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Hölderlin's Skeptical Horizon:
Negation and the Renunciation of Dialectical Production in Hyperion

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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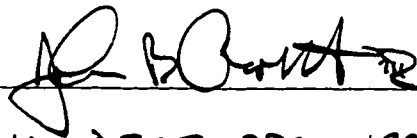
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Abstract

Hölderlin's Skeptical Horizon:
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by John B Crosetto III

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The dissertation interprets Hölderlin's novel as a response to questions about subjectivity and "Grundsätze" raised within the philosophical circle at Jena. The failure of Reinhold's "Elementarphilosophie," the initial publication of Niethammer's "Philosophisches Journal," and Fichte's early lectures on the "Wissenschaftslehre" establish the historical context in which Hölderlin developed his ideas about consciousness. In order to frame the analysis of Hyperion, I also examine Hölderlin's reception of the pantheism debate between Jacobi and Mendelssohn as well as the relation of his early theoretical texts to post-Kantian skepticism.

As a phenomenology of consciousness the novel's reflexive structure is explained by its content. Hyperion's three principal relationships delineate a progressive understanding of the subject's ability to grasp absolutes. Adamas, his mentor, witnesses Hyperion come out of his childhood harmony with nature into self-awareness. Alabanda, his friend and "Gegner," introduces Hyperion to violent opposition. Diotima, his lover, reacquaints him with the possibility of harmonious relation. Though triadic structures like this one suggest ideological closure, Hyperion remains skeptical towards such

products of dialectical thought to the end. Only the form in which Hyperion draws his conclusions changes; cynical and dogmatic judgments are replaced by an optimistic statement of paradox (an Aristotelian riddle or impossible combination of words).

Within the context of Hölderlin's modern reception as it is influenced by Heidegger, the final chapter examines how the function of the negative differs in logic and language. Specifically, it looks at the conditions under which a fundamental principle of logic, the principle of contradiction, has transformed from a crucible for truth to a tool for making statements that neither affirm nor deny truth. The concept of negation unifies the three areas of the dissertation: the concern in Jena for the (im)possibility of a first principle of philosophy, the form of Hyperion as a representation of the individual's (in)ability to conceive ideal wholes, and the rhetorical strategies for naming the (im)possible adopted from Heidegger by modern readers of Hölderlin. Ultimately, the dissertation proposes a negation based on faith and resignation as an alternative to Hegel's more antagonistic and hence productive idea of negativity that persists in postmodern discourse.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER I: The Approach to a First Principle of Philosophy: The Historical Context of Hölderlin's Thinking.....	14
CHAPTER II: <u>Hyperion</u> : An Overview.....	39
CHAPTER III: The Adamas Tragedy.....	47
CHAPTER IV: Violent Oppositions: Alabanda and the Traumatic Past.....	75
CHAPTER V: Diotima as Silent Partner.....	101
CHAPTER VI: Hölderlin's Theoretical Writings and Post-Kantian Skepticism.....	144
CHAPTER VII: Volume Two: <u>Hyperion</u> 's Undoing.....	191
CHAPTER VIII: Dialectic and Negativity: German Roots--French Scions.....	221
CONCLUSION.....	282
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	288
APPENDIX A: "Abendphantasie".....	303
APPENDIX B: "Des Morgens".....	304

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INTRODUCTION

Die Wissenschaft aber, deren Endabsicht mit allen ihren Zurüstungen eigentlich nur auf die Auflösung derselben gerichtet ist, heißt *Metaphysik*, deren Verfahren im Anfange *dogmatisch* ist, d.i. ohne vorhergehende Prüfung des Vermögens oder Unvermögens der Vernunft zu einer so großen Unternehmung zuversichtlich die Ausführung übernimmt.
(Kritik der reinen Vernunft, B 6)

Rousseau appears to have said it all: “I cannot say everything at once.”¹ There is perhaps no better way to describe the subject and methodology of this dissertation, for it reads Hölderlin’s Hyperion as an argument for the individual’s inability to express unity in any given moment. The ineffable commonly defines the Romantic experience, orienting the errant striving of the melancholic poet. For critics who read him romantically, the ideal of “All-Einheit” describes the final principle and ultimate goal Hölderlin pursues with his poetry.² Others do not attribute such idealism to him. Henrich, reading Hölderlin, says that “All-Einheit” describes only the procedure of thinking not an actual object of thought (Grund im Bewußtsein, 195). We will begin, then, dogmatically as Kant suggests, acknowledging his faith in reason that rises up from God knows where to guide his metaphysical pursuit. Hyperion is a phenomenology of consciousness. As a phenomenology, its form is essential to its content. The novel’s letters describe the nature of subjectivity in a process of self-reflection. Hyperion, the subject of the novel, tells the story of how he comes to know that what can be said about life, the universe, and everything can only unfold over time. His education puts what he knows in the past; how he knows remains in a constantly unfolding present. His education thus takes the form of a renunciation of knowledge as an object available immediately in a text. For this reason, his ultimate conclusion takes the form of a riddle:

¹ From his Confessions: “Je ne puis tout dire à la fois.”

² See, for example, Unger’s Hölderlin’s Major Poetry: the Dialectics of Unity. Several critics give the names “Natur” and “Schönheit” to Hölderlin’s “All-Einheit.” For an excellent study of the relation between beauty and language, see Wegenast’s, “Markstein Spinoza: Schönheit als ‘Nahme deß, das Eins ist und Alles.’”

“Es scheiden und kehren im Herzen die Adern und einiges, ewiges, glühendes leben ist Alles. So dacht’ ich. Nächstens mehr” (I, 760, 31-33).³ The final words of Hyperion draw an horizon where earth and heaven--the mortal particular and the eternal universal, the past and the present--only appear to meet.

We recognize a Romantic dialectic in the horizon drawn by Hölderlin’s Hyperion.⁴ Though the author is hardly considered to be a paradigmatic Romantic, the novel’s principal themes, subjectivity and striving toward the unattainable ideal, are Romanticism’s most salient features. The Romantic formulations of the relation between the subject and the ideal owe much to Fichte’s idealism, which incorporates the particular subject (“Ich”) together with its negation (“Nicht-Ich”) into a universal absolute. Furthermore, Fichte’s integration of striving into a notion of unity shifted the foundation of aesthetics from neoclassical principles of perfection to Romantic ideas of perfectibility.⁵ Years later, in his lectures on dramatic art and literature, A.W. Schlegel uses the distinction between perfection and perfectibility to divide the ancients from the moderns (i.e. Romantics). Striving and perfectibility introduce both a dynamic force and concomitant negative space into the aesthetic ideal. Ideal unity, therefore, is no longer a

³ Unless otherwise noted, quotations from Hölderlin’s works are taken from the Hanser edition and cited by volume number, page number, and line number.

⁴ Ryan, for example, sees a form of Romantic dialectic in Hyperion that is not apparent in Goethe’s Wilhelm Meister: “Ausgespart bleibt aber die Reflexion auf das Verhältnis des ‘Idealen’ zum ‘Realen’, sowie auf deren Vermittlung in der dichterischen Sprache: es fehlt noch der bewußte Bezug auf jenen transzendentalen Ansatz, der den ‘romantischen’ Roman kennzeichnet. Es scheint uns, daß ‘Hyperion’ diesen Schritt vollzieht” (“Hölderlins ‘Hyperion’: Ein ‘romantischer’ Roman?,” 212).

⁵ On Fichte’s integration of striving into an absolute unity, see section 11 of the Wissenschaftslehre (nova methodo) (1796/99), especially page 108 (IV/2). See also the Wissenschaftslehre (1794/95), page 286 (I).

totality, it is totalizing.⁶ Henrich observes that Kant proposed a theory of “synthetische Einheit” (synthetic unity), but it was Fichte’s idealism that embodied a theory of “Einheit von Gegensätzen” (unity of opposites).⁷ During the time he was working on Hyperion, Hölderlin wrote to Hegel that Fichte’s absolute subject attempted to give substance to the unthinkable. It is, therefore, with caution that we should read the Romantic aspects of Hölderlin, for his ideal is not that of idealism.

There is a question whether we may interpret Hyperion in such a philosophical context. Henrich, who has produced the single most comprehensive philosophical analysis of Hölderlin’s work, flatly states that while the key text, “Urtheil und Seyn,” is not complete, it nevertheless represents a system of thought. Hyperion, on the other hand, is complete but does not embody a system of thought.⁸ I consider Hyperion to be Hölderlin’s most complete statement of thought. His theoretical essays are fragmentary, his poems mostly thematic or occasional, and his Empedokles unfinished. Furthermore, there is ample historical precedent to conclude that Hyperion was conceived as a philosophical novel. Wieland’s Agathon, from which Hölderlin’s work borrows a great deal, represents an early model of the philosophical novel (Beck, 322). Jacobi’s Allwill of 1792 lies closer still to Hyperion in form and philosophical intent. Hölderlin’s

⁶ The synthetic and self-contained nature of Kant’s more classical idea of unity is evident in his definition of qualitative perfection: “Endlich drittens *Vollkommenheit*, die darin besteht, daß umgekehrt diese Vielheit zusammen auf die Einheit des Begriffes zurückführt, und zu diesem und keinem anderen völlig zusammenstimmt, welches man die *qualitative Vollständigkeit* (Totalität) nennen kann” (KrV, B 114).

⁷ Fichte, in fact, is indebted to Maimon, who speaks of a unity in opposition in his Versuch über die Transcendentalphilosophie, which was published four years before the Wissenschaftslehre. See especially section six, entitled “Einerleiheit, Verschiedenheit, Gegensatzung, Realität, Negation, logisch und transcendental” (Werke II, 110ff).

⁸ Henrich certainly doesn’t ignore Hyperion; he uses it to support his analysis of “Urtheil und Seyn.” I simply reverse the roles and use “Urtheil und Seyn” to support an analysis of Hyperion.

decision to construct Hyperion as a series of letters also suggests its philosophical purpose. In a letter to Niethammer of February, 1794, Hölderlin wrote of a discussion with Schelling in which they agreed that the epistolary style (“Briefform”) was the best suited to philosophical writing. Following Schiller’s example, Hölderlin attempted to write such a philosophical tract, which was to be entitled “Neue ästhetische Briefe.” It is, therefore, understandable that he would express a coherent system of philosophical thought in the form of an epistolary novel.

Not only does Hölderlin’s text suggest in itself that it should be read as a treatise, the context to which it belongs does as well. My first chapter describes the historical circumstances in which Hölderlin developed his system of thought. At the time Hölderlin was receiving his education, the central issue at the philosophical center of Germany, Jena, was the possibility of a fundamental first principle. Kant had cleared the air by announcing the criteria by which philosophy could be considered a science (KrV, B 5), but he left a big hole. He called for *a priori* “Grundsätze” as the basis for synthetic *a priori* judgments, but he didn’t offer one—as he said himself, his work is not a system, but a critique. The debate over the possibility of a first principle revolves around the proper way in which to conceive the negative space left by Kant. Hölderlin’s contribution to the debate may be read in Hyperion, which represents a study of the negations that give rise to consciousness.

The second, third, and fourth chapters interpret the first of Hyperion’s two volumes as a dialectical study of consciousness and negation. For Hölderlin, the subject

is only thinkable in relation to what it is not. In the first half of his phenomenology of the subject, the narrator observes himself through a three part progression. After the innocence of childhood is lost (an unselfconscious unity with nature), the narrated Hyperion first becomes aware of himself as a self in the face of his mentor, Adamas. In Alabanda he confronts the force of opposition and thus learns the nature of the self in contention with that which it is not. Finally, finding a mirror of his soul in Diotima, Hyperion realizes dialectical or self-reflective harmony with that which stands opposite him. The first volume of Hyperion gives us the positive affirmation of subjectivity, the negative affirmation of subjectivity, and the harmonious union with the specular other who both is and is not identical with the subject. But, this is only half the story. Volume one depicts consciousness not as an entity in and of itself but as a phenomenon of experience. The separation or caesura between subject and object as a necessary condition for experience demands a skeptical approach, that is, one that continually analyzes the products of dialectical thought. Diotima's unthinkable status as both an ideal and a real object of experience demands, in turn, the undoing of the dialectic that generates the thought of specular union. Hölderlin's final word on the negative will not come until the end of volume two.

In chapter six, I relate Hölderlin's theoretical texts to post-Kantian skepticism in order to contextualize the analysis of volume two undertaken in chapter seven. Juxtaposed with the arguments made by Salomon Maimon, Hölderlin's theoretical texts reveal a skeptical use of negation distinct from that of idealistic systems. In Kant's

system, negation enables human knowledge. Kant distinguishes between logical and transcendental negation to argue that limited objects of reality are determined only by means of the negation of an unlimited reality. This claim is essential to his explication of the formation of concepts and thus to his fundamental axiom of epistemology, which asserts that knowledge occurs solely in the combination of intuitions and concepts. Hölderlin's "Urtheil und Seyn," judged by Henrich to be the key document to his thinking, uses a version of Kant's theory of negation to argue for a fundamental ontology beyond possible knowledge. Furthermore, the argument in this fragmentary essay critiques Fichte's formulation of the absolute subject ("Absolutes Ich") as unable to constitute a final principle of philosophy precisely because it pretends to manifest that which by its own definition must remain absent. Idealism, like Hölderlin's own phenomenological approach, describes the fact of existence in terms of consciousness. For Fichte, markers of the negative such as the "Nicht-Ich" as well as forces of the negative such as striving constitute part of the reality described by his system. Hölderlin, however, refuses to substantiate the negative by including it *within* the system for describing consciousness. For him, as for Kant, the negative can serve only an epistemological function, not an ontological one.

Chapter seven explicates the undoing in volume two of the ideal dialectic constructed by volume one. Manifesting the basic structure of "Urtheil und Seyn," volume two draws a line between ontology and epistemology, reminding us that the dialectical conception of an ideal, especially one that incorporates the negative,

mistakenly assumes the existence of the ideal as a real object. Hölderlin represents the misconception with the subject's relation to time. In volume two, Hyperion is thrown out of sync with natural time as a result of his attempt to realize his vision of the ideal "Freistaat." His desire to control time and guide Greece's destiny results in his being thrown out of a natural historical process, which, ironically, ultimately defines his *experience* of history as the series of loss and rupture. The narrating Hyperion sees that he must indeed lose all to find all: "Frägst du, wie mir gewesen sei um diese Zeit? Wie einem, der alles verloren hat, um alles zu gewinnen" (I, 668, 31-32). Hyperion's clearest vision, his crucial moment of understanding, is seeing the real as a paradox realized over time. The attempt to realize the ideal in any given moment betrays a materialism that ultimately destroys the ideal at the same time that it produces history. Volume two explains in this way how the novel was made. The attempt to produce the ideal for his reader, Bellarmin, eradicates the concept of a dialectically perfected ideal at the same time that it produces an autobiography.

In the end, Hyperion tells us to be wary of conclusions. Following this advice, chapter eight examines the conclusions drawn from Hölderlin by his (post)modern readers. In keeping with the historical precedent of Jena (Hölderlin's circle), specific attention is given to the logic and language of the negative. The function of the negative in Hölderlin's time is compared to the specific use of the negative inherited from Heidegger by the postmodernists. The logical function of the negative and binary logic in general is described by the principle of contradiction. The principle of contradiction is

arguably the primary foundation for the philosophy of the Enlightenment; it is the proving ground of Enlightenment thinking. Mendelssohn relies on it in his defense of reason against Jacobi, and Kant upheld it in his explanation of the antinomies. Aristotle puts it as follows: “Nothing can both be and not be at the same time in the same respect.”⁹ Being and time are clearly central ideas to the principle of contradiction. Interestingly enough, Heidegger’s readings of Hölderlin introduce a language counter to the logic of the principle of contradiction. He offers poetic conclusions in Schlegel’s sense: “Wo die Philosophie aufhört muß die Poesie anfangen...Man soll der Philosophie zum Beispiel nicht bloß die Unphilosophie, sondern die Poesie entgegensetzen” (Ideen, #48). Heidegger’s turn to poetic philosophy has inspired more than a generation of critics to draw ‘non-binary’ conclusions from Hölderlin.

Heidegger distinguished “Dichtung,” the primordial naming, from “Poesie,” the art of making verses. The poet names the gods and all things in which they are (Wesen der Dichtung, 41). The discussion of Blanchot and the modern readers of Hölderlin in chapter eight shows the legacy of Romanticism (and the Romantic aspects of Hölderlin) to be the naming of the negative, or to put it in words closer to Derrida, the mimicking of the movement of desire—an endeavor that supposedly shifts the focus of philosophy from the *what* to the *how*. Out of this central concern arises a cluster of postmodern issues,

⁹ Kant phrases the same principle from the epistemological perspective in the forms of consciousness dictated by his Copernican turn: “Nur in der Zeit können beide kontradiktorischentgegengesetzte Bestimmungen in einem Dinge, nämlich *nach einander*, anzutreffen sein” (KrV, B 48-B 49). Time for Kant is the form of inner intuition, the manner in which the subject represents itself to itself (KrV, B 54). Hölderlin shows himself to be a student of Kant’s metaphysics when he represents Hyperion’s falling out of time as the moment when his logic breaks down, causing him to believe that he can realize his vision of the ideal. Regaining his rhythm, Hyperion is reunited with his real (i.e. historical) self.

tropes, and styles: paradox, irony, monstrous totalization,¹⁰ the line between philosophy and literature, and the dissolution of the subject.¹¹ The naming of the negative has generated a critical method despite the many disclaimers of such an intention.

'Postmodern critical method' celebrates an anti-ideal (if such a thing could exist outside binary logic) in the dynamic form of "deconstructions," "disseminations," "disjunctions" ("caesuras"), "de-arborizations," and any number of other mechanisms designed to generate a variety of asymmetries.¹²

Postmodern resistance to binary logic and the principle of contradiction cannot help but be seen in relation to Kant's idea of dialectic and the function of the negative. Kant introduces the notion of dialectic in the second part of the *Transcendental Doctrine of the Elements, Transcendental Logic*. The term is introduced in opposition to 'analytic,' the logic of truth. He refers to the ancient use of the term as the 'logic of illusion' ("Logik des Scheins") and describes it as the mere appearance of truth 'by the device of imitating the methodical thoroughness which logic prescribes.' Dialectic, in the ancient sense, is empty.¹³ Kant goes on to say that general logic treated as an organon

¹⁰ The term is derived from Freeman's essay, "*Frankenstein with Kant: A Theory of Monstrosity, or the Monstrosity of Theory*."

¹¹ These last two topics are the central issues for Lacoue-Labarthe's book, *The Subject of Philosophy*.

¹² Blanchot provides one example of 'anti-idealization'. In "La parole 'sacrée' de Hölderlin" he interprets Heidegger to arrive at the claim that silence is the true means of communicating the Sacred: "Le silence est la seule vraie communication, il est le langage authentique" (128). Blanchot notes that for Heidegger silence 'could lead the Sacred to speech without rupture.' He then alters Heidegger's idea of silence as an approach to an idea of silence as a 'real' or 'authentic' means of communication. In this way, he ascribes ideal status to an essentially negative entity.

¹³ Henrich, speaking of dialectic before Hegel, puts another way: "Daraus folgert man dann aber leicht, daß die Dialektik ein positives Resultat nicht haben kann" ("Substantivierte und doppelte Negation," 481). He goes on to point out that Hegel was the first to give dialectical negation a substantive function whereby it operates independently of that which it negates (482).

(i.e. a tool for acquiring knowledge) is always the logic of illusion (i.e. dialectical). Kant, therefore, turns dialectic back on itself to make it a ‘critique of dialectical illusion.’ In this way, the Kantian dialectic functions negatively, allowing for no epistemological profit. Logic is not supposed to give any knowledge of objects, it only lays down the formal conditions for understanding them. When logic tries to become an instrument for gaining knowledge of objects (an organon) it is dialectical (in the ancient sense of the word)—hence Kant’s reformulation of dialectic as a critique of the logic of illusion. It is no wonder that Derrida’s doctoral work focused on Kant, for his dialectic is also deconstructive. And what has become of negation? How can one resist a method that resists itself? It is my argument that Hölderlin proposes a response to such dialectics in his Hyperion by making an argument for a peculiar form of skepticism that renounces the products of dialectics and its deconstruction.

Hölderlin’s skepticism is designed to prevent one from making an ontology of one’s epistemology. To put it another way, his skepticism warns us against a spiritual or metaphysical materialism. Maimon is the post-Kantian skeptic who had the most influence on the thinkers of Hölderlin’s generation. As an epigraph for his Versuch einer neuen Logik des Denkens he used the following quote from Shaftsbury:

You know too that in the *academick* philosophy, I am to present you with, there is a certain way of Questioning and Doubting which no-way suites the Genius of our Age. Man love to take party instantly. They can’t bear being kept in suspence, the Examination torment’s em, they want to be rid

of it upon the easiest terms. 'Tis as if men fancy'd themselves drowning whenever they dare trust to the current of Reason. They seem hurrying away, they know not whither, and are ready to catch at the first twig. There they chuse afterwards to hang, tho ever so insecurely, rather than trust their strength to bear them above water. He who has got hold of an Hypthesis how flight is satisfy'd. He can presently answer every Objection, and with a few Terms of Art give Account of every thing without trouble. (Werke V, 2)¹⁴

The quote celebrates a skeptical method that puts faith in reason above all else. The same sentiment may be found in the "Vorrede" to Hyperion where the author advises the reader to suspend judgment rather than simply look for answers in the head or heart. For Hölderlin, the skeptical method is the proper approach for reading a phenomenology of consciousness. Hölderlin and Maimon, both students of Kant, show a faith in reason to sustain dialogue beyond its conclusions. Idealizations and dogma mark a failure of reason. To embrace such a failure, even when concluding that the ideal is impossible, is to treat reason as if it were productive of some *thing* or that knowledge indicates some sort of actual or material possession that may be exchanged. Kant, Maimon, and Hölderlin all warn against making an ontology of epistemology, against turning reason into a machine for producing knowledge, and even against rejecting reason, for that is

¹⁴ The passage comes from Shaftsbury's Characteristiks II. pg. 124. The full title of Maimon's work, Versuch einer neuen Logik oder Theorie des Denkens: Nebst angehängten Briefen des Philaletes an Aenesidemus (1794), shows his indebtedness to G.E. Schulze's critique of Reinhold and Kant, Aenesidemus.

simply negative ontology.¹⁵ Skepticism itself cannot succumb to its own reification—this presents the most challenging horizon for Hölderlin. A leap of faith in the form of an optimistic resignation to loss and the unknown orients Hyperion to this horizon.

¹⁵ As one scholar aptly put it: “Someone once observed that there’s a hole in the donut, and now everyone’s trying to sell donut holes.”

CHAPTER I:
THE APPROACH TO A FIRST PRINCIPLE OF PHILOSOPHY:
THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF HÖLDERLIN'S THINKING

In Schwaben trifft ihr auch wahrhaft kluge und erfahrene Männer unter den Layen; und ihr mögt nun wählen, welchen Zweig menschlicher Kenntnisse ihr wollt: so wird es euch nicht an den besten Lehrern und Rathgebern fehlen.

Novalis, Heinrich von Ofterdingen

Given that Hölderlin speaks so frequently of an absolute, it would be easy to identify him as an early representative of German idealism.¹⁶ This, however, is not the case. Idealism argues that reality is not independent from the mental operations that characterize and explain it. But, Hölderlin maintains an ontological foundation, “Sein,” outside the subject-object split of consciousness. An examination of the paths to his philosophical thinking reveals the ways in which his thought differs from that of Fichte with regard to some of the basic tenets of idealism. A central concern generating the idealist response was how to justify unity when the state of consciousness is fragmented. In other words, how does one explain the existence of a unity beyond difference in a language and system of thought based on difference. This is the familiar paradoxical task of describing, and hence limiting, the unlimited. Kant locates this conundrum in the cognitive ability of the subject and offers “Urteilkraft” as a possible solution. Jacobi roots his exegesis in “Sein” and has recourse to “Gefühl” or “Glaube.” Between and beyond these poles, idealism finds many paths and landmarks. In broader terms, the philosophical discourse in Jena at the end of the eighteenth century revolves around the proper perspective between epistemology and ontology. Subjectivity and the problematic

¹⁶ Beiser, for example, groups Hölderlin together with Hegel as an absolute idealist (*The Fate of Reason*, 325). Also, when it comes an analysis of Hölderlin’s theoretical endeavors, Ryan puts him in the shadow of Fichte. See his book *Hölderlin’s ‘Hyperion’: Exzentrische Bahn und Dichterberuf*. Hamlin’s assertion that self-consciousness in *Hyperion* is represented by the idea of “intellektuelle Anschauung” is by his own admission a reading of Hölderlin through Fichte and Schelling. See his essay “The Poetics of Self-consciousness in European Romanticism.” Cassirer links Hölderlin to Fichte and Schelling’s idealism, but notes his hesitation to make such a philosophy his own: “Dennoch hat er sich dieser Bewegung, so mächtig sie ihn ergriff und bestimmte, niemals völlig rückhaltlos und unbedingt zu eigen gegeben” (“Hölderlin und der deutsche Idealismus,” 80).

relation to the transcendent object remains the primary arena, but the disputed limit is drawn and redrawn, here around the subject, there around the object. Understood in this context, it is evident why Hölderlin separates himself from the idealists by saying to Hegel that Fichte merely substitutes the “Absolutes-Ich” for Spinoza’s ‘substance’ (letter to Hegel, January 26, 1795). Fichte’s “Ich” is simply an ontological foundation disguised as an epistemological theory of the self-conscious subject. Over the course of the next few chapters, I argue that what has been read as Hölderlin’s idealism is better described as a phenomenologically based skepticism.

In 1796, when Friedrich Schlegel said, “Es giebt keine *Grundsätze*, die allgemein zweckmäßige Begleiter und Führer zur Wahrheit wären,” (518) he was summarizing the philosophical discourse of the previous few years in a manner not unlike that of his brother, whose later lectures on aesthetics summarized and defined the Romantic. His dogmatic assertion draws its negative conclusion from an earlier wave of skepticism. In January of 1795, almost two years after becoming a professor of philosophy at Jena, Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer announced the forthcoming publication of his Philosophisches Journal einer Gesellschaft Teutscher Gelehrten and therewith opened the forum for a discussion of the possibility of a first principle of philosophy:

Seitdem scheint die Ueberzeugung allmählich mehr Eingang gewonnen zu haben, daß nun, um dem Ganzen des Menschlichen Wissens die so lange vergebens gesuchte Einheit und Festigkeit zu sichern, nichts weiter erforderlich sey, als durch eine bestimmtere Entwicklung und engere

Verknüpfung der einzelnen Theile dem Systeme Zusammenhang und Haltung von innen zu geben das von außen auf einem unerschütterlichen Grunde stehe. (75)

In his “Vorbericht” to the first issue of his philosophical journal, Niethammer makes clear that the question of the possibility of a first principle of philosophy, answered with such conviction by Schlegel, is directed at philosophical method. That philosophy must be a “Wissenschaft” is agreed upon by both friends and foes of the critical approach.

What Niethammer proposes for discussion is the “Wissenschaft der Wissenschaft”:

Wir wissen also wenigstens soviel gewiß, daß wir auf dem richtigen Wege zu jenem Ziele [Philosophie als Wissenschaft] sind; und wenn die bisherigen Versuche auf diesem Wege uns dem Ziele noch nicht näher gebracht haben, so kann dies unserm Muth nicht niederschlagen, sondern es muß uns nur um so mehr antreiben, diese Versuche fortzusetzen. (3)

In identifying the search itself as the subject of philosophy, Niethammer moves closer to a phenomenological grounding of philosophy in “einem nie erreichbaren Ziel”(4). As a bridge between the ontological and epistemological approaches, Niethammer’s perspective crystallizes the forces that worked upon Hölderlin during his philosophical maturation and orients an historical examination of the dialogue in and around the Jena circle.

As a student in the Tübinger Stift from 1788 to 1793, Hölderlin concentrated on Greek literature, theology, and Kant, and as Henrich’s research has shown, Friedrich

Jacobi, Karl Leonard Reinhold, and Niethammer mediated Hölderlin's studies in one way or another to a significant degree.¹⁷ It is hardly disputed that Kant's revolutionary philosophy dominated the period, and to be sure, all these thinkers owe a debt to the man from Königsberg. In an effort to make philosophy a science, he sought a foundation for truth more sound than that of fideistic "Schwärmer" or atheistic empiricists. Kant's metaphysics, by assuming an infinite freedom of reason and a limited capability of human understanding, necessitate a logically reflexive grounding in order to keep the system of thought free from dependence on experience. In establishing certain epistemic conditions, his Kritik der reinen Vernunft presented what might be called in broad terms a contractual philosophical method, whereby the system of thought is secured by reflexive rather than foundational principles. It is not that Kant did not provide a foundational principle; rather, he provided too many. As a result, there arose a crisis regarding the idea of a first principle or "Grundsatz" as a philosophical foundation. What ensued in the philosophical discourse after the first critique was a great deal of discussion about "Offenbarung" (e.g. Fichte's first work, Versuch einer Kritik aller Offenbarung (1792)), "Gefühl" (in Jacobi, for example), and "intellektuale Anschauung" (an idea introduced by Reinhold) as means of immediately 'experiencing' the unconditioned, absolute, or in other words, that which could serve as a monistic basis for knowledge. Reinhold and Niethammer were concerned with the search for a first principle of philosophy. The doubts regarding the success of this endeavor generated a

¹⁷ The most recent book on Hölderlin and the Jena circle, Hölderlin Texturen 2: Das 'Jenaische Project', gives an encyclopedic overview of the material analyzed by Henrich in his collection of essays

phenomenological approach that took various forms, the most famous being Hegel's. The attempts to accommodate a persistent monism to the critical method of Kant's metaphysics lie close to the heart of Hölderlin's thinking.

Jacobi's Über die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn made as big a splash at its release in 1785 as Kant's first critique of four years earlier. Jacobi's critique of Spinoza (via Lessing) seeded the philosophical discourse of the following years with the terms "immanentes Unendliches" and "Vermittlung," which identify the roots of a problematic crossing over between monistic ontology and the epistemology of the subject. Jacobi's influence on Hölderlin is evident in the fact that the terms also establish the basic structure of the argument in Hölderlin's most famous theoretical fragment, "Urtheil und Seyn" (1795). In Jacobi's essay, Lessing is identified as a Spinozistic heretic for adhering to a doctrine that demands the replacement of the infinite transcendent God with an immanent infinity. Jacobi claims that this can only lead to absurdity, and that all knowledge secured by principles leads only to contradiction. Knowledge must be founded instead on a philosophical faith. Jacobi's argument was successful in rescuing Hölderlin from a crisis of faith quite possibly the result of his study of Kant.¹⁸ In some respects, however, Jacobi's argument backfired. Hölderlin also gleaned a kind of heresy of his own from Jacobi's reformulation of Spinoza. He ultimately rejected Jacobi's idea of a personal God, but he retained the revised 'Spinozistic' idea of the "immanentes Unendliche" as "Sein" without the

Konstellationen and his book Der Grund im Bewußtsein.

¹⁸ See Hölderlin's letter to his mother of February 14th, 1791 regarding his studies of the previous year.

differentiation of “Dasein.” “Sein” functions in Hölderlin’s system like Spinoza’s *Ev και παν* by serving as a monistic ontological foundation dangerously close to pantheism. Coupled with this idea, however, is “Vermittlung” and Jacobi’s claim that all knowledge based on principles leads to discord. Mediation represents a phenomenological aspect of human cognition that puts “Sein” (or any other term expressive of the absolute) at the end of an infinite regress of principles. Each principle that comes to us must justify itself with fundamental, irrefutable evidence; as a result, we have an endless chain of principles looking to ground themselves in an “oberstem Grundsatz.” Hegel later adopts the term “Vermittlung” to describe “das Wesen endlicher Erkenntnis,” showing the final trajectory of the discourse regarding the possibility of a first principle of philosophy initiated by Jacobi to be the incorporation of epistemology into ontology as the phenomenology of experience. Hölderlin’s version of such a phenomenology, though not developed in “Urtheil und Seyn,” later appears in his novel, Hyperion.

The second edition of Jacobi’s Über die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn published in 1789 initiated a dialogue in which arose the new language of the absolute and an approach different from Kant’s. For Hölderlin, Schelling, Novalis and others, the terms “mittelbar”/“unmittelbar” and “bedingt”/“unbedingt” as words to describe modes of understanding in the relation between subject and object came into sharper focus.¹⁹ Kant speaks of “das Unbedingte”

¹⁹ Kant’s use of the terms “mittelbar” and “unmittelbar” is sparse and does not grant them the consequence of defining a mode of cognition. The Roser-Mohrs Kant-Konkordanz lists no occurrence of either word in the first or second edition of the Kritik der reinen Vernunft.

in the first edition of the Kritik der reinen Vernunft, but its function remains logical within the transcendental system. The term appears only in the “Transzendente Dialektik,” finding its most extensive treatment in the antinomy of pure reason, “System der kosmologischen Ideen.” In the preface of the 1787 edition, Kant inserts a definition of “das Unbedingte” (taken verbatim from the first edition’s introduction to the transcendental dialectic), which maintains a strict relationship to the conditions of subjective experience: “ein solcher Grundsatz der reinen Vernunft ist aber offenbar *synthetisch*; denn das Bedingte bezieht sich analytisch zwar auf irgend eine Bedingung, aber nicht aufs Unbedingte” (B/XX, B364/A308). Kant’s concern with “das Unbedingte” relates to a logical necessity behind a series of conditions, but as such it remains distinct from those conditions. Crossing this limit argued for by Kant is precisely the slippage that lies at the foundation of the idealistic argument; idealism incorporates the conditions of experience, specifically, the subject-object split of consciousness, into the idea of the absolute. Under the influence of Jacobi, Hölderlin’s idea of “das Unbedingte” is loosened from Kantian logic and divorced from the dialectical machinery of idealism; it is given instead a more monistic character by virtue of its function as a foundation.

Jacobi, like Kant, was opposed to idealist denials of the existence of things in themselves, but his argument for immediate access to the unconditioned helped idealism overcome the barrier between limited consciousness and the absolute established by Kantian dialectics. In addressing the problem of a first principle of philosophy in the context of human consciousness, Jacobi wedded the infinite and the limited in a manner

unlike Kant's bridge between reason and understanding ("Urteilkraft") or Fichte's grounding of the absolute in the "Ich." Jacobi argues that we must give up the search for a proof of "Unbedingten" such as Spinoza's "Sein," for the endeavor itself can only produce conditions and differentiation that are antithetical to "Sein" itself. Jacobi does not conflate human consciousness and the absolute as Fichte does. But, though he recognizes the border, he does allow of its crossing. "Gefühl" (im)mediates access to the unconditioned, but unlike Kant's "Urteilkraft," it functions transcendently not transcendently. That is, Kant's "Urteilkraft" must be understood as operating within a system that describes the conditions for possible experience. Jacobi, on the other hand, extends his system to the "Uebematürliches" (a synonym for "Gott"), personifying God in the role of creator: "er ist *Schöpfer*, und seine *unbedingte* Kraft hat die Dinge auch der *Substanz* nach gewirkt" (Beylage VII, 427). Jacobi's ontology, recognizing that the unconditioned lies outside our capacity for knowledge, establishes an essential, absolute existence in the fact "Es ist." Kant, however, starts from the point, "Wahrnehmung ist" and proceeds to necessary conditions of this judgment. Jacobi pulls the foundation of his argument from the epistemology of the subject toward a monistic ontology. A few years later, Fichte unites these opposed views to serve idealism, making the subject's epistemological act of self-identification a foundation in itself.

In Beylage VII to the second edition, Jacobi speaks directly to the misunderstandings that have arisen in speculative philosophy, specifically Spinoza's,

“wenn man die Möglichkeit des Daseyns eines Weltalls auf irgend eine Art erklären will”

(XV):

Da trat Spinoza mit seinem *Εν και παν* hervor, und versuchte die *duo quaerenda*,²⁰ deren Vereinigung die Philosophen vor ihm, samt und sonders, in so mannichfaltige Verlegenheiten gesetzt hatte, auf ein einziges Prinzip zurückzuführen; (405)

As a presupposition of consciousness, “das Unbedingte” stands at the end of the chain of conditioned thought that is cognition itself: “so bleiben wir, so lange wir begreifen, in einer Kette bedingter Bedingungen. Wo diese Kette aufhört, da hören wir auf zu begreifen” (425). In order to accommodate the lack of a first principle, consciousness is defined as the progression of the “Bedingtes” that inevitably confronts the “Unbedingtes.” In this way, Jacobi rejects Spinoza’s demonstrative rationalism, which can only lead to fatalism and further to pantheism. Jacobi also criticizes Fichte’s Wissenschaftslehre for its lack of a genuine “Unbedingtes.” He claims that Fichte simply and substitutes in its place a self-generating knitting of “Ich” and “Nicht-Ich.” Jacobi instead defends the supernatural, a personal God as the source of human understanding.

Kant’s epistemological limits presented serious problems for systems of thought such as Jacobi’s based upon supernatural foundations. Gottlob Christian Storr was a teacher of theology in the Tübinger Stift, who tried unsuccessfully to accommodate Kantian ideas to orthodox faith. He counted among his students Hölderlin, Niethammer,

²⁰ Jacobi refers to Cicero de Finibus when identifying the two fundamental questions of philosophy as inquiry into the origin of things (*quae materia fit*) and of force (*quae vis fit*).

Hegel, and Schelling, all of whom sought alternatives to the failed union of reason and God. Storr's position in the debate about the human capacity to know the unconditioned exposes a central problem between theology and philosophy that occupied the thoughts and dialogs of his students. Storr was a dogmatist who held the belief that God's truth was only accessible by revelation. For this reason, Storr's school was considered a form of "Supernaturalismus." Storr had his adherents, but those students who were later drawn to Jena held Storr's system to be unfounded. More taken with the critical philosophy of Kant founded on the infinite "Freiheit der Vernunft," they held that all theological truths must conform to reason. The young post-Kantians from the Tübinger Stift later developed such thinking into a kind of theological "Naturalismus." Their seminary mentor, however, would not go so far. The 'supernaturalist' theologian, well aware of Kant's dependence on a belief in God, could view critical philosophy as limited to the epistemology of the subject, and thus not see it as a threat. Storr tried to bring Kant's principle of the autonomy of reason into harmony with the authority of revelation, but some, like Schelling,²¹ found this to be a flagrant misreading to serve religious ends. The 'naturalist' confronts a problem when trying reconcile Kant's reflexive transcendental claims with the theological method of laying a foundation in a transcendent principle. Such was the case for Niethammer and Hölderlin, who both experienced a crisis of faith in 1790.²² For both of them, a transcendent foundation

²¹ See his letter to Hegel of January 6th, 1795.

²² For the details regarding Niethammer's need to go to Jena in 1790 to reconcile himself with Kantian philosophy, see Henrich, *Konstellationen*, especially the chapter, "Über Hölderlins philosophische Anfänge." See also Hölderlin's letter to his mother of February 14th, 1791 in which he addresses his faith and philosophical studies of the previous year.

remained problematic, and proved to be a central concern of their philosophical endeavors in the following years.

Those thinkers looking for a firm foundation found in Kant only a solid boundary. As a result, a tension arose between a certain faith in the absolute and an absolutely certain orientation of the subject. The outcome of this was a dispute regarding philosophical method. While Hölderlin was still at the Tübinger Stift, Carl Immanuel Diez, also a student of Storr's, wrote a Kantian critique of religion directed at its manner of philosophizing in which he concluded that Kantian and religious ethics are mutually exclusive.²³ Acknowledging the belief in God necessary to Kant's ethics but unable to accept Storr's supernatural dogmatism, Diez arrives at the conclusion that practical certainty can never cross over to theoretical doctrine. In this, he gives up solid grounding in an absolute and accepts instead a steadfast border that serves to orient the subject and direct the philosophical approach. Storr responded with his own essay which in turn generated responses by Schelling and Hegel in their early works. As Henrich points out, Schelling, Hegel, and Hölderlin all turned to Plato first in order to find a path between Kant (a la Diez) and Storr.²⁴ What they were looking for was a basic ontology beyond subjective faculties, and so in response to the theological crisis there emerged the dialogue regarding "Sein" (essential being) and "das Seiende" (being as we experience it). The discourse on "Sein" marks an initial negotiation between ontology and epistemology that fueled later phenomenological approaches.

²³ On Diez's essay and Storr's response, see Henrich, *Konstellationen*, pg. 178ff.

²⁴ See Henrich, *Konstellationen*, pp. 116-120.

Karl Leonhard Reinhold was Jena's celebrated Kant expert, who drew to his lectures Niethammer and others from the Tübinger Stift. His clarifications of Kant, however, fared better with the critics than his own attempt at a philosophical system in his Versuch einer neuen Theorie des menschlichen Vorstellungsvermögens of 1789. To put it very briefly, Reinhold attempts to find a first principle and arrives at the absolute subject, which ultimately proves to be his greatest stumbling block. Where Jacobi proposes a subject in relation to "das Unbedingte" via "Gefühl" or "Glauben," Reinhold proposed a first principle of the subject in relation to its own representation ("Vorstellung"). His proposal for a first principle is the "Satz des Bewußtseins": "Die Vorstellung wird durch das Subjekt von Subjekt und Objekt unterschieden und auf beide bezogen." Kant understands the subject as an object of intuition, but Reinhold puts the subject in the role of a necessary means with a more foundational function.²⁵ He runs into trouble because his argument does not support the idea that consciousness is autonomous; that is, consciousness remains for him 'consciousness of'.²⁶ Reinhold's failure, however, reveals a great deal about the ideas generated in Jena's philosophical circles. In Reinhold's initial attempts to present a first principle, the circularity of his arguments was generally recognized. The critic who brought Reinhold away from

²⁵ Friedrich Schlegel's comment on Reinhold follows the same line of thought in seeing him as responding to Kant with a search for solid ground: "Reinhold, der erste unter d[en] Kantisch[en] Sophist[en] hat eigent[lich] d[en] Kantianismus organisirt und auch das Mißverstehn gestiftet - Grundsucher-" (Philosophische Fragmente, 1796-97, #5).

²⁶ Reinhold later attempts to clarify his position on the autonomy of consciousness: "Die *Quelle* dieser Elementarphilosophie ist die *innere Erfahrung in wie ferne sie von der äusseren unabhängig ist*, das heisst, in wie ferne sie aus *Thatsachen des reinen Selbstbewusstseyns* besteht" ("Unterschied," 65). His recourse to the distinction between inner and outer experience, however, still requires him to speak in terms of "Selbstbewusstsein," which does not establish the same autonomy as, for example, Fichte's "Ich."

“Grundsatzphilosophie” was Diez.²⁷ Rather than attacking individual arguments, he pointed out that all of Reinhold’s “Grundsätze” were not genuine foundations but instead presuppositions that could not be proved until the end of the argument, which itself was based on them. For example, Diez shows that Reinhold assumes the independence of the subject when he asserts the necessary form of “Vorstellung” but only later arrives at the “Selbsttätigkeit” of the subject. Reinhold’s problem of circularity underlies that of the entire Jena circle: the infinite regress entailed by a first principle of philosophy.

Reinhold was at first part of the school of “Grundsatzphilosophie” in the manner of Descartes. Descartes’ Cogito originated from a materialistic perspective, and it was Kant who shifted this “I think” from its ontological basis to its transcendental one in apperception (i.e. the “Ich” as a necessary constituent of all thought). Problems arise when trying to deduce an elementary system from consciousness seen only as an epistemic condition rather than an ontological foundation.²⁸ Reinhold seems to want to pull the transcendental back onto the grounds of ontology with his “Elementarphilosophie” by bringing the grounds for the possibility of experience back into the realm of experience itself.²⁹ For Kant the Subject is always a subject of

²⁷ For an elaboration on Diez’s critique, which Reinhold discusses in a letter to J.B. Erhard, see Henrich, *Konstellationen*, pp. 242-243.

²⁸ Allison suggests that such problems persist today. He marks misreadings of Kant’s transcendental idealism by the common mistake of considering empirical what Kant actually figured as transcendental (i.e. referring only to the subject). He argues that the distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves exists for both empirical and transcendental categories. The failure to recognize the various distinctions results in a misunderstanding of the relation between epistemic conditions and the real as “außer uns.” See his book *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*.

²⁹ Reinhold speaks materialistically of his principle of consciousness: “In wie ferne die *Thatsachen*, welche durch [die Sätze des Bewusstseyns] aufgestellt werden unmittelbar im *Subjekte des reinen Selbstbewusstseyns* gegründet sind, in so fern enthalten jene Sätze die *reinen Materialien* zu den letzten *philosophischen Principien*” (“Unterschiede,” 65).

something (e.g. “Anschauung”), but Reinhold, with apparent difficulty, comes to the subject in and of itself. Reinhold construes everything in the understanding to be a “Vorstellung” and hence an object. The subject as such must occur in reason in order to be conceived as initial and immediate. As entailed to reason, however, it remains unavailable to the understanding and hence is always sought after rather than grasped. The subject becomes an idea to be approached rather than, as with Descartes, a proof of existence, and thus it becomes no longer an object of self-consciousness, but absolute.

Reinhold’s essay “Über den Unterschied zwischen dem gesunden Verstande und der philosophierenden Vernunft in Rücksicht auf die Fundamente des durch beyde möglichen Wissens” published in 1794 was both a response to the criticisms against his earlier attempts to explain his “Elementarphilosophie” and to Jacobi. He began composing the essay shortly after hearing Diez’s criticisms in the summer of 1792. In the essay Reinhold distinguishes between two types of “gemeiner Verstand”: “communis” which moves across the border between non-philosophy and philosophy, and “vulgaris” which serves the “Unphilosoph” (5). The idea of “der gesunde Verstand” allows Reinhold to evade the earlier criticisms of circularity by providing access to basic truths before arriving at first principles: “Daher besitzt auch der gemeine Verstand, so ferne er *gesund* ist, weit mehr Wahrheit als die philosophierende Vernunft, bevor dieselbe die letzten begreiflichen Gründe gefunden hat” (17). Like Jacobi and Kant before him, Reinhold looks for a bridge-concept to take the subject outside the limits of its own cognitive faculties. Reinhold’s difficulties in describing a self-conscious mind (i.e. one

based upon the Cartesian subject-object split) that is capable of immediately grasping the truth of its presence were grist for the idealists' mill.

Reinhold depends for a great deal on Kant, but his deviations reveal the line of thinking closer to the traditional picture of the Romantics. For Kant, apperception is necessary to the faculty of understanding, and thus subjectivity remains under the rubric of "Verstand." Reinhold shifts the association of the subject to reason: "so macht die Vernunft, durch welche allein das...blosse *Subjekt* aller Erfahrung unmittelbar vorgestellt werden kann, die *innere* Erfahrung *als solche* möglich" (25). Reinhold goes on to identify philosophy as reason's search for a first principle, and here we find the theory of the subject conjoined with an identification of an infinite process:

die Philosophierende Vernunft beschäftigt sich mit den *letzten* Gründen, und geht also *über* die Thatsachen der Erfahrung zu den Gründen derselben hinaus. Sie hat ihren Namen bisher nur dadurch und in so ferne verdient, als sie die schlechthin letzten Grunde gesucht hat. (10-11)

Jacobi declared that a first principle by definition required no proof. Reinhold, responding to the criticisms of Diez, links absoluteness in the form of a constant regression with the subject in order to establish a foundation; he locates a certitude just on the other side of the positive expression of a first principle. In 1798, Novalis will put it succinctly: "Supposition des Ideals--des Gesuchten--ist die Methode es zu finden./ Fichtens Forderung des Zugleich Denkens, Handelns und Beobachtens ist das Ideal des Philosophirens--und indem ich dies zu leisten suche--fange ich das Ideal an zu realisiren"

(610). Novalis's connection of Reinhold's search and Fichte's ideal describes the bridge between post-Kantian thought and idealism.

Reinhold's turn as a result of Diez's criticism may be seen as a reformulation whereby the objective of philosophy is no longer the final cause itself, but consciousness of a final cause. Reinhold's revision is both an inward turn and a call to focus on the practical aspect of philosophy. As such it may be seen as an important spur to the phenomenological approach. It is from Reinhold, in fact, that Hegel gets the term "Phänomenologie." In this way, we can understand Reinhold's introduction of an approach to a first principle:

Die absolut letzten begrifflichen Gründe müssen im Gemüthe *gegeben*, können aber ohne alles klare Bewusstseyn vorhanden und wirksam seyn. Die philosophierende Vernunft setzt auch diese Gründe als wirklich gegeben voraus; und strebt nach dem Bewusstseyn derselben, um durch sie die gemeine Erkenntniss zur wissenschaftlichen zu erheben. (56-57)

Niethammer and other students of Reinhold's would later abandon efforts to locate a first principle in theoretical philosophy and turn instead to practical philosophy. Reinhold's impulse remains much in the same vein as Kant's in the second critique of 1788 where he explains why "Begriffe und Grundsätze" that already endured examination in the critique of pure reason must be reexamined:

Denn, solange man sich noch keine bestimmten Begriffe von Sittlichkeit und Freiheit machte, konnte man nicht erraten, was man einerseits der

vorgeblichen Erscheinung als Noumen zum Grunde legen wolle, und andererseits, ob es überall auch möglich sei, sich noch von ihm einen Begriff zu machen, wenn man vorher alle Begriffe des reinen Verstandes im theoretischen Gebrauche schon ausschließungsweise den bloßen Erscheinungen gewidmet hätte. (13)

Kant's theoretical philosophy of the first critique works from concepts toward first principles, but his practical philosophy of the second critique works from first principles to concepts. In pursuing a course of inquiry into the latter, Niethammer and other students of Reinhold sought to engage what may be called a non-economical or non-contractual system of thought. Where Kant, as I argued earlier, works dialectically in the sense of a contract of mutual conditions, there is an alternative path of idealism in the manner of Fichte that tries to establish an inexhaustible absolute, or in other words, a pure positive that seeks to recuperate the negative absolutely.

Had Niethammer been four years younger like his distant cousin Hölderlin, he too might have had more exposure to critical philosophy while at the Tübinger Stift. Instead, he traveled to Jena in 1790 after completing his exams in order to study Kant under Reinhold. Niethammer had studied moral philosophy and was, therefore, trained to connect theory with practice. In Kant, he saw a collapse of moral theology and, consequently, sought an alternative solution. In Niethammer's first philosophical efforts the search for a "Grundsatz" is clear, but he soon gave it up. His skepticism regarding a possible first principle was the initial impulse behind his "Philosophisches Journal":

Wie sollen die Aussprüche des gemeinen Verstandes Allgemeingültigkeit unsers Wissens begründen, da sie selbst kein anderes Fundament haben, als ein *Gefühl* (unmittelbares Bewußtsein) ihrer Allgemeinheit und Nothwendigkeit? (“Von den Ansprüchen,” 4-5)

Niethammer makes clear reference to Reinhold and Jacobi by using the terms “gemeiner Verstand” and “Gefühl.” Not only does this reiterate the progress of the “Grundsatz” crisis, it also shows how the discourse in Jena was drifting from the influence of Kant.

Niethammer was the first to speak of an “unendliche Annäherung,” the popular phrase from Hölderlin’s letter of September 4th, 1795 to Schiller.³⁰ This phrase expresses Niethammer and Hölderlin’s approach to philosophy in opposition to what Niethammer called “Transcendentismus,” a word that points a finger at Fichte. “Transcendentismus,” in Niethammer’s opinion, was a response to critical philosophy that, in its attempt to establish an “allgemeingültiges Fundament,” lead to antiquated dogmatism. The terms are taken from Niethammer’s announcement of his philosophical journal, and hardly a month after he composed it, Hölderlin uses the same terms to

³⁰ In May, 1795 Niethammer judiciously proposes the idea in the introduction to his philosophical journal: “Gesetzt auch daß ein solches System des menschlichen Wissens, als uns in der *Idee einer Wissenschaft der Wissenschaften* vorgehalten ist, ein nie erreichbares Ziel wäre; so kann doch auch da durch das Interesse, uns der Erreichung dieser Idee soviel als möglich zu nähern, nicht vermindert werden” (qtd. in Jamme, 77). “Allein diese Vollendung der Philosophie als Wissenschaft ist eine *Idee*, der wir uns nur mit allmählichen Schritten annähern können” (qtd. in Jamme, 79). Schelling, who also enjoyed a close relationship to Niethammer, uses the phrases almost exactly as Hölderlin does, substituting, however, “Zernichtung” of the “Ich” and “Nicht-Ich” in the place of Hölderlin’s “Vereinigung” of the subject and object: “Der letzte Endzweck des endlichen Ichs sowohl als des Nicht-Ichs, d.h. der Endzweck der *Welt* ist ihre *Zernichtung*, als einer Welt, d.h. als eines Innbegriffs von Endlichkeit (des endlichen Ichs und des Nicht-Ichs). Zu diesem Endzweck findet nur unendlich Annäherung statt—daher unendliche Fortdauer des Ichs, *Unsterblichkeit* (“Vom Ich” (29. März, 1795), in *KA*, I.2, 128). See also Hölderlin’s letter to his brother of April 13th, 1795.

criticize Fichte's "spekulative Blätter--Grundlage der gesammten Wissenschaftslehre" in a letter to Hegel (Jan. 26, 1795). Implicit in Niethammer's idea of the "unendliche Annäherung" is an endeavor to democratize philosophy in the sense of bringing it closer to common life ("das gemeine Leben näher bringen"). In this he shows himself to be very much a student of Reinhold's in the sense that he moves the philosophy's foundation closer to the side of consciousness and practical experience.

The title of Niethammer's essay, "Von den Ansprüchen des gemeinen Verstandes an die Philosophie," from the first issue of his Philosophisches Journal immediately announces its affiliation with Reinhold. Though approaching philosophy like his teacher from the practical side of experience, Niethammer began to move away from a Kantian approach. At the end of October, 1794, before the announcement of his journal, Niethammer clearly states in a letter to J.B. Erhard his doubts regarding the possibility of founding a philosophy on a first principle. Furthermore, he pulls out the foundation of any possible "Grundsatz" for any system based on the Kantian:

"Erfahr[ung] ist, sagt Kant, und dies ist, zwar nicht der Grundsatz aber doch der Grund seines Systems, und jeder Grundsatz, der nicht unmittelbar auf diesem Grunde ruht, ist ein Hirngespinnst. Dieser Grund kann aber nicht erwiesen--eine Thatsache kann nicht aus [philosoph]ischen Gründen dargethan werden. Die [Philosoph]ie kann jenen Grund nicht erweisen, sie postulirt ihn bloß" (qtd. in Henrich, Der Grund im Bewußtsein, 835).

In the philosophical journal he remains skeptical, but his tone is very different: “Die Thatsache ‘Erfahrung ist’, welche die Grundlage der ganzen Kritik ausmacht, ist uns in jedem Moment des Bewußtseins gegenwärtig und kann also nicht wohl von jemand geläugnet werden” (24).³¹ Together, the two citations suggest the “Evidenz” of “Bewußtsein” in a Fichtean manner. Niethammer has translated Jacobi’s certitude in the foundational existence of “Sein” (the “Uebernatürliche” and, ultimately, “Gott”) into a more popular or contemporary language of the subject. As Jacobi puts it:

da alles, was ausser dem Zusammenhange des Bedingten, des *natürlich* *vermittelten* liegt, auch ausser der Sphäre unserer deutlichen Erkenntniß liegt, und durch Begriffe nicht verstanden werden kann: so kann das Uebernatürliche auf keine andre Weise von uns angenommen werden, als es uns gegeben ist; nemlich, *als Thatsache--Es ist!* (426-427)

Niethammer moves the factual ground to the subject and adopts the term “Gefühl,” also borrowed from Jacobi, to describe immediate experience. He uses “Gefühl” in the same way as Jacobi to avoid the infinite regress necessitated by a principle that demands proof or grounding. The fact of “Erfahrung” has not, however, solved the problem of finding a

³¹ Friedrich Schlegel corrects both Niethammer and Reinhold: “Kant geht nicht von der Tatsache aus; *Erfahrung* IST; wie Nieth[ammer], Reinh.[hold], Erh.[ard] ihn mißverstanden haben; sondern von d[em] unerwiesnen aber zuerweisenden Satze *Erfahrung* MUSS SEYN wie Beck, Schelling und Fichte ihn richtig verstanden haben. Dieser Satz muß aber durchaus erwiesen werden” (*Philosophische Fragmente*, #25). Schlegel’s comment points out the residual methodological monism, or “Grundsatz” tendency in the early post-Kantians, the desire to find firm foundation as a response to what I have termed Kant’s ‘contractual’ approach. Reinhold, for one, starts from the simple fact of consciousness because, according to Reinhold, Kant’s conditions of experience presuppose a particular kind of experience. Idealism moves even further toward a dynamic, process-oriented foundation. Arguably, this lies closer to the approach of Kant, whose more concrete statement “Wahrnehmung ist das empirische Bewußtsein” (B 207/A 166), reveals a certain instability in its ‘Copernican’ perspective reversal of the perspective assumed by Descartes’s cogito.

first principle from which all else can be deduced: “Als Thatsache ist [Erfahrung] eines weitem Beweises nicht fähig, aber, als eine alles Bewußtsein begleitende Thatsache, dessen auch nicht bedürftig” (24). It remains to be demonstrated how to condition something (i.e. prove its necessity within the realm of human experience). Still, Niethammer’s shift of Jacobi’s rhetoric from the supernatural-unconditioned to the natural-conditioned does betray the signs of a phenomenological approach to grounding a philosophical system and hence an idealist grounding of reality in consciousness.

By the time Niethammer published the first edition of his philosophical journal, the issues at stake in idealism had come into sharper focus. Consciousness was the central problem, and philosophy was given the task of recuperating the transcendent absolute (or God) with the idea of an immanent infinite that was accessible to possible experience. The ‘crisis’ has its roots in Jacobi, who problematizes Spinoza’s ontological monism of ‘substance’ with a language of “Bedingtes” and “Unbedingtes.” The influence of Kantian thought is clear here in the epistemological limit drawn around the subject, but the perspective is altered. The hybrid of ontological-monism and Kantian subjectivity generates not one but a multitude of idealisms. Hölderlin’s “Urtheil und Seyn” to a certain extent tries to untie the knot and redraw the distinction between ontology and epistemology. Hölderlin’s concern with fundamental unity and difference (or “Seyn” and “Urtheil”) can be seen as a reaction to the problems raised by Jacobi’s critique of Spinoza’s ontological monism. The idealistic endeavor, more the endeavor within the later Jena circle, is to find a metaphysical foundation that is singular and

unified, yet may also be practically realized as consistent and differentiated. Some, like Hölderlin and Novalis, look to Hemsterhuis, while others like Fichte and Schelling look, at least for a time, to the absolute subject. The concept of this foundation takes form as a process of unfolding that both is and makes possible a metaphysical monism by which speculative knowledge (theory) becomes real knowledge (practice).

Henrich puts Hölderlin at the start of philosophical idealism in the role of a critic. Hölderlin's concern with the problem of "All-Einheit" explores a tension between the conceptual necessity of differentiation and the metaphysical process of deduction. Or in other words, a tension between an epistemological approach which recognizes the precedence of conceptual necessity over metaphysical process, and the ontological approach that claims there must be a fundamental, unified 'being' if we are to think at all. Hölderlin's main criticism of Fichte stems from the idea that relation must be based in "Sein," an ontology of non-relation. In his view, Fichte's "Ich" and "Nicht-Ich" describe only identity and, therefore, address only "Urteil," or epistemology.

The students of Reinhold, among them Niethammer, Hölderlin and Novalis, were the first to express doubts regarding "Grundsatzphilosophie." Jakob Zwilling, who also numbered among Reinhold's students, marks another avenue of departure with his essay "Über das Alles," which constitutes one of the earliest deviations from Fichte's idealism.³² He makes a break toward absolute idealism from which Hölderlin separates

³² Zwilling's line of thinking lies close to that of Hölderlin's "Urtheil und Seyn" in focusing on a primal "Trennung." In the direction of Hegel, he speaks of including the negative in the idea of "das Alles." See Henrich's elaboration on Zwilling's position in *Konstellationen*, pg. 83ff and in "Jakob Zwilling's Nachlass: Eine Rekonstruktion."

himself. Zwilling's conception of "Reflexion" conflates ontology and epistemology in the connection between the particular and the universal. Zwilling thus moves from critical thinking to transcendent speculation. Novalis pursues a similar course in his idea of "Reflexion" by using a process of inversion to arrive at consciousness of that which is beyond consciousness. In his "Fichte-Studien" he says:

Die Philosophie ist ursprünglich ein Gefühl. (18)

Reflexion wird hier, was Gefühl ist--Gefühl, was Reflexion ist--sie tauschen ihre Rollen. Im Ich ist das Gefühl ideal und real und so auch die Reflexion. (32-33)

"Reflexion" describes the practice of philosophy as without end by virtue of a tension between consciousness based on difference and an absolute that by definition cannot fall into opposition:

In diesem Felde ist Täuschung der Einbildungskraft, oder der Reflexion unvermeidlich--in der Darstellung--denn man will Nichtreflexion durch Reflexion darstellen und kommt eben dadurch nie zur Nichtreflexion hin--man beeifert sich zu demonstrieren, daß Schwarz Weiß sey. (27)

Though clearly leaning on Reinhold and Niethammer's idea of "unendliche Annäherung," Novalis's inversive "Reflexion" differs from Hölderlin's system with its more positive fundament of "Sein." It also indicates how the principle of "Reflexion" undermines the foundation of the Fichtean "Ich" by figuring the quest for the absolute subject as a 'self-defeating' endeavor. The failure (or necessary fiction) of self-hood

("Ich zu sein") generates and defines the philosophical process. In this way, the first principle has shifted from a monistic base in the manner of Cartesian evidence, to a dynamic rule that serves only in a regulative capacity. Furthermore, Niethammer's skeptical solution to the question of the absolute, which is also the position of Hölderlin's Hyperion, has been recast as a synthetic rather than analytic proposition. That is, rather than moving away from a positive "Grundsatz," Novalis moves toward a negative whole.

With Friedrich Schlegel we may mark a more definite crossing over to the Romantic aesthetic. Together with Hölderlin, he was one of the first to pursue the contemporary philosophy of the Jena circle into the realm of art. Much in the style of Novalis, Schlegel substitutes a dynamic principle of irony in the place of a first principle from which all else may be deduced. The formulations of both Novalis and Schlegel represent solutions to the increasing skepticism regarding the borders that separate the knowable from the unknowable, or the insurmountable limit of the "Grundsatz." A Romantic may be characterized as one who suspects a forgery or substitute when a system of thought or work of art fails to offer a border to cross. Irony and "Reflexion" demonstrate a response to this suspicion. This claim is supported by the Romantics preference for Kant's third critique, which attempts to bridge the first two, and Schlegel's criticism of Fichte and Schelling's idealism that it is impossible to set a limit to knowledge without transgressing that limit (KA XVIII, 521). Furthermore, the positions of Novalis and Schlegel as opposing poles to idealism offer by way of introduction a degree of closure to the survey of Hölderlin's position within the Jena circle.

CHAPTER II:
HYPERION: AN OVERVIEW

Ein Dialog ist eine Kette, oder ein Kranz von Fragmenten. Ein Briefwechsel ist ein Dialog in vergrößertem Maßstabe, und Memorabilien sind ein System von Fragmenten.

Friedrich Schlegel, Athenäum-Fragmente (1798), #77

At the end of the eighteenth century, the foundations of philosophy in Jena were, as we have seen, unstable. Some, like Reinhold and Fichte, shored up philosophical science with grand fundamental principles. Others, like Schlegel and Niethammer, gave up on the possibility of finding strength in the form of an “oberster Grundsatz” and looked to alternative forms.³³ When Schlegel said in 1800 that poesy must begin where philosophy ends (II, 261), he drew an horizon that Hölderlin had readily embraced years earlier. Despite his enthusiasm for philosophy, Hölderlin’s most complete statements are expressed in poetry and prose. The elusiveness of a foundation in philosophy may account for his choice. The philosophy of the period worked within a framework of Kant’s dualisms, while searching for a fundamental statement of unity. Fichte’s union of the “Ich” and “Nicht-Ich” in the “Absolutes Ich” is a prime example. My reading of Hyperion shows that ideal unions based on overcoming opposition take a form very different from that taken by dialectical resolution or what we may call poetic union. The “Auflösung der Dissonanzen” mentioned in the “Vorrede” represents such a poetic union that unfolds and delineates differences in the process of resolving them. Ideal unions are synchronic and ideological, while poetic unions are diachronic and narrative. Furthermore, ideal unions are achieved only by an act of violence, something both Hyperion and Hölderlin ultimately renounce. Ideal unions attempt to give form, even substance, to the negative beyond the human horizon. In contrast, the poetic union has

³³ The “Athenäum” and “Lyceum” represent two examples of “Symphilosophie,” which propose a collection or chain of fragments by multiple authors in place of an argument or line of thought pursued by a single authoritative mind.

difficulty even naming itself; Hölderlin can only put it vaguely (“Die Auflösung der Dissonanzen in einem gewissen Charakter” [my emphasis]). Given the context in which the novel was produced, Hölderlin’s phrasing suggests that Hyperion takes the form it does in order to accommodate an ambiguity inimical to philosophy but sustaining to art.

Why Hölderlin chose to express his ideas in literary rather than philosophical form will always be a matter of speculation. I propose that Hyperion represents a response to the problem of circularity in philosophical argument, especially one such as Reinhold’s that argues for a first principle of philosophy.³⁴ Reinhold struggled with the charge of circularity made against his “Elementarphilosophie” and his formulation of the “Satz des Bewußtseins.” As mentioned earlier, Diez pointed out that Reinhold assumed the unity and independence of the subject before finally proving it. The same criticism aptly describes the narrative structure of what I have called Hölderlin’s ‘phenomenology of consciousness’. Where Hölderlin’s philosophical circle in Jena demanded linearity, the literary arts offered an alternative. The circularity that is criticized as a flaw in philosophical argument is praised as a mark of perfection in narrative, especially that of Hyperion. By casting his ideas in the form of a reflective epistolary novel, Hölderlin could make circularity work in his favor. Assuming one’s conclusion in one’s premise is to have thought nothing—a logical tautology. To have a narrator end his story where it

³⁴ The circularity in Fichte’s argument for the “Absolutes Ich” takes the form of a union of subject and object that Hölderlin sees as impossible for consciousness. He tells Hegel in a letter of January 26th, 1795 that an absolute subject is “für mich Nichts.” Henrich makes a point of dating Hölderlin’s understanding of the development of subjectivity prior to his reading of the 1794 Wissenschaftslehre (Grund, 212). A justified concern for linearity guides both Henrich’s philosophical approach and his historical interest. Without ignoring the historical context, my reading shifts the focus from *what* Hölderlin understood to *how* he expressed his thought in order to comment on the literary form of ideas.

begins is ingenious.

The structure of the novel makes your head spin. Not only does the story line come full circle, the beginning mirroring the end, the narrator of the story takes himself as the object of his narrative. More than he tells of people and places, *Hyperion* chronicles the emotions and thoughts he had as a result of those people and places entering his consciousness. The first line of the novel reveals what the real object of the narrative is: "Der liebe Vaterlandsboden giebt mir wieder Freude und Leid" (I, 613, 3). Hyperion is considered the first 'reflective' epistolary novel because it is the first to narrate events that had passed entirely before the beginning of the narration (Ryan, Exzentrische Bahn, 3). Several critics elaborate on the introspective style to describe the novel's structure,³⁵ but perhaps more telling is that *Hyperion* is doubly introspective. *Hyperion* reviews his past by examining his own thoughts and feelings through the inception and termination of his three primary relationships. Furthermore, he describes each of these as possessing a reflexive or entirely reflective quality; in Adamas (his mentor), Alabanda (his friend), and Diotima (the embodiment of beauty), he sees himself. For this reason, the metaphor of the double mirror well-describes the two historically significant aspects of Hyperion: its insightful commentary on the current

³⁵ The secondary literature generally focuses on the subject of the self and reflexive curves to draw an inward turn that generates an escalating open return. Abrams's famous spiral, described in Natural Supernaturalism, is paradigmatic. Knaupp calls the novel's structure "scheinbar kreisförmig" and its dual chronology of events "schneckenförmig" (III, 318). Ryan's characterization of the novel interprets its form of the "exzentrische Bahn" as a movement out from a center and back ("eine wiederholende und auch variierende Kreisbahn") (Exzentrische Bahn, 14). Brown justifiably criticizes Ryan's conception of the path as a uniform progression (Shape, 168). In order to delineate his vision of the novel's "Ichform," Aspetsberger draws a "Spannungsgefüge" between a narrating and narrated *Hyperion* around a central axis, the "Athensgespräch" at the end of volume one, book two (82).

philosophical debate regarding subjectivity and an understanding of the need for a phenomenological style that straddles the border between philosophy and art.

Hyperion appeared in its final form as two volumes, each containing two books. The sixty letters are divided evenly between the two volumes. At this point the symmetry ends and the inversion characteristic of mirror images begins. Hölderlin, for example, reverses the sense of ending by using beginnings to close the first and last books and dramatic climaxes to close the two middle books. Where the end of the first book of the first volume initiates an analysis (“Wie das alles in mich kam, begreif’ ich noch nicht” (I, 651, 5)), the second book of the same volume ends with a grand synthesis: “Es wird nur Eine Schönheit seyn; und Menschheit und Natur wird sich vereinen in Eine allumfassende Gottheit” (I, 693, 35-36). Reversing this order, the letter from Hyperion to Diotima that closes the first book of the second volume makes a formal (and false) declaration of his departure and imminent death, while the novel ends with the promise of a new beginning (“Nächstens mehr”). In other words, Hölderlin tells us to see ultimate statements of truth and final departures as middle points, while endings lie more in the anticipation of something beyond the horizon. At the time when Hölderlin began working on Hyperion in 1792, and perhaps even during the most intense period of writing in 1794 and 1795, dialectical inversion may have been something of a novelty. But, by 1798, when the second volume was given to the publisher, it was certainly becoming a cliché of Romantic aesthetics, at the very least within the Jena circle. Hölderlin, however, has apparently given us the message twice. Not only is the structure

reflectional, each book of each volume reversing the ending of the other, it is doubly so. Like a double-diptych, the two volumes face one another; a fragmentary first book and closed second book is reflected by a closed third and fragmentary fourth and final book. In Hyperion, mirrors come in pairs.

What kind of closure is granted by an ending that reflects its beginning? The last line of the novel mirrors the last line of the first book of the first volume, prompting us to ask what has changed from: “So dacht’ ich. Wie das alles in mich kam, begreif’ ich noch nicht,” (I, 651, 5) to “So dacht’ ich. Nächstens mehr” (I, 760, 33). Both passages begin with a moment of reflection upon the self, an explicit consciousness of the separation from past thoughts. The former passage follows with a look backwards and an explicit awareness of self-discovery left undone, an inward journey to be undertaken. The latter, however, looks ahead and thus represents a closure to the task of inward reflection, despite the inceptive tone of its promise. The story of Hyperion is a trip through memory, and at the end of the novel, the hero catches up with himself by putting the past in the past. In order to proceed as a unified individual, he must acknowledge that he can’t bring back Adamas, Alabanda, or Diotima for Bellarmin to see; he must recognize genuine loss. Hyperion’s final resignation is not a negation used simply to recuperate a transcendent ideal dialectically; he does not achieve enlightenment by incorporating loss and failure into a complete vision of the “All-Einheit” of nature as Ryan might suggest. In contrast, Hyperion’s ultimate insight into nature as conditioned by loss describes a moment of pause without full comprehension, a caesura with no assurance of resolution

or guarantee of future progression. There is nothing that Hyperion may recuperate or possess from the void beyond the present horizon of his human reason. Understanding the phrase “to recognize genuine loss” as an oxymoron illustrates the paradox that grants Hölderlin’s novel closure.

How does one read a novel in which conclusions are paradoxically figured as places to begin? To orient ourselves, we look to an horizon drawn by Schlegel: “Der Philosoph kann die Poesie fassen, haben, kennen. Der Poet aber nicht umgekehrt. Auch nicht der vollkommenste?” (Philosophical Notebooks, #642). The poet is denied the thought available to the philosopher. If Schlegel were not to have concluded his fragment skeptically, he would not have differentiated between philosophy and poesy; only philosophers make possessions of knowledge in the closure provided by both positive and negative assertions. Schlegel is certainly the poet’s philosopher, but Hölderlin is the philosopher’s poet, so we look to him for poetics. Hölderlin’s words in the “Vorrede” present a skeptical theory of poetry that guides our reading of a text that moves between philosophy and art. More specifically, the author tells us how not to read his text: “Wer blos an meiner Pflanze riecht, der kennt sie nicht, und wer sie pflückt, blos, um daran zu lernen, kennt sie auch nicht” (I, 611, 6-7). The task seems neither simply to take pleasure nor merely take note, neither passively aestheticize, nor actively analyze. Hölderlin has taken the familiar dualism of feeling and thinking, and rather than making of them an ideal synthesis, he formulates their combination negatively as an

“Auflösung.” His is a skeptical solution to paradox.³⁶ Every sentence in the “Vorrede” with the exception of the first expresses a negation. The poetics take the same approach, reducing thinking and feeling themselves to empty vehicles: “bloßes Nachdenken” and “leere Lust.” The metaphorical “Pflanze” promises an ideal of organic unity in art, but like the “Blume” later used to describe Hyperion’s union with Diotima, the essence of its beauty lies in the expiration of its unity. Both hide a secret whose unfolding to full bloom signals imminent death. Given no positive instructions, the reader of Hyperion should perhaps sooner expect to lose rather than gain an understanding in reading the novel, for Hölderlin’s poetics ask us to renounce the products of dialectics in order to embrace the method.

³⁶ Bachmaier’s excellent study of negativity in Hölderlin shows how theoretical aporia, the subjective condition of paradox, resolves itself in a tragic negativity found in poesy. Not only does this support a view of Hyperion as a skeptical response to philosophical uncertainty, it illuminates the horizon in his work between philosophy and art.

CHAPTER III:
THE ADAMAS TRAGEDY

Um die Erkenntnis unserer Selbst zu erleichtern, ist in jedem Nächsten mein eigen Selbst als in einem Spiegel sichtbar. Wie das Bild meines Gesichts im Wasser widerscheint, so ist mein Ich in jedem Nebenmenschen zurückgeworfen...Gott und mein Nächster gehören also zu meiner Selbsterkenntnis.

Hamann, Ueber die Auslegung der heiligen Schrift (Werke I, 302)

Wenn einer in den Spiegel siehet, ein Mann, und siehet darinn sein Bild, wie abgemahlt; es gleicht dem Manne. Augen hat des Menschen Bild, hingegen Licht der Mond.

Hölderlin, "In lieblicher Bläue..."

The first five letters of Hyperion tell us immediately that Hölderlin intended to make a contribution to the philosophical discourse in Jena, albeit in literary form. The central concern at Jena was the possibility of a first principle of philosophy, which because of Kant's epistemology, could not be considered without defining the nature of subjectivity. Hölderlin's concerns are the same. The first five letters do not simply tell us who Hyperion is but how it is that he became aware of his subjectivity. Hölderlin answers the question "What is the first principle of philosophy?" by asking "How can I answer such a question?" In other words, what does it mean to be a subject who attempts to conceive an absolute unity that could be a first principle? First, let us note that to answer a question with a question is to be a skeptic—the method underlying the form of Hölderlin's argument is skeptical. Second, the answer to Hölderlin's own question takes the form of an epistolary phenomenology; the novel is a study of the development of human consciousness and self-awareness in the form of letters. The 'story' is an unfolding of the mind more than an unfolding of events. The first five letters describe the birth of the subject as a tragedy of separation—the loss of absolute unity played out in five epistolary acts on the original Greek "Schauplaz, wo sich das Folgende zutrug" ("Vorrede," I, 611, 10).

From a hill overlooking the Corinthian isthmus, Hyperion writes his first letter to Bellarmin, his friend back in Germany and introduces the subject of the novel: the self-conscious mind. The opening sentence sets a dramatic stage: "Der liebe Vaterlandsboden giebt mir wieder Freude und Laid" (I, 613, 3). But, it expresses neither

something comic nor something tragic. The sentence is analytic not emotive; it expresses a thought about feeling, not the feeling itself. From the outset, the narrator makes clear that his thoughts are not a stream of consciousness in the immediate sense, but instead, a reflection on perceptions already passed. This would not seem so remarkable were it not for the fact that the novel reads like a reverie.³⁷ The effect is to draw attention to the process of thought itself, or more specifically, the relation between the thinking subject and the object of awareness. Letter two studies the relation of complete unity (“Eines zu seyn mit Allem”) and realizes the impossibility of such a relation for the thinking subject. Recognizing a need for mediation, Hyperion takes up the matter of in letter three, examining its abstract or theoretical form. He acknowledges that the mediation of thought itself is conditioned by concepts of opposition and time. The fourth letter addresses the practical aspects of mediation, specifically, the nature of the subject’s relation to art and the violence that underlies the aesthetic and hence dialectical act of conceiving an ideal. The final letter closes the drama reflexively by reflecting back on the fact of the subject’s alienation. By recapitulating his train of thought, Hyperion first realizes a sense of himself in history. His thoughts no longer appear to him as abstract ideas contemplated with even temper in overview; they become a part of the fabric of his existence in time. As a result, he is not left in a state of aimless reverie, but with a raw sensation of striving: “ich schmachte an der Kette.”

³⁷ The first reviewer of the novel could “für jetzt nichts weiter finden, als ein buntes Gewebe von Empfindungen, Gedanken, Phantasien und Träumen, die bald mehr bald weniger wahr, bald mehr bald weniger verständlich, bald mehr bald weniger glücklich ausgedrückt sind” (from K.F. Manso in Neue allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek, 1798 vol. 40; qtd. in Knaupp, III, 300).

The first letter evinces an emerging sense of separation. The first scene depicts a poetic unity with nature, but signals its artistry with a simile: “wie die Biene unter Blumen fliegt meine Seele oft hin und her” (I, 613, 5-6). Compare, for example, a passage from Geßner’s “Die Nacht” of 1753:

Schüchtern durchstreifet mein Blick den dunkeln Wald, ruht auf lichten
Stellen, die der Mond durch das dichte Bewölb zitternder Blätter, hier am
mossigten Stamm, dort auf dem winkenden Gras, oder an zitternden Ästen
ins schwarze Dunkel hinstreut, oft eilt er schüchtern zurück. (7)

The passage continues at length with the flight of the narrator’s eye, but it is already clear that the narration takes on a perspective like that of a bee in its erratic exploration; the briefly mentioned “Blick” that indicates an agent is quickly lost in the act of seeing. While Geßner’s gaze mimics in order to communicate the feeling of a bee’s view, Hyperion’s simile would have us think his soul is like the bee that it is not. The next paragraph radically separates the subject and the object of imagination in a like manner. In this instance, the gesture is reformulated using time and the subjunctive: “wär’ ich ein Jahrtausend früher hier gestanden” (I, 613, 9). Hyperion’s consciousness is set off once again, this time between imagination and reality. Connecting a poetic reverie personifying Korinth in the simile “Wie ein siegender Halbgott” and the grim reality of Greece’s present state, is the question “Aber was soll mir das?” It is significant that this question does not awaken him to an awareness of Greece’s condition but instead to his own. Following the line of awakening (“Das Geschrei des Jakals...schrökt ja aus meinen

Träumen mich auf”) a short two sentence paragraph chants seven self-reflexive “mir” and “mich”’s in about half as many lines. The first step of Hölderlin’s argument is to distinguish the “Ich” as that which accompanies all perceptions.

Hyperion’s narration in the opening letter begins in the same way as Fichte’s argument in the essay, “Versuch einer neuen Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre,” published in the same year as the first volume of Hölderlin’s novel. Both use the term “Handeln” to denote the self-activity that separates the subject from the object of consciousness.³⁸ Briefly, Fichte defines thinking as “Handeln.” Furthermore, he associates “Handeln” with the transition from thinking of the self to thinking of something other than the self:

Du bemerkst sonach Thätigkeit und Freiheit in diesem deine Denken, in diesem Uebergehen vom Denken des Ich zum Denken des Tisches, der Wände, u.s.f. Dein Denken ist dir ein Handeln. (101-102)³⁹

Hyperion, certainly less enthusiastic than Fichte about the freedom demonstrated in his thinking, laments a similar transition that leaves him without hope: “O hätt’ ich doch nie gehandelt! um wie manche Hoffnung wär’ ich reicher!” (I, 614, 1). Hope for what? Hyperion tells us: “Ja vergiß nur, daß es Menschen giebt, darbendes, angefochtenes, tausendfach geärgertes Herz!” (I, 614, 3-4). To forget subjectivity (“Menschen”) is to overcome the divisive nature of consciousness, which is defined by every form of

³⁸ The subject also appears in Fichte’s *Wissenschaftslehre* of 1794 in part one, section one where “Handeln” defines judgment (“Urteil”) in empirical consciousness (15).

³⁹ The essay was printed in the *Philosophisches Journal* (7. Band, 1. Heft, 1797), which at this time was being published by both Niethammer and Fichte. The reference cited here is to Baumann’s edition.

disharmonious opposition, be it negative (“darben”), reciprocal (“anfechten”), or positive (“ärgern”).⁴⁰ Hyperion would like to return to a state of being free from opposition “und kehre[n] wieder dahin, wo du ausgiengst, in die Arme der Natur, der wandellosen, stillen, und schönen” (I, 614, 4-6). But, it is too late. Turning back to a union with nature, the state of childhood Hyperion idealizes, represents an act of cognition that necessarily introduces division. Fichte’s “Absolutes Ich,” grounded in the reflexive “Handeln” of the subject, (re)claims a fundamental ontological unity.⁴¹ The (re)turn Hyperion calls for, however, cannot ignore the fact that it is a conscious activity and, therefore, can only accomplish an epistemological synthesis. As a result, Hyperion cannot actually return, he can only think about a relation that overcomes the oppositions that constitute consciousness itself.

Hyperion looks to nature for the idea of relation under ideal conditions. The second letter centers around a poetic study of the unity of subject and object, which in a philosophical context, Hölderlin called “die unnachlässliche Forderung, die an jedes System gemacht werden muß” (letter to Schiller, 4 Sept., 1795). The principle of differentiation in unity, central to Hyperion’s aesthetics as put forth in the “Athensgespräch,” makes it possible to speak of such a unity. Hyperion begins the letter by declaring his loneliness and dispossession carried over from the feeling of isolation in the first letter: “Ich habe nichts, wovon ich sagen möchte, es sei mein eigen” (I, 614, 8-

⁴⁰ A note of explanation is needed regarding my labeling of want, contention, and irritation as negative, reciprocal, and positive oppositions, respectively. Thinking, for Hölderlin, is dialectical. Groups of three are a signal that he is categorically defining a concept. The three principal relationships of the novel represent a global example, but we will see such groupings on various levels throughout the narration.

⁴¹ Hölderlin’s letter to Hegel of January 26th, 1795 claims that Fichte’s “Ich” replaces Spinoza’s “Substanz.”

10). Taking his own advice, he tries to return to nature: “Ruhmlos und einsam kehr’ ich zurück und wandre durch mein Vaterland, das, wie ein Todtengarten, weit umher liegt” (I, 614, 14-15). The fatherland rewards him with grim reminders of man’s work in the field, but thinking less politically, Hyperion finds greener pastures: “Du grünst noch, heilige Natur!” (I, 614, 18-19). He momentarily loses himself in the expanse of divine nature: “Verloren in’s weite Blau, blik’ ich oft hinauf an den Aether und hinein in’s heilige Meer, und mir ist, als öffnet’ ein verwandter Geist mir die Arme, als löste der Schmerz der Einsamkeit sich auf in’s Leben der Gottheit” (I, 614, 28-31). The thrust of the second letter, however, is directed at the loss of the feeling of losing oneself. There is a tendency to read the lost idyllic relationship with nature ‘Romantically’ as a simultaneous dissolution and transcendence of the self, a former state of pantheistic grace the poet forever strives to regain. Yet, the salvation offered by nature here is not oblivion, but passivity as a panacea for the “Handeln” that plagues Hyperion in the first letter: “Mein ganzes Wesen verstummt und lauscht, wenn die zarte Welle der Luft mir um die Brust spielt” (I, 614, 26-27). A sense of silent play in the eavesdropper replaces that of effective activity; the self remains intact. The way in which this differs from the feeling of dispossession and isolation that opens the letter is found in the intuition of relation, an oxymoron grasped in the conception of play.⁴² Play is spontaneously interactive; the eavesdropper, “Verloren in’s weite Blau,” maintains relation to his

⁴² Ogden quite correctly focuses on love as the relationship expressive of Hölderlin’s notion of differentiation in unity, but adds that “Spielen” also characterizes this relationship, while emphasizing the maintenance of selfhood. See his essay “Amor de intellectualis: Hölderlin, Spinoza and St. John.”

object, in contrast to the dispossessed, who has fallen stone deaf: “ich vernehme durch keine Stimme von [meinen Geliebten] nichts mehr.” The significance of the distinction is made clear in the comparison between the welcoming arms of “ein verwandtes Geist” here, and Hyperion’s fearful awakening to find himself grasping his own finger instead of “der Geist der Welt” at the end of the third letter. Solipsism is not yet the issue, for that concerns the status of objective reality. Just as nature is not lost in the self, the self is not lost in nature. In the ideal relation, the self only loses its “Einsamkeit.”

The phrase “Eines zu seyn mit Allem,” repeated in the letter in three consecutive paragraphs, has been said to be the peak moment of Hyperion’s life, the goal of his striving, and the ultimate ideal behind Hölderlin’s thinking.⁴³ Fixing the significance of the phrase to a single extreme, however, obscures the range of meaning through which the phrase moves in its reiterations. The repetition of the phrase shows how narrative takes form as a movement opposite to sublimation. It is first equated with the religious abstractions “Gottheit” and “Himmel”—absolute positives. Next, the phrase defines a worldly ideal, and the religious terms shift from predicates to modifiers: “seelige Selbstvergessenheit,” “die heilige Bergeshöhe.” Despite the fact that Hyperion wants to express a positive extreme, “der Gipfel der Gedanken und Freuden,” he speaks of this human ideal as a kind of subtraction:

der Ort der ewigen Ruhe, wo der Mittag seine Schwüle und der Donner

⁴³ See Mason’s “Hölderlin und Novalis” as well as Unger’s discussion of “All-Unity” (Hen Kai Pan) in *Hölderlin’s Major Poetry: the Dialectics of Unity*. Cassirer’s more astute reading uses the phrase “Eines zu seyn mit Allem” to distinguish Hegel’s idealism from Hölderlin’s idea of nature (“Hölderlin und der deutsche Idealismus,” 111).

seine Stimme verliert und das kochende Meer der Wooge des Kornfelds
gleich. (I, 615, 2-5)

The descent from the sun to the clouds to the seas reiterates the transition from divine to human in the change from “Eines zu seyn mit Allem, das ist Leben der Gottheit” to “Eines zu seyn mit Allem, was lebt.”⁴⁴ The continuity in the premise, however, leaves it ambiguous as to whether we’ve actually crossed a border or remain somehow suspended between heaven and earth.

In its third invocation, Hyperion makes more explicit the linguistic and hence mediating aspect of the phrase. The language shifts accordingly, becoming more allegorical:

Eines zu seyn mit Allem, was lebt! Mit diesem Worte legt die Tugend den zürnenden Harnisch, der Geist des Menschen den Zepter weg, und alle Gedanken schwinden vor dem Bilde der ewigeinigen Welt, wie die Regeln des ringenden Künstlers vor seiner Urania. (I, 615, 8-10)

The last of the three formulations clearly conveys an aesthetic experience more removed from the perceiving subject than either the religious or natural representations preceding it. The literal abstractions of the first iteration, gradually replaced by natural metaphorical images in the second, are finally personified with theatrical scenes and classical references. The progression moves from abstract ideal, to the ideal conceived in

⁴⁴ The second passage continues: “Eines zu seyn mit Allem, was lebt, in seeliger Selbstvergessenheit wiederzukehren in’s All der Natur.” To avoid confusion, I reiterate my earlier point that “Selbstvergessenheit” is very different from “Selbstvernichtung.” The former describes a lapse in thinking, a necessary fiction used by the self-conscious subject to conceptualize unity with the object. It does not describe the unity itself, which would require the annihilation of the subject.

nature, to dramatic image. At this point in the novel, Hyperion appears to interpret this as a linear progression, and hence, fatalistically: "Auf dieser Höhe steh' ich oft, mein Bellarmin! Aber ein Moment des Besinnens wirft mich herab." (I, 615, 13-14) What he seems not to recognize is that the ambiguity of his language succeeds in unifying the three formulations of "Eines zu seyn mit Allem" according to a principle of differentiation in unity. That he could be speaking literally or figuratively of the "Höhe" reveals a juncture in the language where the real and the abstract briefly mingle. Not until the end of the novel does he celebrate this kind of loss in nature as beauty itself. Only in this way can Hyperion's "Bildung," here the ruination of childhood bliss, be later considered a triumph. In the end, he realizes an education through inward reflection rather than acquisition, and ultimately, he makes peace with the need to mediate. To regain the immediate intuition of "Gottheit" (the initial iteration of the ideal), he must first understand mediation in "Gedanken" (the second iteration and subject of letter three) and in "Bild" (the third iteration and subject of letter four).

The third letter describes Hyperion's "Zeit des Erwachens"--mediation as "Gedanken." Like his "Bildung" mentioned in the second letter, the time of awakening describes a maturation from childhood, but the transition is one of "das Herz" not of "Vernunft." Though "Bildung" may connote something more institutional, or even intellectual, this is not to say that the "Zeit des Erwachens" applies only to the emotions. In this instance, it would be misleading to rigidly divide heart and mind, for the context already assumes the mental construct of consciousness in which subject and object

remain in opposition. Feeling, here, does not denote a union of subject and object. The time of awakening is the time when one notices boundaries in the absolute sense. But, awakening does not simply mean gaining the ability to analyze or distinguish. The border recognized does not so much describe a distinction as it does a limit; it indicates an awareness of self as defined in and of itself with relation only to complete absence. Hyperion idealizes the child who sees the world as pure positive or non-oppositional other, an extension of the self without consciousness of itself. The awakening represents a consciousness of self with relation not to a positive other, but instead to an object only as an implicit placeholder necessary for the concept of a consciousness itself—the wholly negative other.⁴⁵ Opposition mediates thought, but at this point, Hyperion is not exactly thinking clearly..

We may then read the “Zeit des Erwachens” as an “Erwachen der Zeit.”

Hyperion's chronology is famously convoluted. The explanation for this is twofold: Hyperion must first sort out subjectivity before he can sort out time, but he must have a chronology or story line before he can give his phenomenology of consciousness direction.⁴⁶ As the phrase “Zeit des Erwachens” tells us, the awakening is an historical moment; the opposition that mediates Hyperion's thinking here is temporal. If Hyperion is to come into self-knowledge, to think and thus know himself, he must see what he is now that he was not in the past. Here, however, Hyperion sees only that he is not now

⁴⁵ Kant describes thinking in similar terms when he says that the limited requires a concept of the unlimited. The moment in Hyperion's process of awakening that I describe here is the sense of opposition independent of the concept of the unlimited.

⁴⁶ Again, Hölderlin follows Kantian epistemology where it designates time as the form of inner sense, the mode of representation of oneself as an object (KrV, B 54).

what he was in the past; his identity has no place in the present. Walter Benjamin says in his essay, "Geschichtsphilosophische Thesen": "Die Geschichte ist Gegenstand einer Konstruktion, deren Ort nicht die homogene und leere Zeit, sondern die von 'Jetztzeit' erfüllte bildet." (276) "Das wahre Bild der Vergangenheit huscht vorbei." (270) In order to construct history or tell a story that does not scurry but moves with even tempo, we must establish our place in the present. To do this, Hölderlin gives Hyperion some outside help. Bellarmin asks Hyperion to tell of his youth. Hyperion, in turn, relates how he thinks about remembering childhood. He has not yet learned his art, and as a result, he recounts the past by showing how it passes through thought in the present. In this way, Hölderlin shows mediation itself, the immediate "Gedanken" rather than a narrative history that represents the past as if it were a unified, teleological, or closed series of events. As the predominance of insights on childhood over the actual events of Hyperion's early years suggests, the "Zeit des Erwachens" as a crossing over out of childhood is more an experience in his present mind than in his actual past. At this point, the only unity or teleology is to be found in Hyperion's immediate manner of thinking (i.e. his consciousness), not in what it depicts (i.e. the story line).

Over the course of the novel Hyperion comes to self-knowledge as he comes to terms with the past. The narrating subject must be in time in order to tell his story, but at this moment, Hyperion feels out of time: "Aber schön ist auch die Zeit des Erwachens, wenn man nur zur Unzeit uns nicht wekt" (I, 616, 30-31). He must find his rhythm if he is to find out who he is. In other words, solving the riddle of the self is a task inseparable

from learning how to tell a story. The third letter offers two possible (re)solutions to the question of subjectivity, two manners of closure: transcendence and transformation. Hyperion's subjectivity, being limited, entails, like any other, relation to the unlimited or absolute—the fundamental opposition that defines consciousness. He begins with Geßneresque reverie, recalling a time of life's "müheleose Ordnung." Awakening into selfhood, however, establishes an epistemological limit. The "Zeit des Erwachens" marks a limit of the self. The narrated Hyperion first sees this as an opportunity for aggrandizing transcendence:

O es sind heilige Tage, wo unser Herz zum erstenmale die Schwingen übt,
 wo wir, voll schnellen feurigen Wachstums dastehn in der herrlichen
 Welt, wie die junge Pflanze, wenn sie der Morgensonne sich aufschließt,
 und die kleinen Arme dem unendlichen Himmel entgegenstreckt. (I, 616,
 32-36)

The transcendent is represented with ideal ("herrlich") images of nature, the metaphorical plant-self facing off with a positive (i.e. manifest and present) heavenly world. The following paragraph offers a different scenario—one of willful or 'man-made' transformation (the ship replaces the plant) in which the self-conscious self (addressing itself in the second person) looks to a negative or absent world beyond.

Wie [das Herz] mich umhertrieb an den Bergen und am Meeresufer!...die
 kühnen fröhlichen Schiffen, wenn sie hinunterschwanden am Horizont!
 Dort hinunter! dort wanderst du auch einmal hinunter. (I, 617, 1-5)

Where “zum erstenmale” characterizes the initiation of the plant’s organic cycle, the “einmal” of his imagined journey beneath the horizon suggests something terminal. The idealized scenario of transcendence grants an overview of history, while the more human picture represents a moment in the present looking ahead to an unknown future. Such are the options for historical (i.e. narrative) existence open to the conscious, thinking subject.

The loss of the childhood feeling of oneness with nature identifies Hyperion’s awakening and the initial split or trauma that occasions his striving toward an ideal. Here lies the nascent idea that striving orders narrative and defines the self in contrast to the childish or ‘selfless’ sense of “müheleose Ordnung.” The two orders of striving mark the points of closure for both the ‘unified’ first volume (“Es wird nur Eine Schönheit seyn”) and the ‘fragmentary’ fourth book that concludes the second volume (“Nächstens mehr”). The former directs striving toward an ideal unity (“dem unendliche Himmel entgegen strecken”), while the latter formulates striving as a state of fragmentation, a view into the negative abyss (“hinunterschwinden am Horizont”).

Hyperion’s “Zeit des Erwachens,” an awakening into subjectivity and striving, is also an awakening to the possibility of solipsism: “es ist, als fühlt’ ich ihn, den Geist der Welt, wie eines Freundes warme Hand, aber ich erwache und meine, ich habe mein eignen Finger gehalten” (I, 618, 5-7). Striving and the fear of solipsism are symptomatic of a spiritual crisis resulting from the epistemological limit of consciousness. Hyperion has not lost faith in the absolute, he just doesn’t know where to direct his faith. The

“Zeit des Erwachens” illuminates or perhaps even generates the impossibility of God and nature both being absolute. Where the formulations of “Eines zu seyn mit Allem” relied on an ambiguity in language to resolve their contradictions, a critical tension becomes evident between the tentative rejection of pantheism and its affirmation:

O du, zu dem ich rief, als wärst du über den Sternen, den ich Schöpfer des Himmels nannte und der Erde, freundlich Idol meiner Kindheit, du wirst nicht zürnen, daß ich deiner vergaß! Warum ist die Welt nicht dürftig genug, um außer ihr noch Einen zu suchen? (I, 617, 29-33)

The passage confesses the adolescent inattention to God in favor of nature—a partiality Hyperion seems not entirely to have outgrown, as the rhetorical question in the last line attests. The verb “nannte” comes a little sooner than we might expect, causing a moment of hesitation in which the relative clause “freundlich Idol meiner Kindheit” could mistakenly be identified with “die Erde.” The “Zeit des Erwachens” has brought about the awareness of a horizon between the conscious subject and the object of its perceptions. This awareness has made risky business of pantheism, which now brings with it the threat of solipsistic illusion that ignores the rupture, the leap of faith, that necessarily exists between the conscious subject and a divine object:

O wenn sie eines Vaters Tochter ist, die herrliche Natur, ist das Herz der Tochter nicht sein Herz? Ihr Innerstes, ist's nicht Er? Aber hab' ich's denn? kenn' ich es denn?

Es ist, als säh' ich, aber dann erschrek' ich wieder, als wär' es meine

eigne Gestalt, was ich gesehn. (I, 618, 1-5)

In questioning the reflection of God in nature, Hyperion arrives at a second reflection; approaching a view of the absolute, he suddenly sees only himself. The conscious subject between nature and God looks for a center, “das innerste Herz.” The project is one of incessant questioning, which ends here in a frightful recognition of the self. The search for an absolute center that ends in the self is solipsism. We have arrived then at Hölderlin’s hyperbolic movement, “die unendliche Annäherung,” which is inherent in what I have termed the ‘double-mirror’ structure of the novel.

In his well-known letter to Schiller of September 4, 1795, Hölderlin calls the explanation of the unity of subject and object an infinite approach (“unendliche Annäherung”). The idea also well-describes Hölderlin’s ‘poetics of the hyperbola’. Knaupp sees Hölderlin’s famous “exzentrische Bahn” more as a spiral moving out from a middle point than a hyperbola.(III, 303) The hyperbola, however, better describes what I see as a paradox essential to Hölderlin’s poetics: the ideas of limitation and limitlessness combined in the image of an infinite approach to a line. Where “exzentrisch” can be understood as moving out from the center (Knaupp’s line of thinking), it can also describe the lack of a common center between circles. Just as a viewer between two opposing mirrors can never see the center of their infinitely reflecting regress without his own image coming in the way, Hyperion can never point to an absolute center that does not simply identify himself. In the letter that follows Hyperion’s first explicit acknowledgment of Diotima’s death, he says:

Wo ist das Wesen, das, wie meines, sie erkannte? in welchem Spiegel sammelten sich, so wie in mir, die Stralen dieses Lichts? erschrak sie freudig nicht vor ihrer eignen Herrlichkeit, da sie zuerst in meiner Freude sich gewahr ward? (I, 665, 26-29 (volume one, book two, letter thirteen))

In his relationship with Diotima, Hyperion describes himself as a mirror reflecting her “Herrlichkeit.” Furthermore, to conjure an image of Diotima, whom he equates with beauty itself, he must find a mirror that reflects her light as he reflected it. But, as the initial question reveals, Hyperion cannot find this focal point outside himself. To return to my analogy, the closer the viewer approaches the center position, the further the perspective regresses toward infinity, but at the point of the infinite regress, the view crosses a certain limit and can recognize only self-identity. Hyperion’s manner of recapturing his vision of beauty, figured in the metaphor of the double mirror, describes a way in which to read his novel.

I have already described two orders of striving: the unified order directed at the absolute ideal (“Es wird nur Eine Schönheit seyn”) and the fragmentary order that orients itself to a negative horizon (“So dacht’ ich. Nächstens mehr”). The former closes volume one, the latter ends volume two. To more fully define the novel’s ‘double mirror’ structure, the other two endings must be considered as well.⁴⁷ The first book ends with the initiation of an inward quest: “So dacht’ ich. Wie das alles in mich kam, begreif’ ich noch nicht.” The ending marks an internal epistemological horizon

⁴⁷ For the sake of clarity, I will refer to the novel’s four books sequentially as “one” and “two” for volume one and “three” and “four” for volume two.

(Hyperion does not know himself) and thereby establishes a ‘fragmentary’ order—order by virtue of orientation to a negative unknown. The second book ends with an outward turn, Hyperion confidently striving toward an absolute divinity: “Es wird nur Eine Schönheit seyn; und Menschheit und Natur wird sich vereinen in Eine allumfassende Gottheit.” The ending establishes a dialectically unified order—order by virtue of the closure offered by a positive unknown (i.e. one that is present within the conceptual framework). The third book also reflects a turn away. In his final farewell to Diotima, Hyperion tells his love to look to nature: “Auch die Bäume grüße, wo ich dir zum erstenmale begegnete und die fröhlichen Bäche, wo wir giengen und die schönen Gärten von Angele, und laß, du Liebe! dir mein Bild dabei begegnen. Lebe wohl.” Again, the ending grants closure—a unified order of nature in which one finds a closed conceptual framework (“Bild”). The fourth book, like the first, draws an horizon; this time, however, the inward turn (“So dacht’ ich”) looks back out to the future (“Nächstens mehr”). The final order is once again open or fragmentary by virtue of orientation to something outside the narrative frame, something left unsaid. Two open endings (subjectively defined horizons) frame the two ideological unities, God and nature, that would define objective reality.

We have dedicated some thought to the thinking behind Hyperion’s narrative. We have looked at the mediating form of “Gedanken,” the awakening of the self to its limited subjectivity and the resulting sense of relation to concepts of the ideal and unlimited: God and nature. Hyperion may have an idea of what his story should be about,

but he does not understand how to write it. Bellarmin tried to help by requesting a chronology, but he only makes Hyperion aware of his shortcomings as a narrator. Hyperion must reflect on the lessons of Adamas to understand how to mediate the relation to the absolute not in the abstractions of thought, but in the images of artistic vision. In the fourth letter, the focus shifts from the inner mediation of “Gedanken” to the interaction between consciousness and representation as “Bild.” What becomes apparent over the course of the novel is a violence inherent in the process of realizing ideals. Adamas instills in Hyperion the need to aestheticize the ideal, while Alabanda inspires him to politicize ideals. A subdued violence in the relationship to Adamas will become more explicit in the relationship to Alabanda.

It would be easy to see Adamas simply as an ideal, almost divine figure, the embodiment of all that Hyperion could hope to be, but this isn't the case. Where Hyperion claims to have enjoyed a playful harmony with nature as a child, his description of the relationship with Adamas displays the characteristics of a dialectic, and dialectic is simply the mechanism that *represents* unified ideals. Adamas is a figure in memory, and as such, we must look at his epistemological rather than ontological significance. One cannot simply look at *what* Hyperion says he is, we must instead examine *how* he affects Hyperion's relationship to his own thoughts and recollections. For example, as Hyperion remembers his mentor, “die Barbaren” also come to mind. “Die Barbaren” are the ignoble Greeks who turned gruesomely riotous during the failed revolution undertaken with Alabanda. They are the dark shadow that will always accompany the thought of the

magnanimous Adamas:

Verzeih mir, Geist meines Adamas! daß ich dieser gedenke vor dir. Das ist der Gewinn, den uns Erfahrung giebt, daß wir nichts trefliches uns denken, ohne sein ungestaltes Gegentheil. (I, 618, 26-28)

Adamas must be included as part of that experience that generates dialectical thinking as opposed to a childhood feeling of resonance with the object of consciousness. Adamas, as we confront him in these memoirs, is a placeholder for an activity in Hyperion's mind; he cannot be thought of as having independent identity, or as an abstract ideal representative of something across a border toward which Hyperion strives. Adamas describes instead a mechanism of striving, not that itself toward which Hyperion strives. As such, Hyperion could never lose himself in Adamas, as he did in the silent beauty of nature.

Hyperion twice refers to Adamas as possessing "Begeisterung," a quality that one would think characterizes non-dialectical relation. Adamas should embody profundity, timelessness, immediacy, spontaneity, and beauty:

[Begeisterung] weilt nicht auf der Oberfläche, faßt nicht da und dort uns an, braucht keiner Zeit und keines Mittels; Gebot und Zwang und Überredung braucht sie nicht; auf allen Seiten, in allen Tiefen und Höhen ergreift sie im Augenblick' uns, und wandelt, ehe sie da ist für uns, ehe wir fragen, wie uns geschiehet, durch und durch in ihre Schönheit, ihre Seeligkeit uns um. (I, 619-620, 35-3)

Conviction without persuasion, change without decay: these qualities, testament to self-evidence and ubiquity, could justify Hyperion's early pantheism as well as constitute an ideal first principle of philosophy. The passage would suit the earlier descriptions of nature than to Adamas, but for the effect of "wandeln"; as the first letter told Bellarmin, nature itself is "wandellos." When Hyperion remembers his mentor, he sees himself as ancillary even when equating himself with him:

Und ich, war ich nicht der Nachhall seiner stillen Begeisterung?
wiederholten sich nicht die Melodien seines Wesens in mir? Was ich sah,
ward ich, und es war Göttliches, was ich sah. (I, 619, 30-32)

Adamas's "Begeisterung" has a transformative effect that introduces both hierarchy and tension. Hyperion's conviction that he achieved Adamas's divine status arrives only after overcoming doubts. He does not lose himself in Adamas as he did in nature's "weites Blaue," he takes possession of him.

To mediate is to do violence. Adamas is ever at peace, but he is also a "Sieger und Kämpfer." As Hyperion says, one must either become like him or flee from him. A relationship with Adamas must always be reactive, whereas with nature the spirit is more cooperative. Adamas introduces Hyperion to Plutarch and nature; that is, he teaches the young Greek how to understand nature "nach menschlicher Weise" and gives his wild, adolescent drives number and measure. Hyperion describes this as his spirit becoming "waffenfähig." And yet, with what is Hyperion to do battle? The student was supposed to have learned how to mediate between his human faculties and his ideals. Instead, as

he reexamines his past in his letters to Bellarmin, he only realizes his failure to have done so. Visiting the ruins of a temple to Jupiter, the adolescent Hyperion collects and reassembles pieces of a broken column, while Adamas sketches the scene. As a youth Hyperion tries to recover directly, what Adamas knows can only be recovered in art. Hyperion realizes when writing to Bellarmin that he has not yet learned his lesson from Adamas:

Lieber Bellarmin! ich hätte Lust, so pünctlich dir, wie Nestor, zu erzählen;
ich ziehe durch die Vergangenheit, wie ein Ährenleser über die
Stoppeläker, wenn der Herr des Lands geerndtet hat; da liest man jeden
Strohalm auf. (I, 621, 3-6)⁴⁸

In trying to recuperate everything, the narrative loses itself in isolated fragments that will never succeed in reconstructing the whole. Adamas has introduced Hyperion into the battle with the absolute that is art. The young hero, however, telling the story of himself, has yet to figure out how to fight it.

From Adamas, Hyperion has no peace. Though Adamas asks his pupil to be like him, like the sun, a golden unified absolute, Hyperion ultimately gains only a feeling of alienation when reflecting back upon the experience. The narrating Hyperion sometimes remembers flights of enthusiasm in which the golden age appeared within reach, but further reflection points out the futility of trying to reconstruct the past: “Aber was

⁴⁸ The image of harvesting will return when Hyperion tells of meeting Alabanda. The revolutionary work of his outlaw band, “Nemesis,” is described as tilling. In the relation to Adamas, Hyperion associates violence with the production of art. Addressing Bellarmin while conjuring an image later linked to political violence, Hyperion seeds the thought that the interpretation or reading of art (“lesen”) is a violent act as well.

sprech' ich davon? Als hätten wir noch eine Ahnung jener Tage!" (I, 621, 17-18).

Adamas promises the absolute but doesn't deliver. He leaves to look for a people of unusual excellence, his disciple, evidently, not being one of them. Hyperion doesn't seem to forgive him for this rejection in the past until he can disclaim his anger when writing about it in the present: "Es ist, als zürmt' ich meinem Adamas, daß er mich verließ, aber ich zürm' ihm nicht." (I, 622, 25-26) The student will follow his teacher's example and leave the island of Tina, always associated with confinement and limitation, and go to Smyrna, where he meets the man who will lead him into a different kind of battle under a different kind of ideal. The activity of striving toward an ideal is ultimately associated in the novel with violence, and it is with Adamas that this tendency begins.

The fourth letter ends with a curious contradiction characteristic of tragedy; the realization of loss provides a moment of peace, a moment of bitter resolution. With Adamas's departure there is a kind of closure in reflection, albeit it cynical, juxtaposed with the younger Hyperion's lesson of violent striving: "ich begreife meine Bedürftigkeit nicht, wenn oft mir wird, wie damals ihm seyn mußte. Was ist Verlust, wenn so der Mensch in seiner eignen Welt sich findet? In uns ist alles. Was kümmerts dann den Menschen, wenn ein Haar von seinem Haupte fällt?" (I, 621-622, 36-4) This comes just after he has recounted a powerful moment of rupture and loss, and thus the very Fichteian maxim, "In uns ist alles," must be taken with a grain of salt, for it is imbedded within what are quite plausibly Adamas's own words turned sourly against him. The passage

reads more as an embittered dismissal than a genuine realization, and Hyperion is enough aware of this that he must assure Bellarmin that he isn't angry. As he has told us, Hyperion does not yet grasp how he can feel destitute; his search isn't over, but at least it is now set off in the right direction. The letter closes with a double farewell to Adamas and Bellarmin, a moment of clear correspondence between the past and present, memory and actuality. Hyperion's formal valediction, extremely scarce among his letters, signals a brief moment of insight into the paradoxical union of loss and closure, trauma and tranquillity.

The fifth and final letter of the mini-drama affirms an awareness of alienated subjectivity and thus brings us back to the initial subject introduced in the first letter. The conclusion of what may be called 'The Adamas Tragedy' is the recognition of a certain helplessness and dissolution—a denouement in the more literal sense. Hyperion, as a conscious individual, can more clearly see where his thread of being ends and nature's begins. The succession of animals to which he likens himself draws attention to the art with which he desperately tries to relate to nature ("wie die Fische," "wie die Schmetterling," "wie eine Fliege," "Wie ein blutender Hirsch"). Once again, the use of simile emphasizes his separation from nature more than his incorporation into it. This time, however, he is direct in announcing his alienation, bringing new emphasis to his recently acquired awareness of self:

Warum sind wir ausgenommen vom schönen Kreislauf der Natur? Oder gilt er auch für uns? (I, 623, 19-20)

Nature moves in cyclical time, while he must console himself with historical memory, which attempts to recuperate the past in linear time. The speculation on his inclusion in nature (“gilt er auch für uns?”) does not refute the assertion made by the preceding rhetorical question (“Warum sind wir ausgenommen?”); it simply points out that he is now in a state of striving toward that ideal, that he is outside the circle and searching for a center. Though the feeling of opposition has given him orientation, he is still only on the first step of his journey along “die exzentrische Bahn” and has not yet realized “die Organisation, die wir uns selbst zu geben im Stande sind” mentioned in the Fragment von Hyperion (I, 489, 10-11). Hölderlin’s masterstroke is showing that *what* Hyperion remembers is not in fact as central to the lesson as *how* he remembers. That Hyperion sees Adamas as immortal or a “Halbgott” really doesn’t further his coming into self-knowledge as much as the awareness of a dialectical relationship with his mentor. A state of striving, more than elucidating the ideal, has drawn attention to the subject as individual and in contention. This is what the violent subtext of ‘The Adamas Tragedy’ tells us.

As we recall, Adamas introduced Hyperion not only to nature but to Plutarch, whose “Parallel Lives” represents an artistic mastery over time and history—a model for any biographer. In an unspecified time in the past, Hyperion wandered in a limitless “Unsterblichkeit”:

Lieber! es war eine Zeit, da auch meine Brust an großen Hoffnungen sich sonnte, da auch mir die Freude der Unsterblichkeit in allen Pulsen schlug,

da ich wandelt' unter herrlichen Entwürfen, wie in weiter Wäldernacht, da ich glücklich, wie die Fische des Oceans, in meiner uferlosen Zukunft weiter, ewig weiter drang. (I, 623, 28-33)

Dark and deep images of limitlessness accompany an echo of Hyperion's synchronism with the "Kreislauf der Natur." But, this boundless space in time is delimited to an historical moment in the paragraph that immediately follows:

Wie muthig, seelige Natur! entsprang der Jüngling deiner Wiege! wie freut' er sich in seiner unversuchten Rüstung! Sein Bogen war gespannt und seine Pfeile rauschten im Köcher, und die Unsterblichen, die hohen Geister des Altertums führten ihn an, und sein Adamas war mitten unter ihnen. (I, 623-624, 34-4)

Images of dynamism and direction are coupled with militaristic metaphors within a hierarchy topped by Adamas and his kind from the distant past. The memory of a personal childhood and the past feeling of "Unsterblichkeit" slips into a reflection on antiquity and "die Unsterblichen." The personification of the more abstract, amorphous past shifts the focus from a 'non-conscious' subject unaware of time to a subject conscious of being a part of time. The fifth letter thus explains how Adamas, despite (or perhaps even because of) his abandoning Hyperion, has equipped him to do battle with the heroes of antiquity, the parallel lives in the past reflected in Hyperion's present thoughts:

Wer hält das aus, wen reißt die schräkliche Herrlichkeit des Altertums

nicht um, wie ein Orkan die jungen Wälder umreißt, wenn sie ihn ergreift, wie mich, und wenn, wie mir, das Element ihm fehlt, worinn er sich ein stärkend Selbstgefühl erbeuten könnte? (I, 624, 11-15)

The reflection on his lack of a sense of self in the past is precisely Hyperion's present awareness that he has acquired one. Though it cannot be said that he was cognizant of it then as he is now, Hyperion's relationship with Adamas gave him the initial sense of what it is like to be a self-conscious subject within history. With regard to both nature and time, Adamas teaches Hyperion how to tell his story.

The fifth letter ends with a paradox. As we shall see, the use of this rhetorical device as a means of closure represents a certain literary mastery. The narrator's succinct presentation of the cardinal paradox of the novel attests to his having taken first step toward artistic maturity. Hyperion describes himself metaphorically as a dog straining on the leash to slake his thirst. Stylistically, he has succeeded more so than elsewhere in unifying himself with nature, but the image is one of ceaseless striving. Characteristically, Hölderlin has juxtaposed the *how* and the *what* of his writing. If we recall how this tactic was employed in Hyperion's lesson from Adamas, we can see that we are at a point of closure. Hyperion has achieved here in the subtext a certain harmony with nature, but he will not become aware until the end of the novel that his success is due to an overwhelming feeling of insufficiency. Only then will this paradox rise to the surface in the famous conclusion, "Nächstens mehr."

Integrating striving into a notion of unity certainly belongs to the body of

Romantic thinking. As an idea essentially antithetical to the idea of perfection, the notion of striving revolutionized neoclassical aesthetics.⁴⁹ The incorporation of perfectibility into the aesthetic ideal reveals a shift from a notion of ideal unity as complete or total to one of the ideal as totalizing. Hölderlin's novel points this out. As Dieter Henrich says, Kant spoke of a theory of "synthetische Einheit," but it was Fichte who developed this into a theory of the "Einheit von Gegensätzen" (198). Fichte brought back the idea of unification ("Vereinigung") as the foundation of philosophy. Hölderlin subtly but significantly distinguishes his understanding of unity from that of Fichte, while coloring such absolute unities with an innuendo of violence. For Hölderlin, the conflict of opposites manifests an essential failure that drives the development of the individual along an endless, eccentric path. And yet, in this failure the individual finds a certain unity in himself as a reason being. Incorporating both a suggestion of unity in the interplay of opposites as well as a phenomenological understanding of the self, Hölderlin's Hyperion describes a skeptical approach to Romantic dialectics. 'The Adamas Tragedy' describes the birth of this dialectic by showing how Hyperion fails to learn the lessons of his divinely wise master until he later examines his pearls of wisdom. Curiously, this dialectic manifests both the loss of "Begeisterung" and the understanding of striving as a kind of center or a place to end.

⁴⁹ Behler elaborates on this aspect of the Romantic revolution in his essay, "The German Romantic Revolution."

**CHAPTER IV:
VIOLENT OPPOSITIONS:
ALABANDA AND THE TRAUMATIC PAST**

Ich möchte verschenken und austheilen, bis die Weisen unter den Menschen wieder einmal ihrer Thorheit und die Armen wieder einmal ihres Reichthums froh geworden sind.

Dazu muss ich in die Tiefe steigen: wie du des Abends thust, wenn du hinter das Meer gehst und noch der Unterwelt Licht bringst, du überreiches Gestirn!

Segne den Becher, welcher überfließen will, dass das Wasser golden aus ihm fliesse und überallhin den Abglanz deiner Wonne trage!

Siehe! Dieser Becher will wieder leer werden, und Zarathustra will wieder Mensch werden.

Also Sprach Zarathustra: Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen

In her critique of Hegel, Kristeva identifies negativity (“Negativität”) as “the cause and organizing principle of the ‘process’” (109). She distinguishes it from nothingness (“Nichts”) and negation (“Negation”) by its dynamism; neither abstract nor particular, negativity describes a force of change. The rebel Alabanda would seem to introduce this revolutionary force to Hyperion.⁵⁰ Though revolt remains more a topic of discussion than an actual event in the first book of volume one, Hölderlin associates this force with what eventually proves to be an uncontrollable, riotous violence. Within the ‘Alabanda story’, Hyperion’s initial enthusiasm for change gives way to a darker depression as his relationship with his comrade disintegrates. His falling out with Alabanda foreshadows his ultimate disillusionment in the “Befreiungskrieg,” which promised to return Greece to the glory of its ancient past but ended in barbarous pandemonium. Addressing the principle of revolutionary opposition behind the force of visionary change, the ‘Alabanda story’ stands as a reflection on the negative ideal.

The six letters that conclude the first book of the first volume comprise a unit not unlike the initial five together with the “Vorrede.” Where the first letters use Adamas to address the theoretical concerns of self-hood in its inception, the last reflect on the relationship with Alabanda to examine the practical, or the individual with regard to the

⁵⁰ De Man notes Alabanda’s paradoxical role of “Gegner” within the “friendship cycle” (*Critical Writings*, 46), but this inconsistency compels him to dismiss Alabanda in favor of Bellarmin as a representative of the concept of “Freundschaft.” As a result, de Man clouds what may be more consistent in Hölderlin’s notion of friendship. Kurz’s observation that Bellarmin’s is a speaking name for ‘war’ introduces a violent element into that relationship as well (162). Conversation, essential to Hölderlin’s idea of friendship, depends upon an opposition that precludes the “unity” and “innocence” that de Man wants to see in one of Hölderlin’s “holy words.” The point here is that Alabanda does in fact represent an ‘ideal’ in the sense of an absolute, but it needs to be distinguished from the kind of unity and sanctity that characterizes a figure such as Adamas or Diotima.

deed. Furthermore, as the discourse shifts focus, it looks at the idea of transition itself. The sixth letter opens with a change of scene as Hyperion leaves the confines of Tina for Smyrna. He thinks back on the day as a kind of birthday, and indeed he is entering a new field of learning. As a child, he engrossed himself in the oneness of nature, and then from Adamas he was given a lesson in the arts in order to mediate the highest ideals. As he embarks on his next journey his parents offer direction for his new field of study. His father advises him to learn the skills of seamanship, war, and language (the keystone of culture and society), while his mother suggests only patience. The field of practical life is thus divided into the outer interactions (commerce, confrontation, and communication) and an inner renunciation of reaction (patience as the virtue of resolving conflict within oneself). Both show concern for negotiating the crossing of a border: an outer border and an inner border. The reflections on Adamas constituted a study of separation as a condition of subjectivity. What emerges over the following six letters is a description of Hyperion's coming to terms with transgression and violation.

Reflecting on his days in Smyrna, Hyperion contemplates the nature of change through time: "Wie oft gieng ich unter den immer grünen Bäumen am Gestade des Meles, ...und sammelt' Opferblumen und warf sie in den heiligen Strom!" (I, 625, 27-30 (letter 6)). The time expression in the first phrase of the passage ("wie oft") describes his previous perspective on temporality with its focus on that which is permanent within change. The descriptions of events in the first five letters are replete with expressions that highlight the enduring and the habitual: "Ich bin jetzt alle Morgen auf den Höhn,"

(letter 1) “Auf dieser Höhe steh’ ich oft,” (letter 2) “ach wie ich oft da saß mit klopfendem Herzen auf den Höhen von Tina,” (letter 3) “Und wenn ich oft dalag unter den Blumen...und hinauf sah in’s heitre Blau” (letter 3). These examples show not only the emphasis on the consistent as well as the state of rest or repose, but also associate these ideas with a spatial concept of height. Even where the perspective is from below (the last passage) the gaze looks upward. The transition in the citation from the sixth letter from “wie oft” and “immer grünen Bäumen” to the action of collecting flowers and throwing them into the river introduces a new perspective not only downward, but on the transitory.

This new point of view shifts the emphasis in the narrative from habitual to novel actions and thus from the consistent in the manifold to the anomalous. That is, the neoteric as a basis for sudden, revolutionary action replaces the primordial as the basis for acts of reverence. The distinction characterizes a significant though subtle alteration in the voice of the text. For example, soon after arriving in Smyrna, Hyperion makes a trip to Asia Minor. He frames the event as highly singular by pointing out that he’d wished a thousand times to make the trip but only in this moment succeeded. His travels with Adamas were also unique but in a monumental as opposed to an exceptional way. The penchant for heights also remains in the letters following the ‘Adamas tragedy’; in Asia Minor, Hyperion once again stands atop a mountain. Still, the moment is remembered with a different relationship to time. The path to the summit is described in detail, and in place of the customary “wie oft” Hyperion says, “Es waren seelige Stunden.” These

hours constitute a radically unique unit of time, as opposed to an exemplary unit of time. In choosing which events to narrate, which events to select from memory, Hyperion now places more value on the traumatic than on the nostalgic. Critical in this transition is the confusion whereby the consistent and the characteristic of singularity shared by the anomalous are mistaken for the same quality of universality.

The new tone in the narrative is reflected in a new relationship to nature and suggests a new organizing principle. While thinking back on his time with Adamas, Hyperion sees in nature an “ewige mühelose Ordnung” and frequently identifies himself in simile as a part of this order. Simile does not relieve his separation anxiety, but instead manifests it more clearly. Furthermore, the frequent personification of nature early on in the novel indicates by its artfulness the difference rather than the similarity to Hyperion’s kind. The rhetorical devices that mediated between Hyperion and nature in the first five letters mediate nature within itself in the following six. The separation that allowed Hyperion to identify with nature now separates nature from itself in order to render it in poetic language. The narrative shows nature reversing or turning against itself in an act of self-identification as, for example, in the phrase “Wie ein Meer, lag das Land.” Hyperion no longer identifies directly with nature, he now identifies with the act of self-reflection in nature. Looking at the reflection in the land turned sea, he says:

es war ein himmlisch unendlich Farbenspiel, womit der Frühling mein Herz begrüßt, und wie die Sonne des Himmels sich wiederfand im tausendfachen Wechsel des Lichts, das ihr die Erde zurückgab, so

erkannte mein Geist sich in der Fülle des Lebens. (I, 626, 21-25)

Comparing the structure of nature given in this passage to that from earlier in the novel, the substitution of an “ewige Ordnung” with an “unendliches Farbenspiel” attests to the shift from a notion of eternity as permanence to a view of time as infinitely proliferating. Under Adamas we are given the divine sun-god, “der unsterbliche Titan in seiner ewigen Jugend,” who reigns down from the height of the citadel on Delos: “Hier wohnte der Sonnengott einst, unter den himmlischen Festen, wo ihn, wie goldenes Gewölk, das versammelte Griechenland umglänzt” (I, 621, 10-12). Adamas’s command “Sei, wie dieser!” makes explicit the structuring principle that enforces unity by calling for a mimetic act conditioned on difference. In Smyrna, the celestial unity of the sun finding itself on the surface of the shimmering sea implicitly establishes a doubly reflexive structure in the act of self-identification.

The infinite play of reflection, transformation, and return allows Hyperion to overlook the separation from nature and find fullness even across the specular distance. The inward turn reveals itself as a cycle, to which Hyperion is becoming attuned:

die Natur, die, wie ein schäumender Springquell, emporgedrungen war in allen Pflanzen und Bäumen, stand jetzt schon da vor meinem verdüsterten Sinne, schwinden und verschlossen und in sich gekehrt, wie ich selber. (I, 629, 16-19)

Nature in the fall is not simply withdrawn, but turned inward on itself toward a spring in the past that will one day renew itself. In restructuring the hierarchical into the self-

reflexive, the new order, as reflected in the relationship to nature, poses new problems for the mechanism of transcendence; what can lie beyond that which is a foundation unto itself? The problem is even more acute in the practical realm where the visionary program of worldly transformation can turn hurtfully against itself. Such problematic circularity underlies both the narcissistic manner in which Hyperion comes to know Alabanda and the later insight into the dangerous manner in which ideals are constructed that motivates his eventual break from him. Unable to support itself as an ideal principle, the anomalous ultimately engenders only anomie.

That Hyperion meets Alabanda outside the city is a telling peculiarity, for the larger context for their encounter is that of society not nature. In the most literal interpretation, nature, represented by the horse, is sacrificed in order to bring justice and a bond between men.⁵¹ At the very least, the violence (of men) in nature is resolved by violence. Upon returning from Asia Minor, Hyperion finds society in Smyrna to be something of a disappointment; the fullness and harmony of nature's multiplicity makes apparent the banal diversity in the city. Among the common folk Hyperion is playful but condescending, imitating their customs and manners like a player on the stage. Among the educated, variety, rather than being brought into harmony, is subsumed under a general principle of convenience, whereby utility usurps the function of unity:

Es war mir wirklich hie und da, als hätte sich die Menschenatur in die

⁵¹ Binder cites an etymology from Benjamin Hederich's *Gründliches Lexicon Mythologicum* of 1724 that renders that name Alabanda as 'horse-triumph' ("Ala" means "Pferd" and "Banda" means "Sieg"). Binder dismisses the translation because there is no reason to that it represents Hölderlin's Alabanda. I see no reason why it should not; it suits both Alabanda's warlike nature and the 'bond' made over a dead horse. See Binder's "Hölderlins Namenssymbolik," pg. 165.

Mannigfaltigkeiten des Thierreichs aufgelöst, wenn ich umher gieng unter diesen Gebildeten. (I, 627, 27-29)

Expediency and taste replace vision and reason within this social order, and the apparent problem for Hyperion is that this describes no order at all but instead a simple aggregation of humanity, or rather, animality. The tension here suggests the beginning of a poetic meditation on the formation of social order and the problems that arise when trying to bring genuine freedom in harmony with a visionary, but prescriptive ideal. The Heraclitean ideal of “eine in sich unterschiedene Einheit” acquires new complications when brought from the theoretical into the practical realm.

Where Adamas is introduced dramatically as the subject of an ode,⁵² Alabanda enters more as a character in a novel. Distinguishing between the two in this way suggests not only a new organizing principle of narrative, but a new perspective on history as well. Bellarmin, our reader in absentia, first learns of Adamas by association to classical antiquity (“Weist du, wie Plato und sein Stella sich liebten?” (I, 618, 9)). Adamas, though himself clearly understanding the need to mediate the ideal, is described as something of a living ideal in the classical sense, that is to say, fixed and singular: “O daß nur du mir ewig gegenwärtig wärest” (I, 618, 29). Once again Hyperion uses the temporal expression of the repeated and consistent, if not perpetual: “Wie oft warst du

⁵² This remains consistent with the idea that the first five letters follow the basic structure of a drama. Adamas would essentially be the subject of a choric ode. The classical ode captures both the sense of the dramatic and the divine that is associated with the Adamas narrative. Where Pindar’s odes of choric song performed in Dionysiac theater exemplify the former, the ode of the Homeric style with its typical invocation of a deity illustrates the latter. The association here is to classical drama and is to be distinguished from the lyric, especially in the Romantic sense of poetry in general.

mir nahe" (I, 618, 34). Compare this with the introduction of Alabanda: "Einst war ich tief in die Wälder des Mimas hineingeritten" (I, 630, 6). The singular event in time, fixed to a specific site, signals the beginning of an epic not an ode. This, together with the fact that the story-tellers were the sole sector of Smyrnan society whose company Hyperion could bear, suggests that the narrator has acquired a new taste or manner of reflection. History now organizes itself in memory around the event rather than the figure within the event. Furthermore, by attaching the figure to the historical deed, the epic narrative assures that any idealization remains rooted in the past, inaccessible to the present. A deified figure marks time for a reminiscing subject very differently than does an event; once again, the terms nostalgic and traumatic would apply. At this point, however, it would be difficult to claim that Hyperion has consciously adopted the new historical perspective, but that is the nature of reflection on the traumatic past; therapeutic effect demands that what is gleaned from memory be distinct from memory itself. At the close of the 'Adamas tragedy', Hyperion was left "schmach(end) an der Kette," but his break with Smyrna, though no less painful, is clean: "-o Himmel! schrie ich, und alles Leben in mir erwacht' und rang, die fliehende Gegenwart zu halten, aber sie war dahin, dahin!" (I, 643, 7-8). His apostrophic appeal to heaven goes unheard and the present slips inevitably into the past. Though generated by the sudden turn, the new organizing principle behind the narrative, the new manner of remembrance, inevitably resolves itself terminally. As a result, Hyperion can return to Alabanda only by retelling the story in the failure of the "Befreiungskrieg," whereas Adamas may be repeatedly invoked in all his glory.

The traumatic narrative relies on rupture or violence to construct its account of the past. Its mechanism is analytic not synthetic, like that of the nostalgic narrative. In the relationship to Adamas the violence of separation was incorporated into the process of the creation of the ideal, but with Alabanda the overturning of the ideal or institution becomes the new ideal itself. Hyperion must resolve the problem of how to maintain the enthusiasm and freedom of the revolutionary ideal while preventing the revolutionary machine from establishing itself as a blind mechanism of change.⁵³ Hyperion first offers hope as a counter-force to the revolutionary drive to propel history:

Es lebte nichts, wenn es nicht hoffte. Mein Herz verschloß jetzt seine
Schätze, aber nur, um sie für eine bessere Zeit zu sparen, für das Einzige,
Heilige, Treue, das gewiß, in irgend einer Periode des Daseyns, meiner
dürstenden Seele begegnen sollte. (I, 628, 31-34)

Prignitz locates this counter-force, this form-giving element, in Hölderlin's term "Utopie," but he understands it in the sense of an unattainable ideal, the object of a never-ending search (207). Sticking with the term "Hoffnung" offers a concept closer to the arena of praxis and history in which the novel now finds itself. Hope structures via the negative by embracing change without a program, as opposed to the revolutionary organization that establishes change itself as its program. Only in the passive reception of the negative does the possibility of encountering "das Einzige, Heilige, Treue" in any

⁵³ This certainly relates to the change in Hölderlin's attitude toward the French Revolution. With regard to the historical aspect of this dilemma, see Prignitz's article, "Die Bewältigung der Französischen Revolution in Hölderlins 'Hyperion.'"

period of existence become real. Hope links “Möglichkeit,” in the transcendental sense borrowed from Kant, to empirical or historical reality.

Hyperion enters a new battle ground with a new hero. Alabanda’s association with the moon and meadows, in contrast to that of Adamas with the sun and mountain tops, shows a turn to the reflective-horizontal from the radiant-vertical. In Adamas, Hyperion sought a mentor to make him “waffenfähig” as part of his spiritual growth. In Alabanda, he seeks a companion to relieve his boredom with “den ersten besten Krieg.” The subdued violence in the relationship to Adamas, now comes to the surface in repeated references to battle and confrontation. The repeatedly mentioned horse, that forges their bond introduces a strong sense of the physical, both military and sexual. Like a novice decadent, Hyperion, with expressions such as “das geheime Verlangen,” makes abundantly clear that his desire towards Alabanda is secret and seductively forbidden. He takes voyeuristic pleasure in watching the dwarf-race of society savor the Titan among them: “an dem glühenden verbrannten Römerkopfe, wie an verbotner Frucht mit verstohlnem Blike sich labte” (I, 629-630, 32-1). Where Adamas stood at a limit “auf der Höhe,” Alabanda stands at a threshold “am Thore.” Hyperion’s attraction to Adamas was transcendent, the attraction to Alabanda is transgressive. The arena of Hyperion’s psychic development given to us in his epistolary autobiography mirrors the object of his reflection.

The kind of confrontation Hyperion now enters into is different from that to which Adamas introduced him. The relationship with Adamas introduced the self as

separate, specifically as separated from nature. The relationship to Alabanda reveals the self as divided within itself. The relationship between Adamas as a living ideal and Hyperion as the echo who becomes “waffenfähig” describes something very different from the relationship with Alabanda, to whom Hyperion is a “Waffenbruder.” In Alabanda, Hyperion hopes to find a reflective cure for his separation anxiety: “in einer Seele eine Welt zu finden, mein Geschlecht in einem freundlichen Bilde zu umarmen.” What results is an odd union in which Hyperion finds both a twin and a demon lover, a brother and skeleton bride. The initial meeting with Alabanda foretells of this curious process of attraction, identification, possession, and repulsion. The reversal is effected in the moment in which the image in the mirror is identified with the viewing subject and, still remaining objective, becomes alien and hence, a possessing demon. To see this in the text it is necessary to cite the initial exchange in toto:

In einiger Entfernung sah ich Rosse auf dem Boden ausgestreckt und
Männer neben ihnen im Grase.

Wer seid ihr? rief ich.

Das ist Hyperion! rief eine Heldenstimme, freudig überrascht. Du
kennst mich, fuhr die Stimme fort; ich begegne dir alle Tage unter den
Bäumen am Thore.

Mein Roß flog, wie ein Pfeil, ihm zu. Das Mondlicht schien ihm
hell in's Gesicht. Ich kannt' ihn; ich sprang herab. (I, 630, 18-26)

Hyperion asks for the identities of the others and the reply instead identifies him in the very language he used to identify Alabanda, “der seit einiger Zeit vor dem Thore unter den Bäumen, wo ich vorbei kam, mir alle Tage begegnet war” (I, 629, 27-29). The parity of the expressions makes it irrelevant who speaks to whom; in this moment Hyperion and Alabanda share the same identity. Hyperion’s ‘charge’ in the reflective light of the moon synchronizes the acts of aggression and recognition, revealing an inversive indirection and hence, an instability in the epithet “Waffenbruder.”

Self-identification, deed, and violence reveal themselves as inseparably bound. And yet Alabanda, as a ringleader of Nemesis, the brotherhood of the revolutionary deed, shows a paradoxical penchant for amalgamation. Hyperion speaks of them as two tributaries merging into a single stream, and it appears that he borrows this language from Alabanda. Hyperion remembers a day when Alabanda spoke of the future child of Greece who would be better off dead “weil es allein sein wird wie wir.” The bond between the two of them is such that they are no longer company for one another. At the heart of this bond there consistently lies a sacrifice: here, the child, or at their first meeting, the slain horse. In their friendship, Hyperion also sees a version of his own death: “O nun war mein unbedeutend Leben am Ende.” That he chose the preposition “an” instead of “zu” suggests termination rather than the more appropriate temporal end and implied transition. That is precisely the insidious irony within Nemesis. As an organization, it defines itself only by the mechanism of its own machine; the action of

overturning serves as its own ultimate goal. Differentiation, the nurturing element of the individual, is in turn lost or homogenized as difference becomes the rule.

A turn from essential structure to relative structure has semantic repercussions within the narrative. Hyperion redefines the word “Begeisterung” within Alabanda’s sphere. In Adamas it was spontaneous, but from Alabanda it is reactionary, bringing it closer to a sense of possession than inspiration. His mentor’s “ungetheilten Begeisterung” works organically at the core of existence (“Was ich sah, ward ich”), but Alabanda’s “mühelose Begeisterung” works “kriegerisch und klug.” Alabanda moves through the world like “Stürme,” “Gewitter,” and “Woogen der Meersfluth,” his stormy effect striking not at being, but in language:

Wie erwachte da in seinen Tiefen mein Geist, wie rollten mir die
Donnerworte der unerbittlichen Gerechtigkeit über die Zunge! Wie Boten
der Nemesis, durchwanderten unsre Gedanken die Erde, und reinigten sie,
bis keine Spur von allem Fluche da war. (I, 632, 21-25)

The arena here is linguistic. Following the goddess of retribution, Hyperion fancies himself a messenger contending against a curse. The story of Alabanda ultimately recognizes itself as self-reflexively constituted both in its narrative expression and its driving ideal. Self-reflexive structure depends entirely on a relation of opposition for its stability; this is the principle behind Nemesis. What it lacks in order to be a truly

progressive structure, however, is a sense of the negative not in the relative but in the absolute.⁵⁴

The secondary literature to Hyperion looks primarily to the initiation scene with Nemesis to understand Hyperion's violent rejection of the band and the break with his friend. But the roots lie deeper, as evidenced by the way he composes his recollection of the time with Alabanda. The initiation scene is but the culmination of a rift that opened at the inception of the relationship:

die seeligen Tage, wie Alabanda und ich sie lebten, sind wie eine jähe
Felsenspize, wo dein Reisegefährte nur dich anzurühren braucht, um
unabsehlich, über die schneidenden Zaken hinab, dich in die dämmernde
Tiefe zu stürzen. (I, 635, 15-18)

The vertiginous peak achieves its effect only in consort with its adjunct abyss. This picture is very different from the initial hope “in Einer Seele [j]eine Welt zu finden”—and this before the falling out. The gap continues to widen as the friends exchange words (“Wir hatten dann auch mit heitrem Feuer uns über manches gestritten, während der Fahrt”) and call each other names (“Wohin, mein Schwärmer,” “du bist ein kleiner Mensch!”). By seeding the signs of difference, the narrating Hyperion suggests reading the meeting with the members of Nemesis with a certain irony.

⁵⁴ This idea finds an important parallel in Kant, who distinguishes between analytic and dialectic in this way. The analytic works by simple opposition. Dialectic, by moving into an impossible epistemological void, earns the epithet “Logik des Scheins,” an expression Kant must redefine reflexively as a critique of “Logik des Scheins” in order to use it toward his own ends.

Nemesis functions analytically not dialectically; that is to say, it operates by a simple principle of contrariety: “Aber sie haben ihren eigenen Gelust, sich an ihr Gegentheile zu machen!”⁵⁵ Their language consists almost entirely of cultivation analogies, images of plowing and overturning that depict the mechanistic use of tools. In contrast, Hyperion’s favors allegories from Greek history or abstract metaphors (e.g. “Tochter der Zeit”). Hyperion’s characterization of the three gang members presents a short triadic study on the concept of opposition without synthesis: mutual exclusion (outer conflict), the absence of conflict, and perpetual turmoil (inner conflict). The first is identified by the word “Stille,” specifically, “die Stille eines Schlachtfelds.” This seems at first a kind of resolution, but it proves to be only resolve. His “Verstand” only lends his disposition contempt (“Verachtung”) bound with intent (“Absicht”). He is confrontation waiting to happen. The second possesses the “Ruhe” and reclusiveness of a hard heart. He is a virtual blank without a trace of that which would constitute an individual. The third embodies “Widerspruch”; at war with himself, he is the most withdrawn. Hyperion understands the game: “Das ist dein Ernst? fragt’ einer mich./ Es ist kein Scherz,...sagt’ ich./ Du hast viel mit einem Wort gesagt!...Du bist unser Mann! ein anderer” (I, 638, 22-25). Hyperion is admitted because he speaks their language after all.

⁵⁵ This observation finds analogy in Kristeva’s distinction between Kantian ‘polarity’, which functions in the understanding and Hegel’s ‘negativity,’ which operates in reason. The point being made is that Nemesis’s ‘revolutionary’ principle is, in fact, fundamentally fixed and static.

Though accepted by the band of adversaries, he rejects them. The line he hears that turns him against them is: "Ich hab's mir oft gesagt, du opferst der Verwesung, und ich endete mein Tagwerk doch." Like a machine, the band gives itself to its work without thought of return. Without compensation, there can be no real end, no limit, simply monstrous progression. Interestingly, Hyperion's reaction is a feeling of suffocation, the walls, doors, and windows closing and pressing in. He is desperate for "Freiheit," but his response is immediately to seek the haven of a border or limit: "nur in kindlicher einfältiger Beschränkung fand ich noch die reinen Melodien-" (I, 642, 20-22). His so-called "Garten unsrer Liebe" with Alabanda now destroyed, he wishes to return to the gardens and fields of Tina. Leaving Smyrna by ship, he closes this chapter of his life by pushing it below a horizon terminally: "und alles nach und nach hinabsank, wie ein Sarg in's Grab."

The question remains; how is it that Hyperion feels betrayed? Alabanda persuades but does not convince. He can bring his adversary to act otherwise, but not necessarily to believe otherwise:

Du kannst niemand überzeugen, sagt' ich jezt mit inniger Liebe, du überredest, du bestichst die Menschen, ehe du anfängst; man kann nicht zweifeln, wenn du sprichst, und wer nicht zweifelt, wird nicht überzeugt.
(I, 635, 33-36).

Hyperion is won over but not convinced, possessed to follow a course of action but not persuaded to actually change his mind. Reaction, without the hesitation, without the

empty space of doubt, leaves no access for free will. What Hyperion will learn from this lesson is that the waves of passion left untempered fail to bring about genuine transition and, therefore, never cross the borders necessary to describe true progress. A political platform based on caprice rather than free will generates violence, and what Hyperion proposes instead is a government based on love.⁵⁶

Du räumst dem Staate denn doch zu viel Gewalt ein. Er darf nicht
fordern, was er nicht erzwingen kann. Was aber die Liebe giebt und der
Geist, das läßt sich nicht erzwingen. (I, 636, 27-29)

Hyperion looked to Alabanda to bring about a political state based on the kind of freedom found in love. It is, therefore, no wonder that he so often referred to his friend as a bride. Furthermore, Hyperion's romantic political vision explains the rhetoric he uses to describe their falling out—the betrayal by the “Braut” turned “Dirne.” The criticism of visionaries he raises here, “Immerhin hat das den Staat zur Hölle gemacht, daß ihn der Mensch zu seinem Himmel machen wollte” (I, 636, 32-34), is in fact a criticism of his own relationship to Alabanda, in whom he tried to embrace his own ideal world. This observation will not rise to the surface of the text, however, until it is quoted from Diotima. The Alabanda story is not the place for syntheses.

Hyperion does, however, come to a conclusion: mortals have their limits, which, in turn, condition the existence of deities. The arrow-straight path to his mirror image

⁵⁶ Hölderlin's idea of love as derived from Hemsterhuis is discussed in article, “Amor dei intellectualis: Hölderlin, Spinoza and St. John.” See also Kurz's Mittelbarkeit und Vereinigung. What remains the focus here, however, is the relationship to Alabanda.

other in whom he hoped to find a world turns out to be an “Irrbahn.” On this failure he bases a new material model of heaven and earth:

Mehr will [der Mensch], als er kann!...Das giebt das süße, schwärmerische Gefühl der Kraft, daß sie nicht ausströmt, wie sie will, das eben macht die schönen Träume von Unsterblichkeit und all' die holden und die kolossalischen Phantome, die den Menschen tausendfach entzücken, das schafft dem Menschen sein Elysium und seine Götter. (I, 645, 25-31)

His view is does not sever the divine from the human so much as it roots it. He generates a Homeric mythology based on the very principle that repulsed him; the divine is simply that which is not human. Nemesis possesses like a demon even those or perhaps especially those who reject them. Limited by a world-view that sets as its ideal the act of transgression and overturning of limits, they are unable to go beyond the borders of their motivating ideal and reflect upon it. For this reason, they betray the necessary human quality of freedom. Hyperion will not arrive at this conclusion until he reflects on Diotima and love. Here, we are given only its antitheses: the structure that defines transgression can never serve the purpose of genuine transformation, let alone transcendence.

“Schicksal” enters Hyperion’s vocabulary as a limiting term. It sets a limit by acting as a counter-force to the perpetual revolution machine advocated by Nemesis. The concept gives cadence to history, which suffered a certain arrhythmia while under arbitrary rule. When the waves of passion dominate, chaos precludes progression;

transformation and transcendence fail when expressed as a power structure in the trappings of war. The forces of the heart establish neither direction nor tension and the individual is lost within his own dynamism: “daß ihres Herzenswoogen stärker oft und schneller sich regen, wie der Trident, womit der Meergott sie beherrscht, und darum, Lieber! überhebe ja sich keiner” (I, 644, 10-12). Furthermore, the violence of this force goes so far as to make it alien to its host: “Wir sprechen von unsrem Herzen, unsern Planen, als wären sie unser, und es ist doch eine fremde Gewalt, die uns herumwirft” (I, 643, 28-29). This is very different from the limits set by disillusionment and failure under a concept of “Schicksal.” Within Hyperion’s cynicism there remains insight, subtle yet apparent in rephrasing “eine fremde Gewalt” with “eine fremde Macht”:

das schafft dem Menschen sein Elysium und seine Götter, daß seines Lebens Linie nicht grad ausgeht, daß er nicht hinfährt, wie ein Pfeil, und eine fremde Macht dem Fliehenden in den Weg sich wirft.” (I, 645, 31-34)

The “Irrbahn” still describes the progression, but the force bears a different tenor. The distinction reveals itself as more than merely semantic when Hyperion pits the “Herzens Woge” against “Schicksal” in order to formulate “Geist,” a term that returns character to both the individual and history. The unseen power represented by “Schicksal” thus limits the purely violent in order to create “Melodie” from “Mißlaut.”

Hyperion’s concept of “Schicksal” is synthetic while Alabanda’s is analytic. Schuffels implies this when making the interesting point that Alabanda sees “Schicksal” as a rationale for experience (94). His mentor in Nemesis uses the term as an explanation

for young Alabanda's childhood misfortunes. Hyperion, on the other hand, immediately intuitively suffers in his subjective sense of separation and then applies the term "Schicksal" both abstractly and historically to describe experience. For Alabanda, fate is a rationalization of revolution; it justifies the necessary conflict between given forces. For Hyperion, fate is a synthetic force not a force of contention per se. It unifies him with a constant force in history, a constant revolutionary force through time as opposed to an absolute (necessary) force outside of time. Alabanda's perspective is oddly teleological and discursive, orienting itself to an absolute that is ultimately immanent (recall Hyperion's change in tone regarding the "Pfeil" from an expression of direct, enthusiastic dynamism to one of disillusionment at the misfire). Hyperion's perspective is dialectically skeptical yet 'hopeful'; that is, oriented toward an absolute it cannot identify, an apparent step into the abyss.

"Schicksal," however, remains a positive counter force and, judging from the formulation in the "Metrische Fassung," Hyperion has not yet matured out of youth:

Gestählt vom Schicksal und den Weisen war

Durch meine Schuld mein jugendlicher Sinn

Tyrannisch gegen die Natur geworden. (I, 515, 1-3 ("Metrische Fassung"))

Nemesis fails to do battle with fate; they instead attempt to usurp its role. Rather than becoming a force of fate, they become its victims. They attempt to live without reins as God (the principle of absolute transgression that recognizes no transgression), and instead they simply feel no reins and are thus more dead than alive:

Doch ist in uns auch wieder etwas, das
 Die Fesseln gern behält, denn würd in uns
 Das Göttliche von keinem Widerstande
 Beschränkt - wir fühlten uns und andre nicht.
 Sich aber nicht zu fühlen, ist der Tod. (I, 519, 140-144 ("Metrische
 Fassung"))

The weightless balance found in the idea of "Non coerceri maximo, contineri minimo, divinum est" is not yet achieved. As a first step in that direction, Hölderlin introduces a meditation on nothingness that occupies the last three letters of the first book. Following the example of Kant in his critiques of reason and judgment, Hölderlin will use a negative concept to mark the end of an analytic.⁵⁷

Alabanda, as an opponent, gave Hyperion the opportunity to exercise power, and therein he found identity. Following the Alabanda letter, Hyperion demonstrates a heightened sense of self-consciousness as the puzzling result of having just related the loss of a sense of purpose and conviction. Hyperion slips into a state of complete passivity bordering on absence: "Ich ließ nun jedem gerne seine Meinung, seine Unart...und wenn ich noch so seelenlos, so ohne eignen Trieb dabei war, das merkte keiner, da vermißte keiner nichts" (I, 645, 3-12). Hyperion does not feel himself, but the idiom takes on the figurative meaning from the literal as the absence of a sense of self

⁵⁷ The "Kritik der Urteilskraft" concludes its first division, "Analytik der ästhetischen Urteilskraft," with an analysis of laughter as an effect of the negative: "Das Lachen ist ein Affekt aus der plötzlichen Verwandlung einer gespannten Erwartung in nichts" (KU, 225). The "Kritik der reinen Vernunft" concludes "Die Transzendente Analytik" with an analysis of "Nichts" (KrV, B 348).

becomes the subject of his reflection. So when he says, “Oft, wenn ich des Morgens dastand unter meinem Fenster und der geschäftige Tag mir entgegenkam, konnt’ auch ich mich augenblicklich vergessen,” he draws attention as much to consciousness as his lack of self-consciousness. In this, Hölderlin has made effective use of the window as Romantic icon for the frame of consciousness; the act of forgetting strips consciousness of the act of identity that is self-consciousness. The modifier “augenblicklich” distinguishes this formulation from the self-forgetting of childhood that unites the young Hyperion with nature and, more importantly, signals both the forgetting of the specular act of identity together with the temporal element that conditions inner sense according to Kant. Hölderlin presents here an excellent study of self-hood based on its absence.

The ninth epistle contemplates an empty space that achieves for Hyperion a perspective on two different kinds of absence: one is a light of discovery (“wo uns ist, als hätten wir alles gefunden”), the other a darkness in which all is lost (“wo uns ist als hätten wir alles verloren”). The former expresses an emptiness seen objectively (“sonst lag oft, wie das ewigleere Faß der Danaiden, vor meinem Sinne diß Jahrhundert”), the latter, a subjective sense of emptiness (“eine Nacht unsrer Seele”). The distinction arises perhaps from a new view on the subject’s separation from nature. What is new to the relationship with nature is not only linguistic mediation as an indicator of difference, but also that language is used analytically simply in order to generate a taxonomy:

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

Echo, jedem dinge seinen Nahmen. (I, 647, 9-11)

How different this is from his enthusiasm at being Adamas's echo. Curious in this "Vergessen alles Daseyns, ein Verstummen unsers Wesens" that manifests itself in scientific language is the fact that Hyperion is no longer able to see holes: "nun sah ich keine Lücke mehr." Having reversed his perspective, he now feels empty, but cannot see emptiness. Here, the ironic truth becomes clear; from Nemesis he has gleaned the pure positive. Yet, there is a void necessary to the existence of identity and consciousness. Hyperion reminds us: "Wie ein Strom an dürren Ufern, wo kein Weidenblatt im Wasser sich spiegelt, lief unverschönert vorüber an mir die Welt" (I, 647,12-13). Hyperion is now that which is to be reflected, but is absent. He is not participating in the reflective exchange that both generates poetic consciousness and beautifies the world.⁵⁸ Clearly, he foreshadows his eventual relationship with Diotima, whose role as a reflective partner amplifies if not creates his sense of living in the presence of beauty itself. Seeing in her the ability to name all the plants and flowers becomes most endearing indeed. From violence to love would seem only a step through the looking glass across the void.

What is less apparent behind the new veil of apathy is the germ of a phenomenological philosophy of the world. The reversal of Hyperion's being as constituted by its reflection in the stream of the world (i.e. history) expresses a system

⁵⁸ The difference from Keats's late Romantic concept of Negative Capability deserves mention here. Keats's idea expresses poetical character as a kind of 'selflessness' that accommodates itself to all alteration: "it has no character-it enjoys light and shade, it lives in gusto, be it foul or fair, high or low, rich or poor, mean or elevated." It is precisely his "gusto" that Hyperion has lost, and more than he supersedes all alteration, he has lost the internal cognitive structure necessary to support the notion of opposition altogether. As Diotima says later in the novel, Hyperion's "dichterische Tage" lie yet ahead.

different from both pure idealism and pantheism. The self does not constitute either itself or the world; the world exists as object and we name its manifold appearances. Nor does nature alone represent a divine unity; our apprehension of it depends upon an act of synthesis in our minds. The phenomenological approach to being in the world relies for its progression on a dialectical mechanism of negation and re-synthesis. Nemesis relied positively on the first element in this equation and Alabanda nearly seduced Hyperion into subscribing to its principle. But with the coming of spring, the fascination with the abyss subsides as the conscious reflection upon the negative brings the awareness of a cycle. This is not to say that the narrative now comprehends synthesis; the tenth is the most non-linear, most self-absorbed of the letters since Bellarmin asked for a little more history and less reverie at the end of the second. The narrative remains a stream of consciousness, but it is also a constructive turning point in a larger system of thought.

The final letter doesn't open any doors to this larger system. Instead, it reveals a pessimism more resolute than Hyperion's recent cynicism. The word "Nichts" is repeated six times in a matter of a few lines and not in the conditional manner of the Vorrede; it carries the absolute, dogmatic tone used by an embittered detractor unsure of his argument: "Wenn ich hinsehe in's Leben, was ist das letzte von allem? Nichts. Wenn ich aufsteige im Geiste, was ist das Höchste von allem? Nichts" (I, 650, 15-17). Hyperion has not yet found a language to express the unknowable, the unattainable as a part of the system that cannot grasp it. His musings intimate a certain poetic dialectic, an intuition that transgresses its own cognitive limits to grasp at least the idea of a supra-

conceptual unity, but his language has yet to express it other than ironically. That is, the narrative still communicates more in the spaces between the words, than in the words themselves. Given the tone of the letter, this suggests that Hölderlin's is not a modern sensibility, despite the parallels in such influenced works as Nietzsche's, where provisional introductions to philosophical arguments like Hyperion's "Was ist der Mensch? konnt' ich beginnen" are plentiful. This self-critical skepticism does not generate a sublime manifold of perspectives, the modern freedom of the fragment. Instead, there is a blinding implosion of the self: "So dacht' ich. Wie das alles in mich kam, begreif' ich noch nicht." With Hyperion thus sundered from his own thoughts, the first book ends traumatically.

CHAPTER V:
DIOTIMA AS SILENT PARTNER

Jacobi: Wer nicht erklären will was unbegreiflich ist, sondern nur die Grenze wissen wo es anfängt, und nur erkennen, daß es da ist: von dem glaube ich, daß er den mehresten Raum für ächte menschliche Wahrheit in sich ausgewinne.

Lessing: Worte, lieber Jacobi; Worte! Die Grenze, die Sie setzen wollen, läßt sich nicht bestimmen. Und an der andern Seite geben Sie der Träumerei, dem Unsinne, der Blindheit freies offenes Feld.

F. H. Jacobi, Über die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelsohn (1785)

Es folgt aus der gesetzlosen Willkür des jetzigen Zeitgeistes--der lieber ichsüchtig die Welt und das All vernichtet, um sich nur freien Spiel-Raum im Nichts auszuleeren, und welcher den Verband seiner Wunden als eine Fessel abreißet--, daß er von der Nachahmung und dem Studium der Natur verächtlich sprechen muß. Denn wenn allmählich die Zeitgeschichte einem Geschichtschreiber gleich wird und ohne Religion und Vaterland ist: so muß die Willkür der Ichsucht sich zuletzt auch an die harten, scharfen Gebote der Wirklichkeit stoßen und daher lieber in die Öde der Phantasterei verfliegen, wo sie keine Gesetze zu befolgen findet als eigne, engere, kleinere, die des Reim- und Assonanzen-Baues.

Jean Paul, Vorschule der Ästhetik (1803)

Lieber Bruder! ich tröste mein Herz mit allerlei Phantasien, ich reiche mir manchen Schlaftrank.

Friedrich Hölderlin, Hyperion (1797)

Aber ich muß noch ausgehn, zu lernen. Ich bin ein Künstler, aber ich bin nicht geschickt. Ich bilde im Geiste, aber ich weiß noch die Hand nicht zu führen--
Du gehest nach Italien, sagte Diotima, nach Deutschland, Frankreich--wie viel Jahre brauchst du? drei--vier--ich denke drei sind genug; du bist ja keiner von den Langsamen.

Friedrich Hölderlin, Hyperion (1797)

Jean Paul voices an opinion stated plainly in Jacobi's "An Fichte" of 1799 that the recently popular idealism constitutes a radical "Egoismus" equivalent to nihilism. For the first volume of his Hyperion published in 1797, Hölderlin would have had to refer to a different text. In his Über die Lehre des Spinoza, Jacobi champions him who would determine the boundary where the inconceivable begins. Hölderlin perhaps took Lessing's response literally, for he uses the figure of Diotima not simply to describe the border between the conceivable and the inconceivable, but to demonstrate the transition across that border made possible by acquiring a mastery over words--the mastery of the letter over the spirit. The following pages examine how Diotima does this by looking at her role as a partner in dialogue. The second passage from Hyperion indicates that Diotima is a practical facilitator of the endeavor to master one's art. But, this is Diotima at the end of book two, volume one; at the beginning, she is introduced as the ideal of beauty based upon her ability not to speak. As the first passage shows, the narrator of the novel eventually finds in Bellarmin a new dialogue partner who is silent and therapeutically indulges his wayward spirit. A question arises as to who better enables Hyperion's literary production. The second book of the first volume of Hyperion reveals how the two points of Jean Paul's criticism work to produce poetry: how the nihilistic indulgence of the self works with the manifest in nature to delineate and give cadence to poetic production.

Without question, Diotima lends herself well to a description of the quintessential Hölderlinian ideal. Indicating the numerous and varied formulations of Hölderlin's ideal

in order to claim that it eludes schematic description, begs the question. The ideal in the person of Diotima has been rendered positively as an earthly aesthetic ideal, negatively as a divinely inaccessible ideal, and ironically as a paradoxical union of both. In one of the first books in English on Hölderlin, Peacock puts concisely what critics from Hellingrath to Heidegger on up to Henrich have explained and argued at length⁵⁹: “For what distinguishes Hölderlin in so exceptional a degree is the particular fervor, the pressing religious need, which made him so imperatively desirous of the *presence* of the divine, of the fulfillment of the ideal, and its absence so torturing to him” (3).⁶⁰ Peacock favors the view that Diotima herself represents the beautiful. More contemporary readers of Hölderlin, such as Ryan, express the same sentiment, pointing to the loss or failure that is itself part of the fulfillment of the ideal of beauty.⁶¹ The most recent formulations of the Hölderlinian ideal identify unthinkable unions of dialectical oppositions that make for

⁵⁹ See, for example, the “Buchanzeige” to Hellingrath’s “Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe,” pages 96–97. Henrich distinguishes Hölderlin’s thought from Hegelian phenomenology, but places him within a tradition of speculative philosophy that claims the necessary continuity between the absolute and the experience of the conscious subject. See chapter 30 in *Der Grund im Bewußtsein*, “Absolutes Erkennen und der endliche Gott,” especially page 759. In “Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung,” Heidegger finds that “die Götter unser Dasein zur Sprache bringen” (40). Hölderlin’s sense of absence is especially appealing to Heidegger for its ability to express Being. Finally, in *The Problem of Christ in the Work of Friedrich Hölderlin*, Mark Ogden explains a parallel between Diotima and Christ; Christ incarnates the divine, while Diotima incarnates being, thereby making an abstraction manifest.

⁶⁰ Hölderlin’s exaltations of metaphysical abstractions such as “Schönheit” or “Freiheit” have lead more than a few critics to see him simply as a Platonist. Fineman uses *Hyperion* to assert: “Hölderlin’s unflinching conviction that there is an absolute unity and harmony behind the many-colored, ever-shifting mass of phenomena is one of his prominent Platonic traits” (21). It is my opinion that Hölderlin does not put absolute unities ‘behind’ phenomena; rather, he puts them below the horizon of human cognitive abilities.

⁶¹ See Lawrence Ryan, *Hölderlin’s ‘Hyperion’: Exzentrische Bahn und Dichterberuf*, especially page 156, where he argues that Hyperion learns that negation need not be absolute. In reflecting on his past, in particular his experiences with Diotima, Hyperion gains an understanding of historical process, which allows him to incorporate loss into his concept of the ideal.

impossible manifestations of the “divine-human.”⁶² Very much in the spirit of the Hölderlinian ideal, the desire to manifest it in words has driven the dispute that keeps it alive: “Die Auflösung der Dissonanzen in einem gewissen Charakter ist weder für das bloße Nachdenken, noch für die leere Lust” (Vorrede, I, 611, 8-9). As these words from the Vorrede to Hyperion indicate, Hölderlin expresses resolution skeptically; moreover, this ideal synthesis is not the realization of harmony, but the dissolution of disharmony. Without question, the growing appeal of the Hölderlinian ideal to the modern critics lies in its ability to manifest the negative.⁶³

Ryan and Abrams argue that Hyperion must experience and come to terms with the loss of Diotima in order to arrive at a higher insight into nature. Their conclusion is well founded, given that Hyperion ultimately experiences all his relationships as separation. In the end, Hyperion learns from Diotima how to recuperate (from) these losses; she says to him in the final letter of Book Two: “du wärst der denkende Mensch nicht, wärst du nicht der leidende, der gährende Mensch gewesen. Glaube mir, du hättest nie das Gleichgewicht der schönen Menschheit so rein erkannt, hättest du es nicht so sehr verloren gehabt” (I, 691, 30-33). Thus, he says in an earlier letter to Bellarmin: “Frägst

⁶² See, for example, Martens’s “‘Das Eine in sich selber unterschiedne’: Das ‘Wesen der Schönheit’ als Strukturgesetz in Hölderlins ‘Hyperion.’”

⁶³ Steiner, for example, goes so far as to turn Hölderlin’s breakdown into triumph, claiming silence to be not only Hölderlin’s inevitable poetic fulfillment, but the realization of the ideal in modern Western aesthetics: “Hölderlin’s silence has been read not as a negation of his poetry but as, in some sense, its unfolding and its sovereign logic. The gathering strength of stillness within and between the lines of the poems has been felt as a primary element of their genius. As empty space is so expressly a part of modern painting and sculpture, as the silent intervals are so integral to a composition by Webern, so the void places in Hölderlin’s poems, particularly in the late fragments, seem indispensable to the completion of the poetic act. His posthumous life in a shell of quiet, similar to that of Nietzsche, stands for the word’s surpassing of itself, for its realization not in another medium but in that which is its echoing antithesis and defining negation, silence....In much modern poetry silence represents the claims of the ideal; to speak is to say less” (47-48).

du, wie mir gewesen sei um diese Zeit? Wie einem, der alles verloren hat, um alles zu gewinnen" (I, 668, 31-32). We may ask the question: why didn't he gain this insight upon Adamas's departure, why not after his break with Alabanda or the failure of his revolutionary endeavor? What did he lose when he lost Diotima that he did not lose with Adamas or Alabanda? The question may be answered with a familiar dialectic. The departure of Adamas precludes direct insight into the absolute. In contrast, Hyperion's alienation from Alabanda offers only negative insight into the real. Alabanda's political agenda promises a necessary principle of reality, but the principle proves to exist only for its own sake; its fundamental necessity lies only in the fact that it fails to provide a link to anything outside itself. As a rendering of the absolute in reality, it offers only a view into an infinite abyss. The loss of Diotima gives insight into the nature of beauty, which is to bring about with the artistic mastery the transition from the absolute to the real that is poesy.

Most critics, early and late, read Heraclitus's *εν διαφορον εαυτω* or "das Eine in sich selber unterschiedne" as Hyperion's translation of Diotima and hence, as the justification of her ideal status. Hyperion reads the phrase as descriptive of the fundamental intuition of unity that grounds as well as drives philosophy. Peacock, seeing it as a criterion for beauty, reads the text most literally, focusing on the synthetic aspect of the formulation, "das Eine" and its power to manifest and give utterance. More recent analyses focus on the problematic differences, the "unterschiedne," in order to suggest a

driving force toward an ever absent unity and the inability to give utterance.⁶⁴ Both these perspectives deserve consideration as Diotima's role in the novel is perhaps best represented in the transition between the two.

Book Two of Volume I, devoted entirely to Diotima, is an extended mediation on utterance and manifestation. Book One of Volume I ended pessimistically, closing a psychic and geographic circle with Hyperion's return to the island of Tina, the island of his childhood. Book Two begins with a radical break, opening this circle by shifting the locale to the island of Salamis and bringing the narrative back to the present. Productive physical activity abruptly replaces the introspective mental activity of Book One. Building himself a house and fabricating a picturesque landscape around it, Hyperion reverses and objectifies his previous internal narrative of nihilism and makes a simple assertion of self-presence.⁶⁵ With mirror inversion, he has made his thought of "Nichts" into a practice of subjectivity. The narrating Hyperion has achieved the "dichterische Tage" insofar as he possesses the ability to make manifest, but he does not yet know that he possesses this ability. The poet perhaps creates best when working intuitively, without

⁶⁴ Lacoue-Labarthe takes this approach, using Der Tod des Empedokles. See his work, Typography: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics.

⁶⁵ The 'nihilistic' lines referred to read: "O ihr Armen, die ihr das fühlt, die ihr auch nicht sprechen mögt von menschlicher Bestimmung, die ihr auch so durch und durch ergriffen seid vom Nichts, das über uns waltet, so gründlich einseht, daß wir geboren werden für Nichts, daß wir lieben ein Nichts, glauben an's Nichts, uns abarbeiten für Nichts, um mäßig überzugehen in's Nichts--was kann ich dafür, daß euch die Knie brechen, wenn ihr's ernstlich bedenkt? Bin ich doch auch schon manchmal hingesunken in diesen Gedanken...und bin noch da" (I, 649-650, 29-33/1-5). I use the word "nihilism" only slightly anachronistically. In 1799, only two years after the publication of this part of Hyperion, Jacobi uses the word "Nihilismus" to describe a Fichtean "Egoismus" that denies the existence of anything outside the self ("An Fichte," Werke III, 44. See also Arendt, 9). The last words of the passage, "und bin noch da," indicate that selfhood overcomes the negation of all, and this is precisely the sentiment that Jacobi criticizes in Fichte. "Nihilismus," therefore, appropriately defines the inversion discussed here.

self-consciousness, but Hyperion's education will not be complete until he has articulated the poetics behind his poesy.⁶⁶ It is not simply that he needs knowledge to accompany talent; he needs to know how he knows. This self-reflexive, meta-approach in the spirit of Kant's Copernican turn makes Hyperion a distinctly Romantic poet.⁶⁷

The first letter of Book Two reads more like an ending than an opening, especially if one follows Ryan along the "exzentrische Bahn" that leads to an overview of life: "Oder schau' ich auf's Meer hinaus und überdenke mein Leben" (I, 652, 20). The narrating Hyperion, we remember is already at the end of his experience, reflecting on the past. Hyperion's musings on the landscape suggest that he has attained the "dichterische Tage" promised by Diotima, an aesthetical peace of mind, which according to Ryan, is acquired through reflecting on life's losses ("Wohin man siehet liegt eine Freude begraben" (I, 652, 5)). We are reminded, however, that in these paragraphs Hyperion is speaking in and of the present; narrative details of his war stories are abstracted to a general "Vergangenheit" and summarized as a single comprehensive "Kriegsgeschichte." As we read the epistolary fruits of his poetic labor, we have before us the Hyperion who, though unaware of his skills, has become a poet. This introductory letter, though still in a self-conscious first person, shows a rare narrative control amidst

⁶⁶ Ryan concludes that Hölderlin wrote in epistolary form in order to remove aesthetic will from the novel, thus making it an 'unconscious' poetic act (226). The narrator's objective in the novel, however, may also be expressed as just the opposite—absolute self-consciousness. Hölderlin considered the "Briefform" best suited to express contemporary (i.e. critical) thinking, no doubt, because it is a self-reflective form (to Niethammer, Feb. 24, 1796); examining the principles of its own method, critical philosophy is, after all, based on the idea of transcendental self-consciousness. As the following pages argue, the appropriate perspective is to see that the novel takes form in the transition from a self-conscious philosophical meditation to an unconscious poetic act.

⁶⁷ On the 'meta-approach' as that of philosophy since Kant, see Beiser, The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte, pg. 1.

the more characteristic digressive musings. Whereas the introduction of Alabanda showed a brief command over a series of events in time, we are presented here with several tableaux that communicate in overview a clear sense of place for Hyperion's activity ("Auf dem Vorgebirge," "auf meiner Höhe," "Zart und groß durchirret den Raum jede Linie der Fernen"). This aspect of the narration suggests that his mind, despite a degree of melancholy, is nevertheless at ease. The moment of rest, however, serves only as a caesura to mark the turn to a new meditation.

Up to this point the narrative has been driven by his awareness of his own failure to live up to the parallel he now draws between himself and the mythical military hero Ajax, whose island he now inhabits. Despite his present visions of perfection ("Der ganze Himmel ist rein" (I, 653, 2)), he retains a sense of incompleteness regarding his former foray into Alabanda's political world of "Tat." This trauma underlies the poetic education he received and, in reflecting on the past, is about to receive again from Diotima. Hyperion contrasts the exuberance and exaltation of the day landscape ("wie Stufen gehn die Berge bis zur Sonne unaufhörlich hinter einander hinauf" (I, 653, 1-2)) with the ghostly presence of the moon: "wie ein silbernes Wölkchen, wallt der schüchterne Mond am hellen Tage vorüber" (I, 653, 3-4). This nocturnal object in the middle of the clear day, this shade hovering, undulating within and across the picture of an infinite progression to the absolute, introduces the reflection upon Diotima, leaving the matter of his 'heroic' past unresolved. He does not again take up the issue of action until Volume Two.

Hölderlin reminds us in following letter that his narrator has achieved the status of a poet, suggesting in Hyperion the resolution of dissonances spoken of in the “Vorrede.” The overview of the past that Ryan places not simply at the end of the events in the novel, but only at the end of Hyperion’s reflections, is seemingly accomplished here: “Mir ist lange nicht gewesen, wie jetzt.” Together with his circumspect view of the past, Hyperion describes a poetic feeling of harmony with himself: “Wie Jupiters Adler dem Gesange der Musen, lausch’ ich dem wunderbaren unendlichen Wohlklang in mir” (I, 653, 7-8). Infinite by virtue of its self-reflexivity, his euphoria expresses itself as the play of opposites in his mind: “mit lächelndem Ernste, spiel’ ich im Geiste,” “Wie der Sternenhimmel, bin ich still und bewegt” (I, 653, 8-9, 12-13). His broad overview consists in a dynamic centeredness, a paradoxical peace of mind that prepares him for poetic output: “Nun bin ich stark genug; nun laß mich dir erzählen” (I, 653, 15-16). As Hyperion will tell us, the moment of paradox is a moment of transition, the moment just outside “Dichtung” that can either unfold into rational thought or effervesce into the spirit of art. As he brings himself to remember Diotima, Hyperion feels prepared to write, but by the end of this letter he realizes that he does not possess the knowledge to articulate; or rather, he is too full of the divine spirit to speak. He has the desire to speak, but recognizes a lack of the proper tools. His reflections on Diotima examine poetic desire and the possession of knowledge in language in an attempt to acquire the tools of expression.

The familiar trope of drinking expresses the imbibing of the divine spirit. In the second letter, Hyperion is invited to Kalaurea where the spruce forests (“Fichtenwälder”) fed by “reißende Wassern” bloom along with “die heilige Rebe,” while herds gather like children at the mountains’ “schäumenden Bächen” to drink; here, he will meet Diotima. This is not the first time that Hyperion has described an encounter with a certain ideal; Adamas and Alabanda may be understood as representative of transcendent and worldly absolutes, respectively. The image of drinking distinguishes the encounter with Diotima from those of the past by indicating a transformation from the transcendent to the worldly. Hyperion’s boat crossing to Kalaurea is described as the passing of “der heilige Wein” (I, 653, 33). Other water images also suggest the flowing of the spirit into the corporeal, the image of the divine made manifest.⁶⁸ The penultimate letter of Book Two, for example, associates running water with “Gespräch” and the mountain peaks with “Stille.”⁶⁹ It is important to see this principle underlying such phrases as “O es ist süß, so aus der Schaale der Vergessenheit zu trinken” because, while imbibing the spirit may offer the immediate gratification of feeling the loss of self (a silent forgetting), what Hyperion longs for is the power of speech, a pouring out that demands a clear sense of identity:

⁶⁸ Martens makes a related observation: “‘Gären’ gehört zu den von Hölderlin bevorzugten Wörtern, in deren Bedeutungsparadigma bereits ein vielfach Geschiedenes zur Einheit kommt...Denn dieses Bild des Gärens vereinigt in sich Vorstellungen der (stofflichen) Veränderung und der Entstehung eines Neuen, des Brausens und der Freisetzung von Geist (Alkohol) und konnotiert damit eine belebende oder berauschende Wirkung” (195).

⁶⁹ The complete passage reads: “Unsre Gespräche gleiteten weg, wie ein himmelblau Gewässer, woraus der Goldsand hin und wieder blinkt, und unsre Stille war, wie die Stille der Berggipfel” (I, 678, 28-30). Consistent with his tendency to structure the novel reflectively, this passage from the second to last letter mirrors the image from second letter by reversing the direction of the earlier transformation; the trip to

Ich gieng in einem Walde, am rieselnden Wasser hinauf, wo es über
 Felsen heruntertröpfelte, wo es harmlos über die Kieslen glitt, und mäßig
 verengte sich und ward zum Bogengange das Thal, und einsam spielte das
 Mittagslicht im schweigenden Dunkel--Hier--ich möchte sprechen
 können, mein Bellarmin! möchte gerne mit Ruhe dir schreiben! (I, 655,
 19-24)

The water falling from the heights in droplets and narrowing to a stream, giving shape to the valley, reflects the determination of identity that provides a point of rest, a point of reference from which the subject may speak coherently. In the process of defining himself, in describing the phenomenology of his own spirit, he realizes the need for a new teacher, a muse to teach him how to at once define and give utterance to his soul. As Diotima taught Socrates the philosophy of love, so will Hyperion's Diotima, his muse over the water, teach him philosophy's art--poetry.

Hyperion's inner development begins with a change of scenery. He is enticed to Kalaurea with a description of lush spruce forests; this proves to be an invitation to reflection. Jean Paul's criticism of the Romantic "Zeitgeist" looms when reading the second letter because the "Fichtenwälder" that are home to Diotima offer a clue to the true meaning of drinking in the spirit of the divine: to be full of the absolute is to be full of oneself. The acquaintance who invites Hyperion to Kalaurea has also built a house and a garden with a view into the distance. Hyperion looks from his house upward

Kalaurea is introduced with a turn from silence to speech, while the trip to Athens is preceded by a turn from speech to silence.

toward the heavens, while his friend looks downward from his roost toward humanity “in die Tiefen hinab zu den Dörfern;” the reversal suits the reading of Diotima’s land as that of the turn from the ideal to the real. Hyperion, however, connects to Fichte’s forest all the attributes of self-forgetting and dreamy drunkenness. His entire trip to Kalaurea is suffused with images of self-forgetting brought about by the very act of nihilistic self-absorption: “Ich gab mich hin, fragte nichts nach mir und andern, suchte nichts, sann auf nichts, ließ vom Boote mich halb in Schlummer wiegen und bildete mir ein, ich liege in Charons Nachen. O es ist süß, so aus der Schale der Vergessenheit zu trinken” (I, 654, 1-5). Hölderlin’s criticism of Fichte’s “absolute Ich” was that, as absolute, it could never be an object to itself. The meeting with Diotima that follows puts Hyperion before a mirror in which he sees an other that is both object and identical with the subject. Reflecting on this impossibility results in a reformulation of Diotima’s status whereby she moves from “Nicht Ich” as identical ‘other’ (Fichte’s impossible subject as object of itself) to “Nicht Ich” as objective other—the object of desire.⁷⁰

It is a fundamental principle of Hyperion that reflection initiates dialogue: the process of reversal demands opposition. The arrival in Kalaurea, marked by an abrupt turn from drifting “Selbstvergessenheit” to dynamic force, reflects a new understanding

⁷⁰ This reading is based on Hölderlin’s distinction in “Urtheil und Seyn” between the theoretical statement of identity (“Ich bin Ich”) and the practical statement of identity (“Ich bin nicht Nicht-Ich”). Hölderlin’s distinction essentially makes Fichte’s (and Schelling’s) proposition of an absolute subject theoretical but not real. Hölderlin’s emphasis on the transition between the two perspectives incorporates a phenomenological approach whereby the change in Diotima’s status is seen as a transition from the principle of reflection (a silent, ideal absolute) to an object of reflection (an articulated, real (or eroticized) absolute). Maimon’s work, greatly influential on Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, distinguishes between noumena and phenomena in the same way. His theory of differentials describes the reflective principle of relation as a noumenon, while the object produced constitutes a phenomenon (Werke II, 32). For a further elaboration, see the following chapter on Hölderlin and post-Kantian skepticism.

of oneness amidst diversity. In Book One, Hyperion reflected on his childhood unity with nature. Where he once spoke of feeling a oneness of spirit, he now speaks of a connection to the universal spirit in the speech act itself:

O Schwester des Geistes, der feurigmächtig in uns waltet und lebt, heilige
Luft! wie schön ist's, daß du, wohin ich wandre, mich geleitest,
Allgegenwärtige, Unsterbliche!...Und all diß war die Sprache Eines
Wohlseyns, alles Eine Antwort auf die Liebkosungen der enzükenden
Lüfte. (I, 655, 6-8,14-15)

The immediate resonance with nature that Hyperion experienced in childhood, now renders itself as dialogue. Having withstood a kind of quickening in facing off with Alabanda, he experiences his present dialogue without the painful awareness of separation he felt in childhood. He has begun a positive interaction with nature, imbibing a pure spirit; yet, he reminds us that he lacks the tools to fully participate in the discourse: "Sprechen? o ich bin ein Laie in der Freude, ich will sprechen! Wohnt doch die Stille im Lande der Seeligen, und über den Sternen vergißt das Herz seine Noth und seine Sprache" (I, 655, 25-27). Hyperion delineates human and divine realms along linguistic lines. He sees the need for mediation in this world, a oneness in the process of dialogue rather than in an absolute unity-the lesson of Adamas he missed the first time.

The long-deferred naming of Diotima arrives in the third letter as Hyperion begins his meditations on the manner in which beauty manifests itself in language, and how it drives the creation of poetry. His exegesis, beginning with the words "Ich war

einst glücklich,” continues over the next seven letters to conclude with: “Mein Herz ist nicht so glücklich.” The latter formulation expresses the same sentiment as the former, changing only the relation of the subject to itself and the predicate. In the past, the subject is unified with itself and stands in positive relation to its predicate; in the present, the subject objectifies itself synecdochically and stands in negative relation to the predicate.⁷¹ In this way, his thought represents the manifestation or realization of loss syntactically. Though, he has resisted this painful moment, his objective throughout all of Book Two remains to give proper utterance to the effect Diotima had upon him; what we read is the current effect of her loss. The naming of Diotima marks Hyperion’s turn from silence to expression, and in as much as she communicates ‘silently’ with Hyperion (e.g. via song or the gaze), Diotima’s role as muse is realized only in the loss of her status as a ‘silently’ intuited object.⁷²

The first half of the third letter refers to Diotima simply as “das Einzige,” a substantive that defeats its syntactic purpose by refusing to move from universal to particular, manifesting only the absence of something concrete: “Ich frage nicht mehr, wo es sei; es war in der Welt, es kann wiederkehren in ihr, es ist jetzt nur verborgener in ihr.

⁷¹ The chapter on Hölderlin and post-Kantian skepticism will elaborate on the significance of the difference between a statement of identity (“Ich bin Ich”) as expressive of either unity or relation. As mentioned above, Hölderlin’s “Urtheil und Seyn” is structured largely upon a distinction between the theoretical unity of “Ich bin Ich” and its practical counterpart “Ich bin nicht Nicht-Ich.” The opening and ending phrases quoted here from Hyperion formulate the distinction made in “Urtheil und Seyn” as a transition over time—a transition aimed at the representation of beauty in language.

⁷² In his essay, “Die ästhetische Funktion von Sprache, Schweigen und Musik in Hölderlins ‘Hyperion,’” Siekmann argues that music and silence are more appropriate to the expression of beauty, manifested in the novel by Diotima, than is speech. Such a reading treats Diotima only as an object, not as a phenomenon of Hyperion’s reflective experience. Haberer more closely reflects my own view, reading *Hyperion* as the description of the development of a manner of speech (“Sprechverhalten”).

Ich frage nicht mehr, was es sei; ich hab' es gesehn, ich hab' es kennen gelernt" (I, 657, 16-18). Hyperion can only bring her to mind in the form of a non-activity, a renunciation of the mental activity that would identify her. He dismisses the names "das Höchste und Beste," which serve only to identify the object of "Handeln" such as philosophy, history, and divination. He settles upon "Schönheit," denoting a non-cognitive intuition without object, which in effect presents an object only as an inconceivable paradox, "der Nahme deß, das Eins ist und Alles" (I, 657, 22-23). Reading Diotima as the embodiment of beauty, the critics have found ample reason to associate her with silence and song as opposed to speech.⁷³ As a mode of self-expression Diotima's otherwise taciturn nature is suited to song: "Nur, wenn sie sang, erkannte man die liebende Schweigende, die so ungern sich zur Sprache verstand" (I, 660, 17-18). Hyperion recognizes Diotima non-linguistically and makes clear that words cannot express her being: "Worte sind hier umsonst, und wer nach einem Gleichniß von ihr fragt, der hat sie nie erfahren. Das Einzige, was eine solche Freude auszudrücken vermochte, war Diotimas Gesang" (I, 672-673, 36-1).⁷⁴ The difficult matter of naming Diotima makes the first step toward the loss of her status as a purely intuited object.

Indeed, Diotima's song was rapturous, but the fact that Hyperion was once able to recognize her essential beauty in it is no longer of interest to him. He is far more concerned with translating Diotima's effect upon him into words. In Hyperion's account,

⁷³ Haberer observes that silence is associated both with Diotima and Alabanda; Diotima's silence is positive, while that associated with Alabanda is negative ("Sprachmagie," 118).

⁷⁴ Georgiades points out that "musiké" does not translate to "Musik" or "Dichtung." In the Greek we find a mingling of simple tone and articulation that expresses Diotima's nature.

language plays an increasingly significant role in their courtship. He initially says they spoke little, but he goes on, in fact, to indicate that they did nothing other than speak. He exalts her not by placing her beyond the power of language but by persisting in the attempt to reduce her to metaphor: “ich wollte, die Menschheit machte Diotima zum Loosungswort und mahlt’ in ihre Paniere dein Bild und spräche: Leute soll das Göttliche siegen!” (I, 672, 25-27). More than a divine power beyond human ken, an intangible ideal of beauty, she is ultimately a power of expression, be it linguistic or pictorial. Looking at the transition both in the naming of Diotima in the third letter and in Hyperion’s account of his relationship to Diotima in Volume One as a whole, it becomes clear that the past is the ‘place’ of silence and trauma, while the present is the ‘place’ of speech and recovery. As will become more apparent in the course of the novel, narrative tension arises from the fact that the ideal as the subject of narration silences in the present and can be uttered only in the past. Hyperion is able to put the absence of Diotima’s being into the past only when he becomes capable of giving proper utterance to her in the present. Acquiring the power of expression is, therefore, necessary for Hyperion to overcome the trauma of the past.

Diotima embodies beauty only in the sense that she represents it in reality. That she is first named in the same letter in which Hyperion first names “Schönheit” as the highest aspiration of human activity indicates that the link between the two is semantic rather than essential. As a result, when critics follow the standard picture of Diotima, identifying her in phrases such as “heilige Einfalt” or “die ewige Schönheit, die Natur

leidet keinen Verlust in sich, so wie sie keinen Zusaz leidet" (I, 662, 27-28), they make the mistake of reading identity as an expression of being rather than one of relation. She is a practical rather than ideal motivation for Hyperion's writing: "Sie sind der Worte nicht werth, die Tage, da ich noch dich nicht kannte--" (I, 657, 29-31). Hyperion idealizes their non-verbal communication ("Wir sprachen sehr wenig zusammen. Man schämt sich seiner Sprache"), but he does so only in order to intensify and eroticize the transgressive act of naming: "Und da sie zum erstenmale mit Nahmen mich rief, da sie selbst so nahe mir kam, daß ihr unschuldiger Othem mein lauschend Wesen berührte!--" (I, 658, 15-17) Speech is not simply a reflective mental activity as Haberer suggests (123), it is also a visceral exchange, and Hyperion is coming to recognize that words rather than silent memories are the only real remains of Diotima. What emerges here is a poetics based on Kantian epistemology that defers ontology in order to delineate the conditions of human perception ("Wahrnehmung"). Seeing the novel as a whole then, the unfinished evolution of the narrator's relation to the object of his narration presents a poetic phenomenology. Knowledge of Diotima in the past is impossible, silenced by the separation over time from direct experience. Knowledge of her in the present demands the historical condition of narrative. The nature of her existence is now a moot point, the critical issue now being to identify the manner in which to express her memory in a real, physical, and hence, even erotic sense.

Hyperion begins with faith in Diotima—she is first revealed to him as beauty itself. But as he tries to describe this experience to Bellarmin, his demonstration requires

him to *know* that she embodies beauty. The process of describing Diotima necessitates a change in her status from ideal object to erotic object. Like two synchronized clocks, she and nature keep identical time, but she is not nature itself. Though not derived from his essay, this analogy suits Frye's reading of seasonal and psychic time in Hyperion. Frye demonstrates how Diotima has the effect of bringing Hyperion in sync with nature, while Hyperion throws Diotima off her rhythm. Her arrhythmia betrays her new status as an erotic object.⁷⁵ As with the biblical example in Eden, a loss of faith and the introduction of the erotic coincide with the initiation of historical time.

The explicit recognition of time as a formal condition of narrating experience suggests a poetics derived from Kantian epistemology. In his first attempt to render Diotima in words (letter 4), Hyperion tries but fails to take her out of time: "Laß uns vergessen, daß es eine Zeit giebt und zähle die Lebenstage nicht!" (I, 658, 1-2). The account of their first meeting that immediately follows is non-linear and chaotic; bits and pieces of memory are strung together as a substitute for relating the sequence of events. Hyperion's neutral expression for Diotima's relation to her world, "geheimer Bund," also suggests a problem with narrating time. According to Kant, the principle of temporal sequence is determined by the law of causality, but Diotima does not interact with her environment; she communes secretly.⁷⁶ The letter begins with the attempt to mark a

⁷⁵ The break in meter in the last line of Goethe's Faust demonstrates exactly this arrhythmia characteristic of the erotic object: "Das Unbeschreibliche,/ Hier ist's getan;/Das Ewig-Weibliche/ Zieht uns hinan." Arguably then, Gretchen maintains her status as an erotic object of desire for Faust, despite her apparent apotheosis, and consequently, "das Ewig-Weibliche" represents a driving force rather than an object of pure faith.

⁷⁶ See Kant's first critique, the section entitled "Grundsatz der Zeitfolge nach dem Gesetze der Kausalität."

particular historical moment (“Noch seh’ ich den Abend, an dem Notara zum erstenmale zu ihr in’s Haus mich brachte”), but it disintegrates into an abstraction without time or place. Hyperion communicates a sense of habitual or ideal action rather than the actual events of a single day. Without realism, without the narrative cadence that gives relation to events and thus marks time historically, the letter fails to express real life. The inadequacy of Hyperion’s narrative style is immediately apparent to him, though he has yet to see the significance of his realization: “So sprachen wir. Ich gebe dir den Inhalt, den Geist davon. Aber was ist er ohne das Leben?” (I, 659, 7-8). Outside of time, Diotima’s story is without life.

Diotima’s death anchors and orients Hyperion’s narrative in time and thus, gives it life. The image of the abyss dominates the fifth letter. On a visit to Hyperion’s mountain gardens, Diotima pauses to look down a steep drop off, her host holding her waist to prevent her falling over the brink. Hyperion claims that this moment of “heiße zitternde Wonne” represents “einen Augenblick der Liebe” more significant than the millennia of human deeds. He bases this judgment on the fact that Diotima’s moment on the brink of death orients all life: “dahin führen alle Stufen auf der Schwelle des Lebens. Daher kommen wir, dahin gehn wir” (I, 660, 9-11). Rather than simply partaking of a series of cause and effect events, this tenuous moment constitutes a threshold or linear center to which all moments past lead and in which all future moments find root. Marking history in this way avoids the debate over a final cause by structuring time around a particular moment that is pivotal rather than primal; the infinite regress into

history turns to an infinite progress regardless of one's temporal relation to that point in time. Critical to an understanding of Hyperion's historical perspective and to his nascent poetics is the recognition that this moment is absolute only in and for the particular. A moment of love weighs more than all the deeds of history, but it can be realized only in a fixed point of time and space that forever marks time for an individual. In this, the "Augenblick der Liebe" demands a communication between its own universal status and the individual's particular experience, and such a translation demands a certain sacrifice.⁷⁷

Even when alive, Diotima was more an object of reflection than an object of desire for Hyperion. As a muse she does not pull the narrative along in a linear series of causes and effects; rather, she is a lost presence, a wholeness that leaves only fragments in its wake. Hyperion's writing is driven by her absence rather than her presence, and this is a result not simply of her actual passing away but of her transformation in Hyperion's mind from an inutterable ideal to an object of desire. In contrast, one may look at the pertinent example of Goethe's Lotte from Die Leiden des jungen Werthers, who remains an ever unattainable reality and thus drives the narrative by her presence. Werther ultimately sacrifices himself, abandoning the present and leaving the narrative to be resolved outside the epistolary realm of internal narrative by a third party editor.

⁷⁷ Ryan reads Hyperion's development in Book Two of Volume I as a growth out of "das Kind des Augenblicks" to a poet, who comes to see that loss is not final but part of beauty itself (156). This constitutes a change in Hyperion from seeing the world in terms of strict dichotomies (the "Alles" and "Nichts" at the end of Book One) to a "dialektische Flexibilität." The expression, as we shall see, also applies to the poet's ability to communicate through paradox. "Dialektische Flexibilität," therefore, describes both a phenomenological understanding of history and the transition between philosophy and the "Dichtung" of being.

Diotima's necessary sacrifice ultimately affords Hyperion a resolution with the past; she is deified and he finds himself. Yet, his story remains without a conclusive ending. The object of desire in Werther demands the sacrifice of the subject to effect resolution, whereas in Hyperion, Diotima's status as an ideal object is sacrificed in order to celebrate the subject.

For Hyperion, Diotima is eroticized not simply by virtue of her proximity to death, but by her apparent enthusiasm for staring into the abyss. In letter five, he says: "Und dann die Herzenslust, so traulich neben ihr zu stehn, und die zärtlich kindische Sorge, daß sie fallen möchte, und die Freude an der Begeisterung des herrlichen Mädchens!" (I, 660, 4-6). Early on, Hyperion experiences desire empathically when watching Diotima; abstracted from immediate experience, his 'desire' for her is more theoretical than real. In fact, as he first thinks of her, she does not really constitute a possible object either physically or intellectually: "Es kam nicht Lust und nicht Bewunderung, es kam der Friede des Himmels unter uns" (I, 660, 26-27). Their relationship, defined by plenty and peace rather than lack or desire, was no relation at all, for she was, theoretically, a purely positive presence. But in order to bring her into the present, Hyperion must give her a name. As "Schönheit," she is a mental muse, not the ideal itself but a marker for it, teaching Hyperion how to record her lost presence.

Absolute loss, like absolute presence renders speechless; in contrast, the muse of desire inspires language with an ever-receding presence. Diotima's actual presence was silencing. Hyperion frequently refers to her "Gesang," her "Seelentöne" as the perfect

expression of her being, and as a result, the critics indicate music or song as the medium most suited by far to the expression of the beautiful.⁷⁸ Yet, Hyperion's repeated reference to her song never serves to impart a fuller sense of her being as present. More often, any expression of her being shows only how she is alienated from the text before us. With Diotima, the utterance of her abstracts and moves away from her historical reality until she ultimately dies away from the text altogether. Hyperion makes clear that words always move away from the ideality of Diotima. In contrast, words forever attempt to approach the reality of the muse of desire. The presence of Diotima fulfills and satisfies; she must, therefore, die for poetry to exist. The muse of desire, however, tempts and must persist whether as a worldly or divine 'presence removed', an "Ewig-Weibliches" that pulls words ever onward.

In letter sixteen, Hyperion realizes that a romantic love for and from Diotima is antithetical to her ideal status: "Das ist ja meine Freude, süßes Leben! daß du in dir den sorgenfreien Himmel trägst. Du sollst nicht dürftig werden, nein, nein! du sollst in dir die Armuth der Liebe nicht sehn" (I, 669, 30-33). Hyperion calls the dialogue between himself and Diotima that follows the "Seelengespräch," which consists of a retelling of his life-story, a discussion of his relationships to Alabanda and Adamas, and a proposal. Diotima rejects Hyperion based on his unrealistic ideas about the perfect relationship: "Du wolltest keine Menschen, glaube mir, du wolltest eine Welt...Geh, rief sie, geh, und

⁷⁸ See, for example, Siekmann, "Die ästhetische Funktion von Sprache, Schweigen, und Musik in Hölderlins Hyperion." See also, Haberer Sprechen, Schweigen, Schauen: Rede und Blick in Hölderlins Empedokles und Hyperion, especially pages 239-240.

zeige dem Himmel deine Verklärung! mir darf sie nicht so nahe seyn" (I, 671, 23; 672, 29-30). Diotima points out a serious contradiction in Hyperion's concept of his relation to the ideal; an individual cannot love the one and the many absolutely: "O so bist du ja mir Alles, rief ich./ Alles? böser Heuchler! und die Menschheit, die du am Ende einzig liebst?" (I, 672, 22-24). This changes the relationship. After the "Seelengespräch" Hyperion becomes a creature of the night; it is his "Element," a word from his Alabanda vocabulary signaling the introduction of forces in nature. The lovers meet at night for the first time and just as the first light of day breaks, Hyperion loses consciousness. He describes his "Lücke im Dasein" as a figurative death. This gesture represents the self-sacrifice in the manner of Werther characteristic of the subject's relationship to the real object of desire.

The transformation in Diotima's perceived status parallels a transformation in Hyperion. In the letter following the "Seelengespräch," he becomes aware of a voyeuristic distance as Diotima ceases to be an immediate presence and becomes an object to be mediated. Their bond becomes triangulated, expressing itself as inter-relation rather than mutual identity: "Immer muß' ein Dritter uns stören, trennen, und die Welt lag zwischen ihr und mir, wie eine unendliche Leere" (I, 674, 8-9) The intention expressed in the "Seelengespräch" to make Diotima a real object for the many ("ich wollte die Menschheit machte Diotima zum Loosungswort") rather than an ideal object for the one ("so bist du ja mir Alles") generates erotic desire with the insertion of the negative—the space of distinction. Diotima retreats as a reflective partner, leaving

Hyperion with an empty space for self-projection in which he is lost: "Ich kannte, seit dem letzten Seelengespräche, mit jedem Tage mich weniger" (I, 673, 31-32). And yet, this projection generates some of his most poetic words: "Auch um Diotimas Haus war alles still und leer, und die neidischen Vorhänge standen mir an allen Fenstern im Wege" (I, 675, 17-18).⁷⁹ Hyperion becomes conscious of how he eroticized and thereby corrupted Diotima; he has made her a thing of this earth. Their mirror relationship is transformed from the time Hyperion's own drive for the eternal infuses her with the desire to be otherworldly for him: "Und an mir, rief sie, an mir will sich Hyperion halten? ja, ich wünsche es, jetzt zum ersten male wunsch' ich, mehr zu seyn, denn nur ein sterblich Mädchen. Aber ich bin dir, was ich seyn kann" (I, 672, 18-21). In striving to fulfill Hyperion's ideal image of her, she has acquired a desire that is entirely worldly. The specular or theoretically perfect mirror relation of identity turns to a practical voyeuristic relation, raising issues of mediation and power between subject and object.

As Diotima comes to echo Hyperion's own striving, she makes him conscious of himself as object. Hyperion, therefore, comes immediately to identify Bellarmin as the ideal "Gesprächspartner"—a silent and pure reflection of the soul. Bellarmin is now a better mirror for the self in that he does not present Hyperion as an object to himself; instead, Bellarmin allows an expression of being, the mutual identity of "Seyn," without the self-conscious judgment of relation entailed in recognizing an other as reflective of

⁷⁹ The same kind of perceptual slippage is found in Hölderlin's best poetry. A line from "Heidelberg," for example, shows not a transference from subject to object, but a transference from one object to another, rendering the same lyrical instability in the subject's perceptual field: "die Brücke,/Die von Wagen und Menschen tönt" (I, 252, 7-8).

oneself. The relationship to the ideal object necessitates a language that is not for the many but for the one; it is not universal truth, but a secret message. In letter seven, prior to the “Seelengespräch,” Diotima’s relationship to nature is not beyond language, but the language she uses with nature is purely her own: “Sie nannte sie alle [(die Blumen)] mit Nahmen, schuff ihnen aus Liebe neue, schönere” (I, 661, 4-5).⁸⁰ Diotima’s taxonomy parallels Hyperion’s metaphysics. In the same letter he says: “Es ist doch ewig gewiß und zeigt sich überall; je unschuldiger, schöner eine Seele, desto vertrauter mit den andern glücklichen Leben, die man seelenlos nennt” (I, 661, 12-14). Hyperion addresses here not an ontology, but the structure of language as it reflects our manner of thinking about abstracts and absolutes such as souls. Our language calls what is natural ‘pure’; purifying the soul means to come into harmony with nature or to resonate with the soulless—to arrive at a silent harmony. Not only does this explain Hyperion’s fondness for Diotima’s song as non-linguistic, it explains his turn to Bellarmin as his new favorite “Gesprächspartner” after Diotima becomes an object of erotic desire. In the “Seelengespräch,” when Diotima points out the logical paradox in Hyperion’s thinking, she contradicts him for the first time. The loss of immediate understanding defines the moment in which she ceases to be a mirror reflection, an object of absolute reciprocity,

⁸⁰ To say Diotima’s language is “purely her own” requires a note on Hamann’s theory on the origin of language, which is based itself on the principle that “Alles Göttliche ist aber auch menschlich” (*Werke* III, 27). The language of Hamann’s Adam emphasizes a personal unity with the divine, rather than separation and mediation: “Jede Erscheinung der Natur war ein Wort,—das Zeichen, Sinnbild und Unterpfand einer neuen, geheimen, unaussprechlichen, aber desto innigern Vereinigung, Mittheilung und Gemeinschaft göttlicher Energien und Ideen. Alles, was der Mensch am Anfange hörte, mit Augen sah, beschaute und seine Hände betasteten, war ein lebendiges Wort; denn Gott war das Wort” (*Werke* III, 32). Confusion in language is less the result of a primal fall that necessitates mediation than a product of perverse reason (*Werke* III, 31). Hamann serves Hölderlin well; just as he avoids using a final cause to structure his view of history, Hölderlin obviates the need for one in language by seeing it as a creative act of personal communion.

and becomes instead an erotic object of desire.⁸¹ It also marks the only point in the novel in which Hyperion makes a direct characterization of Bellarmin: “Aber nur dir, mein Bellarmin, nur einer reinen freien Seele, wie die deine ist, erzähl’ ich’s. So freigebig, wie die Sonne mit ihren Strahlen, will ich nicht seyn; meine Perlen will ich vor die alberne Menge nicht werfen” (I, 673, 27-30). What Bellarmin is is defined only by what Hyperion is not. The pure language is a language for one pure and silent partner, who does not echo the speaker. Just as the “Augenblick der Liebe” orients time universally from the particular, the beauty of pure language lies in a secret and singular creative act of pure reflection.

As with the structure of the novel, Hölderlin’s mirrors come in pairs. At times Hyperion is the mirror for Diotima and at others she for him. When the mirror changes from an expression of mutual identity (“das liebe Wesen, treuer wie ein Spiegel” (I, 666, 27) to a metaphor for inter-relational identity (“ich bin deines gleichen geworden”(I, 677, 30), individual identity is put at stake in a deadly negotiation. As early as the second letter, the innuendo of a transfer of identity appears in the early drinking and water images when Hyperion is inspirited with the divine:

hab’ ich es in mir getragen, das Göttliche, das mir erschien! und wenn

hinfort mich das Schicksaal ergreift und von einem Abgrund in den andern

⁸¹ In *Hölderlin et la question du père*, LaPlanche defines Hyperion’s relationship to Diotima as one of absolute reciprocity, distinguishing it from other ‘mirror’ relationships. He distinguishes the relationship to Alabanda as narcissistic and that to Melite, Diotima’s namesake in the “Fragment von Hyperion,” as one of total union. The focus of LaPlanche’s reading is the relationship to Adamas, which he reads as a dialectic and, hence, the only one truly expressive of a dynamic relation. My reading, in contrast, seeks to illuminate the change in Diotima’s status and thereby show the appropriative dynamic within Hyperion’s relationship to her.

mich wirft, und alle Kräfte ertränkt in mir und alle Gedanken, so soll diß
 Einzige doch mich selber überleben in mir, und leuchten in mir und
 herrschen, in ewiger, unzerstörbarer Klarheit! (I, 655, 28-33)

“Das Einzige,” we remember, is one of the names Hyperion uses for Diotima before settling on “Schönheit.” Hyperion then describes a life ebbed away and the resurrection of an eroticized form: “So lagst du hingegossen, süßes Leben, so bliktest du auf, erhobst dich, standst nun da, n sclaner Fülle, göttlich ruhig, und das himmlische Gesicht noch voll des heitem Entzükens” (I, 655, 34-36). A few lines earlier, the word “süß” is linked to Hyperion’s drunken self-absorption, suggesting that the “süßes Leben” is his own and that the resurrection enacts a transfer of identity to Diotima. Reading the “süßes Leben” as that of Diotima immediately correlates the overwhelming flood of fate with the ebb of Diotima’s life. “Schiksaal,” the unfolding of nature into the form of reality, corresponds to Diotima’s fatal eroticization. It is indeed a deadly intersection, where Hyperion’s drunkenness, his imbibing of the spirit, meets the objectification of Diotima.

It is after the sexually charged “Lücke im Dasein” scene in letter seventeen that a more explicitly demonic aspect of the relationship becomes fully articulated. Up to this point Hyperion has consistently referred to her as identical to himself, and thus, her communion with nature (including the gaze into the abyss) is his. Now he tells her that all his life he has searched for an image of God only to find that it is but a *reflection* of himself; one that fades as his mood falls.⁸² We remember his days with Adamas and his

⁸² “O Diotima! so stand ich sonst auch vor dem dämmernden Götterbilde, das meine Liebe sich schuff, vor dem Idole meiner einsamen Träume; ich nährte es traulich; mit meinem Leben belebt’ ich es, mit den

disappointment at being unable to grasp the divine as his mentor did; he reached out for God and awoke to find himself holding his own hand. Prior to the “Lüke im Dasein” scene, Hyperion expresses as best he can a shared identity with Diotima: “O ich hätte mögen Diotima seyn, da sie diß sagte! Aber du weißt nicht, was sie sagte, mein Bellarmin! Du hast es nicht gesehn und nicht gehört” (I, 662, 24-26). Language cannot express a shared being of two things; at best it can only express identity as a relationship between two things. The moment of identification, though only realized in language, is a moment of the rejection of mediative ability. At the end of Book Two, Diotima, possessed since the “Seelengespräch” by the need to strive toward the divine (“jezt zum erstenmale wünsch’ ich, mehr zu seyn, denn nur ein sterblich Mädchen”), takes on the role of Hyperion and he, deified in her eyes (“zeige dem Himmel deine Verklärung”), takes on that of Diotima. He used to see his very being in her words. Now, he speaks her soul: “Du hast noch nie so tief aus meiner Seele gesprochen, rief Diotima./Ich habe es von dir, erwiedert’ ich” (I, 683, 17-19) The reflective relationship expressed in the image of the mirror, which once facilitated Hyperion’s projection of himself into the divine, transforms into an ominous ventriloquism. In the specular power play of appropriation lies the connection between the erotic and demonic possession.

The appropriation of identity in speech is linked to Hyperion’s recuperative strategy for recounting the history of a personal encounter with the ideal. The recuperation of lost time in language is a function of observing oneself in the act of

Hoffnungen meines Herzens erfrischt’, erwärmt’ ich es, aber es gab mir nichts, als was ich gegeben, und wenn ich verarmt war, ließ es mich arm” (I, 677, 20-25).

observing. Diotima's pre-"Seelengespräch" status as a reflective partner, a mirror, expresses both a precognitive mutual understanding and Hyperion's feeling of mutual identity:

Eh' es eines von uns beeden wußte, gehörten wir uns an./Wenn ich so...vor ihr stand, und schwieg, und all mein Leben sich hingab in den Stralen des Augs, das sie nur sah, nur sie umfaßte, und sie dann wieder zärtlich zweifelnd mich betrachtete. (I, 666, 6-10)

To belong to one another is to know each other apperceptively insofar as one's sense of self lies as much within the other as in oneself. The shared specular act represents Hyperion's judgment of Diotima's status as the ideal mirror, expressions of her knowing his thoughts before he does show that she is a mirror in which Hyperion can experience himself as a self:

Wenn sie, wunderbar allwissend, jeden Wohlklang, jeden Mislaut in der Tiefe meines Wesens, im Momente, da er begann, noch eh' ich selbst ihn wahrnahm,...wenn das liebe Wesen, treuer, wie ein Spiegel, jeden Wechsel meiner Wange mir verrieth,... (I, 666, 19-27)

Diotima is simply a place holder for the self as object as Hyperion's thoughts take objective form. That Diotima is "treuer" than a mirror, suggests that she allows Hyperion to see himself without the distorting forms of cognition that would otherwise condition the representation of himself to himself as an object. As a result, in a moment when he

thinks of Diotima's loss, he seeks not her replacement, but one who, like the predicate in the theoretical "Ich bin Ich," will reflect his own understanding and experience of her:

Wo ist das Wesen, das, wie meines, sie erkannte? in welchem Spiegel sammelten sich, so wie in mir, die Stralen dieses Lichtes? erschrak sie freudig nicht vor ihrer eignen Herrlichkeit, da sie zuerst in meiner Freude sich gewahr ward? (I, 665,26-29)

There is a double revelation in this double mirror. First, Hyperion has abandoned any search for the thing in itself, the immediate experience of Diotima's celestial being, and second, he has blindly indicated Bellarmin's function as a silent partner in dialogue: he allows Hyperion to recollect Diotima for himself, for it is only a discrete and exclusive vision that communicates between the universal and the particular.

Hölderlin's phenomenological approach seeks not to describe things and events in themselves as representative of a higher reality, but things in transition and pivotal events as the only possible manifestations of reality. This claim relies for support upon the second stage of the poetics developed in Hyperion, the poetics of history. The first ten letters of Book Two address Diotima's presence, in the eleventh our narrator realizes the impossibility of an immediate and complete presentation: "Ich muß vergessen, was sie ganz ist, wenn ich von ihr sprechen soll" (I, 664, 9-10). He then addresses Diotima's absence and begins a meditation on the nature of time and narrative: "Ich muß mich täuschen, als hätte sie vor alten Zeiten gelebt, als wüßt' ich durch Erzählung einiges von ihr, wenn ihr lebendig Bild mich nicht ergreifen soll" (I, 664, 10-13). In the twelfth

letter, he begins speaking of the practical manifestation of time in the absolute-- Diotima's death. Her ghost inspires the meditation on history that follows and initiates the negotiations of the demonic.

After the description in letters thirteen and fourteen of the demonic workings of (historical) identity, which were discussed above, letter fifteen speaks directly to the relationship between time and narrative. Hyperion begins by introducing Notara, whom he'd already introduced in letter four. This temporal slip marks a fresh beginning and signals Hyperion's desire to present a narrative whole. In contrast to the kaleidoscopic style characteristic of the novel, this letter presents, in fact, the most cohesive, linear episode since the beginning of Book Two. Hyperion has attempted unsuccessfully up to this point to communicate a direct impression of Diotima's presence. Here, he tells the story of an event in the past that directly addressed the subject of the temporal barrier to direct experience. His 'indirect' method, however, consists of a direct quote from an argument that uses a metaphor to argue against the possibility of directly reliving the past; miraculously, Diotima grasps his meaning immediately. This letter exemplifies the phenomenological approach that makes the process of change the essential feature of communicating being: "die Schönheit flüchtet aus dem Leben der Menschen sich herauf in den Geist; Ideal wird, was Natur war...Ideal ist, was Natur war" (I, 668, 8-9, 12). In writing, being must reveal itself as a weaving of past and present, of direction and indirection that hopes to communicate its essence to the reader. Given that the presence of the ideal is always silencing ("meine Diotima hatte mich so einsilbig gemacht") and

that absence offers the only opportunity to speak, the phenomenological, with its constant invocation of the negative, is the only possible narrative relation to the past.

In the penultimate letter to Book Two, Hyperion learns how stories must end. This realization relates directly to Diotima's change in status from an ideal object to an erotic object. The letter describes a breakdown from the immediate and absolute communication of a shared "Allwissenheit" and "unendlicher Glaube" to silence ("fühlt' ich einmal, daß Diotima stiller wurde und immer stiller" (I, 679, 17). This frustrates Hyperion, whose nature it is to demand the complete and unveiled presence of the ideal, to no end. That which is inaccessible to him represents the non-existent:

verschloßne Schätze waren verlorne Schätze für [meinen Sinn]. Ach! ich hatt' im Glücke die Hoffnung verlernt, ich war noch damals, wie die ungeduldigen Kinder, die um den Apfel am Baume weinen, als wär' er gar nicht da, wenn er ihnen den Mund nicht küßt. (I, 679, 29-33)

This is Hyperion at his most lurid. He proceeds to take from the eroticized Diotima what the silent, ideal Diotima will not give him. In doing so, he not only throws her off her natural rhythm, he pronounces her figurative death:

sie liebe zu sehr,...o wie sie rief: abtrünnig bin ich geworden von Mai und Sommer und Herbst, und achte des Tages und der Nacht nicht, wie sonst, gehöre dem Himmel und der Erde nicht mehr, gehöre nur Einem, Einem...und Erd' und Himmel ist mir in diesem Einem vereint! so lieb' ich!--und wie sie nun in voller Herzenlust mich betrachtete, wie sie, in

kühner heiliger Freude, in ihre schönen Arme mich nahm und die Stirne
 mir küßte und den Mund, ha! wie das göttliche Haupt, sterbend in Wonne,
 mir am offenen Halse herabsank, und die süßen Lippen an der schlagenden
 Brust mir ruhten und der liebliche Othem an die Seele mir gieng—o
 Bellarmin! die Sinne vergehn mir und der Geist entflieht. (I, 680, 6-20)

Given the vampiric relish with which his soul receives her sighing breath, his deathlike swoon serves only to remind us that Hyperion is taking sweet revenge for his own figurative death at her hands. The second love scene cited here replays the first almost exactly, except for the crucial fact that the roles are reversed.⁸³ Furthermore, Hyperion appears to be playing the ventriloquist, for Diotima uses almost the very words to describe him (“das Eine”) as he once used when first describing her (“das Einzige”). Hyperion, consciously or otherwise, has contrived a narrative circle—his second, if we count the return to Tina at the end of Book One. True to his reflective nature, Hyperion must think twice before coming to any conclusion: “Ich seh’, ich sehe, wie das enden muß” (I, 680, 21).⁸⁴ But what sort of ending does he see? Hyperion’s conclusive conclusion is followed by an image of deadly aimlessness: “Das Steuer ist in die Wooge gefallen und das Schiff wird, wie an den Füßen ein Kind, ergriffen und an die Felsen geschleudert” (I, 680, 21-23). Hyperion leaves us with a curious paradox—fateful impotence follows triumph.

⁸³ “Es ist hier eine Lücke in meinem Dasein. Ich starb, und wie ich erwachte, lag ich am Herzen des himmlischen Mädchens” (I, 676, 23-24).

⁸⁴ On the necessity of endings to the form of narrative see Brooks’s, *Reading for the Plot*. On importance of whether this particular citation is spoken by the narrating or narrated Hyperion, see Gaskill, “‘Ich seh’, ich sehe’: Observations on a misunderstood passage in Hölderlin’s ‘Hyperion.’”

According to *Hyperion*, paradox is the means by which we enter the realm of art, which in turn is the place of beauty's aesthetic expression. The central paradox for *Hyperion* lies in the fact that the novel is the product of a failure to communicate beauty; *Hyperion* repeatedly affirms that divine beauty is a whole, but it is nothing if not the real fragments in which we perceive it. Readers coming to an end of this first volume may see an ending here, a completion of the whole as conclusions are reached from an overview of the novel's content. The last line of this letter and the volume provides a tidy moral in terms of grand syntheses such as "Eine Schönheit" and "Eine allumfassende Gottheit." But as Hölderlin said in the "Vorrede," those who read the novel as "ein Compendium" and look for a "fabula docet" have only a partial understanding of the work.⁸⁵ What conclusion do we actually arrive at? At the core of the ideal society—the Athenian serves as the example—lies perfect or "schöne" human nature, which emerges naturally when the child is allowed to retain the state of "Einfalt" without the trauma of self-consciousness: "laßt den Menschen spät erst wissen, daß es Menschen, daß es irgend etwas außer ihm giebt, denn so nur wird er Mensch. Der Mensch ist aber ein Gott, so bald er Mensch ist. Und ist er ein Gott, so ist er schön" (I, 683,12-15). *Hyperion's* account of his days with Adamas express precisely the trauma of childhood that would force him to remain "ewig ein Fragment": "Vollendete Natur muß in dem Menschenkinde leben, eh' es in die Schule geht, damit das Bild der Kindheit ihm die

⁸⁵ Reading "fabula docet" literally as the moral of a story makes the point well enough, but reading it speculatively as a "Docetic story" proposes an interesting addendum. The Docetae, an early heretical sect, saw Christ's body as mere appearance, which, if at all real, was a celestial substance. The "Docetic story" would then be one that fails in all but the purely theoretical sense to connect the divine to the worldly.

Rückkehr zeige aus der Schule zu vollendeter Natur" (I, 682, 23-26). Hyperion idealizes the internal awareness of "Einfalt," but despite all efforts to the contrary, he is ultimately forced to find that image outside himself in Diotima's "heilige Einfalt." The process of self-reflection generated by his separation produces the novel. The paradox then appears to lie between theory and practice.

Diotima gives us an image of paradox, and as such she is a phenomenological manifestation of beauty. Diotima acts as muse in the realm of the first expression of the ideal society; art as an expression of beauty.⁸⁶ Diotima is thus the source of rejuvenation and self-reflection, the mirroring necessary to the realization of beauty: "In [der Kunst] verjüngt und wiederholt der göttliche Mensch sich selbst. Er will sich selber fühlen, darum stellt er seine Schönheit gegenüber sich" (I, 683, 24-26). Diotima is referred to once in *Hyperion* as "Urania," who also appears in Hölderlin's poem "Gesang des Deutschen" as the first and the last of the muses. Diotima is a border figure for Hyperion, who best represents the transition between art and philosophy:

Die Dichtung, sagt' ich, meiner Sache gewiß, ist der Anfang und das Ende dieser Wissenschaft. Wie Minerva aus Jupiters Haupt, entspringt sie aus der Dichtung eines unendlichen göttlichen Seyns. Und so läuft am End' auch wieder in ihr das Unvereinbare in der geheimnißvollen Quelle der

⁸⁶ According to Hyperion, the ideal society expresses itself in art, religion, and philosophy. Art is the realm of self-knowledge, religion that of divine insight. Art is an expression of inner beauty turned outward and hence is the source of the gods, while religion manifests the love of beauty. Establishing beauty as the criterion of perfected human nature, Hyperion asserts that the two principal relationships in human life are to the work of art and to the divine. That Hyperion leaves the relationship to the divine unaddressed suggests a starting point for Volume Two.

Dichtung zusammen. (I, 685, 1-5)

For Hyperion poetry is the beginning and end of philosophy, lying at the point where philosophies irreconcilable paradoxes dissolve into a unified source of the work of art.⁸⁷

Diotima's peculiar ability to grasp paradox and her status as a mirror as it transforms into her possession by Hyperion speak for her status as a border figure between art and philosophy.

Beginning with the "Seelengespräch" of letter sixteen of Book Two, the role of paradox in the relationship between poetry and philosophy becomes apparent. The "Seelengespräch" is the moment in which Diotima transforms from ideal object, the inaccessible, yet ever-present universal, to the erotic object, the accessible, yet ever-absent particular. She makes this transition in the moment she perceives and, therefore, reflects to Hyperion, what the demand of his idealization really is:

Den Verlust von allen goldenen Jahrhunderten, so wie du sie,
 zusammengedrängt in Einen glüklichen Moment, empfandest, den Geist
 von allen Geistern beßrer Zeit, die Kraft von allen Kräften der Heroën, die
 sollte dir ein Einzelner, ein Mensch ersezen!—Siehest du nun, wie arm,
 wie reich du bist? warum du so stolz seyn muß und auch so

⁸⁷ Schlegel's famous fragment from *Ideen* (1800) seems to reach the same conclusion: "Wo die Philosophie aufhört, muß die Poesie anfangen" (#48, 226). That Hölderlin conjures the figure of Diotima to reflect this idea shows an interest in manifesting that which Schlegel leaves unspoken and defined only by the unreconciled difference between philosophy and poetry. Schlegel's *Lucinde* contrasts with *Hyperion* along the same lines in that it is less systematic, more fragmentary, and perhaps even more focused on the opposition in any relationship than its unifying aspects. Schlegel might rewrite Heraclitus's expression as "Das Unterschiedne in sich selber vereinigt," and perhaps he did in his two hundred fifty-second Athenäum fragment: "Eine eigentliche Kunstlehre der Poesie würde mit der absoluten Verschiedenheit der ewig unauflösllichen Trennung der Kunst und der rohen Schönheit anfangen. Sie selbst würde den Kampf beider darstellen, und mit der vollkommen Harmonie der Kunstpoesie und Naturpoesie endigen" (#252, 129).

niedergeschlagen? warum so schrecklich Freude und Leid dir wechselt? (I, 671, 23-30)

Diotima explains that the translation of the universal to the particular, or in practical, human terms, a love of the many to a love of the one, results in paradox within human understanding. Diotima takes on, or is possessed by the spirit of this transition as she sees all of heaven and earth in Hyperion, who becomes for her not “Alles” but “das Eine.” When Diotima gives up her “Einfalt,” her ability to resonate harmoniously with nature, she acquires an ability to comprehend paradox. She responds to Hyperion’s description of the relationship between poetry and philosophy with: “Das ist ein paradoxer Mensch,...jedoch ich ahn ihn” (I, 685, 6). As the passage suggests, her ability to intuit the universal has been translated into an ability to comprehend paradox in the particular. Rather than resonating with the universal, she now grasps the particular in the moment it slips beyond human understanding. In Diotima we see the line between philosophy and poetry.

Diotima’s place on the border makes her a force of presencing or making manifest. Where her presence once pushed Hyperion to abstraction and forced his narrative into fragments, she is now a force of reason pulling Hyperion’s meditations to the real and the practical: “Aber ihr schweift mir aus. Von Athen ist die Rede” (I, 685, 7). Heeding his muse, Hyperion directs his discourse toward a practical objective. Diotima grasps what philosophy is, but now she wants to know what it looks like in Athenian society.

Hyperion designates skepticism as the philosophical path to the Athenian mind. It is the perspective of one who has experienced beauty and thus finds only contradiction and insufficiency in all that is thought: “Denn glaubt es mir, der Zweifler findet darum nur im allem, was gedacht wird, Widerspruch und Mangel, weil er die Harmonie der mangelosen Schönheit kennt, die nie gedacht wird” (I, 685, 14-17).⁸⁸ Only the Athenian mind was capable of experiencing beauty and hence articulating the original paradox which gave birth to philosophy out of “das Wesen der Schönheit”: “das Eine in sich selber unterschiedne.” As an analytic science, philosophy can only work negatively to approach beauty or any absolute. Hyperion’s own path through his relationships to Adamas, Alabanda, and Diotima follow this path. The necessary vision of perfection in childhood (“Einfalt”) is ruptured by the awareness of self (Adamas), the self then finds both opposition (Alabanda) and harmony (Diotima) in its reflection upon itself. What remains is Diotima’s promise of the return to beauty and the aesthetic life in the “dichterische Tage.” In this way, the entire novel may be understood as both complete and a fragment. Hyperion recounts the entire process, though the ultimate product remains unaccomplished.

Hyperion calls *εν διαφερον εαυτω* the beginning of philosophy not because it marks an inception but because it enacts a translation. The association between Diotima as the embodiment of beauty and Heraclitus’s phrase as an expression of “das Wesen der

⁸⁸ A year later Friedrich Schlegel, in his *Athenäum-Fragmente* (1798), expresses the same sentiment without offering the explanation Hölderlin does: “Es gibt noch gar keinen Skeptizismus, der den Namen verdient. Ein solcher müßte mit der Behauptung und Forderung unendlich vieler Widersprüche anfangen und endigen” (#400, 147). Again, the closure in Hölderlin’s version shows a drive less evident in Schlegel to voice the inutterable.

Schönheit” stands only if both manifestations are understood not as absolute ideals but as marginal terms used to indicate a transition in progress. Diotima represents “das Eine in sich selber unterschiedne” because she facilitates the act of putting beauty into words. The conception of a whole, a paradox in itself, initiates a process of analysis and fragmentation: “Nun konnte man bestimmen, das ganze war da. Die Blume war gereift, man konnte nun zergliedern” (I, 685, 27-28) Alternatives to this phenomenological formulation of the ideal as paradox fall short for lack of the ability to effect a crossing over. The formulation of the absolute according to the Egyptians produces “eine verschleierte Macht,” which was exactly the end result of Hyperion’s experience with Adamas. Hyperion, like the Egyptian youth, confronted the sublime before he had formed his own image of beauty as the basis for the intuition or “Gefühl” of the beautiful. The result, despite Adamas’s constant evocations of the sun, is “eine leere Unendlichkeit” inaccessible to human reason—slavish faith based on empty superstition: “Auch aus dem erhabensten Nichts wird Nichts geboren.” The Northerners, as a result of an overly introspective tendency also fail to have the “Gefühl” necessary to “Verstand” and “Vernunft.”⁸⁹ Here we find the image of a society according to Alabanda: “ein Treiber, den der Herr des Hauses über die Knechte gesetzt hat; der weiß, so wenig, als die Knechte, was aus all’ der unendlichen Arbeit werden soll, und ruft nur: tummelt euch” (I, 687, 3-6). The premature driving of the child ‘into himself’ of which Hyperion speaks, corresponds both to the narcissistic aspect of his relationship to Alabanda, as well as the

⁸⁹ Invoking “Gefühl” against “Verstand” and “Vernunft,” Hölderlin is clearly reading Jacobi against Kant. The following chapter on Hölderlin’s theoretical works addresses this aspect of Hölderlin’s thinking.

reflexivity of Alabanda's vision. Generating his own ideal and beholden only to himself, his vision drives him to work, to till endlessly, for his vision does not extend beyond its own process: "[der Treiber] siehet es fast ungern, wenn es vor sich geht, denn am Ende hätt' er ja nichts mehr zu treiben, und seine Rolle wäre gespielt" (I, 687, 6-8). For this reason, Alabanda chastises Hyperion with the term "Schwärmer," a word of praise from Diotima. Vision is precisely the capacity to see beyond one's own process: "Leuchtet aber das göttliche *εν διαφερον εαυτω*, das Ideal der Schönheit der strebenden Vernunft, so fodert sie nicht blind, und weiß, warum, wozu sie fodert" (I, 687, 16-18).

Understanding, the epistemology of the Egyptian, is no true philosophy for it simply marks off its own domain, "wie ein dienstbarer Geselle, der den Zaun aus grobem Holze zimmert"—philosophy is more than the knowledge of the manifest. Reason, the epistemology of the Northerner, is no true philosophy for it only drives thinking—philosophy is more than the endless process of synthesis and analysis. "Das Eine in sich selber unterschiedne" gives form to thinking and, therefore, makes it an aesthetic endeavor: "[es] Scheint, wie der Maitag in des Künstlers Werkstatt" (I, 687, 19).

Paradox, the appropriate designation for both Diotima and *εν διαφερον εαυτω*, is the point of beauty's translation, manifesting, therefore, a poetics of philosophy.

Diotima ultimately teaches Hyperion how to deal with the problem of bringing beauty into time: the essential paradox for the poet. In Athens, Hyperion is distressed because the city is less than a shadow of its former self; he reuses a recent metaphor, seeing the city as the unrecognizable hull of a wrecked ship. Diotima plays a tempering

role. Hyperion feels pressed for time; he is caught up in time but wants to escape it and transport himself into the past. His favorite ruin is the gate from the old city to the new—a time portal that Diotima closes for him. Hyperion resists: “Kannst du so dich in die alte Zeit versezen, sagte Diotima./Mahne mich nicht an die Zeit! erwiedert’ ich” (I, 688, 9-10). Hyperion looks at Athens and pines, whereas Diotima, just as she accomodates paradox, finds a meditative peace, a calm at the center of all turns of fate: “Hier, sagte Diotima, lernt man stille seyn über sein eigen Schiksaal, es seie gut oder böse” (I, 689, 4-5). She tells Hyperion that this peace is found in the ability to turn the fragment whole: “Der Künstler ergänzt den Torso sich leicht” (I, 689, 24-25). To keep Hyperion in time she first turns him to nature: “Guter Hyperion!, rief Diotima, es ist Zeit, daß du weggehst...Komm hinaus! in’s Grüne! unter die Farben des Lebens!” (I, 690, 7-10). But ultimately, art is a manual labor, so she tells him to go to Europe to learn “die Hand zu führen.”

Diotima makes Hyperion an artist by causing him to recognize that loss is productive: “Glaube mir, du hättest nie das Gleichgewicht des schönen Menschheit so rein erkannt, hättest du es nicht so sehr verloren gehabt” (I, 691, 31-33).⁹⁰ The zeal with which Hyperion sets off on his artistic mission to Europe suggests that he has yet to progress past his experience with Alabanda. The familiar vocabulary of Alabanda’s element and the ‘deed’ returns here in the words “Siege,” “Tat,” “Helden,” “Braut,” and “alte Bund.” He seems to have simply exchanged Alabanda’s violent means for peaceful

⁹⁰ Hyperion claims these words as his own in letter sixteen when he addresses Bellarmin: “Frägst du, wie mir gewesen sei um diese Zeit? Wie einem, der alles verloren hat, um alles zu gewinnen” (I, 668, 31-32).

ones—an aesthetic educator or “Erzieher unsers Volks”(I, 693, 9) after the Schillerian ideal. The visionary closure to the book is perhaps the most clear signal that a second volume must follow: “Es wird nur Eine Schönheit seyn; und Menschheit und Natur wird sich vereinen in Eine allumfassende Gottheit” (I, 693, 35-36). That this expresses an antiquated Athenian ideal shows how far Hyperion has yet to go along his eccentric path—his mission expresses nothing like the paradoxical equanimity of Heraclitus’s phrase. By showing Hyperion how to artfully enter Alabanda’s world of “Handlung” and “Tat,” Diotima brings closure to the interruption she introduced at the opening of the first volume’s second book.

The story of Diotima in Book Two of Volume One presents a concept of ideal beauty as phenomenological. Hyperion describes this ideal in the same process by which he learns how this ideal must be expressed. As an experience in the past, Diotima embodies an ideal, the immediate experience of which is silencing. As she is manifested in the unfolding of the text, she represents an ideal eroticized by its absence and, therefore, productive of narrative as she is pursued in words. Since she may be manifest only as the absence of the positive (the ideal object) or the presence of the negative (the erotic object), the only possible position for the subject is skeptical. The ideal object describes the divinity that is forever inaccessible, in which we have faith, while the erotic object describes the very tangible, visceral being that forever escapes our grasp—we forever seek to know it. Neither the understanding alone, the faculty of the idealistic fanatic, nor reason by itself, the faculty of the rational empiricist, can conceive of ideal beauty in time. Only the skeptical relation to the manifest accommodates the paradox by

which beauty reveals itself. The narrative of Diotima, therefore, points to a position of skeptical realism as the subject's only possible relation to the ideal object. Diotima thus links philosophical skepticism (the root of phenomenology) as an accommodation of the negative to the caesura that marks the pivotal turn from the ideal to the real—the cadence of poetic form.

CHAPTER VI:
HÖLDERLIN'S THEORETICAL WRITINGS AND POST-KANTIAN SKEPTICISM

Doch uns ist gegeben,
Auf keiner Stätte zu ruhn,
Es schwinden, es fallen
Die leidenden Menschen
Blindlings von einer
Stunde zur andern,
Wie Wasser von Klippe
Zu Klippe geworfen,
Jahr lang ins Ungewisse hinab.

“Hyperions Schicksaalslied”

Kant hat den Begriff des Negativen in die Weltweisheit eingeführt. Sollte es nicht ein nützlicher Versuch sein, nun auch den Begriff des Positiven in die Philosophie einzuführen?

Friedrich Schlegel, Athenäum-Fragmente (1798), (#3)

Das *Dialektische* als negative Bewegung, wie sie unmittelbar *ist*, erscheint dem Bewußtsein zunächst als etwas, dem es preisgegeben und das nicht durch es selbst ist. Als *Skeptizismus* hingegen ist sie Moment des Selbstbewußtseins, welchem es nicht *geschieht*, daß ihm, ohne zu wissen wie, sein Wahres und Reelles verschwindet, sonder welches in der Gewißheit seiner Freiheit dies andere für reel sich Gebende selbst verschwinden läßt.

Hegel, Phänomenologie des Geistes (1807), (160).

Hölderlin came to the Tübinger Stift in the Fall of 1788, the same year as Hegel, and dedicated the following two years to philosophy. In 1793, he completed his “Abschlußexamen,” having dedicated the last three years to the study of theology. His diploma indicates that he focused on Greek literature and Kant. Over the course of the next two years, Hölderlin’s philosophical study and interaction with Hegel, Niethammer, Novalis, Schelling, and Sinclair among others, brought him to the point where he felt prepared to lecture along side Fichte at Jena. Though Hyperion stands as a unified system of thought, what remains of his purely philosophical endeavors is a number of fragmentary essays. The following pages attempt to derive a sense of unity from these essays by looking at the way in which Hölderlin structures his thought during the years in which he composed Hyperion.

The previous chapters describe Hölderlin’s Hyperion as a progression of thought on the subject’s relation to the ideal. Within the philosophical context, the ideal represents the fundamental principle upon which a system of thought is based. In Hyperion, Adamas conveys the presence of the transcendent ideal, Alabanda enacts the monstrous ideal of dogmatic skepticism, and Diotima expresses the aesthetic process of the phenomenological ideal. She incorporates the spirit of a passage from Pascal, that Hölderlin quotes, most likely, from the second edition of Jacobi’s Ueber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn (1789) or possibly from his earlier work, David Hume über den Glauben oder Idealismus und Realismus (1787):

La nature confond les Pyrrhoniens.

La raison confond les Dogmatistes.

**Nous avons une impuissance à prouver, invincible à tout le Dogmatisme;
nous avons une idée de la verite, invincible à tout le Pyrrhonisme. (II, 972)**

This entry, made in J.C. Camerer's *Stammbuch* in March of 1795 just after the completion of "Hyperion's Jugend," shows a trace of Hölderlin's thinking that becomes more explicit in the finished novel; Hölderlin structures the relation to the ideal through a specific relation to the negative. For Jacobi, the passage expresses the unbridgeable gap between faith and reason; for Hölderlin, it expresses the possibility of a unique synthesis of faith and reason. That Diotima embodies beauty is self-evident to Hyperion, yet he is driven throughout his novel to demonstrate this fact of his experience. The organizing principle of the novel, the idea that gives it shape, lies in the tension between his vision of a truth and its explication in reasonable terms. The promise of his "dichterische Tage" to come postpones the end of his novel indefinitely ("Nächstens mehr"). Hölderlin's fundamental ideal reveals itself in the 'abysmal' task of expressing his conviction.

Hölderlin developed his philosophical thinking during a period in which the paradigm for knowledge was shifting from the Platonic to the Aristotelian. That is to say, the knowledge of an object came to be judged not upon the identification of its essential qualities and mechanistic function, but upon the description of the constellation of relations surrounding the object that define its function relative to a whole. It is not possible to divide the thinkers of the period strictly along these lines. Hamann, Jacobi, Kant, Maimon, Platner, and Reinhold, to name a pertinent few, agree and disagree on

various aspects of such related issues as the conflict between faith and reason, the primacy of language or thought, and the nature or even the possibility of a first principle of philosophy. What remains of Hölderlin's papers offers a direct response to only some of these thinkers, but it is clear that their central concerns are also his. Within this context, Hölderlin is perhaps best understood by identifying the basic principles with which he erects his philosophical system relative to others and describing how these principles negotiate the paradigm shift of the period.

The eruption within German philosophy toward the end of the eighteenth century can be seen as a reformulation of the methodology that guides the construction of a system of thought and the manner in which this system is described. Hölderlin found himself in the middle of a revolution instigated by Kant's critical approach, but fueled by skeptics such as Platner, Schulze, Maimon and even onetime advocates gone awry such as Reinhold and Fichte. As a result, systems based upon the positive expression of a self-evident first principle or "Grundsatz" gave way to descriptions of reality as a balance or play of opposed forces.⁹¹ Kant serves as a good example here because while taking one of last stands for the authority of reason, he managed to open the door to a host of 'irrationalisms' from fideistic "Schwärmerei" to absolute idealism. Using modern neologisms, we can speak of Kant as a philosopher who thinks in terms of contracts or 'economies'. The contract describes the conditions under which one can claim to

⁹¹ Cassirer distinguishes the mind of the Enlightenment from that of the seventeenth century (e.g. Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz) by its view of knowledge and reason as dynamic: "[Reason][in the eighteenth century] is not the treasury of the mind in which the truth like a minted coin lies stored; it is rather the original intellectual force which guides the discovery and determination of truth" (Philosophy of the Enlightenment, 13).

possess knowledge. The purpose of the contractual mode of thinking is to define limits, and the system of limits obviates the need to look outside the scope of the contract for grounding. In this way, philosophy, according to Kant, follows the basic tenet of the natural sciences and becomes a true “Wissenschaft”: “daß wir mit ihm nie über die Grenze möglicher Erfahrung hinauskommen können, welches doch gerade die wesentlichste Angelegenheit dieser Wissenschaft [Metaphysik] ist” (KrV, B XVIII). Kant fortifies reason by securing it within itself: “[Naturforscher] begriffen, daß die Vernunft nur das einsieht, was sie selbst nach ihrem Entwurfe hervorbringt.” (KrV, B XIII). It is, however, precisely this most fundamental tenet of Kant’s critical philosophy that forms the basis for Jacobi’s argument for faith and the accusation that all philosophy leads to fatalism. It is also, arguably, the spark that inspires Maimon and later Fichte to do away with the “Ding an sich” altogether by exposing as void that which Kant leaves obscured. The collapse of “Grundsatzphilosophie” is in this way bound with the attempt to cope with the negative that a “Grundsatz,” by definition, must subsume or ignore.

After the collapse of Reinhold’s “Elementarphilosophie,” Fichte’s “absolutes Ich” remained, in its own idealistic way, one of the last vestiges of “Grundsatzphilosophie.” Alternatives to “Grundsatzphilosophie” presented themselves in the form of systems based upon dynamically opposed forces, such as Schiller’s “Triebe”⁹², Hölderlin’s

⁹² Schiller’s likely source for his “Stofftrieb” and “Formtrieb” is Reinhold’s “Begehrungsvermögen” described in his Versuch einer neuen Theorie des menschlichen Vorstellungsvermögen as an alliance between the “Trieb nach Stoff” and the “Trieb nach Form.” Exemplifying perfectly the fate of “Grundsatzphilosophie,” Reinhold’s own “Begehrungsvermögen” represents a dynamic force that enters his philosophical system at the point where it breaks down and transgresses the limits it originally establishes for itself. For a more lengthy discussion of Reinhold’s crisis, see Beiser, pg. 263.

“Dissonanzen,” and finally Hegel’s fully articulated phenomenology. The phenomenological approach may be understood as the result of the effort to establish a first principle based on consciousness (e.g. Reinhold’s “Satz des Bewußtseins” and Fichte’s “absolutes Ich”) combined with a renewal of the skeptical tradition following in the wake of Kant. The former establishes a self-reflexive and ostensibly self-evident fact, while the latter continually suspends judgment, driving each moment of consciousness into an infinite number of moments to follow; this process constitutes the ongoing realization of truth or being. As the “Grundsatz” is turned in on itself (the foundation of consciousness considered as the self looking at itself), a dynamic force of change is introduced; first-principle systems come to be reconstructed as the incessant work of the negative upon a constant positive.

Jacobi is credited with first introducing the term “Nihilismus” into philosophical discourse (Arendt, 9). He uses the word to describe radical skepticism in the manner of Hume that doubts the existence of everything and, therefore, results in complete solipsism. In his opinion, nihilism is the inevitable result of Kant’s and Fichte’s systems. The expression is first used in his “Brief an Fichte” of 1799:

Wahrlich, mein lieber Fichte, es soll mich nicht verdrießen, wenn Sie, oder wer es sei, *Chimärismus* nennen wollen, was ich dem Idealismus, den ich *Nihilismus* schelte, entgegensetze. (Werke III, 44)

In Jacobi’s original use of the term, nihilism describes the instatement of an absolute nothing to which the subject stands in relation:

im Ergründen des Mechanismus aber, sowohl der *Natur des Ichs als des Nicht-Ichs*, zu lauter *An-sich-Nichts* gelange, und davon dergestalt in meinem transcendentalen Wesen (persönlich, so zu sagen) angegangen, ergriffen, und mitgenommen werde, daß ich sogar, um das Unendliche *auszuleeren*, es muß *erfüllen* wollen, als ein unendliches Nichts, *ein reines-ganz-und-gar-An-und-für-sich*, wäre es nur nicht unmöglich!!

(Werke III, 43-44)

Jacobi's calculated reversal of the "Ding an sich" implicates Kant's system by undermining the single idea that distinguishes transcendental idealism from solipsistic idealism, but he aims his argument directly at Fichte. He accuses Fichte of recognizing no objective reality, or more precisely, of recognizing nothing as objective reality: "so sehe ich nicht ein, warum ich nicht, wäre es auch nur in *fugam vacui*, meine Philosophie des Nicht-Wissens, dem Philosophischen *Wissen-des-Nichts*, sollte aus Geschmack vorziehen dürfen" (Werke III, 44). "Nihilismus" describes the substitution of an absolute negative reality in place of the subject's negative relation (not knowing) to an absolute positive reality, which for Jacobi is God.

Though published after Hyperion had been written, the criticism in the "Brief an Fichte" concerns Hölderlin's work because the philosophical principle Jacobi attacks bears strong resemblance to the narrative form in the novel. Kant makes philosophy a science with the fundamental principle that reason knows only that which it has itself put into nature (KrV, B XIII-XIV). Fichte, according to Jacobi, follows this line of thought

to its logical end, claiming that nature is simply the mirror of the subject's own activity. The structure and narrative drive of Hyperion are grounded on the principle that self-reflection is the source for all knowledge. Each of Hyperion's three principal relationships is more self-reflective and more illuminating than its predecessor. Adamas, the mentor, grasps and seeks to communicate the essential truth of nature. He remains, however, the most alienated from Hyperion, and hence, the fewest number of pages are devoted to him. Hyperion's narcissistic interest in Alabanda carries him further along his path of self-discovery, but that relationship is surpassed by his love for Diotima, to whom he repeatedly refers as the mirror of his soul. As we have seen, she defines Hyperion's ultimate purpose in the "dichterische Tage" as she simultaneously becomes a reflection of Hyperion himself. It would be a mistake, however, to read this teleologically as an assertion of absolute idealism. Jacobi asserts faith, a *salto mortale*, in opposition to Kant and Fichte's egoistic attempt to establish a first principle in consciousness. The fact that Hölderlin uses the *progression* of Hyperion's self-reflective relationships to construct his system suggests his own skepticism regarding the use of consciousness as a universal foundation (a criticism directed more at Fichte than Kant). Though Jacobi's warning of the fatal abyss to be found in "Egoismus" may be directed at Hyperion, Hölderlin's approach defines a dynamic or phenomenological form of the negative quite different from the "Nihilismus" Jacobi describes.

Hölderlin's theoretical papers reveal a distinct effort to avoid Jacobi's charge of solipsistic nihilism. He incorporates, for example, a turn initiated by Hamann into

“Urtheil und Seyn” when he distinguishes judgment (epistemology) and being (ontology), giving primacy to the latter. Coming from a visionary, Hamann’s faith in God and revelation invalidates self-reflection as a source or origin of knowledge.⁹³ In contrast to Fichte’s look inward for a fundamental absolute, Hamann looks outward not to God but to the infinite relations between the subject and the world that define being:

Die erste Ursache aller Dinge, von der wir so unmittelbar abhängen, muß daher unumgänglich zur Hülfe genommen werden, wenn wir unser eigen Selbst, unsere Natur, Bestimmung und Einschränkung einsehen wollen. Nächst dieser ersten Ursache gehört dazu eine Kenntnis aller der Mittelwesen, die mit uns in Verbindung stehen, und die durch ihre Wirkung unsere hervorbringen helfen oder zu ändern im stande sind. Alle diese Betrachtungen zusammengenommen können wir den *Zustand der menschlichen Natur auf der Welt* nennen. (Werke, I, 301)

Philosophy begins not with self-knowledge that pretends to represent an insular and absolute foundation, but with the knowledge of being. As he writes to Jacobi on June 2, 1785, the proper perspective is not “Cogito; ergo sum” but “Est; ergo cogito” (Briefwechsel V, 448, 26-27). That is to say, knowledge (specifically, self-reflection)

⁹³ Hamann says: “Warum kann der Mensch sein eigen Selbst nicht kennen? Dies muß bloß in dem Zustande unserer Seelen liegen. Die Natur, die uns in lauter Räthseln und Gleichnissen von dem Unsichtbaren unterrichtet, zeigt uns an den Beziehungen, von denen unser Körper abhängt, wie wir uns die Beziehung unseres Geistes auf andere Geister vorstellen können. So wie der Leib den Gesetzen der äusseren Gegenstände unterworfen ist, der Luft, dem Boden, der Wirkung anderer Körper: so müssen uns wir unsere Seele gleichfalls vorstellen. Sie ist dem beständigen Einfluß höherer Geister ausgesetzt und mit selbigen verknüpft; dies macht daher unstreitig unser eigen Selbst so zweifelhaft, daß wir selbiges nicht erkennen, unterscheiden, noch selbst bestimmen können” (Werke, I, 300)

does not lead to being; rather, being leads to knowledge. This reversal outlines the basic structure of “Urtheil und Seyn.” For Hamann, however, being is bound up with identity and self-knowledge, which in turn is only understood in terms of relation. Being does not indicate a transcendent or noumenal realm. Thus, as a philosopher, Hamann turns to the myriad manifestations and expressions of the absolute in the world. From the perspective of our consciousness, the particular, as an expression of God, is as necessary as the universal to the whole of reality. Here, we find the kernel of a phenomenology in Hölderlin fed by the questions raised by Jacobi and Hamann against “Aufklärer” such as Kant and Mendelssohn.

In Mendelssohn’s response to Jacobi we may identify a skeptical strain of thought that also runs through Hölderlin’s thinking. Mendelssohn shows a tolerance for doubt combined with a drive for rational inquiry: “Meine Religion kennt keine Pflicht, dergleichen Zweifel anders als durch Vernunftgründe zu heben, befiehlt keinen Glauben an ewige Wahrheiten. Ich habe also einen Grund mehr, *Ueberzeugung* zu suchen” (“Erinnerungen an Herrn Jacobi,” Werke, 516).⁹⁴ He will not dogmatically demand unfounded faith even where doubt exists regarding eternal truths. It is important to keep this sense of critical drive in mind when we read in Mendelssohn what may appear to be the egoism defined by Jacobi as nihilism: “Mein Credo ist: Was ich als wahr nicht denken kann, macht mich, als Zweifel, nicht unruhig. Eine Frage, die ich nicht begreife, kann ich auch nicht beantworten; ist für mich so gut, als keine Frage” (Werke, 514).

⁹⁴ Jacobi includes this passage in the second edition of his own Über die Lehre des Spinoza, which is the edition found in Hölderlin’s “Nachlaß.”

Hölderlin expresses a similar sentiment in Hyperion after the “Seelengespräch” that marks Diotima’s turn from ideal object to erotic object: “mein verwöhnter untröstlicher Sinn wollt’ immer offenbare gegenwärtige Liebe; verschloßne Schätze waren verlorne Schätze für ihn” (I, 679, 28-30). At this point in the novel, Hyperion is just coming to understand the need for the ideal to unfold in a process, that it cannot be grasped at once by our limited sense. The same turn appears in Hölderlin’s thinking in a letter to Hegel in which he responds skeptically to Fichte’s claims of locating a universal foundation in consciousness itself:

es giebt also für dieses abs. Ich kein Object, denn sonst wäre nicht alle Realität in ihm; ein Bewußtsein ohne Object ist aber nicht denkbar...und insofern ich kein Bewußtsein habe, insofern bin ich (für mich) nichts, also das absolute Ich ist (für mich) Nichts. (an Hegel, 26. Jan., 1795; II, 569)

Approximately three months later, Hölderlin expresses the same sentiment at greater length and more methodically in “Urtheil und Seyn.” Four years before Jacobi’s “An Fichte,” Hölderlin identifies a kind of nihilism in Fichte by following Mendelssohn’s line of reasoning; that which lies outside or in negative relation to consciousness is lost to rational inquiry.

Hölderlin’s interest in what lies outside the realm of rational inquiry leads him down a path that Mendelssohn refuses to follow. The two did not share the same opinion of the *Ev και Παν*, Lessing’s most basic expression of his Spinozistic tendencies as revealed to Jacobi. According to Jacobi’s Ueber die Lehre des Spinozas, Lessing argues

that *Ev και Παν*, or All-Einheit, is an idea that seeks to overcome an apparently insurmountable barrier between the infinite and the finite built into the orthodox belief in creation *ex nihilo*. In *Hyperion*, Hölderlin uses the Egyptian who sees his God as “eine leere Unendlichkeit” to represent the inability to conceive of a God who creates out of nothing. To the limited mind, that which could causally exist prior to nothing is itself nothing, hence: “Auch aus dem erhabensten Nichts wird Nichts geboren” (II, 686, 16-17). Such a conception of the absolute will forever divorce the individual from the unity of nature and hence, the experience of beauty. Mendelssohn, however, claims that the bridge between the infinite and the finite remains unthinkable even after Spinoza substitutes his immanent “Ensoph” for the Neoplatonic emanating One:

Sind diese sichtbaren Dinge dem Spinoza etwas Endliches: so kann ihr Inwohner in dem Unendlichen eben so wenig, ja wie mich dünkt, noch weniger begriffen werden, als ihr Ausfluß aus dem selben. Kann das Unendliche nichts Endliches wirken, so kann es auch nichts Endliches denken. (“Erinnerungen,” *Werke*, 512)

Indeed many of the differences in the philosophies of this period may be identified by how the thinker responds to the problem of bridging the gap between a necessary absolute and limited consciousness.⁹⁵ In this general sense, Jacobi’s *salto mortale*, Kant’s synthetic a priori judgments, and Fichte’s “absolutes Ich” express different ways

⁹⁵ Mendelssohn concisely expresses a common argument against Spinozistic pantheism: “Die größte Schwierigkeit aber, die ich in dem System des Spinoza finde, liegt mir darin, daß er aus dem Zusammennehmen des Eingeschränkten das Uneingeschränkte will entstehen lassen” (“Erinnerungen,” *Werke*, 517).

of making the same leap. Both Schelling and Fichte depend upon “intellektuale Anschauung” to anchor their philosophies, but Hölderlin, responding to Sinclair’s criticism that the phrase is a theoretical contradiction, finds an ontological basis for his system outside consciousness.⁹⁶ Mendelssohn’s refusal to speculate about that which lies outside consciousness (i.e. his ability to conceptualize) distinguishes his skepticism from Hölderlin’s. Hölderlin’s inquiry, aimed at union of subject and object, drives toward the point where skepticism is no longer possible. For Mendelssohn, *Ev και Παν* is a theoretical impossibility, a closed door. For Hölderlin, it is an impossibility relative to consciousness. Yet, as his conception of Diotima as oxymoron shows us, this opens up a door to an aesthetical possibility. As *Hyperion* shows, reflective reason (i.e. theory) will forever seek this possibility in practical experience.

Hölderlin’s concept of the infinite approach (“unendliche Annäherung”) falls squarely within a tradition of skeptical responses to Kant presented by advocates of Kant’s critical philosophy such as Schulze, as well as critics from the rationalist Leibnizian school such as Platner and even Maimon.⁹⁷ Platner, Schulze, and Maimon

⁹⁶ On the influence of Sinclair’s *Philosophische Raisonnements* on Hölderlin, see Frank, “Philosophische Grundlagen,” pp. 55-56.

⁹⁷ Hölderlin’s letter to Schiller of September 4, 1795 shows that he conceived of the infinite approach within the context of the new post-Kantian skepticism: “ich suche mir die Idee eines unendlichen Progresses der Philosophie zu entwickeln, ich suche zu zeigen, daß die unnachlässliche Forderung, die an jedes System gemacht werden muß, die Vereinigung des Subjects und Objects in einem absoluten—Ich oder wie man es nennen will—zwar ästhetisch, in der intellectualen Anschauung, theoretisch aber nur durch eine unendliche Annäherung möglich ist, wie die Annäherung des Quadrats zum Zirkel....Ich glaube, dadurch beweisen zu können, in wie ferne die Skeptiker recht haben, und in wie ferne nicht” (II, 595-596, 27-33/1-5). It is important to note that the infinite approach is a theoretical principle used to shape a system of thought; it is not an aesthetic principle as is “intellektuale Anschauung.” For this reason, *Hyperion* may be read as a philosophical treatise, given that the “dichterische Tage” made possible by “intellektuale Anschauung” are deferred throughout the novel.

were the most influential of the late eighteenth century skeptics, and their brand of skepticism may be linked to phenomenology through the idea of an infinite approach.⁹⁸

The latter two may be considered Pyrrhonists in that they neither deny nor affirm the possibility of knowledge;⁹⁹ in fact, Schulze's most important work, Aenesidemus, is named after the founder of Pyrrhonian skepticism.¹⁰⁰ Schulze gives the skeptic's creed in the preface to his Aenesidemus: "Charakteristische ist bey dieser Partey [der protestierenden Partey]¹⁰¹ der Glaube an die nie aufhörende *Perfektibilität der philosophierenden Vernunft*, als einen der edelsten und unverkennbarsten Vorzüge des menschlichen Geistes" (ix).¹⁰² Though Reinhold criticized Platner for being a negative dogmatist who denies the possibility of knowledge, he may be considered within the

⁹⁸ Eberstein draws this general conclusion in his Geschichte der Logik und Metaphysik (II, 366ff). More direct links to Hölderlin may also be made to all three figures. Henrich claims that Hölderlin was quite familiar with Schulze's work (Grund im Bewußtsein, 386). Hölderlin attended Fichte's lectures on Platner's Philosophische Aphorismen, and from them he adopted many ideas such as the etymology for "Urtheil" in the fragment "Urtheil und Seyn" and his definitions of "Streben" and "Trieb." Henrich supports this claim based on Waibel's Spuren Fichtes in der Textgenese Hölderlins, her master's thesis at the Universität München from 1986. See Henrich, Grund im Bewußtsein, pg. 798. The lecture Waibel refers to may be found in the Gesamtausgabe of Fichte's work, vol. II, 4, pp. 182-189. Hölderlin's connection to Maimon will be discussed in detail in the following pages.

⁹⁹ Hölderlin's geometric examples of the hyperbola and the squaring of the circle may be traced back a revival of Pyrrhonian skepticism in the sixteenth century. Referring in part to demonstrations by the mathematician Jacques Peletier, Montaigne tells us "how our mind tangles itself up": "Then if anyone were to follow that up with those geometrical propositions which demonstrate by convincing demonstrations that the container is greater than the thing contained and that the centre is as great as the circumference, and which can find two lines which ever approach each other but can never meet, and then with the philosopher's stone and the squaring of the circle, where reason and practice are so opposed, he would perhaps draw from them arguments to support the bold saying of Pliny: '*Solum certum nihil esse certi, et homine nihil miserios aut superbius*'" (692-693).

¹⁰⁰ Schulze published his Aenesidemus as a response to Reinhold's Elementarphilosophie in 1792. Henrich argues that Fichte's Wissenschaftslehre (1794) is, in turn, formulated as a response to Schulze and Maimon. He goes on to say that Hölderlin's thinking sought to avoid the pitfalls the two point out in Reinhold and Kant, while at the same time adopting their strategy of the infinite progression of inquiry (Grund im Bewußtsein, 790).

¹⁰¹ "Die *Skeptiker* machen die *eifrigsten* und *erklärtesten* Anhänger der *protestierenden Partey* in der philosophischen Welt aus" (Schulze, x).

same school in because his skepticism takes a self-reflective or critical approach; that is he examines not simply the claims of a philosophical system but the method by which those claims are formulated. For example, Platner exercises the suspension of judgment characteristic of the Pyrrhonists when pointing out that Kant's negative statements are just as dogmatic as the positive claims of the metaphysician (Beiser, 216). Hegel's phenomenology incorporates the dynamic of skepticism, which he also calls "selbstbewußte Negation," by removing the products of judgment, namely, determination and difference: "Was verschwindet, ist das Bestimmte oder der Unterschied, der, auf welche Weise und woher es sei, als fester und unwandelbarer sich aufstellt.... [D]as Denken aber ist die Einsicht in diese Natur des Unterschiedenen, es ist das negative Wesen als einfaches" (161). Hölderlin's infinite approach adopts the skeptical drive against conclusive determination or final principles, but he directs this drive, which reemerges in Hegel's phenomenology, toward an ultimate unity, "Seyn," which can be conceived only as the undoing of judgment.

Though there are some striking correspondences between Hölderlin's thinking Maimon's, there is little mention of any link between the two. Maimon's only influence on Hölderlin appears to have worked through Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Henrich's exhaustive account of Hölderlin's philosophical development in Der Grund im Bewußtsein makes only brief mention of Maimon, citing him as a direct source for

¹⁰² The Schlegel's translated this principle of reason into an aesthetic principle. See, for example, Friedrich Schlegel's comments regarding perfectibility as the essence of poetry (Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe, 2, 183).

Fichte's Wissenschaftslehre (119). Beiser makes the stronger claim that Maimon's Versuch über die Transcendentalphilosophie is as important for understanding Fichte, Schelling, or Hegel as is Hume's Treatise of Human Nature for understanding Kant (286). Niethammer, Hölderlin's intimate friend and mentor, recognized that the Wissenschaftslehre, a principal focus of Hölderlin's study while in Jena, was in part written as a response to Maimon.¹⁰³ All this suggests that Hölderlin was more than simply acquainted with Maimon's work. Beyond the textual genealogy, Maimon's philosophy elucidates two distinguishing aspects of Hölderlin's thinking: first, his decision to side with Kant's idea of limited consciousness as opposed to Fichte's universal subject, and second, his departure from Kant in granting limited consciousness access to reality through a posteriori experience.

Maimon's skeptical approach has more in common with Kant's critical philosophy than Reinhold's "Grundsatzphilosophie," but his criticisms of the latter eventually turned against the former. In his letter to Kant of September 20th, 1791, Maimon rejects Reinhold's theory of the "Vorstellungsvermögen," formulated in the "Satz des Bewußtseins," as unable to realize its claim of connecting subject and object:

Ich läugne geradezu, daß in jedem Bewußtsein (auch einer Anschauung und Empfindung wie sich Herr Reinhold darüber erklärt) die Vorstellung durch das Subjekt, vom Subjekt und Objekt unterschieden, und auf beide

¹⁰³ In a letter to J.B. Erhard of October 27, 1794 Niethammer writes of Fichte's philosophy as a reaction to Maimon's skepticism: "Sich auf Bekämpf[un]g eines unvernünftigen Skepticismus einlassen, bringt nothwendig etwas unvernünftiges hervor" (qtd. in Henrich, Grund im Bewußtsein, 835). Niethammer writes this from Jena shortly before Hölderlin's arrival there in November, a month in which the two reportedly spent a great deal of time together.

bezogen wird. Eine Anschauung wird meiner Meinung nach, auf nichts außer sich selbst bezogen. (Werke VI, 434).

Implicit in this criticism is the accusation that Reinhold takes an idea or “Vorstellung” to be a real object.¹⁰⁴ Maimon refrains from using the word “Schwärmer,” but his argument uses almost exactly the same terms that define “Schwärmer” in his Philosophisches Wörterbuch, which also appeared in 1791 and which he asks Kant to read in this same letter of September 20th.¹⁰⁵ Maimon’s criticism grants Kant’s assertion that all that is given to us is appearance, but this same sword cuts the other way when Maimon claims that Kant fails to connect a priori principles and a posteriori experience. Maimon makes this argument more than once in his Versuch über die Transcendentalphilosophie of 1790, but he puts it perhaps most concisely in Briefe des Philaletes an Aenesidemus of 1794, referring directly to the Kritik der reinen Vernunft:

Aber wie kann ich aus dem *Grundsatz*[ein synthetisches Princip]: alles

¹⁰⁴ In the same letter, Maimon writes: “Daß man eine jede Anschauung auf irgend ein Substratum beziehet, ist eine *Täuschung der transcendenten Einbildungskraft* die, aus Gewohnheit, eine jede Anschauung als Vorstellung auf ein reelles Object, sondern auf eine an seiner Stelle untergeschobene *Idee* beziehet” (Werke VI, 435).

¹⁰⁵ “Schwärmer,” a designation more damning even than the epithet “Dogmatist,” is usually reserved for fideists, but Maimon’s definition identifies the drive to objectify what is actually entirely subjective: “*Schwärmerei* ist ein Streben, einem Gemüthszustande gemäß, ein Object hervorzubringen, und dennoch zu glauben, daß dießer Gemüthszustand durch die Natur des Objekts an sich hervorgebracht worden sey” (III, 130) In a brief essay entitled “Ueber die Schwärmerei” published in a volume of his own ΓΝΩΟΙ ΣΑΥΤΟΝ oder Magazin zur Erfahrungsseelenkunde als ein Lesebuch für Gelehrte und Ungelehrte from 1793, he writes: “Die *Schwärmerei* ist ein Trieb der *produktiven Einbildungskraft* (das Dichtungsvermögen), Gegenstände die der Verstand, nach Erfahrungsgesetzen, für *unbestimmt* erklärt, zu bestimmen” (IV, 613). In stating that the drive to determine that which lies beyond the limits of experience is “Schwärmerei” (a poetic act), Maimon argues that genuinely productive philosophy concerns itself only with the a posteriori. With regard to Hölderlin’s novel, this definition reconciles the two opposing connotations of the word “Schwärmerei.” Alabanda chastises Hyperion for being a “Schwärmer” in the context of political philosophy, while Diotima praises him for being a “Schwärmer” in the context of aesthetic philosophy. The philosophical dreamer is also the poetic visionary.

was geschieht, geschieht nach den Gesetzen der *Kausalität*, diesen *durch gegebenen Objekten bestimmten* Satz herleiten, daß die Sonnenstrahlen das Eis nothwendig schmelzen. Aus diesem Grundsatz folgt nur, das *Objekte der Erfahrung überhaupt in Kausalverbindung* mit einander gedacht werden müssen, keinesweges aber, daß eben *diese Objekte* es seyn müssen, die in diesem Verhältnisse stehen. (V, 489-490)

Maimon maintains a skeptical stance that grants Kant's claim that causality is necessary for objective experience but questions whether the principle actually determines the relation between particular objects of experience. Pursuing this avenue of thought, Maimon ultimately disposes of transcendent entities altogether, including Kant's "Ding an sich"; this point in particular drives the wedge between Kant's epistemology and Fichte's idealism, which owes so much to Maimon.

Maimon's treatment of Reinhold and Kant shows a concern for pursuing a consistent line of reasoning rather than using reason to establish a philosophical foundation, let alone any ontology of presence. Kant shares with Maimon a fondness for skeptical method over the dogmatic adherence to skepticism, but he gives it a simple meta-critical purpose, rather than a primary function.¹⁰⁶ Kant praises skeptical method for obviating simple oppositions of affirmation and negation, but it is Maimon who goes on to base his philosophical system on this 'principle'. In "Der Antinomie der reinen

¹⁰⁶ Kant says: "Das ist der große Nutzen, den die skeptische Art hat, die Fragen zu behandeln, welche reine Vernunft an reine Vernunft tut, und wodurch man eines großen dogmatischen Wustes mit wenig Aufwand überhoben sein kann, um an dessen Statt eine nüchterne Kritik zu setzen" (KrV, A486/B514-A487-B515). In making skeptical method a force rather than simply a critical tool, Maimon illustrates one aspect of that which defines Romanticism as post-Kantian thought.

Vernunft” Kant defers to skeptical method to test first principles by examining “ob [unsere Frage] nicht selbst auf einer grundlosen Voraussetzung beruhe” (KrV, A485/B513). The examination is ultimately aimed at a theoretical foundation, but the practice of the examination considers the application and consequences (“Anwendung” and “Folgen”) through which the falsity of an idea may more easily be detected. Maimon puts primary importance on the examination of the “application and consequences,” and in doing so works as a phenomenologist who, rather than simply affirming or denying first-principles, seeks to describe the fact of experience. Here, Hölderlin and Maimon find common ground; not only is this approach the basis for the narrative structure of Hyperion, it leads Maimon to more explicitly define different functions of negation, which ultimately illuminate the structure of Hölderlin’s thinking in his theoretical essays.

In both “Urtheil und Seyn” and his letter to Hegel of January 26, 1795, Hölderlin makes clear that a subject can only exist as such when recognizing an object with which it is not unified; the act of judgment (“Ur-theilung”) defines subject and object simultaneously. Consciousness, even when self-reflective, constitutes an act of difference, and thus, according to Hölderlin, the statement of identity “A = A” expresses relation not unity (as it does for Schelling (“Vom Ich” §VII)). In the sixth section of his Versuch über die Transcendentalphilosophie entitled “Einerleiheit, Verschiedenheit, Gegensatzung, Realität, Negation, logisch und transcendental,” Maimon concurs, saying: “Wenn man auch sagt: ein Ding ist mit sich selbst einerlei, so betrachtet man es wenigstens zweimal, d.h. zu verschiedenen Zeiten; diese Zeitverschiedenheit macht also

das Ding in gewissem Betracht von sich selbst verschieden" (II, 111). Maimon's claim that $A = A$ expresses relation works within a Kantian framework whereby any judgment or intuition affirms the subject's necessary existence in time.¹⁰⁷ Only outside of time can " $A = A$ " express unity, and to be outside of time is to be outside of consciousness.

Hölderlin distinguishes his thinking from Kant and Maimon in the relation between subject and object determined by the act of "Urteilen." In "Urtheil und Seyn" Hölderlin differentiates between theoretical judgment and practical judgment. The statement of identity, "Ich bin Ich," exemplifies theoretical judgment. Practical judgment renders the statement of identity from the perspective of actual consciousness as "Ich bin nicht Nicht-Ich"—the form of the double negative expresses experience. Only theoretically does "Ich bin Ich" unify two distinct judgments as a single act of consciousness; that is, only theoretically can two distinct moments of self-positing be made one. The description of the subject's practical experience of reality, however, can and does separate the subject from the (negative) object in any given moment. For Fichte, the statement of identity, "Ich bin Ich," is a practical reality that expresses a

¹⁰⁷ Kant's argument for the necessity of time to any intuition includes the assertion that time is the form of inner sense that renders consciousness: "[Die Zeit] ist also wirklich nicht als Objekt, sondern als die Vorstellungsart meiner selbst als Objekts anzusehen. Wenn aber ich selbst, oder ein ander Wesen mich, ohne diese Bedingung der Sinnlichkeit, anschauen könnte, so würden eben dieselben Bestimmungen, die wir uns jetzt als Veränderungen vorstellen, eine Erkenntnis geben, in welcher die Vorstellung der Zeit, mithin auch der Veränderung, gar nicht vorkäme" (KrV, A37/B54). Maimon states that " $A = A$ " is in fact an alteration *to our consciousness*, while Kant's claim is that the concept of alteration is possible only through the representation of time (KrV A32/B49), which is a basic form of consciousness. Both perspectives affirm the necessity of a subject to accompany any judgment or perception, but Maimon implies a discontinuity between moments of consciousness, which, as we shall see, supports his argument for the simultaneity of subject and object that obviates altogether the need for a noumenal object or "Ding an sich" as a source of perceptions.

fundamental unified ontology. For Hölderlin, it is a theoretical idea.¹⁰⁸ In Hölderlin's schema, any conception of the subject's real existence entails relation, and in this he remains true to both Kant and Maimon. But the place of Hölderlin's subject in the system as a whole shows the way in which he conceives the object *relative* to the system. Kant's Copernican turn shows the need to recognize the relative position of the subject, but that subject stands in relation to a transcendent or noumenal 'reality'. Maimon, on the other hand, derives reality from the moment of perception, the relation of subject to object itself. Following Maimon, Hölderlin structures his system (both theoretically and practically) entirely within a subjective framework of experience (i.e. from the unavoidable perspective of judgment). He does not rely on a noumenal realm, as Kant does, but he refuses to give it up as Maimon and Fichte eventually do.

Maimon argues that "Form" and "Materie" arise simultaneously in the act of judgment, and in doing so, he makes the same claim as Hölderlin that "Urteil" occasions the split of subject and predicate. But when Hölderlin pulls the ultimate expression of unity, "Seyn," outside of consciousness (i.e. outside of judgment), he diverges from Maimon's path toward idealism. In order to demonstrate the similarity and differences in their thinking, it is necessary to present Maimon's definitions of unity ("Einerleiheit"), and opposition ("Gegensetzung") as they relate to his discussion of "Realität" and "Negation." Maimon distinguishes difference from opposition. The former, realized in

¹⁰⁸ Paton's discussion of "the paradox of inner sense" in Kant suggests that the difference between Fichte and Hölderlin's idea of subjectivity is derived from their disparate interpretations of Kant's Transcendental Deduction. Paton states that according to Kant "the self both affects and is affected by itself" (388). To resolve this paradox Fichte posits the absolute self, while Hölderlin distinguishes between a theoretical unity of apperception and its practical counterpart in the act of judgment.

an act of “vergleichen,” necessitates a certain unity of the two things compared, for if there is no unity in them, then one is simply comparing one thing (“Gegensatz”) with nothing (“Nichts”). Finding in A what is not in B (the comparison of one thing with nothing) describes opposition or “Gegensetzung.” “Gegensetzung” itself is what is shared by “Realität” and “Negation.” “Realität” and “Negation” are “Korrelata” and can never be opposed (“entgegengesetzt”) because one does not erase the other; rather, they rely on one another for meaning. Maimon structures his argument for idealism around these principles of relation:

dies ist eben die Natur solcher Verhältnißbegriffe, worin sie sich von allen übrigen Verstandesprodukten unterscheiden: nämlich bei diesen letztern gehen die Begriffe dem Urtheile voraus, d.h. um zu urtheilen oder die Beziehungen und Verhältnisse dieser Dinge einzusehen, oder die Form durch die Kopula zu bestimmen, muß man erst vom Subjekt an sich, und vom Prädikat an sich, Begriffe erlangen, d.h. die Materie gehet der Form voraus; bei den erstern hingegen, bekömmt man erst durchs Urtheilen Begriffe von Subjekt und Prädikat, d.h. die Form gehet der Materie voraus, oder genauer zu reden, sie entstehen beide zugleich. (II, 114-115)

Maimon accepts Kant’s notion of the necessity of the forms of consciousness, then, based on his understanding of unity and opposition, he argues that neither “Form” nor “Materie” can be conceived as prior to the other. Maimon’s idealism lies in his idea that form and matter are simultaneous with the birth of the subject in relation to an object.

A defining feature of Maimon's system and his representative contribution to the shift from Platonic to Aristotelian models, is his theory of differentials that bases reality in concepts of relation ("Verhältnißbegriffe") rather than essences. According to the theory of differentials, the principles of relation, constitute the only real "Ding an sich":

der Verstand bringt aus dem Verhältnisse dieser verschiedenen
Differenziale, welche seine Objekte sind, das Verhältniß der aus ihnen
entspringenden sinnlichen Objekte heraus.

Diese Differenziale der Objekte sind die sogenannte *Noumena*; die daraus
entspringende Objekte selbst aber sind die *Phänomena*. (Werke II, 32)

Hölderlin's system differs from Maimon's in that it puts the noumenal, "Seyn," outside of all relation. Putting "Seyn" outside of the relations entailed by consciousness is achieved by folding Maimon's terms in upon themselves—a strategy of defining terms against themselves that one finds in Maimon's own argumentation. Returning to his words on the relation between "Realität" and "Negation," Maimon says: "So ist hier auch *Gegensetzung das Gemeinschaftliche beider Korrelate Realität und Negation*" (Werke II, 114). In effect, what is shared by "Realität" and "Negation" is the fact that they share nothing. As Maimon goes on to say, concepts of exclusive relation such as these are different from other products of the understanding in that they precede judgment.

Hölderlin conceives of "Urtheil" and "Seyn" in the same relation to one another; the only thing they share is their "*Gegensetzung*." Hölderlin's system is founded upon a principle prior to itself; that is, the system enfolds "Urtheil" itself in a relation that is, by Maimon's

definition, prior to judgment. This strategy, which echoes the structure of the double mirror in Hyperion, establishes a foundation reflexively and paradoxically in order to obviate the need for an affirmative statement of a “Grundsatz,” the methodological principle recognized by Maimon, Niethammer, and many others (with the notable exception of Fichte) as insufficient to the task of making philosophy a science. Such is Maimon’s contribution to the shift from systems based on an essential or noumenal monism to systems based on the relation or balance of forces between phenomena.

Maimon more precisely defines the relation between “Realität” and “Negation” and in doing so, seemingly invalidates Hölderlin’s tactic of putting “Seyn” in negative relation and prior to “Urtheil.” Maimon distinguishes between logical and transcendental forms of “Realität” and “Negation”: the logical opposition of “Bejahung” and “Verneinung” and the transcendental opposition of “etwas” and “nichts.” The logical opposition represents the general form of judgments or the manner in which objects relate to one another and hence, the form of form itself. Whether this logical form describes the specific relation of objects, such as a thing and its accidents, or the general relation of objects, via the concept of causality, for example, both judgments represent a positive expression of the faculty of thought; both express a positive relation to the subject. The transcendental form of judgment, relates the judgment upon objects to the subject; either an “etwas” has relation to the subject, or a “nichts” (“Negations-Ding”) has no relation and is not an object of judgment. As Maimon puts it, logical reality is both a subjective and objective relation of objects to one another, while logical negation

is only a subjective relation of objects to one another. The former states that x is or can be y and produces objects (e.g. a triangle is or can be right angled). The latter states that x is not y and produces no objects. The key point that can be inferred from this is that logical negative relation can only be expressed in the subject, and as such it is made positive. This requires us to pay close attention to Hölderlin's expression of the unity of subject and object in "Sein." Logically speaking, it is either a positive unity or negative lack of distinction, and hence, both are a manifestation of the subject that is impossible within the context of "Sein." Transcendentally speaking "Sein" can be nothing to the subject, for it lies outside of consciousness. From Maimon's perspective, Hölderlin is irrational in speaking of "Sein" transcendentally as a negation of consciousness and, therefore, of the transcendental itself. Logically, "Sein" contradicts the subject that would posit it; transcendentally, "Sein" is itself nothing. And yet, this is precisely Hölderlin's complaint to Hegel regarding Fichte's "absolutes Ich"—that it is "(für mich) Nichts."

The dilemma returns us to Maimon's discussion of "Entgegensetzung" and introduces the inevitable necessity, despite its shortcomings, of representation. Logical "Realität" and "Negation" cannot be opposed ("entgegengesetzt") because they make sense only in *positive* relation to one another; to say that they are truly opposed would be to use the concept of opposition to negate itself:

Wollte man aber sagen: die logische Realität und Negation sind einander entgegengesetzt, so würde dieses gar keine Bedeutung haben; denn da

logische Verneinung nichts anders als Entgegensetzung ist, so würde ein Bestandtheil der Materie des Urtheils (Entgegensetzung) zu gleich die Form desselben seyn, und es hieße so viel, als sagte man z.B.: der Begriff der Einerleiheit ist mit a einerlei, welches gar keinen Sinn hat. (II, 117)

The working or “Handlung” of logical negation (“Verneinung”) is a transcendental reality and, therefore, a positive invocation of the faculty of thought. In saying that logical reality and logical negation are opposed, one is using the concept of “Entgegensetzung” in a manner which subsumes logical reality under the form of judgment called “Entgegensetzung.” This contradicts the meaning of “Entgegensetzung,” which says that x shares nothing with y (i.e. x is compared (“verglichen”) with nothing). The opposition of “Urtheil” and “Seyn,” then, can only approximate or approach the ideal unity (mis)represented by the transcendental negation of judgment.

Maimon’s discussion culminates with the demonstration that transcendental reality cannot be understood as outside of the faculty of representation (“Vorstellungskraft”). This appears to challenge the schema outlined in “Urtheil und Seyn.” The demand to remain within the capacity to represent does, however, aptly express the argument in *Hyperion*.¹⁰⁹ To understand transcendental reality as outside “Vorstellung” is to fail to distinguish the logical and transcendental forms of “Realität”

¹⁰⁹ We are reminded here that “Urtheil und Seyn” is a genuine fragment, while *Hyperion* is a contrived fragment, the point being that the discrepancy does not necessarily indicate an inconsistency in Hölderlin’s thinking.

and “Negation.” Transcendental reality remains a “Verstandsidee” while transcendental negation is a “Vernunftsidee.” Maimon has to put transcendental negation outside of the understanding because within the understanding it would always be a positive act of thinking necessitating such oxymorons and paradoxical expressions as his own: “Die transcendente Negation aber ist ein Etwas....” Only reason in its infinite freedom (following Kant’s formulation) can accommodate that which cannot be made into a concept for the understanding. By defining transcendental negation as a strictly regulative idea of reason, Maimon avoids “Schwärmerei.”¹¹⁰ Logical negation by definition can only exist within the subject, and transcendental negation can ‘exist’ only outside the subject, unless one is to fall victim to “Schwärmerei.” For Hölderlin, this means that if “Seyn” is defined in opposition to “Urtheil” (the form of consciousness), it must be considered transcendent and inaccessible or transcendental and illogical. For Maimon, his distinctions between the logical and the transcendental force him to propose an infinite understanding (“*intellectus archetypus*”) to which he can’t attribute reality since it transcends experience. Like Kant, he makes it a regulative idea, and as such it represents a kind of impossible knowledge or understanding that drives thinking ever onward.¹¹¹ In this manner we must understand Hölderlin’s subject—a subject that

¹¹⁰ “So lang als man die *Ideen* dieser Art [Gegenstände die der Verstand, nach Erfahrungsgesetze, für *unbestimmt* erklärt] für nichts anders ausgiebt, als was sie sind, für *Ideen*, die blos zum *regulativen* Gebrauch unserer Erkenntniß bestimmt sind, ist man kein *Schwärmer*” (IV, 614).

¹¹¹ Beiser puts it most concisely: “The infinite understanding represents that ideal of knowledge where the object is no longer given but completely created. Maimon prescribes such an ideal as a goal of inquiry; but he admits that it is a goal we approach but never attain” (295). Kant contrasts the *intellectus archetypus* and the *intellectus ectypus* using the same image of an ongoing approach: “Es ist hiebei auch gar nicht nötig zu beweisen, daß ein solcher *intellectus archetypus* möglich sei, sondern nur, daß wir in der Dagegenhaltung unseres diskursiven, der Bilder bedürftigen, Verstandes (*intellectus ectypus*), und der Zufälligkeit einer

proposes its own unity with the object in “Seyn” as part of the expression of the *intellectus archetypus*. In Maimon’s elucidating terms, the Hölderlinian subject thus defines itself and makes sense of itself both logically and transcendently only as a phenomenon rather than an entity, noumenal or otherwise.

Maimon’s theory of differentials borrows from Kant, who in effect solves Hölderlin’s problem of subjective consciousness being able to ‘grasp’ transcendent entities. He does so with a phenomenological approach that allows judgment the ability to give intelligible form to “Seyn” by means of establishing its limits.¹¹² In “Die Analytik der Grundsätze,” which address transcendental judgment, Kant offers the following axiom: “In allen Erscheinungen hat das Reale, was ein Gegenstand der Empfindung ist, intensive Größe, d.i. einen Grad” (KrV, A166/B207). The concept of intensive magnitude proposes to bridge a gap between *a posteriori* experience and *a priori* consciousness¹¹³: “Nun ist vom empirischen Bewußtsein zum reinen eine

solchen Beschaffenheit, auf jene Idee (eines intellectus archetypus) geführt werden, diese auch keinen Widerspruch enthalte” (KU § 77, (350-351)).

¹¹² In a section of his Kritische Untersuchungen über den menschlichen Geist (1797), Maimon follows Kant’s “Antizipationen der Wahrnehmung” from the first critique and offers the following definition of differentials: “Aber dennoch sind [Differentiale] intensive Größen, die als solche nicht an sich (in Beziehung auf eine angenommene Einheit), sondern im Verhältnisse zu einander (jede derselben in Beziehung auf die andere als Einheit betrachtet) als Größen bestimmbar sind;...Alle Quanta oder (da wir keine andere Objekte *a priori* haben) alle Objekte *a priori* sind also in ihrem Entstehen und Verschwinden (sie mögen als Geschwindigkeiten in gegebenen Punkten, oder als erste und letzte Verhältnisse betrachtet werden) intensive Größen” (Werke VII, 216-217).

¹¹³ Maimon had hoped that Fichte’s Wissenschaftslehre would make the transition spoken of here. In his letter to Fichte of August 16th, 1794, he spoke enthusiastically of “der Begriff einer Wissenschaftslehre” because he believed it would reincorporate the empirical into the science of philosophy, which had become in its purification by over-zealous Kantians artificially isolated (“selbstständig” rather than “für sich bestehend”): “Es ist nun Zeit, die Philosophie vom Himmel auf Erden zurückzurufen; nicht an einem höchsten Princip mangelt es ihr (wie Herr Reinhold haben will), sondern vielmehr am *niedrigsten* Princip (der Grenze oder dem Uebergange von der blos *formellen* zur *reellen* Erkenntniß)” (Werke VI, 449-450). Two months later, after closer reading, Maimon sees that he and Fichte have very different approaches to the common goal “daß die *Philosophie* eine *systematische Wissenschaft* seyn soll”: “Wir werden uns auf

stufenartige Veränderung möglich, da das Reale desselben ganz verschwindet, und ein bloß formales Bewußtsein (a priori) des Mannigfaltigen im Raum und Zeit übrig bleibt” (KrV, B208). More than an actual transition, however, Kant describes a progression, a negative process that forever approximates the absolute zero, or negation that is formal *a priori* consciousness: “Nun nenne ich diejenige Größe, die nur als Einheit apprehendiert wird, und in welcher die Vielheit nur durch Annäherung zur Negation=0 vorgestellt werden kann, die *intensive Größe*” (KrV, B210). Hölderlin conceives of “Seyn” as the same kind of unity—that which is approached by the ongoing negation of judgment that is the form of consciousness. Where Kant uses intensive magnitude to describe every reality in the field of appearance, Hölderlin’s system, in contrast, suggests using intensive magnitude to delineate that which is beyond appearance. As such, “Seyn” is a border concept that represents for the subject that which cannot be conceived.

Maimon’s theory of differentials uses the term “symbolisch unendlich” to describe the idea of “Gränzbegriffe,” which are tantamount to Kant’s intensive magnitudes.¹¹⁴ Maimon distinguishes between the apparent infinite (“anschauend

eben dem Wege antreffen, sollten wir ihn auch, wie es scheint, nach *entgegengesetzter Richtung* machen. Sie wollen ihn *von oben herunter* (von dem Begriff einer Wissenschaft überhaupt zu den concreten Wissenschaften), ich aber will denselben *von unten herauf* beschreiben” (Werke VI, 452). Maimon sees that Fichte still takes Reinhold’s approach. Though, Maimon’s method is not exactly Kant’s or Hölderlin’s, they share, at least in this context, a principle of working from the ground up, from empirical to pure consciousness.

¹¹⁴ Maimon’s terms are taken from his Versuch über die Transcendentalphilosophie: “Es ist mir nicht unbekannt, was man gehen die Einführung der mathematischen Begriffe vom Unendlichen in der Philosophie einwenden kann. Besonders, da diese in der Mathematik selbst noch vielen Schwierigkeiten unterworfen sind: so möchte es scheinen, als wollte ich etwas dunkles durch etwas noch Dunkleres erläutern....Sie sind aber sowohl in der Mathematik als Philosophie bloße Ideen, die keine Objekte, sondern die Entstehungsart der Objekte, vorstellen: d.h. sie sind bloß Gränzbegriffe, welchen man sich immer nähern, die man aber niemals erreichen kann. Sie entstehen durch einen steten Regressus oder Verminderung des Bewußtseyns einer Anschauung bis ins Unendliche” (Werke II, 27-28fn).

unendlich”) and the symbolic infinite (“symbolisch unendlich”) (Werke II, 351).¹¹⁵ The apparent infinite is determinable but indeterminate (“bestimmbare aber unbestimmt” (Werke II, 352)); it is the amount always greater than or less than any given amount, and as “bloße Form” (Werke II, 353), has ontological significance for the intuiting subject. The symbolic infinite has no ontological significance for the intuiting subject; as such, it may be approached but never attained without destroying itself.¹¹⁶ The forms of intuition, time and space, are infinitely divisible and hence, “anschauend unendlich.” Absolute unity remains beyond intuition (“Anschauung”) and is for us “symbolisch unendlich”: “Die absolute Einheit (wie sie in der reinen Arithmetik betrachtet wird) ist eine Idee, die niemals in der Anschauung (deren Formen Zeit und Raum sind, welche in unendliche theilbar sind) dargestellt werden kann” (Werke II, 350). The structure of Hölderlin’s “Urtheil und Seyn” delineates “Seyn” with the “Ur-theil” in the same way, but Hyperion gives fuller expression to the transition between the two. Diotima’s transformation from ideal object (a symbolic infinite) to an erotic object (an apparent infinite) demonstrates that the only way to grasp the transcendent is in its fatal transition to experience. Diotima perishes and the thought of her generates a memoir without end.

The central concerns of Hölderlin’s theoretical fragments written during the time in which Hyperion was composed were the identification of the limits of knowledge and the nature of its foundation, which together determine the manner of its expression. The

¹¹⁵ I translate “anschauend” as “apparent” rather than “real” in order to keep clear the parallel distinction between what is known through appearance and an essential ‘reality’ that remains unknown. As the previous citations indicate, Kant also associates “das Reale” with “Erscheinung” or that which is known in appearance not with the “Ding an sich.”

¹¹⁶ Maimon gives the example of the intersection point of two parallel lines (Werke II, 351).

pantheism controversy between Jacobi and Mendelssohn drew perhaps the most attention to these issues as it drew Hölderlin's interest to Spinoza. Hölderlin's notes to Jacobi's Ueber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn show his own attempt to find a way out of the infinite regress of rationalism, or what Jacobi called the inevitable fatalism and atheism of all philosophy as revealed by Spinoza:

Gesteht Jacobi, daß er sich von der extramundanen Gottheit keine genügende Vorstellung machen könne, daß die Prinzipia des Leibniz den Spinozistischen kein Ende machen. Die Monaden samt ihren *vinculus*, sagt er, lassen ihm Ausdehnung und Denken, überhaupt Realität, so unbegreiflich, als er sie schon gehabt habe. Er wisse da, weder rechts noch links. Es sei' ihm sogar, als käme ihm noch überdiß etwas aus der Tasche. (Werke, II, 41-42)

Hölderlin focuses on the problem of (meta-)form, specifically, the presence of that which is necessarily prior necessary to any system or form of thought. Jacobi essentially argues that any positive representation or demonstration of the transcendent fails to give genuine form or orientation to human thought. The absence of the divinity to our consciousness is compensated with "eine verständige persönliche Ursache der Welt" (Jacobi's "personal God") and faith. Though he read this text in preparation for his master's exams in theology which would inquire into his thoughts on the existence of God, Hölderlin seems to have taken greater interest in the pantheistic ideas of Spinoza. Within the context of a shift in the paradigm of knowledge from objective-essential (Plato) to

subjective-relational (Aristotle-Hamann), the thought of a universal substance offered an opportunity to bridge the familiar gap between the universal and the particular and justify the universal validity or reality of the forms in consciousness. Hölderlin saw in Spinoza's substance a possible solution to the problem of grounding knowledge and finding its proper expression.

Though we can identify Jacobi's criticism of Spinoza as Hölderlin's source for the term *Ἐν καὶ Πάν*, the expression is not to be found in Spinoza and must, therefore, be read as Lessing's interpretation of Spinoza. Hölderlin, in turn, translates Spinoza's position to "a nihilo nihil fit." Given Hölderlin's later dramatic effort, the fact that the idea "ex nihilo nihil fit" originates from the Greek pre-Socratic philosopher Empedocles is not insignificant. Reading *Ἐν καὶ Πάν* in Jacobi as a Spinozistic idea then rephrasing it with "a nihilo nihil fit," Hölderlin formulates the monism of Parmenides and the Eleatics, who held that plurality is unreal, in the terms of Empedocles's pluralistic philosophy. Though recognizing that Spinoza denies the transition from the infinite to the finite ("Er verwarf also jeden Übergang des Unendlichen zum Endlichen"), Hölderlin makes the connection himself by suggesting that the crossing over into plurality from an ontological monism is itself a necessary expression of reality. In other words, the One must enter consciousness in order to be real, and thus reality is defined in terms of a relation between the finite particular and the infinite universal. Necessary to this definition of reality is that the infinite and the finite remain distinct; by Hyperion's formulation, Heraclitus's *ἐν διαφορῶν εαυτῶ* only has meaning if "das Eine" remains

distinct from the “in sich selber unterschiedne.” The bridge between an absolute unity and consciousness that connects while keeping distinct is Hölderlin’s first step toward a phenomenological system of thought.

Not only does Hölderlin infer the ‘onto-phenomenological’ necessity of consciousness to reality, it is apparent from his notes that the turn to consciousness is achieved in the form of a twofold negation. As a result, the grounds for reality are switched from the object to the subject. As we recall from the practical statement of identity in “Urtheil und Seyn,” “Ich bin nicht Nicht-Ich,” the double negative is an effective rhetorical device for expressing the theoretically impossible simultaneity of distinction and unity. Jacobi uses the term “*immanentes* Ensoph,” or immanent ‘without end’ in a negative formulation of Spinoza’s substance. Hölderlin goes on to remark that presence and form are necessary to consciousness. In words that prefigure his comments on “Bewußtseyn” in “Urtheil und Seyn” of five years later, Hölderlin notes, again in negative terms: “Denn der Wille und der Verstand findet *one einen Gegenstand* nicht statt” (II, 40, 14-15). As undetermined (without end), the absolute unity of the “*immanentes* Ensoph” cannot present itself to consciousness as an object. Defined in this way, the infinite can either present itself as something to non-consciousness (e.g. “*intellektuale Anschauung*,” which Hölderlin relegates to the aesthetic), or alternatively, it is, to practical consciousness, nothing (“(für mich) Nichts”). The real unfolding of the infinite, Hölderlin’s “*unendliches Progress der Philosophie*,” takes place in language within the space between the two negative propositions.

Spinoza's argument, like Maimon's theory of differentials, distinguishes between two types of infinitude. Hölderlin's notes on the subject reveal that he pursues a line of thought not unlike Maimon's in order to bridge the gap between absolute unity and consciousness. Though aimed at eradicating a logical error, Spinoza's distinction as described by Jacobi, betrays a kinship to Kant's Copernican turn when pointing out that our perspective on infinity is necessarily subjective. Quoting directly from Jacobi, Hölderlin writes: "Der Einwurf, daß eine unendliche Reihe von Wirkungen unmöglich, widerlege sich selbst, (in so fern nemlich die Unendlichkeit *indeterminabilis*, nicht *series infinita* ist) weil jede Reihe, die nicht aus *nichts* entspringen soll, schlechterdings eine unendliche, *indeterminabilis* ist" (II, 40, 26-31). The 'infinite' negative of the "immanentes Ensoph" crosses over to the finite in the conception of "Unendlichkeit" as indeterminate: "Und dann sind es nicht bloße Wirkungen, weil die innwohnende Ursache immer und überall ist. Überdiß ist die Vorstellung von Folge und Dauer bloße *Erscheinung*: nur die Form, welcher wir uns bedienen, das *Mannigfaltige* in dem Unendlichen anzuschauen" (II, 40, 31-37). The subject cannot grasp an infinite series as a positive expression, but it can apprehend discrete causal links as an *unfolding multitude* within the infinite.

The idea of an indeterminate array unfolding into the forms of consciousness resembles Maimon's vitalism, which inspired the idealism of Schelling, Fichte, and Hegel. Hölderlin's notes on Jacobi show him to be on the same path; by 1790, four years before hearing Fichte's lectures, he begins to think of being and existence ("Sein" and

“Dasein”) in terms of consciousness. But unlike the idealists, he sees that consciousness structures itself on a positive foundation to which it has negative epistemic relation (the unknowable or indeterminable relation expressed by Jacobi’s “Nicht-Wissens”).

Consciousness cannot logically structure itself in positive epistemic relation to an absolute negative (what Jacobi calls the “Wissen-des-Nichts”). When Hölderlin writes to Hegel in January of 1795, his tone is most critical when pointing out that Fichte’s “Ich” is simply Spinoza’s “Substanz.” His notes on Jacobi, showing preference for the negative term “immanentes Ensoph,” would be consistent with a disapproval of Fichte’s reinstating an epistemically positive expression for the relation of the absolute to consciousness. A positive expression of the relation to the absolute logically destroys the bridge between the infinite and the finite, or as Hölderlin puts it, between the “absolutes Ich,” which must be “(für mich) Nichts,” and the subject.¹¹⁷

From Jacobi, Hölderlin gleans the idea of the type of negative essential to his conception of the “exzentrische Bahn,” which expresses an essentially skeptical philosophical stance. Jacobi rejects a philosophy that is made necessary by perfect skepticism; he thanks Spinoza and his honesty for pointing this out to him. Jacobi’s rejection of Spinoza, however, inspires Hölderlin. He notes from Jacobi: “Das größte Verdienst des Forschers ist, *Daseyn* zu enthüllen, und zu offenbaren. Erklärung ist ihm Mittel, Weg zum Ziele, nächster—niemals letzter Zweck. Sein letzter Zweck ist, was sich

¹¹⁷ In his essay, “Glauben und Wissen” (1802), Hegel makes a very similar criticism of Fichte’s conception of the absolute which “durch ihr Kunststück, das Negative in ein Positives um[setzt]” at the expense of empirical reality (393).

nicht erklären läßt: das Unauflösliche, Unmittelbare, Einfache” (II, 43, 15-19). In Hyperion, skepticism is turned against itself and made an expression of reality rather than a driver into the abyss of fatalism. Hyperion’s reconsideration of his past shows that the revelation of reality does not necessarily demand faith, but instead the constant and renewed act of expression. Though perhaps, in Jacobi’s view, doomed to failure, Hyperion’s endless effort represents the only possible “Auflösung (der Dissonanzen)” of Jacobi’s “Unauflösliche.”

In a fragment that the Frankfurter Ausgabe entitles “Es giebt einen Naturzustand...” (1794), Hölderlin bases his argument on the idea that necessity originates in form. His position makes sense in light of Hume’s skeptical stance toward the principle of causality and Kant’s response that causality is a necessary form of human knowledge.¹¹⁸ Hölderlin sets a “Naturzustand der Einbildungskraft” in opposition to “das Gesetz der Freiheit” in order to highlight “eine natürliche Unschuld” and “Moralität des Instinkts,” which describe a state in which opposites (“das notwendige” and “Freiheit,” “das Bedingte” and “das Unbedingte,” “das Sinnliche” and “das Heilige”) appear to be united (“sich verbrüdern”).¹¹⁹ The necessity of these concepts arises from the fact that they are opposed: “Vielmer setzt [das Gesetz der Freiheit] einen Widerstand in der Natur voraus, sonst würde es nicht *gebieten*” (II, 47, 3-4). Hölderlin’s emphasis on the form of opposition allows his argument to avoid setting up the law of contradiction as a first

¹¹⁸ See Hume’s A Treatise of Human Nature, Part III, specifically section 3. See also Kant’s first critique, “Grundsatz der Zeitfolge nach dem Gesetze der Kausalität,” B232, and the “Widerlegung des Idealismus,” specifically B279.

¹¹⁹ Hölderlin links “Einbildungskraft” to a “Begehrungsvermögen,” a term he no doubt borrows from Reinhold to whom he was introduced by Niethammer in the Wintersemester of 1789/90.

principle prior to the law of freedom. He borrows this tactic from Reinhold, who preempted Schulze's criticism that the "Satz des Bewußtseins" is subordinate to the law of contradiction. As Beiser says:

In his reply Reinhold admits that the proposition of consciousness is subordinate to the law of contradiction in the negative sense that it must comply with it and cannot contradict it; but he denies that it is subordinate to it in the positive sense that its truth follows from it. In other words, only the possibility, but not the reality, of the proposition depends upon the law of contradiction. (274)

Fichte's review of Schulze's Aenesidemus repeats Reinhold's argument, and so once again we find Hölderlin's thinking attuned to a growing predilection for form and relation rather than cause and essence as the basis for knowledge and the description of reality. Like Maimon, Hölderlin appears to place more stock in determining the manifest truth value or form of propositions than anchoring those propositions in a necessary causal chain.

The essay fragment "Über den Begriff der Straffe" of January 1795 seems at first to counter the logic of "Es giebt einen Naturzustand...." It states that principles (or their structural equivalent "Grundsätze") are necessary for any sense of justice because any logical form based on simple opposition is empty. Such a logical form appears in Hyperion as the philosophical system of Alabanda and his band of outlaws, who call themselves "Nemesis." The essay states that the nemesis of the ancients was feared less

for what it actually presented than for what it failed to present: “Es scheint, als wäre die Nemesis der Alten nicht sowohl um ihrer Furchtbarkeit als um ihres geheimnisvollen Ursprungs willen als eine Tochter der Nacht dargestellt worden” (II, 47, 16-18). Just as Alabanda’s band was driven by a destructive principle of simple opposition, it is the fate of the enemies of genuine principles to present only empty forms: “Es ist das nothwendige Schiksaal aller Feinde der Principien, daß sie mit allen ihren Behauptungen in einen Cirkel gerathen” (II, 47, 19-20). Hyperion’s break with Alabanda in the first book of the novel may thus be seen as his recognition of a fundamental difference in their destinies (“Schiksaal,” understood as the inevitable form of nature). A logic that simply defines itself by its opposite is not a genuine principle. If, for example, punishment (“Straffe”) is defined as that which follows bad behavior and bad behavior is that which leads to punishment, the ‘why’ of justice is left unanswered; causality (mechanism), fate (accident), and volition (arbitrariness) become undifferentiated, obscuring the grounds for punishment. When our will goes against the moral law (“Sittengesetz”), our moral consciousness experiences such punishment as both negative and infinite; that is, moral consciousness experiences only opposition (“Widerstand”) without necessarily knowing the law: “Was das Sittengesetz ist wußten wir aber weder zuvor ehe es sich unserem Willen entgegensezte, noch wissen wir es jetzt da es sich uns entgegensezt, wir leiden nur seinen Widerstand, als die Folge von dem, daß wir etwas wollten, das dem Sittengesetz entgegen ist” (II, 48, 10-14). As Hölderlin’s vertiginous language suggests, the moral law, based on the simple opposition of transgression and punishment, represents the infinite regress in Jacobi’s sense; the inability to know can only result in the abysmal

spiral of fatalism, which can only be stopped by faith. Hölderlin's sense of skepticism, however, makes questioning the law a driver for an infinite progression toward the law conceived as ideal. For this reason, the moral principle must be cast in non-oppositional terms; it is the law of freedom as he described in "Es giebt einen Naturzustand..." and the positive expression of justice he attempts to describe in "Über den Begriff der Straffe"—both imply "eine natürliche Unschuld" equivalent to a "Moralität des Instinkts." The positive expression of justice demands a third term that can be understood in dialectical rather than oppositional negative relation. Only in this way may the fundamental principle of a moral system be established.

By the time Hölderlin had completed Hyperion his ideas about how to structure a system that is both whole and open had come into sharper focus. His "Frankfurter Aphorismen" consistently establish dichotomies for the purpose of showing their unity in difference:

Es kommt alles darauf an, daß die Vortreflichen das Inferieure, die Schöneren das Barbarische nicht zu sehr von sich ausschließen, sich aber auch nicht zu sehr damit vermischen, daß sie die *Distanz, die zwischen ihnen und den andern ist, bestimmt und leidenschaftlos erkennen, und aus dieser Erkenntniß wirken, und dulden.* (II, 60-61, 30-1)

The negative aspect of this relation, the tension created by distance, establishes a dynamic rather than schematic structure within which reality or truth is found. The dynamism of this system requires that truth itself incorporate its opposite as part of a

temporal or phenomenological form of truth: “Nur das ist die wahrste Wahrheit, in der auch der Irrtum, weil sie ihn im ganzen ihres Systems, in seine Zeit und seine Stelle setzt, zur Wahrheit wird. Sie ist das Licht, das sich selber und auch die Nacht erleuchtet” (II, 59, 16-19).¹²⁰ The passage continues, showing how the structure of truth relates to its expression: “Diß ist auch die höchste Poësie, in der auch das unpoëtische, weil es zu rechter Zeit und am rechten Orte im Ganzen des Kunstwerks gesagt ist, poëtisch wird” (II, 59, 19-22). “Intellektuale Anschauung” being what it may, the necessary or real *form* of truth is language; the clumsy medium that so often leaves a philosopher’s thinking open to criticism becomes the only proper medium to express truth.

Hyperion is not the only evidence that Hölderlin finds the “Briefform” most suited to his ideas. After abruptly leaving Jena in June of 1796, he met with Schelling in Tübingen where they engaged in intense philosophical discussion. Several months later, Hölderlin wrote Niethammer that he was reading Reinhold and Kant in order to get back on track after his “fruchtlose Bemühungen” in Jena. His latest project was “Neue Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen,” from which the “Fragment philosophischer Briefe” remains. He also wrote that in his conversations with Schelling, though they differed on much, they did agree, “daß neue Ideen am deutlichsten in der Briefform dargestellt werden können” (II, 615, 11-12). For Hölderlin, the epistolary form

¹²⁰ The self-reflexive image in the concluding phrase is derived from Spinoza’s Ethics in which it is used in the same context to describe truth: “Further, what can there be more clear, and more certain, than a true idea as a standard of truth? Even as light displays both itself and darkness, so is truth a standard both of itself and of falsity” (Part 2, XLIII, pg. 115). Hölderlin quite probably read the passage in Jacobi’s Spinoza-Buchlein in which it is quoted. In a related context, Schelling uses the quote in Latin for the dedication of a copy of his essay, “Über die Möglichkeit einer Form der Philosophie.”

is the form of internal dialogue, of self-reflection. It embodies the essential character of Kant's style of criticism—to examine not simply what we know, but the mechanism by and through which we know. Both in Hyperion and in the “Fragment philosophischer Briefe” the addressee remains obscure, only emerging as a silent source of inquiry. Hyperion writes to Bellarmin: “Ich danke dir, daß du mich bittest, dir von mir zu erzählen” (I, 616, 1). In the “Fragment philosophischer Briefe” Hölderlin begins paragraphs with phrases such as “Du fragst mich” and “So fragst du mich, und ich kann dir nur so viel darauf antworten” without naming the figure to which he is speaking. Fichte also uses a superficially dialogic approach, asking his reader to reflect upon himself in the act of reflection, but he builds upon the positive foundation of the “absolutes Ich.”¹²¹ In simply laying down the conditions for knowledge, Kant, in contrast, offers a necessary structure of consciousness and reality; his detractors, many indicating the tenuous status of the “Ding an sich,” criticized Kant's lack of a sound foundation.¹²² Incorporating a silent partner, the “Briefform” represents the proper narrative form of critical philosophy in the manner of Kant.

In a sense, Hölderlin's structure for thinking strives for a classical sense of unity as does Fichte's “Grundsatz” of the absolute subject. But unlike Fichte, Hölderlin

¹²¹ See, for example, the transcription of Fichte's Wissenschaftslehre lectures (Meiner, pg. 29ff; Breazeale, pg. 110ff). The difference is easily seen in the fact that Hölderlin's ‘dialogue’ is a series of responses to questions out of avoid, while Fichte's is a series of commands that direct his audience as a single abstract subject.

¹²² See, for example, Jacobi, David Hume, in Werke II, 291ff. See also, Christian Garve's “Göttingen review” (1782), which charges Kant with Berkelean idealism. Fichte distinguishes his “System” from Kant's “Kritiken” by the fact that the Wissenschaftslehre is formulated on a “Grundsatz,” whereas Kant's critiques are not. See, for example his Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo, pg. 5. Kant himself makes the point that his critique addresses the organon of pure reason not the principles contained therein, nor the application of such principles, which would constitute a system (KrV A11/B25).

formulates his grand unity negatively. The negative distance between the self and itself in the act of self-reflection is necessary not to the understanding of the subject as whole and universal, but to understanding reality (with its third silent term) as whole. As he says in the “Fragment philosophischer Briefe”: “auf die Befriedigung der nothdurft eine *Negative erfolgt*” (II, 53, 34). Rising above the necessity of the subject-object relation proves the existence of God¹²³ and defines spiritual life as a “Stillstand.” Hölderlin’s philosophy, the most salient feature of which is the endless approach to the ideal (a dynamism his system shares with Fichte’s), aims at an ultimate unity and balance in the negative:

In den philosophischen Briefen will ich das Prinzip finden, das mir die Trennungen, in denen wir denken und existiren, erklärt, das aber auch vermögend ist, den Widerstreit verschwinden zu machen, den Widerstreit zwischen dem Subject und dem Object, zwischen unserem Selbst und der Welt, ja auch zwischen Vernunft und Offenbarung. (an Niethammer, 24. Feb, 1796 (II, 614)

The principle for which he searches both gives form to the negative in explaining “Trennung” and, as Hölderlin phrases it, functions negatively by making this separation disappear (“verschwinden”). The “Briefform” is suited to Hölderlin’s ideas and his contemporary philosophical discourse because it manifests the self-reflective structure

¹²³ “Weder aus sich selbst allein, noch einzig aus den Gegenständen, die ihn umgeben, kann der Mensch erfahren, daß mehr als Maschinengang, daß ein Geist, ein Gott, ist in der Welt, aber wohl in einer lebendigeren, über die Nothdurft erhabnen Beziehung, in der er stehet mit dem was ihn umgiebt” (II, 51, 25-30).

with its internal sense of distance that reflects the separation of our consciousness from the divine. These two mirrors, one looked into within and one looked into without, achieve the sense of negative space necessary to our consciousness for representing reality, including the divine, as whole.

Hölderlin's "Urtheil und Seyn," generally considered the key document to his thinking, may be read as a contribution to the pantheism debate that uses Maimon's principles to formulate a response in terms of the negative. "Seyn" and "Urtheil" may be thought of as "Korrelate," sharing only the fact that they are opposed. The former is a non-oppositional negative that serves as an ontological foundation. The latter represents the primal epistemological moment that generates dualistic consciousness. "Seyn" expresses pure unity, while "Urtheil" represents an initial act of negation.

Mendelssohn's defense of reason relies on his theory of judgment, which in turn bases itself on the principle of contradiction.¹²⁴ The principle of contradiction states that all that is in the predicate is already contained in the subject. Consequently, all judgments, including metaphysical judgments such as those regarding God and the soul, simply demonstrate or make clear something that has remained obscured from our limited understanding. Thus, knowledge of all things is possible, if only we were to possess infinite understanding. Jacobi counters Mendelssohn's reasoning with faith, claiming that his adversary fails to distinguish between conceptual and real connections between

¹²⁴ In *Morgenstunden*, Mendelssohn says: "Urtheile also sind wahr, wenn sie von den Begriffen der Subjecte keine anderen Merkmahle aussagen, als die in denselben Statt finden" (*Werke*, 108).

the subject and predicate.¹²⁵ Jacobi's argument essentially severs the subject's understanding from the essential reality of cause and effect in nature, forcing it to rely on faith. Where Mendelssohn eroticizes the absolute, promising complete revelation, but failing to provide an adequate view,¹²⁶ Jacobi idealizes the absolute, removing it entirely from possible understanding through reason. The two approaches are evident in Hyperion as the erotic and ideal narratives of Diotima, which cast her as immanently available, yet distanced by her own capacity to express herself, and transcendent but silent, respectively. In "Urtheil und Seyn," Hölderlin, invoking the central figure of the pantheism debate, systematizes a sentiment expressed by Lessing in order to move between Mendelssohn and Jacobi. In "Eine Duplik" (1778), Lessing's familiar lines read: "Wenn Gott in seiner Rechten alle Wahrheit, und in seiner Linken den einzigen immer regen Trieb nach Wahrheit, obschon mit dem Zusatze, mich immer und ewig zu irren, verschlossen hielte, und spräche zu mir: wähle! Ich fiel ihm mit Demuth in seine Linke, und sagte: Vater gieb! die reine Wahrheit ist ja doch nur für dich allein!" (Werke XIII, 24). Using a parallel schema, Hölderlin's essay makes "Seyn" inaccessible to the subject as subject, while "Urtheil" posits as its unattainable objective the undoing of its own activity.

¹²⁵ Hume, to whom Jacobi by his own admission owes much, expresses his skepticism less dogmatically: "In short, there are two principles which I cannot render consistent, nor is it in my power to renounce either of them, viz. *that all our distinct perceptions are distinct existences, and that the mind never perceives any real connection among distinct existences*" (A Treatise of Human Nature, 284).

¹²⁶ Mendelssohn, like many of his Enlightenment contemporaries, relies on the visual metaphor for knowledge, here, the magnifying glass. As a result, he opens himself to accusations of voyeurism and the eroticization of the object of knowledge. Here, however, the assertion that he does so relies not on the inevitable visual metaphor, but on his coy placement of absolute truth within the structure of his system.

There is also a positive side. In “Urtheil und Seyn” Hölderlin, unlike Reinhold, keeps the foundation of his system outside of consciousness, but in Hyperion he shares with Reinhold a phenomenological approach. The philosophical method of simply describing consciousness that shapes Hyperion and culminates in Hegel’s Phänomenologie des Geistes finds roots in Reinhold’s Elementarphilosophie. Reinhold’s strategy of establishing the faculty of representation (“Vorstellungsvermögen”) as the basis for a philosophical system that describes the fact of existence exemplifies phenomenology.¹²⁷ Furthermore, Reinhold defines a first principle as a *description* of a self-revealing fact; it is immediate and, therefore, in no need of demonstration. Only in this way does the first principle remain outside the system for which it is a foundation.¹²⁸

Reinhold’s “Satz des Bewußtseins” reads:

Durch keinen Vernunftschluß, sondern durch bloße *Reflexion* über die
Tatsache des Bewußtseins, das heißt, durch Vergleichung desjenigen, was
im Bewußtsein vorgeht, wissen wir: *daß die Vorstellung im Bewußtsein*

¹²⁷ As Klemmt puts it: “Bis hierher reicht innerhalb der ‘Theorie des Vorstellungsvermögens überhaupt’ die Aufnahme des für Reinhold in und mit dem *Bewußtsein* allgemeingültig gegebenen *Tatbestandes*, die deskriptive Herausstellung des Grundfaktums, die noch aller eigentlichen *Theorie* der Vorstellung überhaupt *voraus* liegt. Es ist jener Bestandteil wissenschaftlicher Forschung, den man heute wegen seiner methodischen Eigenart in einem ganz *neutralen* Sinne des Begriffes als ‘*phänomenologisch*’ bezeichnet, und der in unserem Falle als *Phänomenologie der Vorstellung überhaupt* zugleich eine Phänomenologie des *Bewußtseins überhaupt* ist” (65). See also, Cassirer, Das Erkenntnisproblem III, pg. 38.

¹²⁸ Reinhold calls principles within experience transcendental, and those outside experience transcendent. His distinction on the basis of “Erfahrung” confronts difficulty when failing to clearly distinguish between the ‘transcendent’ and the ‘objective’: “Solche transcendente Gründe sind die letzten Gründe von den Thatsachen der äusseren Erfahrung, so ferne sie bloß äussere ist. Der nächste *gegebene* Grund einer solchen Thatsache ist immer der von aussenher *gegebene*, und folglich *ausser dem Subjekte* gegründete *Eindruck*, dessen äusserer Grund in dem *ausser uns befindlichen* Objekte, das nur durch jenen Eindruck erkennbar ist, entweder gar nicht oder nur durch einen anderen äusseren Eindruck, das heisst vermittelt eines anderen *in der äusseren Erfahrung* vorkommenden, empirischen, Grundes erkannt werden kann” (Beyträge, 7). Reinhold’s difficulty indicates a point of contention common to the period: how to use the term ‘outside’ in relation to consciousness.

durch das Subjekt vom Objekt und Subjekt unterschieden und auf beide bezogen werde. (Über das Fundament des philosophischen Wissens, 77)

In Reinhold's first principle, we find a concise expression of the narrative form of Hölderlin's Hyperion, what I have termed the form of the double-mirror--the subject reflecting upon itself in the act of reflecting. In this positive aspect of their systems, that is in the *form* they take, Hölderlin and Reinhold are similar. But, they are different in the negative aspect, that is, with regard to the structural principle outside the system that gives the system itself form. Reinhold's "Satz des Bewußtsein" runs into serious difficulty because it tries to stand outside the very system that defines it; the immediacy demanded by the criterion of self-evidence is anathema to the idea of a subject's grasping the principle (as object) at all. For this reason, Niethammer, Schulze, and Reinhold's own students recognized "Elementarphilosophie" as circular.¹²⁹ Hölderlin, in placing "Seyn" beyond consciousness maintains a positive ontological foundation. But, being remains in negative relation to consciousness and thus avoids the structural collapse to which Reinhold's "Elementarphilosophie" falls prey. Yet, as Maimon has shown us, this negative relation is a logically positive expression relative to the subject. Though this positive relation signals a differential or noumenon, one cannot speak of an object

¹²⁹ In a letter, Niethammer concurs with F.P. von Herbert, pointing out that Schulze's Aenesidemus "[hat] dem Reinhold sein allgemeingültiges Fundament unter den Füßen weggespült" (to Herbert, June 2, 1794; qtd. in Henrich, Grund im Bewußtsein, 828). Reinhold, perhaps recognizing the difficulties within his system, presents yet another fundamental principle, but it ultimately wreaks more havoc with his system. At the end of his "Versuch einer neuen Theorie des menschlichen Vorstellungsvermögen," Reinhold introduces the "Begehrungsvermögen" as a force that vitalizes representation (560ff). This faculty of desire extends beyond the realm of representation and thus presents a negating correlate to consciousness. It raises the same kind of problem as the "Satz des Bewußtseins" for Reinhold's system by trying to be both inside and outside the faculty of representation. See also, Beiser, pg. 263.

produced out of this relation as a phenomenon. Hölderlin's system expresses, then, not a fully realized idealistic phenomenology, but instead a phenomenological approach, whereby being, as a fundamental unity, remains outside relation to the subject.

A final word must be given to Kant, for he finds a way between Jacobi and Mendelssohn in much the same manner as Hölderlin. In his essay, "Was heißt sich im Denken orientieren?" (1786), Kant speaks directly of Jacobi and Mendelssohn, pointing out that they make the common assumption that reason is a faculty of knowledge whose purpose it is to know the "Ding an sich" or the unconditioned. Kant denies this assumption on the basis that reason is infinite. In making this claim, Kant essentially pulls reason out of the business of negating or, in effect, distinguishing. That job is given to knowledge, which demands the unity of consciousness in a subject (KrV B137-138). Hölderlin makes the same move in "Urtheil und Seyn"; judgment represents the faculty of knowledge, whose purpose it is to distinguish. Its demand for a unified subject to which the intuiting of an object (a unified manifold) may relate excludes it from the infinitude that is "Seyn." "Seyn," based on a model of consciousness, negates both subject and object as it unifies them. Structurally, within the context of Hölderlin's system, it represents a double negative; it is that which is not the negating of consciousness. The double negative ideal represents a skepticism that forever pushes itself blindly off into the chasm of the unknown as soon as it would rest on the ledge of the known.

CHAPTER VII:
VOLUME TWO: HYPERION'S UNDOING:

Die Stimme wars des edelsten der Ströme,
Des freigeborenen Rheins,
Und anderes hoffte der, als droben von den Brüdern,
Dem Tessin und dem Rhodanus
Er schied und wandern wollt', und ungeduldig ihn
Nach Asia trieb die königliche Seele.
Doch unverständlich ist
Das Wünschen vor dem Schiksaal.
Die Blindesten aber
Sind Göttersöhne. Denn es kennet der Mensch
Sein Haus und dem Thier ward, wo
Es bauen solle, doch jenen ist
Der Fehl, daß sie nicht wissen, wohin
In die unerfahrene Seele gegeben.

Ein Räthsel ist Reinent sprungenes.

“Der Rhein”

Laß den Anfang mit dem Ende
Sich in Eins zusammen ziehn!
Goethe, "Dauer im Wechsel"

Statt heißem Wünschen, wildem Wollen,
Statt läst'gem Fordern, strengem Sollen,
Sich aufzugeben ist Genuß.
Goethe, "Eins und Alles"

The first half of the novel ends with much talk--the "Athensgespräch." In the second volume, the narrated Hyperion finally goes into action, and we are given the story of his undoing. Recounting a series of romantic and military misadventures, the second volume reads as a repudiation of doing or "Handeln." The first volume began with an arrival, Hyperion's "Heimkunft," and culminates in the grand synthesis of the "Athensgespräch": "Es wird nur Eine Schönheit seyn; und Menschheit und Natur wird sich vereinen in Eine allumfassende Gottheit" (I, 693, 35-36). It is undone by the second volume, which begins with a departure, Hyperion's "Abschied" from Diotima, and ends with the juxtaposition of unity against separation and turning: "Es scheiden und kehren im Herzen die Adern und einiges, ewiges, glühendes Leben ist Alles" (I, 760, 31-32). The "Nächstens mehr" has justifiably drawn much critical attention to Hölderlin's thinking on the fragment, but as we have seen in the novel thus far, he tends to put his ideas into dynamic, phenomenological rather than concrete, ontological terms.¹³⁰ Hölderlin's fragment is defined less by what it is than how it functions. The operative

¹³⁰ On the unity conveyed in the ending of *Hyperion*, see Böhm's essay, "'So dacht' ich. Nächstens mehr': Die Ganzheit des Hyperionsromans."

word in the second volume of Hyperion is “scheiden,” for it describes the action of undoing and difference that propels the ‘revolutionary’ dialectics that make it possible to think of the two volumes as a unified whole.¹³¹ To preserve this possibility, Hölderlin renounces the fulfillment of a dialectical conclusion by having Hyperion announce the “Nächstens mehr” that divorces him from his past.

The dialectical movement, a trademark feature of Hölderlin’s work, is often viewed as a triadic form,¹³² but the conclusion of his novel suggests a greater interest in capturing the moment prior to the realization of this form or the failure of the triadic form altogether. We must remember that the “Auflösung der Dissonanzen” in the preface is not a synthesis promised to the reader, but a dissolution withheld from “bloßes Nachdenken” and “leere Lust.” Volume one explains the world with tidy triplets: childhood innocence (“Einfalt”) together with reflection (“Andenken”) produces the

¹³¹ Hölderlin clearly conceived of the two volumes as a unit and expressed to Schiller a certain amount of regret at having published the first volume by itself: “Ich fühle, daß es unklug war, den ersten Band ohne den zweiten auszustellen, weil jener gar zu wenig selbständiger Theil des Ganzen ist” (II, 656 26–28). The undoing of the first volume by the “revolutionary” second volume seems to work as a unifying force both within the novel and without. “Revolution” as a process of overturning represents the most consistent feature within the canon of Hölderlin criticism. It is a term that unifies differing views more often than it pits them against one another. See, for example, Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature; Behler, “The German Romantic Revolution” in English and German Romanticism: Cross-currents and Controversies; Kurz, Mittelbarkeit und Vereinigung: Zum Verhältnis von Poesie, Reflexion und Revolution bei Hölderlin; Prignitz, “‘Der Vulkan bricht los’: Das Kriegsmotiv in Hölderlins ‘Hyperion,’” and Schuffels, “Schicksal und Revolution bei Hölderlin: Die Überwindung des ‘Schicksaals’ durch den Befreiungskrieg im ‘Hyperion.’”

¹³² For example, Hölderlin’s poem “Der Rhein,” quoted on the title page, has five groups of three strophes, each with exactly or very nearly fifteen lines. “Brod und Wein” with its thoroughly dialectical structure (the arithmetic progression in the triadic grouping of the lines [2, 6, 18, 54, 162]) is even more precise. Not only is the poem one of the most reviewed of Hölderlin’s work (Schmidt, Hölderlins Elegie, 6), it is also used to link Hölderlin to Hegel and idealistic philosophy (Willems, 117). See also Olson’s “Renunciation and Metaphysics: An Examination of Dialectic in Hölderlin and Hegel during their Frankfurt Period” where he makes the very relevant observation that the poem “Heimkunft” fails to follow through with its dialectic, whereas “Brod und Wein” does. See also Unger, Hölderlin’s Major Poetry. The Dialectics of Unity, which argues for a progressive synthesis toward “Eins und Alles,” and Pellegrini, Friedrich Hölderlin: Sein Bild in der Forschung, especially chapter VII.

ideal spirit; the ideal Greek culture expressed itself as “Kunst,” “Religion,” and “der Sinn für die Freiheit” forking off from “Schönheit.” In volume two, triangles become dangerous. They are a source of instability—not simply a mechanism of desire (we recall “der Dritte” and the “neidische Vorhänge” that came between Hyperion and Diotima thus eroticizing his love), but the instrument of ruin.¹³³ Alabanda reemerges as the force of dialectical ruin, the force of negation or “scheiden” that continually generates a third term, an ‘outside’ toward which Hyperion will always strive. Both Alabanda and Diotima are sacrificed as victims of Hyperion’s infinite approach to the ideal, his drive for something other than what he has. Diotima, who in the end transforms from a passive reflection to a fount of wisdom, sets off the following words for Hyperion in bold face: “*wer so, wie du, das fade Nichts gefühlt, erheitert in höchstem Geiste sich nur, wer so den Tod erfuhr, wie du, erholt allein sich unter den Göttern*” (I, 731, 11-14). Passing over the horizon into the nothingness that drives the dialectical movement of his life,¹³⁴ Hyperion finds not the presence of the divine but an absence that allows a place for human existence beneath the gods.

Hölderlin is not coy about what he has to say in volume two. The epigraph from Sophocles tells us it is best never to have been born, but once one has seen the light,

¹³³ Baker notes “Hölderlin’s perfection and then his gradual abandonment of the triadic scheme” during and after the time in which *Hyperion* was written, but he comments only on the form of “Brod und Wein” which is “built on a triadic model.” See his essay, “The Problem of Poetic Naming in Hölderlin’s Elegy ‘Brod und Wein.’”

¹³⁴ The image of the movement described here is taken from “Hyperion’s Schicksalslied”: “von Klippe zu Klippe geworfen, Jahr lang ins Ungewisse hinab.” The syntactically opposed “Klippen” represent counterpoints in an oscillating progression into the uncertain or unknown.

second best is to return whence one came.¹³⁵ The end of the novel returns us to the beginning as the narrative gap between past and present is closed. Hyperion, it would seem, overcomes all emotional and geographical separation which arose in the course of his life: “Auch wir, auch wir sind nicht geschieden, Diotima!... Versöhnung ist mitten im Streit und alles Getrennte findet sich wieder” (I, 760, 19; 29-30). The circle and the spiral are popular shapes for describing the form of the novel and the progressive elevation of the narrator’s self-reflective or dialectical consciousness.¹³⁶ But in the last letter, Hyperion has not actually come full circle: “Ich wollte nun aus Deutschland wieder fort...Aber der himmlische Frühling hielt mich auf” (I, 758, 1-6). Hyperion finally concludes the novel by quoting his own words from the recent past; in doing so, he reiterates that he has not fully caught up to himself. The gap deserves our attention, for it indicates not the negative essential to dialectical progression (Ryan’s claim), but the danger in conceiving of ideals as dialectical. We are told again and again that the ideal lies *in* a dialectical process of “werden” and “vergehen,” that it is phenomenological, that it partakes of death.¹³⁷ But when the ideal is conceptually fixed as being dialectical, that is, when it takes on ontological significance as an ideal *of* process, it becomes radically unstable. The ideal must remain balanced, however precariously, in the moment. Every

¹³⁵ “μη φυναι, τον απαντα νικα λογον το δ’ επει φανη βηναι κειθεν, οθεν περ ηκει, πολυ δευτερον ως ταχιστα.”

¹³⁶ Ryan’s *Exzentrische Bahn* and Abrams’s *Natural Supernaturalism* are two prominent examples. Aspetsberger arrives at a similar form by looking at the relationship between the narrated and narrating Hyperion and placing the “Athensgespräch” in the center of a progression “von Bewußtlosigkeit am Anfang zu einer Einsicht in die Weltzusammenhänge” (342). He sees, however, “Hyperion’s Jugend” as more representative of the spiral form (266).

moment that it reveals itself is a moment in the past. When the idea of it is made into a thing in the mind after which one strives, it is taken out of the present and projected into the future. The action of Hyperion's idealizing in this manner results in his undoing. It is perhaps more fitting, then, to see Hyperion's return less as the yield on a dialectical investment and more as a refund.

Timing is critical to Hyperion's negotiation between the gap and the ideal in the dialectical process of exchange. Diotima and Alabanda represent two opposing perspectives: one that remains in time, and one that seeks to step outside it.¹³⁸ Volume two picks up right where volume one left off with Hyperion and Diotima's love affair in full swing. They have returned from Attica, and nature shows the colors of both change and eternity: "Die welkenden Blätter trugen die Farbe des Abendroths, nur die Fichte und der Lorbeer stand in ewigem Grün" (I, 697, 7-9). The relationship to Diotima captures the spirit of "Dauer im Wechsel," the consistency of the river that forever flows.¹³⁹ The river described here doesn't simply flow; it shoots like an arrow: "das rothe Berggewässer schoß, wie ein Pfeil, unter uns weg, aber daneben grünt' in Ruhe der Wald, und die hellen Buchenblätter regten sich kaum" (I, 697-698, 30-2). Indeed, the peaceful

¹³⁷ In volume one, see I, 614-615, 32-12 where, as discussed earlier, the significance of "Eines zu seyn mit Allem" lies in the contextual shift from divine to human. In volume two, see I, 751, 29-30 and I, 706, 21 where, in the highest understanding, death and mutability are figured as part of life and beauty.

¹³⁸ Lawrence Frye's "Seasonal and Psychic Time in the Structuring of *Hyperion*" offers pertinent insights on Hyperion's perceptions of the passing of time as descriptive of his psychic development. Though his distinction between natural time and "psychic—or inner—time" is not mine, his article complements the discussion that follows here, which invokes time as a form of consciousness in order to examine how Hyperion relates to or formulates ideals.

¹³⁹ Goethe's poem alludes to the same relationship between "das Grüne" and the river of time that Hölderlin conveys in the opening scene of volume two: "Soll ich mich des Grünen freuen/ Dem ich Schatten erst verdankt?... Gleich mit jedem Regengusse,/ Ändert sich dein holdes Tal,/ Ach, und in demselben Flusse/ Schwimmst du nicht zum zweitenmal."

green that counterbalances the torrential red is comforting; it carries, but remains part of a passing cycle: "Da that es uns so wohl, daß uns das seelenvolle Grün nicht auch so wegflog, wie der Bach, und der schöne Frühling uns so still hielt, wie ein zahmer Vogel, aber nun ist er dennoch über die Berge" (I, 698, 2-5). Diotima consistently reminds Hyperion of the passing of time, and in doing so she remains eternally in sync with nature. As such, she embodies divine beauty: "O Bellarmin! wer darf denn sagen, er stehe fest, wenn auch das Schöne seinem Schicksaal so entgegenreift, wenn auch das Göttliche sich demüthigen muß, und die Sterblichkeit mit allem Sterblichen theilen!" (I, 698, 10-12). Hyperion rationalizes her death with a metaphysics that paradoxically brings the immortal into the cycle of life. He cannot do this, however, without Alabanda's help; he is the force of separation, the "theilen" that will allow Hyperion to share Diotima as she is divided from him.

In contrast to Diotima, Alabanda takes Hyperion out of time. He separates an ideal past and a golden future from the present and initiates the action necessary to realize his historic vision. Where every moment with Diotima, whether blissful or tragic, is immediate and mutual, Alabanda gives Hyperion the "werdendes Glück" of battle preferable to any past (I, 718, 3).¹⁴⁰ En route to meet with Alabanda for the second time,

¹⁴⁰ De Man explains the 'error' of Hyperion's idealizations well: "The 'error' of Hyperion's belief in the possibility of a union with Diotima in inwardness corresponds exactly to his 'error' of believing in the possibility of reestablishing the grandeur of Greece on our earth by an immediate external action. In both cases the error is due not to a lack or an excess of externality or inwardness but to the illusory hope of being able to escape time" ("Image of Rousseau in Hölderlin," 27). ("L' 'erreur' de Hypérion croyant à la possibilité d'une union avec Diotime dans l'intériorité équivaut exactement à son 'erreur' de croire à la possibilité de ramener la grandeur de la Grèce sur notre terre par une action extérieure immédiate. Dans les deux cas, l'erreur ne provient pas d'un manque ou d'un excès d'extériorité ou d'intériorité, mais de l'espoir illusoire de pouvoir échapper au temps" [164]).

Hyperion stays over night in a hut in which he once stayed while traveling with Adamas. The hut marks an historical crossroads of past and future where Hyperion has an overview of time: "Ich sehe nur Thaten, vergangene, künftige, wenn ich auch vom Morgen bis zum Abend unter freiem Himmel wandre" (I, 708, 5-7). Running headlong towards the most dangerous period of his life, time has stopped for him so that he may view it circumspectly. The water image of time changes appropriately. He sits before the hut and listens to "das Geplätscher des nahen Brunnens, der unter blühenden Akatien sein silbern Gewässer ins Beken goß" (I, 707-708, 29-2). At rest on a bridge with Diotima, he saw a river without beginning or end shoot by beneath him, a streak of red through nature's green. Traveling on the road towards Alabanda, Hyperion can see where the spring begins and the flow ends. Within the frame of his godlike view, a perspective from outside time, the still waters take on the color of precious metal; the silver here foreshadows an association which soon follows between gold and the idealization of both the past and the future. His movement, his striving, is simultaneous with the ability to see time not in its passing, but as an object fixed and idealized. The path to Alabanda is cut by the vision of an historical ideal frozen in time.

Ultimately, Hyperion learns from the failure of his and Alabanda's visionary endeavor. After the final military defeat, listening to the sound of a tree falling under a woodsman's ax and the hushed flow of "der vergängliche Reegenbach hinab ins ruhige Meer," he observes of Alabanda: "Die Zukunft hatte keine Macht mehr über ihn...das lies er so geschehn, als wär' ein zeitverkürzend Spiel verloren" (I, 737, 10-11; 14-15).

Alabanda is set free, in the end, when he loses his game of ‘shortening time’, compressing and framing history to fit his vision of Greece’s future. He finds peace only after the failure of a pointless endeavor; he has simply whiled away the hours with vain hopes to circumscribe time in an historic vision. His final separation from Hyperion is the result of his inability to resist Diotima, whom, he confesses, he would certainly divide and conquer: “aber diese Diotima! kann ich anders? kann ich sie mit halber Seele fühlen? sie, die um und um so innig Eines ist, Ein göttlich ungetheiltes Leben?” (I, 738, 11-13). Alabanda remains to the end a force of division and destruction: “Um Diotimas willen würd’ ich dich betrügen und am Ende mich und Diotima morden, weil wir doch nicht Eines wären” (I, 741, 17-19). In contrast, Diotima remains a passive, specular presence even into renunciation and absence. In an odd declaration of faithfulness, she says that if Hyperion has fallen out of love and hates her, she would reciprocate the feeling in order that they could remain as one. Hyperion is amazed that she followed him “bis in die Nacht” and granted his renunciation (“Entsagen”) of her. She continues to affirm and unify even in the face of negation. The final irony is that Alabanda leaves Hyperion because of Diotima, but just after he leaves, Diotima is removed as an obstacle. Hyperion could not give her to Alabanda while she was alive (“O warum kann ich sie dir nicht schenken?” (I, 738, 18)), but the problem is resolved by her permanent absence: “armer Alabanda! nun gehört sie dir und mir!” (I, 753, 37). We are left with the curious fact that the force of separation (Alabanda) gives rise to the idealization of time as a unified whole, while the presence of unity (Diotima) ensures the passing of time that strikes all plans for the future asunder.

In a letter written in early spring after Hyperion leaves Kalaurea, Diotima warns him that to fall out of nature's rhythm is a sin: "Ist es nicht Sünde, zu trauern im Frühling? warum thun wir es dennoch?" (I, 712, 33-34). Diotima is uprooted by Hyperion's "Thatenlust" ("sollt' ich welken, wenn du glänzest?") and like a plucked flower, she remains for the moment before her death frozen in time, her past flashing before her in the present: "o ihr Schatten seeliger Zeit! ihr meine trauten Erinnerungen! Ist mir doch, als wär' er kaum von gestern, jener Zauberabend, da der heil'ge Fremdling mir zum erstenmale begegnete" (I, 713, 13-16). Meanwhile, Hyperion wants to remove all record of the past in his vision of the "Freistaat": "es muß sich alles verjüngen, es muß von Grund aus anders seyn;...und auch kein Augenblick darf Einmal noch uns mahnen an die platte Vergangenheit!" (I, 714, 28-34). Hyperion believes that the erasure of the past together with the mastery of the future will bring the course of nature to its knees and fate will do his bidding: "es ist Freude, so mit stillen Sinnen über der großen Zukunft zu walten. Wir nehmen dem Zufall die Kraft, wir meistern das Schicksaal" (I, 716, 19-21). The autonomous will, expressed as planning, enables Hyperion to achieve his end. He champions the artificial, the man-made, using Diotima, now objectified, as the model: "Auch [] deine [Welt], Diotima, denn sie ist die Kopie von dir. O du, mit deiner Elysiumsstille, könnten wir das schaffen, was du bist!" (I, 717, 11-12). Diotima told him to become an artist, to learn "die Hand zu führen," and he has done so by taking up the sword. He drills with his troops and they learn to respond autonomously and 'spontaneously' as practiced, "jeder selbst sein Feldherr." Stubborn natures yield to hope and planning:

O Diotima! so zu sehn, wie von Hoffnungen da die starre Natur erwaicht
 und all' ihre Pulse mächtiger schlagen und von Entwürfen die verdüsterte
 Stirne sich entfaltet und glänzt, so da zu stehn in einer Sphäre von
 Menschen, umrungen von Glauben und Lust, das ist doch mehr, als Erd'
 und Himmel und Meer in aller ihrer Glorie zu schaun. (I, 716, 3-8)

The vision of the future laid down in plans surpasses nature's glories. Hyperion acknowledges his anachronism, but his imagination has shown him a vision beyond nature: "Aber was kann ich dafür, daß mein Gedanke schneller ist, wie die Zeit? Ich wollte so gern, es wäre umgekehrt und die Zeit und die That überflöge den Gedanken und der geflügelte Sieg übereilte die Hoffnung selbst" (I, 717, 29-32). Oddly enough, the "Handeln" of war, spontaneous action in the now, is made up of a great deal of planning that by its nature pulls one out of the moment.¹⁴¹

Why is it that Hyperion was unable to see the inevitably fruitless outcome of Alabanda's second call to action when he had already observed the essentially destructive principle at the heart of Nemesis's activity? True, Alabanda claims to have renounced his former allegiance, but it is not that Nemesis was simply a force of ruinous resistance and that Hyperion now takes up arms for his country. The critical factor does not appear

¹⁴¹ A year after volume two of *Hyperion* was published, Kant expressed in ontological terms what Hölderlin says here in temporal terms regarding the principles of action: "Unter *Imperativ* überhaupt ist jeder Satz zu verstehen, der eine mögliche freie Handlung aussagt, wodurch ein gewisser Zweck wirklich gemacht werden soll.—Eine jede Erkenntnis also, die Imperativen enthält, ist praktisch, und zwar im Gegensatze des *theoretischen* Erkenntnisses praktisch zu nennen. Denn theoretische Erkenntnisse sind solche, die da aussagen: nicht, was sein soll, sonder was ist;—also *kein Handeln*, sondern ein *Sein* zu ihrem Objekt haben" (*Logik*, WB V, 517-518). Though Hyperion's relationship to Diotima can only exist theoretically, it is one of pure being (i.e. identity between subject and object). The "Handeln" which he chooses by following Alabanda describes a practical endeavor to realize what *should* be, what is removed from both his presence and the present.

to be a clearly defined enemy, for it is almost as difficult to follow the changes of allegiance in Hyperion's military career as it is to identify Nemesis's foe. In both armed responses, Greeks ultimately fight against Greeks. All else being the same, we must look to Diotima, for she is new to the equation. Since the first encounter with Alabanda, she has given Hyperion a measure of balance and harmony and a place to call home.

Diotima gives Hyperion a point from which to depart, a balance to disrupt. Alabanda calls Hyperion to battle in a letter that sunders the domesticated existence on Kalaurea. He offers the alternative, the third oblique term that takes Hyperion out of himself and propels his life (almost) full circle: "Du wirst [Diotima] tödten, rief Notara. Siehe, wie sanft sie ist, und du bist so außer dir" (I, 705, 29-30). As an instrument of division, Alabanda takes Hyperion on a detour that teaches him a lesson about freedom, not the freedom *to* that drove Nemesis mechanically onward, but the freedom *from*--the freedom of renunciation. Hyperion experiences the freedom of renunciation in the process of individuation from Diotima. He goes 'outside himself', the self considered as one with Diotima, in order to return to himself as an individual.¹⁴² The freedom of renunciation is thus an embrace of absence he could never have enacted without experiencing Diotima's presence.

Hyperion learns his lesson from Alabanda negatively, that is, as a mistake, because that was the nature of Alabanda's own education. Alabanda tells the story of his

¹⁴² Goethe's idea of renunciation expresses the same sense of 'collecting oneself' as part of a circular movement. According to Brown's reading of Goethe: "renunciation is the process of collecting oneself in preparation for turning outward with purpose and understanding" (*Shape*, 39). In this way, "renunciation" aptly describes the structure of Hölderlin's novel when considered as a treatise on subjectivity.

coming to Nemesis shortly before parting ways with Hyperion forever. His lesson in freedom starts, appropriately enough, when he takes up sharpening knives upon the recommendation of the man who will introduce him to Nemesis. The trade allows him to hone skills that will be useful to the band of rebels who, as we have seen, identify themselves with the plow in its work of overturning. On the open road, traveling through France and Spain, he acquires his love of freedom: “meine Freiheitsliebe sich schärft” (I, 740, 1). Striking too noble a figure for a man in his trade, he becomes suspect and is arrested on more than one occasion for no reason other than his good looks. This violation of his freedom constitutes, according to his mysterious sponsor, his lesson in “die Schule des Schicksaals.” The violation of freedom by the irrational forces of fate provides a reason for revolutionary action.¹⁴³ Freedom, therefore, always carries with it a political agenda with an objective, whether it may be ultimately fulfilled or not. As he was taught, Alabanda, in turn, schools Hyperion in the freedom of resistance that constantly demands action against, or better put, a reaction to, some thing.

In order to react, to enact freedom as Alabanda sees it, Hyperion requires not just an obstacle, but a goal. After he receives Alabanda’s letter and the call to action, Hyperion reappraises Diotima. Once a dynamic part of nature in symbiotic relation with him, she is recast as an ideal figure distinctly alien to him. She undergoes a miraculous change: “Diotima war von nun an wunderbar verändert” (I, 701, 21). Brokenhearted at

¹⁴³ On the distinction between Alabanda’s dialectical understanding of fate as a rationalization for revolution and Hyperion’s ultimately poetical understanding of fate as a synthetic force in history, see Schuffels, especially pg. 94.

the thought of her paramour following Alabanda to war, Diotima is now seen by Hyperion as at once “fremd,” “erhaben,” a “Götterbild,” and even a foreign power “voll von allmächtigen Kräften,” “eine sichtbare Gewalt.” Prior to Hyperion’s departure, the two exchange vows before nature in a kind of pantheist wedding ceremony that completes Diotima’s objectification as an ideal. Her apotheosis is, of course, her death: “Diotima stand wie ein Marmorbild und ihre Hand starb fühlbar in meiner” (I, 705, 13). Hyperion’s marriage divorces him from the ideal so that he may pursue it rather than possess it.

Alabanda’s lesson cuts both ways: the revolution fails and the historic vision is extinguished as is Diotima, who embodies the Elysium they sought to create (I, 717, 11-12); but, Diotima’s deification is also what allows the narrated Hyperion to let her pass, so that in reflecting back on her loss, he may come to the higher knowledge of seeing the truly eternal ideal not as divinely outside of time, but actually in time. Only from his present moment may the narrating Hyperion look back and say: “alle Verwandlungen der reinen Natur [gehören] auch mit zu ihrer Schöne” (I, 706, 21). Reflecting back on Diotima’s passing, Hyperion’s perspective on time changes:

Unsre Seele, wenn sie die sterblichen Erfahrungen ablegt und allein nur lebt in heiliger Ruhe, ist sie nicht, wie ein unbelaubter Baum? wie ein Haupt ohne Loken? Lieber Bellarmin! ich habe eine Weile geruht; wie ein Kind, hab’ ich unter den stillen Hügeln von Salamis gelebt, vergessen des Schiksaals und des Strebens der Menschen. Seitdem ist manches anders

in meinem Auge geworden, und ich habe nun so viel Frieden in mir um ruhig zu bleiben, bei jedem Blick ins menschliche Leben. (I, 706, 22-30)

“Das Schicksal und das Streben der Menschen” become the proper relation of the human to the divine, and once attuned to this most natural relation, Hyperion finds peace. And yet, Hyperion feels a need to offer proof of his achievement: “Aber ich meine, du solltest sogar meinen Briefen es ansehen, wie meine Seele täglich stiller wird und stiller. Und ich will künftig noch so viel davon sagen, bis du es glaubst” (I, 706, 32-34). The urgency with which Hyperion wants to convince Bellarmin that he is at peace indicates a sense of falling short or failing that testifies to his ‘successful’ reformulation of the relationship between the human and the divine. The separation that Alabanda, by his nature, effects demands the objectification of Diotima as a divine ideal. As a result, Hyperion may properly experience the only real relationship between the divine and the human—one that occurs in time.

There is something perverse in the idea that one must make a misstep in order to get in step with time, but it is a necessary response to something perverse. After Hyperion has left Diotima for Alabanda, she writes to him and observes his peculiar ability to grasp time completely and as a whole:

Es ist so selten, daß ein Mensch mit dem ersten Schritt ins Leben so mit Einmal, so im kleinsten Punct, so schnell, so tief das ganze Schicksal seiner Zeit empfand, und daß es unaustilgbar in ihm haftet, diß Gefühl,...mein Theurer! ist so selten, daß es uns fast unnatürlich dünkt. (I,

731, 28-34)

As the voice of nature that she always is, Diotima sees something strange in Hyperion's ability to step out of time, preserve it, and observe it synchronically in every detail. She could have told as much from his words at their wedding. Hers is a vow of union, speaking to the past and describing how she and Hyperion were once one with nature. His is a vow of separation, looking at the past, present, and future and saying that even when apart, coming together, and parting again, their love is in nature and holy. He tenders the dialectic that totalizes and recuperates losses, the phenomenological process that takes the negative into account. She offers an ideal union in the present, giving it over to dissolution in time. When the time comes for Hyperion to depart, Diotima spends the day beautifying the home. He finds her by the hearth, the queen of the domestic sphere, reminding us of an earlier letter, the briefest in the entire novel, in which he cites her culinary skills of the hearth as a sign of her unity with nature (volume one, book two, letter eight). Now, however, he perceives her differently. For Hyperion, her work in the home creates a perverse, even monstrous incongruity with her new image as divine and all-powerful. He tells us as much when he points out that she has miraculously found grapes and roses so late in the year. Her ideal status has corrupted her natural rhythm. Thus, Hyperion's vow represents a response to the impossible, to the domesticated divine that has given itself over to him and his arrhythmia.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Heraclitus served Hyperion once before when in the "Athensgespräch" he needed to name the ineffable. Another paradox found in his fragments appropriately represents the nexus of ideas at work here. Homer, it is said, departed this life in the face of a puzzle posed to him by a group of young boys: "What we saw and caught we leave behind, while what we did not see or catch we take [away with us]" (Fragment 56, 88-89). Hyperion's choice to pursue the ideal he already possesses presents an enigma of the same form; he leaves

How then do we understand rhythm, harmony, and balance in the novel, especially with regard to the central theme of volume two, freedom?¹⁴⁵ As we have seen in Hyperion, to desire is to be in the proper relation to the ideal; it is in effect an inactive state of balance. Only the enacting of the deed in the attempt to realize the desired ideal initiates violence and introduces disruption. Diotima's argument against war is that it is extreme ("zum Äußerstem"), that it is out of balance. She says that it is not natural and that Hyperion is not suited to it. Hyperion wants to realize the "heilige Theokratie des Schönen...in einem Freistaat." Diotima's protests suggest that "Freistaat" is in itself a contradiction in terms. The "Freistaat" cannot be natural by the very fact that it is created ("geschafft"), and what is more, created after an ideal. Just as the process of making the "Freistaat" contradicts the essential idea of it, the necessary spontaneity of freedom itself, ideals are lost in their realization: "Der wilde Kampf wird dich zerreißen, schöne Seele, du wirst altern, seeliger Geist! und lebensmüd am Ende fragen, wo seid ihr nun, ihr Ideale der Jugend?" (I, 700, 29-31). Diotima's charge that Hyperion will age ("altern") appears to say that he will be thrown into time by his actions, but we must remember that Diotima's perspective is one from within time; being synchronized, she does not 'age' or change *relative* to time. Hyperion has a different perspective, as

Diotima behind, taking with him a vision he will never see fulfilled. The departure here acts out a figurative or poetic departure that will come at the end of the novel. By reflecting back on the last moment he saw Diotima, the narrating Hyperion learns that the proper response to a riddle is not an answer, but another riddle.

¹⁴⁵ Indeed in volume two, Hyperion reflects upon a pivotal issue in the period of transition between the Enlightenment and Romanticism: the question of nature's harmony with reason. It is the question that seeks to harmonize free will with the highest moral principle. On the pervasiveness of the question of nature's harmony with reason, see Beiser's introduction to The Fate of Reason. On the "Widerstreit" between nature and reason in Hyperion, see Ryan, Exzentrische Bahn, pg. 10.

indicated when he says: “das kriechende Jahrhundert, das alle schöne Natur im Keime vergiftet!—Altern sollt’ ich, Diotima! wenn ich Griechenland befreie?” (I, 701, 2-4).

Hyperion is not in sync; he wants to alter the pace of history. As a result, he must look for an *absolute* permanence in his eventual status as a legendary or mythical Greek hero such as the anonymous runner from Marathon he invokes to make his point. Hyperion seeks to free himself from time with an alteration to history worthy of myth, but in doing so, he only shows his age.

It would seem that Hyperion has failed. In the end, he is abandoned by both Diotima and Alabanda, who claim ultimate freedom in death. He is the only one who clings to life. True to her tendency to passively reflect, Diotima affirms Hyperion’s renunciation of life in the “Unglücksbrief,” and she slips away into the night. Her final letter to Hyperion declares that only death grants us “die Götterfreiheit” (I, 749, 19). Alabanda, true to his nature, confronts the destructive force of “scheiden” and “teilen” that has defined his life. He returns to Nemesis to face judgment for breaking their ranks. His supreme act of freedom is to revoke the liberties he has taken and rescind his separation from the force of “scheiden”: “Mein Herz hat mich beim Worte genommen; ich gab ihm Freiheit und du siehst, es braucht sie....soll ich büßen, was ich that, so will ich es mit Freiheit; meine eignen Richter wähl’ ich mir; an denen ich gefehlt, die sollen mich haben” (I, 741, 12-13; 20-22). Alabanda’s final separation may be seen in Kantian terms as the turn from negative freedom, the freedom from determination by alien causes (heteronomy), to positive, autonomous freedom by which a subject gives itself its own

law.¹⁴⁶ The transition coincides with Alabanda's disclosure of his "geheimere Gedanken," which show his absolute faith "daß wir durch uns selber sind, und nur aus freier Lust so innig mit dem All verbunden" (I, 742, 32-33). An inwardly directed freedom to limit oneself unfolds as unlimited unity. The inner conviction that he is unified with all the universe communicates a sense of unlimited being to one who has defined himself as a force of separation and difference: "weil ich anfangslos mich fühle, darum glaub' ich, daß ich endloß, das ich unzerstörbar bin" (I, 743, 7). Alabanda's belief that his free will partakes of the universal represents a moral grounding like Kant's categorical imperative that obviates the need for a fundamental first principle and makes him "frei im höchsten Sinne." The absolutes in which Alabanda expresses himself offer an explanation for why Hyperion ultimately frees himself from Alabanda. Alabanda's freedom is idealized in the action of turning upon itself, becoming an absolute freedom *to*, a perfect expression of autonomous will to be realized in his final confrontation with Nemesis. Hyperion will always fall short of the freedom *to*, the enactment and realization of an end formulated by the conscious will. His is a freedom just this side of the freedom *from* that manifests itself in renunciation and, as Ryan points out, produces the novel passively as an unconscious or spontaneous act. Just as Adamas abandoned him, Alabanda and Diotima, after undergoing ideal transformations, leave Hyperion, who apparently has renounced every opportunity to share in the ideal in order to produce his poetic work. His circumstances suggest that "Dichtung" requires a freedom from ideals.

¹⁴⁶ See Kant's Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten (1785), WB VI, pg. 81.

Is the novel then the product of an enlightened act of will or an unconscious Romantic effusion? The question pits reason against nature in the struggle to define freedom somewhere between complete autonomy and a resignation to fate. Hyperion redefines freedom when his "Thatenlust" drives him to abandon Diotima. He becomes intoxicated with a divine vision of freedom that consumes his sense of separation from her: "Ein Gott muß in mir seyn, denn ich fühl' auch unsere Trennung kaum. Wie die seeligen Schatten am Lethe, lebt jezt meine Seele mit deiner in himmlischer Freiheit und das Schiksaal waltet über unsre Liebe nicht mehr" (I, 707, 20-23). Hyperion's willful act carves out a space of forgetting safe from "Schiksaal" and the pain of separation; he has changed separation into union and his pursuit of a history-making destiny into the freedom from fate. Indeed, as he tells Diotima: "Ich kenne die rohe Natur. Sie höhnt der Vernunft" (I, 708, 17). Nature, he believes, will guide reason; the natural spirit of the "Bergvolk" of whom he now speaks will not lead them to riotous behavior: "Wer nur mit ganzer Seele wirkt, irrt nie" (I, 708, 19-20). Hyperion, tries to pretend that he is spontaneous, that his will proceeds with nature, but it is clear that he only plays an amusing game with a specific objective. He has his destination clearly in sight, yet he sports at finding his way to Alabanda: "Es ist mir eine Lust, den Weg nach Koron zu erfragen, und ich frage öfter, als nötig ist" (I, 708, 22-23). Already having his end in mind reduces the "Bergvolk" to a means, and thus his claim to know nature makes a mockery of both freedom and the "Klügel" he uses to define it.

The disastrous results of Hyperion's bold assertion of will and specious knowledge of nature reveal a danger in metaphysical accounts of freedom that make the spontaneity and autonomy of the will absolute as, for example, Fichte's system does. Hölderlin suggests in his novel a criticism similar to that made by Hegel that such freedom is only realized by a destructive force that recognizes no limits.¹⁴⁷ For Hyperion, freedom and action will not be united in an absolute synthesis. Kant's categorical imperative, whose purpose it is to harmonize freedom with action, offers an alternative. As the rule states, freedom and action are reconciled when the hypothetical imperative that is directed toward achieving an end becomes categorical and renounces a specific end when bringing law to the will.¹⁴⁸ Hölderlin gives a negative version of the lesson Kant teaches us--that reason is infinitely free and our will, therefore, partakes of freedom only insofar as it conforms to it. Hyperion's will leads him to inspire an uprising, not a purifying sublimation such as Diotima's,¹⁴⁹ but a ferment ("aufgähren") that explodes with destructive force. It is only after his soldiers turn barbarian in the name of freedom (I, 720, 27) that his despondency grants him a higher understanding of freedom: "Und das

¹⁴⁷ Hegel's critique in "Glauben und Wissen" begins: "Bey Fichte ist diese Subjectivität des Sehens selbst zum unendlichen gemacht, ein Gedachtes, absolute Foderung, und die Foderung ist der Kulminationspunkt des Systems: Ich *soll* gleich Nicht-Ich seyn" (387, 27-29). The unlimited subject realizes a pure will that is an end in itself. The result is a kind of mechanized destruction of the genuinely free will and the world: "sonst ist der reine Wille nicht mehr das Bestimmende, und es bleibt nichts als die hohle Declamation, daß das Gesetz um des Gesetzes willen, die Pflicht um der Pflicht willen erfüllt werden müsse, und wie das Ich sich über das Sinnliche und Uebersinnliche erhebe, über den Trümmern der Welten schwebe u.s.w." (402, 21-25).

¹⁴⁸ Kant distinguishes the hypothetical imperative from the categorical as follows: "Der hypothetische Imperative sagt also nur, daß die Handlung zu irgend einer *möglichen* oder *wirklichen* Absicht gut sei....Der kategorische Imperativ, der die Handlung ohne Beziehung auf irgend eine Absicht, d.i. auch ohne irgend einen andern Zweck für sich als objektiv notwendig erklärt, gilt als ein *apodiktisch* (praktisches) Prinzip" (Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, WB VI, 43-44).

ist herrlich, daß wir erst im Leiden recht der Seele Freiheit fühlen. Freiheit! wer das Wort versteht—es ist ein tiefes Wort, Diotima” (I, 722, 21-23). The proper relation to freedom is, as the quotation shows, one of skepticism to definitions of it, one of resignation to unknowing. In this way, he remains in keeping with the categorical imperative defined as being without reference to any purpose and concerned only with the form of the action and the principle from which it follows (Kant, Metaphysik der Sitten, 43-44). As Kant tells us, reason is infinite and the will must conform to it in order to have a share in the universal.

Though Hölderlin may resign us to unknowing, his skeptical nature will not leave us in the dark. The process of reevaluating gold over the course of the second volume sheds light upon the matters of most importance. After the last battle, Hyperion’s life is only worth a “Bettlerpfennig,” and this is a problem because he has accumulated a good deal of debt: “O ich will die Entwürfe, die Forderungen alle, wie Schuldbriefe, zerreißen” (I, 729, 7-8). To pay his debts, Hyperion must reweigh the value of gold, for it has greatly depreciated since its initial equivalence with the sun. When he first receives the letter from Alabanda calling him to battle, he explains to Diotima the value of confrontation: “gerechter Krieg macht jede Seele lebendig. Das giebt dem Golde die Farbe der Sonne, daß man ins Feuer es wirft! Das, das giebt erst dem Menschen seine ganze Jugend, daß er Fesseln zerreißt!” (I, 700-701, 35-1). Gold, like the soul, accrues

¹⁴⁹ Diotima describes her preparation for death as sloughing off the shell of her body from her pure spirit: “so mächtig war der Geist des Lebens in mir! Doch müder und müder wurden die sterblichen Glieder” (I, 746, 18-20).

sublime value when annealed. It represents a metaphysical economic principle whereby lost time (“Jugend”) is recuperated and the release from oppression produces freedom. As a principle of accumulation it indicates a kind of spiritual capital after which one continually strives without limit; it is never finally attained. Just as Notara negotiated Hyperion’s union with Diotima, he subsidizes his interest in a military endeavor with Alabanda. Notara is the proper broker for a venture with Alabanda; playing the surrogate or artificial father, he advises Hyperion to act immediately without consulting his natural father, who will later disown his son for his participation in the disastrous war. To close the deal, Notara uses a prophetic analogy: “Schäme des Gelds dich nicht, sezt’ er lächelnd hinzu; auch die Rosse des Phöbus leben von der Luft nicht allein” (I, 702, 25-27). Hyperion plays along, taking on the role of the errant son bound for disaster, Icarus: “Ich möchte die Flügel der Sonne nehmen und hin zu [Alabanda]” (I, 708, 23-24). Hyperion finds Alabanda, in fact, by moonlight (I, 709, 17). The golden sun, we remember, is never in the present; it remains that after which one works and strives: “O Sonne, die uns erzog! rief Alabanda, zusehn sollst du, wenn unter der Arbeit uns der Muth wächst, wenn unter den Schlägen des Schiksaals unser Entwurf, wie das Eisen unter dem Hammer, sich bildet” (I, 711,6-9). Alabanda has indeed great plans for himself and his partner in arms—a striking confrontation to temper their mettle.

Fire and sun images culminate in a Titanic eruption of labor and getting down to business (“Der Vulkan bricht los”). “Arbeit” and “Handeln” rule the day, and “Tagesordnung,” the work schedule, is established by punching in with the rising sun:

“Mit der Sonne beginn’ ich.” After their initial victories, Alabanda and Hyperion ride over a “sonnenrothen Hügel.” The red that now combines with the gold of the sun signals the coming of the end. The red torrent of time that Hyperion and Diotima observed passing through the peaceful green of Kalaurea echoes here, suggesting a rapid change in the currency rate that will bankrupt Hyperion and put him in the red. On “der Tag des Abschieds,” Hyperion told the story of the demigods Agis and Kleomenes, linking the color red with the twilight of a legendary past and a battle lost against fate:

ich hätte die großen Seelen oft mit feuriger Achtung genannt und gesagt, sie wären Halbgötter, so gewiß, wie Prometheus, und ihr Kampf mit dem Schiksaal von Sparta sei heroischer, als irgend einer in den glänzenden Mythen. Der Genius dieser Menschen sei das Abendroth des griechischen Tages, wie Theseus und Homer die Aurore desselben. (I, 703, 32-37)

Now realizing what was once just a story to him, he looks out “in die Fernen von Sparta, die unser Kampfpreis sind!” (I, 716, 32-33). The moment, however, in which he will (re)claim his spoils of war is not one under the sun but by the indirect light of the moon “in lieblicher Kühle der Nacht.” The golden days of a new dawn remain distant because they are envisioned as completed, fixed, and peaceful, whether in the past (“mitten in unsrer lächelnden Stille die Geschichte der Alten, wie eine Wolke aufsteigt”) or in the future (“O du [Diotima], mit deiner Elysiumsstillen, könnten wir das schaffen”).

Available only through reflection, the golden and the ideal remain always remote from the action which hopes to realize them. Diotima intimated as much to Hyperion when in

a letter she bids him her final “Lebewohl” and wishes him luck in his attempt to accomplish (“vollenden”) the impossible, “das schöne, neue, goldene Frieden.” Like their leader, Hyperion’s troops are seething with a materialistic desire for something that by its nature is non-economic, that is, something that cannot be accumulated or held in reserve: “Du hättest mich besänftigen sollen, meine Diotima! hättest sagen sollen, ich möchte mich nicht übereilen, möchte dem Schiksaal nach und nach den Sieg abnöthigen, wie kargen Schuldner die Summe” (I, 719, 16-18).¹⁵⁰ The disastrous end to Hyperion’s “Hoffnungen” and “Entwürfe” that soon follows makes the point that the passing of time is inevitable and to fight or act against it is what keeps one from achieving the peace of being in sync with natural time.

It is curious indeed how Hyperion, in an epiphanic moment, finally does see the golden days before him: “wie eine Binde fällt von meinen Augen und die alten goldenen Tage sind lebendig wieder da” (I, 729, 20-21). It is a moment that combines nostalgic reflection with a promise to renounce control over the future. In this way, he will honor nature. The immediacy of the golden is achieved in the passive imagination, a peaceful poetic dwelling in the past: “Ich will auch ruhen...Ich will mich rein erhalten, wie ein Künstler sich hält” (I, 729, 7-9). Giving up his idealistic materialism, a political agenda that tries to profit by recuperating a mythical past, he accepts what gifts nature has to

¹⁵⁰ Though Binder does not make the connection, his interpretation of Notara’s name suggests that Hyperion is speaking here of the man who subsidized his venture (171). The Thalia-Fragment uses his first name, “Gorgonda,” which Binder links etymologically to the adjective “karg.” “Notara” translates as “notieren,” which suggests that the perspicacious fellow of whom Hyperion speaks here is a stingy ‘accountant’ or “karger Schuldner.” In “Hyperions Jugend,” Notara is characterized as follows: “Er wußte jedem Dinge einen Wert zu geben.” Indeed, for Hyperion, money, the symbolic objectification of material value, is the root of all evil—that which makes all good things come to an end.

offer: “wie ein Bettler, hab’ ich den Naken gesenkt und es sahen die schweigenden Götter der Natur mit allen ihren Gaaben mich an!” (I, 729, 13-15). At this moment, he will have to make do with the green of the eternal peace he shared with Diotima: “O heilige Pflanzenwelt! rief ich, wir streben und sinnen und haben doch dich!” (I, 728, 33-34). But Hyperion doesn’t simply return to nature.¹⁵¹ He has lost Diotima, given her up, and now he wants her back. He reforms his vision and gives gold a new hue, promising to restore an ideal balance, a life of supreme moderation, “des Lebens goldene Mittelmäßigkeit” (I, 735, 6).¹⁵² He attempts dialectical closure by erecting a stable triangle, a specular vision like those he once shared with her that combines the divine, the human, and nature: “wir werden sitzen am Quell, in seinem Spiegel unsre Welt betrachten, den Himmel und Haus und Garten und uns” (I, 735, 15-16). Keeping in mind that the letter before us is copied from a past letter to Diotima, we should recognize that Hyperion is reflecting back on his past mistakes in order to pacify his mind in the present. He now recognizes that his imagination had run off with him and upset his rhythm. His former state of mind produced materialistic and paradoxical images of a future with Diotima such as: “still die goldne Fluth durch unsre Bäume rinnt” (I, 735, 26-

¹⁵¹ Jamme appears to support this view. He examines a change in the model of knowledge at the turn of the century that made Rousseau’s ‘Retour à la nature!’ obsolete. In his scenario, Hölderlin becomes a critic of the “Denkform der Aufklärung” (“Jedes Lieblose ist Gewalt,” 192). Szondi acknowledges Hölderlin’s idealization of nature but is careful to distinguish it from the divine itself. He discusses the significance of the verb “grünen” in Hölderlin’s work as an expression of that which the Gods have left behind. Nature offers a sacred place in which we can find proximity across the “Götterferne” (233). On the return to nature as a modern myth and its economically disruptive effect, see Link, *Hölderlin-Rousseau: retour inventif*, chapter VII, especially pg. 47.

¹⁵² Schlegel helps us see how the ideal formulated here represents the perfect closure to the dialectic intimated by the eccentric path as it is described in the early draft prefaces. In “Über die Philosophie. An Dörthea,” published in the same year as the second volume of *Hyperion*, 1799, he says: “Die wahre Mitte ist nur die, zu der man immer wieder *zurückkehrt* von den exzentrischen Bahnen der Begeisterung und der

27). He had concocted an impossible combination, a river of gold, at once flowing and still to reflect the sun, at once passing through time and outside it. This vision, an abomination against time both human and divine, will also pass as Hyperion returns to narration in the present. No triangles are stable.

Hölderlin has made it difficult to criticize his novel; it will not submit to “bloßes Nachdenken” or “leere Lust.” He does not offer conclusions, leaving the bridges between the heart and mind, nature and reason, or effusion and design unbuilt, or better, unwritten. As Diotima says to Hyperion, there is a gap between the idea of the perfect society, the “Freistaat” that exists in a “goldenes Frieden,” and real life, “wo wie du sagtest, einst in unser Rechtsbuch eingeschrieben werden die Geseze der Natur, und wo das Leben selbst, wo sie, die göttliche Natur, die in kein Buch geschrieben werden kann, im Herzen des Gemeinde seyn wird” (I, 719, 10-14). Any conclusion would seem anathema to that with which Hyperion leaves us; he is skeptical about his own conclusions: “Muß nicht alles leiden?,” “Leidet nicht die heilige Natur?,” “So dachte ich.” He is most concrete when uttering contradictions and paradoxes: “ohne Tod ist kein Leben,” “Versöhnung ist mitten im Streit.” Diotima, whose swan song makes her more verbose than ever (“Stille war mein Leben; mein Tod ist beredt” (I, 748, 25)), offers the most conclusive conclusion, albeit just before the actual end: “Beständigkeit haben die Sterne gewählt, in stiller Lebensfülle wallen sie stets und kennen das Alter nicht. Wir stellen im Wechsel das Vollendete dar; in wandelnde Melodien theilen wir die großen

Akkorde der Freude” (I, 750, 4-7). The heavenly chooses permanence, we represent it with change. In a novel that follows the constant travels of its namesake, she has, more clearly than Hyperion, shown us our place. The divine is outside time, and in order to experience it, we must stay in time “mit Tanz und Gesang, in wechselnden Gestalten und Tönen den majestätischen Zug [der Welt zu] geleiten” (I, 750, 16-17). The apparent paradox here vouchsafes an overview of time from outside time, the place where the divine must be for us. But just in that “for us” we fall away, unable to hold that limited view of the divine. The absolute, by definition, is beyond the paradox that would contain it. What then will the proper ending look like?

Paradox can only mark the passing of the divine out of our consciousness, and therefore, as Hyperion told us in the “Athensgespräch,” it is the form of “Dichtung.” And so it is that the conclusion Hyperion offers us is a poetic response to a riddle. He claims to hear Diotima’s voice from beyond the grave: “O liebes Wort aus heiligem Munde, rief ich, da ich wieder erwacht war, liebes Räthsel, faß ich dich?” (I, 759, 33-34). The words of his response to his own question illuminate as they are spoken but leave nothing of substance behind: “Worte sprach ich, wie mir dünkt, aber sie waren, wie des Feuers Rauschen, wenn es auffliegt und die Asche hinter sich läßt--” (I, 759-760, 37-1).¹⁵³ His final fiery words are an affirmation (“Es scheiden und kehren im Herzen die Adern und einiges, ewiges, glühendes Leben ist Alles”), but they do not draw a conclusion; they simply juxtapose an image of organic division and turning, a carnal rhythm, against an

¹⁵³ Though he does not use this same citation, Heidegger’s claim that Hölderlin writes “das Wesen der Dichtung” is based on the poet’s taking into account of time’s passing (“Hölderlin und das Wesen der

abstract intellectual vision of unity and timelessness. *Hyperion* leaves us with an impossible combination of words, a riddle.¹⁵⁴ What kind of resolution is to be found in the answering of a riddle with a riddle?¹⁵⁵ *Hyperion*'s repartee reminds us of the riddle contests of ancient Greece where dialectics finds its origin.¹⁵⁶ Like the ancient contests, it is a kind of ritual offering to an unfathomable One, as described in Heraclitus's paradox of "das Eine in sich selber unterschiedne." The riddle's power, its eternal pertinence lies not in its status as an answer, but in the fact that it is forever a question. At the conclusion of *Hyperion*, Hölderlin offers a transcendental space of infinite freedom between the divine and the human in which we may experience the possibility

Dichtung," 44).

¹⁵⁴ The definition is from Aristotle: "For it is the form of a riddle to use an impossible combination [of names] in saying things that are the case" (*Poetics*, 1458a, 24-30(Janko)).

¹⁵⁵ De Man finds it in the selection of a word or rhetorical device that serves the proper function. In his essay "The Riddle of Hölderlin," he criticizes Hamburger for translating Hölderlin's "Rätsel" in the poem "Der Rhein" as "mystery" because the latter indicates a radical separation transcending human linguistic capability. The riddle, on the other hand, is more generous: "A riddle is not, in itself, out of the reach of knowledge, but is temporarily hidden from knowledge by a device of language that can, in turn, be deciphered only by another operation of language" (*Critical Writings*, 206). Indeed, de Man's is a subtle point, for the riddle would seem to generate an abysmal regression of linguistic operations surpassing any single human capacity. The "deciphering" of the riddle suggests in itself one's own undoing. The point remains, however, that a riddle proposes the possibility for a solution to a dilemma, not the solution itself.

¹⁵⁶ See Ohlert, *Rätsel und Rätselspiele der alten Griechen*.

of that which exceeds our limits. As he told us at the beginning with a puzzling phrase that undoes the circle it would draw: “Non coerceri maximo, contineri minimo, divinum est.”

CHAPTER VIII:
DIALECTIC AND NEGATIVITY:
GERMAN ROOTS--FRENCH SCIONS

Es gibt ein Vergessen alles Daseins, ein Verstummen unsers Wesens, wo uns ist, als hätten wir alles gefunden.

Es gibt ein Verstummen, ein Vergessen alles Daseins, wo uns ist, als hätten wir alles verloren, eine Nacht unsrer Seele, wo kein Schimmer eines Sterns, wo nicht einmal ein faules Holz uns leuchtet.

Hyperion

1

Hölderlin has long been a proving ground for German literary critics and his work, therefore, reflects the development of German criticism as a whole (de Man, Critical Writings, 199). De man made this claim in an essay of 1970, and given the popularity of Heidegger among the French intellectuals, the same might be said of French criticism today (Link, 7). Heidegger's interpretations of Hölderlin inspired not only such thinkers as Blanchot, Derrida, and Lacoue-Labarthe, but an international collection of postmodernist critics as well.¹⁵⁷ The pages that follow do not attempt to place Hölderlin at the root of postmodern thought or even to evaluate the significance of his contribution to a modern preoccupation with the absent, the asymmetrical, and the supplementary. Instead, the discussion juxtaposes ideas about the function of the negative contemporary to Hölderlin with those of more recent years. The methodology behind this approach takes a lesson from Hyperion. His attempts to confine the historical process within an imaginary overview of time result in his being thrown out of a natural historical process, which, ironically, defines his ultimate *experience* of history as the embrace of loss and rupture. He must indeed lose all to find all (I, 691, 30-33; I, 668, 31-32). Thus his final

¹⁵⁷ Warminski's Readings in Interpretation: Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger not only reviews Hölderlin's French reception, it is paradigmatic of many such franco-inflected postmodern readings. Frank considers many of the postmodern readings of Hölderlin, especially those funneled through Heidegger, to be distorted by a focus on Fichte: "Heidegger--und ihm folgend mehrere Denker aus dem Spektrum des sogenannten Neostrukturalismus--haben in der 'Machtergreifung' von Subjektivität den Gipfel abendländischer Seins--oder *différance*-Vergessenheit erblicken wollen. Da das gängige Vorurteil Fichte zum Hauptsündenbock der Entwicklung macht und man die Jenenser Frühromantik, aber auch Hölderlins und des Homburger Kreises Anfänge ganz aus der Abhängigkeit von Fichte rekonstruiert hat, ist es üblich geworden, sie alle ganz unter dem Stichwort der Subjektphilosophie zu erfassen. Das ist aus vielerlei Gründen unstatthaft" ("Hölderlin über den Mythos," 8).

‘ideal’ vision, his conclusive moment of understanding, is seeing the real as a paradox unfolding over time. In contrast, the postmodern may be characterized by its tendency to find a place of rest in paradox; conclusions are made in the form of a riddle with synchronic or ontological rather than phenomenological relevance. The following, then, considers a puzzling rhetorical device of postmodern discourse in the light of what Hyperion teaches us about metaphysical or spiritual materialism.

2

“He would be the mediating movement of dialectics if he did not also mimic it, indefinitely preventing it, through his ironic doubling.”

Derrida speaking of Thoth (Dissemination, 87)

“So möchte es scheinen, als wollte ich etwas dunkles durch etwas noch Dunkleres erläutern.”

Maimon, Versuch über die Transcendentalphilosophie (Werke, II, 27-28fn)

Dialectics can be thought of as a way in which to negotiate a border. The terms of the negotiation are ancient. “Cicero de Finibus” defines the central questions of philosophy, the “duo quaerenda”: primal substance and the force that moves it. In his critique of Spinoza made in his letters to Mendelssohn, Jacobi refers to Cicero in order to

negotiate with his adversary the limit between the infinite and the finite in terms of the origin of substance and the force behind the things in the world. The negotiation continues today in similar terms: unified or substantial ‘meaning’ in a text defends itself against the ‘forces’ within a text that disseminates and defers meaning into and out of the spaces between words. “Schwärmer” and fideists (including the unlikely father of existentialism, Kierkegaard) stand firm to maintain the existence of some kind of presence be it known or revealed. Skeptics and existentialists keep to the here and now, secure in a method of inquiry, be it rational or absurd. Cicero’s questions define a tenacious dialectic between the *what* and the *how* that continues to draw and redraw the borders of critical discourse today.

Contemporary critics from Heidegger to Lacoue-Labarthe identify in Hölderlin the idea that a dynamic principle of language best represents truth. Writing rather than speech represents the medium wherein meaning moves fluidly in the empty spaces between words. The basic element of language is seen not as a semantic substance, a word present as a constituent part, but as a sphere of differences—a network wherein words are defined by that which they make absent. In the “Fragment philosophischer Briefe,” which was written early in 1796 to be included in Niethammer’s journal, Hölderlin explains Jacobi’s personal God in terms similar to the modern linguistic model of dynamic relation. He argues that the proof for God’s existence can lie neither in the subject nor the object alone, but only in the relationship (“Beziehung”) between them. This relationship can manifest itself only in activity (“Thätigkeit”). As in Hyperion,

Hölderlin's metaphysics bridges the gap between the present and the absent phenomenologically.¹⁵⁸ For Hölderlin, the relationship between "Menschen" and "Element" is always immediate (i.e. in the now and thus in time) and cannot be stored or retrieved: "In so fern aber ein höherer unendlicherer Zusammenhang zwischen [dem Mensch] und seinem Elemente ist in seinem wirklichen Leben, kann dieser weder bloß in Gedanken, noch bloß im Gedächtniß wiederholt werden" (II, 54, 9-12). Hölderlin possesses no pharmakon be it "good for *hypomnesis*" or bad for "*mneme*" (Dissemination, 91). Like Plato's Thamus, who, as Derrida tells us, is also Ammon, Hyperion represents an immediate power of speech identified with the sun. And yet, like Thoth, Hyperion is both father and son of Ra, of Helios—he is both the authority whose speech is meaning itself and the substitute who writes.¹⁵⁹ They both possess a paradoxical and poetic ability to speak through writing. Such a figure operates with a dangerous capacity for disruption and deferral: "As the god of language second and of linguistic difference, Thoth can become the god of the creative word only by metonymic substitution, by historical displacement, and sometimes by violent subversion" (Dissemination, 89). As a stream of consciousness, a novel entirely of memory, Hyperion can be thought of an expression of something ideal only in the historical sense, as a relation between a subject and his memories, as an immediate activity in the past. Its

¹⁵⁸ For Hölderlin, who at the time he was working on his novel was also rereading Reinhold and Kant (Letter to Niethammer, Feb. 24th, 1796), the phenomenological establishes a direct relationship between particulars of time and space (moments and things) and universals conceived as ideals of beauty or freedom, etc. In this way, he evades Maimon's criticism of both Reinhold and Kant which aimed at the failure of their "Grundsätze" to connect genus to species (IV, 38). Maimon criticized Reinhold and Kant for failing to connect representation and experience as general concepts to any particular representation or experience, respectively.

truth value lies only in the act of its being written and only possibly in the act of its being read.

To look at the deep structure of Hölderlin's system of ideas, it is necessary to show how Kant revolutionized the judgment of truth value. Kant's description of the Copernican turn is puzzling because he seems to express his thought backwards. He says our attempts to arrive at truth by conforming our knowledge to objects have failed. He suggests, therefore, conforming objects to our knowledge. In the same way, according to Kant, Copernicus suggests that we assume the spectator revolves and the stars are fixed, rather than assuming the stars revolve and the spectator is fixed.¹⁶⁰ This seems backwards if we make the common assumption that truth ought to be objective and fixed. We are still in a mental frame that truth means conforming thought to that which is fixed, 'real', or 'true'; we seek to harmonize our limited reason with an unlimited and absolute nature. To a certain extent, this perspective is shared by Cartesians, empiricists, and rationalists. Kant, however, wants us to be transcendental idealists. Obscuring the "Ding an sich" (the abstracted and evacuated term for the essential or the fixed), Kant sees the 'true' as that which conforms. The stars are fixed and universal and, therefore, must 'conform' to our knowledge insofar as to 'conform' means to represent in a form of possible knowledge. In this sense, he has a dynamic understanding of truth. It would be incorrect, however, to say that Kantian truth is variable or inconsistent. He simply

¹⁵⁹ See *Dissemination*, 87 and 93 as well as the *Classical Dictionary*, pg. 155.

¹⁶⁰ The two views are aptly expressed in Diotima's conclusive statement on the human position relative to the divine: "Beständigkeit haben die Sterne gewählt, in stiller Lebensfülle wallen sie stets und kennen das Alter nicht. Wir stellen im Wechsel das Vollendete dar; in wandelnde Melodien theilen wir die großen Akkorde der Freude" (I, 750, 4-7).

switches the basis for truth from the objective to the subjective, determining its immutability from *a priori* necessity rather than *a posteriori* reasoning.

Hölderlin found himself caught between Kant's revolutionary epistemology and the dangerous ontology suggested by post-Kantian skeptics such as Maimon as well as idealists such as Schelling and Fichte. Where Kant initiated a Copernican revolution of the object relative to the subject, Maimon revolutionizes the Kantian subject relative to itself and thereby opens the door to absolute idealism. He criticizes Kant for restricting and limiting the manner of experience and then validating his system upon the necessity of that experience. Our manner of knowing is fixed and particular and that means it not absolute, even if it is necessary. Maimon reinstates the possibility of absolute understanding (*intellectus archetypus*), a Leibnizian rationalist position, and thereby opens the door to a possible relation between subject and object where there is no distinction. Schelling and Fichte use the term "intellektuale Anschauung" to describe this relation.¹⁶¹ Kant devalues the fixed universal object as the basis, measure, or yardstick for truth and promotes instead the necessity or fixity of our experience. Maimon, in turn, reinstates the possibility of the absolute in the subject itself. Hölderlin takes a transcendental realist position that recognizes the necessity of the forms of knowledge to subjective experience, but refuses to void the ontological foundation as Kant's system appears to do, and Fichte's system (one intended to fulfill the terms of Kant's critique) actually does.

¹⁶¹ For a more detailed explanation, see Neubauer's "Intellektuelle, intellektuale und ästhetische Anschauung."

Hölderlin's idea of how the negative functions between epistemology and ontology would seem to make him an unlikely ancestor or postmodern thinking. His "Seyn," though antithetical to the idea of a subject, violates a fundamental tenet of postmodern thought by suggesting a metaphysics of presence. But, it is Hölderlin's poetic language less than his thinking that draws postmodern attention. Again, we may locate Hölderlin between Kant and the idealist. Kant's approach, which I have described as 'contractual', demands a negotiation that idealists apparently didn't want to engage. Kant's exchange demanded an expulsion of absolute (i.e. unlimited or undetermined) presence, and though he himself would not sacrifice an ontological reality ("Ding an sich"), he was willing to push it beyond the limits of his epistemology, outside his 'system' of critique. In pursuing a course of inquiry into the possibility of grounding philosophy absolutely, Niethammer and other students of Reinhold sought to engage what may be called a non-economical or non-contractual system of thought. Where Kant works dialectically in the sense of a contract of mutual conditions, there is an alternative path of idealism in the manner of Fichte that tries to establish an inexhaustible absolute, or in other words, a pure positive that recuperates the negative absolutely. It is the Idealists who try to recuperate the metaphysical presence with the substitution of an "Absolutes Ich." Sacrificing the "Ding an sich," they achieve not just a transcendental but transcendent subject that moves between the finite and the infinite. Similarly, the contemporary critical discourse since Nietzsche, since Heidegger, has done away with a manifest transcendent presence and opened the discourse to the immanent absolute called language. Heidegger and his more prominent French readers find in Hölderlin a poet

who looks this paradox, an enigma to dialectical thought, in the face and offers, if not an answer, a response.

3

Es ist Gleich tödlich für den Geist, ein System zu haben,
und keins zu haben. Er wird sich also wohl entschließen
müssen, beides zu verbinden.

F. Schlegel. Athenäum-Fragmente (1798) (#53)

In the notion of freedom expressed by Rousseau in his earlier works, Kant saw the dissolution of dialectical reason and the need for a foundation for his transcendental philosophy. And, as Velkley says, Kant's transcendental argument that we cannot know things in themselves was less concerned with describing the nature of dialectical consciousness, than with giving dialectical or self-reflective consciousness a world in which it could maintain its existence (22). To give the modern, 'self-conscious' individual a place in the enlightened world, Kant had to reconcile reason, which threatened to resolve itself in dogmatic skepticism, and freedom. Kant recognized that reason could only destroy itself in self-reflective skepticism as long as it was subject to passion; taking his lead from Rousseau, Kant liberated reason from the tyranny of nature by making it and end in itself and thus infinite. In one sense then, reason, which

functions dialectically in Kant, can sustain itself only by disabling that dialectic in circular self-legislation. This, however, does not serve as a complete foundation for transcendental philosophy. In order to affirm the freedom necessary to its existence, reason must also be able to spontaneously project ideals then determine them rationally even though the understanding (“Verstand”) can never know them. The ‘place’ made for the self-conscious individual is indeed precarious, for it continually seeks to conceptually enclose an ever-receding ideal, disappearing beneath the horizon. Reason’s need for wholeness must never forget its infinitely free nature lest it subject the modern, ‘self-conscious’ individual to dogmatic moral tyranny or solipsistic madness. Rupture and transgression rather than balance and harmony would then better characterize the proper dialectic of mind.

Rousseau showed Kant that the “instrumental” view of reason held by Bacon, Descartes and Hume could only lead to the subjection of humanity to dogma (Velkley, 12). The “instrumental” view of reason is that taught to Alabanda in “der Schule des Schiksaals”—the mind justifies any thought or action that it can soundly rationalize. Kant saw that human reason, as an instrument of human nature, destroys the possibility of the freedom necessary to reason itself. Kant shows that to reason purely we must be free, but if reason produces dogma, we are limited in an alienated obligatory fashion not a truly self-regulative one. Kant then sets about mapping our consciousness to see what kinds of statements our reason can validly make without violating its own freedom. The human mind thus enjoys the greatest freedom in a faithful adherence to reason.

Kant is taken to task when trying to reconcile reason and freedom. The dialectical structure of his philosophizing is restrictive, and yet, his ultimate goal is to create a space for the freedom necessary to reason. Kant, therefore, constructs the self and its possible relation to an object of sense dialectically in order that he may leave a void for the notion of the beautiful and feeling, which must be free. But, there is a catch. Freedom and free play in judgment are critical to the faculty of taste's ability to leap to the universal. Yet, the universal would intimate totality if it were to seep into the realm of concepts and understanding. To keep the universal from becoming totalizing dogma (the failure of the Enlightenment thinkers' and the dogmatic skeptic's instrumental use of reason), Kant must radically separate it from understanding: hence, the grounds for pushing the term "Begriff" out of the realm of the beautiful. So, the Kantian machine must constantly reconstitute his contractual dialectics and then destroy them in order to maintain a sense of free play and the autonomous will. The dialectic machine is, in a way, addicted to itself, and here it potentially becomes monstrous.

The destructive effect of the monstrous on Kant's dialectic can only be understood in the context of his discussion of the sublime. The sublime for Kant, though boundless, formless, and forever beyond, always remains so, and, therefore, contributes to a larger order of things that is both certain and constant; in this it finds the security and stability necessary to the mind's experience of it. Not surprisingly, Rousseau offers the most concise summary of this aspect of the Kantian sublime. He describes the landscape as he returns to his "bonne Maman": "Jamais pays de plaine, quelque beau qu'il fût, ne

parut tel à mes yeux. Il me faut des torrents,...des précipices à mes côtés qui me fassent bien peur” (I, 209). In this passage, Rousseau relates what must have been something of a commonplace of the Burkean sublime, what Kant calls the “*physiologische*” or “*psychologische*” sublime. But, he continues:

On a bordé le chemin d’un parapet pour prévenir les malheurs; cela faisait que je pouvais contempler au fond et gagner des vertiges tout à mon aise; car ce qu’ils me font tourner la tête, et j’aime beaucoup ce tournoiement, pourvu que je sois en sûreté.(I, 209)

Rousseau enjoys the whirl of vertigo so long as he remains within a clearly defined space. He revels in the impression of chaos without having to fear the abyss. In this way, he enjoys the fulsome free play of his senses. A certain pleasure is recouped in sacrificing orientation without the fear of losing oneself completely.

In the parallel scene in Hölderlin’s novel, Hyperion mediates the precipice through Diotima. He holds her waist as she gazes into the abyss, and he, in turn, gets his thrill by observing her. The contrast between Rousseau’s image of sublime and Hölderlin’s lies in the relations that make up the dialectic of mind. For Rousseau’s observer, that which is not himself is the abyss immediately before him. The artificial railing that secures him is the product of a social construct of which he is part; it is incidental to his experience. For Hölderlin’s Hyperion, that which serves as a railing is essential to his experience; it is, in fact, the experience itself. The abyss is radically alien, a genuine threat. The internal reflective dialectic shared between himself and

Diotima, his mirror other, secures his position relative to absolute nothingness. That which we look into is ourselves looking into the abyss; we have no direct knowledge or experience of absolute unknowns.

For Kant, dialectics of the sublime has moral significance, for it is bound to the idea of freedom. The sublime must demonstrate relation lest it slip into fanaticism (“Schwärmerei”) or a madness of reason (“mit Vernunft rasen”), the latter suggesting dogmatic skepticism. The thrust of Kant’s third critique and its critical point are located in the notion of communicability (“allgemeine Mitteilbarkeit”). Here one finds the transition from the particular to the universal that suspends the aesthetic judgment (a fundamentally moral mechanism) between alienated solipsism and tyrannical dogma. Communicability must take the form of dynamic process, not fixed text. Here, Kant brings freedom’s inscrutableness to reason in order to contain the sublimity necessary to moral law:

Denn die Unerforschlichkeit der Idee der Freiheit schneidet aller positiven Darstellung gänzlich den Weg ab: das moralische Gesetz aber ist an sich selbst in uns hinreichend und ursprünglich bestimmend, so daß es nicht einmal erlaubt, uns nach einem Bestimmungsgrunde außer demselben umzusehen. (183)

Here is Kant’s clearest borrowing from Rousseau. The inability to penetrate and define the idea of freedom grants autonomy and universal communicability to moral law.

The sublime itself poses a problem for Kant in that it must be both unattainable to the imagination's or the understanding's ability to comprehend, but still within the grasp of reason. The sublime does violence to the imagination by violating purpose in respect to judgment, but Kant contains the sublime by incorporating it into a mental meta-dialectic of 'opposition' versus 'non-opposition'. For example, the sublime, in regard to quantity, remains enclosed on one side of the realm of comparison: "Erhaben ist das, mit welchem in Vergleichung alles andere klein ist." (143) Kant calls this "absolute, non comparative magnum," but this is deceptive. When confronted with the mathematical sublime, the comparison is absolute not non-existent; the mind is not confused, it knows and recognizes relative magnitude. Distinction always demarcates and, therefore, orients. With the interplay of imagination and reason the experience of the sublime oscillates between trauma and recovery, the rupture of apprehension ("Auffassung") and the reconstitution in comprehension ("Zusammenfassung"). The rupture between imagination and the sublime in nature which it attempts to comprehend triggers reason which supplies the idea. Thus, the sublime remains outside of nature and within the mind, the proper location of the Kantian sublime. One cannot really speak of an ideal realm that the sublime inhabits; the terms intellectual beauty and sublimity are misnomers in that beauty and sublimity are not entities in themselves, but rather, aesthetic modes of representation ("Vorstellungsart"). One can only identify the border or epistemological limit. In this sense, the description of the dialectical structure is also a description of the breaking point of dialectical consciousness; the mechanism of rupture

and reconstitution serves only to define, delineate and effectively contain the ‘formloses’ and ‘unbegrenztes’ sublime.

True to form, Kant strives for closure but cannot deny reason’s ability to freely rupture its own constructs. He must, therefore, acknowledge the monstrous, which refuses to maintain borders, including those produced by a dialectic machine functionally opposed to the monstrous mechanism. Once again, Rousseau concisely expresses this in reflecting upon the production of his own narrative:

Je suis, en racontant mes voyages, comme j’étais en les faisant; je ne saurais arriver.(I, 209)

The monstrous in Kant describes a ‘line of escape’¹⁶² without transgression, a telos without end. Were it not for Hölderlin’s faith in ultimate ideals such as beauty, his infinite approach might suggest the same unregulated progression. The monstrous, however, destroys the essential concept one must employ to bring it into cognition:¹⁶³

Ungeheuer ist ein Gegenstand, wenn er durch seine Größe den Zweck, der den Begriff desselben ausmacht, vernichtet. (147)

Kant explicitly confines the monstrous to the category of quantity under the rubric of the mathematical sublime, where the colossal (“Kolossalisch”) could really make his point. He seems to recognize that the monstrous’s close proximity to the beautiful by virtue of

¹⁶² I borrow Deleuze and Guattari’s term because they use it in opposition to “oppressor triangles,” a term which appropriately defines the Kantian dialectic as I describe it here.

¹⁶³ The connection between the monstrous and contemporary theory, which will be elaborated in the pages to come, lies in the logic that generates the syntax used in the statement above. The monstrous ‘essentially’ describes a logic ‘antithetical’ to opposition that inverts the manner in which concepts are formulated; rather than embodying an essential identity, they express radical difference. As a result, the language used to represent a ‘monstrous’ concept must turn against its own internal logic.

their mutual antipathy for concepts would wreak havoc on the foundation of his dialectics.

The monstrous describes a proliferation of rupture that fails to truly progress. This is the problem that Kant sees in Hume's skepticism, and for which he finds a solution in Rousseau. The sublime has no purpose and as such may constantly provide impetus, the desire that generates striving. The monstrous, however, continually constructs and destroys purpose. It moves between quantum (phenomena) and the transcendental (supersensible), constantly destroying the concept of itself. Rather than setting the imagination free, as does the beautiful in its evasion of concepts, the monstrous refuses to let the imagination go. With the beautiful, one may slip from the momentary intuition of beauty into the experience of the pleasant or the good as reason furnishes a concept. The monstrous allows no progressive dialectic, in that one simply oscillates without synthesis between understanding and confusion. Kant recaptures the monstrous by making reason the common ground, the all encompassing touchstone of thought, rather than a simple instrument of the faculties of thought or feeling. The sublime functions by creating tension between the inadequacy of imagination and the purposiveness of reason. The pain of not being able to comprehend the sublime intermingles with the pleasure in reason's ability to affirm precisely this law of freedom (the incomprehensibility of the sublime) which is essential to itself. If reason were simply a tool of the mind and not its very foundation, the experience of the sublime would be only painful and, hence, monstrous. Absolute skepticism, as Alabanda shows

us, makes monstrous use of reason by making the principle of rupture and revolution dogma. Reason's self-regulating inward turn delineates an autonomous, invulnerable space for reason and thus a place of recuperation for dialectical consciousness in the face of the monstrous abyss.¹⁶⁴ As Diotima told Hyperion: "*wer so, wie du, das fade Nichts gefühlt, erheitert in höchstem Geiste sich nur, wer so den Tod erfuhr, wie du, erhohlt allein sich unter den Göttern*" (I, 731, 11-14).

Rousseau's Confessions, like Hyperion, proceeds dialectically as a self-reflective story of the loss of innocence. Both protagonists learn to be skeptical, but Hyperion remains optimistic while Rousseau turns into a cynic. In November of 1791, Hölderlin wrote to his friend Neuffer that he was studying Rousseau and receiving a lesson in human rights (II, 475, 30-34). In the same year, he composes his "Hymne an die Menschheit" with an epigraph from Rousseau on the subject of liberty.¹⁶⁵ We have the first record of his work on Hyperion shortly thereafter in June of 1792 (StA XXI, III, 34). Rousseau gave Hölderlin the idea that to raise a child properly, or naturally, one must not force reason upon it too soon (Letter to Ebel, Sept. 2nd, 1795 (I, 592-593)). They disagree, however, on how the child is expelled from paradise in order to awaken its humanity (I, 593, 13-15). The difference between their two views may be seen in how

¹⁶⁴ Both Velkley and Cassirer attribute Kant's formulation of reason's self-regulating turn to Rousseau. See Freedom and the End of Reason, and Rousseau, Kant, Goethe, respectively.

¹⁶⁵ "Les bornes du possible dans les choses morales sont moins étroites, que nous ne pensons.-- Les ames basses ne croient point aux grands hommes: de vils esclaves sourient d'un air moquer à ce mot de liberté" (II, 120). As the following pages show, Hölderlin is apparently more inspired by these words than Rousseau himself.

they conclude their novels. The difference, in turn, illuminates the renunciation at the heart of Hyperion's optimism.

Rousseau confesses to a materialism we have seen in Hyperion: "Non seulement les idées me coûtent à rendre, elles me coûtent même à recevoir" (I, 152). Rousseau's language makes an association between ideas and monetary exchange familiar to us from the revaluation of golden ideals toward the end of Hölderlin's novel. Rousseau does not part easily with his money, and his fear of debt affects his ideals. Rousseau idealizes unions and absolute syntheses in Part I but loses his faith in them in the mature years of Part II. He slips from playful romantic trysts and ideal morality to vulgar negotiations and society's mores. With the exception of the friendship with the Spaniard he meets in Venice, Rousseau's relationships progress from 'inseparable' in Part I to at best 'mutually beneficial' in Part II. Kant's philosophy maintains the possibility of dialectical synthesis and is thus properly called transcendental idealism. The Rousseau of the Confessions may be called a natural realist; the practical and the material drive out the ideal's of youth, pushing them into the past as his life progresses towards its ultimate disintegration.¹⁶⁶ Hyperion does not embrace a final ideal synthesis; it remains an enigma to him. But, neither will he see the possibility of an ideal answer extinguished.

¹⁶⁶ Rousseau's moral system shows a distinctly material and practical lack of faith. In denying any model for his work, he makes clear from the outset that Augustine's project is not his. Sin and atonement are not a concern in the Confessions, rather, crime and punishment. Practical morality falls into a double dialectic of self-regulation (desire and submission), and obligatory regulation (duty and obedience); the former, the material manifestation of ideal morality, is free because willful submission fulfills Rousseau's masochistic desires. The latter, the principle behind society's mores, is oppressive. The Confessions describe the progressive decay from the former to the latter.

By virtue of his renunciations of both alternatives, we may call him a transcendental realist.

Alabanda's role in Hyperion as the force of separation that turns the spiritual and symbiotic to the material and economic is reflected in the Confessions. Alabanda and Rousseau both experience a turn of heart in learning the cutting arts, and both become in a sense rebels without a cause. The principles by which Rousseau regulates his behavior also turn economic. After being expelled from what he sees as a place of perfect moral freedom "aux genoux d'une maîtresse impérieuse" (I, 55), he goes to work for an engraver to whom he is obedient, but not submissive:

Bientôt, à force d'essayer de mauvais traitements, j'y devins moins sensible; ils me parurent enfin une sorte de compensation du vol, qui me mettait en droit de le continuer. (I, 71)

The economic system of morality authorizes transgression in an entirely unregulated fashion; that is, transgression no longer affirms any internal positive will or desire within the transgressor, it simply confronts the external oppressing authority. So, he steals, and pays for what he steals; the exchange has an alienating aspect foreign to the symbiotic mechanism of ideal morality. Rousseau attributes his leaving to the fact that the engraver was a bad master, but this is something of a red herring. Rousseau always seems to gravitate toward rupture, which is productive of both memory and narrative. As an epilogue to that episode of his life, he depicts an imaginary scene of contented self-regulation, working as a craftsman: "il m'eût contenu dans ma sphère sans m'offrir aucun

moyen d'en sortir."(79) Flight, however, offers compensation more essential to his nature: "j'aurais été regretté du moins aussi longtemps qu'on se serait souvenu de moi. Au lieu de cela—quel tableau vais-je faire?" (79) As Rousseau observes that the French have a distaste for monuments, he himself seems to prefer the decay of a structure to its preservation. But, ironically, he prizes decay precisely because it generates lasting memory in the form of text. It is a material and economic logic that produces language from the destruction of monumental ideals.

Both Rousseau and Hyperion tell love stories in which the object of love changes from something beyond words to something they can only speak about. Hyperion shared a silent union with Diotima that is undone as she separates from him first as an object of erotic desire, then as an objectified ideal, and finally in death. The riddle with which she leaves him is not undone by his putting this thoughts into words. Rousseau does not necessarily provide an answer either, but his novel is produced by unraveling the ineffable: "il faut attendre, je ne puis tout dire à la fois." We may trace in the relationship between Rousseau and his "Maman" a path similar to that between Hyperion and Diotima. To begin with, in her presence one does not converse or have dialogue, one babbles: "Nos tête-à-tête étaient moins des entretiens qu'un babil intarissable, qui pour finir avait besoin d'être interrompu" (I, 145). Accordingly, the relationship is decidedly non-economic; it is one of being: "Je ne l'aimais ni par devoir, ni par intérêt, ni par convenance: je l'aimais parce que j'étais né pour l'aimer" (I, 189). For the young

Rousseau, Maman is not so much an object of love, for that implies desire; her being is necessary for love to exist. She is an object of beauty in the Kantian sense.¹⁶⁷

Just as the “Lüke im Dasein” scene introduces an erotic relation between Hyperion and Diotima, Rousseau’s sexual initiation by his Maman changes the relationship from symbiotic to economic. He becomes indebted to her both literally, because of his financial crisis, and figuratively; he no longer submits to her, he obeys her. Thus she becomes alien to him as Diotima does to Hyperion. The reverie of non-dialectical consciousness experiencing the ideal has split, and Rousseau now comprehends the ideal with dialectical concepts: “A Annecy, j’étais dans l’ivresse; à Chambéry, je n’y étais plus.” (I, 234) Rousseau expresses the loss as if it were a complete negation of his existence. At this point, the two love stories part. Hyperion acknowledges his loss and his final words embrace the dilemma he fails to overcome. Rousseau’s loss takes him to the end of ideal morality, the end of thought, and the end of language.

Rousseau descends into the manifold, the realm of particulars governed by economic exchange. Appropriately, Rousseau finds in the mercantile metropolis of Venice the monstrous incarnation of his ideal object of love, the prostitute, Zulietta. He describes her as an impossible combination of mutually exclusive entities: “vierges des

¹⁶⁷ Kant constructs the beautiful as a non-economic category, i.e. it has no relation with an object and, therefore, involves no exchange, only resonance. As soon as the concept of an object enters subjective consciousness, the mind enters either the realm of the pleasant or the good, and dialectical consciousness establishes want, interest, and desire: “Schönheit ist Form der Zweckmäßigkeit eines Gegenstandes, sofern sie, ohne Vorstellung eines Zwecks, an ihm wahrgenommen wird (KU, 120), “daß die Einbildungskraft ohne Begriff schematisiert, die Freiheit derselben besteht” (KU, 203). “Begriff” is a term associated with the good (Gut) or the pleasant (Angenehm) and describes a realm of objects onto which predicate adjectives may be fixed historically. The beautiful can enter thought only performatively in the present; it is neither pleasant, nor esteemed, rather, it pleases.

cloîtres” and “beautés du sérail,” of “les houris du paradis” and yet, a gift to the “sens d’un mortel.” She embodies antithetical opposites that throw the rational mind into hopeless confusion, not the aporia before revelation, but a stifling conundrum:

Elle a mis dans ma mauvaise tête le poison de ce bonheur ineffable dont elle a mis l’appétit dans mon coeur. (II, 64)

Her profession represents the capitalization of the otherwise non-economic relationship of love as unified being. Zuietta is at first “le chef-d’oeuvre de la nature,” but put at his disposal (“Cet objet dont je dispose”), she becomes an object of contemplation in the alienated or economic sense. He comes to her with a mind of rigid dualisms and mathematically precise concepts. Unable to accommodate her antinomies to his reason, he searches for the “défaut secret” that devalues her. He finds the flaw, but cannot abandon the idea of her ideal status. The combination is monstrous:

Je me frappe, j’examine, je crois voir que ce téton n’est pas conformé comme l’autre. Me voilà cherchant dans ma tête comment on peut avoir un téton borgne; et, persuadé que cela tenait à quelque notable vice naturel, à force de tourner et retourner cette idée, je vis clair comme le jour que dans la plus charmante personne dont je pusse me former l’image, je ne tenais dans mes bras qu’une espèce de monstre, le rebut de la nature.(II, 65)

The words of the head, the terms that give form to dialectical thinking itself, recoil from the imperfection in the midst of sublime beauty, and it is not clear if Rousseau is blinded

or enlightened. If Zuietta were simply to be deprived of her ideal status by the head, she would merely cease to be the object of desire, but she remains a ideal object of desire despite her asymmetry, her deformity. In this she is monstrous; refusing to respect the boundaries of the dialectic, she preserves it only so she may destroy it. In Maman, Rousseau found the supreme systematic mind (“son esprit systématique”), but an idealistic morality that is in practice untenable because of its inevitable disintegration. In Thérèse, the woman with whom he found a measure of domestic bliss, he finds no system at all, but natural morality that is both practical and constitutive¹⁶⁸: “Je voulus d’abord former son esprit. J’y perdis ma peine. Son esprit est ce que l’a fait la nature.” (II, 76) In Zuietta he finds both and neither.

The Rousseau of the Confessions is beaten in the end, and not in the way he would like:

La justice et l’inutilité de mes plaintes me laissèrent dans l’âme un germe d’indignation contre nos sottes institutions civiles, où le vrai bien public et la véritable justice sont toujours sacrifiés à je ne sais quel ordre apparent, destructif en effet de tout ordre, et qui ne fait qu’ajouter la sanction de l’autorité publique à l’oppression du faible et à l’iniquité du fort. (II, 71)

Just as the Comte de la Roque predicted, the purloined ribbon still haunts Rousseau; chimerical order, reason subject to passion, creates unregulated order that is purely destructive of true moral order. Rousseau recognizes a principle that Kant recognizes as

¹⁶⁸Rousseau claims that his relationship with Thérèse formed his moral being: “J’ai toujours regardé le jour qui m’unit à ma Thérèse comme celui qui fixa mon être moral.” (II, 168)

well: fixed principles are always particular and thus deny a truly universal principle.

Rousseau himself realizes that private interest never gives rise to noble action, but Kant's project goes further by liberating aesthetic judgment with the argument for subjective purposiveness (the bridge of communication between understanding and reason, between the particular and the universal). The primary distinction between Rousseau and Kant lies in Kant's affirmation of the will in the possibility of aesthetic judgment's universal validity and Rousseau's cynical resignation to the loss of the will's ability to practically determine universally valid moral principles. Nearing the end of his confessions, Rousseau voices his desire to live out his days subjugated to a will not his own: "J'aurais bien mieux aimé y être confiné par leur volonté que par la mienne: j'aurais été plus assuré de n'y point voir troubler mon repos" (II, 419). His efforts to live according to his own will fail miserably; given the choice he would prefer a stable order to one that is truly free. This is the tragedy of the Confessions. Hyperion's willful pursuit of freedom also failed, but his "Nächtsens mehr" is optimistic. To say that he has renounced both Kant's system and Rousseau's non-system is to say that he refuses to confirm the possibility of crossing from the particular to the universal just as he refuses to give it up.

4

Wir lassen Widerstand nach unserem Willen entstehen, wir reizen den Gegner zu dem, worauf wir gerüstet sind. Oder sehen wir zu und scheinen furchtsam und lassen ihn näher kommen, bis er das Haupt zum Schlag uns reicht, auch nehmen wir ihm mit Schnelle die Fassung und das ist meine Panacee. Doch halten die erfahreneren Ärzte nichts auf solche allesheilende Mittel.

Hyperion

Philosophers after Kant were particularly sensitive to the transgression of categorical boundaries, and thus the principle of contradiction played a crucial role despite its being overshadowed by the ideas it served. The negative, the operative idea in the principle of contradiction, is essential to formulating statements with truth value. Maimon is one post-Kantian skeptic who took a keen interest in the function of the negative, and he set out to revise the logic that would make philosophy a science.¹⁶⁹ He sought to devise a transcendental logic which would give real significance to purely formal logic. Only in a system based on transcendental logic can metaphysical terms such as ‘truth’ have real rather than simply formal significance (V, 23). The product of his endeavor was the principle of determinability (“Satz der Bestimmbarkeit”), which

¹⁶⁹ Fichte and Schelling are the direct heirs of Maimon in this regard. See Schelling, *Werke*, I/1, 221. In addition, Fichte’s lecture on Platner’s “Philosophische Aphorismen” from which Hölderlin reportedly derives the etymology for “Urtheil,” uses the same vocabulary as Maimon’s argument for the principle of determinability to discuss “Gegensetzung” as a principle of thought (*Gesamtausgabe*, vol. II, 4, pp. 182-189).

serves a function parallel to that of the principle of contradiction; it grounds transcendental logic rather than pure logic. The principle of contradiction allows statements such as “Virtue is square” as not self-contradictory, but according to the principle of determinability, it has no material significance.¹⁷⁰ The statement, ‘A triangle is a three sided polygon’ has truth value, while the statement ‘Virtue is square’ does not. As Maimon says, the thought of “einer viereckigten Tugend” is not a real thought, nor even thinking at all because subject and predicate are not in a relation of determinability: “Sie werden blos in *Worten*, aber nicht in *Gedanken* mit einander verbunden” (V, 216). Maimon’s observation clearly draws a categorical border between language and thought and, therefore, raises the question of how the negative might establish truth value in language as opposed to thought.

Maimon criticizes traditional logicians who derive logical forms from ordinary language and fail to distinguish between forms of judgment. Syntactical negation provides a pertinent example in that it fails to distinguish between infinite judgments and negative judgments.¹⁷¹ Negative judgment approaches a positive ontology, while infinite judgment approaches a point of impossibility or a negative ontology. One may

¹⁷⁰ According to the principle of determinability, in order for a statement to have truth value, the terms of judgment must stand in “a relation of one-sided or non-reciprocal dependence” where the species is not possible without the genus but the genus is possible without the species (e.g. “a triangle is a polygon).

¹⁷¹ The two forms share the same grammar, “A is not B,” but they negate in two different ways. As a categorical negation, the infinite judgment says that neither B, nor the negation of B characterizes A (e.g. in the judgment “Virtue is not square,” virtue cannot be said to be square or not square. A negative judgment of the same grammatical form makes the negation of B attributable to A (e.g. in the judgment “A triangle is not square” the negation ‘not square’ can be thought of as an attribute of a triangle). With this argument Maimon disputes Kant’s derivation of the categories from the forms of judgment. See Beiser, 310, fn67. Kant discusses the infinite judgments in conjunction with the affirmative (KrV, B97). See also Henrich’s essay “Substantivierte und doppelte Negation.”

continually assert that which a triangle is not ad infinitum to the point where one has negatively determined what a triangle is; those negative attributes will approach that which defines a triangle. If one makes infinite judgments, that is, judgments that are not attributable to the object of judgment, one will never arrive at a definition of the object. In fact, infinite judgments destroy their objects when granted the ability to determine them. If, for example, virtue were to be considered not square, then the idea that defines virtue would be destroyed. According to the principle of determinability, judgments without truth value such as ‘The past is golden’ make for metaphorical or poetic language. Such statements have no cognitive significance or real truth value, but they do have poetic meaning that can be understood apart from making a judgment upon its veracity. For Hölderlin, such statements are affirmations of an ideal, but as we have seen, such absolutes are always remote. Though working on a different problem, Maimon offers a solution to putting ideals, absolutes, and the infinite into words. His skeptical method offers an approach to the infinite, a constant retraction or renunciation of final affirmation which Hölderlin formulates as a riddle.

Maimon’s ideas on first principles of philosophy reverse the direction of infinity. Indeed they should, given that his “Satz der Bestimmbarkeit” intended to complement the principle of contradiction in its negative determination of the forms of thought: “Nach dem *Grundsatz des Widerspruchs* kann ihre ([die Formen des Denkens]) *Möglichkeit*, als Postulata des Denkens, blos *negativ* bestimmt werden; woher wird aber ihre *positive Möglichkeit* erkannt?” (V, 214). K.P. Moritz introduced Maimon to the Jena circle via

his Wörterbuch der Philosophie in 1791, three years before Niethammer began publishing his philosophical journal to inquire into the possibility of a first-principle and a year before Diez convinced Reinhold of the circularity in his argument for the “Satz des Bewußtseins.”¹⁷² Maimon’s principle of determinability expresses the driving notion behind skepticism. It is the principle that demands that we never stop asking until the infinitude of possible experience is completely described. Maimon claims that the aim of criticism is to examine the ‘truth conditions’ of our judgments about experience. That is, we are given experience and we just determine if our judgments about experience (knowledge quanta) have truth value and are true or false. In this way the infinite regress that plagues “Grundsatzphilosophie” is replaced with an infinite progress of skepticism. Seen by Kant as a monstrous threat to rational thought, such unregulated skepticism has, in the opinion of some, created monstrous theory.¹⁷³

In his Versuch über die Transcendentalphilosophie, Maimon sets two theses off one another in order to reach a conclusion that is inherent in neither; as such, his argumentation may be considered dialectical or even ironic. In order to make a judgment, he says, in order to determine the form of the relation of two things, we must have a concept of the subject in and of itself and of the predicate in and of itself. In this way, “Materie” precedes “Form.” He continues, however, by saying that the concepts of relation must precede judgment if we are even to determine concepts of subject and

¹⁷² Henrich marks Reinhold’s reformulation of his “Theorie des menschlichen Vorstellungsvermögens” with a critique by Diez, who came to Jena from Tübingen in May or June of 1792. Reinhold discusses Diez’s critique in an as yet unpublished letter to J.B. Erhard. See Henrich, Konstellationen, pp. 242-243.

¹⁷³ See Freeman’s essay, “*Frankenstein* with Kant: A Theory of Monstrosity, or the Monstrosity of Theory.”

predicate; hence, “Form” must precede “Materie.” From this he concludes that “Form” and “Materie” must be simultaneous, and he thereby states a fundamental principle of absolute idealism. In contrast to Maimon, who maintains strictly *a posteriori* principles of experience, Hölderlin puts “Seyn” prior to any concept of relation and hence prior to the act of judgment that constitutes consciousness. Prior to experience, “Seyn,” in effect, negates the *fact* of consciousness in order to explain how consciousness comes into existence. What Hölderlin’s system does to that of Maimon or even Fichte’s idealism is what we would today call deconstruction; it is metacriticism not simply because it criticizes criticism, but because it paradoxically turns the fundamental principle against or in upon itself. Important in this, however, is that Hölderlin’s strategy aims at establishing a firm, stable foundation, while modern criticism, in contrast, uses the same strategy to claim that it subverts or destabilizes the object of inquiry.

Maimon’s transcendental logic examines negation and affirmation in order to establish a principle for determining truth value. As the form of expression of truth value, affirmation and negation can only function if the metaphysical concepts of truth and reality are available to be expressed. To twist out of such a metaphysics one must refuse to affirm or deny. In his essay, “Structure, Sign, and Play,” for example, Derrida offers “différance” as way to read and interpret texts, yet he refuses to ascribe it any truth value to the exclusion of another possible hermeneutic that “dreams of deciphering a truth or an origin which escapes play” (292). Maimon claims that transcendental logic should precede formal logic in order to criticize metaphysical terms and presuppositions.

Reflexive critique has, however, failed to yield the statements possessive of truth value that are demanded by formal logic. Accusations of an ‘intentional fallacy’, for example, presuppose the necessity of making meaningful statements, then go on to make meaning “infinitely plural” (i.e. infinitely inaccessible). The demand for sufficient reason is used to undermine absolute truth, while at the same time sufficient reason is pronounced to be never sufficient. In response to the dilemma, postmodern discourse has produced its own *pharmakon*—a paradoxical statement that both redeems and invalidates truth value in language. Only passively affirmative, it is a gesture that, for all its resistance to binary logic and its meaningful production, manages to recuperate its losses by naming the negative.

The negative took shape in modern literary theory beginning with the Russian Formalists who defined literature not by the inherent qualities of a text but in the differences between texts. ‘Literariness’ could be found anywhere one text used language differently than another.¹⁷⁴ The emphasis on artistic devices (Shklovsky) and modes of expression (Jakobson) made literature a functional rather than ontological term. As the qualities of a text were bound up more in relation to one another than in and of themselves, literary identity became defined not by what a text *is* but by what it *is not*.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Defining ‘literariness’ in this way, the Formalists don’t stray far from Aristotle’s *Poetics*: “Impressive and above the ordinary is the diction that uses exotic language (by ‘exotic’ I mean loan words, metaphors, lengthenings, and all divergence from the standard). But if one composes entirely in this vein, the result will be either a riddle or barbarism [gibberish]—a riddle, if metaphors predominate; barbarism [gibberish], if loan words” (1458a, 18-26 (Halliwell)). The passage, quoted in part earlier, now connects structural ideas of difference to the riddles and enigmas of postmodern poetics.

¹⁷⁵ The Derridean formulation will later read: “Whether in written or spoken discourse, no element can function as a sign without relating to another element which itself is not simply present. This linkage means that each element - phoneme or grapheme - is constituted with reference to the trace in it of the other elements of the sequence or system” (*Positions*). Derrida describes a relation is simultaneously negative (the

The critical method of negatively isolating or estranging a text in order to better reveal its 'literariness' has generated a familiar formulation in more recent literary criticism: "x is so by the very fact that it is not so."¹⁷⁶ The postmodern paradox takes direct aim at the fundamental principle of binary logic, the principle of contradiction. Along the 'de-arborized' avenue of thinking, a quality of a text is typically defined by the fact that the text defers, decenters, undoes, eludes, evades, or otherwise makes impossible that very quality. As de Man says: "The 'meaning' of the metaphor is that it does not 'mean' in any definite manner" (Blindness and Insight, 235). The assumption that meaning comes out of an indefinite medial void into an indefinite field of representation fuels both Formalists and Structuralists, who want to define textual content, as well as post-structuralists and postmodernists who would see it disseminated in a constant state of flux.¹⁷⁷

non-presence of the other signs) and positive (the trace of the other signs that always inhere in a sign) and thus describes a 'central' paradox that drives contemporary criticism.

¹⁷⁶ Derrida, once again, readily supplies an example: "What defers presence...is the very basis on which presence is announced or desired in what represents it, its sign, its trace" (Positions, "Implications," trans. Bass). And again in Of Grammatology: "Différance produces what it forbids, making possible the very thing that it makes impossible" (143). Or Johnson on Derrida: "Language as such is already constituted by the very distances and differences it seeks to overcome" (Introduction to Dissemination, ix). Thomas puts For additional examples of the paradoxical rhetorical device in "postmodern thought" see Thomas's essay, "Gödel's Theorem and Postmodern Theory," pg 253. He provides a concise list with the appropriate disclaimer that he in no way intends to reduce the particular critics to a single critical approach.

¹⁷⁷ Blanchot makes Hölderlin an accessory to the murder of being for the sake of language: "In a text dating from before 'The Phenomenology,' Hegel, here the friend and kindred spirit of Hölderlin, writes: 'Adam's first act, which made him master of the animals, was to give them names, that is, he annihilated them in their existence (as existing creatures).' [Blanchot's footnote: From a collection of essays entitled 'System of 1803-1804'. A. Kojève, in his 'Introduction à la lecture de Hegel,' interpreting a passage from 'The Phenomenology,' demonstrates in a remarkable way how for Hegel comprehension was equivalent to murder.] Hegel means that from that moment on the cat ceased to be a uniquely real cat and became an idea as well. The meaning of speech, then, requires that before any word is spoken there must be a sort of immense hecatomb, a preliminary flood plunging all of creation into a total sea. God had created living things, but man had to annihilate them. Not until then did they take on meaning for him" ("Literature and the Right to Death," 42).

Largely due to Heidegger, Hölderlin's work has proved to be fertile ground for postmodernists looking for their logic in language. Often seen as a co-revolutionary, Hölderlin also attracts a great deal of postmodern interest because of the questions he raises as a figure of the historical transition between the neoclassical and Romantic schools of thought. We have seen how Hölderlin's logic unfolds in language, and I have argued that his thinking on the unlimited and the absolute that exceed binary thought can only be expressed in language over time. In this way, his *Hyperion* stays *in* time. The postmodernist rhetorical device described above compresses logic and language into a narrow temporal frame, creating pressure and forces that open fissures and close 'folds' in both. *Hyperion*'s idealizations did the same by attempting to materialize the metaphysical and the spiritual. Heidegger has spawned a variety of Hölderlin critics from Blanchot to de Man to Lacoue-Labarthe who share an interest in the relation of time to the ontology of Being. Romanticism is generally considered to have been a break from the circular notion of history. The belief in perfectibility ruptured a tradition of mimesis and thereby constituted what might be called a transition from an ontology of knowledge, where Being is figured as an object of known truth, to an ontology of consciousness, where reflective thinking itself becomes a kind of residue of the departure of Being. The following pages examine language and logic as they have moved from Hölderlin's infinite approach that unifies subject and object to modern consciousness traced in the wake of Being's perpetual withdrawal.

In anticipation of a discussion of Heidegger's philosophical language, it helps to note a way in which Kantian metaphysics underlies contemporary theory. Eagleton distinguishes modern literary criticism as follows: "The hallmark of the 'linguistic revolution' of the twentieth century, from Saussure to Wittgenstein to contemporary literary theory, is the recognition that meaning is not simply something 'expressed' or 'reflected' in language: it is actually *produced* by it" (60). Meaning is not a metaphysical presence represented by language, rather meaning is the result of its possibility to exist in language. Just as Kantian metaphysics uses the forms of space and time describe the possibility of consciousness, modern literary theory conceives of language as the condition for possible meaning. Furthermore, just as the Kantian forms are not to be thought of as things (KrV, B54), language itself is not conceived as an aggregation of semantic presences. Kant maintained the existence of a "Ding an sich" as the source of intuitions. The postmodernists, however, do not recognize a parallel source for meaning other than relation and difference.¹⁷⁸ For Kant, an essential presence exists but is unknowable. In an unlikely affiliation, contemporary theorists share with Fichte an indifference to essential presence or meaning and instead articulate differences between a given *x* and *not-x* in order to produce their theories of language or knowledge, respectively. All that has meaning or is known moves in the empty space between things uttered or affirmed.

¹⁷⁸ Derrida says, for example: "In this sense, *différance* is not preceded by the originary and indivisible unity of a present possibility that I could reserve, like an expenditure that I would put off calculatedly or for reasons of economy" (Positions, "Implications").

At a time when most philosophers busied themselves with epistemological questions, Heidegger turned to ontology with the “Seinsfrage” posed by Leibniz: “Why is there something rather than nothing?” Though the question suggests a certain faith in the presence of something, Heidegger initiated an inquiry into Western metaphysics that has had more to say about what isn’t than what is. Like Derrida, Heidegger criticized the traditional understanding in Western philosophy starting with Plato that being represents an essential and enduring substance in things. Rather than working within a metaphysics of presence and asking how we come to know things, he examines the conditions that allow things to *matter*. As a result, the ontological question, the “Seinsfrage,” becomes a linguistic question: “What is the meaning of being?” It is the question Hölderlin asks in the second book of volume one of Hyperion when he describes the incarnation and death of Diotima—how is being determined and thus made intelligible to us? Hölderlin, who despite Heidegger’s enthusiasm for his conception of Being was very much a believer in an absolute presence, answered the question in a letter to Schiller with the idea of an infinite approach to the absolute (Sept. 4th, 1795). A century and a half later, Blanchot, following Heidegger’s reading of Hölderlin and the turn from ontology to language, answers the question with an infinite approach to meaning—“Le livre à venir” and “L’Entretien infini.”

Heidegger’s “Dasein,” like the Russian Formalist and Saussurian theories of language developed a decade before Sein und Zeit, uses functionality to determine

identity and meaning.¹⁷⁹ An object ‘ready at hand’ has meaning or exists for us not in itself but as a result of its operation with the system of things intelligible to us. The idea that ontological definition is a product of functional relation to other entities promotes the movements of “dissemination” and “slippage” so prevalent in poststructural theories. Heidegger’s claim that we do not speak but rather language speaks us makes language the ontological proving ground.¹⁸⁰ Language provides a much more resilient ‘foundation’ for the contemporary discourse than any substance. Pursuing this line of thought, Heidegger, after Sein und Zeit, turns the question of being in the direction of poetry and art. In search of a poetic language that has a non-metaphysical way of communicating being, he turns to Hölderlin.

For Heidegger, Being does not manifest itself as a “precisely determined actuality”(Poetry, Language, Thought, 183) and hence, would not lend itself to representation. Even the most poetic pun fails to achieve the “presencing” of Being when considered simply as an expression of deeper semantic correspondences. Heidegger says in his essay on Hölderlin’s “Andenken”: “Das dichtende Wort verwahrt einen Reichtum von eigener Art und Gesetzlichkeit, den wir nur schlecht oder gar nicht fassen, wenn wir ihn als bloße Vieldeutigkeit ausgeben” (26). The poetic word elicits a sense of Being much more successfully in its greatest simplicity, because this permits the indirectness necessary to the approach of thinking about Being. As Heidegger puts it,

¹⁷⁹ See Sein und Zeit, pg. 83, and Cours de linguistique générale, pg. 150 and pg. 250.

¹⁸⁰ Lévi-Strauss’s structural approach comes to a similar conclusion that myths make the people rather than the other way around. See his Structural Anthropology, and his essay “Structuralism and Myth.”

“To think ‘Being’ means: to respond to the appeal of its presencing.”(Letter to Büchner, 183) Always hovering outside the liminal extreme of consciousness, Being only represents itself as a mediating desire. Desire, in turn, functions only as an erring directive to thought, in which Being reveals itself only in its receding from the pursuit of its presencing. In these terms, Heidegger’s claim to hear the voice of Being in Hölderlin’s poetry, despite the impossibility of pronouncing it directly, would make sense. The hymn “Andenken,” for example, succeeds precisely because it does not describe something remembered directly; rather, it communicates remembrance itself indirectly. To rephrase this in terms of the point made earlier regarding Hölderlin’s position in the debate of the ancients and the moderns, the hymn argues for remembrance not on the basis of an ontology of knowledge, which extends to objective truth, but on the basis of an ontology of consciousness, which moves inward through the subject to a radically historical experience of ‘truth’.

Heidegger’s response to Hölderlin’s “In lieblicher Bläue...” elaborates on the way in which Being can voice itself indirectly in language. Here, the notion of ‘dwelling’ (“wohnen”) works as a kind of metaphor for the dimension of dialectical thinking with which man measures himself against the godhead (“Gottheit”). Poetry creates dwelling not additively but simultaneously with the dimension that measures man against god. And, critical to the voicing of Being, one must dwell with ‘kindness’ (“Freundlichkeit”), a persistence that refuses to distort the dimension between man and god and violate its parameters. To speak metaphorically, to dwell with ‘kindness’ means to refuse to let the

wake of Gottheit's receding from manifestation transform into an artificial or rhetorical presence of Being. Poetry, which "first causes dwelling to be dwelling," gives dimension between man and God, between temporal existence and the eternal receding of the unknown and, in this way, voices the nature of Being.

Violating the borders of dimension in the direction from "Gottheit" to human existence is hazardous from the point of view of rational thought and the ontology of objective truth. This describes Empedokles' transgression in the eyes of Hemokrates, the keeper of idols. The reverse of this gesture, however, voices Being in language. Critical for the poet is to remember that language moves toward Being, not the other way around: "Man acts as though he were the shaper and master of language, while in fact language remains the master of man" (215). In other words, meaning is not expressed in language; rather, man pursues meaning in language, where language, measured with kindness, "die Reine" (to use Hölderlin's dislocated appositive), stands as the wake or residue of Being. For Heidegger then, voicing Being is a matter of listening clearly: "Man first speaks when, and only when, he responds to language by listening to its appeal" (216). The "appeal" of language implies the poet's desire for expression that would be, but never is, whole or present as an "object ready for use." This makes sense of seeing the nature of poetry as a 'taking measure' or 'creation of dimension', the wake of difference between man and god which mediates Being. Heidegger identifies Hölderlin's depiction of "der Himmel" as illustrative of this point:

The measure consists in the way in which the god who remains unknown,

is revealed as such by the sky. God's appearance through the sky consists in a disclosing that lets us see what conceals itself...the unknown god appears as the unknown by way of the sky's manifestness. (Poetry, Language, Thought, 223)

Heidegger describes precisely the movement of a receding god who leaves a manifest image in his wake. The dialectical borders remain intact only enough so as to mark the progress of their decay, just as the excessive manipulation of the antimonies in "Heidelberg" pushed their rationale to the point of collapse. In Heidegger's formulation, the receding wake is not seen as a failure or insufficiency, for this would only be to affirm Being as radically other than being and distort the perception of 'actuality'. 'Kindness', or listening clearly, allows the poet to measure himself not unhappily against God and avoid Empedokles' tragic fate when voicing Being.

Heidegger's analysis aside, "In lieblicher Bläue..." itself bears relevance to the endeavor to locate Hölderlin's position within the debate between the ancients and the moderns. The nature of man's existence, or dwelling, on earth is expressed largely by the narrator's relation to Greece. The work opens with a descent from the realm of the ideal to a perspective of self-conscious measure against that ideal. The re-ascent moves toward the realm of Greek drama but, ultimately, only affirms the poet's separation from that sphere. What might be inferred from this is a recognition of the transition from a Greek ontology of Being that can in certainty imitate nature directly to an ontology of consciousness that only imitates the antecedent reflection. The work ends with a logical

paradox instead of an expressive metaphor, designating Greek drama as an absolute, but radically separated, referent. The ultimate radiance of the sun remains forever unknown via direct contemplation; the Greeks offer a purity of reflection in the wake of the sun, but this too recedes, offering itself only in its being imitated, or, as Hölderlin would ideally have it, translated.

The trajectory of the text from the presence of the ideal as reflection to the presence of reflection upon that reflection begins with the image of the steeple, a point of fixity from which the sun's rays shimmer. The critical adjective, "rührend," describes the blue haze as both 'moving' (the perspective of the Subject) and 'selfless' (the defining quality of the absolute Object which issues forth without thought of return). The connection between language or mediation and the receding nature of Being becomes evident in the association of the steeple's emblem, "die Fahne," with the recurring image of "der Bach." The "Fahne" functions symbolically, embodying an ideal perched at the apex, but also serves as a mediating emblem. The narrator renders the paradoxical status of the banner in the phrase, "stille krähet die Fahne"; for all its power to signify the "Fahne" remains mute. In the same way, the brook, by its meandering, indicates direction but refrains from divulging its final goal: "Wie Bäche reißt das Ende von Etwas mich dahin, welches sich wie Asien ausdehnt" (StA XXI, 373, 24-25). In the image of the brook, the narrator teases with the specific reference to the East, but, putting it in a comparative relationship to "Etwas," he denies absolute utterance by deferring to metaphor. The deferral itself, however, voices the essential nature of the brook and thus

reflects it clearly. Once more, however, the reflective utterances turn back on themselves in order not to distort perception, in order to represent clearly: “Du schönes Bächlein, du scheinst rührend, indem du rollest so klar, wie das Auge der Gottheit, durch die Milchstraße” (StA XXI, 373, 4-6). “Rührend” describes both clear reflection as well as a moving appeal to pursue a path of indeterminate end. Within the structure of the text, the “Bächlein” arrives at a point unifying the diastolic movement of the initial figure’s descent from the steeple (“die Bildsamkeit herauskommt”) and the systolic ascent of the eagle which concentrates the voices of “viele Vögel” to one. As the passage above demonstrates, the structural union takes the form of a mirroring image that reverses the polarity of heaven and earth. Here, just as in “An die Hoffnung” where the stars become flowers, the brook reflects the celestial bodies and thus seems to flow through their midst. The reflections have now come full circle; in Heidegger’s terms, borrowed from the work itself, metaphor has established poetic dwelling reflecting in itself that transcendence to divine utterance which it can only hope to accomplish. The text has now set the stage for the entrance of the Greeks.

As the text builds toward the human measure in relation to the highest ideal, the narrator gradually slips from thought into metaphor then recoils, realizing the separation between what the words express and the elusive meaning he would intend:

Größeres zu wünschen, kann nicht des Menschen Natur sich vermessen.

Der Tugend Heiterkeit verdient auch gelobt zu werden vom ernsten

Geiste, der zwischen den drei Säulen wehet des Gartens. Eine schöne

Jungfrau muß das Haupt umkränzen mit Myrthenblumen, weil die einfach ist ihrem Wesen nach und ihrem Gefühl. Myrthen aber giebt es in Griechenland. (StA XXI, 46-52)

The narrator supposes that Greece enjoys a natural unity with joyful perfection, but in that moment self-conscious reflection reminds him of his speculative construct and pushes the myrtles and Greece with them into the distance. The thought process reformulates itself again, this time in the image of a man looking into a mirror; the thoughts once bent toward the ideal and Greece now focus on the narrator's *relationship* to Greece as an object of contemplation: "Augen hat des Menschen Bild, hingegen Licht der Mond" (StA XXI, 373, 19-20). In this scenario, man has eyes to see but remains passive in comparison to the moon, which, though an inert body, reflects the sun and radiates light. The gesture of speculative regression is double.

This inward spiral of reflection helps makes sense of a cryptic series of metaphors early on in the text, that seem to speak directly to Hölderlin's relationship to the Greeks as Lacoue-Labarthe describes it, i.e. as an imitation of imitation: "Die Fenster, daraus die Glocken tönen, sind wie Thore an Schönheit. Nemlich, weil noch der Natur nach sind die Thore, haben diese die Ähnlichkeit von Bäumen des Walds" (StA XXI, 372, 7-9). The odd construction of this metaphor turns it back upon itself in such a way as to have the windows being like trees; that is, they are a perfect imitation of nature. Through these perfect imitations emanate the harmonious tones from the original ideal unity, the steeple. In this image, the eternal receding of Being, as described by Heidegger, and the

caesura of the speculative, as reflection upon its own reflective nature, find common ground. Hölderlin's perception of the Greeks as 'naturally' mimetic, a notion borrowed from Schiller, both called for and denied the imitation of them. In this way, the necessarily indirect pursuit of 'their' Being propelled him in the direction of the modern, toward the sentimental, the melancholic, the self-reflective.

Heidegger's essay on the poem "Heimkunft/An die Verwandten" illustrates how Hölderlin's infinite approach is worked into the logical paradox common to postmodern criticism. The transformation is achieved with a temporal compression with which phenomenology understands being through history.¹⁸¹ The paradox lies in the need to identify the self relative to time. Whether conceived as a temporal unfolding (Heidegger's "Dasein") or temporally fixed (the subjectivist idea of a transcendental unity of apperception) the individual as such must be viewed in relief against the perspective of being either in time or out of time. As an ever-evolving phenomenon, the self as such is viewed across a totality of time compressed in order to accommodate the mind that conceptualizes it as such. As a limited consciousness, the self is seen in an isolated moment that is projected theoretically through all time.

According to Heidegger's reading, "Heimkunft" describes a return that affirms relation to "die Anderen" and thereby constitutes identity. The relation manifests itself and is recognized in language, and thus identity as well as being become a function of

¹⁸¹ For similar reasons Lukács sees Heidegger's historicity as ahistorical. See *The Historical Novel: Studies in European Realism*. He makes a similar criticism of Dilthey and Gundolf: "Both Dilthey and Gundolf imagine they are able to get at the essential core of Hölderlin by leaving out the 'temporal' aspects of his life and work" (*Goethe and his Age*, 144).

language as it puts an individual within a context and within history. Heidegger begins with the ideas of home and nearness: "Die Heimat selbst wohnt nahe. Sie ist der Ort der Nähe zum Herd und Ursprung....Heimkunft ist die Rückkehr in die Nähe zum Ursprung" (23). The origin enables the wanderer-searcher to identify himself as such upon his return:

Wiederkehren kann nur, wer vordem und vielleicht schon eine lange Zeit hindurch als der Wanderer die Last der Wanderung auf die Schulter genommen hat und hinübergegangen ist zum Ursprung, damit er dort erfahre, was das Zu-Suchende sei, um dann als der Suchende erfahrener zurückzukommen. (23)

The relation of the wanderer to the origin that defines him remains forever one of difference. Heidegger never speaks of an arrival but of the ever-diminishing distance, emphasizing separation rather than proximity. From Hölderlin's line, "Was du suchest, es ist nahe, begegnet dir schon," he concludes: "die jetzt waltende Nähe läßt das nahe und läßt es doch zugleich das Gesuchte, also nicht nahe sein" (23). Hölderlin's line does indeed foreground the oppositional stance of that which is near; the word "begegnen" semantically pushes away "dir" and the interpolation of "es ist nahe" syntactically separates what is searched for from the searcher. Heidegger then goes on to claim that the wanderer's identity is bound to the fact that his proximity to home can never be closed.

Heidegger subverts the word “Ankunft” in order to prepare us for a logical turn: “Mit der Ankunft hat der Heimkehrende die Heimat noch nicht erreicht” (13). He points to the distance requisite to relation and the space that allows one person to turn his or her thoughts to another:

Denn jetzt müssen zuvor Denkende sein, damit das Wort des Dichtenden vernehmbar wird....Im Andenken beginnt die erste, und das will sagen, die in langer Zeit noch weit-läufige Verwandtschaft mit dem heimkommenden Dichter. (29)

The relation established in turning one’s thoughts must recognize the separation upon which it is founded. The turning that makes the poet’s words intelligible and meaningful also divides him from his relatives:

Wie aber-wenn ‘die anderen’ durch das Andenken zu Verwandten werden, sind sie dann nicht dem Dichter *zu*-gewendet? Gilt dann noch für sie das jäh ‘nicht’, mit dem die ‘Heimkunft’ endet?¹⁸² Es gilt. Aber es gilt nicht allein. ‘Die anderen’ sind, wenn sie zu Verwandten geworden, zugleich auch noch in einem anderen Sinne die ‘anderen’. In dem sie auf das gesagte Wort achten und darauf denken, daß es recht gedeutet und behalten werde, helfen sie dem Dichter. (29)

¹⁸² Hölderlin’s poem “Heimkunft” ends with the lines: “Sorgen, wie diese, muss, gern oder nicht, in der Seele/ Tragen ein Sänger und oft, aber die anderen nicht.”

The lines that Heidegger quotes from Hölderlin say just this--that meaning is indeed contingent upon difference, upon relation, but meaning is preserved in consensus.¹⁸³ A slippage of meaning results from the inability of any single person to reserve truth for him or herself once it is spoken.

Weil aber das Wort, wenn es einmal gesagt ist, der Obhut des sorgenden Dichters entgleitet, kann er nicht leicht das gesagte Wissen vom gesparten Fund und von der sparenden Nähe allein fest in seiner Wahrheit halten. Darum wendet der Dichter sich zu den anderen, daß ihr Andenken helfe, das dichtende Wort zu verstehen, damit im Verstehen für jeden je nach der ihm schicklichen Weise die Heimkunft sich ereigne. (29-30)

In turning, in the return home, each arrives at meaning and understanding that can only exist across the empty space of relation. Just as the turn of phrase represents an individual's place in history as a function of his or her relations, language constitutes Being which is, therefore, dialogic.¹⁸⁴

The language that Heidegger turns to in order to express Being is that of paradox. For example, when defining the essential nature of nearness he says: "Jetzt dagegen erscheint das Wesen der Nähe darin, daß sie das Nahe nahe bringt, indem sie es fernhält" (23). Heidegger admits that such a statement makes no sense: "Sagen, etwas sei

¹⁸³ Hölderlin's lines read: "Doch nicht behält er es leicht allein,/ Und gern gesellt, damit verstehn sie/ Helfen, zu anderen sich ein Dichter."

¹⁸⁴ Heidegger puts this more plainly in his essay, "Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung": "Nur wo Sprache da ist Welt....Nur wo Welt waltet, da ist Geschichte....Das Sein des Menschen gründet in der Sprache; aber diese geschieht erst eigentlich im *Gespräch*" (35-36). Heidegger draws these conclusion from a line in the second preliminary sketch of Hölderlin's "Friedensfeier": "Seit ein Gespräch wir sind" (I, 361, 72-75).

nahe, indem es fern bleibe, das heißt doch, entweder die Grundregel des gewohnten Denkens, den Satz vom Widerspruch verletzen, oder aber mit leeren Wörtern spielen, oder gar auf etwas Vermessenes sinnen” (24).¹⁸⁵ It is, however, precisely the principle of contradiction, the foundation of binary logic, that Heidegger challenges in order to describe Hölderlin’s ability to put Being into words. According to Heidegger, Hölderlin’s madness (“Thörig red ich”) is also his joy (“Der Dichter muß reden, denn: ‘Es ist die Freude’”). Paradox is the poetic language that embodies Being.

Paradox, the mad rapturous language of the poet, also describes an epistemological limit. Heidegger arrives at this using a pun which received ample elaboration in Freud’s essay on “Das Unheimliche.” Heidegger manipulates the same slippage from the familiar to the secret: “Wenn nun aber Heimkunft bedeutet, heimischwerden in der Nähe zum Ursprung, muß dann nicht das Heimkommen zuerst und vielleicht lange Zeit darin bestehen, das Geheimnis dieser Nähe zu wissen oder gar erst wissen zu lernen?” (24). The secret of proximity, what can be known of it, is itself a paradox; we know a secret only by virtue of the fact that we keep it. It is known because it is not made known: “Doch ein Geheimnis wissen wir niemals dadurch, daß wir es entschleiern und zergliedern, sondern einzig so, daß wir das Geheimnis *als* das Geheimnis hüten” (24). The rhetorical device of paradox that grants ontological significance is used here to delineate epistemological possibility. Mimicking what he finds to be the peculiar genius of Hölderlin’s poetry (that his poetry is not about a thing

¹⁸⁵ Heidegger offers the same two options as Aristotle in his *Poetics*; such language yields “riddles” or “gibberish” (words without proper context, voided of meaning and identity). See footnote 18.

such as “Heimkunft,” but is the thing itself (24)), Heidegger uses paradox to make his most definitive points: “[Die Nähe] verwahrt und hebt es für die Kommenden auf, aber diese Nähe hebt das Freudigste nicht fort, sondern läßt es als das Aufgehobene gerade erscheinen” (24). The work of sublation that describes the dual gesture of erasure and elevation has brought ample returns for postmodern discourse.

What Lacoue-Labarthe finds particularly pertinent to contemporary theory is the way in which Hölderlin’s dialectic drive to mediate between the temporal human and the eternal divine works to dismantle its own mechanism. The twist out of the tradition of mimesis in the manner of Winckelmann’s Hellenism proceeds from the reflection on the ‘impropriety’ of the Greeks. The recognition that the Greeks never existed as “beings of nature” (as Schiller views them) reveals that the speculative drive toward resolution presupposes its own dialectical theater. Lacoue-Labarthe’s reflections on Hölderlin and his twist out of mimesis suggest a way of placing the poet in the debate between the ancients and the moderns, as follows. The neoclassical, or more specifically, the Winckelmannian mimetic drive locates beauty in art in the imitation of the model itself and thus relies on an ontology of existence; Being manifests itself uniformly in being. The Romantic mimetic drive pursues a radically historical manifestation of being which constantly makes itself aware of its immediate separation from an absolute ideal, and thus it relies on an ontology of consciousness; Being manifests itself only in the awareness of its absence from being. Hölderlin seems to fall somewhere in between, recognizing the presence of an ideal in the Greek work of art, yet denying contemporary

access to it, as if pulling the Greek ideal into his present results in a simultaneous regression of an ideal proper to his own time.¹⁸⁶ It is precisely the fascination with this regression that characterizes Hölderlin and, subsequently, holds the interest of Heidegger.

Lacoue-Labarthe observes in Schiller's texts the desire to unify the dialectical opposites established by Kantian metaphysics (239). Hölderlin, in the eyes of Heidegger, turns this speculative desire into a notion of Being itself; paradoxically, the receding of the unutterable ideal constitutes its essential nature. Where idealism virtually fetishizes the unknown as a positive power of the absolute, Heidegger sees in Hölderlin the gesture of grasping onto the wake of Being, which recedes under the very power of our desiring its presence. Lacoue-Labarthe phrases it differently; for him the tension introduced by Schiller in historicizing the Greeks (i.e. saying that Aristotle's *techne* leaves the imitation of nature to the Greeks while calling on the moderns to perfect or accomplish the Greeks) is for Hölderlin the very essence of each culture (243). Hölderlin's turn to the translation of Sophocles in response to this tension reveals his realization that the Greeks don't exist properly (i.e. they exist only in imitation), while the West (Hesperia) doesn't exist culturally. A contemporary translation attempts to mediate between the two. As a result of his historical myopia, Lacoue-Labarthe's Hölderlin finds himself in a void between the Greeks as pure culture (a monstrous union of god and man in art) and the West (at best only a promise of culture).

¹⁸⁶ Jacobi, to whom Hölderlin owes much for his conception of absolutes, puts the same sentiment in positive terms: "Auf diese Weise hat ein jedes Zeitalter, wie seine eignen Wahrheit, deren Gehalt wie der Gehalt der Erfahrungen ist, eben so auch seine eigene lebendige Philosophie, welche die herrschende Handlungsweise dieses Zeitalters *in ihrem Fortgange* darstellt" (*Werke* ("Über die Lehre des Spinoza"), IV/1, 236-237).

Lacoue-Labarthe places Hölderlin on the edge between ancient and modern as a force pulling into the latter. His chapter, “The Caesura of the Speculative,” which addresses Hölderlin’s attempt to twist out of dialectics, seems to move the historical distinction between modern and classical from the late eighteenth century to Bataille, who asserts a radical notion of expenditure.¹⁸⁷ By his reasoning, the dialectical thinking of idealism à la Schelling draws from the same source as Aristotle’s poetics; namely, the recuperative end of tragedy, catharsis. Both the “Aufhebung” of idealism (albeit an ongoing process) and the catharsis of Aristotelian poetics are “economic” and, therefore, based in the same ritual of speculative exchange between the subject and metaphysical object. What Hölderlin arrives at via the failure of Der Tod des Empedokles is the death of Greek tragedy as constitutive of modern tragedy: “for Hölderlin there was basically no modern tragedy except in the form of a deconstruction, a practical one, of ancient tragedy” (*Typography*, 221). More importantly, the death of tragedy in this sense allows an escape from dialectics without a simple negation by ideal synthesis or nihilism. Instead, as Lacoue-Labarthe sees it, Hölderlin raises the question of how the speculative deconstructs itself in the same movement that erects or installs it. In a way, Hölderlin repairs the wound opened by the Kantian epistemological crisis by never detaching a logic that effects its closure. This is the hesitation, or deferral, that catches Heidegger’s interest in his discussion of the mediation of Being. Lacoue-Labarthe phrases it this way: “Hölderlin, by a movement of ‘regression’, if you will, comes to touch upon something

¹⁸⁷ See Bataille’s, “The Notion of Expenditure.”

that dislocates *from within* the speculative” (227). The model of speculative tragedy, an ethically economic tragedy, is founded on Aristotelian mimetology and the theory of catharsis. To this Hölderlin struggles to return with Der Tod des Empedokles. This step backward, however, is itself speculative, and thus creates an imitation of imitation, a caesura of the speculative that dismantles its own mechanism. What Lacoue-Labarthe suggests, that the tragedy of the theory of tragedy defines ‘modern tragedy’, is, in a way, a Heideggerian triumph in that it twists out of metaphysics with the reflection of reflection itself.¹⁸⁸

It is not difficult to work back from Lacoue-Labarthe’s language to find paradoxical logic in Hölderlin’s poetry. But, Hölderlin’s poetry does not commit itself to either the integrity of the dialectic or its complete breakdown. For example, “Mein Eigentum,” as the title suggests, expresses a mood of containment and control. Though the lines of movement throughout the poem tend to meander aimlessly, (“wandle,” “Irrst”) the lack of enjambment demonstrates a firm control and containment of language. The distinctness of borders imparts a sense of security:

Beglückt, wer, ruhig liebend ein frommes Weib,

Am eignen Heerd in rühmlicher Heimath lebt,

Es leuchtet über vestem Boden

Schöner dem sicheren Mann sein Himmel. (FHA V, 21-24)

¹⁸⁸ Heidegger provides ample resource for the contemporary critic’s paradoxical formulation of Hölderlin’s idea of tragedy: “Die Trauer, durch eine Kluft geschieden vom bloßen Trübsinn, ist die Freude” (“Heimkunft,” 25).

To have borders, to clearly see the separation between man and God, between oneself and the universe, evokes a feeling of happiness.

“Heidelberg” takes these same structures and pushes them to the point where the artificiality of the dichotomies undermines the value of distinction. Where the movements of “Mein Eigentum” wandered within safe limits, those of “Heidelberg” have a self-contradictory dual nature, as in the expression, “blüten herab.” The concluding stanza conjures the image of clear delineation, a comforting border (“Ufer hold”), only to confound two opposing moods:

Deine fröhlichen Gassen

Unter duftenden Gärten ruhn. (FHA V, 31-32)

Rather than having peaceful gardens and cheerful streets in clear juxtaposition, the contrary characteristics are ascribed to the same object, “Gassen.” This perversity carries over to the relation between objects as well, revealing a similarly confusing logic: subjects often correspond only indirectly with their verbs. For example, in the phrase, “die Brücke./Die von Wagen und Menschen tönt,” the sounds made by people and carriages are poetically misassigned to the mediating image of the bridge. The reversal of the appositives, “der Jüngling, der Strom,” works in the same way and makes a critical association between mirroring and the collapse of dialectical structures, or, in Lacoue-Labarthe’s terms, the speculative opposition of subject and object. With a movement suggestive of the Derridean ‘mise en abîme’, the river throws itself into its own metaphor, “die Fluten der Zeit,” which for the youth suggests a joyful suicide (“Liebend

unterzugehen"). The image of stretching toward an indeterminate horizon is associated with a curious mix of joy and tragedy, "fort in die Ebene zog,/Traurigfroh." The dual emotion associated with reaching into the distance recalls the double gesture described by Lacoue-Labarthe as the "tragedy of the theory of tragedy": striving toward the Greek ideal by imitating an imitation.

From this perspective, Lacoue-Labarthe's term 'regression', as a description of the mechanism that dislocates the speculative, aligns itself more closely with Heidegger's notion of the 'appeal' of Being. Heidegger identifies in Hölderlin's poetry the nature of Being as the utterance of the 'appeal' of Being. Being reveals itself only as a residue, pulling away from utterance and self-consciousness. In the "Grund zum Empedokles," for example, Hölderlin describes the tragic poet, here Empedokles, who has the problematic, even blasphemous, task of expressing total inwardness (a sense of "Sein" without the self-conscious split of "Urteil") in a language of thought or judgment. Empedokles's transgression is not so much one of crossing into the realm of pure "Sein," but of attempting to vocalize it in the oxymoronic phrase, "I am God." For the postmodernists, such a paradoxical 'appeal to Being' constitutes the only logic that makes Being possible, or what is the same, the only way to speak of it.

De Man reads Hölderlin as saying that Being may not be articulated directly and thus preserved in time; he goes on to accuse Heidegger of making Hölderlin say just the opposite when the philosopher claims that the poet, "dit la présence de l'Être, sa parole

est l'Être présent."¹⁸⁹ This, of course, is central to de Man's refusal to recognize a revolutionary transition from allegorical to symbolic poetry in the late eighteenth-century. But, in a way, he also approaches the 'appeal of Being' described by Heidegger which Hölderlin's poetry forever pursues and thereby manifests:

Leur unité est ineffable et ne peut être dite, car le langage introduit lui-même la distinction. Poussé par l'appel de la parousie, il cherche à établir la présence absolue de l'Être immédiate, mais il ne peut que prier ou combattre, jamais fonder. (812-813)

Hölderlin's complete awareness of the inability of the sign to communicate pure meaning makes de Man's point, but it also propels a Heideggerian pursuit of Being in the direction of the modern; the modern, for de Man's as well as Lacoue-Labarthe's sake, is seen here not as a break from mimesis, but as a turn to mimesis based on an ontology of consciousness rather than an ontology of truth or essential Being. Skepticism turns to the question of the *how* from the question of the *what*.

Heidegger's original question, the "Seinsfrage," is both old and new, a persistent paradox between being and knowing that originated with epistemology in ancient Greece. In the sixteenth century Montaigne observed: "To adjudicate [between the true and the

¹⁸⁹ Though de Man correctly sees Heidegger as a traditional metaphysician pursuing the presence of Being, he apparently chooses to downplay Heidegger's emphasis on the idea that the essence of poetry is historical: "Das Wesen der Dichtung, das Hölderlin stiftet, ist geschichtlich im höchsten Maße, weil es eine geschichtliche Zeit vorausnimmt. Als geschichtliches Wesen ist es aber das einzig wesentliche Wesen" ("Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung," 44). What makes Hölderlin exemplary of great poetry in Heidegger's eyes is the fact that he demonstrates that "Dichtung" cannot be reduced to any common features or qualities that may be preserved and identified through all time: "Aber dieses Allgemeine, das so für alles Besondere gleich gilt, ist immer das Gleichgültige, jenes 'Wesen', das niemals wesentlich werden kann" (32).

false] among the appearances of things, we need to have a distinguishing method; to validate this method, we need to have a justifying argument; but to validate this justifying argument, we need the very method at issue. And there we are, going round on the wheel.” To determine what we know, we require a method, but to determine how we know, we must be able to define what we know. In his essays on Hölderlin, Heidegger relies on a conventional opposition between the human and the divine to distinguish the *what* from the *how*. For Heidegger, human existence is founded in language and, therefore, dialogic (“Wesen der Dichtung,” 36). To avoid an inevitable regression of causal links, he identifies language not as a source of being, but as being itself: “Seit dem die Sprache eigentlich als Gespräch geschieht, kommen die Götter zu Wort und erscheint eine Welt. Aber wiederum gilt es zu sehen: die Gegenwart der Götter und das Erscheinen der Welt sind nicht erst eine Folge des Geschehnisse der Sprache, sondern sie sind damit gleichzeitig” (“Wesen der Dichtung,” 37). Compressing the origin of being and the justification for knowing being (“die Götter”) to a single moment, Heidegger resolves, albeit paradoxically, a dilemma central to the pantheism debate—how to cross the border between the infinite and the finite.

Whether they took any content from Heidegger’s interpretations of Hölderlin or not, the postmodern critics did borrow from his style. They learned *how* to read Hölderlin if not necessarily *what* Hölderlin meant to say. Heidegger turns the causal link in time into a moment of spontaneous identity. Using Hölderlin’s vocabulary gleaned from Jacobi and Mendelssohn’s pantheism debate and inserted into his poem “Wie wenn

am Feiertage...,” Heidegger asks: “Woher aber nimmt [die ‚Allgegenwärtige‘] die Macht, wenn sie das in allem zuvor Gegenwärtige ist?” (“Feiertage,” 52). If one is to speak of an eternal unity of presence, where did it come from? Who made it? Heidegger answers by turning ‘presence’ back on itself, breaking the causal chain in a spontaneous burst of reflective identity: “Die Natur hat nicht irgendwoher noch eine Macht zu Lehen. Sie ist das Machtende selbst. Das Wesen der Macht bestimmt sich an der Allgegenwart der Natur, die Hölderlin, ‘die mächtige, die göttlichschöne’ nennt” (52). In this scenario, power (“die Macht”) is inscribed as a static entity identical with nature. Heidegger then reverses the gesture, making the *what* of a single moment the *how* within a process: “Die Allheit [der] Gegenwart [der Natur] meint nicht das mengenmäßig vollständige Umgreifen alles wirklichen, sondern die Weise des Durchwaltens gerade auch des Wirklichen” (52). The turn relies on the operative verb “walten” in the substantive “Durchwalten” which weaves together the ideas of being and identity (as “ist da”), force and power (as “herrscht”), and cause and effect (as “wirkt”). The word “walten” works as a pivot point for the turn from speaking about fixed essential identities in a Platonic sense to referring to identities in process, identities as the result of relations in the Aristotelian sense, together with all the dynamics of force and power used to describe those relations. Postmodern discourse identifies itself to some degree by virtue of this turn.¹⁹⁰ For Heidegger, as agent and end product are unified in a single ontological

¹⁹⁰ It should be pointed out that though Heidegger speaks of essence as being in process, he does not share the postmodern affection for the infinitely deferred as a movement away from the center. His predilection for overturning and revolution expresses itself more as revelation in words such as “erwachen,” “erscheinen,” “erwecken,” and “Wesenenthüllung.” For him, the truth is essentially within rather than ‘always already’ without.

unfolding, the distinction between the *what* and the *how* is made moot in both senses of the word.

Redrawing the schema with processes, representations, and unfoldings, while discarding the genealogy of things, presences, and fixed identities, Heidegger can bring together opposing terms into a unified concept without flying in the face of or rejecting the principle of contradiction: “Die Allgegenwart hält die äußersten Gegensätze des höchsten Himmels und des tiefsten Abgrundes einander entgegen. Dergestalt bleibt das Zueinander-sich-Haltende in seine Widerspenstigkeit auseinandergespannt. So erst kann das Gegensätzliche in die äußerste Schärfe seiner Andersheit herauskommen” (52). Defining temporal unfolding as essential identity (an extension of time for the thing itself, a compression of time for our understanding of it), Heidegger escapes his own charge of speaking illogical nonsense. Observing Saussure’s insistence on synchrony, postmodern discourse borrows Heidegger’s method of temporal compression in order to formulate the paradoxes that expresses what is being talk about.¹⁹¹

Some critics may object to the term “temporal compression” being ascribed to Heidegger’s method. In his work on time and language in Heidegger and Derrida, Rapaport credits Heidegger with relieving the “temporal constrictions” of the Formalists and New Critics who demand a “strong reader” (or what Eagleton calls an “ideal reader”) who interprets in a totalizing ‘now’. He approves Blanchot’s observations that Heidegger

¹⁹¹ The term “temporal compression” also expresses an apparent urgency of the ‘now’ in postmodern criticism. Blanchot, for example, says: “Un poème n’est pas sans date, mais malgré sa date il est toujours à venir, il se parle dans un ‘à présent’ qui ne répond pas aux repères historiques” (“La parole ‘sacrée,’” 116). Warminski, making an exemplary postmodern method of Blanchot’s observation, considers historical context as a way to avoid reading texts. See his essay “Monstrous History: Heidegger Reading Hölderlin.”

appropriates Hölderlin's poetic language in order to open the relationship between reader and work to "the process of coming or arriving from a poetic and hermeneutical horizon" whereby the "self-presence of the reader or the work is displaced by the destining of thought, the *à venir* of language as openness" (117). And yet, in order to perceive the process of arriving does the reader or observing subject 'prolong' the temporal frame, or in other words, compress time in order to take the process into account? Who is such a reader? Perhaps one who, like the 'anonymous' or 'posthumous' writer of Blanchot's absent book or Barthes's dead author, arrives after the text? What sort of apotheosis transforms the reader or poet into Heidegger's Hölderlin as he is seen by Blanchot—one "who in announcing his arrival in the wake of his being-there (or Dasein) brings into proximity a sacred disseminating temporality by means of reflectively holding time together in an *à venir*, *avenir*, or *advenir* that is literature" (Rapaport, 121)? Such a poet has the power to 'hold', to preserve, to compress time in a manner that accommodates the discourse of presence as well as that of absence.

Though Saussure's tactic is more to freeze language in time, it shares with Heidegger as well as other Structuralists and Formalists such as Todorov and Shklovsky the effect of projecting the reader-subject across time (i.e. compressing time for the sake of understanding). For example, in order to bring the artistic technique into higher relief Shklovsky calls for "slowing down" or "prolonging" perception in order to objectify the text, to divorce it from a 'subjective' interpretation (i.e. one that takes place within a limited time frame) ("Art as device," 12). One criticism that gave rise to 'discourse' and

dialogic approaches such as Bakhtin's, was that structuralism failed to take into account the necessarily temporal act of reading wherein the meaning of a word can change simply by its being repeated. The postmodern paradox, permeated by a language found in Heidegger's essays on Hölderlin, arises out of the recognition of multiple meanings in words combined with the desire to compress those meanings into a single textual moment. To put it another way, meaning in language remains fluid by virtue of its being frozen in time. The 'meaning' of the previous statement lies then not in *what* it says but in *how* it is said.

Blanchot, known for his reading of Hölderlin and Heidegger, addresses a question that occupied the poet and was answered by the thinker. In "The Most Profound Question," Blanchot takes up the matter of a first principle of philosophy or, in other words, the most profound answer. Just as Hölderlin ultimately responded to the question raised by Niethammer—the possibility of an "oberster Grundsatz"—with the idea of an infinite approach, Blanchot defers the dilemma with an infinite conversation, "L'Entretien infini." Both responses, seeking only to 'name the possible and respond to the impossible', take a skeptical stance in the face of the absolute. In doing so, they let the method itself assume what was once the role of a more substantial or manifest foundation. The Romantic infinities and ideals reemerge in more fluid, dynamic forms in postmodern discourse; the "infinite conversation" (Blanchot), the "endless play of signifiers," and the "irreducibly plural" (Barthes) represent a more "literary absolute" (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy). Postmodern skepticism in the manner of Blanchot takes

the form of a method that threatens to devour its young, a *how* that preys on the *what*:
 “The illuminating force that bring to the fore and that is...at the same time what threatens to dissolve it. Questioning is the movement wherein being veers and appears as the suspension of being in its turning” (13). Blanchot clearly plays off the turns in Heidegger’s reading of Hölderlin, turning language to skeptical method.¹⁹² Rather than providing an answer (for the answer no longer forms a reciprocal counterpart to the question)¹⁹³, he tells us only how the question must be answered: “This is [the most profound question’s] solution: it dissipates in the very language that comprehends it” (17). Like Hölderlin and Heidegger, Blanchot establishes the epistemological limit with a paradoxical turn of phrase.

Derrida follows in the tradition of phenomenology à la Husserl and Heidegger that may be historically linked to skepticism. Known for his use of paradoxical puns, Derrida maintains a skeptical stance whereby no hermeneutic of literature is possible.¹⁹⁴ As such, resistance may be considered the characteristic force of post-modern thinking, and experts in Derridean theory will quickly point out that ‘resistance’ is not the same as ‘negation’—deconstruction is not the work of the negative.¹⁹⁵ The language of paradox

¹⁹² Interpreting Hölderlin’s lines, “Darum ist der Güter Gefährlichstes, die Sprache dem Menschen gegeben...damit erzeuge, was er sei” (IV, 246), Heidegger writes: “Die Sprache, das Feld des ‘unschuldigsten aller Geschäfte’, ist ‘der Güter Gefährlichstes’” (“Wesen der Dichtung,” 33).

¹⁹³ Blanchot tells us that each term infuses and possesses its opposite: “But the answer, in answering, must again take up within itself the essence of the question, which is not extinguished by what answers it” (14).

¹⁹⁴ In “Structure, Sign, and Play,” Derrida will not commit himself to either the deconstructive or traditional critical method (293). In this sense he is a methodological skeptic; he will not say *how* we should read. He does, however, see *what* we choose not to see. His ambivalence represents a turning away from “the as yet unnameable” which proclaims itself “under the species of the non-species” in the “form of monstrosity” (293).

¹⁹⁵ See Derrida’s words in Mortley’s French Philosophers in Conversation, pg. 96-97. See also Eagleton, pg. 148.

represents a temporal compression that refuses to accept the alternatives offered by dialectics or binary logic.¹⁹⁶ Derrida uses the “pharmakon” to demonstrate the “ant substance” that “refuses to submit” to analysis, “resists” any conclusive designation, and “exceeds” identity, thus granting philosophy the force of “adversity” to replace any substantial, manifest, or present foundation (Dissemination, 70). Putting so much effort into explicating its paradoxes for the sake of complicating, ‘problematizing’, or otherwise contesting presence and the manifest products of meaning, postmodern skepticism, as Derrida shows us, often takes textual form as the naming of the negative. Deconstruction, as a form of critique in the tradition of Kant, does not investigate empirically or otherwise what a statement means but where it is being made from (i.e. how it is made possible) (Johnson in Dissemination, xv). We are told that reducing deconstruction to a set of tools for the improvement of theoretical systems under analysis is to misunderstand it. And yet, this is how Kant conceives the purpose of skeptical method.¹⁹⁷ The discrepancy asks us to compare postmodern skepticism to that which arose in response to Kant in the philosophy of Schulz and Maimon—a form of skepticism

¹⁹⁶ For a concise list of Derrida’s “non-binary” terms see Johnson’s introduction to Dissemination. The list includes: “pharmakon” (neither remedy nor poison), “supplément” (neither plus nor minus), “hymen” (neither confusion nor distinction, neither identity nor difference), and perhaps the most critical term, the “simultaneous neither/nor” which by compressing their meanings to a single moment allows these binary terms to be non-binary (pg. xvi).

¹⁹⁷ See the first critique, A486/B514-A487-B515.

that, as we have seen, is apparent in Hölderlin's work.

CONCLUSION

Sich orientieren heißt, in der eigentlichen Bedeutung des Worts: aus einer gegebenen Welt gegen (in deren vier wir den Horizont einteilen) die übrigen, namentlich den Aufgang zu finden. Sehe ich nun die Sonne am Himmel, und weiß, daß es nun die Mittagszeit ist, so weiß ich Süden, Westen, Norden und Osten zu finden. Zu diesem Behuf bedarf ich aber durchaus das Gefühl eines Unterschiedes an meinem eigenen Subjekt, nämlich der rechten und linken Hand. Ich nenne es ein Gefühl; weil diese zwei Seiten äußerlich in der Anschauung keinen merklichen Unterschied zeigen.

Kant, "Was heisst: sich im Denken orientieren?" (V, 269)

I have read Hölderlin's Hyperion as an horizon. The horizon is a boundary that marks relative rather than absolute distinctions. The distinction it offers orients the observer, but it is never identical for two different observers at any given moment. It is a limit at which one will never arrive, and yet it creates the appearance of heaven finally meeting the earth. In aesthetics, Hyperion marks the horizon between the ancient and the modern as formulated by A.W. Schlegel, who shows us in his lectures on dramatic art and literature that models are not fixed, but change over time.¹⁹⁸ Hölderlin readily assimilated the philosophical ideas of his time, which were dominated by Kant and defined by the philosophers in Jena. In this arena as well, Hyperion marks distinctions and places of apparent intersection. Hölderlin's work also marks an horizon in the more recent criticism; Henrich, Kurz, and Ryan read Hölderlin microscopically as a reflection of his time, while Blanchot, de Man, Derrida, and Lacoue-Labarthe take broader approaches that project Hölderlin into postmodern times. Both the German and the French critics put Hölderlin on an horizon between philosophy and art. Frank, following Schlegel's lead, marks the point at which philosophy becomes art with 'the riddle of the individual' ("Grundlagen," 108). He also criticizes the French 'neostructural' conception of the self as a return to a monolithic Cartesian subject.¹⁹⁹ The riddle leaves its answer

¹⁹⁸ Szondi reviews Hölderlin's own ideas about the distinction between the ancients and the moderns in "Überwindung des Klassizismus." He stresses that Hölderlin did not adhere so much to Herder's opinion that each period has its own art; rather, Hölderlin sought to identify the "lebendige Kraft" in each epoch as a common source (87).

¹⁹⁹ For a review of Frank's ideas on postmodern subjectivity and a most lucid discussion of the 'individual' (distinguished from the 'subject', which is defined only by self-reflection), see Smith's essay, "The Transcendence of the Individual."

unsaid; it is, as I have argued, the form or closure used by Hölderlin in his novel—the horizon where Hyperion ends.

Criticism lays a trail of things unsaid—a silent trace. That something has been left unsaid is the fundamental assumption that generates criticism. The history of criticism antagonizes claims to and even warnings of totalization, or complete utterance. In the late eighteenth century, leaving something unsaid became a popular way to ‘compose’ an ending—the fragment is one of the period’s most prevalent forms. Then and now endings and closure are seen as problematic. Strict dialectics afford closure, but the dialectic has never been ideal. As a result, its closures often leave large openings. Kant’s resolution of the Paralogisms, for example, sets reason at the foundation of thinking in order to resolve conflict, but for him, reason is infinitely free. Hegel puts God at the end of his philosophy, but we remember that he borrows his notion of God from Böhme, who defined Him as an “Ungrund” or abyss. Behler shifts the attention away from dialectic towards irony in order to more honestly recognize Romanticism’s open structures. Derrida criticizes Hegel for closing off his dialectic and making his negativity an economic principle, showing instead a preference for Bataille’s notion of absolute expenditure. Both Romantics and postmodernists appear to value openendedness over closure, suggesting that a word might be said about Hölderlin’s endings. In, Reading for the Plot, Brooks maintains that endings bring narrative into being by giving it form. His conclusion is certainly true of Hyperion. We look then beyond the horizon of Hölderlin’s novel for both a place to end and a marker for the trail.

“Abendphantasie,” a poem composed the year Hyperion was finally published in its entirety, depicts an ending.²⁰⁰ The plowman’s day is done; the work of tilling and turning comes to a halt. It is time to return home, to put an end to commerce and economic exchange (“Geschäft”) and join together (“gesellen”). These endings echo the movement from revolution to repose in volume two of Hölderlin’s novel, the transition from the dialectical attempt to realize the ideal to its ultimate failure. A thorn, however, still sticks in the narrator’s side; it makes him self-conscious and, therefore, pulls him outside the rhythm of life’s toil and rest: “Wohin denn ich? Es leben die Sterblichen/ Von Lohn und Arbeit; wechselnd in Müh’ und Ruh’/ Ist alles freudig; warum schläft denn/ Nimmer nur mir in der Brust der Stachel?” (ll. 9-12). He desires something beyond the economic, beyond even life’s rhythm of “Müh’ und Ruh,’” and for a moment he drifts amongst the twilight tinted clouds; before him is “die goldne Welt.” His desire for something beyond the economy of daily life keeps him working after hours, and he realizes a profit of sorts—a vision of poetic and spiritual substance. His desire, however, has become a permanent feature of his personal being that fixes him so he may not follow life’s natural cadence as do the others: “dunkel wirds und einsam Unter dem Himmel, wie immer, bin ich--” (ll. 19-20). His utopian reveries of timelessness only show his age, and so he resigns himself: “doch endlich, Jugend! verglühst du ja.” There is the dialectic of economic exchange and production—the ‘Handeln’ of ambition and striving that competes against time. There is also the dialectic that subsumes that of

²⁰⁰ For the complete text, readers may refer to Appendix A.

human endeavor—one that is an inevitable passage of time that undoes any (dialectical) attempt to realize material or spiritually material profit. The failure of the former resigns the narrator to the latter.

“Abendphantasie” ends in “sanfter Schlummer,” a euphemistic expression for the narrator’s final resignation and the abysmal negation it implies. But, Hölderlin’s horizons are not made only for sunsets. “Abendphantasie” was written with a companion piece, “Des Morgens,” first entitled “Morgenphantasie.”²⁰¹ The narrator of “Des Morgens,” like his evening counterpart, watches clouds colored by twilight moving across the sky. The narrator of “Abendphantasie” looks to the clouds for escape. He desires to get outside the ebb and flow of days to a golden world. The narrator of “Des Morgens” is more ambivalent about golden worlds beyond, because the sun in the full light of day is blinding: “Komm nun, o komm, und eile mir nicht zu schnell./ Du goldner Tag, zum Gipfel des Himmels fort!/ Denn offner fliegt, vertrauter dir mein/ Auge, du Freudiger! zu, so lang du/ In deiner Schöne jugendlich blickst und noch/ Zu herrlich nicht, zu stolz mir geworden bist” (9-14). The poem does not offer the mediating indirection of Faust’s waterfall-mist in “Anmutige Gegend.” We are given no sublime reference point to guide dialectical resolution. Hölderlin’s two poems meet in a blank space—in both, the sun is notably absent. The sun is neither named nor seen. “Abendphantasie” and “Des Morgens” capture not the moment of transition, but the moment just after and just prior to transition, respectively. We can only imagine the horizon that marks the transition

²⁰¹ The complete text may be found in Appendix B.

from day to night and night to day. The fact that they are written as separate poems is crucial, for it shows the skeptical nature of Hölderlin's horizon. A skeptical horizon is one that brings two sides together in juxtaposition—a tangency that is made in the eye of the observer, where in fact an absolute gulf exists. If it were not for the distinction here between judgment and being (the observer's "Urteil" and the fact of "Sein"), we would have to express such an horizon in a postmodern paradox: the horizon separates two realms by the very fact that it brings them together. Hölderlin's paradoxes, however, are formulated differently, for he renounces such dialectical productions that would name the negative. Instead, he simply asks the question again as if the riddle were left unanswered.

Wo bist du? trunken dämmert die Seele mir
 Von aller deiner Wonne; denn eben ists,
 Daß ich gelauscht, wie, goldner Töne
 Voll, der entzükende Sonnenjüngling

Sein Abendlid auf himmlischer Leier spielt';
 Es tönnten rings die Wälder und Hügel nach.
 Doch fern ist er zu frommen Völkern,
 Die ihn noch ehren, hinweggegangen.

“Sonnenuntergang” (1799)

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APPENDIX A

Abendphantasie (1799)

Vor seiner Hütte ruhig im Schatten sitzt
Der Pflüger, dem Genügsamen raucht sein Heerd.
Gastfreundlich tönt dem Wanderer im
Friedlichen Dorfe die Abendglocke.

Wohl kehren icht die Schiffer zum Hafen auch,
In fernen Städten, fröhlich verwechselt des Markts
Geschäft'ger Lärm; in stiller Laube
Glänzt das gesellige Mahl den Freunden.

Wohin denn ich? Es leben die Sterblichen
Von Lohn und Arbeit; wechselnd in Müh' und Ruh'
Ist alles freudig; warum schläft denn
Nimmer nur mir in der Brust des Stachel?

Am Abendhimmel blühet ein Frühling auf;
Unzählig blühen die Rosen und ruhig schient
Die goldne Welt; o dorthin nimmt mich
Purpurne Wolken! und möge droben

In Licht und Luft zerrinnen mir Lieb' und Laid!--
Doch, wie verscheucht von thöriger Bitte, flieht
Der Zauber; dunkel wirds und einsam
Unter dem Himmel, wie immer, bin ich--

Komm du nun, sanfter Schlummer! zu viel begehrt
Das Herz; doch endlich, Jugend! verglühst du ja,
Du ruhelose, träumerische!
Friedlich und heiter ist dann das Alter.

APPENDIX B

Des Morgens (1799)

Vom Thau glänzt der Rasen; beweglicher
Eilt schon die wache Quelle; die Buche neigt
Ihr schwankes Haupt und im Geblättern
Rauscht es und schimmert; und um die grauen

Gewölke streifen röthliche Flammen dort,
Verkündende, sie wallen geräuschlos auf;
Wie Fluthen am Gestade, woogen
Höher und höher die Wandelbaren.

Komm nun, o komm, und eile mir nicht zu schnell,
Du goldner Tag, zum Gipfel des Himmels fort!
Denn offner fliegt, vertrauter dir mein
Auge, du Freudiger! zu, so lang du

In deiner Schöne jugendlich blickst und noch
Zu herrlich nicht, zu stolz mir geworden bist;
Du möchtest immer eilen, könnt ich,
Göttlicher Wanderer, mit dir!--doch lächelst

Des frohen Übermüthigen du, daß er
Dir gleichen möchte; seegne mir lieber dann
Mein sterblich Thun und heitre wieder
Gütiger! heute den stillen Pfad mir.

VITA

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