God".

[59] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 332.

[60] Ibid. p. 333.

[61] Ibid. p. 334.

to a true religion of community and earth. This is illustrated by the riddling formulae that sees "happiness" (V 205), given the modern blindness it must overcome, as "more difficult" (V 205) to bear than "unhappiness"[62] (V 204).

The *Dionysiac chronotope* similarly absorbs the absence of the sacred in modern time in *Germania*. As we have seen, the lack of "[t]he gods who have fled" (V 17) yields to the epiphany of a "priestess" (V 110) and her sacred "holidays" (V 109). But here the loss of religion is more clearly, if implicitly, tied to capitalism and its tendency toward homogenisation and individual isolation. In a letter from 4 December 1801 to Casmir Böhlendorf, Hölderlin points out after considering his friend's novel, which he significantly names "a *real* modern tragedy":

> For that is the tragic among us, that we disappear from the kingdom of the living quietly packed in to some casket or other, not that we, consumed by flames, atone for the flame that we were unable to contain.[63]

Modern corpses "packed in to some casket or other" recalls modern workers "nailed alone/To his own affairs, in the din of his workplace" (V 242–243). At the centre of this desolation is the absence of transformative mystic "flames" that unite the living to the otherworldly.

In *Germania* the sharp absence of "[t]he gods who have fled" (V 17) is neutralised by the epiphany athat "glimmers now around our doubting heads"[64] (V 26). The magical light reveals itself from the darkness of modern time no longer connected to the sacred, which Hölderlin dresses up in mythic clothing:

> For when it's over, and day's light extinguished,
> The priest is the first to be struck, but lovingly
> The temple and the image follow him and also his cult
> Into the dark land, and none of them may now shine.[65] (V 20–23)

The conquering of godlessness that looks forward to "Germania"[66] (V 110) is articulated through the *Dionysiac chronotope*. Out of the unholy darkness wafts a mystical "golden smoke" (V 25), "as from a funeral pyre" (V 24), that reconnects mortals to immortality. Gestures to the global socio-political power of Dionysus' mystery-cult—"So that even into the orient/One may look and be moved by the many transformations there."[67] (V 37–38) evokes the journey of the Greek god to the east in *Bacchae*—opens up a cosmic (vertical) axis of authentic seeing that limits the restless wanderings of a godless, modern night: "But down from the aether falls/The true image […]"[68] (V 39–40)

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[62] Ibid. pp. 333–334.

[63] *Friedrich Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente*, hg. J. Schmidt (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker 1992) p. 460.

[64] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 335.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid. p. 337.

[67] Ibid. p. 335.

[68] Ibid.

As we have noted, *Bread and Wine* also confronts the desolation of modern time through "the wine-god's holy priests" (V 123) who, like Dionysus in *Bacchae*, "draw on from land to land in the holy night."[69] (V 124) This modern wasteland etched into the centre of the song interrupts the magic of the Dionysian night that Hölderlin retrieves during the previous six strophes.

And already here the *Dionysiac chronotope* absorbs the echo of *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes*. After reducing nature to money and then selling off its products, that is, after being "emptied of grapes and flowers" (V 5), "the busy marketplace rests" (V 6) and "a sensible head weighs profit and loss/Well contented at home"[70] (V 4–5). The dissolution of clarity associated with the counting of money extends to *spatialised time*. The fading voice of "the watchman, minding the hour, calls out the number [Zahl]."[71] (V 12)

> Now also a breeze comes and excites the peaks of the grove,
> Look! and the shadow-image of our earth, the moon
> Comes secretly [geheim] now also; the intoxicated one, the night comes,
> Full of stars and little concerned with us,
> Gleams the astonishing one there, the stranger among humans
> Over mountain peaks rising sadly and gloriously.[72] (V 12–18)

The epiphany of the magical grove and Dionysian night that neutralise the daily exchange and calculation of money—whose unlimited essence is blind to a cosmic (vertical) axis and thus lends itself to endless wanderings—is followed by a critique of abstract philosophy, in particular that of Kant.

> Wondrous is the gift of the most sublime one and no one
> Knows from where or what she bestows on one.
> So she moves the world and the hopeful souls of humans,
> Even a wise man does not understand, what she prepares, […][73] (V 19–22)

The formulation: "Even the wise one does not understand, what she prepares […]" (V 22) recalls Hamann's claim, pointed at abstract philosophers such as Kant, that "[n]o one, not even the philosopher, can unfold the fingers" (6.2).

Bread and Wine thus begins with the *Dionysiac chronotope* transfiguring a visual culture of egoism inseparable from money and abstraction. The clarity of unlimited seeing peculiar to the individual, "sensible head" (V 4) who, having returned from "the bustling marketplace" (V 6) now "emptied of grapes and flowers" (V 5), counts his "profit" (V 4), and the unlimited seeing peculiar to the Kantian abstractions of the "wise one" (V 22) are dumbstruck (and thus limited) "meanwhile" (V 25) to a "clear eye [that] also loves shadows […]"[74] (V 25). Here the development of a Dionysian space-time is exceptional. "And give us forgetting and sacred-drunkenness,

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[69] Ibid. p. 290.

[70] Ibid. p. 285.

[71] Ibid. p. 286.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[…]"[75] (V 33) evokes the language of the blind prophet Tieresias in *Bacchae* who describes Dionysus as the god who "brings sleep and forgetting to everyday suffering"[76] (V 282).

But as we have seen, the *Dionysiac chronotope* that transports us to "[…] where the open sea rustles/At Parnassus and snow glistens on Delphic rocks" (V 49–50) stumbles across the desolation of a modern time no longer in balance with nature and community. The verdant "mountain wilds of Kithairon" (V 51) yield to a wasteland of egoism and blindness that underlie an unlimited visual culture: our "desolate time" (V 122) of money and intellectual calculation that foolishly devours earth and shared experience.

In the CONCLUSION we shall discuss Hölderlin's poetic syncretism of Dionysus and Christ, and the poet's relation to Christianity in general. The synthesis of Greek and Christian demigods is not without interest. But given the neglect in Hölderlin scholarship of Dionysus, specifically Dionysus in *Bacchae*—although quick to identify "the Syrian" (V 156) in the final strophe as Jesus, Hölderlin scholars fail to note that Dionysus raises "the flaming pine-torch on his thyrsus, like the smoke of *Syrian* incense"[77] (V 144–145) in Euripides' tragic play—I shall here limit myself to the more difficult, powerful and original spirit of Greece.

Similar to his other poems, *Bread and Wine* neutralises the desolation of modern time by re-establishing a cosmic (vertical) axis, here in the "tokens" (V 132) that "the divine chorus left behind"[78] (V 132). "Bread [as] the fruit of earth [and which is] blessed by light,/And from the thundering god […] the joy of wine"[79] (V 137–138) gesture to a future homecoming of the gods and thus the end of homelessness in the present. This leads Hölderlin to Dionysus' cosmic significance at the end of Sophocles' *Antigone*. Whereas the Sophoclean chorus invokes Dionysus to come to purify with dancing the polluted people of Thebes (V 1116–1152) and names the god, imagined in various places, as "chorus-leader of fire-breathing stars"[80] (V 1144–1145), the final (ninth) strophe of Hölderlin's elegy begins by celebrating Dionysus who "[l]eads the stars of heaven upward and down eternally/Forever happy"[81] (V 144–145).

The *Dionysiac chronotope* is elaborated to absorb and transform the "desolate time" (V 122) of the present. The darkness to which eyes that calculate money and abstract thought—and therefore tend to alienate earth and community—lead is redeemed by the epiphany of a luminous demigod crowned with "ivy" (V 146) who "brings the trace of the gods who have fled/Down to the godless below, into

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Euripides, *Bacchae, in Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 303.

[77] Ibid. p. 297. Emphasis added.

[78] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 290.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 229.

[81] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt pp. 290–291.

the midst of their gloom."[82] (V 147–148) Similar to Dionysus who liberates himself from a dark prison cell and then his desolate and blind initiates in *Bacchae* (2), the "torch-bearer" (V 155) with which *Bread and Wine* culminates, who "into our gloom bears his torch" (V 156), excites "a smile from imprisoned/Souls" (V 157–158) that "lights up" (V 158) alongside "eyes [that] thaw out from the light"[83] (V 158).

The final transition from *tragic* to *Dionysian seeing* coincides with the rebirth of the unity of gods and humans. The final verse of *Bread and Wine* invokes the gentleness of "[e]ven the envious one, even Cerberus" (V 160) who also "drinks and sleeps."[84] (V 160) This evocation of Horace's picture of the fierce guardian of the underworld gently fawning on the departing Dionysus[85] ties the experience of authentic seeing to the conquest of the horror of individual finitude. As "one and the same as Hades",[86] Dionysus is uniquely "dual-formed", *dímorphos*.[87] He has the power to enter into and transfigure death.

To conclude this chapter, we return to where Hölderlin retrieves the *Dionysiac chronotope* while explicitly gesturing to the *visualised chronotope*. As we have seen, *The Vocation of the Poet* similarly stumbles across the desolation of modern time, in particular the exploitation of nature: "Too long already has everything sacred been useful/And all the powers of heaven squandered, misused" (V 45–46). The consuming of earth's resources is connected to modern visual culture whose self-isolation and egoism knows nothing of earth and community: "a clever race" (V 48) and their rapid inventions of visual technology presume to know natural phenomena and the cosmos upon which they "sp[y]" (V 50), as when they look through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[t] and/Nam[e] the stars of heaven with names." (V 50–52)

> Before stumbling across the desolation of the *visualised chronotope* in the present, Hölderlin begins his song with the epiphany of a Dionysian space-time:
> The Ganges shores heard the god of joy
> Triumph, as when coming from the Indus the all-conquering
> Young Bacchus came with holy
> Wine waking the people from sleep.[88] (V 1–4)

Still more explicit than his other poems, the interruption of the poet, whose sacred "task" (V 13) is to celebrate the cosmic (vertical) axis of nature and the gods

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[82] Ibid. p. 291.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Horace, Odes 2.19, in *Horace, Odes and Epodes*, ed. N. Rudd (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2004) pp. 134–136. Here we might also note that Hölderlin translated Horace' odes and that in his translations we come across "Jupiter" (V 21), "fruitful Bacchus", *fruchtbare[r] Bacchus* (V 22), as well as "Melpomene" (V 1), which together betray one of the key sources of Hölderlin's familiarity with the ancient Greek understanding of Dionysus as the god of music, dance and language. *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt pp. 682–684.

[86] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Diels and Kranz, B15.

[87] Diodorus, *Bibliotheca historica*, 4.5.2, in *Diodorus of Sicily*, *The Library of History*, *Oldfather, Books II.35-IV.58* p. 354.

[88] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 305.

(V 13–25),[89] is connected to the egoism and immorality that accompanies a world of unlimited money:

> You exploit the spirit and mock
> Its kind presence, and betray
> This good soul, heartlessly, and, to make
> A little money, bait it like a captured animal.[90] (V 37–40)

The danger of visual technology is preceded by the danger of money that also exploits the resources of earth and neglects humankind. This is clear in the phase "to make/A little money", *zum Spiele/Feil* (V 39–40). The old German word that Hölderlin turns to—*feil*—evokes both *käuflich* and *korrupt*, and thus refers to that which is "purchasable" and "corrupt". Furthermore, that Hölderlin is making direct reference to the dangers of unlimited "profit seeking", *Gewinnsucht*, is made still more clear in a few verses from the first version of this poem. Here he speaks of "the ones who do not understand", *die Unverständigen*, who are associated with the evils of "despicable gold", *schnödem Gold*.[91] Alongside the absorption of earth and community into the unlimited visual culture is therefore their absorption also into an unlimited monetary culture.

The coincidence of the *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* in Hölderlin's poetry is also clear when we return to the "clever race" (V 48) of modern humans who presume to know the cosmos upon which they "sp[y]" (V 50). As we have noted, Hölderlin turns to "[t]he telescope" (V 51) though which it "scans … and counts [späht … und zählt] and/Names the stars of heaven with names." (V 50–52) Here "seeing and counting", *sehen und zählen*, evoke individual isolation, as when we are able to "see and count", *sehen und zählen* (V 42) the "number", *Zahl* (V 42), of years that belong to an individual lifespan, while "a mortal eye", *ein sterbliches Auge* (V 44) fails to see communal time, that is, "the years of people" (V 43). Individual isolation is then associated with money and useless intellectual abstraction that are absorbed by the *Dionysiac chronotope*. The "sensible head" (V 4) from the marketplace that "weighs profit and loss/Well contented at home" (V 4–5) is linked to "the number", *die Zahl* (V 12) that "the watchman, minding the hour, call out" (V 12), both of which are then neutralised by the epiphany of the Dionysian night.

Monetary and visual space-times are conquered in Hölderlin's poetry by the re-establishment of the vertical (cosmic) axis of the *Dionysiac chronotope* that transcends what individual eyes can see, calculate and control. "From aether but falls/ The true image and legends of the gods rain/Innumerable [Unzählbare] down from it, […]"[92] (V 39–41) The "desolate time", *dürftig*[*e*] *Zeit* (V 122), is transformed into the Dionysian "holidays" (V 109) of "[t]he non-desolate ones", [*d*]*ie unbedürftigen* (V 107–108).

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[89] Ibid. pp. 305–306.

[90] Ibid. p. 306.

[91] Ibid. p. 781.

[92] Ibid. p. 337.

But perhaps because of its direct confrontation with the danger of visual technology—something that we have still to confront in the twenty-first century—*The Vocation of the Poet* absorbs the *visualised chronotope* into a *Dionysiac chronotope* that remains incomplete. At the end of the ode the poet leaves us in the absence of god. On the one hand, we remain within the programmatic spirit of mystery-cult that is opened out in tragedy. The blindness of the suffering mystic initiand transferred to tyrants on stage such as the forlorn Oedipus (1) that enable the final transition into a luminous Dionysiac paradise, as illustrated by Hölderlin's translation of *Oedipus at Kolonus* (5.1), echoes in the following verses: "But the father covers with holy night,/So that we may remain, the eyes."[93] (V 53–54) Although we are abandoned to the absence of god, the promise of his epiphany remains. Thus we moderns wait "until god's absence helps."[94] (V 64)

On the other hand, the dreadful absence of the god in the present is a problem. In particular, the broken relation to the sacred in modern time betrays our failure to limit the unlimited egoism of money and visual culture that alienate humankind from nature and itself. That Hölderlin continued to see such unlimited desires that tear at the core of earth and community as an enduring danger in the present, if costumed in a Greco-Germanic myth, is clear. One thinks of the newly born Rhine who, "like lightning" (V 73), threatened "[t]o split the earth"[95] (V 73–74) by plunging back into the motherly abyss from which he sprang. And that Hölderlin also continued to see Greece as a way redeeming this danger is clear in his return to tragedy, in particular Sophocles' *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone*, to which we now turn.

[93] Ibid. p. 307.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ibid. p. 330.

Chapter 9
The Dionysiac Chronotope (1802–1804 and After)

Abstract Chapter 9 looks at Hölderlin's translations of and commentaries on Sophocles' Oedipus the Tyrant and Antigone. In an instance of unparalleled textual (and artistic) creativity, the image that the poet invented from his previous retrieval of Dionysus' spirit—in particular the modern use of visual media (such as the telescope) to exploit earth's resources for profit—is fused with a dynamic, original representation in Greece. The dreadful spirit of isolated, monetised eyes that fix instrumental pictures of the cosmos with modern visual technology coalesces about the ancient tyrannical spirit of Oedipus, as when the tyrant (unconsciously) initiates a mystical revelation of the truth (and horror) of his own blindness. To conclude, the chapter shows how this unparalleled retrieval of Dionysian Greece reappears in Hölderlin's final poems and his last years of lucidity.

Keywords Sophocles · *Oedipus the Tyrant* · *Antigone* · Visual media · Money

9.1 *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone*

It is not surprising that Hölderlin returned to Sophocles in 1802. As Johann Voss' translations of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in 1793 remind us, fascination with Greek poetry had been increasing in Germany during the late eighteenth century. And as a letter from a friend in November 1802 shows, Hölderlin had never abandoned his dialogue with Sophocles since his own translation of *Oedipus at Kolonus* from 1796 (7.1).[1] Nevertheless, the new rendering of the two tragedies *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone*, a version of which had already completed by September 1803,[2] represents the only time when Hölderlin explicitly (and thoroughly) confronts the oppositional forces out of which tragedy is born: the *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes*, on the one hand, and the *Dionysiac chronotope*, on the other hand. Because of this, the new, sustained turn to the battle between tyrants (with devouring eyes) and the communal spirit of earth must be understood within the changing historical context to which Hölderlin belongs.

[1] Böschenstein, *"Übersetzungen"*, in *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, Kreuzer p. 280.
[2] Ibid.

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To be sure, this glance backward in search of a true leader is a response to the image of false leadership that plagues the present. It must have been hard for Hölderlin who had once compared Napoléon to the "untouched […] spirit of nature"[3] (V 7), and who had recently waited in the cold, early morning hours of 9 January 1802 in Lyon for the French hero (who was then rapidly making his way back from Egypt to Paris),[4] to witness Napoléon degenerate into a tyrant by the end of 1802. The void of authentic leadership, coupled with the continued "cleansing of the Rhine",[5] and this includes the secularisation of the territories of Baden and Württemberg in 1803,[6] holds open the way, painful though it is, for an exploration of the socio-politics of Greek religion.

When we consider the scope of Hölderlin's project—he originally intended to translate all of Sophocles' tragedies, and even asked Goethe to stage one of his translations in Weimar[7]—along with the *Notes* that the poet made in regard to both of the plays that he did in fact translate,[8] it becomes clear that this return to the theatre of the remote, ancient past is for the sake of transforming Hölderlin's society *in the present*. The profound reflection on socio-political change in his time is thus a deepening of Hölderlin's earlier interests. Attraction to the structure and temporal order of the artwork, precisely what is lacking in "modern poetry",[9] leads to a reiteration of the importance of "the staging of myths" (7.1). In his *Notes to Antigone* Hölderlin demands: "We must represent myths more *convincingly*."[10] As victims of the unlimited (visualised) desire that accompanies money, human beings urgently require a new form of art, in particular a new style of poetry, with "limits".[11] And to facilitate the rebirth of such an artwork with real socio-political power and the "more humane time"[12] that it shall establish, Hölderlin sets sail on his most distant voyage to the magical and unexplored mystical depths of Sophoclean tragedy.

Whereas his earlier translations of Greek poetry touch upon the emergence of money—we have noted Hölderlin's translation of Pindar's *eleventh Pythian ode*: "O Muse, it is yours, if you/have bound yourself to wages, to provide/The silvered voice, at different places/In different ways abundantly." (V 63–66; 6B)—, his translations of *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone* now explicitly confront the *monetised*

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[3] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 374.

[4] *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer p. 16.

[5] F. Engelhardt, *Als Bingen zu Frankreich gehörte* (Bingen am Rhein: A. Engelhardt 1979) p. 256.

[6] Böschenstein, *"Übersetzungen"*, in *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer p. 521.

[7] *Hölderlin's Sophocles. Oedipus & Antigone*, trans. D. Constantine (Taset: Bloodaxe Books, 2001) pp. 7–8.

[8] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 849, 914.

[9] Ibid. p. 849.

[10] Ibid. p. 916.

[11] Ibid. p. 849.

[12] Ibid. p. 919.

chronotope. After presuming that the previous king was murdered for "silver"[13] (V 123), Oedipus accuses Teiresias of having "eyes only/For profit [Gewinn]"[14] (V 392–393), and Kreon of seeking his throne with "money"[15] (V 549). As we have seen, the tyrant's obsession with precious metal leads the chorus—despairing before the perverse celebration of wealth (kérdos), *hubris* and impiety—to cry out: "Are such actions to be honoured?/What should I sing?"[16] (V 912–913; 2) Similar to Oedipus, Kreon in *Antigone* accuses Teiresias of having "sold [his] soul for money"[17] (V 338), and goes as far as to say that the blind prophet is secretly "purchas[ing] electrum from Sardis"[18] (V 1076–1077; 4.1). By the end of the *Antigone*, it is clear that tyrant is projecting his desire for individual gain (kérdos) onto others (V 1096–1097; 1).[19]

On the one hand, the many references we come across in Hölderlin's translation of Sophocles to the "disgraceful profit"[20] (V 1097) of money-tyrants and the tragic isolation to which they succumb recalls the "clever race" (V 48) of modern humans from his earlier poetry (7.1, 8). Having "become more barbaric through industry", humans today are even more "tyrannical towards nature" (7.1). The compartmentalised individual of the present, "nailed alone/To his own affairs, in the din of his workplace/Hearing only himself, and caught up in an insane labour" (V 242–244), and who exploits the resources of earth "to make/A little money" (V 39–40; 8) is therefore elaborated in the figure of the Sophoclean money-obsessed tyrant. This ties modern humans ruled by precious metal during the emergence of industrialisation to the Herakleitean cosmos of unlimited homogeneity and circularity during the emergence of money in ancient Greece (7.2)—and this means to the terrifying, single homogeneous mass—one thinks of Sophocles' gesture to an incestuous origin—to which money and industrialisation lead (6.1).[21]

But as we have seen, although Hölderlin's poetry touches upon the danger of egoism that emerges from the unlimited essence of money, he is concerned first with a psychical symptom that accompanies this danger, namely the danger of eyes that know no limit. The greedy individuals of the present who exploit nature "to make/A little money" (V 39–40) reduce the earth and its resources to a picture that they can calculate, control and exchange for a profit, as when they "sca[n]/With

[13] Ibid. p. 793.

[14] Ibid. p. 803.

[15] Ibid. p. 809.

[16] Ibid. pp. 822–823.

[17] Ibid. p. 872.

[18] Ibid. p. 899.

[19] Ibid. p. 900.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 325. "In *Septem* the fratricides return to their incestuous origin, a circularity that is one aspect of the maximisation of homogeneity. Three generations of a family are assimilated to a single homogeneous mass. The central opposition, between Eteokles and Polyneikes, is in the finale endowed with as much unity as it is possible to endow human beings with. This combination of the unity of opposites with spatio-temporal homogeneity and circularity, resembles the monetised chronotope to be found in Herakleitos. 9D, 13 A."

the telescope and coun[t] and/Nam[e] the stars of heaven with names." (V 50–52; 8) Given the socio-political potential of Dionysus' epiphany that precedes this turn to the danger of money and its coincidental visual culture (8)—and given Hölderlin's persistent attraction to the mystic conquest of Pentheus in *Bacchae* (7.1, 8), this critique of *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* recalls that which we find in Euripides' tragic play. As we have seen, Dionysus deconstructs the tyrant's reduction of mystery-cult to a private picture that he can purchase (3.3). And as we have also seen, Hölderlin's adaption of this ancient critique of *monetised* seeing that is disconnected from earth and community is itself an adaption of Dionysian myth and ritual that questioned reckless eyes, for instance, in the tragic death of Semele.

In his Sophocles translations Hölderlin returns to the critique of reckless eyes in myth and ritual. "[T]he lightning-struck mother"[22] (V 1188) at the end of *Antigone* evokes the individual death to which Semele succumbs not only in his Pindar and *Bacchae* translations (7.2), but also in his first Pindaric poem *As when on a holiday*…. Because "she desired/To see the god made visible, [Zeus'] lightning-flash [fell] on Semele's house" (V 50–51; 8). And just as Semele's *tragic seeing* is adapted to express that of Pentheus in *Bacchae*, Sophocles' tragedies open out the *tragic seeing* of mystery-cult to express the *monetised vision* of tyrants who reduce nature and human life to pictures that which they can calculate, control and exchange.

Like a mystic initiand suddenly caught off guard by the terrifying image of his surroundings during the first phase of ritual (2.1), the emergence of the tyrant at the beginning of the tragic play coincides with this individual's confrontation with the wasteland of the *pólis* in which he finds himself. "For the city that you see"[23] (V 22), the priest explains to Oedipus,

> [i]s already toppling, greatly, and can raise its head
> Out of the abyss no more and the red wave.
> She notices death in beakers of fruitful earth [chthonós]
> In herds and unborn birth
> Of women; and fire from within
> Brings the god of the plague and empties Kadmos' house;
> Hell becomes rich in sobbing and wailing[24] (V 22–29)

As we have just seen—and also like a mystic initiand resisting ritual during the first phase of mystic initiation (2)—, the *monetised* brain of the tyrant wildly resists the image of communal and earthly desolation by projecting his all-consuming vision of money onto everyone and everything. Given the primal affinity between precious metal and the organ of sight (3.2), the tyrant appeals to a style of seeing that is alienated from community and earth. This dislocation of the eyes from the other sense-organs of the body is witnessed, for instance, when Oedipus seeks to ease the suffering of the city by celebrating "King Apollo!"[25] (V 79) just before Kreon returns

[22] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 904.

[23] Ibid. p. 789.

[24] Ibid. pp. 789–790.

[25] Ibid. p. 791.

with a message from Apollo's oracle. "Surely if he has arrived" (V 79), the tyrant says, "He may come shinning with eyes of salvation [Rettersauge]."[26] (V 79–80)

This is not to shift the responsibility of the tyrant's perverse style of seeing onto the Greek god of light. After Oedipus tears out his eyes, the chorus asks him, "how could you/Stain your eye thus, which demon drove you?"[27] (V 1350–1351) The blind king indeed responds by referring to the divine origin of the curse to which his *monetised* vision has succumbed: "It was Apollo, Apollo, o friends,/Who brought about such misfortune,/Here mine, my sufferings."[28] (V 1352–1354) But Oedipus then casts light on the mortal origin of his self-dismemberment: "But I the suffering one" (V 1357), he says, "[w]hat should I see,/To whom seeing there was nothing sweet to look upon."[29] (V 1357–1358) As we have noted, the tyrant makes it clear already at the beginning of the play that the "eyes of salvation [Rettersauge]" (V 80) which he celebrates are none other than his own. Investigation into the primal scene of the past to redeem the communal and earthly desolation in the present is predicated upon self-isolating, *monetised* eyes. After hearing of the dark secret buried within the Sphinx' songs, the tyrant snaps: "Then from the beginning I will illuminate it [will aber ichs beleuchten (*egò phanò*)]."[30] (V 131; 132; 2.1)

As we have noted, Hölderlin's poetry before his Sophocles translations connects "profit", *Gewinn* (V 4) and "number", *Zahl* (V 12), with a style of seeing that is haunted by the isolation and horror of mortality (7). Although we can "see and count", *sehen und zählen* (V 42) the "number", *Zahl* (V 42), of years that belong to an individual lifespan, the "mortal eye", *sterbliches Auge* (V 44) remains isolated from communal time, that is, "the years of people" (V 43; 8). The association between money, number and *tragic seeing* is explicit in *The Poet's Vocation*. Here "a clever race" (V 48) of modern money-tyrants and heartless scientists who have "squandered, misused" (V 46) the resources of earth and community "to make/A little money" (V 39–40) uses new visual technologies such as the "[t]he telescope" (V 51) as it "scans … and counts [späht … und zählt] and/Names the stars of heaven with names." (V 50–52; 8)

In his translations of *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone* Hölderlin reunites modern *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* with their original, ancestral forms in Greece. Oedipus' accusation that Teiresias has "eyes only/For profit", *der Gewinn*/*Nur ansieht* (V 392–393) and the despair that the chorus suffers because of Oedipus' obsession with "profit", *Gewinn*[31] (V 906) as well as the critical gestures to "profit", *Gewinn*[32] (V 1097, 1077), in *Antigone* are inseparable from tyrants whose reckless, calculating eyes recalls those of modern time (8). Just as Kreon projects his desire for money onto others, the tyrant projects also his questionable style of calculation

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid. p. 841.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid. pp. 841–842.

[30] Ibid. p. 793.

[31] Ibid. p. 822.

[32] Ibid. p. 900.

onto the messenger, as when the he asks him: "Why do you calculate [rechnest] the place of my misery?"[33] (V 334) And as if embodying "the clever race" of heartless capitalists and scientists who, "to make/A little money" (V 39–40), use visual technology such as the "[t]he telescope" (V 51) as it "*scans* … and counts [**späht** … und zählt] and/Names the stars of heaven with names" (V 50–52), Oedipus declares at the beginning of his tragedy that he intends to "*scan* every story.", *Denn alle Worte* ***späh****'ich*.[34] (V 295)

Although similar to the mystic initiand resisting ritual (2.1) the tyrant aggressively resists nature and community—Hölderlin describes "the spirit of Oedipus, all-knowing" as "wrathful"[35]—, the "senseless sense"[36] (V 1317) of his *monetised* vision succumbs to cosmological confusion. In particular, the *visualised*, "spiritually sick questioning and consciousness"[37] of the tyrant leads to the loss of a cosmic (vertical) axis that, in turn, absorbs "desolate time" (V 122; 8) of the present. This is witnessed in the "countless", *zahllos*[38] (V 185), unburied corpses in *Oedipus the Tyrant* that *monetised* eyes cannot calculate and control. And in *Antigone*, the echo of money and counting that one hears in the German verbs "to pay", *zahlen*, and "to count", *zählen*, returns when the blind prophet predicts that Kreon's calculating spirit shall "pay", *zahlen*[39] (V 1108), for a horrific profit, one corpse (Haimon) in exchange for two (Antigone kept alive below and Polyneikes kept dead above).[40]

That the unburied corpse of Polyneikes symbolises the absence of "[t]he gods who have fled" (V 17) from Hölderlin's earlier poetry is further suggested by Teiresias' speech to Kreon:

> Because of your sense the city is sick.
> For the altars and hearths are
> Full with the carrion of birds and dogs,
> Of the fallen son of Oedipus.
> And no longer do the gods accept with sacrifice the prayer
> From us, nor the burning flame;
> Nor does any bird sound clear
> Cries, for they have eaten the fat
> Of dead human blood.[41] (V 1053–1061)

Here cosmological confusion and the communal and earthly desolation to which it leads in myth—one thinks of Persephone's disappearance into Hades that suspends sacrifice—is adapted to express the separation of gods and humans and earth and

[33] Ibid. p. 872.

[34] Ibid. p. 799. Emphasis added.

[35] Ibid. p. 852, 851.

[36] Ibid. p. 909.

[37] Ibid. p. 854.

[38] Ibid. p. 795.

[39] Ibid. p. 901.

[40] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 169.

[41] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 899.

sky that shall worsen under the inauthentic vision of money-obsessed tyrants. As a product of the brave new "(Herakleitean) world of pervasive monetised circulation, in which money is able to obtain the 'seat, nearest to the gods, of highest tyranny'",[42] Kreon projects the false image that he has been "sold" (V 1076) for "profit", *Gewinn*[43] (V 1077). And like a calculating capitalist or heartless scientist, the tyrant alienates the "funeral pyre" (V 24) through which the dead are redeemed. "For that is the tragic" of Polyneikes, that he disappears "from the kingdom of the living quietly" left somewhere "or other, not that" he, being buried in the earth, atones for the curse that he was "unable contain" (8).

The return to tragedy thus renews Hölderlin's sense of how the ancients deconstruct the *visualised chronotope*. Similar to the isolated initiand who stumbles across horrific images during mystic initiation (2.1–2.2), the *monetised* tyrant, although confident in his self-isolating eyes, stumbles into mystic blindness. The "*suffering organs*"[44] of Oedipus are expressed at first with deceptive simplicity. Unknowingly making reference to the tragic story of his father/victim, the tyrant declares, "I know it, I have heard it, but I of course did not see it."[45] (V 104) This visual misidentification, which gestures to Oedipus' inability to truly see, repeats. "I heard it also, nevertheless nobody sees he who saw it."[46] (V 297)

Such deceptively simple foreshadowing of the blindness that plagues the *visualised* brain of the tyrant gives way to actual mystic blindness. In *Antigone* the glowing midday "sun" (V 432) that descends "[f]rom the aether" (V 433) coupled with the epiphany of a dust cloud that arises "[f]rom the soil"[47] (V 434) gestures to a cosmic (vertical) axis that inhibits the messenger from reporting the event with *monetised* clarity to Kreon.[48] That such blindness foreshadows the absolute loss of the tyrant's unhinged eyes is clear. Whereas Kreon shrieks that he shall never look upon "another day"[49] (V 1384), Oedipus, when "the whole comes out clearly" (V 1198), howls: "O light! for the last time I see you now!"[50] (V 1199)

But what is most striking about Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles is, given their concentration of the modern and ancient forms of *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes*, their renewal the socio-political potential of the *Dionysiac chronotope* for the present. As we have seen, reference to "the lightning-struck mother" (V 1188) at the end of *Antigone* continues the poet's dialogue with the tragic

[42] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 331. Sophokles, Fragment p. 88.

[43] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 899.

[44] Ibid. p. 919.

[45] Ibid. p. 792.

[46] Ibid. 799.

[47] Ibid. pp. 875–876.

[48] Here we might note the similarity of shape and horror between the midday sun and mystic mirror (2.1–2.2).

[49] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 911.

[50] Ibid. p. 836.

individual death to which Semele's reckless eyes lead in both myth and cult (2.1–2.2). Also at the end of Hölderlin's *Antigone* we hear of "the awaking/Thyiads" (V 1200–1201), mystics who impersonated "the Nysiads" (V 1189) of Dionysian myth by journeying to Delphi every 2 years to celebrate the biennial holiday of the god under the "hills of Parnassus"[51] (V 1193). And the sacred *dromena* performed by the "Thyiads" (V 1201) who staged the myths of "the Nysiads" (V 1189) every 8 years at Delphi during the festival of *Herois*[52] remind us that the mystic initiates to which *Antigone* gestures harnessed the transition from tragic individual death to a Dionysian afterlife.

But by associating the *monetised* and *visualised* brains of the tyrants of antiquity with those of modern time—for instance, when Oedipus, like a heartless capitalist or scientist peering through new visual technology without limit, declares that he shall "*scan* every story", *Denn alle Worte* ***späh*** *ich* (V 295)—Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles adapt the socio-political power of mystery-cult to confront the desolation of the present. This is shown in his rendering of the "swelling force" (V 960) of the "madness", *manías*[53] (V 959) of the mythical tyrant as "the blossoming rage", *den blühenden Zorn* (V 998), of "madness", *Wahnsinn*[54] (V 997). The unlimited "rage", ***Zorn*** (V 998) of Lykourgos who sought to murder Dionysus and his female initiates is connected with the "clever race" (V 48) of tyrants in modern time who like Oedipus "speak […] in *raging* apprehension [***zorniger*** *Ahnung*…] all-knowing".[55]

And that the transition from *tragic* to *Dionysian seeing* in myth and cult is appropriated for the present is suggested in Hölderlin's translation of the lightless, rocky prison to which Lykourgos s is condemned (V 993–996)—and which implies the victory of "the evian fire", *eúión te pûr* (V 964; 4.3), *das evische Feuer*[56] (V 1001), that the tyrant insanely sought to snuff out. The epiphany of magical Dionysian light (2.3) that overcomes the desolation to which modern eyes glued to visual technology lead is linked to the female mystic initiates of Dionysus who, "having a god

[51] Ibid. p. 905. See Plutarch, *Moralia*, 953d, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, ed. H. Cherniss and W. Helmbold, vol. 12 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001) pp. 272–274; and Plutarch, *Moralia*, 365a, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, Babbit, vol. 5 pp. 86–87. In Orphic Fragment 53 we hear of Dionysus' birth and his early childhood "in the midst of your female attendants." *Poetae Epici Graeci, Testimonia et Fragmenta*, ed. A. Bernabé, vol. 2, Orphicorum *et orphicis similium testimonia et fragmenta, fasciculus 1* (München und Leipzig: K. G. Sauer 2004) pp. 62–63. See also Plutarch, Moralia, 293c, in *Plutarch, Lives*, trans. B. Perrin, vol. 4, *Alcidiades and Coriolanus*, *Lysander and Sulla* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1986) pp. 184–186. And it is significant that there was a Nysa on Parnassus, which is suggested by the scholia to verse p. 1131.

[52] Orphic Fragment p. 44, in *Poetae Epici Graeci, Testimonia et Fragmenta*, Bernabé, vol. 2, *Orphicorum et orphicis similium testimonia et fragmenta, fasciculus* 1 pp. 57–58.

[53] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 222.

[54] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 897.

[55] Ibid. p. 852. Emphasis added.

[56] Ibid. p. 897.

in them", *enthéous*[57] (V 963), [*d*]*es Gottes voll*[58] (V 1001), combine the Dionysian "joyful guardian-spirit", *Freudiger Schutzgeist!* (V 93) of Hölderlin's earlier poetry (5.3) wit the Dionysus of his *Antigone*. The Sophoklean "joyful god", *Freudengott*[59] (V 1169), thus elaborates the poet's earlier gestures to the "god" (V 4) of earth and community who secretly "rules […] in us." (V 5; 8)

This brings us to the heart of Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles: A projection of the wasteland of modern *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* onto the figure of the ancient tyrant who is then neutralised by the mystic blindness that precedes the epiphany of the *Dionysiac chronotope* (3.2–3.3). The "staging" of this "onward progress of the work, the things it has to bring into shape", and this means "the living sense, that cannot be calculated [berechnet]",[60] is illustrated in *Oedipus the Tyrant* in the early gesture to Dionysus that quickly moves into the background. Soon after the chorus cries out to "intoxicated Bacchus, the Evier,/United with the maenads" (V 216–217) to come "[w]ith the gleaming, shinning torch burning"[61] (V 217–218), the modern *monetised* vision of Oedipus begins to dominate the play. Only after the tyrant has torn out his eyes at the very end of the work do we glimpse a gesture to the rebirth a cosmic (vertical) axis, for instance, in the blood flowing from Oedipus' eyes with Jokasta's corpse lying on the ground (V 1276–1281) that evokes not only fertilising liquids of incestuous sexual union, but also rain falling to earth (3.3).

In *Antigone* Hölderlin also achieves a gesture to the much needed socio-political "limits" that a new art-form of poetry can accomplish in the present. References to the epiphany of light scintillating across "Dirce's streams [Bäche]"[62] (V 107) and divine "forgetfulness"[63] (V 156) evoke Dionysus' epiphany in the opening lines of *Bacchae* "at Dirce's forests"[64] (V 5; 5.2) as well as Teiresias' description of Dionysus as the god who "brings sleep and forgetting to everyday suffering" (V 282). This gesture reappears, as we have seen, in the "forgetting and sacred-drunkenness"(V 33) of *Bread and Wine* (8). Following their early invocation of Dionysus' choruses and their nocturnal dance and song (V 155–160), the chorus is nevertheless interrupted by the new "king of the land"[65] (V 161) whose *visualised* mind shall dominate the rest of the play. Only at the very end does the chorus call out to Dionysus to make his epiphany to cleanse the desolate city of the sickness to which the *monetised* and *visualised* thinking of the tyrant has led.

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[57] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 222.

[58] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 897.

[59] Ibid. p. 904.

[60] Ibid. p. 849.

[61] Ibid. p. 796.

[62] Ibid. pp. 864–865.

[63] Ibid. p. 866.

[64] Ibid. p. 690.

[65] Ibid. p. 866.

> But now, because a violent
> Illness has gripped the entire
> City, we must walk the steps of penance over
> Parnassus' hills or
> The sighing ford.
> Io! you! going in fire!
> Chorus-leader of stars and guardian
> Of secret speech!
> Son born of Zeus!
> Reveal yourself! With the Naxians
> And the awakening
> Thyades, who insanely
> Sing the chorus to you, the joyful-crying master.[66] (V 1189–1202)

As we have seen, the absolute blindness to which the *monetised* vision of the tyrant succumbs quickly follows upon the above reference to Dionysus' reuniting the light of earth and sky—the fire of torches intermingling with starlight (2.3, 4.3). The absorption of the *visualised chronotope* into an experience of space and time no longer alienated from earth and community is thus accompanied by the transition from *tragic* to *Dionysian seeing*. And this coincidence, we should note, is caught up in the continuity of the god who conquers the insatiable eyes of egomaniacs. The Dionysus of Hölderlin's *Antigone* who as "[c]horus-leader of stars and guardian/Of secret speech!", ***Chorführer*** *der Gestirn' und* ***geheimer****/Reden Bewahrer!* (V 1196–1197), repeats the Dionysus from his *Bacchae* who makes his epiphany "to lead [his] chorus", ***Chor zu führen*** (V 21), and reveal "mystic initiation", ***Geheimnis*** (V 22), into his cult (7.2).

As we have seen, Hölderlin's poetry is directly inspired by the socio-political potential of the opening out of Dionysus' cult in the tragic play (5.2–5.3). In *Antigone* the power of the "artwork" to liberate "the spirit of the time and nature"[67] is also connected to potentially global reach of the "democratic god par excellence" (2.3). The chorus sings of Dionysus' presence not only in Greece, but also in "Italy" (V 1165), where his cult is "known to everyone" (V 1166), and even of the sharp presence of the god in the Eleusinian mysteries[68] (V 1167–1168). It is in regard to this greater socio-political potential of the *Dionysiac chronotope* that Hölderlin develops his understanding of the struggle between Kreon and Antigone.[69] On the one hand, this battle is between tyranny and democracy, which is elaborated also as a battle between "hatred [and] love"[70] (V 544). In contrast to Kreon (and Aristotle, see 5.2) who accepts the rule of one, Haemon and Antigone seek a democratic "turning", *Umkehr*, whose revolutionary politics shall lead to a future of great agreements.[71]

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[66] Ibid. p. 905.

[67] Ibid. p. 914.

[68] Ibid. p. 904.

[69] Ibid. p. 920.

[70] Ibid. p. 879.

[71] Ibid. p. 867, 920.

On the other hand, the struggle between Antigone and Kreon is centred on the absence of ritual and its devastating effects on community. This becomes clear in the heroine's reversal of the "law" of the tyrant and her appeal, instead, to "*my* Zeus", in particular Zeus' preservation of "right of the gods of death".[72] This does not mean that Antigone is "lawless". As we have seen, the Dionysian Rousseau "lawlessly gives the language of the purest" (V 146; 8). But in *The Vocation of the* Poet Hölderlin reminds us that he is in search of a Dionysian leader in the present who "give[s] the laws"[73] (V 6). The evil law of the present that denies access to an earthly afterlife, in other words, must be replaced by the ethical law of the future. What the poet sees in Antigone is not lawlessness, but instead resistance to tyranny whose insatiable egoism has severed access to "the eternal living unwritten chaos and kingdom of death."[74] And that Hölderlin seeks the luminous reestablishment of a cosmic (vertical) axis through which mortals and immortals are united is suggested further in his attraction to "[t]he gold-streaming becoming" and "rays of light" that coincide with the coupling of Danae and Zeus and which magically illuminate her "death chamber"—and through which a style of counting, *zahlen*, arises that has nothing to do with the "profit" of tyrants.[75]

Given their strong gesture to the transition from desolation to the rebirth of the sacred that ties the living to a Dionysian afterlife it is tempting to think of Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles in regard to the *Dionysiac chronotope* in *Bread and Wine*. As we have seen, the earlier elegy invokes "happy madness"[76] (V 47) to confront "a desolate time" (V 122) that is "without companions" (V 119) and which culminates with the cosmic reach of Dionysus who "[l]eads the stars of heaven upward and down eternally/Forever happy" (V 144–145; 8). Hölderlin's rendition of Sophocles similarly invokes the power of "holy madness"[77] to confront a "wasteland"—the chorus cries out that it is "godless, friendless"[78] (V 674)—and culminates with the epiphany of Dionysus as a "[c]horus-leader of stars" (V 1195).

But—and to conclude this section—I suggest that Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles represent instead an elaboration of the *Dionysiac chronotope* witnessed in *The Poet's Vocation*. As we have noted, although the earlier song begins with Dionysus' epiphany, it soon yields to insatiable egomaniacs who reduce nature and others to pictures "to make/A little money" (V 39–40), and then culminates with the absence of the god and mystic blindness (8). And as we have just seen, Hölderlin's *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone* both stage the emergence of tyrants who reduce everything in their environment to that which their *monetised* eyes can calculate,

[72] Ibid. p. 914.

[73] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 305.

[74] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 914.

[75] Ibid. p. 916.

[76] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 287.

[77] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 915.

[78] Ibid. p. 814.

control and exchange and who are then absorbed into the wandering absence of the god and mystic blindness—or, in Hölderlin's language, into tragedy's representation "of the god who is present in the shape of death."[79]

This is perhaps most clear in the heroine of *Antigone*. Identifying not with the *visualised* spirit of *Oedipus the Tyrant*, but instead with her wandering, blind father at Kolonus who stands on the cusp of Dionysian redemption (7.1), Antigone transforms the coupling of a wedding bride with tragic individual death (that transitions into a new communality) witnessed in Greek tragedy—one thinks of the doomed bride who laughs at a "lifeless image of her body"[80] (V 1162) in Euripides' *Medea*—into a socio-political revolution against insatiable tyrants whose eyes alienate community and earth. The bride betrothed to "death" (V 844) departs from "the last glance/Of sunlight"[81] (V 837–838) and, like the reader of *The Poet's Vocation*, leaps into mystic blindness.

9.2 After *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone*

As we shall see in the CONCLUSION, Hölderlin's retrieval of the *Dionysiac chrontope* and its power to absorb the *monetised* and *visualised* space-time of tyrants is itself absorbed finally into the German identity crisis, Christianity and mental illness. As this occurs, however, the poet continues to illuminate a communal and earthly (spatio-temporal) form that is inspired by Greek tragedy and that conquers the insatiable eyes of egomaniacs.

In *The Only One*, which begins with Hölderlin reasserting his love of "the ancient, sacred coasts"[82] (V 2) of Greece, Dionysus appears as the "brother" (V 53) of "Heracles" (V 53) and "Christ" (V 52).[83] The second, more familiar version of the hymn describes "the Evier" (V 55) as he "who/Holds back peoples' desire for death […]"[84] (V 54–55) But in the first version Dionysus is described as he,

> […] who
> Harnessed tigers to
> The chariot and descending
> To the Indus
> Inspiring joyful service
> Founds the vineyard and
> Restrained the wrath of people.[85] (V 53–59)

[79] Ibid. p. 917.

[80] Euripides, *Medea*, in *Euripides fabulae*, vol. 1, *Cyclops, Alcestis, Medea, Heraclidae, Hippolytus, Andromacha, Hecuba* p. 143.

[81] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 891.

[82] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 343, 347.

[83] Ibid. p. 345, 348. This is something to which I shall return in the CONCLUSION.

[84] Ibid. p. 348.

[85] Ibid. p. 345.

Taken together, *The Only One* harnesses the image of Dionysus from *Bacchae* to which Hölderlin refers in *Bread and Wine* and *The Poet's Mission* and returns in his Sophocles translations. Whereas the name "Evier"[86] (V 53; 55) evokes the god from *Oedipus the Tyrant*, as when the chorus cries out to "intoxicated Bacchus, the *Evier*,/United with the maenads"[87] (V 216–217) to make his epiphany "[w]ith the gleaming, shinning torch burning" (V 217–218), an echo of Dionysus "Evier" (V 53; 55) is heard also in *Antigone* when the chorus imagines "the evian fire", *das evische Feuer* (V 1001), of Dionysus' mystery-cult (9.1).

The picture of the god "harness[ing] tigers to" (V 54) his "chariot and" (V 55) heroically "descending/To the Indus/Inspiring joyful service/Found[ing] the vineyard and/Restrain[ing] the wrath of people" (V 55–59) recalls the ancient picture of Dionysus who, having been inducted into "mystic initiation", *teletàs*, returns to Greece after conquering the Indians,[88] and to which the first strophe of Hölderlin's *The Poet's Vocation* refers:

> The Ganges shores heard the god of joy
> Triumph, as when coming from the Indus the all-conquering
> Young Bacchus came with holy
> Wine waking the people from sleep. (V 1–4; 5.3)

The demonstration of Dionysus' unique power to enter into and conquer even the realm of death in his restraining of "wrath" (V 59) and *Todeslust* (V 55) recalls the final couplet of *Bread and Wine* when "[e]ven the envious one, even Cerberus drinks and sleeps." (V 160; 7) These allusions to the conquering, mystic spirit of Greece who unites mortals with immortal life takes us back to Hölderlin's first glimpse of the socio-political power of Dionysus in the opening lines of *Bacchae*. Whereas in *The Only One* the god "[f]ounds the vineyard [Den *Wein*berg *stiftet*]"[89] (V 57–58), Dionysus in *Bacchae*, having encircled Semele's gravestone with "the grapevine", *Weinstock* (V 12), makes his epiphany "to found", *stiften* (V 21), his "mystic initiations", *teletás* (V 22), *Geheimnis* (V 22; 5.2, 8).

The first version of *The Only One* also makes clear he who Dionysus conquers. Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles remind us that tragedy culminates in the dismemberment of the *visualised chronotope* that accompanies individuals ruled by precious metal (9.1). After reducing human life to an unconscious image of money, that is, to that which his eyes can see, calculate and exchange, Oedipus is engulfed by horrific "night-clouds" (V 1336) and the "unspeakable, unrestrained [unbezähmt]"[90] (V 1337). That Dionysus redeems the tragic death to which the unlimited desire for money leads is suggested in the original version of *The Only One*. After "found[ing] the vineyard" (V 58), Dionysus "[r]estrained [bezähmte]

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[86] Ibid. p. 345, 348.

[87] Emphasis added.

[88] Apollodorus, *Library*, 3.5.1, in *Apollodorus, The Library, Frazer*, vol. 1, *Books I-III* p. 326.

[89] Emphasis added.

[90] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 841.

the wrath of people." (V 59) And because "[t]he god of earth"[91] (V 57), as Dionysus is named in the third and final version of *The Only One*, "restrains", *bezähmt*, the "unrestrained", *unbezähmt*, horror to which the visual-centred desire for money succumbs, the immeasurable darkness of the tyrant is transformed into a cosmic (vertical) axis of light in which "[h]umans see exquisitely, for they/Do not go the way of death and shepherd the measure, […]"[92] (V 57–58)

Hölderlin's late poems remain in dialogue with a *Dionysiac chronotope* that neutralises the *visualised chronotope* of money-tyrants. We see this in his ongoing references to the transition from the loss of a cosmic (vertical) axis at the hands (and eyes) of blind egomaniacs to its re-establishment implicit in Sophoclean tragedy. After despairing before Oedipus' obsession with "profit", *Gewinn* (V 906; 8A), the chorus says that it will no longer go with "reverence" (V 915) to "the untouchable […]/[…] navel of earth […]"[93] (V 914–915). As if to complete this transition to a sacred place the third version of Hölderlin's *Greece* proclaims: "For fixed is the navel/Of earth."[94] (V 16–17)

But this continued dialogue with Greek tragedy, in particular with Sophocles, should not surprise us. When we consider his final translation of *Oedipus at Kolonus* from 1803,[95] it is clear that Hölderlin's poetry for almost a decade, beginning in the mid-1790s, is inseparable from a restless engagement with the Sophoklean money-tyrant seeking release from the unlimited wanderings and blindness to which he has succumbed (7.1). What is new in his final return to *Oedipus at Kolonus*, nevertheless, is the presence of the tragic heroine—his daughter Antigone—and the turning back to a moment just before that when the blind, homeless tyrant glimpses the rebirth of a cosmic (vertical) axis with mystic eyes. This gives Hölderlin's Oedipus a new socio-political power.

The leap out of the modern visual realm of Kreon's calculating eyes into the mystic realm of blindness and tragic individual death that the heroine embodies in Hölderlin's *Antigone* (9.1) is united with her blind father and the Dionysiac paradise to which Hölderlin's 1796–1797 first translation of *Oedipus at Kolonus* gestures. Antigone's description of the "mellifluous sounding nightingales"[96] (V 18) to Oedipus recalls the chorus' description of "[t]he returning nightingale […]" (V 7; 7.1) The "sacred" (V 16) place, although "distant" (V 15) from Oedipus' "eyes" (V 15), "[o]f rustling laurels, and olive trees and grapevines"[97] (V 17) evokes the sacred "soil" (V 3) and "heavenly scent" (V 16) of the narcissus and the "gold-gleaming crocus" (V 21), in particular "the green coppice/Sheltered by dark ivy" (V 8–9)

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[91] *Friedrich Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke*, hg. F. Beissner, vol. 2, *Gedichte nach 1800* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer 1951) pp. 162–163.

[92] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 348.

[93] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 823.

[94] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 421.

[95] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 1316.

[96] Ibid. p. 776.

[97] Ibid.

under which the nightingale sings and the "inviolate foliage/Full of fruits, lightless" (V 10–11) of "the reveller/Dionysus" (V 11–12; 7.1).

That the revolution against unlimited seeing peculiar to tyrants who, like modern capitalists and heartless scientists seeking "to make/A little money" (V 39–40), "scan [späh'] every word" (V 295; 9.1) is not only a leap into mystic blindness and tragic individual dismemberment, but also a leap towards a new image of earthly communality becomes clear in the following verses. After Oedipus asks about the place and divinity to which he has come (V 38),[98] the wanderer with whom he is speaking answers: "Inviolable, where no one may dwell. For the shy/Goddesses hold it, the maidens of earth and night."[99] (V 39–40) Whereas the "[u]ntouchable, undwellable" (V 39) recalls the tragic "unheard, unseen"[100] (V 1335) into which *Oedipus the Tyrant* stumbles, "[t]he all-seeing ones, the Eumenides"[101] (V 42), "the shy/Goddesses […] the maidens of earth and night" (V 39–40), evoke Hölderlin's vision of "the most quiet daughter of the gods" (V 49), "[t]he maiden"[102] (V 68) *Germania*, and the epiphany of "golden smoke"(V 25), "as from a funeral pyre" (V 24; 8) with the image of communal, earthly happiness to which tragedy gestures. We have noted in Part I the joyous torch-lit procession with which Aeschylus' *Eumenides* culminates (V 1012–1046; 2).

The socio-political power of Dionysus as the "democratic god par excellence" (2.3), which Hölderlin connects to the democratic spirit of "Athens"[103] (V 59), specifically the power of Dionysian space-time to transfigure the *visualised chronotope* of money-tyrants into a style of seeing that supports earth and community, recurs in Hölderlin's translation of Sophocles' *Aias* from 1804.[104] Although less explicit than his return to *Oedipus at Kolonus*, Hölderlin's *Aias* continues an earlier engagement with the Sophoklean tragedy in the form of a citation that introduces *The Blind Singer*.[105] Similar to his return to *Oedipus at Kolonus*, Hölderlin's *Aias* takes us back to a time before that to which he first gestured.

Beginning not with "the eyes" (V 14) that have been "released [from] dreadful sorrow"[106] (V 14), we begin with Aias, like Antigone, plunging into mystic blindness and death. "Io night, my light, o gleaming Erebus take/Me, take/Me […]"[107]

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[98] Ibid.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid. p. 841.

[101] Ibid. p. 776.

[102] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 335.

[103] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 777.

[104] Böschenstein, *"Übersetzungen"*, in *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer p. 278.

[105] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 307. The Sophocles reference is verse p. 706 from *Aias*: "Ελυσεν αινον αχος απ' ομματων Αρης". Sophocles, *Aias*, S 29. This is something to which I shall return in the third section of Chapter Ten (10.3).

[106] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 781.

[107] Ibid. p. 778.

(V 1–3) To accent the impending, lightless abyss into which the tragic hero hurls himself Aias invokes a resplendent image of Dionysian "streams that flow into the sea and the tidal caves and […]/[The] meadow, over the shore"[108] (V 19–20) that "[s]hall never […]/See"[109] (V 28–29) him again. This sets up the transition from the "innumerable", [*u*]*nausgezählet*[110] (V 8), suffering of friendlessness—"For it is better to sleep in hell" (V 36) recalls verse 120 from *Bread and Wine*: "better to sleep, than to be without companions" (8)—and "innate wrath", *angebore*[*r*]/*Zor*[*n*][111] (V 39–40)—one thinks of tyrants such as Lykourgos and Oedipus (9.1)—to the rebirth of a cosmic (vertical) axis.

Abandoning the darkness of Aias' tragic ecstasy, the third and final fragment transforms "[u]nfathomable Hades"[112] (V 12) and the mad hero standing "outside himself"[113] (V 40) into a pulsating picture of communal and earthly ecstasy—one that is strikingly similar to that which the chorus imagines at the beginning of the fifth act in *Antigone* (6.1). "I tremble with love", (V 1) it sings, "I arise to an all-embracing joy."[114] (V 1)

> Io! Io! Pan. Pan.
> O Pan! Pan! appear from out of the rolling waves
> Of Kyllene, from out of snow-swept
> Rocky hills o you
> King appointed by the gods! gathering one!
> That you dwelling with us may incite
> Your self-taught Nysian, Cnosian leaps.
> Now I long to dance.[115] (V 2–9)

That this transition from loneliness and eternal dark to earthly and communal joy is caught up in the rebirth of a cosmic (vertical) axis is clear. The enchanting picture of "thundering waves" (V 2) and "snow-swept/Mountain wilds" (V 3–4) is enhanced by what Nietzsche shall identify as the prehistoric mystic union of Dionysian and Apolline light. "And you who ascends from Icarian waters", the chorus continues, "King Apollo/Known to Delos,/Be with me in eternal benevolence."[116] (V 10–13) The combining of earth's dark light with Olympian light brings us back to the citation with which Hölderlin introduces *The Blind Singer*:

> Ares has released dreadful misery from the eyes.
> Io! Io! Now also
> Now Zeus appear from the white radiance

[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid. p. 779.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid. p. 780.
[112] Ibid. p. 779.
[113] Ibid. p. 780.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid. pp. 780–81.

Of the beautiful day bringing
The swift ships, for Aias,
Forgetting his trouble, again, also to the gods
Has completed with the beautiful smoke
Of sacrifice lawful worship
With strict observance.[117] (V 14–22)

As we shall see in the CONCLUSION, the conquering of isolation and individual death in *Aias* to which Hölderlin turns is finally an expression of the poet's search to romanticise his impending madness. Despite Hölderlin's last gestures to a transition from the *visualised chronotope* of ancient and modern tyrants—one thinks of his final reference to "king Oedipus" as having "one eye too many perhaps"[118]—to the *Dionysiac chronotope*, the socio-politics of this transformation quickly dissolves into an abyss of abstractions and other signs of mental illness. The lucid allusions to the transformative mystic lightning-flash of Dionysus blinding the greedy eyes of the money-tyrant Pentheus in *Bacchae* that we come across in *The Blind Singer*—which we shall discuss in Chap. 10—evaporate in Hölderlin's "night-songs",[119] for instance, into the myth of Herakles that we come across in *Chiron*.[120] Although the poet continues his search for a sacred community where humans are reunited with nature, his dream of Dionysian Greece and "founding/A kingdom of art" (V 3–4),[121] populated as it is with satyr-like "centaurs" drunk with "honey-sweet wine"[122] and other Dionysian creatures, grows pale.

This is not to say that Hölderlin's poetry after his translations of *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone* no longer elaborates the socio-politics of the *Dionysiac chronotope*. To show this I conclude the chapter with a reading of his last complete song, *Memento*, significantly Hölderlin's most subtle gesture to the absorption of the *visualised chronotope* into a Dionysian space-time. Although ostensibly a souvenir of his journey in the winter and spring of 1802 to Bordeaux where he worked as a household tutor to the family of the German wine merchant Daniel Christoph,[123] *Memento* begins with the Dionysian spirit of his Pindar translations (7.2). "The northeast blows,/The most lovely of the winds/To me, because he promises/Sailors a fiery spirit and safe voyage"[124] (V 1–4) evokes Hölderlin's rendering of three verses of Pindar's *first Pythian ode*: "But to the sea-bearing ones/The men the

[117] Ibid, p. 781.

[118] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 480.

[119] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt p. 470.

[120] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 314.

[121] Ibid. p. 399.

[122] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 773.

[123] *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer p. 45.

[124] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 360.

first joy/Of the voyage is that at the beginning a fortuitous wind comes; […]"[125] (V 61–63)

The "fiery spirit" (V 2) that "[t]he northeast" (V 1) inspires recalls the epiphany of the Dionysian "torch-bearer" (V 155) in *Bread and Wine* (8) who is inseparable from Dionysus in *Antigone* "walking in fire!" (V 1195) and in *Oedipus the Tyrant* who appears "[w]ith the gleaming, shinning torch burning" (V 217–218; 9.1). The flowing, watery essence of the wind that "promises/Sailors a […] safe voyage" (V 3–4) along with the strophe's subsequent references to "[t]he beautiful Garonne" (V 6) and "stream [Bach]" (V 10) that "falls" (V 10) "into the river"[126] (V 9) evoke the *bacch*ic ecstasy of "the river" (V 5) in *As when on a holiday….*, *The Rhine*, and the "hundred streams [Bächen]" (V 11) from *The Wandering* (8)—all of which have their origins in the Dionysian "waters of Cephisus" (V 23) from *Oedipus at Kolonus* (7.1), the "forests of Dirce, [and] Ismenos' streams" (V 5) that Dionysus invokes in *Bacchae* (7.2), and the "streams [Bäche] of Dirce" (V 107) and "Isemenos' cold stream [Bach]" (V 1171) in *Antigone*, that is, "where the waters/Fall *bacch*icly [*b*]*acch*antisch]"[127] (V 1170–1171; 9.1).

The song begins with the poet recognising the epiphany of a Dionysian journey with which he indirectly identifies by way of a greeting. "But go now" (V 5), he tells "[t]he northeast" (V 1), "and greet/The beautiful Garonne,/And the gardens of Bordeaux/There, where on steep shores/The path runs and the stream falls/Into the river, […]" (V 5–10) In contrast to the homogenised experience of space and time implicit in industrialisation—written in 1804 *Memento* lies significantly at the centre of the half-century when Stephenson's *Rocket* and the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1829 emerges from the transformation of burning coal into motion by Watt and Bolton in 1776 (6.1)—the Dionysian journey inseparable from the uniqueness of the landscape takes us to the idyllic spirit of southwest France that doubles as a Dionysiac paradise. *Memento* begins by departing on a journey to a *Dionysiac chronotope* where the ecstasy of *Dionysian seeing* that arises from a cosmic (vertical) axis that cannot be calculated and homogenised—the image the poet paints of the floral and vegetative, and hence bacchic, "gardens of Bordeaux" (V 7) evokes "Zeus' excellent garden"[128] (V 91) from Hölderlin's Pindar translations—transcends immediate space and time.

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[125] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 169. "Den schiffegetragenen/Aber den Männern die erste Freude/Zur Fahrt ist, daß ihnen im Anfang förderlich komme ein Wind; […]" See also Hölderlin's translation of the first verses of Pindar's *eleventh Olympian ode*. Ibid. p. 710. "Es sind den Menschen Winde das größte/Bedürfnis, auch sind es himmlische Wasser/Regnende, die Kinder der Wolke." As we shall see, "the gusts of wind" (V 85) that are linked to "the sea" (V 90), Zeus' "excellent garden" (V 91) and the "surrounding shores" (V 94) from Hölderlin's translation of Pindar's *ninth Pythian ode* would also seem relevant.. Ibid. p. 753. "[…] und den Stößen der Winde gewälzt wird,/[…]", "[…] und du wirst über das Meer/Zu Jupiters trefflichem Garten sie bringen", " […] auf umliegende Ufer."

[126] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 360.

[127] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 904. Emphasis added.

[128] Ibid. p. 753.

Whereas in *Aias* the radiant picture of Dionysian "streams that flow into the sea and the tidal caves and […]/[The] meadow, over the shore" (V 19–20), because they "[s]hall never […]/See" (V 28–29) the hero again, succumbs to eternal darkness, "a noble pair/Of oaks and silver poplars gaze upon"[129] (V 10–11), and thus sustain, the calm, vibrant picture of Dionysian otherworldliness. We have noted Hölderlin's attraction to Dionysus and the mystery-cult of Eleusis already in the mid-1790s (7.1). When the chorus in *Antigone* accents the global potential of the "democratic god [Dionysus] par excellence" (2.3) by singing of Dionysus' cult as being "known to everyone" (V 1166) not only in Greece, but also in "Italy" (V 1165), it witnesses that the god "rule[s] also/In the womb of Eleusis."[130] (V 1167–68) Dionysian mystic initiates "[w]ere garlanded with silver poplar, for this plant is chthonic, like the chthonic Dionysus, son of Persephone".[131] The image of the "noble pair/Of oaks and silver poplars [that] gaze upon" (V 10–11) the pulsating paradise invites us to see our journey as leading to a cosmic (vertical) axis where the gaze of mother earth, Dionysus and Zeus (to whom the oak is sacred) absorbs the emerging industrial world ruled by the abstract and homogenising "silvered voice, at different places" (V 65; 5.1) into the natural and irreplaceable beauty of "silver" (V 11)—whose earthly, communal reflection, similar to the eyes of the forest wild in *Antigone* that "saw"[132] (V 1175) Dionysus, gathers heaven and earth, mortals and immortals into an image of unity.

The first verse of the second strophe, "Still I remember it well […]"[133] (V 13), unifies the geographical places across which our Dionysian journey descends in the first strophe with history. Space through which we travel to reach the sacred, in other words, is a metaphor of time. Hölderlin tends to absorb industrial technology into pre-industrial forms of power, as when he speaks of "fire that sleeps in the dry branch or coal" (5.1). The imagery we recall in the second strophe, for instance, "the mill" (V 15) "over" (V 15) which "[t]he broad peaks of the/Elm forest hang"[134] (V 14–15), continues our pre-modern spatio-temporal descent. That this inner voyage is caught up in the *Dionysiac chronotope* is suggested in the deceptively simple picture of "a fig-tree" (V 16) that is "growing" (V 16) "in the courtyard"[135] (V 16). Through his rendering of *Bacchae* Hölderlin mistranslates the ancient Greek word *sêkos* (V 11),[136] which names "an enclosed, sacred place", with another ancient

[129] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 360.

[130] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 904.

[131] See W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion: der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, hg. C. Schröder, vol. 15, *Der Religionen der Menschheit* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 1977) p. 438, ftnt. 13.

[132] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 904.

[133] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 360.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 291.

Greek word, *sykê*, which names "fig-tree" (V 10; 7.2). In the dreamy "fig-tree" (V 16) that is "growing" (V 16) "in the courtyard" of *Memento* we come upon a concentration of these words that evokes the transition from Semele's tragic individual death to immortality, reinforced by the presence of Dionysus.

As if to leave no doubt about his return to a cosmic (vertical) axis of the past that, like a courtyard gathering interior and exterior spaces, knows nothing of the "restless" (V 245), "insane labour" (V 244) of industrialists seeking "to make/A little money" (V 39–40; 8), the poet invokes "holidays" (V 17) when,

> [t]he brown women themselves
> [Go u]pon silk earth,
> In the time of March,
> When night and day are equal,
> And upon slow paths,
> Heavy with golden dreams,
> Cradling breezes waft.[137] (V 18–24)

The *Dionysiac chronotope* implicit in the "holidays" (V 17) and to which we journey across space and time is linked to Hölderlin's first *Bacchae*-inspired song, *As when on a holiday*.... The transition that the Dionysian "fig-tree" (V 10; V 16) memorialises: a movement from Semele's reckless eyes and tragic individual death to chthonic communality issuing forth from "[t]he fruit of thunder and lightning, holy Bacchus" (V 53; 8), combines with the picture of sun kissed female initiates going, like Dionysus "going in fire!" (V 1195; 6.1), barefoot upon the silken flowers of an otherworldly meadowscape. One thinks of the *númphai Bakíkdes* (V 1129),[138] "the women/Filled with the god"[139] (V 1000–1001), and "the awaking/Thyiads" (V 1200–1201) impersonating "the Nysiads" (V 1189) from Hölderlin's *Antigone* (9.1)—and "the singers" (V 141) from *Bread and Wine* who "also sing with solemnity to the wine-god, […]"[140] (V 141) The alignment of the pre-industrial, agricultural holiday with the spring equinox "[i]n the time of March,/When night and day are equal," (V 20–21)—again one thinks of the cosmic significance of Dionysus in Hölderlin's *Antigone* and *Bread and Wine* (8, 9.1) who "reconciles day with night"[141] (V 143; 7, 9.1)—"[a]nd [the] slow paths/Heavy with golden dreams,/[where c]radling breezes waft" (V 22–24), which recall the Dionysian images of the "gold-gleaming crocus" (V 21) and "golden Aphrodite" (V 29) from Hölderlin's *Oedipus at Kolonus* as well as that of the "golden smoke" (V 25), "as from a funeral pyre" (V 24), in *Germania*, complete the poet's dream of a *Dionysiac chronotope*.

But the melancholy implicit in the spatio-temporal distance between the poet and the unity of Dionysian space-time that he seeks announces itself at the beginning of the third strophe in the form of a concentrated metaphor of the wine. "But hand

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[137] Ibid. pp. 360–361.

[138] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 229.

[139] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 169.

[140] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 290.

[141] Ibid. p. 290.

me/One of the fragrant cups/Full of dark light,/So that I might rest."[142] (V 25–28) The Dionysian reconciliation of opposites in "[t]he dark light" (V 26), the allusion of "the grape-scent of the vine" (V 12) from Hölderlin's *Bacchae* in "the scented cups" (V 27; 7.2) of wine, and the gesture to "forgetting and sacred-drunkenness" (V 33) from *Bread and Wine*—itself a reference to Dionysus as the god who "brings sleep and forgetting to everyday suffering" (V 282) in *Bacchae* (5.3)—succumbs to a tone of desolation redolent of *Aias*. After referring to himself for the first time, the poet proclaims: "for sweet/It would be to sleep among the shadows."[143] (V 28–29) This flirtation with death, the longing to enter into the kingdom of the underworld and rescue a loved one—one thinks of Dionysus returning with his mother as Cerberus gently fawns upon him (8, 4.3) which Hölderlin doubtlessly associated with Diotima who had meanwhile died when he was stranded in France—what in *The Only One* appears as the life-threatening "death-wish" (V 55), that only Dionysus, in contrast to untamed tyrants, can "tam[e]" (V 59), recalls the *Todeslust* of Antigone and Aias hurling themselves into mystic darkness and death.

But the Dionysian poet tames his temptation "to sleep in hell" (V 36). "It is not good,/To be soulless with/Mortal thoughts"[144] (V 30–31), he reflects,

> […] But good
> Is a talk and to say
> The heart's opinion, to listen much
> Of days of lov',
> And acts that occurred.[145] (V 31–36)

On the one hand, Hölderlin resists the destructive desire to follow in the footsteps of the self-isolating tyrants who issued forth from his poetic imagination. The apostrophe from the sleepy and seductive dark "shadows" (V 29), in particular the abandonment of the perverse state of being "soulless [Seellos] with/Mortal thoughts" (V 30–31), is a turn away, for instance, from the unlimited tyrannical wrath of Empedokles who "[…] soulless [seellos], as a slave, wanders […]/In the night […]"[146] (V 1631–1632)

On the other hand, the communal desire to unify the present and past, and this means Hölderlin's need to unite his secret love to Diotima and public hope that a revolutionary politics would erupt in Germany transforming the "desolate time" (V 122; 8) of emerging industrialisation into a more democratic society, stumbles into an abyss. Unlike *As when on a holiday ...* where the poet glorifies the radiant "sign" (V 30) pointing to "the acts of the world" (V 30; 8) in 1800, *Memento* modestly concedes in 1804 that, although the poet carries the "days of lov',/And acts that occurred" (V 35–36) inside him, they remain locked in the past, helpless before

[142] Ibid. p. 361.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Ibid.

[146] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 334.

all-devouring time. The loss not simply of the past, but of the hope this past had, threatens the future. This danger shows up in the immediate present.

"But where are the friends? Bellarmin/With the companion?"[147] (V 37–38) begins the fourth strophe. As if to console Hyperion's longing for a kindred "spirit" (7.1), now combined with the "godless, friendless" (V 674; 8A) tragic chorus of Sophocles, Hölderlin observes that "[m]any/Are reluctant to go to the source"[148] (V 38–39). As we have seen, "the source", *die Quelle* (V 39), names "the springs of earth", *der Erde Quellen*, that modern industrialists and capitalists "tear apart" (7.1). And as Hölderlin's translation of the ancient Greek word for "spring", *kréne*[149] (V 39; 69), *die Quelle*[150] (V 72; 123) is inseparable from the Dionysian, miraculous "spring", *kréne*[151] (V 707), of wine that leaps out of dark soil in *Bacchae*, the loss of community in the present is connected to the loss of the spirit of earth that supports communal life.

To address this absence, we return to the "fiery spirit" (V 3) of "the seafarers" (V 4) that "[t]he northeast" (V 1) inspires, to whom it promises a "good voyage" (V 4) and with whom the poet initiates his *Memento*.

> For riches begin
> At sea. They
> Like painters, gather together
> The beauties of earth and do not
> Forswear winged war, and
> To live lonely, year-long, under
> The defoliate mast, where the holidays of the city
> Do not blaze through the night,
> And there is no stringed music and native dance.[152] (V 40–48)

The tragic tone of "the sailors" (V 4)—the "*winged* war"[153] (V 44) they "do not/Forswear" (V 43–44) evokes "the night/Of the ocean" (V 351–352) from *Antigone* "when the south wind blows/Against the winter" (V 352–353) and man "sets sail upon *winged*, tossing waves"[154] (V 353–354)—invites us to see our journey as similar to that of *The Poet's Mission* and tragic heroes and heroines who embrace mystic blindness and death. Nevertheless, the heroic perseverance of these seafaring

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[147] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 361.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Pindar, *First Pythian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epnicia* p. 52; Pindar, *Third Pythian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* p. 63.

[150] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 715, 728. These references, which include "Parnassos Quelle", are just a few of many.

[151] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* p. 321.

[152] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 361.

[153] Emphasis added.

[154] Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 873. Emphasis added.

"priests of the wine-god" (V 123; 8) who, "liv[ing] alone, year-long, under/The defoliate mast" (V 45–46), endure the lack of community and earth, suggests a step beyond the modern "night" (V 47) in which "the holidays of the city/Do not blaze through […]" (V 46–47)

That *Memento* seeks to redeem the mystic blindness and tragic individual death coalescing about *The Poet's Mission* and *Antigone* becomes clear when we consider the resplendent *Dionysiac chronotope* with which it concludes.

> But now to India
> The men have departed,
> There on the airy peak
> Upon grape-covered mountains, from where
> The Dordogne comes,
> And together with the glorious
> Garonne sweeps
> Out to sea.[155] (V 49–56)

As we might expect, Hölderlin's gesture to sailors departing for the Americas from the cliffs of Lormont above the Gironde estuary in southwest France, perhaps on 3 March 1802,[156] infuses the German romantic concept of "India" as the universal source of culture and religion with the spirit of Dionysian conquest.[157] One recalls the poet's invocation of the ancient myth of Dionysus conquering the Indians in *The Poet's Mission*:

> The Ganges shores heard the god of joy
> Triumph, as when coming from the Indus the all-conquering
> Young Bacchus came with holy
> Wine waking the people from sleep. (V 1–4; 5.3)

As if to be symmetrical in tone, the ending of the song echoes the Dionysian spirit of Hölderlin's Pindar translations with which it begins. In particular, the linguistic mood of the beginning of the fifth and final strophe evokes that of Pindar's *seventh Olympian ode*—a song which, as we have seen, bears an uncanny resemblance to Hölderlin's first Pindaric hymn *As when on a holiday ...* (7.2) "But now to India/ The men have departed,/There on the airy peak/[…]" (V 49–51) mirrors the poetic tone of the verses: "But now, with the music of the flute and lyre I have departed […], singing/A song of the sea-child Aphrodite […]"[158] (V 13–14)

But the significance of the dazzling *Dionysiac chronotope* with which Hölderlin leaves us, enclosed by "the airy peak/Upon grape-covered mountains"

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[155] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt pp. 361–362.

[156] *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer p. 49.

[157] See Herder (1989), and Schlegel (1808). We might also note Hölderlin's attraction to exploratory adventurers, as suggested by his poem "Kolomb". And that Alexander von Humboldt, the so-called German Columbus, ended his voyage to the West Indies by shoring into Bordeaux on 3 August 1804, (precisely when Hölderlin was completing this poem), would also seem to be of relevance. O. Ette, *Alexander von Humboldt: Aufbruch in die Moderne* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag 2001).

[158] Pindar, *Seventh Olympian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* pp. 23–24.

(V 51–52)—one thinks of the Dionysus who "dwells upon high mountains"[159] (V 1123) in *Oedipus the Tyrant* and the "green shores,/Full of hanging grapes" (V 1181–1182) upon "Nysian mountain wilds"[160] (V 1179) in *Antigone*—and which returns to the oceanic spirit of mother earth through the godlike rivers that together "swee[p]/Out to sea" (V 55–56), is clarified by three thoughts with which the poem concludes. "But it takes/And gives memory, the sea,"[161] (V 57) adapts Hölderlin's concept of what he calls "the oppositional-rhythmic interruption" of dialogue in the tragic play that looks forward to "the pure word".[162] Applied to a future sea voyage "the oppositional-rhythmic interruption" expresses the mystic transition that the Dionysian seafarers shall undergo when they begin their voyage to the new world, that is, through their homecoming to the enchanting power of "the springs of earth", *der Erde Quellen*. That this gesture to a cosmic (vertical) axis of the future is inseparable from *Dionysian seeing* is made clear by Hölderlin chthonising of Saul's letter to the Corinthians.[163] As we have noted, "the love" (V 58) that "sedulously fixes the eyes" (V 58) is rooted in an image not only of heavenly, but also of earthly, light, for instance, in "the eyes [that] are fixed on the soil." (7.1)

But the final verse with which *Memento*—and in a sense Hölderlin's entire poetic project—leaves us is the most illuminating. "But what remains, poets found."[164] (V 59) The scribbling of the word "vineyard"[165] alongside "India" (V 49) in the original manuscript page suggests not only that Hölderlin's imagination concentrated a picture of America with that of India, but also that the late image of Dionysus to which he turns, for instance, in *The Only One*, where Dionysus "descending/To the Indus/[…]/Founds a vineyard […]" (V 55–58), remains inseparable from the god he first glimpsed in his translation of *Bacchae* from 1799 (7.2). The mosaic of the innermost core of Hölderlin's poetry, *Memento* reveals itself finally as a token of the future. The socio-political power of transforming the secret light of Dionysus' mystery-cult into a public image, as when the god declares in Hölderlin's *Bacchae* that he has made his epiphany "to found" (V 21) his "[m]ystic initiation", *Geheimnis* (V 22), if unable to come to light in the visual culture of a modern world out of touch with nature and itself, could still belong to the eyes of the future in search of a better world.

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[159] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 832.

[160] Ibid. p. 904.

[161] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 362.

[162] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 850.

[163] Corinthians 13:4–8.

[164] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 362.

[165] *Friedrich Hölderlin, Sämtlich Werke, Frankfurter Ausgabe*, D. Sattler, vol. 7/8, *Gesänge I/II* (Basel and Frankfurt: Stroemfeld/Roter Stern 2000) p. 455.

Chapter 10
Dionysiac Language (Pre-1799–1802)

Abstract This chapter considers the inner spirit of ritual that Hölderlin transforms into a modern linguistic experience. Early gestures to the language of "the reveller/Dionysus" yield to a still more clear echo of the god's battle cry against money-tyrants like Pentheus: the "joyful shout" that is inextricably tied to the making public and founding of a new langauge of Dionysus' mystic *Geheimnis*, "secret". Following this exploration of *Bacchae*, we turn to the adaption of *Dionysiac language* in Hölderlin's own poetry from 1799 until 1802. That this earthly and communal linguistic experience is struggling not only with *monetised*, but also *visualised language*—that is, language that speaks only of abstract, superficial images that promote individual profit—is made clear by Hölderlin's Dionysian description of modern money-tyrants who peer through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[t] *and*/*Nam*[*e*] *the stars of heaven with names*."

Keywords Dionysiac language · Secret/*Geheimnis* · Visual media · Monetised language · Visualised language

10.1 Before *Bacchae*

At the centre of Hölderlin's retrieval of the *Dionysiac chronotope* is that to which we referred to in Part I as the central nervous system of a earthly and communal space-time, namely *Dionysiac language* (4.1). As we have just seen, Hölderlin's search to transcend the alienating shocks of modern life is rooted in his turn to the entrancing language of Greece. Soon after his student days at the *Tübinger Stift* he conceives of poetry alongside religion as the source of thinking, and connects "representation" to "dramatic myths", in particular to "the staging of myths" (7.1).

This gesture to the socio-political power of theatre is grounded in *Dionysiac language*. In Hölderlin's translation of *Oedipus at Kolonus* the chthonic synaesthesia—the "divine scent" (V 16) of the narcissus and "gold-gleaming crocus" (V 21) and the magical image of "golden Aphrodite"—includes also the melodious song of the nightingale (V 6–7) and "choruses of Muses" (V 28). The chorus, itself a concentrated expression of *Dionysiac language*, sings of "the reveller/Dionysus", the god of the joyous cry who "forever returns here" (7.1, 4.3).

L. Murrey, *Hölderlin's Dionysiac Poetry,* DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-10205-4_10

But what makes Hölderlin's translation unique is its gesture to linguistic change. On the one hand, the fallen tyrant to whom the chorus addresses looks back to the language of tyranny, and this means the language of unlimited money and seeing (7.1). On the other hand, the blind Oedipus to whom Hölderlin turns has been liberated from the language of evil eyes. When he foresees a sign consisting of "earthquake, thunder or lightning of Zeus" (V 95), the blind wanderer speaks the language of mystery-cult. Oedipus foresees, "thunder shall lead me to Hades" (V 1460–1461). Hölderlin's translation thus retrieves a linguistic movement from *monetised* and *visualised languages* to *Dionysiac language*, heard from the perspective of the linguistic conclusion. The unlimited wanderings of inauthentic words arrive, we might say, at a cosmic (vertical) axis of authentic words that are rooted in the democratic spirit of earth. The blind Oedipus who cultivates the secret language of Dionysian ritual (V 623–624) refuses the language of the monarch and declares that the land beyond the city "is the place" (V 643–644) where real, magical communication shall occur.

Following his translation of *Oedipus at Kolonus*, Hölderlin applies the linguistic transformation internal to *Dionysiac language* to his own time. Firstly, there is the inauthentic language of money that the poet suffered while tutoring in the banking city of Frankfurt, and to which Hölderlin refers when he speaks of German barbarians who "have become still more barbaric through industry" (7.1). *Monetised language* is linked to the language of mechanisation, science and abstraction, that is, *visualised language* that reduces human life to what can be seen, calculated and controlled (4.1–4.2). Hölderlin reminds us "that more than a machine process, that a spirit, a god, is in the world" (7.1). The threat of a disenchanting industrialised life-world is understood through the lens of the isolated mystic initiand. The human being is pictured as a denigrated, homeless "beggar when he reflects" (7.1). And German barbarians "have become still more barbaric" in modern time "through industry and science" (7.1).

The "immature attitude" of capitalists and scientists who are "tyrannical towards nature" (7.1) which they greedily "tear apart" (7.2) is rooted in their "evil tongues".[1] One recalls Pentheus "breathing great arrogance" (V 640) in *Bacchae*. Hölderlin describes the language of modern time that estranges nature and humanity as the "idle chatter" of "clever ones" who are no match for the true language of "the springs of earth and morning dew [that] refresh the grove".[2] He also perceives the language of capitalism, science and dogmatic Christianity—false "religion" is included in his list of causes for concentrated German barbarism in the present (7.1)—as the inauthentic languages against which he is doing linguistic battle. "[W]hen they speak, woe to him! who understands them […]",[3] Hyperion declares. "I spoke in your

[1] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 169.

[2] Ibid. p. 170.

[3] Ibid.

name also, I spoke for everyone from this land and who has suffer as I suffered there."[4]

Secondly, there is the authentic *Dionysian language* to which the inauthentic languages of money and abstract thinking give way. The *monetised language* of the Frankfurt banking world recedes before the mystical name of the priestess *Diotima* that Hölderlin associates with a chthonic and communal paradise. "It seemed as if the old world died and a new one began with us, everything having become so spiritual and fervent and loving and light," Hyperion declares, "and we and all creatures floating, sacredly united, like a chorus of a thousand, unbreakable tones through the infinite ether."[5] Similar to the linguistic "destructions and disappearances, followed by [linguistic] returns to life and rebirths" in mystery-cult (4.1), Hölderlin harnesses a linguistic "Becoming in Perishing". No longer imprisoned in the unreal words of money, machines, science and dogmatic Christianity, the ears delight in "intoning mystic sayings", from the silence of "the stars […] the day, and the night" to "the light, secret breath of evening".[6]

The Death of Empedokles continues, if implicitly, the linguistic transition internal to *Dionysiac language*. On the one hand, the "lonely word"[7] (V 1479) of the presocratic philosopher who "spoke in insolent pride"[8] (V 479) against "blind desolation", is reduced to deathly silence. On the other hand, "the word of the dying one"[9] (V 1583) is united with nature—with the enchanting stillness of the "mountain wild/In the rain and in the ray of sun"[10] (V 1291–1292). "And joyful, without patience I already cried out," Empedokles declares, "[t]o the new festival, where my lonely song/Shall become a joyful chorus with you."[11] (V 1477–1480).

But if it is clear that Hölderlin retrieves *Dionysiac language* to conquer *monetised* and *visualised languages* whose insatiable egoism has become still more unlimited in modern time, it is also clear that he is unable to establish a language of earth and community. As we have seen, Hölderlin's homecoming to modern Germany fails to complete the linguistic transition internal to *Dionysiac language*. After explaining how he "came to the Germans […] like the homeless, blind Oedipus at the gates of Athens," Hyperion sadly confesses: "How different it was for me!" (4.1) And because he remains imprisoned in a language of "evils tongues" in and "idle chatter" in the present, Hölderlin returns to the entrancing, language of Greece, in particular the richest literary source of *Dionysiac language*.

[4] Ibid. p. 171.
[5] Ibid. p. 84.
[6] Ibid. p. 199.
[7] Ibid. p. 339.
[8] Ibid. p. 296.
[9] Ibid. p. 342.
[10] Ibid. p. 332.
[11] Ibid. p. 339.

10.2 *Bacchae*

Hölderlin's retrieval of the "linguistic-spirit"[12] of Pindar's odes to which we have gestured (4.2) opens up a roughness of sound where language seems as if to be liberated from the abstract rules of grammar. Verses nine and ten of Pindar's *second Olympian ode*, for instance, are rendered: "They had the holy, the house/By the river. To Sicily they were/The eye."[13] (V 15–17) This abandonment of grammar coincides with the cultivation of musical tone and mood. The first line of the song acquires an alliteration that accents language as a performance of sound. Hölderlin translates *anaziphórmigges húmnoi*[14] (V 1) as *Ihr **H**errscher auf **H**arfen, ihr **H**ymnen!*[15] (V 1).

Heightened sensitivity to the linguistic feel of Greece leads to the transition at the heart of *Dionysiac language*. This includes the *monetised language* implicit in Pindar's linguistic nihilism, which we noted in Hölderlin's translation of Pindar's *eleventh Pythian ode*: "O Muse, it is yours, if you/have bound yourself to wages, to provide/The silvered voice, at different places/In different ways abundantly." (V 63–66, 7.2) Hölderlin also turns to the *visualised language* of myth where unlimited eyes lead to death. In particular, he highlights the myth of Semele who longed to see Zeus' unmediated glory and who then "died in the thunder/Of the lightning-flash" (V 45–46, 7.2). Hölderlin's translations of Pindar evoke the *visualised language* of Semele's "sorrow", *pénthos* (V 41, 7.2), which in turn evokes the *visualised language* of *Pentheus* who "breathes out his soul" (V 620) and shrieks *éa éa* (V 644) as well as the linguistic "sadnesses", *pentheîn* (V 1320), of Oedipus the tyrant who cries out *aiaî aiaî* (V 1308; 4.2).

Semele's "writhings and screams"[16] (4.2) are transfigured, however, into the balmy language of a Dionysiac afterlife. The mortal mother is reborn in Hölderlin's Pindar translations (7.2). This connects Semele to the "sweet-sounding songs"[17] to which the 11th *Olympian ode* (V 4) and the *third Pythian ode* (V 113) refer.

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[12] Böschenstein, *"Übersetzungen"*, in *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer 275. See also A. Seifert, *Untersuchungen zu Hölderlins Pindar-Rezeption* (München: Wilhelm Fink 1982).

[13] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 695. For the original verses, see Pindar, *Second Olympian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* 7. "hieròn éschon oíkema potamoû, Sikelías t' ésan/ophthalmós" (V 9–10).

[14] Pindar, *Second Olympian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* 7.

[15] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 695. Emphasis added.

[16] Although the citation from Chap. 4 refers to Ariadne, it is clear that this re-enactment itself re-enacts, in a mythico-historical sense, the physical anguish that previously accompanies Dionysus' birth from Semele.

[17] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 710, 728.

Pindar celebrates the earthly and communal "ox-driving dithyramb"[18] that inspires herds of animals dance (7.2), as well as choral voices that sing of Semele.[19] Perhaps most magical—and similar to the linguistic transition from the bourgeois wife of a Frankfurt banker (Susette Gontard) to a mystical spirit (Diotima), Semele who "died in the thunder/Of the lightning-flash" while giving birth to Dionysus reappears in Hölderlin's Pindar translations as "Thyone" (V 99; 7.2). "Thyone" names the mortal woman Semele who "has been received into the circle of immortality." (4.3) *Monetised* and *visualised languages* associated with death give way to an undying *Dionysiac language* that is concentrated in a change of names. One thinks of the cult "Ariadne Aphrodite" and Dionysus who, "rich-in-names", *poluónume*[20] (V 1115), appears under the titles of "initiate", *ho bákchos* (V 491) and "mystic", *mústes* (4.3), and whose satyrs are re-named *Sáturos* and *Seilenós*.[21]

More striking than the traces of *Dionysiac language* that Hölderlin excavates from Pindar's odes is his retrieval of the Dionysian "sacred story", *hieròs lógos*, that is projected into *Bacchae*, whose trimeters he explicitly follows.[22] This turn to Euripides' tragic play witnesses a transition from *monetised*- and *visualised chronotopes* to a *Dionysiac chronotope* (7.2), and this means a transformation of *monetised*- and *visualised languages* into *Dionysiac language* (4.3).

Firstly, there is the language of the *túrannos* Pentheus "breathing great arrogance" (V 640) who, in projecting his desire for money onto Teiresias and mystery-cult (4.2), uses language as an instrument to reduce earth and community to a delusional image that supports his egoism. After asking Dionysus if he can spy on his female initiates while they perform their secret rites on Kithairon in exchange for an enormous amount of money (V 810–812; 3.2, 4.2), Pentheus falsely pictures the maenads "in the thickets, like birds, held in the most pleasant nets of sex" (V 957–958, 685–688; 4.2).

Secondly, there is the language of Dionysus initiated by the sound of the thunderbolt and earthquake (2.3) to which the *visualised language* of Pentheus succumbs. "[P]ut out of his mind" (V 850; 2.2) and blinded by "two suns" (V 922; 2.1), the tyrant is hunted down and dismembered, that is, absorbed into Dionysus' linguistic spirit of community and earth. The cleansing of Pentheus' language thus makes way for the language of democracy in which "the pain-removing delight of wine" belongs "equally to the wealthy man and to the lesser man" (V 421–423; 2.3) and when "[n]obody neither young nor old is willingly absent from [Dionysus'] choruses" (7.2). That Hölderlin was aware of such linguistic liberation in *Bacchae* is suggested in *Hyperion*. Here he refers to "the moments of liberation, when the divine bursts open the prison" (7.1), and this means the time when Dionysus makes

[18] Pindar, *Thirteenth Olympian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* 44.

[19] Pindar, Fragment 75, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* 84.

[20] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 128.

[21] Seaford, Introduction and Commentary to Euripides' *Cyclops*, in *Euripides, Cyclops* pp. 8–9.

[22] Böschenstein, *"Übersetzungen"*, in *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer 274.

his epiphany to his speechless initiates in the form of a magical "light", φῶς (V 608; 2.3), that follows the epiphany of his enchanting voice (V 575–577; 2.3).

Critical to Hölderlin's translation of *Bacchae* is its gesture to *Dionysiac language* concentrated in its opening lines. The *visualised language* of Pentheus that leads to death is foreshadowed by Dionysus' references to the *visualised language* of Semele, that is, the "writhings and screams" of she who succumbed to the "violent act of Hera" (V 9) and whose reckless desire to see leads to incineration by the "fire of thunder and lightning" (V 3; 7.2). Hölderlin's rendering of Pindar's *second Olympian ode* witnesses the ancient association of *Pentheus* with the "sorrow", *pénthos* (V 41), that is inseparable from the *visualised language* of Semele (7.2).

But the opening lines of *Bacchae* foreshadow finally a transition from *visualised* to *Dionysiac language*. Dionysus' melancholy and remembrance of his "mother's gravestone" (V 6) and, alongside it, "the ruins of the halls" (V 7; 7.2) yields to the socio-political force of his linguistic epiphany. "I came here first to a Greek city," he declares, "[t]o lead my chorus myself and to establish my/Secret, so that I shall be visible to humans as spirit." (V 20–22; 7.2) The tragic, isolated speech of Semele's *pénthos* is thus implicitly transfigured into the linguistic ecstasy of Dionysus and the mystic chorus he leads. In particular, Dionysus makes public his secret "joyful cry", *anololúxo*[23] (V 24), which Hölderlin translates as *das Jauchzen*[24] (V 24), and which prefigures the language of community and earth that shall publically conquer the perverted *visualised language* of money-tyrants such as *Pentheus*. Later in *Bacchae* we hear the cohesive, ecstatic shout, *ololúzo* (V 689; 4.2), of Dionysus' female mystics on the mountain wild. This is linked to the subterranean—and hence invisible to the mortal eye, enchanting powers of earth, for instance, in the "spring", *kréne* (V 707; 9.2), of wine that miraculously leaps out of dark soil.

Hölderlin's translation of *Oedipus at Kolonus* retrieves the linguistic experience of the blind-mystic initiand on the cusp of *Dionysiac language* (10.1). But the adaption of this linguistic shift capsizes on the present. Hyperion's homecoming to modern Germany leads to language of homelessness (7.1, 10.1). In Hölderlin's translation of *Bacchae*, however, the sorrowful *visualised language* of "[t]he smouldering, still living divine fire's flame" (V 8; 7.2), which is merely imagined as present in Pindar, is presently transfigured in Euripides' tragedy into the *Dionysiac language* of a godlike being who not only has completed the mystic transition, but is himself the eternal leader of the mysteries. Disguised as his own wandering priest, Dionysus in *Bacchae* adapts the socio-political potential of *Dionysiac language* to conquer the *visualised language* that underlies the insatiable egoism of the new city of money.

But that Hölderlin found the compact expression of *Dionysiac language* preserved in the opening lines of Euripides' tragic play inspiring is shown finally in the language of earth and community that permeates his post-*Bacchae* poetry. Because he translates "spring", *kréne* (V 39; V 69), in Pindar into *Quelle* (V 72; V 123), the

[23] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* 292.

[24] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 690.

epiphany of the "joyful cry", *anololúxo* (V 24, 689; 4.2), *das Jauchzen* (V 24), of the mystic chorus, inseparable as it is from that of a miraculous "spring", *kréne* (V 707; 9.2), for instance, of wine, shall invite us to think of language in a revolutionary new way. Now the word has its origin in a cosmic (vertical) axis rooted in earth's unmastered mystery.

10.3 After *Bacchae*

After his *Bacchae* translation the *Dionysiac language* of myth permeates Hölderlin's poetry. In *The Archipelago* the echoing "night-song" (V 34) of the gods calls forth "a more happy magic"[25] (V 39). The "rustl[ing]" (V 49, 52) of "the open sea […]/at Parnassus" (V 49–50) and "the mountain wild of Kithairon" (V 51) in *Bread and Wine* is foreshadowed by "singers in the holy night suddenly possess[ed]" (V 48) by "happy madness" (V 47; 9.1).

Because the myth to which Hölderlin turns tends to be aetiological (8), the *Dionysiac language* that he retrieves tends to be caught up in the mythic origins of the divine. In *Nature and Art or Saturn and Jupiter*, the law-giving power of "Kronion!" (V 25), "Kronos' son!", a name which appears like a mystic "lightning-flash" (V 17), "as if from out of dark clouds" (V 17) leads to the redemption of the "lament"[26] (V 7) of namelessness to which the elder god succumbs. Here the "lament", *jammre* (V 7), recalls "[t]he lament", *Der Jammer* (V 41) of Semele from Hölderlin's translation of Pindar's *second Olympian ode* (7.2). Coupled with *Bread and Wine*, which was originally a dithyramb (8),[27] this evokes the linguistic ambivalence implicit in the aetiological myth from which *Dionysiac language* originally issues forth, namely the story of Dionysus' joyous birth alongside Semele's tragic death (4.1).

In his first Pindaric poem *As when on a holiday …* Hölderlin invokes the mythical origin of the god of music and dance (4.3):

> So it fell, as poets say, for she desired
> To see the god made visible, his lightning-flash on Semele's house
> And the divinely-struck one bore,
> The fruit of thunder and lightning, holy Bacchus. (V 50–53)

As we have seen, a few strophes of *As when on a holiday …* appear on the back of the same page on which Hölderlin translates *Bacchae* (8). And as we have also seen, this poem initiates Hölderlin's retrieval of the compact transition from *visualised* to *Dionysiac chronotopes* implicit in the opening lines of *Bacchae* (8).

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[25] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 254.

[26] Ibid. p. 298, 297.

[27] The dithyramb was clearly associated with the mythical birth of Dionysus. Pindar, Fragment 83/75, in *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler, Pars II, *Framenta Indices* 84. See also Plato, *Laws*, 700b, in *Plato, Laws, Books I–VI*, Bury, vol. 10 244.

But now we focus on the deeper power of this renewal: the transition from *visualised* to *Dionysiac language*. Harnessing *the change of language* concentrated in *Bacchae* from, on the one hand, the *lament*/*Jammer*/*pénthos* of unlimited eyes that lead to tragic individual death to, on the other hand, the epiphany of Dionysus' *ecstatic cry*/*Jauchzen*/*anololúxo* and its celebration of earth and community (10.2), Hölderlin constructs two concentrated couplets where we implicitly move from the language of "the divinely-struck one" (V 52) to that of "holy Bacchus" (V 53). The birth of Dionysus inspires all the immortals to dance and sing (4.3). Here Hölderlin implicitly aligns his poetic voice with the voices of ancient Greek poets who originally sang of Dionysus' birth. At the centre of the poem is therefore a poetic invocation of what Dionysian "poets say" (V 50).

But Hölderlin harnesses *Dionysiac language* for "a new mythology" (7.1). The "poets" (V 50) of Dionysus model the "poets" (V 57) in the present who suffer the mystic transition from individual isolation and death to community and earth (2). After exposing themselves to the "god's thunder and lightning" (V 56), they shall offer "the heavenly gifts/Wrapped in song to the people" (V 59–60; 8). In *Bread and Wine* poets of today are likened to "the wine-god's holy priests/Who wander from land to land in the holy night"[28] (V 123–124), thus linking them to Dionysus, who in *Bacchae* disguises himself as a priest of Dionysus wandering from land to land (2.3). In *The Poet's Vocation* the epiphany "of the happy god's/Triumph" (V 1–2) that "[t]he shores of the Ganges heard" (V 1) *listens* forward for the epiphany of *Dionysiac language* that "the day's angel" (V 5) and "master"[29] (V 7) of the present shall soon sound.

We should note that Hölderlin's retrieval of *Dionysiac language* invites "a new mythology" (7.1) of love. As we have seen, the "secret source of poetry" is associated with "an infinite godlike being", "a communal godhead" who opens out "a communal sphere" (7.1). The democratic spirit of the god in whose presence "every person lives equally" (7.1) is tied to the primal community of lovers. *Menon's Lament for Diotima* culminates in the ecstatic presence of a Dionysian, "joyful guardian-spirit!"[30] (V 93) And that this egalitarian divinity, who opens out and secretly "rules"[31] (V 4) the epiphany of love, is rooted in the earthly and communal spirit of *Dionysiac language* is clear. The poem *Love* concludes by declaring: "The language of lovers/Is the language of the land, /Its soul the sound of the people!"[32] (V 26–28).

But central to Hölderlin's *Dionysiac language* is its coincidence with the mystic transition from *tragic* to *Dionysian seeing* (2.3, 4.3, 8). In *The Blind Singer*, which is introduced by a verse from Sophocles' *Aias* significantly celebrating Dionysian eyes released from dreadful anguish and darkness (5B), begins with the absence of "light" (V 2) and nocturnal, "holy magic" (V 4) that cultivate a heightened sense of

[28] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 290.

[29] Ibid. p. 305.

[30] Ibid. p. 271.

[31] Ibid. p. 249.

[32] Ibid. p. 241.

hearing, an infinite, imprisoning night and the remembrance of an earthly vision.[33] The "dawn" (V 5) to which the poet "listened" (V 5), accented by his plea "where are you, light?" (V 15), leads to an "endless night [that] binds and constrains" (V 16–17) him, and the remembrance of "flowers" that in the past "would shine like my own eyes"[34] (V 13–14). This sets up the central drama of the poem, where the poet *listens* forward for a redemptive god whose epiphany shall release him from individual isolation.

> Now I sit silent alone, from one
> Hour to the next, and creating shapes
> Of love and suffering from brighter days,
> Taking comfort only in my thoughts,
> And strain far to hear if perhaps a
> Friendly rescuer comes to me.[35] (V 19–24)

Like the desolate maenads in *Bacchae* (2.3, 4.3) who Pentheus threatened to imprison, the poet suddenly "hears" (25):[36]

> […] the voice of thunderer
> At midday, when the honoured one comes near,
> When he shakes the house, and under him
> The foundation quakes, and the mountain resounds.[37] (V 25–28)

Hölderlin here refers to the central mystic transformation in *Bacchae*. As we have seen, Dionysus makes his epiphany to his desolate female initiates and the royal house of the tyrant is shattered by thunder and earthquake, both of which are followed by Pentheus' violent death (2.3, 4.3). Hölderlin's reference to this ritual transfiguration that is projected into *Bacchae* is still more explicit in the following strophe: "Then I hear my rescuer in the night, I hear/Him killing, the liberator, to give new life,/The thunderer […]"[38] (V 29–31)

As if to model the rebirth of seeing that follows the rebirth of hearing in *Bacchae* (4.3), Hölderlin concludes *The Blind Singer* with a similar ordered timetable of synaesthesiac ecstasy. The voice of the poet reunited with his god—"My song lives with him" (V 33–34)—calls forth "the blessing of the seeing one!"[39] (V 50) *Dionysiac language* thus opens out to *Dionysian seeing*, as illustrated by the transformation of the memory of "flowers" that in the past "would shine like my own eyes" (V 13–14) into an earthly vision of the near future: "[…] my eyes will flower for you,/O light of youth!"[40] (V 47–48).

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[33] Ibid. p. 307.

[34] Ibid. pp. 307–308.

[35] Ibid. p. 308.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid. pp. 308–309.

[40] Ibid. p. 309.

But the "new mythology" (7.1) for which Hölderlin harnesses *Dionysiac language* is finally German in spirit. The power of the Dionysian "chorus" (V 36) to unite chaotic spirits, as when it "forces the wild/Souls of fighting men together"[41] (V 36–37), now belongs to the newly initiated German mystic city of *Stuttgard* (8). Other elegies such as *Homecoming* transform Dionysus' "happy shout", *anololúxo* (V 24), from *Bacchae*, which Hölderlin translates as *das Jauchzen* (V 24; 10.2), into "the joyful-shouting [das jauchzende] valley"[42] (V 64) unique to German land. In the ode *Heidelberg* the "magic" (V 3) that "once entranced" (V 3) the poet initiates the "fated fortress" (V 22) that was "torn apart" (V 23) by an epiphany of lightning and *thunder* into "the eternal sun" (V 24; 7) and the "friendly forests" (V 27) that "*rustled* from above down to the fortress below."[43] (V 28) And in *To the Germans* where "the mountains of German/Land are the mountains of the Muses" (V 35–36; 7), "the silence of the people" (V 9) is potentially a Dionysian prologue to "the celebration/Before the festival"[44] (V 9).

As we have seen, Hölderlin's translations of Pindar and *Bacchae* implicitly link Dionysus' "joyous cry", *das Jauchzen*, *anololúxo* to a "spring", *Quelle*, *kréne*, as when a spring, *kréne* (V 707), of pure water *springs* forth alongside the cohesive shout of Dionysian mystics, *ololúzo* (10.2). In the hymn *The Wandering* the sound of the superabundance of "the purest water" (V 17) that "overflows the earth" (V 16) is tied to that of the "rustl[ing]" (V 11) of a Germanic "source", *Quell*[45] (V 11). By the end of the song, "[t]he source", *Quell* (V 11), that "rushes", *rauscht* (V 11), is combined with the "source [Quell] of Parnassus" (V 73) and the "gold-gleaming streams [Bächen]" (V 74) from which "echoed/An eternal song"[46] (V 74–75). "So they rustled [rauschten]" (V 75), the poet sings, "the forests and all/The string music together/Touched by divine tranquillity."[47] (V 76–78).

The "dark ivy" (V 1) of the "forest" (V 2) below the Alps in *The Rhine* connects "[t]he source [Quell]" (V 3) to the poet's faint perception of a "secret", *Geheim* (V 8), but "talkative"[48] (V 13) destiny. This echoes Dionysus making known his mystic initiation, *Geheimnis* (V 22), in *Bacchae* (5.2). As we have seen, Hölderlin translates Semele's "sorrow", *pénthos* (V 26), which evokes *Pentheus* and Oedipus, *pentheîn* (V 1320), as *Jammer* (V 41; 7.2). That Hölderlin associated *Jammer* with the evil that accompanies a *near-death experience* in myth and ritual is clear in his translation of the "wretched death"[49] (V 42) of Coronis, who like Semele is incinerated by the flames of the god while giving birth, as her *jammervolleste*[*r*] *Tod*

[41] Ibid. p. 282.

[42] Ibid. p. 293.

[43] Ibid. p. 242.

[44] Ibid. p. 236. Emphasis added.

[45] Ibid. p. 324.

[46] Ibid. p. 326.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid. p. 328.

[49] Pindar, *Third Pythian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* 62.

(V 73).[50] When we hear the newly born *Rhine* "wailing for release", *um Erlösung jammern* (V 23), transfigured into "a joyous cry", *ein Jauchzen*[51] (V 61), it is clear that Hölderlin has adapted the linguistic transition from *tragic* to *Dionysian language*, heard from the perspective of the linguistic conclusion (3 °C), to construct a timeless aetiological myth of the German river.

But as we have seen, Hölderlin's poetry remains tied to the present (8). And *Dionysiac language*, which he retrieves to confront his modern historical circumstance, is no exception. The mood of experimental socio-politics inspired by the French Revolution at the end of eighteenth century—the new, global time transcending "the gods of the west and orient [that] is now awake with the sound of arms"[52] (V 22–23)—is preceded by the epiphany of a sacred *Dionysian language*: "the holy" that is the "word"[53] (V 20) of the poet and which appears, magically, before his eyes. The "genius of the people" (V 25) in *To the Germans* looks forward to *Rousseau* who, like the poet in the opening strophe of *The Rhine*, perceived "the language of the gods." (V 32; 8) The *Dionysiac* "language of the stranger"[54] (V 29), another reference to Dionysus in *Bacchae*, has global socio-political potential.

But that which is most contemporary about Hölderlin's *Dionysiac language* is its confrontation with the selfishness and individualism that alienates nature and humanity (8). In particular, it confronts the alienation of the present and the loss of *Dionysiac language*. The chilling question: "why poets in a desolate time?" (V 122) is foreshadowed by tragic silence coalescing about "the ancient, sacred theatre" (V 103) and "the consecrated dance"[55] (V 104; 8) in modern time. Hölderlin further links the loss of *Dionysiac language* to the rise of *visualised language*. Greedy individuals who, "to make/A little money" (V 39–40), reduce nature and community to pictures and visual abstractions do so not simply by looking through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[ting…] the stars of heaven" (V 51–52; 8). What sustains this evil is an evil language. The rapid squandering of natures and its resources during industrialisation that had began already within Hölderlin's own lifetime (7.1) is a consequence of how modern humans, more and more determined by new visual technology, peer through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[t] *and*/*Nam*[*e*] *the stars of heaven with names*."[56] (V 50–52).

But if at the heart of these songs is a critique of the estrangement that accompanies a *visualised language*, then how are we to understand its place within the poetic arc of Hölderlin's revival of *Dionysiac language*?

As we have noted at the end of Part I, tragedy is a battleground of competing languages. On the one hand, there is the *monetised*/*visualised language* of the tyrant

[50] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 727, 730.

[51] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt pp. 328–329.

[52] Ibid. p. 239.

[53] Ibid. p. 239.

[54] Ibid. p. 238.

[55] Ibid. p. 289.

[56] Emphasis added.

and his unhinged monetary and visual desires (4). On the other hand, there is the *aetiological*/*Dionysiac language* of the chorus and its democratic, and hence revolutionary spirit (4). But given his criticism of language that accompanies modern visual technology, Hölderlin combines the *visualised language* that descends from ancient Greece and becomes more concentrated in Christianity and the *Renaissance* into that of his own *enlightened* present (2). For the first time in the history of art or literature, the socio-politics of *Dionysiac language* is elaborated to absorb modern *visualised language*. *At the core of Hölderlin poems are two competing languages concentrated into a singular language, where the visual alienation of language in modern time is redeemed by language in balance with nature and community*.

On the one hand, the linguistic desolation of the present can appear buried within "the staging" of this compact "new [linguistic] mythology". In *As when on a holiday …* the language of isolation and death, on the one hand, and rebirth, on the other, are immediately implied in the "distant sounding thunder" (V 4) that accompanied "[t]he cooling lightning-flashes" (V 3), and which has yielded to "the quiet" (V 9) atmosphere of "freshening rain" (V 7) dropping "onto the grapevine" (V 8) below. The mild, if strong, pulse of *Dionysiac language* then confronts the absence of poetry in the present. The solemn "poets" (V 16) who "appear to be alone" (V 17) threaten to regress into linguistic isolation.

This sets up the final transition of language for which Hölderlin copiously appropriates Pindar's change of speaking-styles.[57] Awoken "by the *sound* of arms"[58] (V 23), the "fire kindled in the souls of poets" (V 31) repeats the birth of *Dionysiac language* out of the thunder and lightning from the previous summer night. Now "the powers of the gods" (V 36), whose "communal spirit" (V 43) is concentrated "in song"[59] (V 37), calls forth a cosmic (vertical) "holy ray" (V 47) that connects "heaven and earth" (V 42) and "gods and humans" (V 48), and turns the poet's attention back to the birth of Dionysian "song"[60] (V 49). In particular, Hölderlin returns to the birth of *Dionysiac language* out of Semele's *tragic language* to model the transition of "poets" (V 57) in modern time to the founding of a new language.

Although also buried within the timelessness of a mythic universe, *Stuttgard* similarly retrieves *Dionysiac language* to absorb the linguistic desolation of the present. Here we glimpse Hölderlin's innovation of the elegiac couplet in a way that his predecessors such as Goethe and Schiller could never have imagined. Only

[57] Despite the fact that there is no record that Hölderlin translated this song, the beginning of *As when on a holiday…* bears an uncanny resemblance to Pindar's *seventh Olympian ode*. The tonal apostrophe at the beginning of the third strophe, *Jetzt aber* […] (V 19), appears to be a literal translation of the first two words of verse 13 of Pindar's poem: "*kaí nun* […]" Pindar, *Seventh Olympian Ode*, *Pindar carmina cum fragmentis*, Maehler and Snell, Pars I, *Epinicia* 23. Even the language of Pindar's opening verse, when translated into German, bears a literal resemblance to that of *Wie wenn am Feiertage…*: *Wie wenn einer eine Schale nimmt* […] *Pindar, Siegesgesänge und fragmente, Griechisch und deutsch*, übersetzt. O. Werner (München: Ernst Heimeran 1967) 51.

[58] Emphasis added.

[59] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 240.

[60] Ibid.

after transitioning from the *tragic language* of unlimited individualism—through "the sacrifice's/Festive flame" (V 29–30), "the rustling communal god" (V 31), and the "wine [that] dissolves our selfish sense" (V 32)—does the German city begin to speak a language of earth and community. This means that only after the "chorus" (V 36) has conquered modern tyrants, as when it "forces the wild/Souls of fighting men together" (V 36–37), does the "gleaming priestly head" (V 77) of *Stuttgard* speak the *Dionysiac language* of Thebes.

In *The Archipelago* Hölderlin adapts *Dionysiac language* to absorb the individual isolation that accompanies the tyrannical language of money. Here the gesture to the Greek-Persian war of liberation evokes Aeschylus' *Persians*. As we have seen, this tragedy witnesses the invention of money. The Athenian silver resources recently discovered at Laurium are described as "a spring of silver, a treasury in the earth" (V 238; 2). The other tragic plays that Aeschylus authored such as *Semele*, *Pentheus* and *Bacchae* (4.3) associate the danger of reckless eyes with unlimited money, i.e. *visualised* with *monetised language*. In Hölderlin's elegy we come upon the *tragic language* of Xerxes. Similar to Pentheus in *Bacchae* (4.3), the Persian tyrant "[s]peaks carelessly and fast"[61] (V 91). And the egoism of Xerxes' word leads to a battle scene where "lightning flashes" (V 127) and "thundering waves" (V 130) express "innumerable", *zahllos*,[62] individuals succumbing to a tragic death.

But the victory of *the democratic language of Greece* stumbles across the linguistic desolation of modern time. The poet who perceived "the language" (V 205) and "myth", *Sage* (V 206), of the gods is "ceaselessly grieving"[63] (V 206). This sets up a linguistic association between the isolated ego that accompanies modern money and its demand to industrialise and compartmentalise and the isolated ego of the tyrant. Just as the aggressor of ancient Greece heard only his own voice, "[e]ach individual" (V 242) in modern time,

> […] is nailed alone
> To his own affairs, *in the din of his workplace*
> *Hearing only himself* and caught up in an insane labour,
> With a violent hand, *restless*, but always and forever
> Bringing about nothing, like the Furies, from the toil of his hands.[64] (V 242–246)

The neutralisation of *monetised language* is complete when the poet announces that he hears already in the distance the epiphany of "the festival's/Choral song"[65] (V 256–257). *Dionysiac language* then calls forth the *Dionysian seeing* to which we have already gestured: the "flowering land" (V 263),

> […] where upon sunny plains
> Noble corn and fruit ripens, there at the festival wreathed
> Happily the pious ones also, and upon the hill of the city gleams,
> Humane dwelling, the heavenly halls of joy. (V 263–266)

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[61] Ibid. p. 256.

[62] Ibid. p. 257.

[63] Ibid. p. 260.

[64] Emphasis added.

[65] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt. 262.

In *To the Germans* the spectre of linguistic absence in the present returns. As we have noted, the horror of the isolated, "mortal eye" that, despite its efficiency in "seeing and counting", *sehen und zählen* (V 42), is too selfish to see beyond the life of the individual ego is implicitly tied to the isolated, modern individual who is "nailed alone/To his own affairs, in the din of his workplace/Hearing only himself and caught up in an insane labour" (V 242–244; 8). But whereas *To the Germans* ends in *tragic language*—"[s]oundless" (V 53), "[w]ithout names and unmourned"[66] (V 56)—and thus fails to complete mystic initiation, the ode to which it leads, *Rousseau*, embraces the French hero who has deciphered "the language of the gods." (V 32; 8).

This change from *tragic* to *Dionysiac language* recurs in *The Rhine*, where the Dionysian transition from "wailing for release", *um Erlösung jammern* (V 23), to "a joyous cry", *ein Jauchzen* (V 61), capsizes on the absence of a sacred name in modern time. As we have seen, while meditating on "demigods" (V 135) in the tenth strophe, Hölderlin returns to "Rousseau" (V 139) and his Heinse-inspired speech "from holy abundance/As the wine-god, whimsically divine" (V 144–145) and who "without law gives the language of the purest" (V 146). Although he asserts the power of *Dionysiac language* to neutralise the *visualised language* of Christian dogma (5.2)—real language is "[u]derstandable to the good ones, but justly/Strikes the heedless ones with blindness/The unholy slaves […]" (V 147–149; 8)—the strophe halts before linguistic absence in the present. "[…] how do I name the stranger?" (V 149; 8), the poet asks. The abyss of language at the centre of *The Rhine* is healed by the rebirth of the balmy sound of *Dionysiac language*. The enchanting "tones" (V 164) of "nightingales" (V 165), for instance, evoke the song of the nightingale (V 6–7) and the "choruses of Muses" (V 28) from the Dionysian afterlife glimpsed in *Oedipus at Kolonus* (6 A).

In *Germania* the absence of "[t]he gods who have fled" (V 17), that is, the time when "[t]he priest" (V 21) and his "temple and the image follow him and also his cult/Into the dark land" (V 22–23), is also the absence of *Dionysiac language*. The darkness that haunts this godless moment is redeemed by the epiphany of "golden smoke" (V 25), "as from a funeral pyre" (V 24; 8). But in modern time, we have lost our tie to the transformative mystic flame through which the dead access the afterlife. No longer "consumed by flames" in death, we no longer purify ourselves and "atone for the flame that we were unable to contain" while living (8). And this "*real* modern tragedy" (8) speaks a *real* tragic language, one that even deviously seeks to conceal its evil sound. "For that is the tragic among us, that we disappear from the kingdom of living *quietly* packed in to some casket or other, […]"[67] (8).

The devious nature of language in modern time, as when we are "*quietly* packed in to" isolated, homogenised compartments whose potential for exchange is unlimited evokes the sinister language that accompanies "[e]ach individual" (V 242) when he "is nailed alone/To his own affairs, in the din of his workplace" (V 242–243; 7). Similar to how the *visualised chronotope* of modern time is limited by the

[66] Ibid. p. 237.

[67] Emphasis added.

Dionysiac chronotope (8), the unlimited nocturnal wandering of linguistic evil in the present is absorbed into a cosmic (vertical) axis of linguistic luminosity. Alongside the reunion of mortals and immortals in the epiphany of "golden smoke" (V 25), "as from a funeral pyre" (V 25), heaven and earth are reunited by the appearance of sacred words. "But down from the aether falls/The true image and divine sayings rain/Innumerable from it, and the innermost grove resounds."[68] (V 39–41) The final strophes of *Germania* consist of the poet inspiring "the quietest daughter" (V 49) to embrace the "fulfilment of golden words" (V 73) and to "name that which is before [her] eyes"[69] (V 83). Like Dionysus in *Bacchae*, the poet declares: "No longer now may the secret [Geheimnis]/Remain unspoken"[70] (V 84–85).

Bread and Wine opens by *listening* backwards to *monetised-visualised language*. While "a sensible head" (V 4)—and this means the *"sensible eyes"* of an isolated individual calculating arithmetic—"weighs profit and loss/Well contented at home" (V 4–5), the noise of the "*busy* marketplace",[71] now "emptied of grapes and flowers" (V 5), has just faded (8). The *listen* backwards to the reduction of language to counting money is followed by its reduction to *spatialised time* in the present. "[T]he watchman, minding the hour, calls out the number [Zahl]." (V 12) But the epiphany of a Dionysian "breeze" (V 12) that "excites the peaks of the grove" (V 12) absorbs the *visualised languages* of money and abstract numbers into ecstatic "songs"[72] (V 28). "[T]he streaming word"[73] (V 54) of the Dionysian night calls then forth pictures of *Dionysiac language*: "singers in the holy night suddenly possess[ed]" (V 48) by "happy madness" (V 47) foreshadow the "rustl[ing]" (V 49, 52) of "the open sea […]/at Parnassus" (V 49–50) and "the mountain wild of Kithairon" (V 51).

> But already in the fourth strophe we begin to stumble across the linguistic desolation of the present.
> Where, filled with nectar to delight the gods the song?
> Where, where do they light up, the winged sayings?
> Delphi sleeps and where does the great destiny resound?[74] (V 60–62)

Possessed by the mysterious and secret "power of the word" (V 68) that "grows sleeping"[75] (V 68), the poet demands: "Now, now words, like flowers, must come forth."[76] (V 90) But the invocation gives way to more tragic silence such as that coalescing about "the ancient, sacred theatre" (V 103) and "the consecrated dance" (V 104). This leads finally to the linguistic abyss that Hölderlin chisels into the

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[68] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 335.

[69] Ibid. pp. 335–336.

[70] Ibid. p. 337.

[71] Emphasis added.

[72] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 286.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid. p. 287.

[75] Ibid. p. 288.

[76] Ibid.

keystone of *Bread and Wine*: "Thus waiting and what to do and say meanwhile,/I do not know and why poets in a desolate time?"[77] (V 121–122).

Linguistic egoism and isolation in modern time is then absorbed into *Dionysiac language*. By declaring poets "the wine-god's holy priests,/Who wander from land to land in the holy night" (V 123–124), Hölderlin evokes the "joyful shout", *das Jauchzen* (V 24), *anololúxo* (V 24), of Dionysus in *Bacchae*—the same tragedy where the god presents himself to the tyrant Pentheus disguised as a wandering priest of Dionysus (2.3). As we have seen, the elegy concludes by establishing a cosmic (vertical) axis in the "tokens" (V 132) that "the divine *chorus* [leave] behind"[78] (V 132; 8): "Bread [as] the fruit of earth [and which is] blessed by light,/And from the thundering god […] the joy of wine" (V 137–138) gesture to the epiphany of a sacred language and thus the end of linguistic desolation in the present. "Therefore they also sing with solemnity to the wine-god, the singers/And without vanity they sound praise for the ancient one."[79] (V 141–142).

The cosmic reach of *Dionysiac language* to conquer language in modern time that alienates nature and community concludes in *Bread and Wine* with an evocation of Horace's image of the fierce guardian of the underworld gently fawning on the departing Dionysus (8). Given that Dionysus made his epiphany to the Roman poet to inspire poetic creation,[80] the Horace to which Hölderlin gestures was well aware of the power of *Dionysiac language* to conquer even *the language of death*, as when wild howling of the inhuman creature is transfigured into peaceful sleep.

To conclude this section, we turn to the clearest instance of *Dionysiac language* battling against *visualised language* in the present. In *The Poet's Vocation* Hölderlin transcends Klopstock's adaption of the Horatian ode not only in poetic flexibility and expressiveness, but, more importantly, in philosophical and socio-political potential—something that Goethe or Schiller could also have never imagined. As we have seen, the song begins with the epiphany "of the happy god's/Triumph" (V 1–2) that "[t]he shores of the Ganges *heard*"[81] (V 1), and *listens* forward for "the day's angel" (V 5) and "master"[82] (V 7) who shall soon resound. But the sacred "task" (V 13) of the poet to celebrate community and nature is interrupted by the return of insatiable egomaniacs who,

> […] exploit the spirit and mock
> Its kind presence, and betray
> This good soul, heartlessly, and, to make a little money,
> Bait it like a captured animal. (V 37–40)

And as we have also seen, what makes the "thankless […]/Clever race" (V 47–48) of humans in modern time who have "squandered, misused" (V 46) nature and each

[77] Ibid. p. 290.

[78] Emphasis added.

[79] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 290.

[80] Horace, Odes 2.19, in *Horace, Odes and Epodes*, Rudd pp. 134–136.

[81] Emphasis added.

[82] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 305.

other for precious metal dangerous, is the *visualised language* they speak. This we witnessed in their fanatical use of modern visual technologies such as "[t]he telescope" (V 50) through which they feverishly look, "coun[t] and/*Nam*[*e*] *the stars of heaven with names*." (V 50–52).

It is true that *The Vocation of the Poet* does not absorb *visualised language* into a new language of earth and community. The modern absence of the god in which we are left implies also the absence of *Dionysiac language*. Nevertheless, Hölderlin gestures to the blindness and speechlessness of the suffering mystic initiand (4.1–4.2) transferred to tyrants such as the blind Oedipus in *Oedipus at Kolonus* (7.1), as when refers to the covering of "the eyes" (V 54) with "holy night,/So that we may remain" (V 53–54). The silence in which the poet abandons us, in other words, is transitional. The inauthentic language of the tyrant in modern time who "counts [zählt] and/Names the stars of heaven with names" (V 50–52) shall succumb to deathly silence. As we witness in *Germania*, from the "aether" (V 39) the "sayings of the gods [shall] rain/Incalculable [Unzählbare] down […]" (V 39–41).

This is not to say that we should content ourselves with the transitional mystic silence with which *The Poet's Vocation* ends. Hölderlin continued to be haunted by the danger of *visualised language* to nature and humankind. This is suggested by his return to the original linguistic battleground of Greek tragedy, in particular to the traces of the death and rebirth of language in Sophocles' *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone*, to which we now turn.

Chapter 11
Dionysiac Language (1802–1804 and After)

Summary After studying Hölderlin's retrieval and adaption of Dionysiac language, Chap. 11 proceeds to the poet's articulation of the linguistic spirit that lurks within (Sophoclean) tragedy as well as his final invocation of this language to resist the (visualised) words of money-tyrants in the present. On the one hand, the "[c]horus-leader of stars and guardian/Of secret speech" now struggles against the perverse, distorted language of ancient money-tyrants who, like modern individuals preoccupied with infinity of images (that harmonise with their profit-driven unconscious), declare the unlimited spirit of their intentions to "scan every word". On the other hand, Hölderlin's elaborates this linguistic technique to resist monetised and visualised languages in the poet's imagination of a future voyage to "the pure word", *das reine Wort*, of Dionysian Greece.

Keywords Dionysiac Language · "Secret speech"/*geheime Rede* · Monetised Language · Visualised Language · "The pure word"/*das reine Wort*

11.1 *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone*

Hölderlin's disappointment with the socio-politics of his time—one thinks of the modern tyrant into which Napoléon quickly degenerates—lead him back to the original battleground of *visualised* and *Dionysiac chronotopes* in early Greece (9.1). As we have noted, at the heart of Greek tragedy is *Dionysiac language* (4.1). Hölderlin's protracted search for what he refers to in December of 1802 as a new "style of song",[1] in particular a poetry of "limits" whose *convincing* representation of "myths"—precisely what is lacking in "modern poetry"—shall found a "more humane time" (6.1), thus leads him back to the linguistic struggle of "speech against speech"[2] out of which tragedy is born.

Although his earlier translations of Greek poetry episodically gesture to the emergence of the *language of money* in Greece—Hölderlin's rendering of Pindar's

[1] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt 467.

[2] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 856.

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eleventh Pythian ode turns to the "Muse" (V 63) who has "bound" (V 64) herself "to wages, to provide/The silvered voice, at different places/In different ways abundantly" (V 64–66; 7.2)—his translations of Sophocles' tragic plays explicitly confront *monetised language*. This is clear in the language of money that permeates Oedipus' speech. After presuming that the previous ruler was murdered for "silver" (V 123), the tyrant accuses Teiresias of having "eyes only/For profit [Gewinn]" (V 392–393), and Kreon of seeking his throne with "money" (V 549; 9.1). The *monetised language* of Oedipus, "stuffed"[3] (V 892) with self-isolating greed, leads the chorus, despairing before the celebration of excessive wealth (kérdos), *hubris* and impiety, to cry out: "Are such actions to be honoured?/What should I sing?" (V 912–913; 9.1).

The language of Kreon in *Antigone* is similarly stained by the emergence of money. Like Oedipus, he accuses the blind prophet of having "sold [his] soul for silver" (V 338) and even claims that Teiresias is secretly "import[ing] electrum from Sardis" (V 1038–1041; 9.1). By the end of the play, it is clear that Kreon is projecting his own unlimited desire for money onto anyone in range. When he pointedly attacks Teiresias by saying that "[t]he prophet loves everything that is silver" (V 1096), Teiresias responds in kind by saying: "The way of the tyrant is to love disgraceful profit [Gewinn]." (V 1097; 9.1)

On the one hand, Hölderlin projects his earlier gestures to the language of money in modern time onto the *monetisation* of language in ancient Greece. The "clever race" (V 48) of capitalists and scientists emerging in the late eighteenth century who, having "become more barbaric through industry", in particular their modern, "evil tongues" that, "to make/A little money" (V 39–40), support the "insane labour" (V 244) that accompanies industrialisation (10.1, 10.3), combines with the self-isolating and money-obsessed, evil tongues of Oedipus and Kreon.

But on the other hand, Hölderlin's poetry also touches upon the physical perversion that accompanies the emergence of money in early historic Greece, namely an abstract style of seeing that alienates nature and community (8). And just as he projects his earlier references to the *monetisation* of language in modern time onto the first historical instance of the language of money, Hölderlin also projects his earlier references to *visualised language* in the present onto the original *visualisation* of language which we witness in the tragic play.

As we have seen, "profit", *Gewinn* (V 4), is linked to "number", *Zahl* (V 12), which, through the act of counting, is haunted by the isolation and horror of individual finitude (8). Although we can "see and count", *sehen und zählen* (V 42) the "number", *Zahl* (V 42), of years that belong to an individual lifespan, the "mortal eye", *sterbliches Auge* (V 44) remains isolated from communal time, that is, "the years of people" (V 43; 8). The association of money, number and *visualised language* is explicit in *The Poet's Mission*. Here "a clever race" (V 48) of money-tyrants and heartless scientists who have "squandered, misused" (V 46) the resources of earth and community "to make/A little money" (V 39–40) uses visual technology

[3] Ibid. p. 822.

such as the "[t]he telescope" (V 51) as it "scans… and counts [späht… und zählt] and/Names the stars of heaven with names." (V 50–52; 7)

In his Sophocles translations that follow Hölderlin connects the money-obsessed tyrant of Greece with self-isolating eyes. Oedipus sets out to redeem the suffering of the city with "eyes of salvation [Rettersauge]" (V 79–80), and this clearly implies a *visual egoism*—one thinks of the tyrant's declaration *egò phanò* (V 132)—that shall "light up" (V 131) the dark secret of the past (9.1). Oedipus' accusation that Teiresias has "eyes only/For profit", *der Gewinn*/*Nur ansieht* (V 392–393), unconsciously connects the insatiable desire for money with his insatiable desire to see. Given the inherent connection between money and abstract seeing that emerges just before Greek tragedy (3.2), the link between "profit", *Gewinn* (V 4), and "number", *Zahl*—we have noted the inextricable linguistic relation between "counting", *zählen*, and paying, *zahlen* (6.1)—of Hölderlin's earlier poetry is projected into his translations of Sophocles. Kreon deviously displaces his own desire to calculate—haunted, perhaps, by his *coup d'état* following Oedipus' suffering—onto the messenger, as when the tyrant asks: "Why do you calculate [rechnest] the place of my misery?" (V 334) Later on in the play, Teiresias predicts that Kreon's calculating spirit shall "pay", *zahlen* (V 1108), for (a horrific) profit, one corpse in exchange for two (9.1).

That the *visualised language* of the tyrant is a projection of Hölderlin's earlier gestures to the *visualised language* of modern time is made clear when we consider Oedipus' language just after his pointed turn to "eyes of salvation [Rettersauge]" (V 79–80). Hölderlin's earlier poetry accuses the new "race" (V 48) of capitalists and scientists that emerge in the late eighteenth century of reducing the earth and its resources to pictures that they can calculate, control and exchange "to make/A little money" (V 39–40; 7). Here it is not simply the uprooting and *visualisation* of space and time—the *visualised chronotope*—that represents a danger, but instead the uprooting and *visualisation* of language—*visualised language*—that, insofar as it establishes and maintains the reckless venture of an unlimited spatio-temporal form, represents the deeper threat. The "clever race" (V 48) of tyrants in modern time do not simply "sca[n]/With the telescope and coun[t…] the stars of heaven" (V 50–52), it "scans [**späht**]/With the telescope and counts and/***Names*** the stars of heaven ***with names***."[4] (V 50–52; 8)

In his translation of *Oedipus the Tyrant* Hölderlin projects his elaboration of the *visualised language* of Greece, which now includes the everyday language of capitalism and science in modern time, back onto the ancient, self-isolating language of the tyrant from which it originally descends. Whereas the greedy "race" (V 48) of individuals during the emergence of industrialisation "***scans*** [**späht**]/With the telescope and counts [zählt] and/***Names*** the stars of heaven ***with names***" (V 50–52), Oedipus declares, as if his *monetised eyes* represented an advancement in modern visual technology, that he shall "***scan every word***", ***Denn alle Worte späh' ich***[5] (V 295; 9.1). This brings us to the original linguistic experience to which Hölder-

[4] Emphasis added.

[5] Emphasis added.

lin's translations of Sophocles gesture, namely the projection of thousands of years of an increasingly *visualised language* back onto its origin which, in turn, opens out and reinvents the socio-political potential of *Dionysiac language*.

At the end of *Antigone* the chorus invokes Dionysus' "lightning-struck mother" (V 1188; 9.1). Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles touch upon the *visualised language* harnessed in initiation, as when mystics re-enacted the "writhings and screams" of Semele during Dionysus' birth (4.2). This echoes Hölderlin's rendering of Semele's *tragic language*, in particular his translation of her individual "lament", *pénthos* (V 26), into *Jammer* (V 41; 7.2). And because *Dionysiac language* represents the transition from *visualised language* of an individual to a joyful language of earth and community, heard from the perspective of the linguistic conclusion (4.3, 10.1), the work of the Sophoklean tragedy that Hölderlin engages can be understood as a linguistic transition, namely the equating of the *visualised language* of the tyrant with the "lament", *pénthos* (V 26), *Jammer* (V 41), of Dionysus' myth and cult. This shall absorb the *tragic language* of the individual into the epiphany of *Dionysiac language*. Consider the obscure language that the tyrant soon stumbles upon, and which represents an opening out of the "riddling language used to confuse and intrigue the initiand" in mystery-cult (4.1). "What sort of word is that"[6] (V 88), Oedipus asks, puzzled, when Kreon reveals the message of the oracle. "What is it […]?"[7] (V 247), Kreon inquires, similarly frustrated, when the messenger appears at the beginning of *Antigone*. "You cloak/The act in every way […]"[8] (V 251–252)

Such "destructions and disappearances" of *visualised language* that "cleverer people" such as Sophocles "construct" (4.1) lead the tyrant into a state of linguistic melancholy. The self-confident language of Oedipus, for instance, becomes increasingly unstable. "Through which purification? which ill thing is it?"[9] (V 98), he asks, increasingly bewildered by the message from Delphi. The growing sense of loss and homelessness significantly issues forth from the elision between the tyrant's eyes, ears and mouth. Oedipus declares in regard to the tragic fate of his father/victim, "*I know* it, *I* have *heard* it, but *I* of course did not *see* it."[10] (V 104; 9.1) As we have noted, this abyss between the "*suffering organs*" of the tyrant recurs: "*I heard* it also," Oedipus declares with everyone looking upon him, "nevertheless nobody *sees he* who *saw* it."[11] (V 297; 9.1)

When the *visualised language* of the tyrant—a product of the (Herakleitean) world of unlimited monetised circulation (9.1)—comes into contact with a limit, he responds with dis*organ*ised, linguistic fury. Oedipus invokes with aggressive language a series of violent, inauthentic images: the previous king was murdered for "silver" (V 123), Teiresias has "eyes only/For profit [Gewinn]" (V 392–393),

[6] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 792.

[7] Ibid. p. 869.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid. p. 792.

[10] Emphasis added.

[11] Emphasis added.

and Kreon seeks his throne with "money" (V 549; 9.1). Like the tragic, *visualised* language of Pentheus who is heard "breathing great arrogance" (V 640; 4.1) and who falsely pictures Dionysus' female mystics "in the thickets, like birds, held in the most pleasant nets of sex" (V 957–958, 685–688) in *Bacchae* (2.1), the insolent, *visualised* "words" (V 902) of *Oedipus the Tyrant* know nothing of "justice"[12] (V 902)

Hölderlin's *Antigone* also testifies to the linguistic rage of the tyrant who is unable to force his *visualised language* onto the dark centre that haunts his insatiable egoism. After Kreon asks the herald, "[w]hat is it […]?"(V 247) and stumbles upon his unclear response: "You cloak the act in every way […]" (V 251–252), he demands that the herald "[…] say it now, and depart!"[13] (V 254) Similar to Oedipus (and Pentheus), Kreon invokes with hostile language the violent, unreal image of Teiresias who, having "sold [his] soul for money" (V 338), is secretly "purchas[ing] electrum from Sardis"[14] (V 1076–1077; 9.1). And that this aggressive struggle of "talk against talk" is centred upon the undoing of the *visualised language* of the money-tyrant is suggested when Kreon, after projecting his calculating individualism onto the messenger (V 344), cries out: "My god! to what wretched style of speech have you been born?"[15] (V 336)

By the end of the tragic play it becomes clearer that the *visualised language* of tyranny is being absorbed into the linguistic transition at the heart of mystery-cult, for instance, when the untamed words of Kreon and Oedipus disperse into cries of despair. The *tragic vowels* to which the tyrant succumbs in tragedy is an adaption of the horrified language of the mystic initiand during a near-death experience (4.2). While running "feverishly this way and that" (V 625), Pentheus in *Bacchae* "breaths out his soul" (V 620), "gnash[es] his teeth in his lips" (V 621) and then, before the terrifying mystic lightning-flash that Dionysus invokes, shrieks *éa éa* (V 644; 4.2). In Sophocles the *tragic vowel—ìo*[16] (V 1260)—which Hölderlin in contrast to most translators often leaves as "Io!"[17] (V 1317)—expresses the "senseless sense", *unsinnige Sinne!* (V 1317) that issues forth from the *visualised* "speech" of the *geisteskrank*, "spiritually ill", tyrant (9.1). Whereas the *ioú ioú* (V 1182) of Oedipus is rendered *Ju! Ju!*[18] (V 1198), the terrible howl *aiaî aiaî* (V 1307) to which he succumbs when he hears of his mother's/wife's suicide—significantly the same *aiaî aiaî*[19] (V 1267) that Kreon shrieks when the messenger reports the suicides

[12] Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe, Bd. 2, Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen, Schmidt 822.

[13] Ibid. p. 869.

[14] Ibid. p. 899.

[15] Ibid. p. 872.

[16] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 234.

[17] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 909.

[18] Ibid. p. 836.

[19] *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 166, 171, 234.

of his son and wife—is given the frenzied melancholy of the recurring *Weh! Weh! Weh! Weh!*[20] (V 1330; V 1362)

And that tragedy adapted the coincidence of deathly silence and blindness in ritual to neutralise the unlimited vision of insatiable money-tyrants is also clear at the end of tragedy. Kreon cries out *Ju! Ju!* (V 1383) and, like a desolate mystic initiand "foaming at the mouth" with "distorted eyes" (4.2), declares that he shall never look upon "another day" (V 1384; 9.1). Oedipus shrieks *Ju! Ju!* (V 1198) and proclaims, "O light! for the last time I see you now!" (V 1199)

Critical to the simultaneous dismemberment of *visualised* space-time and *visualised language* at the end of tragedy—one thinks also of the dreadful "night-clouds" (V 1336) and the "unspeakable, untamed"[21] (V 1337) that the blind Oedipus sees after screaming *Weh! Weh! Weh! Weh!* (V 1330)—is how the absolute dis*organ*isation of the tyrant coalesces with that of the heart of the suffering community. After asking the speechless and blind egomaniac, "how could you/Stain your eye thus […]?" (V 1350–1351), the tragic chorus is itself unable to *organ*ise that which it perceives through its sense-organs: "You poor one, but I cannot/Look upon you, […]"[22] (1326–1327) At the centre of this radical—and somewhat mutual—transition into the "unheard, unseen" (V 1335; 9.2) is the revelation of the tyrant's name for that which it had always been, namely a symbol of unlimited "wailing", *pentheús*. Too gruesome to look upon (V 1213–1221, 1297–1306) and too grievous to hear (V 1205–1211), "Oedipus" names finally, the tragic chorus wails, "sadnesses", *pentheîn* (V 1320).

Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles and notes on his translations illuminate the relation between the linguistic violence and suffering of the money-tyrant and that of the pre-*monetised* tyrant from myth and cult. Whereas "Oedipus, all-knowing" alienates nature and community, as when he "speaks […] in furious [**zorn**iger] apprehension",[23] Lykourgos seeks to murder Dionysus and his female mystic initiates in his "blossoming rage", *blühenden* ***Zorn*** (V 998; 9.1). That the *visualised language* of the money-tyrant is absorbed into that of the pre-monetary mythical figure whose eyes lead to tragic individual death is implied by Oedipus' "wailing", *aufjammern* (V 1343),[24] that recalls Hölderlin's earlier translation of Semele's "wail", *pénthos* (V 26) as *Jammer* (V 41; 7.2).

This brings us to the linguistic "caesura"[25] to which Hölderlin's reflections on Sophocles gesture. Because it can be linked to that of the pre-monetised tyrant of myth and cult, the *visualised language* of the money-tyrant can be absorbed into the mythic and ritualistic timetable that composes *Dionysiac language*. The myth of the "blossoming rage", *blühenden* ***Zorn*** (V 998) of Lykourgos—which, because

[20] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 841, 911.

[21] Ibid. p. 841.

[22] Ibid. p. 840.

[23] Ibid. p. 852. Emphasis added.

[24] Ibid. p. 841.

[25] Ibid. p. 851.

it is associated with Oedipus who "speaks […] in furious [**zorn**iger] apprehension", is associated also with a modern, "clever race" (V 48) of industrialists and scientists who look through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[t] and/Nam[e] the stars of heaven with names" (V 50–52; 9.1)—provides a metaphor of sorts for that which is adapted to absorb the *visualised language* of money-tyrants. "[C]oncealed" (V 996) in a rocky cell, Lykourgos' violent and insane attempts to eradicate the sacred cult of Dionysus lead to desolation and darkness—and thus contrast the epiphany of *Dionysian seeing*: "the evian fire", *eúión te pûr* (V 964), *das evische Feuer* (V 1001; 9.1), and *Dionysiac language*: the enchanting song of "the flute-loving/[…] Muses."[26] (V 1102–1003)

The emergence of the *visualised chronotope* in tragedy is preceded by gestures to a Dionysian space-time, which then, during the "onward progress of the work" (9.1), retreats into the background. In *Oedipus the Tyrant*, soon after the chorus calls out to "intoxicated Bacchus, the Evier,/United with the maenads" (V 216–217) to come "[w]ith the gleaming, shining torch burning" (V 217–218), the *monetised* vision of Oedipus begins to dominate the action of the play (9.1). Following their invocation of Dionysus' choruses and their nocturnal dance and song (V 155–160), the chorus in *Antigone* is quickly overshadowed by the image of the new "king of the land" (V 161; 9.1)

This is the same in regard to *Dionysiac language*, to which the chorus gestures early on in tragedy and which then moves into background. The projection of Dionysian light that recedes in *Oedipus the Tyrant* is coupled with that of receding Dionysian song at the heart of the god's ritual of dancing torches and the drinking of wine (2.3). In *Antigone* the invocation of the *Dionysiac chronotope* that soon disappears is also inseparable from the disappearing *Dionysiac language* of choruses and their nocturnal song and dance—what Hölderlin translates as "Bacchus' round dance!", *der Bacchusreigen!*[27] (V 160; 9.1)

The vanishing of *Dionysiac language* from the foreground of action is reversed at the end of tragedy. At this point "the oppositional-rhythmic interruption" of the dialogue looks forward to "tragic transport" in the form of "the pure word" (9.1). This is strikingly clear in Hölderlin's mistranslation of *poluónume* (V 1115; 7.2) as "Name-creator", *Namenschöpfer* (V 1162), which draws attention to the socio-political potential of Dionysus' "immortal words"[28] (V 1184). The "joyful cry", *das* ***Jauchzen*** (V 24; 10.2) of the god in the opening lines of Hölderin's *Bacchae* where he makes his epiphany "to lead [his] chorus", ***Chor zu führen*** (V 21), and reveal his "mystic initiations", ***Geheimnis*** (V 22; 7.2), recurs in the "joyful crying", ***jauchzenden*** (V 1202), Dionysus at the conclusion of Hölderlin's *Antigone*, where is also named "[c]horus-leader of stars and guardian/Of secret speech!", ***Chorführer*** *der Gestirn' und* ***geheimer****/Reden Bewahrer!* (V 1196–1197)

The *Dionysiac language* that Hölderlin retrieves in his Sophocles translations enhances the language of earth and community in his earlier poetry. As we have

[26] Ibid. p. 897.

[27] Ibid. p. 866.

[28] Ibid. p. 904.

seen, linguistic ecstasy at the heart of mystery-cult is opened out in tragedy. This we hear, for instance, in the recurring, happy cry *iò ió* (V 582) of Dionysus and his redeemed mystic chorus in *Bacchae* (4.3). That Hölderlin's preceding poems gestures to the ecstasy of *Dionysian vowels* is heard in the citation from Sophocles' *Aias* with which *The Blind Singer* begins (10.3), a verse that is significantly followed by the *Dionysiac* shout *iò ió*[29] (V 707). Given its absorption of the *visualised vowels* of the tyrant, as when Kreon shrieks *ìo* (V 1260), *Io!* (V 1317), the inner core of *Dionysiac language* to which Hölderlin turns—at the end of *Antigone* the chorus, while calling out for Dionysus to make his epiphany: "become manifest/ King", *propháneth'/ánax*[30] (V 1149–1150), *Werd' offenbar!*[31] (V 1199), shout *iò*[32] (V 1146), *Io!*[33] (V 1195)—represents a continued poetic dialogue: the power of a cosmic (vertical) axis of language to neutralise the inauthentic language of individuals whose desire for money and unnatural images knows no limit.

The linguistic transition from Semele's "wailing", *Jammer* (V 41), to Dionysus' "joyful cry", *Jauchzen* (V 24), that Hölderlin retrieves in his translations of Pindar and *Bacchae* (10.2), and which he then integrates into his own poetry (10.3) is now deepened by the mystic transformation of language from *Jammer* to *Jauchzen* in his translations of Sophocles. As we have just seen, the movement from the *tragic language* of "the lightning-struck mother" (V 1188) to the "joyful crying master", *jauchzenden Her*[*r*] (V 1202), is adapted to represent a shift from the *visualised* "wailing", *aufjammern* (V 1343), of the blind money-tyrant to the *Dionysiac language* of earth and community. This continues the transformation of language in *The Rhine* when, after "wailing for release", *um Erlösung jammern* (V 23), the godlike river is transfigured into "a joyous cry", *ein Jauchzen* (V 61; 10.3). The conquest of the *visualised language* of dogmatic Christian tyrants in modern time who are struck "with blindness" (V 148; 10.3) combines with that of the original, blind tyrants of Greece whose *monetised* vision and language similarly threatens the *Contrat social*.

Still more striking is the articulation of *Dionysiac language* from *Bread and Wine* to which Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles gesture. As we have seen, this earlier elegy begins with a Dionysian night absorbing the *visualised language* of "a sensible head weigh[ing] profit", *Gewinn* (V 4), and this means, through Hölderlin's poetic metonymy, the language of "number", *Zahl* (V 12; 5.3). This dithyramb, as it was originally titled *The Wine-god* (8), soon paints an exceptional image of *Dionysiac language*. Nocturnal, ecstatic "songs" (V 28), in particular "the streaming word" (V 54), look back, on the one hand, the liquid spirit of Dionysian song that Hölderlin's *Oedipus at Kolonus* evokes (7.1). On the other hand, "the stream-

[29] Sophocles, *Aias*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 29.

[30] Ibid. p. 229.

[31] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 905, 920.

[32] Sophocles, *Aias*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 299.

[33] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 905.

ing word" (V 54) looks forward to the ceaselessly flowing and watery "language of the purest [***Rein***esten]" (V 146) in *Der **Rhein***. The source of linguistic magic: "A riddle [that] is purely sprung [***Rein***entsprungenes]"[34] (V 46) from an abyss of darkness below, recalls the epiphany of "the pure word", *das **rein**e Wort*,[35] wherein pre-*monetised* and pre-*visualised* myth, cult and nature intersect. One thinks of the coincidence of a "revelation of the gift of corn" and Persephone's "return to the light by passing [upward] through a crack in the earth" (2.3). One thinks also of grapevines, like a new season of language, growing out of the earth.

The second, and more dramatic, image of *Dionysiac language* that Hölderlin paints in *Bread and Wine* makes its epiphany after the "singers in the holy night suddenly possess[ed]" (V 48) by "happy madness" (V 47) and the "rustl[ing]" (V 49, 52) of "the open sea […]/at Parnassus" (V 49–50) and "the mountain wild of Kithairon" (V 51) succumb to linguistic and communal desolation in the present. Now the poet confesses that it would be "better to sleep, than to be without companions" (V 120): "Thus waiting and what to do and say meanwhile,/I do not know and why poets in a desolate time?" (V 121–122; 5.3, 10.3) Recollecting Heinse's belief that poets are "the wine-god's holy priests" (V 123), Hölderlin then conquers the pointlessness of poetry in modern time by re-establishing a cosmic (vertical) axis of language about which Dionysian "singers/[…] sing praise for the ancient once" (V 141–142; 8, 10.3)

In his translations of Sophocles, the dual-image of *Dionysiac language* that we see in *Bread and Wine* is enriched. Whereas the *visualised language* of "profit", *Gewinn* (V 4), and "number", *Zahl* (V 12), is absorbed into the calculating, *rechnenisch* (V 334), spirit of tyrants who "love disgraceful profit [Gewinn]" (V 1097; 9.1), the tragic isolation of the poet "without companions" (V 120), haunted by the melancholy of linguistic nihilism in the present—"[…] why poets in a desolate time?" (V 122; 8)—, is absorbed into the Sophoklean tragic chorus. Suffering the *visualised language* of money-tyrants, it cries out that it is "godless, friendless" (V 674), and then asks, if such individualism that alienates earth, community and the sacred remains without limit: "What should I sing?"[36] (V 913; 9.1)

The epiphany of "the streaming word" (V 54) in *Bread and Wine*, which also reflects the flowing image of "Dirce's forests, [and] Ismenos' streams" (V 5) that Dionysus invokes in *Bacchae* (7.2), is re-absorbed into choral references to "Dirce's streams [Bäche]" (V 107) and "Ismenos' cold stream [Bach]" (V 1171; 9.1) in *Antigone* that temporally enclose the emergence and descent of Kreon *visualised language*. The Dionysian night from which ecstatic "songs" (V 28) issue forth:

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[34] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 329. Emphasis added.

[35] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 850.

[36] That Hölderlin is uniquely concerned with language is suggested in his mistranslation of this verse, which is significantly related to his mistranslation of Dionysus as "Namenschöpfer". The original Sophoklean line, as we have seen, reads: "if such actions are honoured, why should I dance?" (V 895–896; p. 2). Unconsciously reflecting the concentrated modern crisis of language, Hölderlin thus transforms the nihilism of "dance" into that of "song", that is: "Why should I sing?"

> Now also [**Jetzt auch kommet**] a breeze comes [**kommet**] and excites the peaks
> [**Gipfel**] of the grove,
> Look! [**Sieh!**] and the shadow-image of our earth, the moon
> Comes secretly [**Kommet geheim nun auch**] now also; the intoxicated one, the
> night
> comes [die Schwärmerische, die Nacht kommt],
> Full of stars [**Voll mit Sternen**] […],
> Gleams the astonishing one there [**Glänzt die Erstaunende dort**], the stranger
> among
> humans
> Over mountain peaks [**Über Gebirgseshöhn**] rising […] gloriously [**prächtig
> herauf**].[37] (V 12–18; 8)

is transfigured into that which conquers the perverted words of the egomaniacs who haunt the tragic stage:

> But now [**Jetzt aber**], […]
> […]
> […] over [**über**]
> Parnassus' hills [**Parnassischen Hügel**] […]
> […]
> Io! you! going in fire! [**Io! du! in Feuer wandelnd**!]
> Chorus-leader of stars [**Chorführer der Gestirn'**] and guardian
> Of secret speech! [**geheimer Reden**]
> Son born of Zeus!
> Reveal yourself! [**Werd' offenbar!**] […]
> […]
> […]
> […], the joyful-crying master [**jauchzenden Herrn**].[38] (V 1189–1202)

Insofar as *Bread and Wine* culminates in a celebration of a Dionysian demigod who "[l]eads the stars [**Früher des** … **Gestirns**] of heaven upward and down eternally/ Forever happy" (V 144–145), this earlier poem looks forward to the choral invocation of Dionysus at the end of *Antigone* where the god, imagined in various places, is named "chorus-leader of stars [**Chorführer der Gestirn'**]"[39] (V 1144–1145; 8). The second and final transition to *Dionysiac language* that we see in *Bread and Wine*, which ascends out of the abyss of language in modern time and to which the "singers in the holy night suddenly possess[ed]" (V 48) by "happy madness" (V 47) succumb, is thus transfigured into the linguistic purification of the money-tyrant. The conquest of the loss of language in the present through a gesture to "the wine-god's holy priests" (V 123) is now the conquest of the polluted, *visualised* words of an insatiable egomaniac through the opening out of the linguistic inner core of the mystic initiations, ***Geheimnis*** (V 22; 7.2), of Dionysus who is named "Chorus-leader and protector/Of secret [**geheimer**] speech![40]" (V 1196–1197) The re-establishment of the cosmic (vertical) axis of language with which *Bread and*

[37] Emphasis added.

[38] Emphasis added.

[39] Emphasis added.

[40] Emphasis added.

Wine culminates, in particular the Dionysian "singers/[Who…] sing praise for the ancient once" (V 141–142), is given new socio-political depth "[w]ith the Naxians/ And the awakening/Thyades, who frenzied/Sing the chorus […]" (V 1199–1202) to Dionysus who, as the "[c]reator-of-names", *Namenschöpfer* (V 1162), shall re-establish and guard a more ethical, democratic language of earth and community.

But the most striking articulation of *Dionysiac language* in Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles is in regard to the echo of an earthly and communal language that we hear in *The Poet's Vocation*. As we have noted, Hölderlin projects the *visualised language* of industrialists and scientists who "exploit" (V 37) nature and humankind "to make/A little money" (V 39–40) in modern time, as when they "sp[y]" (V 50) through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[t] and/Nam[e] the stars of heaven with names" (V 50–52), back onto its origin in Greece.

The *visualised* "wail", *pénthos* (V 26), *Jammer* (V 41), of Semele in Dionysian myth and cult, which Hölderlin integrates into his poetry—for instance, in the return to Semele who "desired/To see the god made visible" (V 50–51) in *As when on a holiday…*—and to which his Sophocles translations gesture—"the lightning-struck mother" (V 1188) at the end of *Antigone*—is adapted to express the *visualised language* of the money-tyrant. The ***Jammer*** (V 41) to which Semele's reckless eyes secretly lead in myth and ritual, in other words, comes to express the *auf**jammern*** (V 1343), to which Oedipus' eyes lead on the public tragic stage (4). Because Oedipus—similar to modern capitalists and scientists whose visual technology and language of money perverts nature and humankind, as when they "sp[y]", ***späh***[*en*] (V 50), through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[t] and/Nam[e] the stars of heaven with names" (V 50–52)—recklessly declares that he shall "*scan* every word", *Denn alle Worte **späh** ich* (V 295), the transition from *visualised* to *Dionysiac language* in Hölderlin's Sophocles expresses the conquest of *visualised language* emerging with industrialisation.

As we have also seen, the sacred language of earth and community of the tragic chorus and the calculating language of the money-tyrant alienated from nature, kin and even the gods radically oppose one another. The linguistic transition from *visualised* to *Dionysiac language* to which the end of the tragic play gestures therefore requires that the inauthentic words of egoism be transformed into primal sounds that parallel those that are internal to authentic words. This opens up the possibility of a linguistic identification through which a democratic language can absorb and neutralise the linguistic difference that sustains the inauthentic language of tyrants.

Consider the heart of the tragic chorus, whose simultaneously singular and plural (*ecstatic*) voice embodies the inner core of the *pólis*. As we have noted, although it invokes *Dionysiac vowels* such as *eúion* (V 211; 4.3) and *ìo*/*Io!* (V 1146; 4.3; V 1195), it also succumbs to silence, for instance, when it cries out: "What should I sing?" (V 913) Hölderlin remarks in his notes on Sophocles that we hear "in the choruses" is a concentration of "the wailing [das Jammernde] and the peaceful and the religious […]"[41] And it is precisely this profound linguistic ambivalence

[41] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 856.

inscribed into the tragic chorus that allows the *visualised language* of the tyrant, reduced to the wailing of *ìo*/*Io!* (V 1260; V 1317), to transition into the communal and chthonic joy of *Dionysiac language* to which the chorus gestures: *ìo*/*Io!* (V 1146; V 1195)—and which founds and sustains a cosmic (vertical) axis of authentic language. The *Jammer* of tragedy, in other words, is not simply the timeless wailing of a money-tyrant with reckless eyes, but instead the necessary temporal sound that a self-isolating individual must finally embrace as it precedes the rebirth of a language of happiness. This brings us to that which best illustrates the elaboration of *Dionysiac language* from *The Poet's Mission* in Hölderlin's Sophocles translations, namely the "wailing", *Jammer*, of Antigone.

Although these tragedies offer preeminent examples of *Dionysiac language*, their main action is dominated by the *visualised language* of tyrants whose unlimited desire for money and calculating eyes destroy their relation to nature and others. Internalising the endless need to "calculate", *rechnen* (V 334), the tyrant establishes an abstract relation to language, for instance, when he declares that he shall "*scan* every word", *[...] alle Worte späh*[*en*] (V 295), with his greedy, restless eyes. As we have seen, Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles remind us that the *visualised language* of the tyrant, facilitated by the lucid vision of the blind prophet, is gradually absorbed into the *Dionysiac language* of the chorus.

But in *Antigone* we come across another figure who, similar to Teiresias, catalyses the transition from *tyrannical seeing* and *language* to a new image and sound of humankind. Revolting against the calculating eyes of her money-obsessed uncle who has disrupted the cosmic (vertical) axis (9.1), Antigone embraces the mystic language of melancholy through which her dead brother can find his way to a Dionysiac afterlife. "With a shrill voice, like a grieving bird," (V 441) the messenger reports, "she *lamented* loudly [**jammerte** sie laut **auf**]"[42] (V 444; 9.1) when she looked upon Polyneikes' uncared for corpse.

The "grieving bird", *órnithos* (V 425), to which the tragic heroine is likened evokes the metaphor of "swift-winged birds", *órnin* (V 175), for the "countless", *zahllos* (V 185), soulless making their way to Hades in *Oedipus the Tyrant* (4.2, 9.1). This connection is strengthened when we consider the chorus' next two verses that link the "countless", *zahllos* (V 185), dead to the "unmourned"[43] (V 188) corpses lying in the field, as well as, shifting back to *Antigone*, when Tieresias predicts that Kreon's calculating spirit shall "pay", *zahlen* (V 1108), for (a horrific) profit, one corpse (Haimon) in exchange for two (Antigone kept alive below and Polyneikes kept dead above; 9.1). This means that Antigone's performance of mystic "lamenting", *auffammern* (V 444), re-establishes a cosmic (vertical) axis between heaven and earth which transcends that which individual eyes can see, calculate and control. The epiphany of the midday sun descending [f]rom the aether" (V 433) above and the magical cloud of dust ascending [f]rom the soil" (V 434) below (9.1)

[42] Emphasis added.

[43] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 795.

together with the mystic "lament" blind the *scanning* eyes of the messenger which are an extension of the *calculating vision* of the tyrant.

The socio-political power of Antigone's linguistic leap into the dark and incalculable spirit of death becomes clearer as the play proceeds. On the one hand, the wilful descent from "the last light/[…] of the sun" (V 837–838) into her "death chamber" (V 846), which renders Antigone's "luminous holy eyes"[44] (V 910) useless, revolts against the polluted vision of the tyrant. On the other hand, the marriage of Antigone's linguistic hysteria to deathly silence revolts against the restless wanderings of Kreon's *visualised language*. We have noted the evocation of the spherical and glowing (and hence blinding), midday sun to the mystic mirror of Dionysian cult that appears in tragedy, as when a doomed bride, while gazing into a mirror, *laughs* at the "lifeless image of her body" (V 1162; 9.1). For the tragic heroine of *Antigone*, it is the transition from a frenzy of *tragic vowels—ìo/Io* (V 844; V 873) and *o/O*[45] (V 891; V 922)—to the absolute absence of language that shall alienate the *alienated vowels* of the tyrant: "[…] and not in hymns/Shall I be called, nor shall a bridal song be sung/To me, some song of celebration, for instead/I am married to Acheron."[46] (V 841–844)

The linguistic transition that coalesces about Antigone elaborates that which we noted in *The Vocation of the Poet*. As we have *heard*, the epiphany of the enchanting, Dionysian sound "of the happy god's/Triumph" (V 1–2) that *listens forward* to that of "the day's angel" (V 5, 7) in the present initiates an ecstatic, hopeful silence that is then broken by the *visualised language* of capitalists and scientists in modern time who, "to make/A little money" (V 39–40), reduce nature and community to an abstract language of pictures (10.3). Using modern visual technology like "[t]he telescope" (V 51), this "clever race" (V 48) shamelessly "scans… and counts [späht… und **zählt**] and/Names the stars of heaven with names" (V 50–52; 7.3). This alienates "[t]he true picture and sayings of the gods" (V 40) that, sustaining the sacred tie between earth and heaven, descend "[f]rom the aether […]/[…]/Innumerable [**Unzählbare**]" (V 39; 10.3) The language of Dionysian "singers/sound[ing] praise for the ancient once" (V 141–142) who "[l]eads **the stars of heaven** upward and down eternally/Forever happy" (V 144–145; 10.3), in other words, is silenced by a concentrated form of *visualised language*. Now "**the stars of heaven**" (V 52) are dead material that "a clever race" (V 48) of emerging capitalists and scientists "scans… and counts [späht… und **zählt**] and/**Names** […]" (V 50–52; 10.3).

The loss of *Dionysiac language* in modern time implicit in the estrangement of a cosmic (vertical) axis of words, that is, in the loss of the incalculable "sayings of the gods", *Göttersprüche*[47] (V 40), through the emergence of a language of unlimited calculations (and hence visuality) implies also the loss of what Hölderlin refers to

[44] Ibid. p. 891, p. 893.

[45] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 217, 219. *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 892, 894.

[46] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 891.

[47] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 337.

in his earlier poetry as "the saying", *die Sage*. That the disappearance of the sacred word that binds isolated individuals to one another is tragic is clear when we consider the epiphany of *die Sage* (V 25) alongside that of "a golden smoke" (V 25), "as from a funeral pyre"[48] (V 24; 10.3), that re-establishes the pulsating relation between the living and the dead. The alienation of the "saying", in other words, means the alienation of the incalculable spirit of language that unifies heaven and earth, mortals and immortals.

The socio-political power of the *Sage* is strengthened in Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles. The "riddling language" at the heart of myth, which was "used to confuse and intrigue the initand" during ritual in mystery-cult, often invokes the number three. "Now you died and you came into being, *thrice* blessed one, on this day",[49] says a mystic formulae:

> Tell Persephone that Bakchios himself liberated you.
> Bull, you jumped into milk.
> Quickly you jumped into milk.
> Ram, you fell into milk.
> You have wine as your blessed honour (?).
> And below the earth there await you the same rituals as the other blessed ones. (4.1)

One thinks also of the people of Elis to whom Dionysus came during an annual holiday and magically filled the *three* empty pots with wine that they ritually placed inside his temple behind sealed doors.[50]

We have gestured to how the mystical spirit of *threeness* is opened out in tragedy. Cassandra's prophesy of "young creatures like phantoms of dreams" (V 1215–1216) in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, which recalls the horrific image of *phasmata* and *deimata* (and the *Émpousa*) that isolated individuals suffered during mystic initiation (4.2), chillingly looks forward to Klutaimestra's forlorn attempt to rescue her relation to the gods. "After he fell," she says, "I struck him a *third* time to grace my prayer to the infernal Zeus, saviour of the dead."[51] (V 1385–1386) We might also consider the *triadic* cycle of tragedies whose sacrificial spirit prepared the audience for the burlesque drama of a chorus boisterous satyrs (2.3).

That Dionysian *threeness* continued to survive, if gradually absorbed within the abstract zones of Roman literature, is suggested by the picture that Horace paints—and to which Hölderlin directly refers—of the fierce guardian of the underworld, the *three*-headed dog Cerberus, gently fawning upon the departing Dionysus (8). We have also gestured to Ovid's narrative of desolate Ariadne wandering alone on the shores of Naxos, barefoot, with beltless tunic and yellow hair unbound (4.3).[52]

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[48] See also verses 205–206 from Hölderlin's *The Archipelago* (5.3).

[49] Emphasis added.

[50] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 6.26.1–2, in *Pausanias. Description of Greece, Books VI-VIII.21*. ed. W. Jones (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002) 156–58.

[51] Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, in *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoedias* 187. Emphasis added.

[52] Here we might note that Hölderlin translated Ovid's elegies of forlorn lovers, including *Hero and Leander* and *Dejanira and Heracles*, throughout the 1790s. Böschenstein, *"Übersetzungen"*,

When the lament and silent melancholy of the abandoned love is interrupted by the epiphany of Bacchus and his thiasos sounding cymbals and drums, "[*t*]*here* times she tried to flee, and *three* times she was held back by fear."[53]

The gestures in Hölderlin's earlier poetry to the incalculable "sayings of the gods", *Göttersprüche* (V 40) and the mystical *Sage* (V 25)—and this includes, following his Dionysian declaration that the "secret", *Geheimnis*, can "[n]o longer [… r]emain unspoken" (V 84–85; 8), the poet telling Germania to "circumscribe" (V 94) the "truth" (V 93) of the epiphany of her cosmic (vertical) axis of language "*threefold*", ***dreifach***[54] (V 94)—are elaborated in his Sophocles translations. In *Oedipus the Tyrant* the "riddling language" of the "word of the oracle", *Orakelspruch*, which, like the mystic mirror in initiation, gives "an obscure image of what [is] subsequently revealed" (4.1), for instance, in the gesture of "the saying", *die Sage* (V 729) to a mystical "*threefold* highway", ***dreifach****er Heerweg* (V 730), hints at the fateful absorption of the *visualised language* of the tyrant into the earthly and communal spirit of *Dionysiac language*. In *Antigone*, where the we also find references to the queen of the underworld, the tragic heroine, after "she *lamented* loudly [jammerte sie laut auf]" (V 444; 5A), and while seeking to open up the magical road for the descending spirit of her dead brother to be "thrice blessed" by Persephone, crowns the unburied body of Polyneikes "with *thrice*-poured [**drei**mal] libations."[55] (V 448)

The mystic blindness and silence that the reader embraces at the end of *The Poet's Vocation* is articulated anew in the ritualistic blindness and silence into which Antigone wilfully leaps on the tragic stage. Now the ear that patiently awaits the epiphany of Dionysus' mellifluous' song is animated by the "holy madness" of a heroine who, identifying not with the *visualised language* determined by Oedipus' telescope-like eyes, but with the blind father at Kolonus who, on the cusp of a magical language of earth and community, was learning to see and hear (10.1).

This is not to say that the caesura of language in modern time with which the *Mission* of both *The Poet* and *Antigone* culminates should be taken lightly. Although the mood of revolutionary politics issuing forth from France is intensified by the mystical love of a heroine who shall reunite earth, gods and kin, we remain with her in the present, before the epiphany of the "Name-creator" (V 1162), languageless. Although the blood flowing from Oedipus' eyes with Jokasta's corpse lying on the ground (V 1276–1281) evokes the metaphor of rain falling to earth, in other words,

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in *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer 272. Perhaps most significant is his translation of Ovid's rendering of the myth of Phaethon which expresses the danger of the epiphany of an immortal, luminous father—here in the form of the sungod Helios, that leads to potential communal disaster and tragic individual death, that is, Zeus' lightning bolt to which Phaethon, similar to Semele, succumbs.

[53] Ovid, *Ares Amatoria*, 1.525–64, in *P. Ovidi Nasonis, Amores, Medicamina faciei femineae, Ars Amatoria, Remedia amoris*, ed. E. Kennedy, E. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 143–44.

[54] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 331. Emphasis added.

[55] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 876. Emphasis added.

the blood remains, for the moment, first a metaphor of fertilising liquids of incestuous sexual union of out our modern visual culture and uprooted language.

On the other hand, embracing the mystic experience of death, from which no mortal—including the *monetised* and *visualised*, *geisteskrank*, tyrant—can escape (V 377–378),[56] to redeem the relation between earth and sky, gods and humans, opens up a final picture of *Dionysiac language* that Hölderlin composed after his return to Sophocles, and to which we now turn.

11.2 After *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone*

Although the CONCLUSION shall show that Hölderlin's retrieval of *Dionysiac language* and its power to absorb *monetised* and *visualised languages* is itself absorbed into the German identity crisis, Christianity and mental illness, following his Sophocles translations he continues to gesture to a language of community and earth inspired by Greek tragedy. To show this we return first to Dionysus in *The Only One* where the god is named "the Evier" (V 55; V 53; 9.2). As we have seen, "the Evier" comes from Hölderlin's translation of *Oedipus the Tyrant*, as when the chorus cries out to "intoxicated Bacchus, *the Evier*,/Together with the maenads" (V 216–217) to make his epiphany "[w]ith the gleaming, shinning torch burning" (V 217–218; 9.2). Dionysus "the Evier" (V 55; V 53) echoes also Hölderlin's translation of *Antigone* where the chorus, suffering the darkness of a money-tyrant, imagines the light of "the evian fire", *das evische Feuer* (V 1001), sacred to Dionysus' mystery-cult (9.1–9.2).

As noted in PART ONE, at the heart of Dionysus' myth and cult that is opened out in tragedy to absorb the *visualised language* of money-tyrants is the ecstasy of *Dionysian vowels* whose *primal openness* have the power to found a more democratic language of earth and community (4.3). Dionysus "the Evier" (V 55; V 53) of Hölderlin's *The Only One* who is derived from Dionysus "the Evier" (V 216) from Sophocles' tragedies thus echoes the god of "the joyous call", *Eúios*, a name that arose from Dionysus' "echoing shouts of joy", *euoî*, in myth and ritual (4.3).

As we have also noted, the "joyful cry", *anololúxo* (V 24), that Hölderlin in his *Bacchae* translation renders as *das Jauchzen* (V 24; 10.3) reappears at the centre of his poetic project. *Bacchic vowels* that sound when "[t]he Ganges shores *heard* the god of joy/Triumph, as when coming from the Indus the all-conquering/Young Bacchus"[57] (V 1–3) in *The Poet's Vocation* "came with holy/Wine waking the people from sleep" (V 3–4; 10.3) struggle against the *visualised vowels* of modern money-tyrants. In particular, the primal sounds of earth and community oppose the alienated, *visualised language* of heartless capitalists and scientists who use new visual technology to reduce nature to an unlimited amount of isolated, static pictures

[56] Ibid. p. 874.

[57] Emphasis added.

"to make/A little money" (V 37–38), as when they peer through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[t] *and*/*Nam*[*e*] *the stars of heaven with names*."[58] (V 50–52; 10.3)

After adapting the ancient *Dionysiac chronotope* to neutralise the concentrated form of the *visualised chronotope* that accompanies the emergence of industrialisation, Hölderlin then projects his adaption back onto the tragic play from which it comes (11.1). Ancient egomaniacs ruled by money appear like modern capitalists and scientists who have no regard for nature and community. One thinks of Oedipus in *Oedipus the Tyrant* who, before tearing out his eyes, that is, while he aggressively reduces language to that he can see, calculate and control, declares that he shall "scan every word" (V 295; 9.1, 11.1).

That Hölderlin's turn to *Dionysiac vowels* to oppose the *visualised vowels* of money-tyrants is implicit in *The Only One* is shown when we consider the original version of the song. Having "found[ed] the vineyard" (V 58), Dionysus "[r]estrained [bezähmte] the wrath of people." (V 59; 9.2) As we have noted, Hölderlin associates "wrath", *Zorn*, with the mythical tyrant Lykourgos who foolishly sought to destroy the language of Dionysus' cult and whose linguistic "wrath" then models the *visualised language* of money-tyrants such as Kreon and Oedipus (11.1). In *The Only One* the language of "[t]he earth god" (V 57; 9.2) that "[r]estrain[s] [bezähmt] the" (V 59) linguistic "wrath" (V 59) of tyrants ruled by precious metal therefore implies the overcoming of the tragic language of the "unspeakable, unrestrained [unbezähmt]" (V 1337; 9.2) to which the blind and bloody tyrant Oedipus succumbs.

Hölderlin's multiple references to Dionysus "the Evier" (V 55; V 53) in *The Only One* evoke the linguistic transition internal to *Dionysiac language* heard from the perspective of the conclusion. The *visualised vowel* of the money-tyrant—one thinks of Oedipus' scream *ió*[59] (V 1313), *Io!*[60] (V 1336) precisely while he is being engulfed by the "unspeakable, unrestrained [unbezähmt]" (V 1337)—is absorbed into and neutralised by *Dionysian vowels* of restraint, as heard in the "echoing shouts of joy", *euoî*, that issue forth from the "democratic god par excellence" (2.3), Dionysus "the Evier" (V 55; V 53).

The enduring attraction to a *Dionysiac language of restraint* is shown also in his third version of *Greece*. The verses that we come across in this song: "For fixed is the navel/Of earth" (V 16–17; 6.2), redeems the loss of "the untouchable […]/[…] navel of earth […]"(V 914–915) to which the chorus in *Oedipus the Tyrant*, given Oedipus' obsession with "profit", *Gewinn* (V 906; 6.1, 8.1), is no longer able to visit with "reverence" (V 915; 6.2). Hölderlin accents the linguistic spirit of dance when he translates the nihilistic question that the chorus asks in despair before the *scanning*, *visualised language* of Oedipus "stuffed" (V 892; 11.1) with greed. In place of the correct translation of verses 895–896 from Sophocles' *Oedipus the Tyrant*:

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[58] Emphasis added.

[59] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 171.

[60] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 841.

"if such actions are honoured, why should I *dance*?"[61] (2), Hölderlin's translation in German says: "Are such actions to be honoured?/What should I *sing*?"[62] (V 912–913; 11.1) The rebirth of "the navel/Of earth" (V 16–17) in *Greece* implies, in other words, the rebirth of a cosmic (vertical) axis of language where the linguistic alienation of individuals from nature and each other is transfigured into a language inseparable from earth and community.

But Hölderlin's enduring dialogue with *Dionysiac language*, in particular that inspired by Sophocles, is to be expected. In his final translation of *Oedipus at Kolonus* around 1803, Antigone's description of the "mellifluous sounding nightingales" (V 18) recalls the chorus' description of "[t]he returning nightingale […]" (V 7) from his earlier translation that dates back to the mid 1790s (9.2). The "rustling laurels, and olive trees and grapevines" (V 17) evoke "the green coppice/Sheltered by dark ivy" (V 8–9) under which the nightingale sings and the "inviolate foliage/Full of fruits, lightless" (V 10–11) of "the reveller/Dionysos" (V 11–12; 9.2).

What is new, however, is Hölderlin's more explicit gesture beyond the inauthentic, *visualised language* of money-tyrants to authentic words that support earth and community. Consider the answer that the mystic "wanderer" gives to the blind Oedipus who has asked about the "place" (V 38) and "divinity"[63] (V 38) to which and to whom he has wandered. As we have seen, the mystic language that describes the sacred "place" (V 38) as "[u]ntouchable, undwellable" (V 39) absorbs the tragic "unheard, unseen" (V 1335) place into which *Oedipus the Tyrant* stumbles (9.2). That this process of transfiguration is a search for linguistic purity is suggested in Oedipus' response to the mystic words of the stranger who introduces him to "the shy/Goddesses […] the maidens of earth and night" (V 39–40; 9.2). "Who is it?" (V 41) he asks, "I would like to hear the pure name", *den reinen Namen möcht' ich hören*.[64] (V 41)

And that the search for "the pure word", *das reine Wort* (8.1), of earth that sustains the tragic play (4.3) is communal in spirit is accented when the wander explains that the mystic knowledge he has of the luminous, earthly goddesses, "[t]he all-seeing ones, the Eumenides" (V 42; 9.2), has its source in the local language to which he belongs. "So/Speak the people here"[65] (V 42–43), he says. The linguistic transformation that Oedipus embodies—the movement from the deathly silence to which the *visualised language* of money leads to the mystic language of earth and community fore*heard* in the imagined sound of impending "thunder [that] shall lead [him] to Hades" (V 1460–1461; 10.1)—is now more clearly connected to the search for a cosmic (vertical) axis of language whose authenticity is rooted in the communal-building powers of earth's darkness below, that is, in that which eyes

[61] Emphasis added.

[62] Emphasis added.

[63] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 776.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

looking for cannot exploit. We have gestured to the joyous song of the torch-lit procession with which the *Eumenides* culminates (V 1021–1046; 2).

Also explicit is the transition to *Dionysiac language* that we witness in Hölderlin's rendering of *Aias*. Although his earlier poetry refers to *Dionysian vowels*, as when the chorus' joyfully cries out *iò ió*[66] (V 707) immediately after the verse with which *The Blind Singer* begins (11.1, 10.3), we now begin with *tragic vowels* that accompany Aias' descent into darkness and individual death. *Io* (V 1), *iȯ*[67] (V 394), he cries, "night, my light, o gleaming Erebus take/Me, take/Me […]"(V 1–3; 9.2) Following the ordered timetable of languages from mystic initiation that is opened out in tragedy (4.2, 4.3), *tragic vowels* are followed by the projection of a time of deathly silence when Aias shall "no longer" (V 23) be "[d]rawing breath."[68] (V 24) *Near-death language*—the "innate wrath", *angebore*[*r*]/*Zor*[*n*] (V 39–40; 9.2) of Aias recalls the tyrannical words of Oedipus, Lykourgos and Pentheus who "breathes out his soul" (V 620) in *Bacchae* (4.3)—is followed by the tragic, non-*Dionysian language*, to which the mother of the fallen hero suffers. When she "hears" (V 28) of Aias' "sickness" (V 27), the chorus predicts that her "lamenting" (V 29) shall not be the "melancholy song of the poor nightingale"[69] (V 30). Instead the "[s]hrill-sounding song" (V 32) of Aias' mother "shall be/The lament, and her hands/Beating shall fall upon her chest/Tearing out the strands of grey hair."[70] (V 32–35)

The *tragic language* and *vowels* to which Hölderlin first turns in his translation of *Aias* open up the transition to *Dionysiac language* with which it culminates. "I tremble with love", (V 1) the chorus sings in the next and final fragment, "I arise to an all-embracing joy." (V 1; 9.2)

> *Io! Io!* Pan. Pan.
> O Pan! Pan! appear from out of the rolling waves
> Of Kyllene, from out of snow-swept
> Rocky hills o you
> King appointed by the gods! gathering one!
> That you dwelling with us may incite
> Your self-taught Nysian, Cnosian *leaps*.
> Now I long to *dance*.[71] (V 2–9; 9.2)

As we have *heard*, the "thundering waves" (V 2) and "snow-swept/Mountain wilds" (V 3–4) invite a cosmic (vertical) axis of language through which we return to the verse that introduces *The Blind Singer* (9.2). "Ares has released dreadful misery from the eyes./*Io! Io!*"[72] (V 14–15) Striking here is the similarity to the choral invocation of Dionysus in *Antigone*. Just as it calls out, "Io! Io! […] appear" (V 14–15)

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[66] Sophocles, *Aias*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 29.

[67] Ibid. p. 18.

[68] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 778.

[69] Ibid. p. 780.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Emphasis added.

[72] Emphasis added.

in *Aias*, the chorus invokes the "[n]ame-creator" (V 1162). "Io! you!" (V 1195), it sings, "Reveal yourself!" (V 1199; 8.1)

We have implied that the conquering of the language of isolation and individual death in *Aias* is inextricably tied to Hölderlin's romantisation of the language of madness that finally claims him (9.2). In spite of his last gestures to the transition from *visualised* to *Dionysiac language*, for instance, in his reference to "king Oedipus" who by virtue of his unlimited desire to "scan[s] all words" (V 295; 8.1) like a heartless capitalist and scientist "has one eye too many" (9.2), the socio-political power of this linguistic transformation fades into an evanescence of abstraction and other symptoms of schizophrenia. Clear references to the linguistic transformation that accompanies the lightning-flash in *Bacchae* in *The Blind Singer* melt into the nocturnal fog of Hölderlin's "night-songs". One thinks of the mythic language of Heracles in *Chiron*. Although he continues to search for authentic words of earth and community, Hölderlin's dream of "founding" (V 3) a language that would sustain "[a] kingdom of art" (V 4), haunted through it was by the "songs of centaurs, sung with the river-spirit, and the Greek Chiron who learned the stringed instrument from Achilles",[73] grows faint.

But we should take Hölderlin's turn to the socio-political potential of *Dionysiac language* after his translations of *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone* serious. To demonstrate this I conclude PART THREE of this study with an elucidation of the linguistic spirit of earth and community at the heart of Hölderlin's last complete hymn.

The flowing, Pindaric tone with which *Memento* begins, in particular its evocation of one who has "[…] departed […] *singing*/*A song* of the sea-child Aphrodite […]"[74] (V 13–14; 9.2), evokes *Dionysiac language*. The epiphany of "[t]he north-east" (V 1) wind and the "fiery spirit" (V 4) that it inspires in those who follow it (6.2) recall (1) the epiphany of "the Evier" (V 216) whose voice arises "[w]ith the gleaming, shinning torch burning" (V 217–218) in *Oedipus the Tyrant*, (2) the "immortal words" (V 1184) of Dionysus "going in fire!/Chorus-leader […] and guardian/Of secret speech!" (V 1195–1197; 11.1) in *Antigone*, and (3) "the singers/[…] praise" (V 141–142) that coalesces about the Dionysian "torch-bearer" (V 155) in *Bread and Wine* (8).

In contrast to the disenchanting spirit of *visualised language* that, "to make/A little money" (V 37–38; 8), reduces landscapes to homogenised, visual territories (3.2, 6.1), the enchantment of *Dionysiac language* transcends space and takes us to a Dionysiac paradise for which southwest France doubles (9.2). The "good voyage" (V 4) that the earthly and communal language "promises" (V 3–4) is itself an elaboration of the appearance of the *Dionysiac language* with which the poem begins. The "fiery spirit" (V 4) of the "[n]ame-creator" (V 1162) creates, through its invocation of a gurgling "rivulet [that] descends/Into the river-*stream*" (V 9–10; 9.2), the Dionysian, "*stream*ing word"[75] (V 54; 8). Just as the "noble pair/Of oaks

[73] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 773.

[74] Emphasis added.

[75] Emphasis added.

and silver poplars [that] gaze upon" (V 10–11) the calm, pulsating paradise invite *Dionysian seeing* that transcends the *tragic seeing* of money, so too does the *Dionysiac language* to which *Memento* initially journeys invite the *Dionysian hearing* that transcends the homogenising "silvered voice, at different places" (V 65; 7.1) to which Hölderlin's translations of Pindar gesture. This means to say that just as vision is born from the loving spirit of nature and community by which it has always already been "seen"[76] (V 1175), sound appears from out of a cosmic (vertical) axis of perception by which it too has always already been "heard".

The first verse of the second strophe, given its local flavour—*Noch denket das mir wohl* […][77] (V 13), which, although literally translated says "Still it thinks well to me […]" and comes from the Swabian dialect of German, can be rendered as: "Still I remember it well […]"—reinforces the irreplaceable earthly spirit of language while transforming space into a metaphor of time (9.2). The windy, winged words through which we transcend place, to put it differently, are also those through which we retrieve the past. That this linguistic ecstasy is to be differentiated from the *visualised language* of industrialisation that, to increase profit, conquers space and time by homogenising both, becomes clear in non-urban tone of "the mill" (V 15) "over" (V 15) which "[t]he broad peaks of the/Elm forest hang"[78] (V 14–15; 9.2).

That the Dionysian-inspired descent into the past is a journey into *Dionysiac language* becomes clearer, if also more textually mediated, when we come across the "fig-tree" (V 16) that is "growing" (V 16) "in the courtyard" (V 16; 9.2). The concentration of "an enclosed, sacred place" with that of the calm, dream-like epiphany of the Dionysian symbol from Hölderlin's *Bacchae* implies a compact movement from Semele's *visualised language* to Dionysus' "joyful cry", *das Jauchzen* (V 24; 7.2). As we might expect, this subtle gesture to the rebirth of *Dionysiac language* opens out to the linguistic spirit of "holidays" (V 17) when "[t]he brown women themselves/Wander upon silk earth, […]" (V 17–19; 9.2) Given the poet's demand that "words, like flowers, must come forth" (V 90; 8), the voices of the female chorus of "women/Filled with the god" (V 1000–1001; 9.2), seem as if to embody the lovely ground upon which they tread.

The dream of a pre-industrial language of gods and humans, heaven and earth "[i]n the time of March,/When night and day are equal" (V 18–19) and which culminates with the balmy tone of "slow paths,/Heavy with golden dreams" (V 22–23) where "[c]radling breezes waft" (V 24; 9.2) recalls the music of the Dionysiac paradise which Hölderlin cultivates in his *Oedipus at Kolonus*. The "golden dreams" (V 23) lead us back to the song of "[t]he returning nightingale" (V 7) and the "choruses of Muses" (V 28) coalescing about the "gold-gleaming crocus" (V 21) and image of "golden Aphrodite" (V 29; 10.1). One thinks also of the "divine sayings [that] "rain/Innumerable from [the aether], and the innermost grove [that] resounds" (V 39–41) after the epiphany of a reassuring, "golden smoke" (V 25), "as from a

[76] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 904.

[77] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte, Schmidt* 360.

[78] Ibid.

funeral pyre" (V 24) in *Germania*. That Hölderlin's *Memento* of "golden dreams" (V 23) is also a remembrance of the "fulfilment of golden words" (V 73) rooted in the ancient, Dionysian ecstasy of earth and community is suggested by an unsuspecting passage by Plato. "And so when mothers have children suffering from sleeplessness, and want to lull them to rest,"[79] the Athenian reveals,

> the cure is to give them not quiet, but motion, for they rock them ceaselessly in their arms; and instead of silence, they utter a crooning sound, and thus cast a spell on the children (like victims of Bacchic frenzy) by turning to the combined movements of dance and song as a remedy.[80]

At the beginning of the third strophe, and for the first time since its epiphany in the opening verse of the poem, the "fir[e]" (V 4) of *Dionysiac language* begins to flicker. The tentative allusion to *Bacchae*-inspired "forgetting and sacred-drunkenness" (V 33) in the appearance of "the fragrant cups/Full of dark light" (V 26–27) and the linguistic whimsy that accompanies such "rest" (V 28) shades into deathly silence (9.2). On the one hand, through its resistance to the language of "[m]ortal thoughts" (V 31) and its turn to the "good" (V 31) of "a conversation and to say/The heart's opinion, to listen much" (V 32–33), the third strophe seems as if to conquer the *tragic languagelessness* of "shadows" (V 29; 9.2).

On the other hand, by its admission that the "days of lov',/And acts that occurred" (V 35–36)—and here *days and acts* name the *Dionysiac language* that would establish the socio-politics of an authentic days and acts—have slipped into the past, the middle of *Memento* succumbs to the *tragic silence* with which it flirts. This is subtly suggested in the poet's melancholy evocation of the lost mortal love once immortalised by the Dionysian name Diotima (10.3). The repetition of the initial letters "S" and "G" in verses 30–32: "Nicht ist es **g**ut,/**S**eellos von **s**terblichen/**G**edanken zu **s**ein./Doch **g**ut/Ist ein **G**espräch und zu **s**agen" (V 30–31), invite us to listen to Hölderlin's hymn retrospectively, beginning with "[t]he beautiful Garonne", [*d*]*ie* ***s****chöne* ***G****aronne* (V 6), as an attempt to rescue the Dionysian "language of lovers" (V 26; 10.3) from all-devouring time.

The first verses of the fourth strophe listen into the linguistic abyss that the poet can no longer elude. The isolated tone of the question: "But where are the friends? Bellarmin/With the companion?" (V 37–38) recalls the *tragic language* of the "godless, friendless" (V 674; 11.1) chorus in *Oedipus the Tyrant*. Despairing before the perverse celebration of wealth (kérdos), *hubris* and impiety, it cries out: "Are such actions to be honoured?/What should I sing?" (V 912–913; 11.1) That the loss of *Dionysiac language* implicit in the loss of community is caught up in the emergence of the *visualised language* of tyrants during the early industrial time who, "to make/A little money" (V 37–38), "tear apart" natural phenomena such as "the springs [Quellen] of earth" (8) is made clear in the poet's subsequent reflection: "Many/Are reluctant to go to the spring [Quelle]" (V 38–39; 9.2).

In contrast to the source of visual language that is amplified by unquestioned technology, "the spring", *die Quelle* (V 38) calls forth flowing sounds that cannot

[79] Plato, *Laws*, 790d-e, in *Plato, Laws, Books VII-XII*, R. Bury, vol. 11 10. Translation amended.

[80] Ibid. Translation amended.

be reduced to pictures and profit. One thinks of "[t]he spring", [*d*]*er Quell*, that "rushes" (V 9), "Parnassus' spring [Quell]" (V 73) and the "gold-gleaming streams [Bächen]" (V 74) from which "echoed/an eternal song" (V 74–75; 10.3). Given Hölderlin's translation of the concentrated expression of *Dionysiac language* in the opening lines of *Bacchae* where the magic of the "spring", *kréne* (V 39; V 69), *Quelle* (V 72; V 123), combines with the "joyful cry", *anololúxo* (V 24, 689; 3B), *das Jauchzen* (V 24), of Dionysus' mystic chorus, the reluctance to honour the "the spring", *die Quelle* (V 38), in modern time is finally a neglect of the earthly and communal origins of language.

The tragic tone of "the seafarers" (V 4) to which we then turn in the fourth strophe—the "*winged* war" (V 44) they "do not/Forswear (V 43–44) evokes the language of "the night/Of the ocean" (V 351–352) from *Antigone* "when the south wind blows/Against the winter" (V 352–353) and man "sets sail upon *winged*, tossing waves"[81] (V 353–354)—invites us to read *Memento* as a token of the deathly silence to which *The Poet's Vocation* and tragic heroes and heroines succumb (8B). The absence of "stringed music and native dance" (V 48) in the final line returns to the language of the tragic chorus in *Oedipus the Tyrant* who cries out: "why should I dance?" (V 895–896; 2, 11.1) One thinks also of the loss of "sacred dance" (V 104; 10.3) from *Bread and Wine*.

But as we have also seen, the heroic endurance of the seafaring "priests of the wine-god" (V 123; 10.3) who, "liv[ing] alone, year-long, under/The defoliate mast" (V 45–46), suffer the lack of a communal and earthly language, suggests a step beyond the deathly silence of a world ruled insatiable egomaniacs. That *Memento* seeks to redeem the languagelessness of the present when "the holidays of the city/ Do not blaze through the night,/And there is no stringed music and native dance" (V 46–48; 11.2) that haunts *The Poet's Mission* and *Antigone* is shown by the epiphany of *Dionysiac language* with which it concludes. Firstly, there is the linguistic mirroring of Pindar, in particular his *seventh Olympian ode* which sings of one who has "[…] departed […] *singing*/*A song* of the sea-child Aphrodite […]"[82] (V 13–14) in the first verses of the final strophe: "But now to India/The men have departed,/ There on the airy peak/[…]" (V 49–51). Secondly, there is the vibrant and rustling sounds of "grape-covered mountains" (V 51–52) that evokes Dionysus' "immortal words" (V 1184) echoing from "high mountains" (V 1123) in *Oedipus the Tyrant* and the "green shores,/Full of hanging grapes" (V 1181–1182) upon "Nysian mountain wilds"[83] (V 1179) in *Antigone*. And thirdly, there is the rushing sound of the oceanic spirit of earth into which the godlike rivers "swee[p]/Out to sea" (V 55–56; 6.2, 11.1).

This enchanting allusion to words and sounds rooted in the subterranean power of earth that look forward to a voyage that transcends the deadly silence of money and its reckless visual culture is elaborated by three successive thoughts. As we

[81] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 873. Emphasis added.

[82] Emphasis added.

[83] Ibid. p. 904.

have noted, verse 57: "But it takes/And gives memory the sea" (V 57) is an adaption of Hölderlin's concept of "the oppositional-rhythmic interruption" of dialogue in tragedy that gestures to "the pure word" (9.2). In the context of a journey to a new land, "the oppositional-rhythmic interruption" expresses a new linguistic change internal to *Dionysiac language*, specifically the transition of speaking that the Dionysian sailors shall undergo when they begin their homecoming back to "the springs of earth", *der Erde Quellen* (9.2). Having cleansed themselves of the *visualised language* of isolation in the present, a time shall come when heroes and heroines like Antigone can once again embrace the sound of home, along with its innate democratic socio-political potential, that rises up from the deepest unconscious level of the word.

But that this gesture to the discovery of a cosmic (vertical) axis of language in the future is linked to *Dionysian hearing* is clarified by Hölderlin's chthonising of Saul's letter to the Corinthians (9.2). Just as "love sedulously fixes the eyes" (V 58) not only on heaven, but also "on the soil" (V 61; 7.2), and thus reconnects the experience of seeing to earth, "love also sedulously fixes the" (V 58) the ears "on the" (V 61) unheard tone in the ground whose communal essence resists the isolating individualism.

The final verse with which *Memento* culminates is the clearest, if also most concentrated and deceptively simple, gesture to *Dionysiac language* within Hölderlin's poetic oeuvre. "But what remains, *poets found* [stiften die Dichter]."[84] (V 59; 9.2) We have noted the word "vineyard" alongside "India" (V 49) in the original manuscript page and the significance of the presence of Dionysus "the Evier" (V 55; V 53) who, "descending/To the Indus/[…]/*Founds* [stiftet] a vineyard […]"[85] (V 55–58; 9.2) *Memento*—and Hölderlin's poetry in general—can thus be understood as a token of the socio-political power of the language of Dionysus that the German poet found in his translation of *Bacchae*. The god of earth announces that he has made his epiphany "[t]o lead [his] chorus [himself] and *to found* [zu stiften] [his]/Mystic initiations […]"[86] (V 21–22; 9.2) Although the power of Dionysian poets in the present no longer has the immediate potential they once had—one thinks of the ecstatic "poets!", *Dichter!* (V 57) from *As when on a holiday ...* and "the wine-god's holy priests" (V 123), the "poets", *Dichter* (V 122), from *Bread and Wine* (10.3)—the founding "poets", *Dichter* (V 59), with which *Memento* concludes nevertheless recall the democratic spirit of Dionysus' mystic chorus in *Bacchae*.

And Dionysus himself who, because of the unhinged *visualised language* of a money-tyrant, announces that he "shall lead [his] army of maenads" and "demonstrate to him that [he is] a god" (V 47–55; 7.2) Although the dream of retrieving Dionysian Greece and "founding", *stiften* (V 3), the language that would sustain "[a] kingdom of art", [*e*]*in Reich der Kunst* (V 4), disappears into a future beyond the sea, "the riches", *der Reichtum* (V 40), of these more humane words "begin/At sea" (V 40–41). Simply by remembering the modest, and therefore more powerful,

[84] Emphasis added.

[85] Emphasis added.

[86] Emphasis added.

language of earth and community, symbolised by "poets" (V 59) who sustain the mystery of the "[n]ame-creator" (V 1162; 11.1), the voyage beyond the terrible silence of a world ruled by the language of money and its insatiable visual culture has already begun.

Part IV
Conclusion

Chapter 12
Nationalism

Abstract Having traced the elements of Hölderlin's hymns (Part III) that dynamically retrieve the Dionysian spirit of Greece (Part I), this study finishes with a final Part (IV) wherein we consider three problems that plague the poet's otherwise socio-politically powerful (and enchanting) linguistic artworks: Nationalism, Christianity and hyper-abstractions. Important in regard to the first misfortune is how the psychological hysteria that ignites Nationalism (a close neighbour, alas, to racism) occurs also on the level of space, time and language.

Keywords Nationalism · Racism · Nationalised space-time · Nationalised language · "The german race"

As we have just seen in Part III, Hölderlin does that which no other poet (or artist) before (or since) his time imagined. By retrieving the *Dionysiac chronotope* and its language of earth and community he helps to illuminate the danger of (unlimited) *visualised* space-time and its underlying, unconscious *monetised*/*visualised language*, both of which support the concentrated, concealed spirit of capitalism since the rise of industrialisation. The "authentic wor[k] of art"[1] is reinvented as the "staging" of "a new mythology" (7.1) that absorbs the "*real* modern tragedy" (8) of reckless egomaniacs who, with modern visual technology like the "telescope" (V 50; 8, 10.3), exploit the resources of earth and communal life.

As I have shown, this search for a new poetry of "limits" (precisely that which is lacking in "modern poetry") to found a "more humane time" (11.1, 9.1) that, given the socio-politics of the "democratic god par excellence" (2.3) that Hölderlin retrieves—and this means the irreplaceable experience of space, time and language that "[t]he god of earth" (V 57; 11.2), "the communal god" (V 31; 8) and the "[n]ame-creator" (V 1162; 11.1) founds—, is potentially open to all places, people and languages. One thinks of *The Rhine* that begins with a recollection of "Italia" and Peloponnesian "coasts"[2] (V 13–15). The nostalgic image of Italy and Greece soon gives way to the epiphany of the German river alongside its "brothers,/The Tessin

[1] Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe, Bd. 2, Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen, Schmidt p. 920.

[2] *Hölderlin,* Sämtliche *Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 328.

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and the Rhodanus"[3] (V 34–35), rivers that descend from Switzerland into south eastern France and the Mediterranean Sea.

Nevertheless, it would be naïve to overlook the problems that haunt Hölderlin's retrieval of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language*. In this Conclusion we consider three modern spatio-temporal forms and styles of speaking that tyrannise the universal spirit of community and language in his poetry.

12.1 "The Mountains of German/Land are the Mountains of the Muses."

Nationalism as we understand it in modern time erupts, in fact, already in early historic Greece. The invention of money and its abstract, visual culture in the seventh century B.C. lead to "the first ever monetised empire, within which Athenian coinage eventually became dominant", and this means, finally, the first mass self-mutilation to which this inauthentic vision of community succumbs: the Peloponnesian War that tears Athenian Greece (from the inside-out) as under by 400 B.C.E. (3.1, 7.1).

Because the *sacred law* of Greece maintains the inviolable relation "between deities and specific locales", the homogenisation of space, time and language that the abstract, visual spirit of money demands leaves the Greeks with a sense of loss and homelessness (3.1). The democratic socio-politics latent in the prehistoric dream of an afterlife is then adapted to rescue the cosmic (vertical) axis of gods and humans, earth and sky from tyrants of precious metal—and their unhinged eyes (2–4). This is clear in the choral despair before Oedipus' obsession with money alongside his *visualised* search for knowledge: "No longer will I go with reverence/To the inviolate navel of earth"[4] (V 897–898).

By the time Hölderlin retrieves the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language*, nevertheless, the consequences of this transition into a zone of unlimited visual abstraction (that had been increasing for two millennia) announce themselves with the sudden emergence of industrialisation. The unleashing of industrial energy to which Christian and Enlightened thought lead—and this means the coal-driven ships, railroads and machines that replace human labour, to which the profitable exchange of guns from Liverpool for slaves in Senegal and rum from New England for slaves in Africa and then molasses in the Caribbean lead (9.1)—gives rise to more food and humans on the planet. Capitalism's internal dynamic of unlimited self-expansion thus results in a culture that perversely celebrates the enslavement of nature and humanity and, through science that conquers disease, lowers infant mortality and increases life expectancy, invents a mass population no longer in balance with nature or itself.

[3] Ibid. p. 329.

[4] Sophocles, *Oidipous Tyrannos*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones p. 155.

By the time Hölderlin glimpses in his translation of *Bacchae* from 1799 the power of Dionysus' "mystic initiations" (V 22), *Geheimnis* (V 22; 7.2), to conquer tyrants of money, in particular their selfish visual culture, the dramatic leap from 1 to 15 million hunters and gathers to 200 million farmers on the planet in antiquity had been replaced by the dramatic burst through the hard ceiling of an agricultural population limit, namely the leap to 1 billion people living on earth by the late eighteenth century (9.1). Although critical as a forerunning tragedy, the experience of nationalism in ancient Greece is different from what we see in modern time. Given the rapid emergence of masses of individuals who tend to be alienated from nature and themselves, nationalism is linked to a new unlimited form of mass hysteria. This is not to say that one's home, that is, one's fatherland and mother tongue, should not be celebrated. Quite the opposite: The celebration of home is at the heart of human life. This is why it is critical that we recognise that such joy is authentic only when it includes that which the concept of nationalism has failed to include: the equal acknowledgment of other fatherlands and other mother tongues alongside those of one's own. Nationalism is thus here understood as the reckless glorification of one's fatherland and mother tongue without mention of other fatherlands and mother tongues in the same breath. But this problem is something we should expect. With the rise of a mass population the search for communal identity—in particular the search for a leader—is necessarily plagued by mass fanaticism.

That the inclusive, democratic spirit of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language* that Hölderlin retrieves, connected as it to the dream of a singular and "fixed […] navel/Of earth" (V 16–17; 11.2) in modern time, is stained by a nationalistic experience of space, time and language—what we shall call the *Nationalised chronotope* and *language*—is clear. Essays such as *Becoming in Perishing*—significantly more well know as *The Dying Fatherland*[5]—and epigrams like *Sophokles* where "the most joyful" (V 1) magically arises from "sadness", *Trauer* (V 2)—where *Trauer* evokes the German name for tragedy, *Trauerspiel*—belong to Hölderlin's earliest retrieval of Dionysian space-time and language (7.1). Revolutionary fever issuing forth from France across the Rhine in the 1790s inspires the German poet not only to embrace the universal experience of a transition from a near-death experience to an authentic community, but also to harness this ancient power for Germany in the present. One thinks of odes such as *Death for the Fatherland* and *Song of the Germans*[6] that Hölderlin composes while translating *Oedipus at Kolonus* in the mid-1790s.[7] The perversity of poetic nationalism combines with the phantasm of

[5] *Hölderlin,* Sämtliche *Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 446, 1197.

[6] *Hölderlin,* Sämtliche *Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 216, 224. *Der Tod fürs Vaterland* and *Gesange der Deutschen*, respectively. Here it should be noted that, given its refrence to French soldiers during the revolutionary wars, the nationalistic spirit of Germany here emerges from France.

[7] *Hölderlin,* Sämtliche *Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 1276.

an ancient race, for instance, of "a *Volk* of rare excellence hidden" secretly "in the depths of Asia",[8] that support the search to establish "[o]ne race!"[9]

Although he proceeds to retrieve the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language*, in particular through his translation of *Bacchae*, the democratic potential of Dionysus' mystery-cult is often lost in Hölderlin's need *to confine the humanity of Greece to Germany*. In *The Archipelago* we return to the victory of "festive Athens" (V 271) and the "springtime of Greece" (V 272; 8) to turn, finally, to the time when "our" (V 172)—and here "our" names the German nation—"autumn would come"[10] (V 173). Elegies such as *Homecoming* narrow the ecstasy of "bacchic" (V 8) space-time to the "incalculable workshop" (V 17) of Swiss "Alps" (V 1) that underlie German villages and landscapes (V 69; 8). Odes such as *Heidelberg* make it clear that the German city is the privileged place of the present where the rebirth of a Dionysian paradise where "all around" (V 26) is "green with ivy" (V 26–27) is fated to make its epiphany (8). And not only the German city: The German landscape is also uniquely tied to that of Greece, as when *To the Germans* declares that "the mountains of German/Land are the mountains of the Muses." (V 35–36; 8)

Hymns like *The Wandering* turn from "[b]lissful Swabia" (V 1) to the "[l]and of Homer" (V 79) to invite the "graces of Greece" (V 99), "if the trip is not too far,/[To] come to us" (V 101–102; 8). In *The Rhine* the ivy of Dionysus is the "dark ivy" (V 1) of the German "forest" (V 2) below the Alps (8). Like Dionysus in *Bacchae*, the flowing spirit of the "demigod" (V 31), "[w]andering quietly through German lands" (V 85), founds "cities" (V 89), but for Germany in the present and future (8). In *Germania* the painful absence of the Greek "[g]ods who have fled" (V 17) is redeemed only through the a new German "priestess" (V 110) who, during her "holidays" (V 109), "gives advice everywhere/To kings and peoples." (V 111–112; 8)

Hölderlin's confining of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language* to German nationalism is complex given Dionysus' power to conquer oppression in the present. The global spirit of the French Revolution in *As when on a holiday* is introduced by a Dionysiac paradise disguised as a rural German landscape (8). Although the darkness of egoism and isolation is transfigured in *Stuttgard* into a luminous image of earthly communality, this image is also *nationalised*: "Only one thing matters for the day, *the fatherland* and into the sacrifice's/Festive flame everyone throws his own."[11] (V 29–30; 8) The heroic conquest of the tyranny of precious metal in the present as well as its self-isolating and abstract visual culture—the "seeing and counting" (V 42) of "a mortal eye" (V 44) enhanced by visual technologies like the "[t]he telescope (V 50) that, "to make/A little money" (V 39–40), "exploit" (V 37) nature and lead to the "nail[ing]" of "[e]ach individual […] to his own affairs, in the noise of his compartment" (V 242–246; 8)—is assigned—somehow?—*To the Germans*.

[8] Ibid. p. 24.

[9] Ibid. p. 51.

[10] Hölderlin*, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 262.

[11] Emphasis added.

12.2 "Rhine of the Germans"

At the core of Hölderlin's *nationalising* of the *Dionysiac chronotope* is his *germanification* of *Dionysiac language*. This means that the poet constrains the linguistic experience of earth and community that is potentially open to all languages to the German tongue. Elegies like *Homecoming* appropriate Dionysus' "happy shout", *anololúxo* (V 24), from *Bacchae*—translated as *das Jauchzen* (V 24; 9B)—for "the joyful-shouting [das jauchzende] valley" (V 64) of German land (10.3). Hölderlin's translations of Pindar and *Bacchae* implicitly link Dionysus' "joyous cry", *das Jauchzen*, *anololúxo*, to a "spring", *Quelle*, *kréne*, as when a *kréne* (V 707) of pure water springs forth alongside the cohesive shout of Dionysian mystics, *ololúzo* (7.2). The "rustl[ing]" (V 75) of the "source [Quell] of Parnassus" (V 73) is absorbed into the "rustl[ing]" (V 11) of a Germanic "source", *Quell* (V 11; 10.3). When Hölderlin celebrates "[t]he language of lovers" (V 26), the universal, life-giving word rooted in a primal experience of earth and community is *nationalised* by "the language of the land" (V 27), which here means "the sound of the *Volk*!" (V 28; 10.3)

A striking example of Hölderlin's *germanifying* of *Dionysiac language* occurs in *The Rhine*. As we have seen, this song harnesses the linguistic change in mystic initiation that is opened out in tragedy. On the one hand, the tragic tone of the newly born river who is "wailing for release", *um Erlösung jammern* (V 23), evokes Hölderlin's translation of Semele's "wailing", *pénthos* (V 26), as *Jammer* (V 41; 7.2). This word further significantly evokes *Pentheus* and Oedipus, *pentheîn* (V 1320). On the other hand, the tragic language of the godlike river as he wails for his freedom is transfigured into a Dionysian "joyous cry", *Jauchzen* (V 61; 10.3). The purity inherent in the socio-political power of language to support the earthly place of community in the cosmos is, nevertheless, narrowed to German natural phenomena. Although Hölderlin's linguistic mosaic of "the streaming word" (V 54) and "the purest [**rein**estem] water" (V 17; 7.3)—as well as his reference to the blind Oedipus in search of "the pure name", *den **rein**en Namen* (V 41; 11.2)—at first seems innocent, what the German poet himself names "the pure word", *das **rein**e Wort*, and "the language of the purest [***Rein***esten]" (V 146; 11.2), are inextricably tied (and thus narrowed) to the German river *Der **Rhein***. The universal humanity of ancient Greece is thus excluded from natural phenomena outside of those that belong to modern Germany.[12]

Given that *Dionysiac language* resides at the heart of the *Dionysiac chronotope*, Hölderlin's perversion of its socio-politics perverts, in turn, the democratic spirit of mystery-cult and tragedy. What is potentially open to all peoples, places and languages—the opening out of Dionysus' "mystic initiations", *teletás*

[12] This is not to say that the shift from the German river to the French hero Rousseau (5.3, 7.3) is not significant, nor that Hölderlin's other river songs such as the *The Source of the Donau*, *Die Quelle der Donau*, do not embrace a more open perspective of origins. *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 321. This is to say that the potential for German nationalism in Hölderlin's poetry is real and needs to be acknolwedged. The reasons for this shall become clear in the following part of this study.

(V 22)—translated as *mysteries*, "Mysterien", *secrets*, "Geheimnisse" and *secret*, "Geheimnis" (V 22; 7.2), and this includes the "secret/Speech", *geheimer*/*Reden* (V 1196–1197) of Dionysus *Chorführer* (V 1196)—aquires the dangerous potential to succumb to the unlimited hysteria of mass nationalism in modern time: "the language of the purest [***Reine***sten]" (V 146) exists only in regard to the "Rhine of the Germans", ***Rheine*** *der Deutschen*[13] (V 8). And because the *Geheimnisse* of ancient Greece are absorbed into the "purely sprung [***Rein***entsprungenes]" (V 46; 11.2) "secrets [Geheimnisse]" (V 43) of "nature […]/[…] in Germany"[14] (V 43–44), the "divine sayings" (39)—for instance, of *Germania*, for whom "the secret [Geheimnis]" (V 84) can no longer "[r]emain unspoken" (V 85)—represent the potentially limitless tyrannising of earth and community with an imaginary "source", *Quell* (V 3), and the imaginary "secret", *Geheim* (V 8; 10.3), of "German youth", *Deutscher Jugend* (V 25). This means finally "the German race", *d*[*as*] *Deutsch*[*e*] *Geschlecht* (Fragment 72).[15]

12.3 "To Sing of the Angels of the Holy *Vaterland*."

Nowhere is the socio-political threat of Hölderlin's nationalism more concentrated than in his projection of an imaginary cult of Dionysian-inspired poets in modern Germany. Because this priestly society is inseparable from the choral projections of maenads and satyrs singing with Dionysus (10–11), it has its origin in that which prehistoric and early historic "poets" (V 50) of Dionysian Greece "say" (V 50). One recalls the evocation of the sacred story of the death of Semele and birth of Dionysus in *As when on a holiday…* (10.3) Nevertheless, because Greece is gone and Hölderlin is first concerned with the creation of a community of German poets in the present, his multiple references to "poets!", *Dichter!* (V 57), of the near future refer to the appearance of "the wine-god's holy priests" (V 123; 10.3) in modern Germany. The Dionysian conquest of money-tyrants and their unlimited visual culture, in other words, is lost in Hölderlin's Germanic conquest and tyranny of Dionysus' language.

This absorption of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language* into the *nationalised chronotope* and *language* continues in Hölderlin translations of *Oedipus the Tyrant* and *Antigone* around 1802. Voss' rendering of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the 1790s set the stage for German nationalism to amplify itself through the language of Greece (9.1). But given the unique depth of Hölderlin's retrieval of antiquity that far exceeds that which Voss, Goethe or Schiller could ever imagine, his *nationalising* of tragedy represents a unique danger within German literature and thought. As

[13] *Hölderlin,* Sämtliche *Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 374.

[14] Ibid. p. 406, 404.

[15] Ibid. p. 413, 445. It should be pointed out that fragment 72 leaves us with little context to ascertain precisely what Hölderlin means in his reference to "the German race", *d*[*as*] *Deutsch*[*e*] *Geschlecht*.

the dedication to princess Auguste from Homburg (that introduces his Sophocles translations) makes clear—Hölderlin declares that it is his final intention "to sing of the angels of the holy fatherland"[16]—, at the heart of this linguistic enterprise is not an innocent retrieval of the socio-political power of Dionysian Greece open to all languages, but instead the confining of the language of humanity to a German linguistic experience. We have noted Hölderlin's conflation of the mystical speech of Greek myth with that of the Germanic "Sage" (11.1, 8).

12.4 "German Song" of the Future

The *nationalising* of the *Dionysiac chronotope*- and *language* continues until the end. After his Sophocles translations, a time that Hölderlin devotes to "the height and pure joyfulness of patriotic songs",[17] he composes a series of late hymns that often culminate with a nationalistic tone. One thinks of the last two words, the "German song", *deutscher Gesang*[18] (V 226), of the final verse in *Patmos*. Given our exploration of the Dionysian spirit of "Memento" (9.2, 11.2), this section concludes with a brief look at the *nationalised chronotope* and *language* that haunts the *Dionysiac* spatio-temporal form and linguistic experience at the heart of Hölderlin's last complete hymn.

As we have seen, the "slow paths/Heavy with golden dreams" (V 22–23) with which the second strophe concludes evoke the "golden smoke" (V 25), "as from a funeral pyre" (V 24), and the "fulfilment of golden words" (V 73) of *Germania* (9.2, 11.2). As we have also seen, the nationalistic abyss and isolation that Hölderlin's "Memento" endures during the third and fourth strophes, in particular the loss of the revolutionary potential of "acts that occurred" (V 36; 8B), are redeemed by the epiphany of a *Dionysiac chronotope* inseparable from the German romantic concept of "India" at the beginning of the fifth and final strophe (9.2). The heroic voyage to a *germanified* Dionysian paradise, in particular the reference to Dionysus' conquest of India through modern colonialism, elaborates Hölderlin's phantasm of "a *Volk* of rare excellence hidden" secretly "in the depths of Asia". *Memento* releases the failure of the German revolution in the present, in other words, by projecting the earlier dream of "[o]ne race!" into the distant future. Now a Dionysian "German race", *Deutsch*[*es*] *Geschlecht* (Fragment 72), of the future is connected to imaginary "forefathers" who originally descended "[f]rom the forests of the Indus".[19]

But that which most clearly demonstrates that the coming of Dionysian "breath"[20] (V 37) and "times/Of secrets", *Zeiten*/*Des Geheimnisse* (V 43)—prophesised to

[16] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 785.

[17] *Hölderlin,* Sämtliche *Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt p. 470.

[18] *Hölderlin,* Sämtliche *Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 356.

[19] Ibid. p. 400.

[20] Ibid. p. 406.

occur "in Germany"[21] (V 44)—shall be absorbed into *The Voice of the Volk*[22] is the final verse with which Hölderlin concludes this hymn. At first glance, the reference to "poets" (V 59; 11.2) continues his gesture to a (unreal) community of Dionysian-inspired singers in modern Germany. But the *nationalising* of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *Dionysian language* now takes on new complexity. Here "the wine-god's holy priests" (V 123; 10.3) belong to the epiphany of a distant, if still heroic, German future. Hölderlin's retrieval of a cosmic (vertical) axis of Greece suffers from his need to *germanify* this establishment—and this means his (unconscious) need to exclude non-German places, people and languages.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid. pp. 309–313.

Chapter 13
Christianity

Abstract After treating the problem of Nationalism, this chapter moves into Hölderlin's creative, but finally narrowing relationship to Christianity. At times the coincidence of ancient Greek and Christian religion gives rise to a new and fascinating form of poetic syncretism, as witnessed in the elegy *Bread and Wine*. But the psychological core of Hölderlin's relationship to Christianity (which is concealed finally in the poet's relationship to a selfish, monetised mother and the lack of a father) proves to be harmful to his grasp of history, without which his retrieval of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language* can only remain fragmentary.

Keywords Christianised chronotope · Christianised language · Poetic syncretism · "[t]he fixed letter"

13.1 "Hour of the Last Supper"

As we have noted, Christianity, in no small part, not only reinforces the loss of Dionysian Greece, but also institutionalises a contempt of chthonic communality that accompanies the insatiable egoism of money (5.2). The transfer of financial power from the Roman Caesar to the Pope looks forward to our modern time of conquest and colonisation. The emergence of visual technology and media like the telescope facilitate, for instance, the identification of trade routes through which molasses can be exchanged for a profit (6.1). By closing the door on Greece Christianity sets the stage for the cosmic (vertical) axis of capitalism and *visualised* science (that is, science that abandons community and nature) in the present.

Let us briefly return to Galileo who, after defeating *diabolocentrism* "with the aid of the spyglass which [he] devised", demands to be named "mathematician" and "philosopher" at the court of Cosimo Medici when he leaves his professorship of mathematics at the University of Padua (6.1). The invention of the modern intellectual who heroises visual apparatuses implies that a society and culture ruled by money is stuck in Christianity's dismemberment of Greece's earthly cosmos. After enjoying the "mathematician" and "philosopher" at court—and after bribing Christian officials to install the pirate Baldassarre Cossa as Pope in the early fifteenth century (who, incidentally, makes the Medici Bank the official financial institution of the papacy)—, the banking family installs one of its own, Pope Leo X,

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as the unquestioned ruler of Christendom—that is, of the known (visible and hence financially calculable)—cosmos.

But as we have seen, the splintering of Christian sects that follow Martin Luther's protest begins to succumb, by Hölderlin's time, to a secularisation of sorts. Despite the Protestant urgings of a strict mother, the *French Revolution* that inspires the secularising of 1.5 million Germans living along the Rhine in March 1789 reinforces the young poet's distaste for the ministry for which he and his roommates Hegel and Schelling ostensibly prepare (7.1) Hölderlin's retrieval of the Dionysian critique of modern money-tyrants who, like the ancient "king Oedipus", have "one eye too many" as they peer through "[t]he telescope […] and coun[t] and/Nam[e] the stars of heaven with names" (V 50–52; 5.3, 9.2–9.3, 11.2) remains revolutionary in its reversal of the naïve (at root, even selfish) optimism that accompanies such (limitless) technological progress. The unquestioned relationship between visual technology, science and money that is reinforced by Kepler—a celebrated alumnus of *Tübinger Stift*—in the early seventeenth century (7.1) is suddenly in question.

It would be a mistake, nevertheless, to overlook the spirit of Christianity that haunts Hölderlin's retrieval of a Dionysian spatio-temporal form and language, which is often perverted into a Christian spaces, times and languages—what we shall call the *Christianised chronotope* and *Christianised language*. Despite the heroic proclamations of contemporaries such as Goethe and Schiller that "Christianity was a terrible bugbear to the new-born pagan […]", the heroes of *Romanticism* (and German Classicism) tend to remain all-too-Christian (6.2). One recalls the "new-born pagan" Goethe who, after catching a cold, is heard "crying out to Christ in his delirium […]" (9.2) Schiller did not know Greek.

Despite its unique Hellenic depth, Hölderlin's poetry is narrowed by a *Christianised chronotope and language*. This is clear when we consider his relationship to his mother. The pressure she placed on her eldest son to become "a country clergyman" as well as Hölderlin's persistent "wis[h] to be what she represented […] to be like her, in the same way as he had once wished to identify himself with Schiller"[1] is seen already in the early 1790s, in particular in a long letter that the son writes to his mother from Tübingen in 1791. Here his belief in Christ suddenly requires philosophical justification.[2] And that the spirit of Dionysus is absorbed into the spirit of Christ in Hölderlin's earlier work is also clear. Dionysian liberation from *Bacchae* that reappears in "the moment of liberation" in *Hyperion*, "when the divine bursts open the prison […] when it is for us as if the unchained spirit […] returns to the halls of the sun" (7.1), evokes the so-called *Knechtslied* when Paul and Silas are released from prison in the Acts of the Apostles.[3]

If the spiritual turbulence that takes hold of Hölderlin in Homburg during the late 1790s, a crisis of belief that facilitates his retrieval of the socio-political power of Dionysus' "mystic initiation", *Geheimnis* (V 22; 7.2) from the opening lines of *Bacchae*, he continues to confess "from the bottom of [his] heart" in letters to his

[1] Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* pp. 226–227.

[2] Ibid. p. 227.

[3] See Paul's *Epistle to the Philippians*: 2, pp. 5–11.

mother "that [she] secretly [ingeheim] rules [him]".[4] A few weeks after the letter just mentioned from 11 December 1798 the dutiful, protestant son, upon mother's request, composes a poem to celebrate his grandmother's birthday. In this song she who "secretly [ingeheim] rules [him]" is likened to Mary, the mother of Christ, "the best of men born on this earth, the great reconciler [and] godlike of spirit."[5] Hölderlin's attractions to the leap into darkness and the epiphany of a divine name at the heart of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language* (7, 10) thus remain tied to a *Christianised* spatio-temporal form and language, to which the conclusion of Fritz's letter to his brother from 1 January 1799 testifies: "when the kingdom of darkness wants to break in with violence, we cast the quill under the table and go out into God's name […]".[6]

We have hinted at Hölderlin's poetic syncretism, in particular the synthesis of Dionysus and Christ in the symbols of *Bread and Wine* that are common to both and which recur in his poetry follow his translation of *Bacchae* (8). But the absorption of Dionysian space, time and language into a Christian space, time and language continues during his Sophocles translations. One thinks of the reduction of the democratic plurality of the gods of Greece to the jealous singularity of the Judeo-Christian God, as when Hölderlin translates—and reduces—Haemon's preference for "the honour of the gods"[7] (V 745) into "God's holy name"[8] (V 774). One thinks also of the reinvention of Antigone as a medieval nun from an era when time was first measured with clocks (spatially) in the west. The tragic heroine is compared to Danae who "counted the strokes of the hours,/The golden strokes, for the Father Time"[9] (V 987–988). And one thinks of Hölderlin's transformation of Zeus' penetrating the room of the tragic heroine first into the "coming of the streams of gold", then into "rays of light", and finally into the "strokes" of church-bells.[10] We have noted the poetic desire that drives the translations of *Oedipus the Tyrant* and

[4] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt 324. "Liebste Mutter! Sie haben mir schon manchmal über Religion geschrieben, als wüßten Sie nicht, was Sie von meiner Religiosität zu halten hätten. O könnt' ich so mit Einmal mein Innerstes auftun vor Ihnen!—Nur so viel! Es ist kein lebendiger Laut in Ihrer Seele, wozu die meinige nicht auch mit einstimmte. Kommen Sie mir mit Glauben entgegen! Zweifeln Sie nicht, an dem, was Heiliges in mir ist, so will ich Ihnen mehr mich offenbaren. O meine Mutter! es ist etwas zwischen Ihnen und mir, das unsre Seelen trennt; ich weiß ihm keinen Namen; achtet eines von uns das andere zu wenig, oder was ist es sonst? Das sag' ich Ihnen tief aus meinem Herzen; wenn Sie schon in Worten mir nicht alles sagen können, was Sie sind, es lebt doch in mir, und bei jedem Anlaß fühl' ich wunderbar, wie Sie mich ingeheim beherrschen, […]"

[5] Cited in Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* p. 228.

[6] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt 334.

[7] Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Sophoclis Fabulae*, Lloyd-Jones 213. "ou gar sébeis, timás ge tàs theôn patôn."

[8] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 888.

[9] Ibid. p. 896.

[10] Ibid. p. 916.

Antigone, namely Hölderlin's need "to sing of the *angels* of the holy fatherland"[11] (12.3).

Although secularisation continued in the territories such as Baden and Württemberg in 1803 (9.1), the poet's late hymns, for many synonymous with his so-called *Christus-hymnen*, witness the "first reappearance" of the Christian saviour "in Hölderlin's poetry since the early schoolboy efforts".[12] In the *Introduction* we saw Dionysus "the Evier" (V 54) and "Heracles" (V 51) named "the brother[s]" of Christ. The simple fact that such preeminent Greek demigods appear in *The Only One*[13] at all betrays Hölderlin's persistent need to raise the godlike spirit of Christianity, upon whom he continues to "hang" (V 51), above all other non-Christian divine spirits (who also have the unique power to unite mortals and immortals, heaven and earth).

The most profound expression of Hölderlin's enduring commitment to Christ is *Patmos*, a song that he composed in place of Klopstock for the landgrave of Homburg. The Dionysian spirit of Pindaric song is absorbed into the proximate and incomprehensible spirit of the Christian "God"[14] (V 2). Mystic redemption fades into pietistic "salvation" (V 4) from "danger"[15] (V 3). One thinks of Friedrich Oetinger and Johann Bengel. This means, among other things, that the symbols of Greece are now the symbols of Christianity. Zeus' eagle, for instance, becomes the eagle of John the Evangelist. Although the tone of personal loss is unmistakable, in particular Hölderlin's longing for Diotima, "the loved ones" (V 10) who "[l]ive near, but growing faint upon/Most separate mountain peaks"[16] (V 11–12) represent first the patriarchs and prophets of Christianity—and the apostles of Christ.

In answer to the poet's plea "to cross over and to return from" (V 15) "the chasm" (V 7) that separate "the peaks of time"[17] (V 10) from the present, "a Genius" (V 19) appears who steals him away from "the longing streams", *Bäche* (V 23), of his home to the coasts of "Asia" (V 31), which appear magically "in fresh blaze,/Secretly [Geheimnisvoll]/In golden smoke"[18] (V 25–27), and finally to the island of "Patmos"[19] (V 53). If the revelation of mystic space, time and language is subtly present—associated with Artemis, Patmos is inseparable from the transition to joyful images and sounds that are implicit in the "most lamenting death", *jammervolleste*[*r*] *Tod* (V 73) of young pregnant mothers like Coronis (and Semele) who succumb to divine flames (10.3)—, the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language* are nevertheless absorbed into the space, time and language of Christian legend.

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[11] Emphasis added.

[12] Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* pp. 228–29.

[13] Emphasis added.

[14] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 350.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid. pp. 350–51.

[19] Ibid. p. 351.

When the poet arrives at Patmos he comes first to the place where John, author of the pneumatic gospel, wrote down the *Apocalypse*.

Calamities of shipwreck, homelessness and the loss of friends[20] (V 64–66) that haunted the apostle in the past—and that haunt the poet still struggling with Diotima's death in the present—give way to the *Bacchae*-inspired image of Christ as "the bearer of thunder and lightning", *der Gewittertragende*[21] (V 78). But the Dionysian saviour is quickly absorbed into "the hour of the last supper"[22] (V 82). Distanced from the ritual of mystery-cult, in particular the opening out of "mystic initiation", *Geheimnisse* (V 22), into the religion of Dionysus "of the vine", *des Weinstocks* (V 12) in *Bacchae* (7.2), the "secrets of the vine", *Geheimnisse des Weinstocks* (V 81), in *Patmos* express exclusively the *Holy Communion* of Christianity.

13.2 Christ Consumes the *Bread and Wine* of Greece

In Part I we noted the transcendent power of wine in mystic initiation that offers "a taste of the next world"[23] (2.3, 4.3). Dionysus' association with "the liquid/moist drink of the grape" (V 279; 2.3) is tied to his prehistoric epiphany in Greece. Alongside the appearance of a new ruler, the *wánax*,[24] and burial rites[25] in the sixteenth century B.C.E.—a time that, given the appearance of the Linear-B logogram *Di-wo-nu-so* inscribed into clay tablets no later than the thirteenth century B.C.E.,[26] may well have coincided with the emergence of Dionysus into human history—is the invention of a "different kind of beverage being drunk or ceremonially presented"[27] (during the late Helladic period from 1600 to 1480 B.C.E.) Because the ritual that issues forth from this prehistoric time "changes fundamentally the state or status of one or more people", this new style of "incorporation (or 'initiation') of an individual into a real or imagined group who belongs at least in part to the next world",[28]

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[20] Ibid. p. 352.

[21] Ibid. One recalls Dionysus' epiphany in *Bacchae* that brings Pentheus' royal palace to the ground, "thunder-stricken", *keraunóbolos* (V 598). Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* 316.

[22] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 352.

[23] Seaford, *Dionysus* 81.

[24] T. Palaima, *"The Nature of the Mycenaean Wanax"*, in: *The Role of the Ruler in the Prehistoric Aegean*, ed. P. Rehak (Liège, Belgique: Université de Liège 1995) p. 119, 125, 133.

[25] Ibid. p. 126.

[26] Palaima, "Die Linear-B Texte und der Ursprung der hellenischen Religion: *di-wo-nu-so*", in *Die Geschichte der Hellenischen Sprache und Schrift, Vom 2. Zum 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.: Bruch oder Kontinuität*) 216.

[27] P. McGovern, *Ancient Wine: The Search for the Origins of Viniculture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2003) pp. 256–58, 264, 271, 278.

[28] Seaford, *Dionysus* 50.

because of its relation to "honey-sweet wine",[29] is inseparable from a new earthly and communal experience of "well-being in this world."[30]

In Part II we further noted how Christ's vision of a heavenly "kingdom […] not of this world" (5.2) facilitates the alienation of humans from earth and one another. This is not to say that Christianity does not seek to harness the power of mystic initiation, in particular its,

> Secret and frightening ritual that consists of a transition from the anxious ignorance of the outsider, through an experience that might be like death and that involves revelation (sometimes of sacred objects), into a new blissful state as an insider (initiate). As a pre-enactment of death, it might remove (as do modern near-death experiences) the fear of death.[31]

"For the great Hellenistic monarchies of western Asia (the Seleucides) and Egypt (the Ptolemies)", Seaford reminds us, "there was no god more important than Dionysus."[32] The god of wine, he proceeds,

> Was said to have founded Scythopolis (in Hebrew named Beth-Shean, about 18 miles south-east of Nazareth), where evidence—mainly from the second-century A.D.—has been unearthed for his cult. That the city was once known as Nysa, the place where in myth Dionysus war reared by the nymphs, is mentioned in the first century by Pliny the elder.[33]

This is also not to say that Christianity does not harness—one may say *drink from*—Dionysus' relation to wine. We have gestured to the power of the godlike spirit of Greece to dissolve the boundary between water and wine,[34] to associate wine with blood (including his own blood),[35] as well as Dionysus' myth and mystic performance of dismemberment—as a reflection of the genesis of wine out of crushed grapes (2.3).[36] The popular image of Jesus transforming water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana,[37] which the fourth gospel sees as the first of the "signs" (miracles) that revealed his glory, as "the great grape-cluster, the word crushed for our sake",[38] and as the Christian saviour cultivated by Christian theologians from the second to the third century A.D. all make it clear that Christianity sought to adapt and harness the socio-political power that emerged alongside the great winepresses of the Aegean around 1500 B.C. We should further note the picture of Jesus encircled with other figures by vines on a chalice from Antioch from the sixth century

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[29] McGovern, *Ancient Wine: The Search for the Origins of Viniculture* pp. 256–58, 264, 271, 278.

[30] Seaford, *Dionysus* 70.

[31] Ibid. p. 50.

[32] Ibid. p. 120.

[33] Ibid. p. 121.

[34] Plutarch, *Life of Lysander*, 28.4, in *Plutarch, Moralia*, ed. F. Babbit, vol. 4 312.

[35] See Achilles Tatius' *The Story of Leucippe and Cleitophon*, 2.2.1–3, in *Achilles Tatius, Leucippe and Clitophon*, Whitmarch 20; Timotheos, Fragment 780, in *Poetae Melici Graeci*, ed. Page.

[36] Diodorus, *Bibliotheca historica*, 3.62, in, in *Diodorus of Sicily, The Library of History*, Oldfather, *Books II.35-IV.58* pp. 286–291.

[37] 2.1–11.

[38] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*, II, 19.3, in Seaford, *Dionysus* 127.

A.D.,[39] as well as Mary's response to her son's forewarning of his crucifixion: "O my grapevine (botrus), may they not squeeze you out",[40] to which Jesus responds by saying that his resurrection shall bring new life and renewal to earth—a Dionysian lament linked to Mary's lament for Christ in the twelfth century (which is clearly a variation on the now lost lament of Agaue for Dionysus in *Bacchae*).[41] Given the socio-political potential of the re-enactment of the god's mythic rebirth through which an isolated individual is accepted into a timeless community free of death that existed for over millennia before his time, the saviour of Christianity had no lack of material with which to work.

But the emergence of wine as an earthly and communal experience of "well-being *in this world*"[42] in prehistoric Greece is not only absorbed into, but also neutralised by the *visualised* cosmic (vertical) axis of Christ's "kingdom […] *not of this world*".[43] The tension between these two competing pictures of paradise, in particular the spirit of revenge that issues forth from the perversion of wine as an abstract, uprooted and hence less earthly and communal vision of the sacred, is seen in the jealousy and aggression toward Dionysus implicit in Jesus' claim in the fourth gospel: "I am the true vine".[44] We have noted Christianity's eradication of Dionysus' mystery-cult from human history (7.2). Although Hölderlin's many references to the Dionysian spirit of Parnassus, for instance, in *Bread and Wine*, and his translation of the choral epode at the beginning of the fifth act of *Antigone*, demonstrate the unique depth of his retrieval of the socio-political power of the wine-god, in *Patmos* the historical reality of Dionysus and his mystic ritual fades. Consider the Euripidean chorus who dreams of being "free of fear and circling in the dance of the deathless god" (V 235) while celebrating Dionysus' birth in winter upon "the sacred, snow-swept mountain"[45] (V 234) of Parnassus, in particular the death of this sacred holiday through the birth of *Christ*mas.[46]

By the time we come to the density and complex rhythm that haunts the sixth strophe of *Patmos* we are no longer in the presence of the *Bacchae*-inspired beverage of "heavenly fire"[47] (V 54) in *As when on a holiday…*, nor Hölderlin's "mystic initiation", *Geheimnisse* (V 22), into the religion of the god "of the vine", *des Weinstocks* (V 12)—from which this Hölderlinian draught of intoxication comes.

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[39] Seaford, *Dionysus* 127.

[40] Romanos, *Second Hmyn on the Nativity*, in Seaford, *Dionysus* 127.

[41] "Christus Patiens", a Byzantine cento (poem made up of verses from other sources). See Seaford, *Dionysus* 127.

[42] Emphasis added.

[43] Emphasis added.

[44] John, 15.1, 15, 5.

[45] *Euripides fabulae*, Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* 95.

[46] Already by the 1920s it is clear that the mystic awakening of "Dionysus in the winnowing cradle" may well have been celebrated on the eighth of November. See E. Norden, *Die Geburt des Kindes* (Leipzig: Teubber 1924) 36.

[47] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 240.

The "secrets of the vine", *Geheimnisse des Weinstocks* (V 81), are now signs of the Christian conquest of death, in particular of the ritual of the Eucharist: "calmly foretelling death"[48] (V 83), Christ conquers "the rage of the world" (V 87) during Passover[49] by "giv[ing] thanks", *eucharistésas*, to a cup of wine,[50] by claiming that "the fruit of the vine"[51] is his "blood",[52] and finally by establishing the ceremony in which his disciples drink his "blood" to remember him.[53]

The mystic revelation of light that arise from out of the earth (2.3) is of course present in *Patmos*. One thinks of the miraculous flourishing of "living images" (V 120) from "deep/In the mountains"[54] (V 119–120). Nevertheless, what was once a Dionysian "riddle" (V 46; 11.1) and search for a heroic "stranger" (V 149) who battles Christian dogma (8) is now a familiar Christian "riddle" (V 140) of nihilism—and one that requires a familiar Christian solution. The death of "beauty"[55] (V 138) and evacuation of the divine is processed by the New Testament. "It is the cast of the winnower, when he/Shovels the wheat,/And casts it into the clear air over the threshing floor."[56] (V 152–154) Mystic darkness encircling "the many timid eyes/Waiting/To see the light"[57] (V 186–188) disappear into the abstract and distant "work" (V 177) of an unfathomable Judeo-Christian divinity that "[p]roceeds by its own force"[58] (V 177–178) and the "quiet radiant power [that] falls/From holy scripture […]."[59]

13.3 "The Fixed Letter"

The pressure that Hölderlin's places on "sacred texts"[60] (V 207) at the end of *Patmos* is important as it betrays how at the core of the absorption of the *Dionysiac chronotope* into a *Christiansed* spatio-temporal form is the further absorption of *Dionysiac language* into a Christian linguistic experience. Renewed faith in "his silent sign" (V 203), that is, the epiphany of the rainbow above throne of the judge in the *Book of Revelations*, and the assertion that "Christ still lives"[61] (V 205) cul-

[48] Ibid. p. 352.

[49] Luke, 22.15.

[50] Matthew, 26.27; Mark, 14:23; Luke, 22.17.

[51] Mark, 14:25; Luke, 22.18. *Genematos tês ampélou*.

[52] Matthew, 26.28; Mark, 14:24. *Aîmá*.

[53] Luke, 22.19. *Anámnesin*.

[54] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 353.

[55] Ibid. p. 354.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid. p. 355.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid. p. 356.

[61] Ibid.

minate in a turn to "[t]he fixed letter" (V 225) of the bible—that preserves the covenant between "the Father" (V 222) who lords over the darkness of "Mother Earth" (V 220) and "light of the sun"[62] (V 221) and those who live piously in his (present) absence.

As we have seen, at the heart of the revolutionary power of Hölderlin's retrieval of Dionysian Greece is his renewal of a cosmic (vertical) axis of language rooted in the earth (8, 11.2). This accounts not only for the enchanting power of the voice to call forth images from subterranean darkness, but also the equally magical power of writing—"the silent text" (V 8)—that "[f]ollows the fruit, like the dark leaf/ Of the meadow"[63] (V 7–8). But "the fixed letter" (V 225) of Hölderlin's *Songs to Christ*, the "sacred texts" (V 85) that mediate the "voices" of the Christian "God" (V 83) who, because of his alienation from earth, "appears […] as/Nature from the outside"[64] (V 83–84), the terrestrial origin of spoken and written language is lost to an abstract, if popular, picture of the *Holy Ghost* who descends and gives language to the chosen ones below (7.2).

> The poet "had had his vision," as Butler notes, "but it had nothing to do with joy":[65]
> In this apocalyptic poem of the life and death of Christ there is nothing left of the mystical expectation which had filled Hölderlin in Homburg and even after. At the very moment when he was preparing himself for the supreme revelation Christ barred the way with a flaming sword, and the gods of Greece retreated before him, not for the first and not for the last time in history. The heart expanding to receive them broke. The mind exalted to grasp them snapped. Ever since his childhood Christ had been waiting for this moment in the deep recesses of his mind[.][66]

Butler proceeds to cite the opening verses of a late fragment *To the Madonna*: "Much have I suffered/For your sake and your Son's,/O Madonna, since I heard of him/In sweet youth."[67]

13.4 *Pneûma hágion*, "Light Darkness" and Christian "Love" that "Sedulously Fixes the Eyes"

To conclude this chapter we return to *Memento*. Despite its clear representation of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language* (9.2, 11.2), the socio-political potential of Hölderlin's last complete song is narrowed by the space, time and linguistic spirit of Christianity. As we have seen, the epiphany of nature coincides with that of poetic breath. The appearance of the "northeast" (V 1) and the "fiery spirit" (V 4) that it inspires evokes, in turn, the voice of "the Evier" (V 216) in *Oedipus the Tyrant* who

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[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid. p. 235. The German word for "leaf", *Blatt*, significantly doubles as the word "page".

[64] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke*, Beissner, vol. 2, *Gedichte nach 1800* 163.

[65] Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* 234.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid. *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 385.

appears "[w]ith the gleaming, shinning torch burning" (V 217–218), the "immortal words" (V 1184) of Dionysus "going in fire!/Chorus-leader […] and guardian/ Of secret speech!" (V 1195–1197; 8.1) in *Antigone*, and, finally, "the singers/[…] praise" (V 141–142) that coalesces about the Dionysian "torch-bearer" (V 155) in *Bread and Wine* (8, 11.2). But given Hölderlin's failure to free himself from the oppressive spirit of Christ, the epiphany of poetic breath that coincides with that of the "northeast" (V 1) and its "fiery spirit" (V 4) evokes also the *pneûma hágion* of the *Holy Spirit*, in particular the biblical image of the epiphany of "tongues, dispersed as fire".[68] One thinks of a later version of *Patmos* where the poet declares "the voices of God/Are as fire"[69] (V 47–48).

The holiday implicit in the second strophe of *Memento*: "In the time of March,/ When night and day are equal" (V 20–21) that recalls the cosmic significance of Dionysus in Hölderlin's *Antigone* and *Bread and Wine* (8, 11.1) where he "reconciles day with night" (V 143; 8, 9.2, 11.2), can be related not only to local French rituals (associated, for instance, with Bordeaux's *Les Robinson des Bordelais* of 22 March, which Hölderlin may have witnessed),[70] but also Judeo-Christian holidays of Pessac, Easter and the Feast Day of the Annunciation (to mention just a few). The riddling formulae of Dionysius the Areopagite that God is simultaneously light and darkness invites us to see the Dionysian reconciliation of opposites in "[t]he dark light" (V 26; 8B, 10B) of the third strophe as related to a Christian "paradox of light darkness".[71] We have noted Hölderlin's citation of Paul's letter to the Corinthians with which his poetic remembrance concludes: "And love also sedulously fixes the eyes" (V 58; 9.2, 11.2).

[68] Acts 2: pp. 3–4.

[69] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 358.

[70] *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer 49.

[71] G. Lüers, *Die Sprache der deutschen Mystik des Mittelatlers im Werke der Mechthild von Magdeburg* (München: Ernst Reinhardt 1926) 170.

Chapter 14
Hölderlinian Hyper-Abstractions

Abstract Alongside the narrowing of Dionysian potential in Hölderlin's poetry by the spectres of nationalism and Christianity is the poet's hyper-abstractions. The final origin of these (often outlandish) concepts may be seen as Hölderlin's emergent schizophrenia. Nevertheless, this chapter brings to light a few examples of the poet's highly complex intellectual constellations. This includes, for instance, Hölderlin's hyperabstract concept of "the fire of heaven" wherein the poet fantasises that he has been "struck by Apollo". Another problematic, if influential hyper-abstract concept which diminishes the clarity of Hölderlin *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language* is what he gestures to as sublime "boundlessness". Being unaware of the historical invention of money in Greece (despite his uncanny capacity to illuminate the theatrical tension that this cataclysmic event calls forth), Hölderlin follows the hyper-abstract—and significantly monetised (and visualised)—unconscious of the presocratic Herakleitos in his references to "the One differentiated in itself".

Keywords Hyperabstractised chronotope · Hyperabstract language · German-greek romance · "Fire of heaven" · Sublime "boundlessness" · "The One differentiated in itself"

14.1 "Fire of Heaven"

Hölderlin's retrieval of Dionysian space, time and language is further hindered by *hyperabstractions* that haunt his poetic project—an overly, that is, superfluous conceptual spatio-temporal form and linguistic expression that are dislocated from common sense—what here shall be called the *Hyperabstractised chronotope* and *hyperabstract language*.

On the one hand, this is something to be expected. We have noted the transition of our species into a zone of limitless money and visual abstraction, one that has been increasing, even gaining in velocity, for two millennia. The concentration of this infinite visual territory of money through the unleashing of industrial energy is something to which Christian and Enlightened thought lead much more than we may prefer to believe (9.1). What makes this significant is that such "progress", in turn, gives way to a mass population (no less than 1 billion human living on earth

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by 1800) that is no longer in balance with nature or itself (9.1). When we as a species begin to burst through the hard ceiling of the (previous agricultural) population limit sometime after the *Renaissance* and just before Hölderlin's translation of *Bacchae* around 1799, it is not clear how such a (massive) identity of humankind should be organised. This vast crises of form is entangled in an identity crisis to which the unlimited hysteria and violence implicit in *Nationalism* gestures (11A). But what makes all of this especially critical is that the emergence of unlimited individualism gives rise to bureaucracies whose homogenising forces impose abstraction (and modern nihilism) onto everyday human life in a way that is unprecedented.

Nevertheless, the *hyperabstractions* that we see in Hölderlin's poetry and, more specifically, in his essays and commentaries, cannot simply be explained by the everyday bureaucratic abstractions that the modern world begins to demand. For reasons that shall become clear in the CODA, the conceptual inventions that refuse to leave the core of Hölderlin's poems and poetic reflections are much too unexpected—and outlandish—as to be mere innocent responses to the cataclysm of the historical time to which he belongs.

One such *hyperabstraction* to which we have already gestured is Hölderlin's poetic syncretism: his synthesis of Dionysus and Christ in the symbols of *Bread and Wine* (8, 13). This is not to say that the conflation of the Classical and Christian traditions—the notion that Christianity has the potential to suggest an earthly and communal counterpart to Dionysian Greece—is not of significance. The fusion of Christian and Greek demigods such as Christ, Dionysus and Heracles in Hölderlin's late hymns (13.1–13.2) recalls early Christian sarcophagi from the second or third century A.D. These melancholy objects, once housed at the Lateran Museum and now a part of the Vatican's collection, portray Christ as a shepherd with an uncanny resemblance to Hermes—the god who presents baby Dionysus to the nymphs and Papposilenus at Nysa (4.3).[1] But because Hölderlin represses the brutal (and sometimes racist) sides of Christian socio-politics that it inherits, in part, from Rome and Judaism, his fantasy of a Greek-Christian synthesis remains just that: an ethereal dream that, despite its creativity, never had—and never shall have—any real revolutionary power, at least not in *this world*. In contrast to Dionysus in *Bacchae*—and perhaps the political force of Hölderlin's poetry from 1800 to 1802—, *hyperabstractions* such as the concept of Christ and Dionysus as brothers from 1803 remain, for the most part, ineffectual phantasms that distance us from the everyday reality to which we belong.

Also troubling is Hölderlin's wilful alienation of modern Germans and ancient Greeks from history. This abandonment of time occurs through the false belief that these cultures and languages are uniquely related to one another—and this means that the German language and culture has a unique claim to Greek in a way that

[1] Vase painting testifies to this event. See the white calyx-crater by the Phiale painter. *A History of Greek Vase-Painting, Arias p. 367*, and Plates XLIII and XLIV pp. 192–194; see also vase painting from Palermo in: *Mon. d. 1st*, II 17. In one instance Hermes saves the child from his first foster-mothers, the daughters of Lamos, and gives him directly to Ino. Nonnus of Panopolis, *Dionysiaca*, 9.49–53, in *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques, Chuvin*, vol. 3, *Chants 6–8* 35–37.

is—somehow?—above and beyond all other languages. As we have seen, Hölderlin proclaims in *To the Germans* that "the mountains of German/Land are the mountains of the Muses." (V 35–36; 12.1) On the other hand, the fantasy that the Germans and Greeks are related to one another appears in the *hyperabstraction* that theses they—and they alone—stand in a uniquely *inverse* relation to the other. Whereas the ancient Greeks, to whom "the fire of heaven" was "natural", had to learn "the clarity of representation", the modern Germans, to whom "the clarity of representation" is innate, have still to asborb "the fire of heaven".[2] This *hyperabstract* thought, as tantalising as it may appear, and which is inseparable from Hölderlin's "nationalism",[3] singles out Germany as the sole inheritor of the harmonising of oppositional forces in Greece. One thinks of the proclamation of the gods to *Germania*: "It is you, the elected one"[4] (V 62)

Hölderlin's *hyperabstraction* that Germany needs to submit itself to "the fire of heaven" is a perversion of Dionysian Greece. This is clear in his *Bacchae*-inspired song *As when on a holiday ...* where the sacred refreshment of wine—"heavenly fire" (V 54)—that appears after Semele succumbs to Zeus' "lightning-flash" (V 51) and "holy Bacchus" (V 54), "[t]he fruit of thunder and lightning"[5] (V 54; 5.3), is born leads to an outlandish program in the present. The "poets" (V 57) of modern Germany are commanded to "stand bare-headed" (V 57) like Semele "under god's thunder and lightning" (V 56) and offer "the heavenly gifts/Wrapped in song to the people" (V 59–60; 7). As we have seen, the ancient Greeks express the need to transition from the potential danger of the eyes (that often lead to tragic individual death) to the redemptive spirit of earth and communality that is concentrated in the fiery taste of wine (2–4). Hölderlin, in contrast, expresses the (suicidal) need to identify with the mortal danger to which the eyes can lead—"the fire of heaven"—as embodied in the "lightning-flash" that incinerates Semele and the "thunder and lightning of the god" (V 56) to which modern German "poets" (V 57) must expose themselves. Hölderlin's *hyperabstraction* causes, in other words, the sacred transition of ritual to suddenly suffer paralysis.

14.2 Sublime "Boundlessness"

The absorption of the *Dionysiac chronotope* into that which it struggles against—namely the eyes of an isolated individual lured into the proximity of an incomprehensible and dangerous natural event—, echoes the modern aesthetic concept of the *sublime*. Although it can be traced back to the Greek rhetorician Longinus from the first century A.D., this abstract mental category significantly becomes fashionable

[2] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt pp. 459–460.

[3] Ibid.

[4] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 336.

[5] Ibid. p. 240.

first in the eighteenth century England, the home of humankind's industrialisation. In particular, it is the *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* by Edmund Burke in 1756 that picks up and elaborates such *hyperabstract* concepts of (concentrated) opposing emotions as harmony and horror and pleasure and despair—often incited by images of the Alps,[6] and or anything that "arise[s] from visible objects" that are "unbounded" and "unlimited".[7] For Burke, such emotional condensations of awe and horror, beauty and ugliness, form and formlessness, and fear and attraction are caught up in the pleasure of negative pain, that is, the delight that accompanies the removal of pain (caused by confronting the *sublime* object).[8]

Although the Dionysian spirit that Hölderlin retrieves is opposed to Kant's *hyperabstract* philosophy (4C), the impressionable late eighteenth century German poet remains in many ways within a Kantian aesthetic orbit. This means that Hölderlin is exposed to Kant's concept of the *sublime*, influenced as it is by Burke, in *The Critique of Judgment*.[9] Important is not only Kant's adaption of Burke's "ideas of pain and danger",[10] in particular the pleasure that secretly inheres in such suffering,[11] but instead his association of the "formless object" of the *sublime* (whose "boundlessness" knows nothing of "limitations") with a fearfulness, a "without being afraid *of* it",[12] and this alongside the contention that the unfathomability of nature betrays the inadequacy of the being human. In grasping for the *sublime* in a formless object, as when Hölderlin reaches out his hands to absorb the lightning in *As when on a holiday…*, the poet can be understood as seeking a "supersensible substrate" to prove the superiority of his cognitive powers, a heroic (and self-aggrandising) gesture to complement the revolutionary political climate of his time.

What most critics of the *sublime* fail to note, however, is that the invention of such *hyperabstract* concepts legitimise the tyranny of nature and other fellow humans during industrialisation. Consider the incomprehensible image of life to

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[6] One thinks of Anthony Ashley-Cooper's *Moralists* of 1709 and John Dennis' *Miscellanies* from 1693, both of which express an attraction to the fearful and irregular forms of nature, as well as Joseph Addison's *The Spectator and Pleasures of the Imagination*.

[7] Here I am thinking of Addison's *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* from 1699, significantly followed by Mark Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination* of 1744 and Edward Young's poem *Night Thoughts* from 1745.

[8] E. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London and New York: Routledge 2008) pp. 39–40, 32–35.

[9] *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer pp. 90–94. It is significant that Kant already sought to discern a subject's mental state with his *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* from 1764.

[10] Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* pp. 39–40.

[11] Consider the greatness, infinity and obscurity that can be an object of terror and the sublime for Burke, linked as they are to that which remains unknown, are often further related to the Christian concepts of Death and Satan in Milton's Paradise *Lost both* of which are taken as representative of the sublime.

[12] Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, par.s 23, pp. 27–28, in *Immanuel Kant, Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Klemme pp. 104–108, 123–133.

which the melting of iron with coke by Abraham Darby gives rise. The view of "the [Bedlam] furnaces, forges, &c. with the vast bellows that give those roaring blasts […] make the whole edifice horridly sublime."[13] Consider also of the refusal of the good Quaker of Coalbrookdale who refused to have his portrait made because of his pious rejection of images that represent the vanity of the material world. Would not Darby's deed to the valley of Shropshire—a material, textual image—that documents his unlimited individual ownership of the coal and iron that lay secretly side-by-side in the earth a horribly sublime image for the eyes? One thinks also of the alienation of time from nature, as when factory workers were commanded to internalise abstract images of hours tied to wages, or be fired.

That the *hyperabstract* concept of the *sublime* is caught up not in an actual experience of the horror of nature that transitions into the joy of earth and communality (as is the *Dionysiac chronotope*), but instead in sadism, that is, a form of psychosis, is clear. "I am convinced we have a degree of delight, and that no small one," Burke writes, "in the real misfortunes and pains of others."[14] The mental illness that accompanie such *hyperabstract* thought is significantly linked to the visual. For Burke "there is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue, as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity".[15] One thinks of Pentheus in *Bacchae* who wants to cut off the head of the magician who has come to his city, who sees Dionysus bound in a dark cell, and who threatens to imprison also the maenads upon whom he desires to secretly spy (in exchange for a large sum of money). When we combine Burke's perverse enjoyment of pictures of the suffering of others with the (unlimited) Christian transcendence implicit in Kantian philosophy, it is clear that the *sublime* embraces the tyranny of earth and other humans in way that accompanies the emergence of modern life and its mastery of nature.

14.3 "Struck by Apollo"

The absorption of Hölderlin's retrieval of Dionysian space, time and language into the *visualised chronotope* of *hyperabstractions* is caught up in his denigration of the Dionysian priest into the figure of the tyrant. In fact, there is no moment when Hölderlin's references to the mystic initiates of the wine-god (8B, 10B) do not dangerously shade into a Germanocentric egoism (12). The Swabian poet already imagines himself as a prophet of Germany long before *The Poet's Vocation* and the sublime awakening of the cosmic (vertical) axis in *As when on a holiday…*, that is, where "the spiritualisation" (V 26) of "divinely beautiful nature" (V 13) reconnects

[13] A. Young, *A Tour to Shropshire* (1776) *Tours in England and Wales* (Chippenham, Wiltshire: Routledge/Thoemmes Press 1996) p. 151.

[14] Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* p. 45.

[15] Ibid.

the "height of the aether to the abyss below"[16] (V 24; 8). As the Coda shall show, the prophetic self-image that Hölderlin models for himself in a poem from late 1799 dedicated to *The Princess Auguste of Homburg*—where he declares that it is his "vocation" (V 24) is "[t]o praise higher things, […]"[17] (V 25)—, has its roots in the threefold psychic crisis, namely the identity crisis of modern Germany, a troubled childhood and a psychic-physiological imbalance.

Although there are many signs of Hölderlin's reduction of Greek myth and cult to the *hyperabstract* concept of the *sublime*, specifically his perverse identification with (and hence implicit celebration of) the tragic hero—precisely what the tragic chorus questions in *Oedipus the Tyrant*—, one of the most striking instances before his Sophocles translations is found in the letter from 4 December 1801. Towards the end of the epistle Hölderlin confesses to his friendly recipient: "[…] now I fear that I shall end up like the old Tantalus who received more from the gods than he could digest."[18] The modern German poet seizes on the ancient Greek myth of a king of considerable wealth who alienates the gods by killing and dismembering kin. But for Hölderlin, Tantalus is *romanticised* as an innocent Swabian seeking a modern Kantian "supersensible substrate" to prove the superiority of his cognitive powers, a heroic (and hubristic) gesture to complement the heroic (and hubristic) spirit of Napoléon—and which ends in tragic individual death.

Such (outlandish) arrogance recurs in another letter that Hölderlin sent to his friend Böhlendorff, this time after his return from Bordeaux in the autumn of 1802 while working on his Sophocles translations and commentary. After evoking "[t]he violent element, the fire of heaven", Hölderlin proceeds to the indiscrete characterisation of his desolate state: "[…] and as one speaks of heroes, I can say with confidence that I have been struck by Apollo."[19] Understood in regard to his retrieval of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *Dionysiac language*, this otherwise peculiar self-image continues Semele's tragic fate and Dionysus' joyful birth from *Bacchae* and *As when on a holiday…* We have noted the striking similarity (and hence implicit presence of mystic initiation) of Semele's tragic fate to that of the young pregnant mother Coronis—Apollo's unfaithful mistress who, as Hölderlin's translations of Pindar remind us, is struck by Artemis' arrow and whose unborn child is recused from the flames of the funeral pyre by his father the Olympian god (10.3). But because the ancient story and its socio-political significance are absorbed into the *hyperabstract* concept of the *sublime*, Hölderlin perverts the transition from tragic individual death to chthonic communality in a way that allows the presence of the tyrant to fester.

This regrettable tendency to identify with and thus *romanticise* the figure of the tyrant is most clear in Hölderlin's commentary on Sophocles. We have noted the youthful poet's tendency to see himself as "the homeless, blind Oedipus" (7.1). To

[16] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt p. 239.

[17] Ibid. p. 227.

[18] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt p. 461.

[19] Ibid. p. 466.

the extent that such an identification can be understood in regard to the nuanced transition that Oedipus undergoes from an egomaniac with insatiable eyes to a desolate, blind wanderer who shall be transfigured in death (by a mystic lightning-flash) and find his way to a Dionysian paradise, Hölderlin's Oedipus can be read as a meaningful retrieval of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *Dionysiac language*. Nevertheless, in his commentary on *Oedipus the Tyrant* he represses the unlimited visual desire of the leader that accompanies his (unconscious) desire for money (2–4). The tension encircling the tyrant is imagined as caught up in an encounter with the *sublime*. Oedipus is in danger, like Hölderlin's Tantalus, of coming "to know more than he can bear or fathom."[20] The evil essence of the tyrant, his perverse visual desire that reinforces a new world ruled by money, is overlooked with the *hyperabstract* concept that the "noble"[21] Oedipus should never have uncovered the truth about his father's intention to murder him, his (unintentional) patricide and incest, all of which are causing the Theban community to perish.

Less expected, if just as clear, is Hölderlin's perverse celebration of the identity and language of the tyrant through the absorption of Antigone into the *sublime*. Referring to the verses where the heroine invokes the tragic end to which the arrogance of Tantalus' daughter Niobe leads (V 852–861),[22] he reflects:

> Perhaps that is the highest trait of Antigone. Sublime mockery insofar as holy madness is the highest human appearance, and here more soul than language, and which outdoes all of her other expressions […][23]

Because he associates the "holy madness" of the heroine "with bold, and even often blasphemous words",[24] Hölderlin opens up a *hyperabstract* mental zone where "[t]he raging self-knowing" (V 906) that "destroy[s]"[25] (V 905) Antigone shades into "the spirit of [her father] Oedipus, all-knowing"—the tyrant who because he is also characterised as "raging" (9.1), evokes the unlimited "rage" (V 998) of Lykourgos who sought to murder Dionysus and his female mystic initiates—which Hölderlin (bizarrely) *romanticises* as "blossoming rage" (V 998; 9.1).

Because his view of ancient Greece is eclipsed by modern *hyperabstractions* such as the *sublime* where tragedy is reduced to a dispute between god and an isolated individual, in particular to the excessive and intense contact of the individual with the divine,[26] Hölderlin's retrieval of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *Dionysiac*

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[20] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 852.

[21] Ibid. p. 854.

[22] Ibid. p. 891.

[23] Ibid. p. 915.

[24] Ibid. p. 916.

[25] Ibid. p. 893.

[26] Such *hyperabstractions* complement nationalism and Christianity. Consider Hölderlin's erratic use of the concept of "law", *Gesetz*. Whereas Antigione threatens to overturn Kreon's tyrannical law and thus open up a certain lawlessless, Rousseau in *The Rhine* lawlessly gives the language of the purest and the Dionysian angel of the present in *The Vocation of the Poet* shall give new laws (5.3, 6.3). On the one hand, implicit here is the downfall of inauthentic laws and establishment

language suffers from a lack of historical sobriety. This is not to say that he does not illuminate and harness the liberating power inherent in the opening out of a communal and earthly afterlife (during the emergence of money and its visual culture). As we have seen, the rise of capitalism's internal dynamic of unlimited self-expansion through the *visualisation* of the cosmos calls forth the drama of self-isolating money-tyrants such as Pentheus, Oedipus and Kreon who invariably succumb to tragic blindness, dismemberment and death (2–4)—what we might call the first systematic projection of the life-giving darkness of earth and community as transcendent in Axial thought.[27] At the heart of this study remains that which Hölderlin and he alone—not Goethe nor Schiller nor anyone else in the history of German literature or philosophy—glimpses in antiquity and remodels for the present. That individuals since the time when Pindar complains of the *monetised* "silvered voice" (V 65) in the early fifth century B.C.E. to the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries "have become more barbaric through industry and science and even through religion [Christianity]"—and this means more visually reckless like Semele in *Bacchae* and *As when on a holiday …* and "king Oedipus [who] has one eye too many" with how they reduce experience, "to make/A little money" (V 39–40), to modern visual technologies like "[t]he telescope" (V 51; 7–11).

Hölderlin's *hyperabstractions*, which are inextricably tied to his nationalism and love of Christ, nevertheless alienate him from history. Here I refer not simply to the misunderstandings that arise from the corrupt text that he uses for his Sophocles translations (the old edition of the sixteenth century, the *Brubachiana*), nor his many mistakes while translating ancient Greek, but instead to the reality of the past that the poet sacrifices to rescue his romantic dreams. We have noted the heroised seafarers of *Memento* who, although in search of "riches" (V 40), tell us more about the Sophoklean "night/Of the ocean" (V 351–352) than the profitable exchange of molasses and slaves that characterises the birth of modern time (6.1). *Memento* ends

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of authentic ones. See *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 917. Nevertheless, the attraction to such *hyperabstract* concepts obfuscates this otherwise clear revolutionary precondition of change. Further, such superfluous opacity is intensified by the relation of Hölderlin's concepts of law and lawlessness to the formal structure of his post-*Bacchae* poety. See, for instance, "the law of the song", *das Gesetz des Gesanges*, that is caught up in transitions of "progress and regress" scribbled above *The Rhine*, and which can only be loosely tied to the ordered timetable of ritual. *Friedrich Hölderlin, Sämtlich Werke, Frankfurter Ausgabe*, D. Sattler, vol. 7/8, *Gesänge I/II* (Basel, Frankfurt: Stroemfeld/Roter Stern 2001) p. 161. Instead, such a formal "law" is caught up in the poetological, even mathematical construction of content alongside Hölderlin's *hyperabstract* concept of the "change of tones", *Wechsel der Töne*. *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt pp. 524–526. See also L. Ryan, *Hölderlins Lehre vom Wechsel der Töne* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 1960).

[27] For a traditional description of the concept of the Axial Age that was dreamed up in the 1940s, that is, the trend at work in the first-millennium B.C. from China to the Mediterranean (one thinks of Confucianism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, classical philosophy and their Christian and Muslim spinoffs), in particular this early historical transformation as a response mostly from the margins (both geographical and social) of great empires to the rise of bureaucratic power and the spiritual vaccum left by the fading of godlike kingship, see R. Bellah, *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Palaeolithic to the Axial Age* (Cambridge: Belknap Press 2011).

with the beginning of a voyage to a new world. Although inspired by "Columbus",[28] this expedition has more to do with the *hyperabstract* imagination of the orb of the "Hesperides"[29] (V 150) and the German romantic phantasm of "a *Volk* of rare excellence hidden" secretly "in the depths of Asia" (9.2, 12.4) than with a responsible confrontation with the brutal realities of an early modern voyage of exploration.

14.4 "The One Differentiated in Itself"

At the core of the *hyperabstractised chronotope* and *hyperabstract language* into which Hölderlin's Dionysian space, time and linguistic expression are absorbed is the expected inability of the modern German poet to understand the historical emergence of money, philosophy and tragedy. Although Hölderlin links modern money-tyrants made "barbaric through industry and science and even through religion [Christianity]", in particular modern egomaniacs who, "to make/A little money" (V 39–40), "exploit" (V 37) and "squande[r]" (V 56) the resources of earth with visual new technology like "[t]he telescope" (V 51; 8), to the danger of the eyes of ancient money-tyrants like Oedipus in Greece (4–7), this connection remains fragmentary and episodic, at best.

When he stumbles directly across ancient evidence of the emergence of money and its ghost of linguistic resignation in sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E.—as when Hölderlin translates verses 63 through 66 of Pindar's *11th Pythian ode*:

> O Muse, it is yours, if you
> have bound yourself to wages, to provide
> The silvered voice, at different places
> In different ways abundantly (V 63–66; 7.2)

it is clear that he has little understanding of that which he has stumbled across. Despite Hölderlin's incessant rhetoric about the loss of the sacred, instead of questioning the "convention", *nomos*, of "currency, coinage", *nomisma*, that, since "it is in our power to change it and make it useless",[30] is plagued by a crisis of meaning that extends to religion—Socrates declares that "the gods are not *nomisma* (currency/coinage) with us" (V 247–248; 3.2)—, Hölderlin elevates "convention", *nomos*, in his *hyperabstract* interpretation of Pindaric *nómos* as the (*sublime*) "law", *Gesetz*, of "strict mediation" that is inaccessible for "mortals" and "immortals".[31]

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[28] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt pp. 408–412.

[29] Ibid. p. 291. See also *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 919.

[30] This is a famous passage taken from Aristotle's *Nicomachaean Ethics* (1133ab). Cited in Seaford, *Money and the Early Greek Mind* p. 143.

[31] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 769. Here we might also note that essential to Hölderlin's return to a (*hyperabstract*) "law" is the poet's attempt to recapture precisely that which he abandoned and for which he had subsequently "been struck by Apollo."

Since he is unable to thematically identify the emergence of money in ancient Greece, it is hardly surprising that Hölderlin is also unable to identify one of money's most destructive *hyperabstract* children: Philosophy (7.2). This is not to say that Hölderlin's poetic philosophy is of no value. As we have seen, the birth of the love of wisdom plays a key role in his understanding of the Greeks as a noble people who transitioned into thinking by virtue of religion and, in particular, "the secret source of poetry", which is tied to "an infinite godlike being." (7.1) "The great word, the εν διαφερν εαυτω (the One differentiated in itself) of Herakleitos", Hölderlin proceeds to declare in the same passage from *Hyperion*, "could only have been discovered by a Greek, for it is the essence of beauty, and before it was discovered there was no philosophy."[32]

The spirit of the Greek thinker, who contrasts the one-sidedness of the Egyptian, more specifically the spirit of the noble Athenian who transcends the fragmentary essence of the Spartan, echoes in Hölderlin's desperate transformation of "philosophy" in a letter from 12 November 1788 into "a hospital to which every unhappy poet like [him]self can flee with honour."[33] Such despair that leads to intellectual asylum is enhanced, in a sense, by Hölderlin's philosophical ecstasy years later where, in his letter to Böhlendorf from the autumn of 1802, he exclaims "the philosophical light upon my window is now my joy".[34] "The nature of home", in particular the mystic "thunder and lightning" from *Bacchae* and *As when on a holiday…* as "something sacred", its ecstatic,

> pulsation in coming and going, [along with] that which is characteristic of forests and the intersection in one region of a manifold of nature's characteristics where all the sacred places of earth coalesce about one sacred place

—and this means finally a "style of song" (11.1) inseparable from "the Greeks"[35]—suggests a Dionysian philosophy with exceptional relevance and potential to our time.

But although Hölderlin challenges classical philosophy since Plato (6A), he does not dig deep enough and remains within a traditional ahistorical philosophical framework that unconsciously (and in a solipsistic way) imagines philosophy as having nothing to do with precious metal, much less the thought that philosophy emerges as a consequence of the historical emergence of money. As we have seen, philosophy arises from the unlimitedness of precious metal that creates the unconscious picture of the cosmos as ruled by an abstract, singular and unlimited substance—for example, the water of Thales, the unlimited (apeiron) of Anaximander, the air of Anaximenes and the One of Parmenides (5.1). The *monetised* and *visualised chronotopes* and *languages* of philosophy are particularly clear in Herakleitos'

[32] Ibid. p. 92.

[33] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt p. 315.

[34] Ibid. p. 467.

[35] Ibid.

projection of the cosmos as ruled by a raging and strangely abstract fire that is, like a coin, exchangeable for all things, and significantly comparable to gold (5.1).

Although Hölderlin unintentionally touches upon philosophy's origin in money, specifically the tendency of philosophers to cultivate an abstract image of primal (homogenised) Oneness and infinite exchange—for instance, in his heroising of Herakleitos' "great word, the εν διαφερον εαυτω (the One differentiated in itself)"—, his *hyperabstractions* keep him from making what would be otherwise obvious connections. Consider the self-isolating arrogance of the Frankfurt Banker Gontard under whom Hölderlin suffered and that of the presocratic, self-aggrandising Greek philosopher. The metaphor of philosophy as "a hospital to which every unhappy poet like [him]self can flee with honour", although intriguing, remains unclear. And given the *hyperabstract* concepts of nationalism and the *sublime* that plague Hölderlin's letter to Böhlendorf from the autumn of 1802, the luminous philosophical ecstasy in which he seeks to rejoice—one thinks also of the Herakleitean (and thus *monetised* and *visualised*) unity of opposites in the "[t]he dark light" (V 26) of *Memento*—is threatened by an experience of space, time and language that is dislocated from a balanced view of history.

To conclude, because Hölderlin is ignorant of the historical emergence of money and philosophy, his understanding of that which the spirit of humanity opened out to confront the danger of tyrants of precious metal and the visual culture they selfishly promote (in the form of Greek tragedy) is absorbed into the *hyperabstract chronotope* and the *hyperabstract language* that fashionable in his time. Although he penetrates the secrets of mystery-cult more deeply than anyone else, Hölderlin's final thoughts on the meaning of the tragic play are excessively abstract. His characterisation of tragedy's dialogue, for instance, where "[e]verywhere is talk against talk that abolishes the other" (11.1), recalls the (unlimited) cycle of "cosmological confusion" in which the money-tyrant "lives inescapably"—that is, "in the (Herakleitean) world of pervasive monetised circulation".[36] One thinks also of Hölderlin's attraction to a *hyperabstrac*t (Herakleitean) celebration of reversal for the sake of itself.[37]

[36] Seaford, *Cosmology and the Polis* p. 331.

[37] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt p. 919, 913.

Coda "Holy Madness"?

If Hölderlin's retrieval of the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *Dionysiac language* fall prey to nationalism, Christianity and *hyperabstraction*, the final executioner of earth and community is alas the madness to which the poet succumbs. But is this not something we should have expected? Because the *hyperabstract* concepts that Hölderlin cultivates combine that which nationalism and Christianity already invoke, that is, the unhinging of the human life from history—, we can anticipate that such a gesture issues forth from a psychic disturbance that can devour a balanced experience of space, time and language.

To be sure, we cannot fault Hölderlin for his isolation, an echo of which we hear in Hyperion's longing for a kindred "spirit"—one that, because it is accompanied by the melancholy reference to "the rays" of "light" that gather together in a "mirror",[1] evokes the isolated Dionysus' who stumbles across a looking glass and gazes (fatefully) into his reflection (2.1). Schiller's neglect, Hölderlin's lack of stable employment, and the failure of his journal *Iduna*—also a victim of Schiller's tyrannical spirit—all suggest a normal, if tragic, series of events(that tragically befall the talented poet).

But symptoms of a psychic caesura reveal themselves. Alienation from others degenerates into wild self-hatred. "So I came to the Germans," the German poet says, and proceeds to describe his own as,

> [b]arbarians from time immemorial, they [modern Germans] have become more barbaric through industry and science and even through religion, profoundly incapable of any divine emotion […] dull and lacking harmony, like fragments of a tossed out vessel. (5.1)

"It is a hard word, but I say it nonetheless, for it is the truth," Hölderlin continues, "I can think of no people more torn apart than the Germans. You see craftsmen, but no humans, thinkers, but no humans, priests, but no humans" (7.1). As we have seen, this passage concludes with the metaphor of the German people "like shards of a thrown out vessel" (7.1): "is this not like a battlefield", Hölderlin asks, "where

[1] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 71.

L. Murrey, *Hölderlin's Dionysiac Poetry,* DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-10205-4

dismembered hands and arms and all body-parts lie cast about while their life-blood drains into the sand?" (7.1)

As we have seen, the "immature attitude" of Germans who are "tyrannical towards nature" (7.1) which they greedily "tear apart" (7.2) is rooted in their "evil tongues" (10.1). Hölderlin describes the German language that estranges nature and humanity as the "idle chatter" of "clever ones" who are no match for the real language of "the springs of earth and morning dew [that] refresh the grove" (10.1). Here he leaves no doubt that it is his inauthentic mother tongue against which he is battling. "[W]hen they [the Germans] speak, woe to him! who understands them […]" (10.1)

Given this unusual concentration of love and hatred for his German language, in particular the murder of the self that is implicit in Hölderlin's contempt, it is not surprising that he perversely *heroises* individual death. This is clear in his essay *Becoming in Perishing* (7.1, 12.1). As we have noted, Hölderlin writes this essay, also titled *The Dying Fatherland*, while translating a fragment from *Oedipus at Kolonus* where the tragic hero wilfully embraces his mortal finitude (12.1).

Eerie also is Hölderlin's need to identify with tragic heroes. We have witnessed how when he criticises "the Germans" he compares himself to "the homeless, blind Oedipus at the gates of Athens […]" (7.1) Although this gives Hölderlin some distance from the reality of the inauthentic Germans and the inauthentic German language from which he struggles to free himself, this tendency to accept fantasy *as if* it is real turns into a dangerous illusion not simply of secret, authentic Germans and a secret, authentic German language—to which Hölderlin gestures when Hyperion declares, "I spoke in your name also, I spoke for everyone from this land and who has suffer as I suffered there" (10.1)—, but also into the illusion of a pure, ancient race from India and Greece from which authentic Germans and their authentic language secretly descend: the phantasm in *Hyperion* of an ancient "*Volk* of rare excellence hidden" secretly "in the depths of Asia" (12.4).

Connected to these symptoms of psychic turbulence is the German identity crisis. Although the heightened linguistic feel of the alliteration of Hölderlin's rendering of the first verse of Pindar's *second Olympian ode*, *Ihr **H**errscher auf **H**arfen, ihr **H**ymnen!* (V 1; 10.2), echoes the socio-political potential of the language of mystery-cult to establish a more democratic language in tune with nature (10.2), it is also followed by an echo of Germany's lack of a leader and, in contrast to France with its tradition of kingship and revolution, absence of sacred heroism:

> Which god, which hero
> Which man will we celebrate with song?[2] (V 2–3)

As we have implied, Hölderlin does not simply translate Pindar, but instead seeks "to penetrate", as Böschenstein points out, "the linguistic spirit of the original"[3] Greek songs (10.2). This suggests, alongside Hölderlin's rigorous mimicry of

[2] Ibid. 695.

[3] Böschenstein, *"Übersetzungen"*, in *Hölderlin-Handbuch. Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, hg. J. Kreuzer 275.

Euripides' trimeters in his translation of *Bacchae*,[4] that the search for a hero and heroic language threatens to annihilate the mother—if often inauthentic—tongue. This means the destruction of the sacred place from which the identity of the poet issues forth.

Hölderlin's need to identify with the Greeks suggests finally psychosis, that is, a mental illness that conceals itself within the object of affection with which or with whom it actually has nothing to do. This is clear in how easily he transfers his dream of ancient Greece to modern Germany: "the mountains of German/Land are the mountains of the Muses" (V 35–36; 8). This psychotic gesture lays the foundation for the ambivalence that colours the poet's culminating mental dismemberment.

Let us briefly return to the heroism of ancient Greece that is transferred to modern Germany. The dream of Dionysian "fire" (V 28) that "gleams in the eye […] of the man/When he designs the great"[5] (V 28–29) and "the wine-god's holy priests" (V 123; 8) in search of "the open" (V 41) that secretly belongs to them[6] (V 42) invokes the phantasm of a German hero. We have witnessed the birth "of the demigod" (V 31; 8) *The Rhine*, a godlike German spirit whose sheer strength and emotional disassociation is celebrated beyond all others: "He does not, like other children,/ Whine in swaddling clothes; […]"[7] We have witnessed also the epiphany of "the day's angel" (V 5), the German "master"[8] (V 7) in *The Poet's Vocation* (8, 10.3).

Critical is that Hölderlin suffers the absence of the German deity he calls forth. "Creating one, o when, Genius of our *Volk*," (V 25) he asks despairingly in *To the Germans*: "When will you make your complete epiphany, soul of the *Vaterland*"?[9] (V 26) We have seen similar suffering before the absence of the divine German "stranger?" (V 149) at the centre of *The Rhine*, as well as the anguish that accompanies the absence of this deity at the end of *The Poet's Vocation* (8). Given the borderline psychosis that accompanies Hölderlin's picture of Greece and Germany, it is not surprising that such desolation easily regresses into—and thus continues—the poet's self-hatred. The failure of the German god to appear is haunted by the "poverty of action"[10] (V 4) that plagues the poet's inauthentic *Vaterland*.

But what is most telling—and that which most exacerbates the symptoms of Hölderlin's impending psychosis—is the protracted absence of an authentic language. Given its absorption into a romantic image of silence—one thinks of Hölderlin's often cited *Half of Life* and its haunting reference to "[t]he walls [that] stand/ Speechless and cold" (V 12–13) in "winter"[11] (V 8)—this tragic event tends to be overlooked. Nevertheless, *tragic silence* remains the terminal point of Hölderlin's poetic experiments. Instead of transitioning into a *Dionysiac language*, in his first

[4] Ibid. 274.

[5] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 239.

[6] Ibid. 287.

[7] Ibid. 329.

[8] Ibid. *305*.

[9] *Ibid*. 236.

[10] Ibid. 235.

[11] Ibid. 320.

Pindaric hymn *As when on a holiday…*, for instance, the poet, following his turn to the *hyperabstract* concept of the *sublime*, suffers a startling self-negation:

> But alas, if from
> Alas!
> And though I say
> I approached to see the heavenly ones,
> They themselves cast me down deep under the living
> The false priest, into the dark, so that
> I sing the warning song to those who can learn.
> There.[12]

Although most editions leave spaces about the final words of Hölderlin’s hymn, the original manuscript page shows that he crossed out many verses and words.[13] Instead of founding a language that resists reckless eyes that lead to death (as with Semele)—and this means the *visualised* spirit of tyranny to which his blind *Oedipus at Kolonus* gestures (7.1), Hölderlin’s song culminates in an unsettling silence—and one that reverberates in the poem’s title. *As when on a holiday…* is not the name that Hölderlin gives to his first Pindaric, *Bacchae*-inspired song, but instead its opening five words: like the title of a lost painting that upon discovery arbitrarily emerges from the first few colours upon which the beholding, reckless eye fixates.

Linguistic resignation echoes not simply the loss of an everyday language, but the loss of a sacred language. In *Homecoming* the joyful cry of Dionysus, *das Jauchzen* (V 24) from *Bacchae* (10.2), that is transferred to “the joyful-shouting [das jauchzende] valley” (V 64; 10.3), and which is inseparable from the time “when lovers find one another again”[14] (V 95), yields to communal and earthly silence.

> When we bless supper who can I name and when we
> Rest from daily life, say, how should I bring my thanks?[15] (V 97–98)

We should not *romanticise* Hölderlin’s silence as a creative expression of namelessness. The poet is in search of a real language. This is shown not only in his subsequent observations: “Often we must be silent; the sacred names are missing,/[…]”[16] (V 101), but also the incomplete question that he scribbles on the side of this strophe in the original manuscript page: “How do I say[?]”[17]

The namelessness of the German deity who Hölderlin seeks to give “thanks” (V 98) for the mystic bestowal of that which supports communal life (such as the evening supper) also tears at the Dionysian heart of *Bread and Wine*. Once again tragic silence is concentrated into an intersecting loss of form and content. Despite the mathematical perfection of this Dionysian elegy—nine strophes each with nine couplets, that is, an external three with three corresponding to an internal three

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[12] Ibid. 241.

[13] *Hölderlin, Sämtlich Werke, Frankfurter Ausgabe*, Sattler, vol. 7/8, *Elegien und Epigramme*. 98.

[14] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 294.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid. 295.

[17] Friedrich *Hölderlin, Sämtlich Werke, Frankfurter Ausgabe*, D. Sattler, vol. 6, *Elegien und Epigramme* (Basel and Frankfurt: Stoemfeld/Roter Stern, 1976) 308-309.

within three—, when the poet succumbs to self-reflexive nihilism at the end of the seventh strophe in his question: "why poets in a desolate time?" (V 122; 8) the compact crystalline structure of the song collapses. When he formulates his despairing question Hölderlin miscalculates—the only time in *Bread and Wine*—the number of couplets in his strophe.

The threat of the absence of an authentic language of earth and community to poetic form and content recurs throughout Hölderlin's post-*Bacchae* songs. Although potentially Dionysian, "the silence of the *Volk*" (V 9) in *To the Germans* gives way to a series of rambling strophes that culminate not only in *tragic language* that is "[s]oundless" (V 53) and "[w]ithout names" (V 56; 10.3), but also in the "lonely speech"[18] (V 12) of *Rousseau*. Such *tragic silence* leads us, in turn, to the failure to discover the name of the godlike German spirit at the centre of *The Rhine*, as when the poet asks in despair at the end of the tenth strophe: "[…] how do I *name* the stranger?"[19] (V 149; 7, 10.3)

The lack of a sacred language that would do justice to earth and community finds chilling expression in Hölderlin's farewell from the one woman he seems to have loved. Butler says that this leave-taking "broke something in both of them."[20] But this is not only tragic love. This is also the fate of an individual whose mental illness has begun to show itself. One thinks of Hölderlin's erratic resignation from the post he accepted with the family Gonzenbach in Hauptwil, Switzerland, and his sudden return to Nürtingen. Diotima recognises this man's potential not only as a great poet and lover, but also as a victim of unreal voices when she writes to him in early 1800: "don't break […]"[21]

The late Hölderlin who continues to struggle to establish himself by his writing—we have noted the ode and Sophocles translations that he dedicates to the princess of Homburg (13, 12.3) cannot escape failure and loneliness. One thinks of the opening lines of *Patmos*, another song that he writes, this time for the Landgrave of Homburg (13.1), to make a name for himself, in particular of verses eleven and twelve of the first strophe. They evoke not only Christ and his disciplines, but also Hölderlin's Diotima: "the loved ones" (V 10) who

> Live near, but are growing faint upon
> Most separate mountain peaks (V 11–12; 13)

But symptoms of spiritual decline are undeniable. As the *Hofbibliothekarius*—a fantasy title that Hölderlin liked to be called—makes his final descent into madness, it is tempting to still see traces of his earlier affection for Greece. "In the early stages of his disease," Butler notes, Hölderlin's "family would send for a talented young man to soothe his violent fits by readings from Homer."[22] As late as,

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[18] Ibid. 237.

[19] Emphasis added.

[20] Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* 219.

[21] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt 589.

[22] Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* 236.

> 1811 a passage from Homer still had the power to pacify him in one of those distressing rages which a fancied slight so often aroused, a grisly contrast with the servility of his usual bearing.[23]

The last moments of lucidity are, nevertheless, caught up in "suffering, Oedipus and the Greeks."[24] "When the power to write coherently had left him," Butler further notes, "Hölderlin went on filling sheets upon sheets of paper with letters to Diotima […] He also spoke at times an unintelligible mixture of German, Latin and Greek."[25] This insanity has little to do with Dionysus. "I don't understand a word of that! It's Kamalatta language!",[26] Hölderlin retorted once after reading a few verses of ancient Greek aloud and laughing maniacally. Because the dream of a socio-political revolution degenerates into "Pollaksch"—a nonsensical word that the mad Hölderlin often mumbles—, even the memory of the search for a language of lovers becomes too painful to bear. When a visitor accidentally speaks the forbidden name, Hölderlin cries out "that Diotima had borne him many sons and now was mad."[27] Given that the final poems whose rhymes are perversely simplistic have little to do with Greece nor the primal relation of the self (*ich*) to the other (*du*), it is perhaps not surprising that "[t]he silence which succeeded the death-rattle was filled by the obsequious babblings of Scardanelli, who rightly denied that his name was Hölderlin."[28] In the end it is a charlatan from the eighteenth century whose identity Hölderlin presumed—a bizarre, "gruesome wreck" who finally possessed "one of the greatest poets in the world".[29]

Despite his exceptional insight, Hölderlin remains unable to understand Greece, in particular Greek tragedy. We have noted that his nationalism, Christianity and *hyperabstractions* alienate the *Dionysiac chronotope* and *language*, as when the poet unconsciously imagines that the Greeks and Germans are uniquely related to one another (13). The absorption of tragedy into Hölderlin's "sublime" *hyperabstractions* recurs also when he claims in his commentary on *Oedipus the Tyrant* that,

> [t]he representation of the tragic is essentially the monstrousness of the pairing of God and man and the boundless coming together in anger [Zorn] of the powers of nature and the innermost heart of a man, is grasped in the catharsis of that boundless union through boundless separation.[30]

As we have seen, in contrast to such *hyperabstract* concepts, tragedy (and the tragic) is the opening out of the socio-political power of mystery-cult to conquer the tyrant of money and his unhinged visual culture (2–4). This is something that because of his unconscious need to force himself onto the tragic play—as when he invents

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[23] Ibid. 237.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid. 238.

[29] Ibid.

[30] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 856.

verses in his translation of *Antigone*—,[31] Hölderlin is never able to understand with sustained clarity. Although his interest in Greek drama remains throughout his cognizant life (5–8), never once does he show any interest in, much less translate even a fragment of, a satyr-play: the ancient dramatic nucleus that enhances the significance of tragic play (2.3, 4–3).

But the unhinging of tragedy from history serves not only Hölderlin's unconscious need for nationalism, Christianity and *hyperabstraction*, but also his need to mask his impending psychosis. This is not to say that the poet does not also turn to modern heroes in his desperate attempt to conceal his mental illness. One thinks of his poem to *Columbus*.[32] Nevertheless, it is the Greek tragic hero and heroine who remain uniquely attractive to Hölderlin's unconscious imagination. Witness the impressive closet of masks that the poet feverishly consumes to conceal his tragic destiny: "Tantalus who received more from the gods than he could digest" (14), "Oedipus, all-knowing", "wrathful", *zornig*, "spiritually ill", *geisteskrank* (9.1, 11.1), Antigone and her "highest trait [of] holy madness" and "wrathful", *zornig*, (daughter-like-father) "self-knowing" (14), the insane king-tyrant Lykourgos and his perversely "luxuriant rage", *Zorn* (V 998; 11.1), and even Hölderlin himself: the tragic German hero who "can say with confidence that" he has "been struck by Apollo" (14), and finally Aias and his "innate wrath", *Zorn* (V 39–40; 9.2, 11.2)—still another Greek tragic hero who, in succumbing to "an illness" (V 27) of divine origin, wanders "outside of himself"[33] (V 40) into horrific ecstasy (11.2, 9.2).

But to see Hölderlin's unconscious desire to repress his impending spiritual dismemberment with a romance of Hellenic masks is also to see beyond these delusional, if scintillating, surfaces. One of the clearest symptoms shows up in regard to the poet's obsessive nature. Hölderlin who wilfully imagines a new "fixed […] navel/Of earth" (V 16–17) about which a planetary population of over 1 billion should—somehow?—coalesce (9.2, 12.1) does not hesitate to radically shift the spirit of his love away from the self and onto the other. "What is it," (V 1) he asks in *The Only One*,

> That
> Binds me to the ancient
> Sacred coasts, that I love them still more
> Than my *Vaterland*?[34] (V 1–4)

Self-annihilation is of course the consequence of unlimited self-hatred. Whereas Hyperion criticises "the Germans" as "[b]arbarians from time immemorial, they have become more barbaric through industry and science and even through religion," the late Hölderlin, despite Friedrich Schlegel's celebration of Goethe's

[31] See verses 857-858: "she turned to a wasteland", *Ich habe gehört, der Wüste gleich sei worden*, and "so full of life," *Die Lebensreiche*, which do not appear in Sophocles' original play.

[32] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 408-13.

[33] Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe, Bd. 2, Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen, Schmidt 780.

[34] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 347.

Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and Johann Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, continues to gnash his teeth on "the narrow restraints" of his "child-like culture".[35]

Hölderlin's self-murder kindles his obsession with death. *The Dying Fatherland* and the tragic *Oedipus at Kolonus* who wilfully embraces his finitude (12.1) continue in the poet's reflexive commentary, for instance, in his notes on *Antigone* where tragedy is understood as a representation "of the god who is present in the shape of death." (9.1) One recalls also the *Todeslust* to which the poet almost gives into in *Memento*: the third strophe when he dreams of how, "sweet/It would be to sleep among the shadows." (V 28–29; 9.2)

Destruction of the self leads to the destruction of the other. Hölderlin's spasms of love for that which he "love[s…] still more/Than [his] *Vaterland*" conclude in tyranny. As if following his teacher Klopstock whose *Vingolf* from 1767 reminds us that the German resurrection of Greece witnesses finally the *germanification* of the Greek language, that is, the submission of ancient Greece to modern Germany (9.2), Hölderlin writes in his commentary on Sophocles' *Antigone* that "the Greek style of imagination and poetic forms are more subordinate than those that are patriotic."[36] When one considers his retrieval of the "wrath", *Zorn*, of Tantalus, Oedipus, Antigone, Lykourgos and Aias, it is clear that Hölderlin's speech "of a spiritual violence of time",[37] which he calls the "patriotic reversal" (9.1), there is no lack of conquering violence toward the other.

Attempts to describe the poet's madness have been made. But these descriptions remain vague and are themselves historically unhinged—and thus suggest their own forms of insanity. One of the most famous attempts is that of of Karl Jaspers who declares romantically that Hölderlin is the only schizophrenic who is also a great poet.[38] Many take up Hölderlin's *hyperabstractions* of Greece and Christendom (as if they were real) and gesture to a synthesis of a rationalised Christianity and Pagan polytheism and the impossibility of recovering the latter on the basis of the former. For William Desmond,

> Hölderlin is shattered in the tension between Greek paganism and Christianity in the tremendous effort to wed together in a perhaps impossible marriage the figures of Christ and Dionysus.[39]

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[35] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Schmidt, Bd. 3, *Die Briefe, Briefe an Hölderlin, Dokumente* Schmidt 470. "Es ist eine Freude, sich dem Leser zu opfern, und sich mit ihm in die engen Schranken unserer noch kinderähnlichen Kultur zu begeben." Hölderlin goes on to note "[t]he prophecy of the *Messias* and a few odes" by Klopstock as an "exception". Here it should be noted that for some Hölderlin is referring not only to German culture, but humanity in general.

[36] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 918.

[37] Ibid. 919-20.

[38] See K. Jaspers, *Strindberg und van Gogh: Versuch einer pathographischen Analyse unter verfleichender Heranziehung von Schwedenborg und Hölderlin* (Bern: E. Bircher, 1922).

[39] W. Desmond, *Art and the Absolute: A Study of Hegel's Aesthetics* (New York, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986) 109.

But such critics fail to identify the deeper, more powerful gesture to Hellenic earth and community that resides at the heart of Hölderlin's poetry, much less the emergence of money and its visual culture against which this exceptional poetic project struggles (7–11).[40] The critics of Hölderlin's madness are thus unable to evaluate what is lost and how this loss occurs.

To conclude this Coda I suggest a new understanding of Hölderlin's insanity and its significance for his poetry. Although inspiring in its potential liberation from Christianity, the French "cleansing of the Rhine" (9.1) opens up a vacuum in the European soul. The danger that such an absence presents during the emergence of industrialisation and a rapidly changing world for the youthful Swabian who grows up without a father and in a German society without a centre (9.2) is clear. Nevertheless, the poet's response to his personal and socio-political crisis, to explore other cultures beyond his own immediate space and time—such as ancient Greece and its epiphany of a cosmic (vertical) axis of earth and community—offers an exceptionally attractive alternative.

But Hölderlin's Christian mother who the poet loves and therefore to whom he can never reveal his secret love of a Hellenised married woman (Diotima) and a non-Christian Greek god (Dionysus) makes his search for an authentic language of earth and community impossible. The inability to reconcile the two worlds of Greece and Christianity is not the cause, but the catalyst of a psychosis that is perhaps biologically present long before its psychic outbreak. The discovery of an authentic *Fatherland* and *mother tongue*, for which Hölderlin desperately struggles—one thinks of Haemon accusing his evil father of not knowing god's sacred name[41]—doubtlessly would have helped to heal the psychic wounds that the poet had suffered during childhood.

We have mentioned the epiphany of Hölderlin's *Dionysiac language*—both spoken and written—from the darkness of the earth, be it "the eternal living unwritten wilderness and kingdom of the dead" in *Antigone* (9.1) or "the silent page" (V 8) that "[f]ollows the fruit, like the dark leaf/Of the meadow" (V 5–8; 13). Given that the origin of language is also the origin of memory, when we speak of the source of the word, we are speaking simultaneously of that which sustains the paradox of identity. One thinks of *Mnemosyne* which Hölderlin composes soon after *Memento* and whose name is caught up in the mystic "Memento", *Mnamosúnas*, of the future "time when one shall die".[42] As the poet may well have noted during his translation of *Bacchae*, "memory", *mneía*[43] (V 46), is linked to the remembrance of a subter-

[40] Although the term *Axial Age* in fact comes from Jaspers, this concept, in his hands, remains abstract and superficial. Because Jaspers cannot explain where this time comes from he is unable to clarify its meaning.

[41] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 915.

[42] Gold leaf from Hipponion. Cf. Marcovich, *"The Gold Leaf from Hipponion"*, Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik (23) 221.

[43] Euripides, *Bacchae*, in *Euripides fabulae*, ed. J. Diggle, vol. 3, *Helena, Phoenissae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia, Avlidensis, Rhesus* 293.

ranean Dionysian paradise where descending souls come upon a spring and utter secret sayings:

> I am a son of the Heavy (Earth) and the starry Sky

and walk upon the path upon which "other mystics and holy initiates" walk.[44]

But whatever solace an authentic language of earth and community could offer the desolate Hölderlin is lost. The liberating personal and socio-political power of a cosmic (vertical) axis rooted in an authentic *mother-tongue* and *Fatherland* yields "in the eleventh hour" when the poet "transfer[s] his allegiance from the gods of Greece returning in all their ancient glory to the son of man".[45] The natural Dionysian letter is eclipsed by the unnatural "fixed letter" (V 225) of the bible (13.3). One thinks also of the *Eucharist* of *Patmos* that absorbs the Dionysian *Memento* of wine into an abstract and uprooted Christian universe (13.3–13.4).

When Hölderlin trembles before the Hellenic heroes and heroines he ritually invokes, as when he confesses in *Germania*,

> I fear it, for deadly it is,
> And scarcely permitted to wake the dead[46] (V 15–16)

it is not the eerie ghosts of Greek heroes and heroines that the poet fears, nor even the Christian "shame"[47] (V 62) that haunts his love of Dionysian Greece, but instead his own crumbling spirit. Whereas Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides harness the emotional ambivalence unique to mystery-cult to absorb the opposing voices of the money-tyrant and Dionysian person into one, the concentrated ambivalence of the "sad-happy"[48] (V 14) poet shades into modern psychosis. One thinks of *The Only One*, of which we have *three* versions. One thinks also of the *tragic vowels* that are transformed into the *joyful vowels* of earth and community—the "Weh! Weh! Weh! Weh!" (V 1330) and "o mir! o mir!" (V 1338; 11.1) of *Oedipus the Tyrant*—that become the unhinged "Weh mir!" (V 68) of the *sublime*: "The warning song" (V 73) of modern mental illness.

> "His spirit", Butler concludes,
> when called upon to renounce the dream by which it lived, renounced the dream and died. Not suddenly, but after a long-drawn-out agony, vehement paroxysms gradually subsiding into hopeless apathy.[49]

Not the combing of Greece and Christianity, but instead the absent father and mother who cruelly refused to visit her son while he is indisposed—an evil woman who in swindling her kin out of his inheritance[50] reminds us of the money-tyrants against

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[44] Gold leaf from Hipponion. Cf. Marcovich, *"The Gold Leaf from Hipponion"*, Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik (23) 221-22.

[45] Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* 238.

[46] Ibid. 334.

[47] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke*, Beissner, vol. 2, *Gedichte nach 1800* 163.

[48] Ibid. 242.

[49] Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* 238.

[50] See P. Bertaux, *Friedrich Hölderlin* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1978).

which Hölderlin could no longer struggle—are to blame. For it is for them that he unconsciously tyrannises the Greek “Vater Äther!” (V 65) with the German “Vater! heiter!”[51] (V 69), he who only with “[d]ifficulty leaves/[…] the origin”[52] (V 18–19), and thus transforms the ancient “melancholy peace, the idiocy, the pathetic, naïve mistake of a violent man”,[53] his “foolish and wild search”[54] into that of a modern “false priest” (V 73). Being forced to serve an eternally absent father and tyrannical mother ‚Hölderlin’s retrieval of Dionysus’ *holy madness* (6.1) can only become unholy. Despite its socio-political power, *Dionysian language*, like the word of “runners” who have lost their “breath”,[55] disappears. One thinks also of “the names” (V 163) that have faded and become faint “[l]ike morning air”[56] (V 163).

[51] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 1, *Gedichte*, Schmidt 288.

[52] Ibid. 324-25.

[53] *Hölderlin, Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, Bd. 2, *Hyperion, Empedokles, Aufsätze, Übersetzungen*, Schmidt 852.

[54] Ibid. 853.

[55] Ibid. 920.

[56] Hölderlin*, Sämtliche Werke*, Beissner, vol. 2, *Gedichte nach 1800* 182.

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