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The Philosophy of Tragedy: The Tragedy of Philosophy.

The Mimetic Interrelationship of
Tragedy and Philosophy in the
Theoretical Writings of Friedrich Hölderlin.

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The Philosophy of Tragedy: The Tragedy of Philosophy.
The Mimetic Interrelationship of Tragedy and Philosophy in the
Theoretical Writings of Friedrich Hölderlin.

Summary.

This study investigates Phillipe Lacoue-Labarthe's claim in "The Caesura of the Speculative" that Hölderlin is a "modern" writer. Its aim is to establish what is at stake in this claim and to evaluate whether it can be substantiated.

In Chapter One I discuss the relationship between tragedy and philosophy. I show that the uneasy relationship between philosophy and the arts is premised upon Plato's understanding and judgement of mimesis. I contrast Plato and Aristotle's treatment of poetry by examining how they understand the mimetic process. In Chapter Two I focus on Hölderlin's understanding of the relationship between Ancient Greece and 18th Century Germany. After discussing the background to Hölderlin's work I provide detailed readings of two texts, The Perspective from which We Have to Look at Antiquity, (1799) and the first letter to Böhlendorff, dating from 1801. I argue that in these texts Hölderlin, through his acknowledgement of the divided nature of Greek culture, offers a unique understanding of the relationship between Greece and Germany which isolates him from his contemporaries. In Chapters Three and Four, I examine Hölderlin's understanding of tragedy. After establishing the centrality of the aesthetic presentation for Hölderlin's project I examine the "poetological" writings which date from 1798-1800. I give a close analysis of the implications of Hölderlin's statement that the tragic "is the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" which occurs in the text On the Difference of the Poetic Modes, (1800), showing why the tragic form is central to Hölderlin's poetological project. To illustrate the problems inherent in this project, in Chapter Four I examine Hölderlin's attempts to write a tragic drama which corresponds to his theoretical beliefs. I discuss the two theoretical texts - The Ground to Empedocles and Becoming in Dissolution - which accompany Hölderlin's drama Empedocles. In analysing these texts I argue that there is an inherent tension between the presuppositions of the theory and the way they can be realised in the drama. In Chapter Five, I turn to Hölderlin's final work, his project to translate Sophocles' tragedies. Through close analysis of the theoretical Remarks which accompany the translations, I show how Hölderlin's theoretical and poetological interests in Greece and Tragedy are brought together through this project. I argue that these texts give an insight into the problems which confront Hölderlin's poetological project. However, simultaneously, these texts provide an alternative way of understanding the function of the tragic form. In this discussion I show how the questions concerning the status of dramatic mimesis and the "mimetic" relation between Greece and Germany coincide in the analysis of Sophocles' dramas.

In conclusion I return briefly to the questions that I raised in the introduction concerning the status of tragedy in the present time, and assess the accuracy of the claim that Hölderlin is a "modern" thinker.

In memory of my mother, Christine M. Chapman.

"...I am her only novel..."

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Greece.

The Greeks as Interpreters. When we speak of the Greeks we involuntarily speak of today and yesterday; their universally known history is a polished mirror, which always reflects something that is not in the mirror itself. We take advantage of the freedom to speak about them in order to be silent about other things - so that these Greeks might themselves whisper something in the ear of the thoughtful reader. Thus for modern man the Greeks facilitate the communication of many things which are difficult or hazardous to communicate.

Nietzsche. Maxims and Propositions no.218.

Tragedy.

What prophecy could still surprise us; could lure from us cries of woe like those uttered by the chorus of old Argive men when they hear it proclaimed that their king is at that moment being slaughtered by their queen?

Aren't we beyond all proclamations and prophecies and so beyond tragedy?

Christa Wolf. Cassandra.

Hölderlin.

If someone looks into the mirror, a man, and sees in it his image, as though it were a painted likeness; it resembles the man. The image of man has eyes, whereas the moon has light. King Oedipus has an eye too many perhaps. The sufferings of this man, they seem indescribable, unspeakable, inexpressible. If the drama represents something like this, that is why.

In Lovely Blueness...

Greece.

Die Griechen als Dolmetscher. - Wenn wir von den Griechen reden, reden wir unwillkürlich zugleich von Heute und Gestern: ihre allbekannte Geschichte ist ein blanker Spiegel, der immer Etwas wiederstrahlt, das nicht im Spiegel selbst ist. Wir benützen die Freiheit, von ihnen zu reden, um von Anderen schweigen zu dürfen, - damit jene nun selber dem sinnenden Leser Etwas in's Ohr sagen. So erleichtern die Griechen dem modernen Menschen das Mittheilen von mancherlei schwer Mittheilbarem und Bedenklichem.

Nietzsche. Vermischte Meinung und Sprüche. 218.

Tragedy.

Welche Prophezeiung könnte uns noch überraschen, uns Ach- und Wehrufe entlocken wie dem Chor der argivischen Greise die Ankündigung, daß sein König gerade von seiner Königin geschlachtet wird?

Sind wir nicht jenseits aller Verkündigungen und Prophezeiungen, also jenseits der Tragödie.

Christa Wolf. Kassandra.

Hölderlin.

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. Der König Oedipus hat ein Auge zuviel vielleicht. Diese Leiden dieses Mannes, sie scheinen unbeschreiblich, unaussprechlich, unausdrücklich. Wenn das Schauspiel ein solches darstellt, kommt's daher.

In Lieblicher Bläue.[1]

Introduction.

"Reflections" on the Problem.

The three epigraphs placed at the beginning of this study delimit its boundaries, introducing the three terms which will act as the touchstones for the argument I will put forward. The three terms - Greece, Tragedy and Hölderlin - are linked together by a fourth, which although not mentioned explicitly in any of the quotations, is intimated by the imagery which they contain. Both Nietzsche and Hölderlin employ the figure of the mirror as their central image. In these quotations the main preoccupation of both writers is to establish the way in which the process of reflection is constructed and understood. The image in the mirror can be described as a mimetic image; it is an imitation. However, as is suggested by both Hölderlin and Nietzsche, the status of this mimetic image can be problematic. The mirror does not reflect a simple imitative representation of what is placed in front of it. Instead, the mirror acts as a site of construction, it constructs that which is presented to the observer. The process of construction develops out of the interpretative interplay between the observer and that which is observed. As this study develops it will be seen that the question concerning the ambiguous nature of the mimetic image underlies the discussion of the other three terms. The terms Greece, Tragedy and Hölderlin are linked by arguments concerning how the term mimesis is understood and employed, which refer both to the terms considered separately and to the relationships between them. In order to establish the relationship between the terms, I shall discuss each one separately, allowing the links and associations between them to develop in a cumulative manner.

O.1. Greece.

The 18th Century's "re"discovery of Greece through the arguments presented in the so-called Quarrel of Ancients and Moderns and the rise of Classicism has cast a shadow over subsequent developments in thought. It is no accident that consideration of the nature of Greek thought and society and its relationship to the present arises at the same time as modes of philosophical thinking become reflexive, when they start to consider their own status and limits. In the desire to understand one's experience of one's own time it is necessary for the "present" to set itself against the past, establishing an historical narrative that provides the present with accounts and explanations of its own identity. This enables a distinction to be drawn between "antiquity" and "modernity".[2] Thus, at least within German thought, Greece becomes the ancient society against which the "modern" is established. As I will show in Chapter Two of this study, the way in which the relationship between Greece and Germany is understood varies according to the respective diagnosis which is given of the nature of the "modern" time. Furthermore, as is shown by Nietzsche's interest in Greece, once a genealogy has been established for the "modern" - more specifically in relation to German thought, once the Greeks have been established as the forebears - each subsequent generation offers its own understanding of this history. This is demonstrated in Nietzsche's early work, both in the published text The Birth of Tragedy and in the *Nachlass* fragments.[3] However, as Nietzsche acknowledges in maxim 218, "The Greeks as Interpreters" in part two of Human, all too Human, the relationship between Greece and the present is not a simple one. When we comment on the Greeks we are not speaking about an ancient society as it actually was. It is impossible to return to, and speak of, the Greeks as they were in themselves. Any discussion

of the Greeks is necessarily an interpretation which is mediated and influenced by the concerns and prejudices of the time in which it is conceived. Thus as Nietzsche states in this maxim, "when we speak of the Greeks we involuntarily speak of today and yesterday". That is, when a thinker attempts to explain the nature of Greek thought and relates it to present concerns, he or she is unconsciously implicated in the process of the construction of the historical narrative which constitutes the genealogy of the present. Such a narrative continues the promulgation of the genealogy, whilst simultaneously offering the possibility of critique. One possible form that this critique may take is suggested by Nietzsche's use of the metaphor of the mirror. As he says, the Greeks'

universally known history is a polished mirror, which always reflects something that is not in the mirror itself. We take advantage of the freedom to speak about them in order to be silent about other things - so that these Greeks might themselves whisper something in the ear of thoughtful reader.[4]

In these remarks Nietzsche suggests that the history of the Greeks operates like the surface of a mirror. Just as the reflection in the mirror offers an image which is created out of what is situated before it, when we look at the Greeks what is projected back is not simply an image of their society as it was. Instead we are also presented with an interpreted image of our own present. This is because the Greek historical "mirror" cannot be observed in isolation. What is seen in this "mirror" always includes a reflection of the person who is looking into it. In the interpretation which is presented, the history of the Greeks and the concerns of the present necessarily coincide. However, the observer does not always acknowledge the presence of him or herself in the reflection. As is suggested implicitly by Nietzsche's maxim, the

discussion of Greece is often an attempt to retreat from the strictures of the present. It is an evasive gesture used to hide away from confrontation with the demands of the moment. However, the "thoughtful reader" (*dem sinnenden Leser*) can interpret what is presented in the history of the Greeks to their advantage, using the analysis as a means of understanding their own time. Thus "for modern man the Greeks facilitate the communication of many things which are difficult or hazardous to communicate." While such communication is risky, because it is "*bedenklich*" it also demands serious thought. It is this ability of the Greeks to reflect the concerns of the present which opens the possibility of analysis and critique. The Greeks act as the interpreters of the present by opening up a space in which contemporary concerns can be expressed and discussed, albeit in a disguised manner.

In the light of these remarks, I want to propose that my use of the term "the Greeks" will function in a similar manner. I am not concerned with a study of the Greeks "in themselves". In Chapter One it will be necessary to return to the Greeks, but this is to establish how the terms tragedy and mimesis are understood in this study. In a sense, it is my attempt to provide the background which will allow me to move on to attempt to employ my own "interpreter" in order to communicate the doubts and concerns of the present. However, before this "interpreter" is introduced, it is necessary to turn to the question of our own "modernity". What is the nature of our present? How is it to be identified and characterised? To start to provide answers to these questions it is necessary to turn to the second touchstone of this study, tragedy.

0.2. Tragedy.

As I remarked at the beginning of the previous section, the desire to understand the past arises out of the need to make sense of the present. It is an attempt to find modes of thought and explanation which will allow the present to be given meaning. For us at the end of the twentieth century, surveying the prospect of the new millennium this need seems all the more acute. The present is perceived as a time of loss and destruction, characterised by a sense of absence. The analysis provided by many contemporary thinkers are uniformly bleak.^[5] In a time which is defined by the loss of the "Grand Narratives" - i.e. the metanarratives, the systems of thought which provided meaning and structure - we are left in a situation where it is increasingly difficult to attribute worth or value.^[6] This is illustrated clearly by the first chapter of Phillipe Lacoue-Labarthe's book Heidegger, Art and Politics, which is entitled "The Age's Modesty".^[7] In this chapter, Lacoue-Labarthe summarises the situation which faces the tradition of philosophical thought in which he works. He argues that this tradition has reached a limit beyond which it cannot pass, creating a crisis that must be addressed. This crisis has not arisen *ex nihilo*, rather it marks the logical conclusion of a particular tradition of philosophical thought.^[8] The thinkers engaged with this tradition are left with the conclusion that the limit which they face is,

...the limit of philosophy: not a limit fixed by external boundaries or assigned to it, nor one imported from elsewhere, but the limit against which philosophy itself has run up, the limit which it has encountered within itself. This is why the recognition of the limit does not oblige one to give up philosophy, any more than it obliges one to repudiate it...

Philosophy is finished/finite. (*La philosophie est finie*); its limit is uncrossable. This means we can no longer - and we can only - do

philosophy, possessing as we do no other language and having not the slightest notion of what 'thinking' might mean outside of 'philosophizing'.^[9]

These statements reflect the mood of exhaustion which is symptomatic of the situation facing this tradition. Although philosophy is able to recognise the limits and constraints against which it is fighting, it can find no way to surpass them. Thus the thinker is left in a double bind; he or she realises that they can go no further using the familiar modes of thought, yet at the same time they must acknowledge that these ways of thinking are the only ones they have. There is no "beyond" of the limit, they must continue within the restraints. The realisation of these limits affects all areas of thought. This situation is exemplified by Lacoue-Labarthe's discussion of the possibility of speaking of "doing wrong" and attributing blame which arises later in the book.^[10] His discussion shows how the efficacy of traditional ethical beliefs and values are brought into question by the breakdown in philosophical thinking. This occurs because the "sacred names" which validated the systems of ethics have been brought into question, thus creating a vacuum at the heart of such judgements.^[11]

It is the experience of this sense of absence and lack of external criteria for validation and judgement which lies at the heart of Christa Wolf's impassioned statement regarding the position of tragedy within the modern world. The appositeness of this statement which creates a link between the theoretical expressions of absence and lived experience is clear. The statement is made in the course of the four theoretical lectures that accompany her novel Cassandra. These lectures themselves can be seen to be symptomatic of the mood of the present. Asked to present a series of "Lectures on Poetics", Wolf feels unable - or unwilling - to offer a systematised analysis of her "theory" of writing.

Instead, the text addresses the question of why Wolf does not have a poetics, basing its arguments on the problem of alienation within the modern world.[12] The way in which this sense of alienation is perceived is summarised by Wolf's statement concerning tragedy: "What prophecy could still surprise us?...Aren't we beyond proclamations and prophecies and so beyond tragedy?"[13] The question raised by this statement concerns what is implied by the remark that we are "beyond tragedy"? What is indicated by the apparent absence of tragedy? These questions lead back to the first touchstone of this discussion, Greece. As I will argue in the first chapter, dramatic tragedy is a unique art form that arose under specific circumstances in 5th Century Greece. Its performance is premised upon the idea that the community can come together to observe the enactment of legends and stories which make up the shared history and consciousness of the society. In order for "proclamations and prophecies" to be recognised and acted upon it is necessary that the society is cohesive, that it shares a common mythology and set of beliefs. However, for us Moderns, this cohesion is absent, we lack belief in the Grand Narratives and thus for us tragedy is apparently an anachronistic form. Tragedy - insofar as it presupposes an external order and cohesion - is redundant in a society in which the guarantees of the validity of the systems of belief are absent. One could almost go so far as to suggest that tragedy, having lost its relevance, has disappeared leaving only a gap, an absence - perhaps a tragic absence - behind. This feeling is captured by Wolf's question "What prophecy could still surprise us?" That is, even if the prophets spoke and they were recognised, their words would just be seen as commonplace, another opinion among the many, with no efficacy or worth to distinguish them from others.

However, is it possible to offer a different way of understanding what is meant by the idea that we are "beyond tragedy"? Can an alternative approach to this question be found? As I hinted above, this absence of tragedy can in itself be viewed as a tragic situation. Furthermore, in describing it in these terms the basis for a re-evaluation of the current situation is provided. Whilst it is clear that we are "beyond tragedy" understood in the Greek sense - and probably it would not be too odd to suggest that the Greeks were themselves beyond it^[14] - could it not be possible to offer a reassessment and re-interpretation of the term so that it is able to address the experience of the present. That is, in naming and describing the situation which we experience we create the possibility of endowing it with value and meaning. However, as was suggested in the first section of this discussion, it is often difficult to provide an assessment of the nature of the present directly, for we are unable to gain the necessary distance and separation. In fact, it could be suggested that it is this lack of distance which accounts for the slightly desperate tone of Lacoue-Labarthe's text discussed above. Thus it is necessary to employ the services of an interpreter, to speak of another in order to allow us to comment on ourselves. In this study, this is the role assigned to Hölderlin.

0.3. Hölderlin.

It is in the work of Friedrich Hölderlin that the two previous discussions coincide. Several recurring themes appear throughout Hölderlin's work, the most prevalent being his overwhelming desire to understand the relationship between Ancient Greece and Eighteenth Century Germany. One way in which Hölderlin approaches this issue is through his attempts to differentiate, and analyse the difference between, the poetic forms, in particular tragedy. This is manifest both in his theoretical writings and in his attempts to write his "authentic"

modern tragedy as is apparent from the drafts for the drama The Death of Empedocles. However the interest in Greece and tragedy is in itself not sufficient to justify my choice of Hölderlin as interpreter over and above his peers. In this period - roughly defined as the era of the inception of the Romantic and Idealist projects, i.e. the period from 1790 to 1802 - exploration of these themes is almost universal. An interest in Greece and in tragedy is shown in various forms of thought and expression and is approached from both a theoretical and practical point of view.^[15] Theoretically, this interest is manifest in both the writings of the Romantic and of the Idealist schools of thought.^[16] As Phillipe Lacoue-Labarthe comments at the beginning of his essay "The Caesura of the Speculative" in Typographies,

...I would like to show - but this is scarcely a thesis, so evident is the point, fundamentally - that tragedy, or a certain interpretation of tragedy, explicitly philosophical, and above all wanting to be such, is the origin or matrix of what in the wake of Kant is conventionally called speculative thought: that is to say dialectical thought... in the earliest stages of absolute Idealism, we find the speculative process itself (dialectical logic) founded quite explicitly on the model of tragedy.^[17]

Lacoue-Labarthe proceeds to show how this "model of tragedy" is utilised in the early work of Schelling and Hegel. However, whilst Lacoue-Labarthe illustrates the validity of this claim, he also wants simultaneously to offer a "counter-example" to this model. He finds this counter-example in the theoretical writings of Hölderlin. As Lacoue-Labarthe admits, Hölderlin's opinions often appear to be close if not identical, to those of his contemporaries. Yet in places, particularly in the later theoretical writings, he does appear to be offering a different understanding of the relation to Greece and an alternative interpretation of the function and role of tragedy. It is the

possibility that Hölderlin might be "different" from his contemporaries that attracts my attention and warrants my choice of Hölderlin as "interpreter". Lacoue-Labarthe claims that in Hölderlin's later dramatic and theoretical writings it is possible to discern a new approach

to the theory and practice of the theatre, in the theory of tragedy and the experience or the testing... of a new kind of dramatic writing. Perhaps simply a new kind of writing: one which is, as he himself and his epoch said, modern.^[18]

It is this suggestion that Hölderlin may be separated from his contemporaries by virtue of the fact that his writing appears "modern" which I want to explore in this study. Whilst I will employ Lacoue-Labarthe's analysis as my starting point, I intend subsequently to refer to this text only obliquely. Rather than reading Hölderlin through Lacoue-Labarthe, I want to return to Hölderlin's own texts in order to generate a reading which is situated firmly in the primary sources. The reason for adopting this approach lies in the fact that Lacoue-Labarthe - whilst providing a brilliant and provocative analysis of Hölderlin's relationship to speculative thought - wants ultimately to subsume Hölderlin's theory of tragedy into his own theoretical work on mimesis. Thus he does not provide a sustained analysis as to why Hölderlin may be considered to be "modern".^[19] It is this form of detailed analysis which I intend to provide. In a certain sense, I will be filling in the gaps in Lacoue-Labarthe's analysis, whilst simultaneously using detailed textual interpretations to show why Hölderlin becomes isolated from the mainstream of philosophical thinking. In so doing I hope to show why Hölderlin's thought can be said to be "modern", ultimately referring the analysis that is developed back to current debates concerning our own present modernity. In particular I intend to use Hölderlin's arguments concerning the function of tragedy as a way of addressing the

questions that I raised in the previous section concerning the apparent redundancy of tragedy in our time.

In response to this proposal it could easily be suggested that my choice of Hölderlin as interpreter is at least idiosyncratic, if not, plainly perverse. Detractors could argue that if I want to start to understand how the present situation arose, I should examine the mainstream theorists who have developed the "philosophical" interpretations and understandings of tragedy - i.e. thinkers such as Hegel - rather than focussing upon minor figures like Hölderlin. He, after all, cannot really be considered to be a philosopher, he is merely a poet - albeit great in this sphere - who displayed philosophical leanings and pretensions.[20] However in reply I want to argue that it is because of these "mainstream" thinkers that we are placed in the situation that we are. Hence, rather than simply tracing back the history of the problem, perhaps it would be useful to examine the figures who have become marginalised by this history, those who offered an alternative way of thinking which was rejected by the mainstream. For in identifying Hölderlin as "modern" are we not implicitly proposing that he had in some sense understood more acutely the possible crises and inherent flaws within the dominant modes of thought of his time? It could be suggested that in a certain sense, the apparently "modern" quality of Hölderlin's thought points to the fact that he identified the problems earlier than other thinkers and was forced to look for alternative solutions. Thus, the ideas which Hölderlin evolved are relevant for us, for the problems they address are similar - but, as I shall show, never identical - to our own. This is not to say that Hölderlin will be able to provide "answers" and "solutions" to the problems that are generated by the breakdown of the "Grand Narratives". However, within his thought it may be possible to find different

explanations and ways to approach the current dilemma. It could be suggested that Hölderlin himself possesses the "third eye" of King Oedipus, which allows him to look beyond the surface of the reflection in the mirror, generating explanations which reveal the depths of the problem he confronts. In looking into the "mirror" of Hölderlin's own text, perhaps we too may be able to gain a similar insight into our own situation.

0.4. The Structure of the Argument.

To conclude this introduction I want to provide a brief outline of the structure of this study and the arguments I shall propose. In Chapter One it is necessary to establish the background of the relationship between tragedy and philosophy and to introduce the main themes of this study. I show that the uneasy relationship between philosophy and the arts is premised upon Plato's understanding and judgement of mimesis. However, to understand why Plato legislates against tragedy it is first necessary to investigate the nature of the Greek tragic drama. Thus in first section of this chapter I discuss Greek tragedy both in terms of its social function and as a dramatic phenomenon. In the light of this analysis, I return to Plato's arguments against the poets in the Republic, showing how his disagreements arise out of a particular, limited understanding of mimesis. In contrast to this, in the final section of this chapter, I examine Aristotle's use of mimesis in the Poetics, to see whether this text can offer a more useful description of the mimetic process.

Having outlined the two opposing readings of mimesis provided by Plato and Aristotle and related the arguments to Greek tragedy, in Chapter Two I turn to Hölderlin's understanding of the relationship between Ancient Greece and 18th Century Germany. Before examining Hölderlin's own texts in depth it is necessary to outline the background to the debate. I first give a brief account

of the evolution of the Quarrel of Ancients and Moderns in German thought, particularly focussing upon the way in which this reintroduces the question of the function of mimesis. Secondly, the immediate background of Hölderlin's thought is established by a brief examination of the writings of Winckelmann and Schiller concerning the relationship to Greece. It is then possible to turn to Hölderlin's own texts. In order to establish how Hölderlin's relationship to Greece differs from his contemporaries, I provide detailed readings of two texts. First, I examine the short fragmentary text The Perspective from which We Have to Look at Antiquity, (1799) showing how its arguments relate to the work of Schiller. I will contrast these arguments with those which Hölderlin presents in the first letter to Böhlendorff, dating from 1801. I argue that in this text Hölderlin offers a unique interpretation of the relation between Greece and Germany which separates him from his contemporaries. In acknowledging that the Greek society is divided, Hölderlin introduces the necessity of a re-evaluation of the nature of the mimetic relationship between Greece and Germany. However, how this re-evaluation is interpreted is a point of debate among Hölderlin commentators. Therefore in order to establish my own assessment of this text it is necessary to outline some of the interpretations that have been given. I focus particularly on the arguments put forward by Peter Szondi and the criticisms which have been offered by Andrzej Warminski.

Having summarised the debate concerning Greece, in Chapters Three and Four, I examine Hölderlin's understanding of tragedy. Again, before examining the theoretical writings in detail it is necessary to establish the background to these texts. Thus Chapter Three opens with a discussion of the issues which are raised in the text that has come to be known as The Oldest System-Programme of German Idealism. In an analysis of this text I show how the

sphere of the aesthetic is placed at the centre of system-thought, re-adjusting the Platonic assessment of the value of art. The ideas proposed by this text are then linked to Hölderlin's own work through a discussion of his novel Hyperion. Having established the centrality of the aesthetic presentation in Hölderlin's work, I examine the so-called "poetological" writings which date from 1798-1800. In these texts Hölderlin introduces his theory of "poetic modes" which outlines the qualities of, and distinctions between, the poetic genres of epic, lyric and tragic. Through an analysis of Hölderlin's statement that the tragic "is the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" which occurs in the text On the Difference of the Poetic Modes, (1800) I show why the tragic mode is central to Hölderlin's poetological project. I argue that the tragic mode becomes the site in which Hölderlin's theoretical and poetological projects coincide. This is because it is through the tragic mode that the relationship with the Absolute is offered. However the way in which this relationship is manifest and understood is very problematic. To illustrate these problems, in Chapter Four I examine Hölderlin's attempts to write a tragic drama which corresponds to his theoretical beliefs. After a brief discussion of the drafts of the drama Empedocles I discuss the two theoretical texts which accompany it. In these texts - The Ground to Empedocles and Becoming in Dissolution - Hölderlin explains the relationship between the dramatic presentation and his theoretical beliefs in greater depth. In analysing these texts I argue that there is an inherent tension between the presuppositions of the theory and the way they can be realised in the drama. It is these tensions which prevent Hölderlin from completing the project of Empedocles.

In Chapter Five, I turn to Hölderlin's final work, his project to translate Sophocles' tragedies. Through a close analysis of the theoretical Remarks which

accompany the translations, I show how Hölderlin's theoretical and poetological interests in Greece and Tragedy are brought together through this project. I argue that through these texts it is possible to gain an insight into the problems which confronted Hölderlin's poetological project. However, simultaneously, these texts provide an alternative way of understanding the function of the tragic form. This analysis brings together the debate concerning the process and function of mimesis which has been developed throughout the preceding inquiries. In this discussion I show how the questions concerning the status of dramatic mimesis and the "mimetic" relation between Greece and Germany coincide in the analysis of Sophocles' dramas.

In conclusion I return briefly to the questions that I have raised at the beginning of this introduction concerning the status of tragedy in the present time and show how these issues can be related to the arguments presented in the course of the study.

Chapter One.

Greece, Tragedy and Mimesis.

1.1. Introduction.

Now, as it seems, if a man who is able by wisdom to become every sort of thing and to imitate all things should come to our city, wishing to make a display of himself and his poems, we would fall on our knees before him as a man sacred, wonderful and pleasing; but we would say that there is no such man amongst us in the city, nor is it lawful for such a man to be born there. We would send him to another city, with myrrh poured over his head and crowned with wool...[1]

Plato reaches this conclusion concerning the position of the poet within his ideal state at the end of the discussion of the appropriate education of the guardians in Book Three of the Republic. Previously, he has argued - in outline - that most poets and dramatists cannot be included in the state because their work is capable of corrupting and confusing the young. Poems and dramas present only imitations of an object or subject, they cannot present the object itself. Furthermore, these imitations are often so accurate - especially in the case of drama - that they can confuse the spectators by leading them to believe in the actuality of what is depicted; thus the rigid differentiation and hierarchical ordering which Plato wants to establish between the Idea, its mode of appearance in the world, and a copy of this appearance, is challenged. However, the poet is not dismissed without receiving honour. Within Plato's discussion there is an implicit admiration and recognition of the skill of the poet. It is clear that the expulsion of the poet occurs on political rather than aesthetic grounds. The poet is viewed as a threat to the basic tenets upon which the state is founded. At the heart of the threat lies the problem of the status of the mimetic process, the imitation; i.e. the introduction of that which

challenges and threatens the theoretical structures upon which the state is built. When it is also taken into account that this state is meant to be the state ruled over by the Philosopher-Kings, it can be seen that more is at stake than simply the ground-rules for a hypothetical system of government. Rather, what is being confronted is the enterprise of philosophy itself. In the denigration of the status of the mimetic arts there can be seen the foundation of the disjunction and dichotomy between philosophy and literature; between the serious and the frivolous; between the "real" and the "mere imitation". In fact, this brief passage contains the embryonic foundations of the traditional structures of philosophy, the oppositions upon which it is constructed, which will enable the great edifices of systems of thought to be built, and in whose ruins we, at the end of the twentieth century, stand.

If it is accepted that the poet poses such a threat to the philosophic enterprise, it is perhaps surprising that he is not disposed of in a quieter manner, simply run out of the city at the dead of night, ostracised, and denigrated. Also, if it is only "mere" appearance that he offers, surely this fact should be instantly apparent to all spectators. However, it is clear that because the threat posed by mimesis is considered so great and potentially problematic, that it must be addressed by more subtle means. At the least it appears that it is unwise to upset the poets, they must be afforded some recognition. Hence the elaborate ceremonies which Plato suggests should accompany their expulsion; they are anointed with myrrh and a "crown of wool [is] placed around their heads". How is this ceremony to be understood? What does it denote? On the one hand the adornments of the poets are similar to those worn by the priest, the celebrant of the sacrifice, yet there are also resonances of the garb of the sacrificial victims themselves.[2] Plato's

honouring of the poets is thus implicitly double-edged. As I will show in the following discussion, the ambiguity of this ceremony reflects Plato's own difficult relationship with the poets and their arts. Whilst for the sake of the philosophical premises of his thought he must necessarily sacrifice the poets, he is still also reliant on their arts and complicity. Whether the poet is viewed as an unnecessary threat which must be eradicated from the state, or an artist who is to be praised and honoured depends upon the attitude that is adopted towards the problem posed by the mimetic relationship.

However, the simple description of the expulsion of the poets does not provide any explanation of the exact nature of the problem posed by the mimetic process as it occurs in the production of the work of art. As I suggested earlier, Plato does not object to the poets on aesthetic grounds - in fact the care which is taken to confront the works of the poet indicates an implicit recognition of their merit. The roots of his hostility lie much deeper for there is something fundamentally threatening and problematic in the notion of the mimetic, the imitation. It is this point that I will address in this chapter. My concern will be to investigate certain aspects of the role and function of mimesis within Greek thought, in particular with respect to the discussion of Greek tragedy. What is the position of tragedy in relation to Greek thought, and what does tragedy demonstrate about the relationship between mimesis and philosophy? This discussion will cover three distinct areas. First, I consider the nature of Greek tragedy itself. Secondly, in the light of what has been established about the unique nature of Greek tragedy, I shall discuss Plato's treatment of mimetic arts and of tragedy in particular in the Republic.^[3] Finally, I shall contrast Plato's opinions with Aristotle's discussion of tragedy in the Poetics, highlighting the difference between their respective understanding

of the term mimesis. Generally, however, the motivation behind these considerations must be borne in mind. My interest in the discussions of mimesis lies primarily in relating the questions and problems which emerge in the discussion of these texts to Hölderlin's work. The underlying possibility which I am exploring is that the problems which Greek tragedy poses for the Greek philosophical enterprise have a direct relevance and relationship to those which are to be found at the centre of Hölderlin's theoretical work.

1.2. The Greek Tragedy.

The possible ambiguity of the title of this section is intentional, if not in fact inescapable. Greek tragedy as a dramatic form is essentially constructed around ambiguity; the ambiguity of knowledge, the impossibility of ever being able to ascertain stability and certainty in relation to oneself and one's position within the world. A similar ambiguity exists in relation to the question of the genesis of Greek tragedy. How, and why, did this apparently singular dramatic form arise within the Greek society? The only real certainties that can be established about the form are that its inception, period of flourishing, and decline occurred in one site in the space of less than 100 years - between the 6th and 5th centuries BC - which corresponds roughly with the most successful period of Athenian democracy. When the influence and significance of these works are placed alongside and against the actual duration of their flourishing, a striking degree of incommensurability is instantly visible. It appears extraordinary that a form which arises in such a limited time and area could exercise such an immense and universal influence over all subsequent centuries. What is specific to Greek tragedy that inaugurates and ensures its survival and apparently continuing relevance? To examine this question it is necessary for it to be considered from two distinct points of view. First, the relation between

the state and the tragedy needs to be established. Secondly, the nature of the dramatic presentation itself needs to be reviewed. It will become clear in the ensuing discussion that these two aspects are not mutually exclusive; in fact the problems of the state enter and inform the drama and vice versa, creating a situation where tragedy is to be understood as the site where a set of problems concerning the identity of the state, and thus by inference, the identity of its subjects, are made into - literally, in the case of the dramatic presentation - the focus of debate. Hence it is apparent, even from this preliminary outline, that the issues which lie at the heart of this discussion are concerned with the particular nature of the Greek dramatic presentation; i.e. with the issues introduced by the mimetic art of drama.

Greek tragedy was performed at a certain specific time and place within the city state. It occurred at the festival entitled the City or Great Dionysia. The competition between the three selected playwrights was only part of the celebrations and rites of the festival.^[4] Many commentators have interpreted the function of the festival as a time of release and excess - undoubtedly reading back Aristotle's discussion of the cathartic effect of tragedy onto their understanding of the festival - concluding that it was primarily a religious and ritualistic festival.^[5] However, other more recent commentaries, whose research is based on reconstruction of the fragmentary primary evidence, suggest that this is only a partial understanding of what occurred. To substantiate the claims that a wider understanding of the function of the tragedy is necessary, one need go no further than a contemporary Athenian proverb which said that the rituals of the festival had "nothing to do with Dionysus"^[6]. That is, whilst the festival may have been held under the name of Dionysus, and the God's statue paraded to the theatre on the first day of the competition and

established in the place of honour overlooking the action that would unfold on stage, the events which followed bore very little relation to the excesses and debauchery which the 5th century Athenian would have associated with Dionysian celebration. In fact what emerges from the accounts of the events of the festival is that these events were primarily civic occasions, undertaken with a great degree of ceremony and officialdom, and that they were informed by rigid structures and traditions of pageantry. It is evident that this was a situation where the city itself was put on display; an occasion when the thirteen tribes that made up the ruling families of the city were brought together in a common arena and with a common purpose.^[7] Undoubtedly the main event of this festival is the competition between the plays, but even this takes place within a rigid framework of rules and laws concerning the form of the performance, the way in which it is to be judged and by whom. Thus, as Simon Goldhill writes in his discussion of the festival,

...the Great Dionysia is in the full sense of the expression a civic occasion, a city festival...The Great Dionysia is a public occasion endowed with a special form of belief. This is fundamentally and essentially a festival of the democratic *polis*.^[8]

However as Goldhill then emphasises,

After such preplay ceremonies, the performances of tragedy and comedy that follow could scarcely seem - at first sight - a more surprising institution...For both tragedy and comedy, in their transgressive force, in their particular depictions and use of myth and language, time after time implicate the dominant ideology put forward in the pre-play ceremonies in a far from straightforward manner; indeed the tragic texts seem to question, examine and often subvert the language of the city's order.^[9]

A brief examination of the plots of a representative selection of the extant tragedies supports this statement. It is clear that there is a radical

disjuncture between the pageantry of the festival itself which celebrated the stability and wealth of the city, and the events of the plays themselves which depicted cities and families at war, clashes occurring both between and within rival groupings.^[10] There cannot be any simple contrast drawn between the stability of the city which hosts the plays and the dramatic depiction of these alien places which are subjected to division and strife. Rather, as Goldhill emphasises, the problems and conflicts raised by the plays precisely call into question the basic tenets of this host society itself. Furthermore, when the themes of the surviving tragedies are examined, it is clear that they are constructed around the essential problems or ambiguities of the relation between the individual and the state, or the problem of defining the individual's position within the society. From this discussion it can be concluded that a fundamental tension is established between the tragedy and the context of its performance. Not only does an ambiguity exist within the tragedy itself, but this can be extended to the position which tragedy occupies within the functioning of the state.

What does the tragedy contain which generates this tension and ambiguity? How is the tension created and sustained? The answers to these questions are related to the main theme of this discussion; the problem of the potentially ambiguous status of the mimetic presentation. In the staged drama the audience is presented with the depiction of a series of events which is a literal enactment and embodiment of the contradictions of their own society. Although the events of the tragedies refer back to another era, to the past age of heroes,^[11] the tragic dramatist re-works and reinterprets these myths so that they reflect the ambiguities and dilemmas of contemporary society. It is no accident that the language of the tragedy frequently employs legal terminology,

basing argument and justification of action upon the claims of law, e.g. the rights of the familial law versus the rights of the law of the state, that is the law of the *oikos* versus the law of the *polis*.^[12] As Jean-Pierre Vernant points out in his essay "The Historical Moment of Tragedy in Greece", the "moment" of the irruption of Greek tragedy is the time when the society begins to attempt to codify and regulate the differing claims of opposing notions of *Dike*, justice. The tragedy is built upon the tensions which arise from the differing world-views which are competing for dominance within the Athenian state. It reflects the claims of the values which originate in the historical past, where the law is equated with the divine law, and opposes to this the questions which arise out of the need to establish forms of law which are appropriate to the establishment of a democratic *polis*. Even in those tragedies which do not have the interpretation of law as the dominant theme of the plot, the language which is used to describe any conflict that occurs is predominantly technical, employing the new linguistic distinctions established by the law of the Athenian democracy. Thus,

What tragedy depicts is one *dike* in conflict with another, a law that is not fixed, shifting and changing into its opposite. To be sure tragedy is something that is quite different from a legal debate. It takes as its subject the man actually living out this debate, forced to make a decisive choice, to orient his actions in a universe of ambiguous values where nothing is ever stable or unequivocal.^[13]

It is this notion of acting out, of living out, the debate which introduces the element of the mimetic. As I mentioned previously, the tragedy combines two separate, and in a sense, mutually exclusive ages; the characters depicted on the stage come from the mythology of the society, they refer back to the age of heroes, yet the reinterpretation of the myths by the 5th century dramatists

introduce the contemporary debates of the society. Thus, these two aspects are brought together and held in tension within the drama. What is given on the stage is a literal enactment of the problems and quarrels of the society as it attempts to establish its own unique identity. It is this which differentiates tragedy from the art forms which had evolved previously. The lyric and the epic both take as their subject matter the events of the age of heroes, yet they differ from tragedy in two crucial, related ways. First, these forms do not introduce the contemporary problems into the development of the narrative, rather they simply recount the events that occurred. Secondly, - and this arises as a consequence of the first point - the narrative is related predominantly in the third person, it is a distanced account of events, rather than it being viewed as an enactment. The rhapsode who is reciting epic verse never claims to adopt the persona of any of the heroes completely. Even when he speaks in the first person, it is clear that there is still a separation between the assumed character and the orator; the adoption of the persona is not a literal embodiment, what is spoken is still seen as an account.^[14] However in tragedy this separation disappears;

What the public sees before it in the theater is not a poet recounting the trials withstood in ancient times by men now gone, whose absence is, so to speak, implied by the very narration. Instead, those trials take place before its very eyes adopting the form of real existence in the immediacy of the performance. The tragic poet becomes totally invisible behind the characters on the stage, acting and speaking for themselves as if alive. In Plato's analysis, it is this directness of speech and action that constitutes the essence of mimesis: Instead of speaking in his own name and recounting events indirectly, the author disappears inside the protagonists and apes them by taking on their appearance, manners,

feelings and words. The precise meaning of *mimeisthai*, to imitate, is to simulate the presence of one who is absent.[15]

These remarks summarise succinctly how the tragic form introduces the problematic elements of dramatic mimesis. Unlike those genres which had been established earlier, it is only with the emergence of tragedy that the mimetic is fully brought into consideration. Within the lyric and the epic, the characters within the narration have only a two dimensional existence; what is given is an account of an event, the subject has no existence independent of the narration, what is given is clearly a relayed account of the events. However in the staging of the tragedy the characters take on a three dimensional form. On the stage the events of the narrative become literally embodied. In dramatic mimesis, what is shown is a concretized presentation of the characters of the tragedy; they are given, in a certain sense, an autonomous identity. Yet the status of this identity is ambiguous, for as Vernant states, "the precise meaning of *Mimeisthai*, to imitate, is to simulate the presence of one who is absent." This "precise" definition of *Mimeisthai* highlights the specific nature of the problem introduced by the dramatic presentation. The process of imitation is premised upon the interplay of presence and absence. The imitation "simulates the presence of one who is absent"; i.e. the status of that which is presented is always necessarily indeterminate. As I will argue, it is this essential indeterminacy of the status of that which is presented which Plato perceives as the greatest threat to his theoretical schema and which provides him with the motivation to legislate against the poets.

How, then, is the mimetic presentation to be understood? Furthermore, what is the relation between the tragedy and the spectator? This discussion of dramatic mimesis suggests that the relation between the spectator and the image is

highly problematic. This relationship contains many ambiguities which exist on several levels and with varying degrees of complexity. It is clear that not only is the status of the represented character brought into question, but that this in turn also problematises the identity of the spectator. First, if it is accepted that on one level, the spectator is perceiving an image of themselves - i.e. what is presented before them on the stage is a human subject, albeit from a mythical past - the unfolding of the drama demonstrates that the identity of this subject is a problem for the society. The ambiguity that surrounds the identity and actions of the tragic character calls into question the identity of the perceiving spectator. The tragic presentation challenges the spectator's own epistemological and ontological beliefs. For example often the play "questions" the sense of selfhood and identity which the Athenian city-state is developing. This is not to say that the term "subject" is being used here in its contemporary Twentieth Century understanding. The Greek conception of subject differs from our own in that there is a lack of reflexivity in the former.[16] The subject is not so much an agent who acts but rather an agent who is acted upon. It is this which creates the potential for the tragic confrontation, for whilst such agents often consider they are acting in an autonomous manner, what will be revealed in the unfolding of the dramatic narrative is that their action is also dependent upon external forces, events and causes. It is through the action that the character's true identity is established, rather than there being an identity which exists and survives outside of this action. It is in this tragic confrontation that the challenge to the identity of the observer occurs. For example, on an epistemological level, the actions of the character call into question the status of human claims to self-knowledge and judgement. This is epitomised by the figure of Oedipus. On an ontological level, the nature of the human is questioned. This is exemplified in the interplay between the tragic

protagonists and the chorus where the chorus comments upon the events that have occurred and tries to attribute to them order and meaning. The most obvious instances of this occur in Sophocles' Theban Plays; e.g. the Ode to Man in Antigone, and also in the remarks made by the chorus in relation to the appearance of Oedipus after his self-blinding.^[17]

These problems are compounded further by consideration of the status of the dramatic presentation. First, there is a tension in the relation between the spectator and the character presented on the stage in that the problematic status of the dramatic presentation also challenges the status of the spectator. It might be presumed that it is easy to differentiate between these two, for the character embodied in front of the spectator is merely illusory, it is a simulation. However, whilst on one level what is presented is an "illusion", on another, it is as "real" as the observer themselves. As Vernant remarks, the poet disappears into the characters on the stage, his voice merges with theirs, and this problematises how the status of the characters is to be understood. There is no longer the rigid separation between the narrator and that which is narrated. Rather, both coincide in the figure which is presented on the stage. Again, to understand the exact nature of this problem it is necessary to refer back to the precise definition of *Mimeisthai* which has been given: namely *Mimeisthai* means "to simulate the presence of one who is absent." This definition emphasises that the root of the problem lies in how that which is "presented" is understood. It acknowledges the fact that the drama offers concrete representations, it presents one who is absent; yet this presentation is also a simulation. Hence the paradoxical situation arises in which the figure presented on the stage both is, and is not, what it claims to be. This description of the fundamental ambiguity of the ontological status of that which

is presented allows several conclusions to be drawn. First, it indicates that there is a fundamental break between the Athenian world-view and the Age of the Heroes to which the dramas allude. The plays demonstrate the division, the break which marks the separation of the Athenian-Greeks from their mythological past. The Gods themselves no longer appear among men, all that is possible is their simulation in the drama. The tragic dramatic form indicates that the Greeks lack an immediate relationship to their Gods. Knowledge of the Gods can only be communicated in a mediated form, through the way in which they are manifest in the drama. As I will argue in subsequent chapters, it is the recognition of the essentially divided nature of Greece which is crucial to an understanding of Greek drama and helps to account for the apparent "modernity" of the Greeks.

The second conclusion that can be drawn from the ambiguous status of the dramatic presentation relates to how the figure on the stage is to be interpreted. In the Greek drama the figure presented on the stage claims to be, in a certain sense, the figure who is absent. It adopts the name, the position, even the history of the absent character. Thus it can be seen that the figure on the stage is, and is not, simultaneously, what it claims to be. This situation arises out of the way in which the drama presents the character as embodied, understood in both senses of the word; i.e. the character has a physicality, it is corporally embodied, and furthermore in the course of the unfolding of the narrative of the drama, it takes on the life of the figure: in the performance of Oedipus Rex, Oedipus is Oedipus. Within the world opened up through the dramatic presentation this is his identity. The ambiguous status of the dramatic figure subverts attempts to claim that what is presented is a "mere simulation" for it begs the question concerning the status of the "original" of which this

is supposed to be a simulation. This consideration disrupts the belief that it is possible to make the apparently simple distinction between that which is a simulation and that which is real. Instead of there being two separate sites, one of which contains the original, one the copy, the implication of this discussion is that it is impossible to see them as two distinct entities each within separate ontological spheres. Any discussion of origin, or the original, is effectively annulled. Rather, the play of presence and absence which defines the mimetic relationship highlights that there can only be the site of the presentation itself. The mimetic presentation must be understood as an active process which constructs that which is presented.

This conclusion also necessarily affects the way in which the status of the spectator who views this process is understood. In the same way that there cannot be a rigid distinction drawn between the object of imitation and the imitation itself, there also cannot be such a differentiation between the observer of the drama and the drama itself, as a single event. In calling the status of the figure on the stage into question the possibility of attributing an autonomous identity to the spectator is also challenged. The identity of the spectator is constructed in and through the viewing of the drama.^[18] The stage of presentation is not simply to be understood as the stage in front of which the spectator sits and on which the drama unfolds. Rather, the spectator becomes part of this stage; the play of presence and absence which constitutes the mimetic relationship must be extended to cover the status of the observer of the drama. - I will return to these issues in subsequent chapters and discuss them in greater depth when I consider Hölderlin's understanding of the nature of the dramatic presentation.

This discussion has shown that in placing identifiable apparently autonomous figures upon the stage, Greek tragedy unleashes the full force of the mimetic process. Dramatic mimesis introduces the potential for disruption and problematisation of the way in which the autonomous identity of the presented object is to be understood. The tragic presentation demonstrates the fundamental instability of the status of that which is presented, it complicates the meaning of terms such as the "real", "the illusory" and introduces the problem of providing any foundational certainties as to the status of that which perceived within the sphere of the mimetic. However, it is crucial to note that this form of analysis is necessarily retrospective. It is only from the position of the present that these problems can be identified, or even be labelled as "problems" as such. For mimesis only becomes a problem after thought has taken the fatal step towards becoming *theoria*, when questions are asked which demand foundational answers, which in itself is a concretization of the processes of thought. That is, mimesis only becomes problematic when philosophy labels it as such.^[19] Mimesis in itself is not a problem, in fact it is the dynamic process through which drama is constructed. Mimesis opens up the possibility of the realm of the imagination, of art, of the aesthetic, for in practice it simply denotes the process of creation. As Paul Ricoeur states, "mimesis is not a copy; mimesis is poesis, that is, construction, creation..."^[20]. I will return to this designation in the third section of this chapter when I discuss Aristotle's definition of mimesis in the Poetics. At its root mimesis is always something other to theory, the mimetic process functions in such a way as to call any theoretical framework in which it is placed into question. Hence, perhaps, Plato's anxiety about the function of the poets within his republic.

Two main points can be drawn from this discussion. First, as I emphasised in the first part of this section, Greek tragedy must be understood as an unique art form which arises at a specific time and place as a response to a particular set of needs and circumstances. It arises in a specific historical context in the development of Western Civilisation. It marks the advent of the concept of the political man, when human beings start to adopt an autonomous identity and to establish rules and laws to govern society. Tragedy therefore arises as the form which reflects the conflicts between the new and old ways of thought and expression. It presents the society with a mirror in which its own problems are reflected. This is not to say that the function of the tragedy is to resolve these conflicts, in fact, it is impossible with any degree of certainty to attribute a definitive "meaning" to the tragedy of the Greeks. Any interpretation that is given - including this one - is necessarily coloured by the historical demands of its own present. Hence tragedy in its original form must considered to be a specifically Greek phenomenon. This does not mean that it cannot be re-interpreted, but, as I suggested in the introduction to this thesis, the necessity of the re-interpretation must be acknowledged. The second conclusion that can be drawn from this section concerns the way in which the Greek tragedy introduces the problem of the status of the staged presentation. In placing figures on the stage, the tragedy introduces the power of dramatic mimesis into the society. Mimesis is to be understood as the process through which the tragic drama is constituted. However, the analysis of the functioning of mimesis within tragedy which I have given demonstrates that the mimetic process problematises how both the object of imitation and the imitation itself is to be understood. That is, the dramatic presentation challenges the new forms of thought which also arise as a consequence of the establishment of the Athenian democracy. As I will show, for Plato, tragedy is corrupting precisely

because it challenges the basic presuppositions of the new modes of thought which he wishes to introduce.

How does Plato achieve this limiting of the power of the tragedy? What controls must he impose on the form so as to ensure its subjugation, and by implication the limitation of the effects of the disruptive influence of mimesis? For if it is correct to assert that the control of mimesis has occurred only by the imposition of laws alien to the process itself, is it possible to understand these constraints as themselves being subject to subversion by that which they are apparently limiting. How secure a safeguard is the simple expulsion of the Poets out of the front gates of the city? - especially if the ceremonies which this entails means that the back gate is left unguarded, unmanned, and thus vulnerable to attack.

1.3. Plato, Mimesis and Tragedy; The Expulsion of the Poets.

Plato's arguments against the poets vary, depending upon the context in which the issue is raised. As was suggested in the introduction to this chapter, the need to exclude the poets is not simply political, it is not to be seen as a ploy to exclude the undesirables from the society. The problem is much more pressing: the threat which the poets pose is to the philosophical enterprise itself; they challenge the basic presuppositions upon which the philosopher-ruler establishes his authority. The nature of the challenge is elaborated at two specific points in The Republic, first in the initial discussion of the education of the guardians in Book Three and secondly in the discussion of art in Book Ten. The fact that the problem of the status of the poets merits two separate discussions is not to be overlooked, because this in itself suggests that Plato considers that the arguments need to be returned to and re-emphasised. The actual positioning of the arguments is also of importance and I will return to

this point after the arguments that are set out in these two sections have been examined in more detail. At this stage it is sufficient to point out that between Book Three and Book Ten Plato establishes the need for a philosopher-leader by recourse to the analogies of the cave and the line. Thus, the polemics against the works of the poets, their "mere imitations", surround the philosophical core of the book, which is itself outlined in the form of a fiction, of an allegory. The potential for irony here is unmistakable.

The arguments against the poets which are put forward in Book Three arise out of a discussion of the form of education appropriate for the Guardians of the Republic. Plato has established that the ideal Republic will need a class of people whose task will be to lead and govern; these are the Guardians, a group of people who are by nature "philosophic, spirited, swift and strong."^[21] This emphasis on the "correct" set of qualifications for the role of Guardian is important insofar as it allows Plato to start his attack upon the poets. Previously he has argued that the best way to ensure the smooth operation of a society is for each citizen to have an assigned role and function which it is their duty to fulfil. Thus a person should only have one skill which they carry out to the best of their abilities. Furthermore this insistence on specialisation ensures the maximisation of efficiency within the state. However the poet and dramatist challenge these presuppositions in that within the enactment of a drama the player takes on a role which is other to his own nature, and often plays two or three roles.^[22] According to the logic upon which the state is built, this form of role playing is to be understood as inferior and possibly disruptive, for it appears to challenge the premise that it is only possible to play one role correctly. Thus Plato argues,

Does this follow from what went before - that each one would do a fine job in one activity, but not in many, and if he should try to put his hand to many, he would surely fail of attaining fame in all?

Of course that's what would happen.

Doesn't the same argument hold for imitation - the same man isn't able to imitate many things as well as one?

No he isn't.

Then, he'll hardly pursue any of the noteworthy activities while at the same time imitating many things and being a skilled imitator...[23]

This argument enables Plato to conclude that the occupation of the poet is necessarily inferior to that of the other craftsmen, because it lacks the specialisation which is inherent in the definition of the craftsman's skill. The poet only imitates (the Greek term used here is *mimesis*) the skills of the craftsman, he does not actually have the skills himself. However it is clear that this argument is not sufficient in itself to dismiss the works of the poets. The discussion which surrounds this argument indicates that often the skill of the poet is so great that it leads the spectator into believing that the actor is capable of portraying the craft or the role. Therefore, the need to legislate against the poets stems not so much from the fact that they produce manifestly inferior works, but rather that their works are so good that they confuse the spectator and therefore by implication, upset one of the basic tenets used to justify the structure of the society. Again here the potential power of *mimesis* is revealed, simply through the evident need to legislate against it. This point is emphasised further by the discussion which follows, where Plato argues that if the Guardians are to take part in the drama as part of the process of education they can only play roles which are appropriate for their future careers; i.e. they are only to play characters suitable to them, namely "men

who are courageous, moderate, holy, free and everything of the sort"[24] The reason for this is made blatantly clear by Plato's subsequent query: "Haven't you observed that imitations, if they are practised continually from youth onwards, becomes established as habits and second nature, in body and sounds and in thought?"[25] This query implies that the influence of the effects of the mimetic process is more insidious and pervasive than might at first be thought, for if the imitation becomes "second nature" it leads to a situation where it is difficult to distinguish between what is an affectation and what is the actual behaviour which is true to a person's nature. Therefore through mimesis a person may start to become something other than their true nature. The danger that this poses for Plato's project is clear, for it confuses the rigid distinctions that are being made between the proper and improper. Here again it is apparent that mimesis must be legislated against not because it produces merely inferior copies, but rather because it challenges the rigid categorisation upon which such distinctions themselves are based. Furthermore, it raises the possibility that Plato's own role within this enterprise may also be brought into question, for he too has to be seen as a writer, one who engages with the mimetic arts. The question that this raises is how many roles is Plato himself playing within this text? As he suggests, writing is the mimetic form par excellence. As may be suspected with any successful mimetic project, this question will return, and will have to be subject to closer examination later in the discussion.

However the argument outlined above does not seem to provide sufficient justification for the outlawing of the poets, for as has been argued, it justifies their expulsion on purely political terms. That is, the poets must be expelled because they encourage the type of behaviour which is not appropriate to the

ideal state. If these political arguments are challenged, is Plato able to justify his actions by recourse to a more theoretically sophisticated argument? Another, more philosophical argument, does underpin the argument which has just been discussed. It focusses upon the effect of the content of the drama rather than its form. This argument is concerned primarily with the epistemological status of that which is presented by the poet, and the way that these images challenge the way in which the notions of truth and falsity, fictionality and fact are to be understood. Plato argues that it is necessary to use stories in order to educate the mind. These stories are necessarily fictional. However, within the realm of the fictional, there are some stories which contain more truth than others, for the legends and myths often misrepresent that which they are depicting, showing the protagonists carrying out deeds which are either unsavoury or alien to their character. An example of this is the manner in which the Gods are depicted. Gods, by definition, are perfect beings, therefore any representation of them must correspond to this description. However, in many of the legends the Gods are depicted as either acting evilly or imperfectly and changeably. Because of this, these legends are to be understood as less truthful and should not be used by the poets. Using these criteria Plato is then able to establish the correct material for the poets to use in their writings. The criterion which Plato is using here demands that the work should strive to attain a degree of verisimilitude. The way in which this is to be judged links back to the previous argument in that what should be shown is the character acting in accordance with their nature; i.e. God should be perfect, a king just etc. However, in this section there is still no exterior justification given as to why these criteria should be adhered to. This discussion also indicates that the term mimesis is being employed in a certain very specific sense. In the demand that the work should display some degree of

verisimilitude, Plato is employing a very static notion of mimesis. He focusses upon the content of the mimetic presentation rather than the actual process whereby the representational object is created. In concentrating upon the object itself, Plato is able to offer a critical judgement which establishes whether the work is a good or bad, truthful or untruthful imitation. However as was suggested at the end of the previous section, this is only a partial understanding of the function of the mimetic process which perhaps ignores its most powerful dimension. To concentrate upon the object itself may enable Plato to pass judgement upon the mimetic process, but as will be shown, this also means that he leaves the most problematic aspect of the mimetic relation untouched. That is, he ignores the dynamic, creative movement of mimesis which enables the production and presentation of the objects. Thus this dimension is not directly affected by the form of legislation which is brought against the work, allowing for the possibility of its return to haunt the text.

It is only in Book Ten when Plato returns to his discussion of art that he is able to provide reasons as to why the judgements he has passed upon the works of the poets and dramatists are correct. However the reasoning he employs is dependent upon the arguments which have been established in Book Six concerning the theory of forms. These arguments establish a rigidly hierarchical metaphysical schema which judges the veridical statusvalue of phenomena by reference to a distinction between appearance and reality. This schema justifies the denigration of art by stating that it is "mere imitation" and therefore does not have access to truth, this being defined as existing only in the realm of ideas. Therefore at the beginning of Book Ten, before Plato starts to reiterate why the poet should be excluded, he states that the poet "if he is an imitator; he is naturally as it were a third remove from a king and the truth, as are

all the other imitators"[26] In this remark, Plato acknowledges that his reasons for excluding the poets arise out of his metaphysical beliefs. This is confirmed by the subsequent exchanges. Plato writes,

I also recognize in many other aspects of this city that we were entirely right in the way that we founded it, but I say this particularly when reflecting upon poetry.

What about it?

In not admitting at all any part of it that is imitative. For that the imitative, more than anything, must not be admitted looks, in my opinion, even more manifest now that the soul's forms have been separated out.

How do you mean?

Between us - and don't denounce me to the tragic poets and all the other imitators - all such things seem to maim the thought of those who hear them and do not have the knowledge of how they really are as an antidote.[27]

In this exchange Plato indicates that he is aware that his treatment of art can only be justified on the basis of the imposition of the theory of forms. This theory, in that it establishes the "real nature" of art, enables him to substantiate the claims which he has made in Book Three. In arguing that the artist merely copies that which is in itself a copy of the form, Plato is able to employ an argument which establishes that the skill of the artist is necessarily less than that of the craftsman. This is because the craftsman creates the object in relation, and with reference, to knowledge of the form itself. However the artist only creates his work by reference to the object created by the craftsman. Hence the claim that the work of art is a "third remove" from the truth. These arguments deny the validity of any objection which appeals to the apparent "reality" of that which is presented by the

artist, annulling their relevance automatically. Anyone who wants to make a claim about the status of the work of art has been simply seduced by its power, they have been deceived by its illusions. It is therefore impossible to challenge Plato's characterisation on its own terms. This schema manages to impose a set of criteria which allows for the denigration of the artist and his skills, for built into these criteria is the explicit assumption that the artist "knows nothing worth mentioning about what he imitates; imitation is a kind of play and not serious; and those who take up tragic poetry in iambics and in epics are all imitators in the highest possible degree".[28] This prescriptive denunciation of the status of the work of the art - in particular, the tragic drama - enables Plato also to apply his arguments to the spectator, and to create a distinction between those who are seduced by art and those who are aware of its inferior status. In turn this leads him to create a division between the irrational arts of poetry and drama, which appeal to the lower elements of the human - i.e. to emotion and feelings - and the higher rational elements of thought which pursue the quest for wisdom and justice by recourse to theoretical modes of explanation.[29] This distinction can therefore be understood as the first systematic manifestation of the division between philosophy and the aesthetic.

However, is this rigid schematism as invincible and invulnerable to attack as it at first sight appears to be? For all the explanations given here still do not explain why Plato feels it necessary to attack and denounce the poets whilst at the same time apparently honouring them. To address this question further, it is necessary to return to the last remark that Plato makes in the passage cited earlier, for two equivocal - and thus potentially useful - utterances are to be found here. In the first Plato is adamant that the works of the poets will

harm the observer; so adamant, in fact, that he demands that the observer is given an "antidote" to ward off the effects of the imitative arts. The Greek terminology used here is very interesting in that the word that is translated as "antidote" is in fact the medical term *Pharmakon*, a drug that can be used as both a poison and a cure.[30] Thus Plato is demanding that the observer must have taken the correct dose of Platonic theory before watching the drama so that they are able to see the spectacle for what it is; so they are able to observe the "mere imitations" that are presented before them, and so that they can subsequently be able to attribute it to the correct theoretical category. However, if the double-edged meaning of the term *Pharmakon* is taken into account, is it not equally possible to suggest that this prescription of Platonic theory can in fact also be understood as a poison? As it is expressed in the translation, the theory offers an "antidote" to the observer to protect them from the effects of the drama, but what is there to prevent an outsider from suggesting that this "antidote" is to be understood more as a drug which controls and allows the observer to see only that which the state wants; i.e. it is the introduction of a theoretical filter which acts as the poison which leaves the observer immune to the troublesome disruptive effects of mimesis. The introduction of the theoretical understanding of mimesis "poisons" the observer to any other point of view; i.e. they become blind to the potentially disruptive movement of that which is presented to them, they refuse to see the process of mimesis. Furthermore, like any successful poisoner, Plato is fairly subtle in his administration of the lethal prescription, he is able to seduce at least some observers into believing in the "good" of this poison. It is the philosophers who swallow the largest draft of the Platonic *Pharmakon* and this has far reaching consequences. For Plato's prescriptive judgement against the poets

introduces the modes of thought and methods of enquiry which will come to be used as the touchstone for all subsequent philosophical investigations.

However, not everyone is prepared to accept the Platonic *Pharmakon* readily and unquestioningly. Plato is all too aware of this, thus perhaps the apparently throwaway statement he makes just before the introduction of the drug where he comments that he doesn't want the tragedians and other writers of that kind to know why it is that he is able to object to their work. This is strange for several reasons. First, if the motivation underlying his maieutic project is a desire to enable everyone to be freed from their prior illusions and delusions concerning the nature of truth, it is unusual that Plato is here apparently discriminating against the poets. Surely if the task in which they are engaged is so liable to lead people astray, they ought to be the first group to be enlightened about the folly of their enterprise so as to prevent them from continuing to mislead others. However, according to this comment this is not the case. An alternative explanation is that if the tragedians do get to know what is wrong with their work, they may be able to devise ways and means to combat Plato's objections; i.e. they may find their own antidote to his poison, they may modify the drama in such a way that the boundaries between fiction and fact, truth and illusion become even more blurred and potentially corrupting. Both these explanations presuppose a rational fear or problem is being addressed. This is not the case. A third alternative is that in response to learning Socrates' justification for not telling them why they are being victimised, the poets will simply laugh. For as was suggested earlier, perhaps not everyone is so prepared to swallow the substances administered by the Platonic apothecary, not everyone wants to become immune to the seductive powers of mimesis. If the poets do laugh in response to Plato's theory, it is

certain that they are not laughing with him, but rather at him. If Plato wished to find an explanation for their laughter, he need go no further than taking to heart the maxim of the delphic oracle, "Know thyself". If the process of self-examination takes place, sooner or later he will come across the following statement, made in the centre of his explanation of the position of the philosopher-ruler. He writes,

For... a man who has his understanding truly turned toward the things that are has no leisure to look down toward the affairs of human beings and to be filled with envy and ill will as a result of fighting with them. But, rather, because he sees and contemplates things that are set in a regular arrangement and are always in the same condition... he imitates them and, as much as possible, makes himself like them. Or do you suppose there is any way of keeping someone from imitating that which he admires and therefore keeps company with?

It's not possible, he said...

...Now if the many become aware that what we are saying about this man is true, will they then be harsh with the philosophers and distrust us when we say that a city could never be happy otherwise than by having its outlines drawn by the painters who imitate the divine pattern?[31]

Throughout this passage Plato refers to the process in which the philosopher constructs the ideal state using mimetic terminology. The "painters" who draft the blue-prints of the state "imitate the divine pattern". Similarly, the philosopher "imitates" the "things that are set in a regular arrangement" in order to elevate himself into "company with the divine". In all these instances the term employed in the Greek original derives from the root word "*Mimeisthai*". Hence it would be tempting to suggest that in his attempt to outline the details of the ideal state, Plato has succumbed to practising the

arts which the state explicitly forbids. His texts are riddled with examples of the mimetic arts; he creates allegories to illustrate and elucidate the theories which he puts forward. Therefore, in admitting that philosophers are also imitators it might be supposed that Plato is transgressing the distinction which allowed him to bar the poets, thus allowing his own system to be called into question. However, these conclusions are too hasty: they fail to take into account one crucial difference which separates these instances of the use of mimesis from the way which it is employed by the poets. From his treatment of the poets it might be supposed that Plato's objection to their work is based solely upon the fact that it is mimetic; i.e. it is "merely imitative". This interpretation could lead to the conclusion that it is the mimetic element itself which Plato objects to in the poet's work. However this is not the case. Plato does not establish any arguments against mimesis *per se* anywhere in his writings. He does not condemn the mimetic process itself, rather what he objects to is the way in which it is employed. The mimetic process in itself can never be judged to be right or wrong, good or bad. What is to be judged is the use to which the mimetic process is put. Thus the philosopher's use of mimesis is good for it is directed towards the imitation of the forms, providing examples of the correct modes of thought and reason. However the poet's employment of mimesis is problematic because they do not possess the correct forms of knowledge and wisdom, hence they produce images which are corrupting and challenge the order which the philosophers wish to impose.

An example from Plato's own text can be used to reinforce this interpretation. When Plato is outlining the forms of education that are appropriate for the Guardians it is apposite to note that he does not expel all the poets from the

Republic. After the statements which outline the ceremony which accompanies the poets' expulsion, Plato remarks,

...we ourselves would use a more austere and less pleasing poet and teller of tales for the sake of our benefit, one who would imitate the style of the decent man and would say what he says in those models that we set down as laws at the beginning, when we took to educate the soldiers.[32]

From this statement it is clear that some poets will remain in the state. However the ones who are allowed to stay are limited to those who provide works which are edifying and instructive. They follow the "models" that have been prescribed earlier in the dialogue; i.e. they are the poets whose works only depict Gods as good, kings as just, etc. As Plato admits, these poets are "more austere and less pleasing" but they are the only ones who can be tolerated, for the images of the others necessarily corrupt. This example demonstrates that Plato is not concerned so much with the mimetic process; he will allow some forms of imitation to be practised in the state. Rather, his objections are levelled at the content of the mimetic production. The arguments that he levels against the content of the poets' productions are two-fold. First, according to the arguments given in Book Three, they produce images which are corrupting for they show people acting against their true natures. Secondly, in the arguments employed in Book Ten, Plato objects to the images of the poets because they are only third hand copies of the "original". The artist does not have access to the world of forms, he only copies them as they appear in the world. Thus the images that they produce are necessarily limited.[33] In both these instances it can be seen that Plato is not offering any objections to the process in which the work of art is created. He is not in any way criticising the mimetic process itself, he is criticising its content.

If Plato does not object entirely to the mimetic arts, why is it that the expulsion of the poets has come to be seen to mark the moment of division between philosophy and the work of art? The answer lies in the fact that, although Plato does not object to the mimetic process in itself, by constraining it within the boundaries of his theoretical system he severely limits the use to which it can be put. In fact, as is suggested by this dialogue and others,[34] the mimetic process can only be tolerated when it is being used to further philosophy's own ends. The majority of the poets will always remain outside the gates of the city ruled by philosophers.

Furthermore, in the light of the analysis and interpretation I have given here I want to suggest that Plato's analysis of the work of art fails even to start to investigate the nature of mimesis when it is understood as process. As I suggested in the first section, this is because the imposition of the Platonic metaphysical schema - i.e. the theory of forms - automatically annuls any questioning of the status of that which is presented through the mimetic process. The theory of forms provides the Platonic theorist with an a priori explanation of the status of the mimetic process. The image is always a "third remove" from the truth. This sidelines any possible investigation into the nature of mimesis, declaring it redundant and secondary.[35] That is, it belongs to the realm of the aesthetic, not to philosophy. Hence the absence of any sustained discussion of the nature of the work of art as an aesthetic phenomenon.

For an explanation and description of the way in which mimesis contributes to the creation and functioning of the tragic form it is necessary to look elsewhere; but one needs to look no further than the discussion by Aristotle in the Poetics.

1.4. Aristotle, Mimesis and Tragedy; The Revenge of the Poets.

In the following discussion I do not intend to offer a full interpretation of the arguments of Aristotle's Poetics, for this would take me too far away from the main focus of this debate. My interest is not in the details of Aristotle's text - I am not concerned primarily with his interpretation of the internal components of the tragedy - rather I am interested in showing how Aristotle introduces and employs an alternative understanding of mimesis. My analysis of this text will be necessarily selective, only highlighting the parts which have direct relevance to the question of the nature of mimesis.

The first point that needs to be made in relation to this work is that insofar as it is a treatise that focuses solely on the nature of the work of art, it marks the point of the emergence of the separation of the aesthetic from the theoretical *per se*. By discussing the nature of the aesthetic object in a manner which is informed by external theoretical presuppositions - i.e. moral, political, epistemological - but yet treating it as a phenomenon of worth which can be examined in its own right, the notion of the discipline of aesthetics becomes manifest. This is demonstrated by the way in which in Chapter Nine Aristotle differentiates between poetical and historical modes of truth. Interestingly, in opposition to Plato, Aristotle wishes to claim that poetical truth is more philosophical than historical truth in that poetry is concerned with universals, whilst history can depict only specific events. Hence it can be inferred from this division that the criteria of judgement which are used in relation to the work of art will necessarily differ from those applied to actual events. This is because historical truths are limited for they can only refer to "things that have happened", whilst the scope of poetical truths are much larger for they can portray "the kinds of events that are possible according to probability or

necessity."[36] This distinction emphasises how greatly Aristotle's discussion and treatment of poetry differs from Plato's insofar as the former's understanding of the nature of poetical truths does not attempt to limit or control what can be portrayed by referring to higher theoretical principles. Thus, as long as an event is "probable" it is suitable for depiction by the poet.

At the beginning of the text, Aristotle establishes his definition of the nature of the work of art, whether epic or tragic poetry, dithyrambic poetry, or music, by arguing that they can all be described as "forms of imitation". This definition is then expanded further by the statement that,

They, [the works of art] differ from one another in three respects: viz in the fact that the imitating has (1) different media, (2) different objects, or, (3) different modes or methods.[37]

This statement shows that Aristotle considers mimesis - i.e. the process of imitation - to be the common element in the definition of the work of art. From this description, it might be assumed that Aristotle's understanding of the term mimesis is similar to Plato's insofar as he is referring apparently to a form of copying and replication. On a certain level this is correct, for Aristotle argues that the underlying motivation for mimetic presentation is the desire to produce likenesses of phenomena that are observed in the world, and that it is through this process of imitation that man starts to learn. In fact imitation is described as being "a part of man's nature from childhood".[38] However, when Aristotle starts to distinguish the between the various forms of art the way in which his views differ from Plato's starts to become clearer. From the statements that are made in Chapter Five it is clear that Aristotle considers tragedy to be the most complete art form, because it is a combination of all the others. Tragedy can contain elements of the epic but "not everything

the tragedy has is present in the epic." This helps to explain why Aristotle's discussion proceeds to concentrate on the features of the tragic drama. In focussing on the tragic drama, he is able to analyse the features which make up the most complete, hence the highest, work of art. It is in chapter six that Aristotle gives his summary of the "essential nature" of the tragedy, outlining the main features of its component parts. He states,

Tragedy then is an imitation of an action which is serious, complete and has bulk, in speech that has been made attractive, using each of its species separately in the parts of the play...And since tragedy is an imitation of an action, and is enacted by certain people through action, who must necessarily have certain qualities of thought and character...and since it is the plot which is the imitation of the action (for by "plot" I mean here the organisation of the events)...it follows necessarily that the constituent elements of the tragic art are six in number...they are plot and characters, speech composition and thought, visual appearance and song-composition.[39]

To understand how this description of the functioning of the mimetic process in the drama differs from Plato's, I want to refer to the analysis which Paul Ricoeur gives in Volume One of Time and Narrative. As Ricoeur points out, in this description of the components of the tragedy Aristotle establishes an equivalence and "quasi-identification" between the expressions "imitation of an action" and "the organisation of events". The two terms imitation and plot, (*mimesis* and *muthos*) are inextricably linked together. Furthermore, neither term is to be understood as referring to a "structure" or static entity. Rather, both refer to the active process of construction; i.e. the process of imitation, the process of "emplotment"[40]. The "organisation of events" - the process of emplotment - is the imitation of the action. Having shown how these two terms are linked, Ricoeur then uses this analysis to show how far removed Aristotle's understanding of mimesis is from Plato's. He writes,

This equivalence first of all excludes any interpretation of Aristotle's mimesis in terms of a copy or identical replica. Imitating or representing is a mimetic activity inasmuch as it produces something, namely, the organisation of events by emplotment. With one stroke we leave behind the Platonic use of mimesis, both in its metaphysical sense and its technical one in book 3 of the *Republic*...the metaphysical sense of mimesis, [is] associated with the concept of participation, by means of which things imitate ideas, and works of art imitate things. Platonic mimesis thereby distances the work of art by twice over from the ideal model which is its ultimate basis. Aristotle's mimesis has just a single space wherein it is unfolded - human making [*faire*], the arts of composition.[41]

This description summarises succinctly the differences between Aristotle and Plato's understanding and use of mimesis. In placing the emphasis of the analysis on the process of imitation - the process of the organisation of the events - Aristotle removes the link between the object which is presented and that to which it refers which is always presupposed in the Platonic use of the term. Aristotelian mimesis refers to the presentation, the process of the production of the work of art, which as Ricoeur states, "has just a single space wherein it is unfolded". It can be seen that this interpretation correlates with the analysis I gave in section one concerning the way in which actual dramatic presentation disrupts the rigid distinction between appearance and reality. Aristotle's understanding of mimesis as the process of imitation emphasises the fact that the drama is a form of production; it is always a presentation. As Ricoeur states later in his analysis "The action is the "construct" of that construction which the mimetic activity consists of." [42]

This difficult statement can be used to summarise the relationship between the process of imitation, the plot, and its presentation. The actions, the events which are presented on the stage are the unfolding of the process of the

mimetic production. However, this process of production cannot be thought separately from the action itself. That which is presented is the mimetic production. The use of the term "production" in this context is to be understood in both its nominal and adjectival sense. What is presented is the production of the production. Furthermore, the characters and events of the play which are presented on the stage are not to be understood as separate entities which can be divorced from the process of production. Rather, the process and the result are identical. This can be substantiated by Aristotle's comment that

...plot is the foundation or as it were the soul of the tragic art, with character portrayal second...it is in fact an imitation of an action and for that reason, rather than any other, an imitation of the dramatic persons.[43]

This remark suggests that it is through the "imitation of the action" that the characters of the drama are established. In that the "organisation of events" is equivalent to the "imitation of the action", this means that it is the action which necessarily determines the forms of character that are presented. The process of mimesis creates, generates the individuality of the characters, but they too, cannot be considered separate from this process of generation. However this does not mean that Aristotle is limiting the types of character and plot that may be generated. Although he will comment on the types of plot and character that are appropriate to tragedy, these are not to be understood as being defined in relation to a wider metaphysical system as occurs in Plato[44]. As I stated earlier, this is because Aristotle wants to show that the work of art is not a debased form, it can present "universal truths" for it is capable of showing "what can happen" rather than what has happened. Hence it can be seen that in defining mimesis in terms of process, Aristotle allows

the work of art to have value, albeit one that is not recognised by the dominant Platonic tradition.

Conclusion.

To conclude this chapter I want briefly to summarise the arguments that I have presented. In the first section I discussed the role of tragedy in the Greek state, and argued that this can be seen to generate two types of problem. The first problem concerned the relation between the drama and the context in which it was performed. The second problem concerned the status of the dramatic image. However, it is clear that these two problems are inextricably interlinked, for both relate back to the question of the status of the mimetic presentation. However, as I argued, the mimetic image is not considered problematic until it confronts the modes of thought of the philosopher who wishes to be able to impose control and order; i.e. they desire to understand the nature of the image. Thus, in the second section, I showed Plato's response to the dramatic presentation, namely that in subsuming it under the wider categories of his thought, he is able to denigrate and thus legislate against it. However, this means that Plato is unable to give an account of the process whereby the mimetic presentation is created that is not based upon the prior suppositions of his theoretical system. As I stated, Plato does not discuss the nature of mimetic production itself, he does not offer a satisfactory explanation of the processes which are internal to the generation of the work of art. It is only in Aristotle's Poetics that such an analysis can be found. In discussing this work I highlighted how Aristotle's understanding of mimesis as a dynamic process leads to the possibility of a different understanding of both the nature of mimetic production and the status of the work of art.

However, as I will show in the next chapter, it is the Platonic understanding of mimesis that gains the ascendancy and informs much of the subsequent formulations of the function of mimesis and the status of the work of art. This understanding only starts to be challenged in the aftermath of the so-called "Quarrel of Ancients and Moderns" which introduces a new dimension into the debate. This is because the question concerning the nature of the imitation is compounded by the introduction of an historical dimension. Discussion of the process of mimesis does not therefore refer simply to the way in which work of art is generated, but must refer also after the quarrel to the relationship between the work and its historical precedents. As I will argue, the process of the creation of the work is re-evaluated, introducing an alternative understanding of mimesis which is much more akin to the interpretation of Aristotle's Poetics which I have just outlined.

Chapter Two.

Hölderlin and Greece.

2.1. Introduction.

At midnight on December 31st 1798, Johann Friedrich Hölderlin celebrated the arrival of the new year, not with a toast among friends, but rather by writing a long letter to his brother. Towards the end of this letter, he comments,

Oh Greece with your geniality and your piety, whereto have you come? I myself, too, despite all good will, merely stumble in my deeds and thoughts after these only human beings in the world, and in what I do and say I am often only the more inept and inconsistent because I stand like geese, with my flat feet in the modern water and helplessly beat my wings up to the Greek sky. Do not scold me for the simile. It is unseemly but true, and among ourselves something like that is still acceptable; also it shall only be said of me.

O Griechenland, mit deiner Genialität und deiner Frömmigkeit, wo bist du hingekommen? Auch ich, mit allem guten Willen, tappe mit meinem Tun und Denken diesen einzigen Menschen in der Welt nur nach, und bin in dem, was ich treibe und sage, oft nur um so ungeschickter und ungereimter, weil ich wie die Gänse mit platten Füßen im modernen Wasser stehe, und unmächtig zum griechischen Himmel emporflüge. Nimm mir das Gleichnis nicht übel. Es ist unschicklich, aber wahr, und unter uns gehet so was noch wohl an, soll auch nur mir gesagt sein.^[1]

These remarks reflect the complexity of the time in which Hölderlin is writing. His relationship to the thought and culture of the Greeks is influenced by several, often conflicting, movements of thought. Although on first reading it could be presumed that these remarks position Hölderlin firmly within the German classicist tradition, such easy categorisation is not possible. Hölderlin mourns the loss of Greek culture and ideals, but he is also aware of the

unbridgeable gap between antiquity and his own time. As he comments in this letter to his brother his "flat feet" are firmly in "the modern water". As I argued in the introduction to this study, the thought of the late 18th century is characterised by the development of a sense of self-reflection. Hölderlin acknowledges that he speaks from the perspective of the modern, and this necessarily affects his understanding of the relationship between the world of Ancient Greece and his own time.

Thus, in order to understand Hölderlin's own writings on Greece it is first necessary to summarise briefly the contemporary context of his thought. I shall then argue that Hölderlin's position is opposed to his contemporaries and that the point of dissension is located in Hölderlin's problematisation of the way in which the mimetic relationship between Greece and Germany is to be understood. I shall offer an interpretation of the short fragment The Perspective from which We have to look at Antiquity (Der Gesichtspunct aus dem wir das Altertum anzusehen haben) which dates from 1799. The views expressed in this fragment will then be compared with the statements that Hölderlin makes in the first letter to Böhlendorff written on the 4th December 1801. The focus of the discussion will be to ascertain exactly how Hölderlin's conception of the mimetic relationship between Greece and Germany - the mythical past and the present modernity - differs from the traditional Classicist arguments, and to assess the implications that may be drawn from this reappraisal for the debate concerning the nature of Hölderlin's - and perhaps our own - modernity

2.2. Two Conflicting Interpretations of Mimesis.

One way in which the question concerning Hölderlin's attempt to comprehend the relation between Greece and Germany can be confronted is by situating it in relation to the discussion in the last chapter concerning the way in which the

concept of mimesis is to be understood. As I argued in the conclusion there, the meaning and understanding of mimesis is complicated further by the introduction of a historical perspective. Hence in the 17th and 18th centuries, the term mimesis has to refer not only to the relationship between the work of art and the "original" of which it is a copy - eg. the relation between the painting of a flower, and the "actual" flower which blooms in the field - but also to the relationship between the work of art and its historical precedents. The artist must be aware that they are working within a tradition which is necessarily self-referential and self-perpetuating. The artist establishes the relative merit of his or her work by placing it in relation to other works of art. Hence the Classicist movement establishes the work of ancient Greece as the paradigm example against which all other works are to be measured. This elevation of the qualities of one society over another provides the basis for the re-evaluation of the way in which the concept of history is understood. In the 17th and early 18th centuries the introduction of rationalist, scientific modes of thought devalued the idea of historical modes of understanding. True knowledge was understood to be necessarily ahistorical and universal. Hence, for aesthetic judgements to be valid they must have recourse to universal principles of beauty and order. This is exemplified in the development of French classicist theory - e.g. the work of theorists such as Boileau - where it is argued that for a work to be beautiful it must be truthful. This imperative is based upon an ahistorical understanding of both beauty and truth; the terms refer to universally known and verifiable concepts.^[3] This belief in universal truths and concepts corresponds to an understanding of history as cyclical. It suggests that there is a universal standard of perfection to which each society aspires and against which it is to be measured. It is the questions and aporias raised by this notion of universality which generated the first "round" of the

"Quarrel of Ancient and Moderns". As Karl Menges argues in his article in Eighteenth-Century German Authors and their Aesthetic Theories, in the early stages of the development of the Quarrel in France, both parties shared a common belief in the validity of the idea of a universal "historical greatness". Neither party is concerned to establish the qualitative differences between the ancients and moderns - as occurs in relativist theories of history; rather they focus upon judging and evaluating their own time.^[4] When discussing these early instances of the quarrel, Menges contends that,

The only difference rests with the fact that the Ancients place classical perfection at the beginning of history, with the consequence that its imitation is considered the only possibility to gain a similar status. The Moderns on the other hand, view the splendour of French Absolutism as indicative of the end of the historical cycle, thus offering ample evidence that classical greatness does not have to be limited to Antiquity but that it can re-occur - through emulation - in a quantitatively identical or even superior form. In that sense, the cultures of the two classical ages ultimately merge in the perception of their outstanding characteristics which is possible only because this perception does not extend into the realisation of their qualitative difference; or to put it differently, because it is not yet supported by an historical consciousness, developed enough for an individual differentiation of the ages.^[5]

However, Menges proceeds to demonstrate that as the thought of the French Enlightenment develops and matures, there is a corresponding reassessment of how the idea of historical development is to be understood. The "progress" made in thought necessarily involves a re-evaluation of how history is comprehended. Hence, there is a move away from a cyclical understanding of historical development towards the idea of linear development and continual progress and enlightenment. This move comes about because of the gradually developing awareness of the unique nature of each individual era. Belief in the

Enlightenment ideas of progress and development must entail the notion that the present time is necessarily better than the previous time. This judgement is based upon a qualitative assessment between eras; in relation to the arguments of the French Quarrel, this means that the debate culminates in an effective truce because there is the recognition of the relative nature of the arguments proposed by both sides which means that there can be no external criteria to which the proponents can have recourse. The fight degenerates into squabbles concerning individual preference and taste. However, the most important outcome of this debate is the development of a notion of historical consciousness; the society and culture becomes aware of itself as unique, thus introducing the possibility of self-questioning and self-evaluation.

It is against this background that the rise of the German Classicist movement must be set. Whilst German aesthetic theory is necessarily influenced by the debates surrounding the Quarrel, it never engages directly in the arguments or adopts entirely the conclusions which are drawn. At the latest from Lessing onwards there is active opposition to French classicist regulations, particularly in the theatre. It must also be remembered that the nation state of Germany did not exist; in the 18th century "Germany" comprised a large number of separate principalities - with Prussia as the dominant state - each of which fiercely guarded its own identity. Hence, although the Enlightenment notion of progress and historical development is adopted in German thought, it takes a different form.^[6] This is demonstrated most clearly in the writings of J. Winckelmann, the writer who formulated the main precepts of German Classicist theory. In his influential article, Thoughts on the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks, (1755) Winckelmann acknowledges that there is a difference between eras. However, rather than celebrating the work of

contemporary artists as the achievements of an enlightened age, Winckelmann sees these works as symptomatic of a decline in standards and skill. The contemporary German artist must not look towards his or her immediate ancestors in France or Britain for instruction on how to proceed, instead they must return to the birthplace of art; they must look towards the works of ancient Greece. Thus, Winckelmann's famous demand with which he begins the essay Thoughts..., "The only way for us to become great, and indeed - if this is possible - inimitable is by imitating the ancients."^[7] It is this imperative which motivates the entire German Classicist tradition. The only way in which German art can be revived and progress is by emulation of the Greek models and ideals. This idea becomes the rallying cry for subsequent generations of German writers and artists. However, it is clear that the form of mimesis advocated by this movement is much more akin to a notion of *imitatio*; it refers to the restrictive copying of prescribed models, not to the actual process whereby the artist creates the work of art.^[8] Furthermore, although Winckelmann and his followers are aware of the qualitative difference between eras - in fact it is this which leads them to advocate the emulation of the Greek model - they are unable to offer a positive analysis of the present situation which they face. That is, in demanding that the Germans emulate the Greeks, they are implicitly providing a negative diagnosis of the state of modern culture. For the thinkers of Winckelmann's generation this is not problematic for they believe that the programme of emulation which they will institute will bring about a renaissance in German culture. However, by the time that the second and third generation of the followers of Classicism emerge, the problem becomes more acute. The much vaunted revival of Greek ideals has not been fully effective, thus a more sophisticated response is called for. This is provided by the work of Hölderlin's contemporaries, F. Schiller and F. Schlegel.

It is outside the scope of this study to provide a detailed outline of the work of these two thinkers.^[9] However, in relation to the present discussion it is sufficient to state that both thinkers complicate the manner in which the relation between Ancient Greece and contemporary Germany is understood, through the introduction of a dialectical understanding of history. In Schiller's writings Greece is viewed as the ideal, unified society from which the modern, fractured society is irretrievably distanced. However, through the emergence of a growing awareness of the split nature of the modern society, it is proposed that humanity can start to work towards a reconciliation between the two cultures in the utopian concept of the "ideal". The Greek and the modern, nature and civilisation will be reconciled through the "aesthetic education" of humanity. This aesthetic education will occur initially in and through the work of the poet.^[10] As I shall argue in Chapter 3 of this study, the aesthetic sphere becomes central to this process because it was perceived that purely theoretical modes of thought are symptomatic of the malaise of the modern time for they are unable to bring about the reconciliation which is needed. This can only occur in the sphere of the aesthetic. The individual poet or artist hence becomes central to the process. In the introduction of the dialectical understanding of historical progress there is a subtle re-evaluation of the role and function of the individual artist. The artist does not simply copy the pre-existing models, as is advocated by the Classicism of Winckelmann, rather they become actively engaged in the process of progress. Hence this opens the possibility for a different understanding of the process of mimesis. The artist is not simply an emulator or copier, they are viewed also as active creators.

In fact, this re-assessment of the status of the artist does not occur *ex nihilo* with the emergence of dialectical forms of thought. Between Winckelmann's

Classicist initiative and the full development of "Classical Weimar" there is also the development of a counter movement which rejects the classicist precepts entirely. This is, of course, the *Sturm und Drang* movement led by writers such as J.M.R. Lenz and H.W. von Gerstenberg. This movement can also be viewed as a reaction to French Classicist poetics and the emergence of enlightenment modes of thought. As Helga Madland shows in her book Non-Aristotelian Drama in Eighteenth Century Germany and its Modernity, J.M.R Lenz, throughout the first half of the 18th century, German dramatic theorists move away increasingly from an adherence to either Aristotelian or French Classicist theories and develop their own understanding of the place and function of the work of art. An integral element of these theories involves a re-evaluation of the status of the artist. This occurs because once the artist is freed from the imperative to follow prescriptive rules regarding composition and form they are allowed to create works of art which reflect their own concerns and understanding of the world.^[11] Thus the artist is not constrained entirely by rules which define how they are to emulate or imitate the world of nature. The artist must not simply be a copier of pre-existing models, rather he or she must also be viewed as a creator.^[12] Thus, as Madland remarks in relation to Lenz's text Anmerkungen übers Theater,

Lenz reminds the reader that the writing of a drama requires a "poet," "*einen Dichter*". A poet possesses talents and capabilities not shared by non-poets -- he is able to represent nature in an aesthetic fashion, as opposed to the factual rendition of the historian. The implication here is that the result of the poet's attempt to imitate nature is no longer a copy, but a re-creation of reality... Certainly Lenz, unlike a number of earlier theoreticians, rejects the imitation of traditional literature: a poet must create not copy, before he is worthy of the name "poet".^[13]

It is apparent from these comments that the understanding of mimesis employed by these writers is much closer to Ricoeur's interpretation which I outlined in the previous chapter. Mimesis is understood in terms of the process of creation; i.e. mimesis is seen as a mode of poiesis, as a form of "making". It refers to the active process of construction, rather than the static imitation of an already existing model, be it the rules governing the form of a dramatic genre - e.g. French Classicism's interpretation of Aristotle - or the "ideal" example provided by a work of art - e.g. Winckelmann's analysis of the qualities of the Laocoon. Thus, the *Sturm und Drang* writers redefine the status of the individual artist through the emphasis which they place on the "originality" of the work. The work must necessarily reflect the mood and feelings of the artist; it is an expression of their own, unique point of view. In the work the artist offers their interpretation and understanding of the world. Thus the work of art is to be viewed as a product of a certain specific historical situation; it expresses the specific situation of an individual artist.

These ideas, in particular the celebration of the position of the individual artist as creator, form the basis of the *Sturm und Drang* movement. In his early years, Schiller was heavily influenced by this movement and this helps to explain where the emphasis which he places upon the function of the individual poet originated. Furthermore, from this discussion it is clear that when Hölderlin starts to consider the relationship between Greece and contemporary Germany, he is confronted with two conflicting conceptions of the mimetic project. In the Classicist tradition mimesis is understood as the imitation of the models provided by ancient Greek art, whilst in contemporary poetics, the artist is viewed as the imitator who re-creates in and through the production of the work of art the world which they perceive. Hölderlin is influenced by

both these traditions, and as I shall show in the following sections, he attempts to develop a form of theoretical understanding which utilises both. However, as will become evident in the course of the discussion, in considering both these interpretations of the function of mimesis, Hölderlin encounters a problem which will cause him to separate his opinions from those held by Schiller and his other contemporaries.

2.2. The "Perspectives" Fragment.

Although Hölderlin is preoccupied with Ancient Greece throughout his work, it is not until 1799 that he engages with the problem of the relation between Antiquity and Modernity from a theoretical perspective. This occurs in the fragmentary text, The Perspective From Which We Have to Look at Antiquity. The fragment can be divided into two main parts. In the first part, Hölderlin outlines the situation which faces the contemporary artist particularly with reference to their problematic relation to the given tradition. In the second half he offers his own response to the analysis he has given and proposes a solution to the problems he has outlined.

The first difference between Hölderlin and his contemporaries is established immediately by the tone of the work. He writes,

We dream of education, piety, p.p. and have none whatsoever; it is assumed - we dream of originality and autonomy; we believe to be saying all kinds of new things and, still, all this is reaction, as it were, a mild revenge against the slavery with which we have behaved towards antiquity.

Wir träumen von Bildung, Frömmigkeit pp und haben gar keine, sie ist angenommen - wir träumen von Originalität und Selbstständigkeit, wir glauben lauter Neues zu sagen, und alles diß ist doch Reaction, gleichsam eine milde Rache gegen die Knechtschaft, womit wir uns verhalten haben gegen das Altertum...[14]

In these opening remarks two different opinions are being challenged. Firstly, in describing Germany's relationship to Greece as one of "slavery" it is clear that Hölderlin is criticising the Classicists who have uncritically advocated that the Greeks offer the only standards against which the work of art can be judged. It is probable that Winckelmann and his followers are those whom Hölderlin here has in mind.^[15] However, he is also challenging the presumption that it is possible to adopt a diametrically opposed position; i.e. to argue for the creation of a totally new set of ideas and values which owe nothing to the previous traditions. This point underlies the opening statement of the fragment "We dream of education, piety, p.p. and have none whatsoever; it is assumed." These remarks suggest that it is impossible to create the absolutely new; Hölderlin is challenging the assumption that a culture may be able to create a movement or idea that is original. An idea, even if it is apparently innovative, owes its very innovativeness to that against which it is a reaction. To dream of achieving either "originality" or "autonomy" is exactly that; it is a mythical fiction, a project which can never be realised. How then can a society progress if, as is apparently being suggested here, it can never rid itself of what has gone before? Hölderlin's response to this problem appears initially to be very negative. He states,

There seems to be indeed hardly any other choice than to be oppressed by what has been assumed and by what is positive, or with violent effort, to oppose as a living force everything learnt, given, positive.

Es scheint wirklich fast keine andere Wahl offen zu seyn, erdrückt zu werden von Angenommenem, und Positivem, oder, mit gewaltsamer Anmaaßung, sich gegen alles erlernte, gegebene, positive, als lebendige Kraft entgegenzusetzen.^[16]

Hölderlin does not appear to have much hope or enthusiasm for either of the alternatives which are here suggested, and in the following paragraphs he explains the reasons for this negative diagnosis of the situation. He argues that the problems arise out of the unavoidable conflict between Antiquity and Modernity. This conflict occurs when the Modern artist attempts to create a work of art which is representative of his or her time. Hölderlin states that the artists' drive to create, to form ("*Bildungstrieb*"), always tends towards a desire to "form the unformed" ("*das Ungebildete zu bilden*").^[17] However, Modern society cannot provide the conditions for this to occur, for it is necessarily dependent upon what has gone before. It is only within Antiquity that the conditions existed which were conducive for the artist's "*Bildungstrieb*" to flourish, because it was a society that was not subject to the influence of another; i.e. it is only here that the "unformed" is present. It is this which makes Antiquity unique, and in a certain sense, inimitable. However it is not difficult to see the potential contradictions which arise out of this situation. Hölderlin's argument highlights the almost incommensurable difficulties of attempting to use Antiquity as a model for the revival of the conditions necessary to allow the creative drive to flourish. This is because the moment that Antiquity is seen as a model, as a "form" that can be imitated, it loses that which makes it unique; i.e. the unformed becomes the formed, it is something which can be assumed, adopted ("*angenommen*"). As Hölderlin states, it becomes "positive" and in so doing it loses the very quality that has made it inimitable. Therefore the factor upon which the distinction between Antiquity and Modernity itself is drawn also starts to break down, for implicit in this distinction is the assumption that Greek culture is unformed and unique. Hölderlin does not expand this point any further and does not explicitly state that this is the conclusion to which his argument leads. It is perhaps doubtful

therefore whether at this stage he realised the full implications of what is here stated. However it is clear that within this fragment there can be found the seeds of the thinking which, as I will argue later, come to full fruition in the letter to Böhlendorff and which will lead Hölderlin to offer a different understanding of the mimetic relation between antiquity and modernity.

Instead Hölderlin moves back to presenting his analysis of the situation which faces the modern artist, drawing an analogy between the decline of the Greek society and the conditions which presently prevail. He writes,

And that which was the general reason for the decline of all peoples, namely, that their originality, their own living nature succumbed to the positive forms, to the luxury which their fathers produced, that seems to be our destiny as well, only on a larger scale in that an almost boundless, prior world, which we internalize either through learning or experience, works and exerts pressure on us.

Und was allgemeiner Grund vom Untergang aller Völker war, nemlich, daß ihre Originalität, ihre eigene lebendige Natur erlag unter den positiven Formen und unter dem Luxus, den ihre Väter hervorgebracht hatten, das scheint auch unser Schicksaal zu seyn, nur in größerem Maße, indem eine fast gränzenlose Vorwelt, die wir entweder durch Unterricht, oder durch Erfahrung innwerden, auf uns wirkt und drückt.[18]

Here Hölderlin offers an explanation for the decline of Greek society premised upon the argument outlined above, namely that the moment that the society becomes implicated within a mimetic relationship with itself, when it "succumbs to the positive forms", by definition it loses that which makes it unique and thus loses its identity and declines. Furthermore, as he then states, it would seem that this is the fate with which the Modern society is faced, albeit in a more aggravated and critical form.

However it is at this point in the fragment that Hölderlin challenges the negative point of view that he has presented hitherto, stating that "On the other hand, nothing seems more favourable than precisely these circumstances in which we find ourselves." This break between the two halves of the fragment also marks the point at which Hölderlin moves back to giving a much more conventional reading of the situation, insofar as the positive solution that he offers to the problems that he has outlined earlier is heavily reliant upon Schiller's and Schelling's aesthetic theories. It is also interesting to note that in this second section of the fragment any consideration of the problems posed by the relation between Antiquity and Modernity are absent. This can help to explain why after giving such a problematic account of the position of the contemporary artist, Hölderlin is apparently able to move so easily to offering an alternative, more affirmative solution. The analysis which he proposes does not consider the relation between Antiquity and Modernity - seen as distinct periods with their own characteristic traits and problems - rather it views the problem strictly from the perspective of the present. This suggests that the problems occur when a comparative analysis is made; i.e. when the analysis involves consideration of the mimetic relationship between Antiquity and Modernity.

Hölderlin is able to offer an alternative reading of his situation through the distinction which he draws between whether "the artist's drive to cultivate operates blindly or with consciousness." ("*Es ist nemlich ein Unterscheid ob jener Bildungstrieb blind wirkt, oder mit Bewußtseyn*") This distinction - characterised by whether a society is reflective or not - is very similar to Schiller's analysis in Über Naive und Sentimentalische Dichtung. (1795-6) In this essay Schiller distinguishes between the Ancient and Modern societies by

arguing that in the latter "it is the elevation of actuality to the ideal...the *representation of the ideal* that makes for the poet". Ancient society is characterised by unity, hence it has no need for reflection and idealist forms of thought. However in the modern world there is a cleavage between the natural and the cultural, and hence the function of art is to attempt to regain this unified Absolute, a task which is by definition infinite. The artist is caught up in the process of elevating the natural into the ideal through its representation in the work of art. This movement allows the natural to transcend its limitations as the purely natural; it allows the move from the sphere of the finite into the infinite. As Schiller states, the role of the artist alters so that

The correspondence between his feeling and his thought which in his first condition - the ancient - actually took place, exists now only ideally; it is no longer within him but outside of him as an idea still to be realised, no longer as a fact within his life.[19]

In elevating the function of the work of art to the realm of the ideal, it transcends the limitations of the finite artist, it gains an autonomy which is not possible in the ancient world. The break between the natural and the cultural is indicative of "civilisation" itself, for the civilisation is characterised by this striving towards the representation of the ideal. Thus art has not only an aesthetic function but also one that is moral.

These Schillerian ideas underlie the arguments which Hölderlin puts forward as a solution to the problems of modern society. Hölderlin argues that within modern society it is possible for the drive to cultivate to operate in a self-conscious manner, so that "it knows from where it emerged and whereto it strives" ("*Er weiß woraus er hervorgieng und wohin er strebt*"). It is through this process of constant self-reflection that it is possible to avoid becoming enslaved to what has occurred before. In the rest of the fragment Hölderlin

develops an account of the way in which this process of constant self-critique and self-reference prevents the individual or society from falling prey to "positivity" and hence stultification. The movement he describes is strictly dialectical and involves the complete absorption of the past into the present, in such a way that the present is always aware of, and informed by, its origins. This movement ensures that "[we] give ourselves our own direction which is determined by the preceding pure and impure directions that we, due to understanding, do not repeat." ("*unsere eigene Richtung uns vorsezen, die bestimmt wird, durch die vorhergegangenen reinen und unreinen Richtungen, die wir aus Einsicht nicht wiederholen.*") As is evident from this statement, Hölderlin believes that the progression of the dialectic in this manner will prevent a blind repetition of past forms from occurring. In the taking up of the past into the present, the past will necessarily be transformed and altered and this prevents it from being viewed as a static entity. The process is motivated by the underlying *Bildungstrieb*, the drive to form, cultivate. The system is necessarily dynamic and relies upon the assumption of the validity of the dialectical progression from moment to moment. The emphasis which is placed upon the centrality of the process of reflection and self-understanding to this project reinforces Hölderlin's acceptance of this form of dialectical thinking

This reading of Hölderlin's short essay makes it now necessary to ask whether the solution he offers in the second part is able to solve the problems that were outlined in the first. At the very least, it appears slightly strange that after having offered such a negative, yet also astute, diagnosis of the problems which arise out of the relationship between Antiquity and Modernity as given within the German Classicist theories, Hölderlin is apparently able to move so easily towards offering a solution. As I suggested earlier, it is important to

observe the change of perspective between the two halves of the essay which arises out of the employment of Schiller's idealist theory. The use of this theory removes the static oppositional relation between Antiquity and Modernity in favour of the progressive dialectical model, enabling solutions to the problems that have been diagnosed to be proposed. It would not be incorrect to conclude that whilst Hölderlin is moving towards offering a different analysis of the nature of the relation between Antiquity and Modernity, at this stage he is not sufficiently free of Schiller's influence to be able to offer a truly alternative solution to the problem. In the face of the difficulties that his analysis throws up, he attempts to conceal the problem by returning to the thought of his mentor, Schiller.^[20] However by the time of the letters to Böhlendorff two years later, Hölderlin has started to formulate his own reply to the problem. It is to these letters that I now turn.

2.3. The First Letter to Böhlendorff.

It is in the so-called "first letter to Böhlendorff"^[21] that Hölderlin gives his fullest theoretical account of how the relationship between Greece and Germany is to be understood. The letter is dated the fourth of December 1801, two years after the Perspectives... fragment. In the letter Hölderlin announces his intention to leave Germany to take up a tutorial position in Bordeaux, France. The announcement of the move to France is unexpected, coming at a time when Hölderlin's interest and concern with Germany is at its peak.^[22] It would not be an exaggeration to claim that this short letter has received more critical attention than the rest of Hölderlin's critical writings put together and has proved the basis for many disparate and often contradictory interpretations. My intention is to demonstrate how the views expressed in this letter render any easy interpretation problematic, particularly insofar as the issue which this

letter expressly addresses - the relation between Antiquity and Modernity, seen from the perspective of the latter - necessarily undercuts any firm statements being made about the status of the discourse of the Modern. In discussing the letter it will be necessary to have recourse to some of the critical responses which it has generated not only to illustrate their conflictual nature, but also to offer a concise summary of the position in which we are left.

The discussion of the relationship between Antiquity and Modernity arises in the context of Hölderlin's response to Böhlendorff's new work, his drama Fernando.^[23] Hölderlin congratulates his friend on the technical qualities which the work exhibits, claiming that its "precision and able suppleness" ("*Präzision und tüchtiger Gelenksamkeit*") is indicative of his increasing abilities and promise of progress. Hölderlin then writes,

We learn nothing more difficult than the free use of the national. And as I believe, it is precisely the clarity of representation that is originally as natural to us as the fire from heaven is for the Greeks. For just this reason they will be more readily surpassed in beautiful passion - which you have also preserved for yourself - than in that Homeric presence of mind and gift of representation.

Wir lernen nichts schwerer als das Nationale frei gebrauchen. Und wie ich glaube, ist gerade die Klarheit der Darstellung uns ursprünglich so natürlich wie den Griechen das Feuer von Himmel. Eben deswegen werden diese eher in schöner Leidenschaft, die Du Dir auch erhalten hast, als in jener homerischen Geistesgegenwart und Darstellungsgabe zu übertreffen sein.^[24]

In this statement, Hölderlin starts to explain the relation between Greece and Germany with respect to how the concept of the "national" is to be understood and employed. At this stage it is not made clear exactly what is meant by the term "national", whether Hölderlin intends it to be understood in terms of the given culture of a country or nationality, or whether it refers to a more

originary relationship between the artist and the source of their inspiration which will allow him or her to reveal something concerning the nature of their "national" which has hitherto been concealed. This is problematized further by the emphasis which is placed upon the "free use of the national", the inference being that it is possible to reflect the national through the work, but this in itself does not guarantee the autonomy necessary for it to be "freely" manifest. However it is clear that the term "free" is not intended to introduce any notion of laxity or spontaneity on the part of the artist - it is not a manifesto for the avant-garde, a sweeping away of accepted convention^[25] - for as is stated, the skill of freely using the national is one that must be "learnt"; i.e. it has its own form of logic and regulation.

Hölderlin then moves on to characterise the Greek and Modern forms of art, stating that it is "precisely the clarity of representation that is originally as natural to us as the fire from heaven for the Greeks". The question raised above concerning the meaning of the term "national" is complicated further by this statement for it establishes a connection between the natural and the national. However the way in which this connection is to be understood is problematic and potentially ambiguous; is the "clarity of representation" to be seen as that which is natural to us - or that which is national? Or is it even possible to consider the two terms as mutually exclusive? The difficulties raised by these questions are exacerbated further by consideration of how Hölderlin intends the term "originally" to be read. One possible interpretation would be that this term indicates that what is characteristic of the natural for us has been lost. In the sentence that follows, Hölderlin appears to suggest that this interpretation could be valid. He aligns the Modern form of art with the "beautiful passion", remarking to Böhlendorff that in his work this is "also

preserved for yourself". He then states that the Greeks "will be more readily surpassed" through this form of art - through beautiful passion - than "in that Homeric presence of mind and gift of representation." What this remark suggests is that the "clarity of representation" that is "originally natural to us" is no longer so readily available. If the modern artist desires to surpass the Greeks, it cannot be through the form that is most natural, it cannot occur in "clarity of representation". At this stage Hölderlin gives no explanation as to why this conclusion may be drawn - it is merely given as a fact - but, in turn, this raises a subsidiary question. What is the relation between the "beautiful passion" through which the Modern Artist may surpass the Greeks and the "fire from heaven" which is characteristic of that which is "originally natural" to them? Is Hölderlin suggesting that a similar relationship of alienation from the "natural" exists within the Greek world? Is Hölderlin arguing here that it is precisely through appropriating the "natural" of the Greeks - the peoples to whom in the Perspectives fragment the Moderns were seen to be "in slavery" - that the Moderns will be able to surpass and remove themselves from their enslavement to the Greek legacy? No quick resolutions of these questions can be made, for they are fraught with ambiguities and contradictions. Hölderlin himself is aware of the problems raised by these statements for he resumes the next paragraph, by stating "it sounds paradoxical". To start to unravel these paradoxes it is necessary to quote the next section at length so as to follow the line of argument employed.

It sounds paradoxical. But I will maintain it once again, and make it available for your examination and use: in the progress of culture, the properly national will become ever more the lesser virtue. For this reason the Greeks are less masters of sacred pathos, since it was inborn in them; on the other hand, they excel in the gift of representation from Homer onward, because this extraordinary man

was spirited enough to capture the Occidental Junonian sobriety for his Apollonian realm, and thus to truly appropriate what is foreign.

With us it is the reverse. For this reason it is also so dangerous to abstract the rules of art for oneself simply and solely from Greek excellence. I have long suffered from this and now know that except for that which must be the highest for the Greeks and for us - namely the living relationship and skill -, we should not even have anything the same as them.

Es klingt paradox. Aber ich behaupte es noch einmal, und stelle es Deiner Prüfung und Deinem Gebrauche frei: das eigentliche Nationelle wird im Fortschritt der Bildung immer der geringere Vorzug werden. Deswegen sind die Griechen des heiligen Pathos weniger Meister, weil es ihnen angeboren war, hingegen sind sie vorzüglich in Darstellungsgabe, von Homer an, weil dieser außerordentliche Mensch seelenvoll genug war, um die abendländische Junoische Nüchternheit für sein Apollonsreich zu erbeuten, und so wahrhaft das Fremde sich anzueignen.

Bei uns ist umgekehrt. Deswegen ist auch so gefährlich, sich die Kunstregeln einzig und allein von griechischer Vortrefflichkeit zu abstrahieren. Ich habe lange daran laboriert und weiß nun, daß außer dem, was bei den Griechen und uns das Höchste sein muß, nämlich dem lebendigen Verhältnis und Geschick, wir nicht wohl etwas gleich mit ihnen haben dürfen.[26]

In the first paragraph of this section, Hölderlin addresses the question of the status of the national. His first statement that "in the progress of culture, the properly national will become ever more the lesser virtue" is surprising considering that in the previous paragraph he had apparently wished to emphasise and valorise the role of the national. The clue as to how this contradictory statement is to be interpreted lies in the relationship that is drawn between the progress of culture ("*der Fortschritt der Bildung*") and the National. This reference to the progress of culture can be linked back to the

earlier discussion of the Perspectives fragment. As was argued there, it is through the drive to cultivate ("*Bildungstrieb*") that the break can be made with the past; in order for the culture to progress it necessarily has to free itself from a slavish dependency upon the "positive" forms provided by past cultures. Hence as Hölderlin goes on to explain, Greek culture developed not through that which was "inborn" in them; their culture is not founded upon, or recognised for, its "sacred pathos". Rather it flourishes and reaches maturity through Homer's ability to appropriate the foreign; i.e. he "captures the Occidental Junonian sobriety for his Apollonian realm." It is because of this explanation that Hölderlin is able to argue that the national should become the "lesser virtue" for if the example provided by the Greeks is accepted, it appears essential that the culture be developed through appropriation of that which is outside, rather than simply accepting the positivity of that which is inborn and given.[27]

This interpretation is substantiated further by the second part of the quotation where Hölderlin turns to examine the contemporary position. He states that "with us it is the reverse"; i.e. what is inborn for the Moderns is the "clarity of representation". Thus it cannot be expected that the Moderns will be able to "surpass" the Greeks in this form because by definition it is that which constitutes the "positive" form for this culture, and is precisely that which acts against the artist's "*Bildungstrieb*". Hence the warnings that Hölderlin makes against abstracting "the rules of art for oneself simply and solely from Greek excellence". It is evident that this comment is addressed at the advocates of Winckelmannian Classicism and their demands that "the only way we can become great is by imitating the ancients." [28] Through the arguments outlined in this letter, Hölderlin shows the reactionary nature and consequences of such

demands. In advocating a blind submission to the authority of the Greeks, these theorists do not allow the culture to advance, but rather aid its stultification. Hence the adamant tone of Hölderlin's statement that "we should not even have anything the same as them."; i.e. the one to one, imitative mimetic relation which Classicism advocates must not be allowed to occur.

However there is one element common to both the Greeks and Moderns. This is that which is "the highest...namely the living relationship and skill" ("*Das Höchste...dem lebendigen Verhältnis und Geschick*"). The relationship to which Hölderlin is referring can be equated with the statements that have been made concerning *Bildungstrieb*. It is this drive, this desire to cultivate which is shared both by the Greeks and the Moderns and which motivates the production of the living work of art. The relationship between the Greeks and the Moderns is thus not to be seen as a simple hierarchical ordering - i.e. Greece as the model which the Moderns merely have to imitate - but rather it is a dynamic, parallel relation arising out of a recognition of the necessary difference and incompatibility between the two cultures. Hölderlin emphasises this difference when he returns to reconsider the problem of that which is "one's own". ("*das Eigene*") He writes,

But that which is properly one's own must be learned just as well as that which is foreign. For this reason the Greeks are indispensable for us. Only we will not catch up to them precisely in that which is our own, proper national element because, as has been said, the free use of that which is one's own is the hardest.

Aber das Eigene muß so gut gelernt sein wie das Fremde. Deswegen sind uns die Griechen unentbehrlich. Nur werden wir ihnen gerade in unserm Eigenen Nationellen nicht nachkommen, weil, wie gesagt, der freie Gebrauch des Eigenen das Schwerste ist.[29]

What is important in this statement is the emphasis which Hölderlin places on learning. Contrary to what might be expected, not only the foreign but also the "own, proper, national element" must be acquired through an active process of learning. This process of learning is to be equated with the "*Bildungstrieb*". It is the recognition of the split nature of both the Greek and Modern cultures that allows for the process of learning to proceed in a way that does not simply replicate old structures, but rather introduces the possibility of the new. As Hölderlin states in this passage, it is through the recognition of the impossibility of "catching up" with the Greeks that the step can be taken which will start to introduce the new. What must be discarded is the dream of the perfection of the Modern form of art through the taking up and surpassing of the Greek form, for this only reinforces the Modern's inadequacy in relation to the Greek; it is a copying of Greek culture, not the discovery of the Modern's nature: it will not give "that which is one's own.". The only way to discover that which is "one's own" is through a recognition of the differences that exist between Greece and the Modern. The origin of "what is one's own" for the Modern may initially be thought to be found in Greece, for surface similarities necessarily exist; e.g. in the recognition of shared qualities such as "clarity of representation". However, what has to be acknowledged is that these qualities are specific to their own culture, they are not mutually interchangeable. It is this recognition of the necessity of difference which underlies Hölderlin's insistence that it is the free use of what is one's own that is most difficult. In emphasising freedom Hölderlin points towards the way in which his formulation of the relationship between the Ancient and Modern breaks down the possibility of considering the former as a model in any simple sense of the term. The Greeks can only act as a shady, negative model for the Modern artist; they demonstrate only what the work cannot be, thus leaving the modern

artist alone and in a certain sense always divorced from what they hitherto had understood as their history. The possibility that the Greek may act as a guide is removed, leaving the Modern artist to find their own route forward. Hölderlin gestures towards the nature of the autonomy that emerges from this re-formulation in the comments he makes with regard to tragedy. He writes,

...you [i.e. Böhlendorff] treat the drama in a more epic manner. It is, as a whole, an authentically modern tragedy. For this is the tragic for us: that, packed up in any container, we depart very quietly from the realm of the living, and not that, consumed in flames, we atone for the flames we are not able to control.

...Du das Drama epischer behandelt hast. Es ist, im Ganzen, eine echte moderne Tragödie. Denn das ist das Tragische bei uns, daß wir ganz stille in irgendeinem Behälter eingepackt vom Reiche der Lebendigen hinweggehn, nicht daß wir in Flammen verzehrt die Flamme büßen, die wir nicht zu bändigen vermochten. [30]

The difference between the two forms of tragedy, the ancient and the modern is starkly encapsulated in this statement. It also helps to highlight the position of the Modern artist insofar as the distinction which is drawn between the two types of tragedy emphasises how the structures given in the Greek form of tragedy are no longer applicable. The Modern's "authentic" experience of tragedy lacks prescriptive guidelines or rules; there is no pre-ordained mechanism to give order or structure, rather for the Modern "any container" will suffice and the departure is not heralded by pomp or ceremony, it is simple and quiet ("stille"). If the Modern artist wishes to create a work of art which is representative of his or her time they must choose their own route without recourse to the Greek example. This is the consequence of the autonomy which arises when the artist is freed from the compulsion to use the Greek model.

2.4. Critical Responses: The Problem of Interpretation.

It is now necessary to set the arguments presented in the first letter to Böhlendorff in relation to my wider concerns regarding how the mimetic relation between Greece and Germany is to be understood. The question I wish to address is how far the views which Hölderlin expresses in this letter differ from those given in the Perspectives fragment. In the discussion of this fragment, I concluded by questioning how far Hölderlin's proposed "solution" differed from that given by his contemporaries such as Schiller. This is the question to which I now wish to return, but with reference to the Böhlendorff letter and the apparently different formulation of the problem that it yields. In relation to the Perspectives fragment I suggested that Hölderlin was able to give an alternative more affirmative solution to the problems that he had diagnosed only by ignoring the dynamic, relational reading of the relationship between Antiquity and Modernity; to solve the problems he introduces a dialectical framework which automatically subsumes the past into the present by advocating of a forward progression of self-critique and enlightenment. Can it be argued that a similar dialectical process underlies the arguments in the Böhlendorff letter? or does the recognition of the complexities involved in the consideration of the split nature of both Antiquity and Modernity start to call elements of this reading into question?

Several commentators have adopted the former position, arguing that the Böhlendorff letter is to be viewed as the culmination of the development of a mature dialectical schema, which integrates Hölderlin's poetological and philosophical writings. This leads them to regard Hölderlin's work as a form of proto-Hegelianism, which is interesting only insofar as it is to be considered in relation to the mature Idealist project.^[31] Whilst it cannot be denied that

Hölderlin's writings are heavily influenced by Idealist thought, such readings pay insufficient attention to the tensions within the works - primarily caused by the attempts to understand the relation of Antiquity and Modernity - and rely upon a reading of Hölderlin through the filter of the Hegelian dialectical schema, thus creating a totalising interpretation which ignores those elements which do not comfortably fit.

A more sophisticated interpretation is given by Peter Szondi in his article "Hölderlin's Overcoming of Classicism" ("*Überwindung des Klassizismus*"). In this detailed essay, Szondi outlines several of the "accepted" interpretations of the Böhlendorff letter, highlighting their problems and inadequacies.^[32] In critiquing the existing interpretations he also offers his own more radical reading which is based upon a recognition of the central role played by the relation of antiquity and Modernity within Hölderlin's work. As the title of Szondi's article indicates, he acknowledges the radicality of Hölderlin's insight into the necessarily split nature of the Greek world, overturning, as it does, the Classical interpretations' insistence on its undivided, unified nature. Szondi summarises this point when he states,

This differentiation [between the Greek and the Hesperian] relieves him [Hölderlin] entirely of the imitation of antiquity which Winkelmannian classicism had made obligatory for him, and at the same time it allows him to see the reason why the Greeks are nevertheless "indispensable" for him. Hölderlin overcomes classicism without turning away from the classical.^[33]

The final statement neatly encapsulates Szondi's interpretation of Hölderlin's "overcoming of classicism", insofar as it prevents Hölderlin from being aligned with the classicist tradition, whilst at the same time, recognising that Greece, the classical, still has an important function in his thought. How Szondi

understands the nature of this function is suggested in the title of his essay, emphasising the overcoming of classicism. Classicism is replaced by "the classical" freeing the latter to operate as one side of another dialectical opposition. Szondi's interpretation frees the classical from Classicism only in order to reappropriate it for another "overcoming" which will pitch "the Greeks" against the "Hesperian poet" culminating in the emergence of the third of the dialectical structure, here characterised as "poetic language". Hence Szondi writes,

The Greeks are "indispensable" for the Hesperian poet because in their art he encounters his own proper origin as a foreign element. Thus he gains the distance from his own element which is freedom. From Greek poetry he learns, without imitating, or "commenting upon" it, to "use freely", to apply as a medium of his own language, that which is indeed given by nature, but which has until now remained unused in his poetry...both elements - his own and the foreign, "precision" and "warmth" - are to be integrated into poetic language.[34]

It is not possible to question this reading in terms of its accuracy in relation to Hölderlin's texts, for it does not distort or add anything to what Hölderlin himself writes. However, what is at stake is whether Szondi's reading is coloured by the Hegelian theory upon which it relies. Whilst this reading is totally consistent in its own terms, positing as it does a third term through which the opposition between the Greeks and the Moderns can be mediated, it does not question how the opposition itself is to be understood. Or rather, it assumes the term "opposition" to function in accordance with a strictly dialectical reading which presupposes a symmetrical relation between the terms, as would be expected if Hölderlin is implying that the form of dialectical relation that is operating here is based upon the Hegelian model. Szondi

acknowledges that he understands the dialectic relation to be symmetrical when he describes the relationship between Greek and Hesperian nature and art in terms of the "mirror-symmetry" between the two. It is this presupposition of symmetry which allows him to claim that the Hesperian poet "encounters his own proper origin as a foreign element" in the work of the Greeks. However, as I argued earlier, what is distinctive about Hölderlin's reading of the relation between Greece and the Moderns is the emphasis which is placed upon the difference between the two cultures. A strict mirror-symmetry cannot exist between the two, for whilst they apparently contain similar qualities - the "clarity of representation" appears on both sides of the Greek/Modern equation -, they have different functions and meanings within each culture. Hence Szondi's claim that the Hesperian poet encounters his "own proper origin" within the Greeks cannot be supported. What the poet finds in the Greek poetry cannot be described as his origin because Hölderlin's formulation of the problematic questions the validity of any discussion of origin understood as ground. The Greek world, both in its nature and culture, is alien to the Modern. The Modern may have inherited qualities from the Greeks, but these are mediated and tainted by history and time. This point is summarised by Andrzej Warminski in his discussion of Szondi's interpretation in his book Readings in Interpretation. In response to Szondi's presupposition of a symmetrical relation between with two cultures, Warminski writes,

This presupposition becomes questionable once we read the relation between the Greeks and us as an asymmetrical chiasmic reversal of terms, one of which (das Fremde) we have no access to because it cannot be the object of our perception or our knowledge, not the object for a subject. If it is an object at all, it is somebody else's (the Greeks') object and not ours. The fact that our relation to the Greeks is structured not like the relation of consciousness to the object of its knowledge but like a trope - chiasmus, a reversal

concerned only with the relation of terms and not their constitution
- is already indicative of the problem.[35]

Here Warminski challenges Szondi's reading precisely because it fails to recognise that the relation which Hölderlin evolves cannot be understood in terms of a strict mirror-symmetry. Once this is acknowledged the full force of Hölderlin's interpretation can be realised. As Warminski states, what is important for Hölderlin is the relation between the terms, not what constitutes the terms themselves. Szondi's reading, whilst recognising the relational aspect to a certain degree, is also equally dependent upon the constitutive elements. This is exactly what Hölderlin warns we must not base our theories upon, what is important is "we should not even have anything the same as them", that is excepting the "living relation and skill", we cannot have anything in common with the Greeks.

Conclusion.

At the beginning of the previous section I questioned the extent to which Hölderlin's theory differs from his contemporaries and whether it could be said to offer a different understanding of the relationship between Antiquity and Modernity. Through a discussion of Szondi's and Warminski's views I think it has become clear that differences do exist and that Hölderlin is gesturing towards a different reading of the relationship which emphasises the problems that occur through assuming that a simple dialectical relation between past and present can operate. In concentrating upon a relational analysis, Hölderlin effects a break with the past, not only in that he brings the status of the Classicist approach into question, but also in the way that he problematises the role and function within the Modern of terms such as "the Greeks" and "Antiquity". He challenges the assumption of linear continuity between past and

present, offering instead a multi-layered reading which although apparently dialectical, challenges any easy understanding of how the dialectic can function within the Modern. In the Böhlendorff letter, Hölderlin manages to rewrite the relation between Antiquity and Modernity in such a way as to force a re-evaluation of how both terms are to be understood. This is because in acknowledging that the Greek culture is itself split, the assumption which forms the basis of the theory of his contemporaries, in particular Schiller, is called into question. As I argued earlier, Schiller's characterization of ancient and modern is dependent upon the assumption that the ancient world is unitary whilst the modern world is divided. It is this distinction which allows Schiller to privilege his dialectical understanding of the progress of the modern over the ancient. However through his discovery of the split nature of the ancient world - Homer must also have recourse to the "foreign" - Hölderlin is prevented from simply assuming the primacy of the modern over the ancient, for the premises which underlie this claim have been removed. It is this which makes Hölderlin's position much more critical and problematic for he is forced into a position where he has to rethink his understanding of the modern.^[36] The project of *Bildungstrieb* cannot be understood as a process towards enlightenment which is opposed to, and necessarily surpasses, the limited achievements of the Greeks. Rather it has to find its own means of justification and legitimation for its progress. Hence the ambiguous and ambivalent comments concerning the nature of the national and its relation to the natural. The "national" of the modern is something which must be created in and through the process of *Bildungstrieb*. However as the arguments I have put forward suggest, the form that this "national" must take is something that is far from predetermined or certain. There can be no assumptions made as regards what constitutes the "national" of Hölderlin's time, for the removal of the Greeks as

a model casts modernity adrift from any form of certainty or ground regarding its own origins. Hence, perhaps, Hölderlin's increasingly desperate attempts to find a voice which will be representative of the problems of his time, for in an age which he views as being characterised by an "absence of destiny" ("*das Schicksallose*")^[37] no easy solutions can be found.

As I shall show in Chapter 5 of this study, this search culminates in the Remarks on Oedipus and the Remarks on Antigone, which accompany Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles' dramas. However, before these texts can be discussed in detail it is necessary to examine Hölderlin's treatment of tragedy in relation to the wider concerns of his theoretical work.

Chapter Three.

Hölderlin and Tragedy: The Poetological Writings.

3.1. Introduction.

At the end of the last chapter I showed how Hölderlin's discussion of the problem of the relationship between Antiquity and Modernity in the letter to Böhlendorff culminated in a few brief comments concerning the form of tragedy which is most relevant and applicable to these eras. The question that I want to address in this chapter concerns the reasons why the tragic form comes to play such an important and central role in Hölderlin's thought - not only in his poetry and drama, but also in his theoretical writings. It is clear that Hölderlin's concern with poetic form is not limited to the narrow sphere of "Aesthetics" understood in terms of earlier theorists such as Baumgarten. Rather, as I argued in the previous chapter, Hölderlin's work is heavily influenced by Kant and Schiller. Any discussion of the "aesthetic" is necessarily influenced by this wider philosophical framework. Thus before any analysis of Hölderlin's specific writings on tragedy can take place, it is necessary to establish how they are related to this wider framework. In particular, in order to ascertain how the term "aesthetic" functions within Hölderlin's thought, it is useful to establish how the relationship between poetry and philosophy is understood. One reason for a systematic account of this background is the need to demonstrate that Hölderlin's work is a move away from the position of both Schiller and the early Idealists such as Fichte. This is necessary in order to prevent Hölderlin's work from being cursorily dismissed as a regressive move into a form of naive Romanticism which celebrates the natural over the theoretical, the non-conceptual over the conceptual. This interpretation would see his thought as a move away from the

rigour of the "philosophical" approach towards a form of analysis which is much more akin to "literature" and "literary theory". As will become clear in the course of this discussion, the reasons why such evaluations may be made arise out of Hölderlin's insistence on conducting his theoretical investigations into the status of the "aesthetic" by way of analyses of poetic structure and functions. However as I intend to show, when these analyses - in particular the analyses of tragedy - are read in the light of the philosophical positions by which they are informed, such dismissals are much more difficult to make.

3.2. The Relation between Philosophy and Poetry: The System Programme Fragment.

The difficulty of understanding the relationship between poetry and philosophy is exacerbated in Hölderlin's work not least because he operates in both fields; he is literally both a philosopher and poet. Yet to state the position in this way is to adopt automatically the categorisations against which Hölderlin is reacting. To view these two appellations as defining mutually exclusive enterprises with no interaction between them is clearly fallacious. This position also falls into the trap of presupposing that the genre distinctions which distinguish the difference between "literary" and "philosophical" texts can be transposed easily onto the writings of the late eighteenth century. In fact as the work of Hölderlin and many of his contemporaries demonstrates, one of their express intentions is to question the validity of establishing such barriers between the disciplines. This is exemplified by the fragmentary text which has come to be known as the Earliest System-Programme of German Idealism. This short text contains in embryonic form many of the ideas which characterise the mature Idealist and Romantic position and establishes the primacy of the "aesthetic" modes of understanding. Therefore to establish the background to

Hölderlin's employment of the term "aesthetic", I shall give a detailed reading of this text. Subsequently, I shall show how Hölderlin's own writings are related to the concerns of this text.

Many mysteries surround this text, not least of which being the uncertainty concerning its authorship and date of composition. Most critics now agree that it is the product of the combined authorship of Hölderlin, Schelling and Hegel and was written between June and August 1796.⁽¹⁾ The intentions of the text are extremely ambitious. These intentions are summarised by the declaration which concludes the text. The authors declare that the programme which they have set out "will be the very last and grandest of humanity's works." What, then, does this text contain which allows such grandiose claims to be made, enabling all subjects ranging from ethics to metaphysics, physics to politics to be covered and which culminates in the statements which place the aesthetic firmly at the centre of the system?

The first issues discussed arise out of Kantian and Fichtean theory. The first paragraph refers specifically to Kant and the division between the theoretical and practical philosophy. It is suggested that the System-Programme offers a way of overcoming this division through the collapsing together of the Kantian practical and theoretical postulates. Hence it is stated that the form of ethics advocated in the system "will be nothing else than a complete system of all ideas, or, what comes to the same, of all practical postulates" ("*...so wird diese Ethik nichts anders als ein vollständiges System aller Ideen, oder, was dasselbe ist, aller praktischen Postulate.*")⁽²⁾ This is reminiscent of Fichte's argument that the philosophy of the Absolute must be based within the practical sphere and, in particular, that the founding act of philosophy must originate in the action of the autonomous agent. The Fichtean overtones become

clearer in the next stage of the argument which establishes the position of the subject in relation to the system. The authors write,

The first idea is of course the representation of me myself as an absolutely free creature. At the same time, along with the free, self-conscious creature, a whole world comes to the fore - out of nothing - the sole true and conceivable creation out of nothing.

die erste Idee ist natürlich die Vorstellung von mir selbst, als einem absolut freien Wesen. Mit dem freyen selbstbewußten Wesen tritt zugleich eine ganze Welt - aus dem nichts hervor - die einzig wahre und gedenkbare Schöpfung aus Nichts.[3]

This passage introduces two of the most important ideas of the system. First, there is the insistence on the primacy of the representation of the self, which simultaneously gives the disclosure of world to the subject. Secondly, what is referred to here is the representation of the self through an act, understood as the founding act of self-consciousness. Thus the "I" is not to be seen simply as a given. It is not the mere Kantian logical construct which accompanies my actions but about which nothing can be ascertained except in formal terms.[4] Rather, what is posited here is the active construction of the "I" in and through intellectual intuition. To substantiate this interpretation, the quotation from the System-Programme can be compared with the statements which Fichte makes in his 1796 essay, A Comparison between Prof. Schmid's System and the Wissenschaftslehre^[5]. Here Fichte writes that the "entire act through which the "I" posits itself, while at the same time positing within itself everything that exists, is an act which does occur."^[6] The emphasis placed upon the actuality of the act, on its basis within experience, can be related to the statements made in the first section of the system concerning the conflation of the Kantian division between the theoretical and practical spheres. The Fichtean notion of act ("*Tathandlung*") is employed here to bring together the two

spheres of the Kantian system. The Fichtean overtones of this passage are substantiated further by the emphasis which is placed upon the fact that the act which founds the system is to be understood as a free act, which in turn, both creates and confirms the "I" as a free acting agent. Throughout the various versions of the Wissenschaftslehre, Fichte attempts continually to assert the importance and radicality of this aspect of his system. The notion of act which is built into his system presupposes the possibility of self-determination even if this can only be understood conceptually after the act of positing the I. The Fichtean insistence on the primacy and necessity of freedom is prevalent throughout the System-Programme fragment. It occurs particularly with respect to the discussion of how "the works of mankind" - i.e. the state and its institutions - are to be understood. Hence the authors of the programme write, "I want to show that there is no idea of the state, because the state is something mechanical; just as little is there an idea of a machine. Only that which is an object of freedom is called an idea."^[7] This remark implies that practical philosophy has hitherto placed freedom in a subordinate position within discussions of the practical ordering of the system. This has meant that freedom has only been considered to operate upon the level of the practical rather than the theoretical. It is this which separates the Idealist understanding of the importance of freedom from the Kantian, for the former - the Idealist - is based upon the assumption of the primacy of the actuality of freedom which then enables the positing of the details of the system. Hence the statement which is made in the remark quoted above that "only that which is an object of freedom is called an idea."

After discussing the effects that this re-evaluation of freedom will have upon the practical sphere of state and government and then relating it to religion,

the authors turn to the question of the position of the aesthetic. This sudden and abrupt move marks the turning point of the text where the Fichtean terminology and concerns are removed and a radically different set of concepts is introduced. The authors write,

At the close, the idea that unifies all, the idea of beauty, the word taken in its higher, Platonic sense. For I am convinced that the supreme act of reason, because it embraces all ideas, is an aesthetic act; and that only in beauty are truth and goodness of the same flesh, - The philosopher must possess as much aesthetic force as the poet, those human beings who are devoid of aesthetic sense are our pedantic philosophers. The philosophy of the spirit is an aesthetic philosophy...Poetry will thereby attain a higher dignity; in the end she will again become what she was in the beginning - the instructress of humanity.

...Zuletzt die Idee, die alle vereinigt, die Idee der Schönheit, das Wort in höherem platonischem Sinne genommen. Ich bin nun überzeugt, daß der höchste Akt der Vernunft, der, indem die alle Ideen umfaßt, ein ästhetischer Akt ist, und daß Wahrheit und Güte, nur in der Schönheit verschwistert sind, - Der Philosoph muß eben so viel ästhetische Kraft besitzen, als der Dichter, die Menschen ohne ästhetischen Sinn sind unsere Buchstaben Philosophen. Die Philosophie des Geistes ist eine ästhetische Philosophie...Die Poesie bekommt dadurch eine höhere Würde, sie wird am Ende wieder, was sie am Anfang war - Lehrerin der <Geschichte> Menschheit.[8]

In the light of what has been established earlier it might be expected that when the move to a discussion of the aesthetic is made, it will be from the perspective of Kant's Third Critique.[9] Instead the authors introduce the concept of an idea of beauty which will unite all other ideas which is based upon Plato's discussion of the idea of beauty in the Phaedrus.^[10] Thus in elevating beauty to the highest point of the system, in making it the idea which "unifies all", the move away from the Fichtean system is made. This passage

suggests that the accomplishment and understanding of the Absolute I through the act of intellectual intuition occurs in the sphere of the aesthetic, rather than it being a purely theoretical operation. The authors of the System-Programme are suggesting that it is only through the aesthetic that this act can be fully realised, for it is only in the idea of Beauty that full unity can be attained. Hence the statement which can be seen to summarise the manifesto of the System-Programme: "the philosophy of the spirit is an aesthetic philosophy"; i.e. access to the Absolute can occur only in and through the aesthetic. This explains why later in the fragment, the authors argue that the "philosophers must become sensuous" or risk remaining as mere "*Buchstabenphilosophen*". This call for "sensuous" philosophers indicates the radicality that lies at the heart of this text, for it involves the reintroduction of precisely the elements which the philosophical enterprise has traditionally tried to exclude and legislate against. Furthermore, the call for "sensuality" also introduces the possibility of an alternative "way of doing" philosophy. This point is summarised succinctly by Phillippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy in the introductory chapter of their book The Literary Absolute. After emphasising the potential radicality of the statement "the philosopher must possess just as much aesthetic power as the poet" they write,

In other words, because the idea of beauty is the very ideality of the Idea, the speculative Aesthetics in which the System-subject culminates must necessarily reverse itself in aesthetic speculation; it must adopt a presentation or exposition which is itself aesthetic. Philosophy must fulfill itself in a work of art; art is the speculative *organon par excellence*.^[11]

These remarks suggest that the System-Programme offers the possibility of breaking down the rigid distinctions which separate philosophical, theoretical modes of thought from the aesthetic arts. Philosophy itself must become

aesthetic. This means that not only must it consider the sphere of the aesthetic but also its mode of presentation must become aesthetic. As is expressed by Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, "philosophy must fulfill itself in a work of art."

It is this idea that the work of art can itself be seen to be the site of presentation of the philosophical project which intrigues Hölderlin. Although at the time of the development of the System-Programme fragment he has not yet evolved his mature analysis of the function of the work of art, it is clear that he is already exploring the nature of the problematic relationship between the work of art and theoretical modes of thought. In fact it could be suggested that the importance which is placed on the aesthetic in the System-Programme fragment can be related directly to Hölderlin's influence on its conception. Throughout his work of this early period - i.e. between 1794 and 1797 - Hölderlin returns repeatedly to consideration of the nature of the beautiful and in particular to how the notion of unity is made manifest in the beautiful. This is evident most clearly in his epistolary novel Hyperion^[12], specifically within the final chapter of Volume One. Here Hyperion and his friends finally have the opportunity to visit Athens. Whilst making the crossing to the mainland of Greece, they engage in a discussion which valorises the world of Greek antiquity. Many of the statements that are made mimic the Schillerian position that I outlined briefly in the previous chapter; e.g. there is a discussion of which factors led to the emergence of the Greek state, whether it is attributable purely to the climate, the art, the religion or a combination of all occurring at a pertinent moment in time. The qualities of the Greeks are then compared favourably to other civilisations, specifically the Egyptians and the "Northern". Hyperion, the character who personifies Hölderlin himself and who

has been leading the conversation is then asked what makes the Greeks a philosophical people rather than simply "poetic and religious". He replies,

"The fact is...that without poetry they would never have been a philosophical people!"

"What has philosophy," he answered, "what has the cold sublimity of philosophical knowledge, to do with poetry?"

"Poetry," I answered, confident of my argument, "is the beginning and end of philosophical knowledge. Like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, philosophy springs from the poetry of an eternal, divine state of being. And so in philosophy, too, the irreconcilable finally converges again in the mysterious spring of poetry."

"...The man who has not at the least once in his life felt pure beauty in himself, when the powers of his being merged like the colours in the rainbow...that man will not even be a philosophical sceptic.

Sie waren sogar, sagt ich, ohne Dichtung nie ein philosophisch Volk gewesen!

Was hat die Philosophie, erwiedert' er, was hat die kalte Erhabenheit dieser Wissenschaft mit Dichtung zu thun?

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 Dichtung zusammen.

...Der Mensch ...der nicht wenigstens im Leben Einmal volle lautre Schönheit in sich fühlte, wenn in ihm die Kräfte seines Wesens, wie die Farben am Irisbogen...der Mensch wird nicht einmal ein philosophischer Zweifler werden.[13]

Resonances of many of the ideas expressed in the latter half of the System-Programme fragment can be identified in this passage. First, there is the distinction that is drawn between the purely "theoretical" philosopher and the

one who also has recourse to the aesthetic. The former - i.e. the "theoretical", - like the "*Buchstabenphilosophen*" of the System-Programme, is judged to be inferior, unable to even be recognised as a "philosophical sceptic". However the latter - i.e. the aesthetic - is aligned with the philosophers of Greece, whose thought arose out of and recognised the necessity of the aesthetic realm. If the terminology of the System-Programme is interjected, these people could be described as "sensuous" thinkers who recognise and revel in the relationship between philosophy and poetry. Secondly, in both texts, there is the recognition that it is the idea of beauty which has the capacity to unify all the other spheres. Hence Hyperion later declares that,

The great saying, the εν διαπερον εαυτη (the one differentiated in itself) of Heraclitus, could be found only by a Greek, for it is the very being of Beauty, and before that there was no philosophy.

Now classification became possible because, for the whole was there. The flower had ripened; now it could be dissected.

Das große Wort, das εν διαπερον εαυτη (das Eine in sich selber unterschiedne) des Heraklit, das konnte nur ein Grieche finden, denn es ist das Wesen der Schönheit, und ehe das gefunden war, gabs keine Philosophie.

Nun konnte man bestimmen, das Ganze war da. Die Blume war gereift; man konnte nun zergliedern.[14]

As in the System-Programme fragment, beauty - i.e. the aesthetic - is seen not only to be prior to the theoretical, but is also that which allows for its emergence. The aesthetic sphere is understood as the whole, the necessary, prior unity out of which differentiation occurs. Hence the similarities which can be observed between the statement quoted above from the System-Programme that "Poesy will thereby attain a higher dignity; in the end she will again become what she was in the beginning - the instructress of humanity", and the remark

made by Hyperion that it is only through Heraclitus' notion of the one differentiated in itself, which is "struggling reason's ideal of Beauty" that philosophy is able to occur. In both instances the prior status of the aesthetic sphere is acknowledged; it is that from which the theoretical emerges, and it is understood as necessarily subordinate to, and dependent upon, the former. However, in both Hyperion and the System-Programme fragment there is the recognition that philosophy has moved away from and denied its origin within the aesthetic. In so doing it has lost touch with that which gave it life, relying on the purely theoretical sphere thus producing ideas and theories which are both limited and sterile for they can only address this sphere itself; i.e. the theoretical cannot adequately speak of the aesthetic. This leads Hyperion to claim that this type of theory cannot be considered as philosophy for,

"Mere understanding produces no philosophy, for philosophy is more than the limited knowledge of what is.

" Mere reason produces no philosophy, for philosophy is more than the blind demand for ever greater progress in the combination and differentiation of some particular material."

Aus bloßem Verstande kömmt keine Philosophie, denn Philosophie ist mehr, denn nur die beschränkte Erkenntnis des Vorhandnen.

Aus bloßer Vernunft kömmt keine Philosophie, denn Philosophie ist mehr, denn blinde Forderung eines nie zu endigenden Fortschritts in Vereinigung und Unterscheidung eines möglichen Stoffs.[15]

These statements explain why Hölderlin feels it necessary to call for the re-evaluation and reinstatement of the aesthetic within the philosophical enterprise. The claim being made here is that it is only through the aesthetic that philosophy will be able to return to address all areas of concern. The aesthetic presentation provides an access to the Absolute which is denied to the purely theoretical enterprise. This explains the radical jump to which I alluded earlier

which occurs in the middle of the System-Programme fragment as it turns from purely theoretical issues regarding the status of the subject of the system, to a discussion which places the aesthetic firmly at its centre. In order for the authors to be able to claim that the system has universal validity, the theoretical, practical and aesthetic spheres must all be considered and incorporated. Furthermore the necessary supremacy of the latter is acknowledged when it is stated that "only in beauty are truth and goodness of the same flesh". Hence the jump to the discussion of the aesthetic which occurs at the centre of the system is not to be understood as a radical disjuncture which fractures the coherence of the whole, but rather it is the move which is necessary to ensure this coherence.^[16]

However it is now necessary to take a step back from the details of these texts and to return to the wider question posed at the beginning of this section; namely how is Hölderlin's use of the aesthetic to be understood? What function does it play within his thought? In the foregoing discussion I highlighted the reasons why the aesthetic becomes important to the philosophers of the last decade of the eighteenth century. The move towards consideration of the aesthetic occurs because of the inadequacies which are perceived in aspects of the existing theoretical discussions, in particular with regard to how the relationship between theoretical, conceptual discourse and the Absolute is understood. Hölderlin summarises his disquiet concerning purely theoretical modes of understanding in comments he makes in a letter to Schiller, written on September 4th 1795. He writes,

I am attempting to develop, for my own use, the idea of an infinite progress of philosophy, and I am attempting to prove that what must be continually demanded of any system, the union of subject and object in an absolute I (or whatever name one wishes to give to it), is undoubtedly possible on the aesthetic level in intellectual

intuition, but not on the theoretical level except by means of an infinite approximation, like that of the square of the circle. Immortality is just as necessary to realise a system of thought as it is to realise a system of action.

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 Subjekts und Objekts in einem absolutem - Ich oder wie man es nennen will - zwar ästhetisch, in der intellektualen Anschauung, theoretisch aber nur durch eine unendliche Annäherung möglich ist, wie die Annäherung des Quadrats zum Zirkel und daß, um ein System des Denkens zu realisieren, eine Unsterblichkeit ebenso notwendig ist, als sie es ist für ein System des Handelns. [17]

When these comments are placed alongside the remarks from Hyperion regarding the difference between a philosophy based solely on reason and the understanding and an aesthetically informed philosophy, it is possible to establish a clearer understanding of Hölderlin's conception of the place and function of the aesthetic. He feels that a purely conceptual system cannot address itself adequately to the possibility of intellectual intuition; it can only give "approximations." Hence the statements made in the letter to Schiller which indicate Hölderlin's desire to show how an "aesthetic" formulation of the intellectual intuition can occur.

How, though, does this view differ from those held by Hölderlin's contemporaries? and what prevents the accusation that he is merely replicating existing theories albeit in a more esoteric form? It is difficult to deny that Hölderlin is not influenced by his peers, specifically Schiller and Schelling. As I argued in the previous chapter, Schiller's influence is most apparent in the earlier work. Volume One of Hyperion dates from this period, and in certain respects, it contains many Schillerian themes and motifs.[18] However the

differences between the two become most apparent in the discussions of Beauty. Schiller's understanding of the function of the idea of beauty is similar to that of the authors of the System-Programme fragment insofar as both view the idea of Beauty from a totalising perspective; i.e. the idea of beauty unifies all elements, thus abolishing internal difference. On the other hand, Hölderlin relates the Platonic idea of Beauty to the earlier Heraclitean formula of "the one differentiated in itself". This creates two very different conceptions of how the unity of the Beautiful is to be understood. The unity given by the Schillerian project is a strictly dialectical unity; i.e. beauty is understood as the "third", synthesising component of the triadic structure, which brings the other two conflicting parts together. The movement involved in this process is understood in terms of an onward progress in which the component parts are necessarily taken up, and incorporated into the third. Hence the dialectical movement is always aiming towards a totality, as is stated in the System-Programme fragment, the programme which is set out will be the culmination of all thought, "the very last and grandest of humanity's works." This totality is one that is closed; the form of unity which is given is a unity of the Same, for all the component parts are brought together in the aesthetic. Hence all notions of difference are erased; the all-embracing "instructress of humanity", poesy, will ensure that "there will no longer be any philosophy, any history; the poetic art alone will survive..."[19]

In contradistinction to this, the form of unity perceived by Hölderlin is one that is characterised by difference and fission. This is exemplified best in the concluding passage of Hyperion, where Hölderlin develops an extended metaphor which illustrates his conception of a unity characterised by discordance and an absence of totality. He writes,

Like lovers' quarrels are the dissonances of the world. Reconciliation is there, even in the midst of strife, and all things that are parted find one another again."

"The arteries separate and return to the heart and all is one eternal, glowing life."

Wie der Zwist der Liebenden, sind die Dissonanzen der Welt. Versöhnung ist mitten im Streit und alles Getrennte findet sich wieder.

Es scheiden und kehren im Herzen die Adern und einiges, ewiges, glühendes Leben ist alles.[20]

When these statements are placed alongside the Heraclitean formulation of "the one differentiated in itself", the way in which such a unity is to be understood starts to become clear. Whilst the notion of the whole is still posited, this is not seen as a goal which must be worked towards; i.e. the Schillerian forward directed, dialectically mediated teleology is not operating here. Rather, as is indicated by the biological metaphors used in the passage from Hyperion, the unity which Hölderlin proposes is one that is living and dynamic. The sense of whole and unity that is employed here is one in which difference and conflict are sustained as such; there is no attempt to force a reconciliation of these oppositions. It is this emphasis on the importance of differentiation which separates Hölderlin's account from that of his contemporaries and which prevents him from being easily assimilated either to Schiller's dialectical schema or to the Idealist system of Schelling. In adopting the Heraclitean model as the basis of his understanding of the dialectical relation, Hölderlin makes the move which will not only isolate him from mainstream thought, but which also necessarily influences and informs the direction which his own work will take. It is outside the scope of this study to develop a full comparative analysis of the differences between the thought of Hölderlin and the Idealists. However, as this

interpretation develops it should become evident that although Hölderlin's work contains many elements similar to the thought of Idealists such as Hegel and Schelling, the conclusions which can be drawn with respect to his work are subtly different. Hölderlin can be distinguished from his contemporaries immediately by the observation that he is the theorist who takes the call for the reinstatement of the aesthetic to its most logical conclusion. Whilst his peers will discuss the "aesthetic" from a theoretical perspective, - e.g. using examples from fiction to substantiate theoretical claims^[21] - and will gesture towards the necessity of consideration of the aesthetic within their systems, Hölderlin takes a different and potentially more radical route. This is evidenced by the emergence of the so-called "poetological" writings which engage with the theoretical concerns of system thought. As Hölderlin states in the letter to Schiller which I quoted earlier, he is concerned to investigate "what must continually be demanded of any system, the union of subject and object in an absolute I". However this is undertaken from the perspective of the aesthetic; i.e. the ground upon which the discussion takes place is moved away from the purely theoretical "philosophical" texts, into the actual sphere of the aesthetic, namely into the discourse of the aesthetic, the poetical. These texts enact the conflation of the types of discourse which was demanded by the system-programme. Through the discussion of the poetic genres Hölderlin brings together all the components which have been outlined in this discussion. The concerns of the System-Programme fragment are joined with issues that arise out of Hyperion with regard to the Heraclitean formulation of the "one differentiated in itself" in order to work towards a new understanding of the aesthetic. The place where these concerns become most manifest is in the

discussions of the tragic form. To understand the full implications of this move it is to these discussions of tragedy that I now wish to turn.

3.3. The Poetological Writings.

In this section I shall examine Hölderlin's treatment of the poetic forms and show how it is related to the wider theoretical concerns that I discussed previously. Many difficulties exist with the so-called "poetological writings"[22] not least of which being the fact that many of the texts are incomplete, often contradictory and exist only as working drafts. It is therefore not possible to view them as constituting a finished body of work, or as providing a definitive account of Hölderlin's understanding of the relationship between poetic and philosophical theory. When these factors are taken into consideration, problems arise with respect to how these texts are to be approached from a critical perspective. Hence in what follows I shall concentrate on an analysis of one of the texts in detail, whilst informing this analysis with passages from other texts which help to illustrate Hölderlin's position at this time. In adopting this selective approach and, specifically, not examining all the texts from this period I can necessarily make no claim to a representative account of all the issues thrown up by these texts. Yet, because of their provisional nature, systematic coverage would anyway be illusory. None of the texts provide a fully coherent or polished "system" of thought, hence it is appropriate to engage them in an interpretation which brings together elements from several, apparently disparate, texts.

I intend to focus my discussion on the short text, On the Difference of the Poetic Modes.^[23] This text was written in the summer of 1800, and is Hölderlin's most succinct summary of the nature of the poetic modes and the

relationships between them. At the beginning of the text, the features of the three distinct modes are outlined in a schematic fashion. Hölderlin writes,

The lyric, in appearance idealistic poem, is naive in its significance. It is the continuous metaphor of a feeling.

The epic, in appearance naive poem, is heroic in its significance. It is the metaphor of great aspirations.

The tragic, in appearance heroic poem, is idealistic in its significance. It is the metaphor of an intellectual intuition.

Das lyrische dem Schein nach idealische Gedicht ist in seiner Bedeutung naiv. Es ist eine fortgehende Metapher eines Gefühls.

Das epische dem Schein nach naive Gedicht ist in seiner Bedeutung heroisch. Es ist die Metapher großer Bestrebungen.

Das tragische, dem Schein nach heroische Gedicht ist in seiner Bedeutung idealisch. Es ist die Metapher einer intellektuellen Anschauung.^[24]

In this statement Hölderlin describes the individual components of the three poetic modes which constitute the basis of his analysis of the poetic process. Although the three modes exist independently of each other, a circular relationship between them can also be discerned. The description of each of the modes comprises three elements; Hölderlin establishes the appearance of the mode, its significance, and of what it is a metaphor. Whilst the first two categories are self-explanatory, the third - of what the mode is a metaphor - is more problematic. This part of the description refers apparently to the content of the form, and the relationship between the content and the wider context to which it refers. However this is not to be understood as a direct, unmediated relationship as is shown by the fact that it is described as a "metaphor", indicating that a displacement occurs between the mode, and the wider meaning which is attributed to it; i.e. each type of poetic mode gestures

towards this wider relevance but this is not given expressly within the work itself. Furthermore the modes comprise the same components, although each component performs a different function within each individual mode. For example, the "heroic" is given in the "appearance" of the tragic, whilst it constitutes "the significance" of the epic. Thus it is possible to establish a circular relationship between the different modes because there are a limited number of components which make up the modes which occur in a finite set of combinations within the poetic process as a whole.[25] Hölderlin's desire to understand the internal structure of the poetic forms can be related to the discussion in the previous chapter of the first letter to Böhlendorff regarding the necessity of learning the "rules" for the composition of a work.

Hölderlin explains the interrelationships between the modes further in a very short, fragmentary text which is contemporaneous with the Differences essay. In this short text Hölderlin writes that,

The tragic poet should study the lyric, the lyric poet the epic and the epic poet the tragic. For in the tragic lies the completion of the epic, in the lyric the completion of the tragic, and in the epic the completion of the lyric. For if the completion of all is a mixed expression of all of them, nevertheless in each one, one of the three sides stands out most.

Der tragische Dichter thut wohl, der lyrischen, den lyrische den epischen, der epische den tragischen zu studieren. Denn im tragischen liegt die Vollendung des epischen, im lyrischen die Vollendung des tragischen, im epischen die Vollendung des lyrischen. Denn wenn schon die Vollendung von allen ein vermischter Ausdruck von allen ist, so ist doch eine der drei Seiten in jedem die hervorstechendste.[26]

This fragment suggests that a mutual complementarity exists between each of the modes, and that the ideal completed work should be seen to contain a

mixture of all three. Hence the poets should not confine themselves to specialising in one of the modes, rather they should learn both the individual nature of each mode and also the relationships between them. However this does not preclude the possibility of identifying the work with one of the specific modes, for even though it contains a "mixture" of all three, one mode is still dominant, thus enabling the work to be defined as "tragic" or "lyric."

A further distinction can be drawn between the modes which arises out of the final characteristic which Hölderlin describes, namely of what they are a metaphor. The lyric is seen as a "continuous metaphor of a feeling", the heroic as "the metaphor of great aspirations," and the tragic as "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition". The difference between these three descriptions is important because it indicates that each of the modes has a different value for, and relationship with, the wider context towards which it gestures. Furthermore, it seems that the modes can be arranged hierarchically with the tragic mode placed highest since it is the metaphor of "an intellectual intuition". This remark suggests that in the tragic mode there is given the possibility for a relationship to the Absolute. However this apparently simple, factual statement raises more questions than it answers, for whilst it locates the site of the relationship between the philosophical and the poetical process within the tragic mode, at this point no other explanations are given. What significance, then, can be attributed to this remark? Furthermore, what justification can be given for choosing the tragic mode rather than the lyric or the epic, especially when the statements quoted above regarding the mutual interrelationship between the modes is taken into consideration?

To start to answer these questions it is necessary to move momentarily away from this text, back towards the issues raised in the previous section, and

specifically to return to the discussion of how the idea of beauty is to be understood. In the previous section I argued that a difference can be observed between Hölderlin's characterisation of beauty in terms of the Heraclitean formula of the "one differentiated in itself" and that which is given by the authors of the System-Programme who view beauty as a concept which is all-encompassing, totalising and which eradicates difference. As a result of these characterisations, two different readings can be developed as to how Beauty - understood as the highest idea which unifies all the others - is to be realised. Whilst for the writers of the System-Programme fragment all elements of the system will be brought together in the general category of "poesy", Hölderlin's conception calls for a much more sophisticated response. In the discussion at the end of previous section I highlighted the biological metaphor which underlies Hölderlin's understanding of the "one differentiating in itself". This metaphor suggests the impossibility of being able to speak of the whole without the parts; the unity that is posited is a unity of unity and difference. How, though, is this to be thought in an aesthetic sense if it is assumed that the access to this unity can only be gained through the aesthetic sphere as is suggested by the letter to Schiller of the fourth of September 1796 which I quoted previously? How does this relate to the tragic?

Answers to these questions can be found in a preliminary way in the second volume of Hyperion. Hölderlin prefaces this volume with a quotation from the chorus in Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus, "Not to born is best when all is reckoned in, but, when a man has seen the light, this is next best by far, to go back where he came from, quickly as he can." This desolate assessment of humanity's condition is in stark contrast to the sentiments with which Volume One concludes. In the final letter of Volume One Hyperion and Diotima call for

the rejuvenation of Greece and Nature through the new spirit of Beauty which Hyperion will teach to all who are receptive.[27] However, at the beginning of Volume Two, Hyperion has returned to his previous melancholy. This change is summed up by the Sophoclean quotation which from the start casts a shadow over Hyperion's aspirations. This mood continues in the first letter of the volume which is set in the autumn after the triumphant visit to Athens. The visit is discussed in a reminiscent manner. Overall there is a sense that this is a time which has passed irrevocably into memory and which can never be recovered. Speaking of the past, Diotima laments, "We felt so glad then that the living green did not flee from us too, like the brook...yet now spring, too, is over the hills and away." (*Da tat es uns so wohl, daß uns das seelenvolle Grün nicht auch so wegflog, wie der Bach...aber nun ist er [d.h. der Frühling] dennoch über die Berge.*)[28]. In response to these remarks, Hyperion speaking from the position of the present narrator replies,

We smiled at these words, although sorrow was closer to us.

So was our own bliss to depart, and we foresaw it.

Oh Bellarmin, who then is allowed to say he stands fast, if even beauty reaches maturity out of its fate, if even the divine must humble itself, and mortality share itself with all that is mortal!

Wir lächelten über dem Worte, wie wohl das Trauern uns näher war.

So sollt auch unsre eigne Seligkeit dahingehn, und wir sahen voraus.

Oh Bellarmin! wer darf denn sagen, er stehe fest, wenn auch das Schöne seinem Schicksal so entgegenreift, wenn auch das Göttliche sich demütigen muß, und die Sterblichkeit mit allem Sterblichen teilen![29]

In this passage Hölderlin suggests that Hyperion has realised that the proposal with which Volume One ended - that "there will be but one Beauty; and man

and Nature will be united in one all-embracing divinity" - is unrealisable. In the light of the insights which Hyperion has gained, he sees this as an utopian ideal which has no possibility of actualisation. This new understanding occurs because Hyperion realises that the positive "solution" which had been proposed, failed to consider the empirical situation of the protagonists. It was an attempt to impose an ahistorical, theoretical solution onto a situation which is determined by the constraints of time and history. The proposals which are put forward in Volume One can be seen to be subject to the same objections as the "theoretical solution" which Hölderlin criticises in the letter to Schiller of the fourth of September 1796. Simply to posit the Idea of Beauty as a goal which can be worked towards, albeit through philosophical or aesthetic forms of education, is a hopeless enterprise. There is a need for a different understanding of the nature of the unifying idea of beauty to be developed which will recognise the limitations of human nature and thought. This is what Hölderlin is working towards in the passage quoted. Here Hölderlin considers the situation facing Hyperion from a temporal and historical perspective. Hyperion is shown to have become aware of his own mortality, thus gaining a new insight into the nature of the Beautiful. He realises that not only humanity, but also the Gods and Nature must be subject to fate.^[30] All things, both natural and spiritual, must be considered from an historical perspective. Thus for the Gods and Nature to be understood by humanity, they must be subject to the same strictures. Hence as Hyperion states "the divine must humble itself, and mortality share itself with all that is mortal". That is, for the divine to mean anything to man it must enter history; it must become subject to the strictures of time. Also in order for humanity to gain an insight into its own situation it must realise it is necessarily subject to limitation and finitude. In turn this also changes how the idea of Beauty is

understood, for it is realised that it too can only be understood from a temporal perspective. Hence Hölderlin comments that "beauty reaches maturity out of its fate". This means that Beauty can only be understood in relation to the way it is manifest in the world. It cannot be understood as an abstract ideal concept which thought tries to grasp and comprehend, rather it can only be understood in respect to how it is manifest in specific instances which necessarily always fall short of the Ideal. However this does not mean that the notion of beauty is diminished, rather it simply offers alternative possibilities as to how it is to be construed. Hölderlin demonstrates this different, more historical, understanding in a letter to his sister, written in 1798, the year before the publication of the second volume of Hyperion. He explains to her that,

...everything has its time, and that summer is essentially as beautiful as spring, or rather that neither one nor the other is completely beautiful, and that beauty consists rather in all seasons of life together, precisely in their succession, rather than in one single season.

...Daß alles seine Zeit hat, und daß der Sommer im Grunde so schön ist, wie der Frühling, oder vielmehr daß weder der eine, noch der andere ganz schön ist, und daß die Schönheit mehr in allen Lebenszeiten zusammen, so wie sie aufeinanderfolgen, besteht, als in einer einzigen.[31]

What is offered here is a dynamic understanding of beauty which is similar to the heart and arteries metaphor which occurs at the end of Hyperion. No one thing can be considered beautiful in itself, rather what is of importance is the process of succession and change which allows each part to be given value. Hence as Hölderlin writes, beauty "consists in all seasons of life together, precisely in their succession rather than in one single season". This remark

suggests also that the dynamic nature of this process makes it impossible by definition to achieve an understanding of beauty in itself. That is, there is no transcendent Idea of beauty, or perhaps more correctly, even if a transcendent Idea of beauty is presupposed, no point of unmediated access can ever be achieved. There is no point outside the temporal sphere, outside the process itself, from which the succession can be viewed. Hence the component elements can only gain value and meaning through the acknowledgement of the progression from one to another. Thus, in a wider perspective, this helps also to explain Hölderlin's move towards consideration of the individual poetic forms. For if the Absolute can only be understood from a historical perspective - i.e. if an awareness of the necessary temporal dimension of any viewpoint must be acknowledged, - then the move towards consideration of individual instances, rather than a universal theoretical stance, becomes more understandable. The realisation of the necessity of the historical perspective of any understanding can be related to the argument that I established in the previous chapter with regard to how the relationship between Greece and Germany is to be viewed. It relates specifically to the idea that one must, and can only, speak from the perspective of the present. Just as it is impossible to work towards the reinstatement of Greek models of art, it is equally problematic to propose the birth or rejuvenation of an ideal realm of Beauty. Thus it can be seen that this acknowledgement of the unavoidable necessity of developing a historical form of understanding, problematises how the call for the rebirth of poetry which is made in the System-Programme fragment is to be brought about.

Having established how Hölderlin's understanding of the nature of Beauty alters, it is now necessary to return to the problem of how this relates to the tragic mode. What is specific to the tragic mode which enables it to be seen as the

"metaphor of an intellectual intuition"? In the above discussion I showed how Hölderlin moves away from arguing for the possibility of an immediate relation with the Absolute as Beauty. Rather, the Absolute must necessarily always be presented via its contact with the temporal sphere. The necessity for a mediated relation to the Absolute can be used to explain why the tragic presents the metaphor of an intellectual intuition. Hölderlin denies the possibility of the immediacy which is entailed in the theoretical understanding of intellectual intuition. Therefore in the aesthetic presentation, through the work itself, a mediated relation with the Absolute is proposed. This is the reason why Hölderlin explains this relation in terms of metaphor. When metaphor is considered structurally it can be understood as a device which operates relationally. The metaphoric process presupposes a displacement in the "literal" meaning of terms; the two terms are juxtaposed by the copula "is", which brings forth a new "meaning". The sense of the metaphor lies in neither of the terms in themselves, rather it exists as a hitherto unstated relational third term which is sited in limbo between the other two. This is why Hölderlin is able to make use of metaphor in his discussion of intellectual intuition, for the form of relationship given in the metaphoric process describes how access to the Absolute is given. The Absolute can only be presented through its contact with the temporal sphere, through the aesthetic process. Yet in this contact its nature is necessarily altered insofar as its unity can only be gestured towards, intimated. Just as in the metaphoric process, the "meaning" of the metaphor cannot be seen to lie in either of the two terms of which it comprises, in the metaphoric relation between the tragic mode and the intellectual intuition, the intuition can only gain meaning and value through its relation with the mode in which it is allowed to come to expression.

Hölderlin summarises this idea succinctly in a letter to his friend Neuffer, written on November 12, 1798. Here he writes that,

The pure can only present itself in the impure...and does so precisely because the noble itself, just as it comes to expression, bears the colour of the fate in which it originated.

Das Reine kann sich nur darstellen im Unreinen...und zwar darum, weil das Edle selber, so wie es zur Äußerung kömmt, die Farbe des Schicksals trägt, unter dem es entstand.[32]

The "pure" - i.e. the Absolute, the divine, the ideal of Beauty, all these terms are now synonymous - is incapable of revealing itself as itself. Rather it can only be given via a mediated relationship with that which it is not. This occurs through the necessity that it must become subject to time, it has to "bear the colour of the fate in which it originated"; i.e. for the Absolute to "come to expression", it has to be mediated through the present, and in so doing it becomes tainted. It can never be given as immediate, hence there cannot be direct access to the Beautiful in itself, or the Divine in itself. Rather all that is given is the "metaphoric" relationship with the Absolute. How though is this specifically related to the tragic?

Two answers can be given, one general the other more specific. Firstly, the whole process of the necessary relation between the Absolute and the finite can be understood as one that is tragic. The Absolute can only be understood in and through its relation to time and history. In terms of the idea of Beauty, this means that it is only through the destruction of Beauty that its true nature is revealed, albeit indirectly. The ambiguous nature of this process is more evident in the original German text. The term Schicksal, which appears with great frequency throughout these texts can mean both fate and destiny. Thus the "fate" of the Absolute - its necessary subjugation to time - is also

its destiny understood in the futural sense. As I will show in the analysis which follows, the "destiny" of the Absolute is that it must transcend its unity, it must become subject to time. This move is entirely necessary and is already anticipated in Hölderlin's structuring of the nature of the Absolute. This is because the unity of the Absolute is not to be understood as a totalising, transcendent concept. The term "Absolute" does not refer to a static concept, rather it refers to the process of constant engenderment. The unity of the Absolute must constantly be sundered. This is what is shown in and through the tragic mode.^[33] The tragic mode is the site in which this process is most clearly enacted. Hence the reason why Hölderlin claims that the tragic mode presents "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition." In order better to understand the relation between the tragic mode and the intellectual intuition, it is necessary now to return to the Poetic Modes essay, and to examine the specific discussion which arises there. After examining the characteristics of the lyric and epic modes, Hölderlin returns to discussion of the tragic. He reiterates the schematic formulation of the relation between the different characteristics of the mode which was given at the beginning of the essay and then states that the tragic,

...must be founded on an intellectual intuition which cannot be any other one than that unity with everything living which, to be sure, is not felt by the limited soul, only intimated in its [the soul's] highest aspirations, yet which can be known by the spirit.

...muß Eine intellectuale Anschauung zum Grunde liegen welche keine andere seyn kann, als jene Einigkeit mit allem, was lebt, die zwar von dem beschränkten Gemüthe nicht gefühlt, die in seinen höchsten Bestrebungen nur geahndet, aber vom Geiste erkannt werden kann...^[34]

In this statement Hölderlin emphasises how the tragic mode is central to his understanding of intellectual intuition. From this passage it is clear that Hölderlin's understanding of intellectual intuition differs from the Fichtean schema which I outlined in the previous section. The term "intellectual intuition" is not seen to refer to an act undertaken by an individual agent which founds his or her identity. Rather - as may be expected from Hölderlin's insistence that the tragic mode is "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" - this formulation problematises Fichte's assertion that the intuition is the founding act of the system.[35]. The "limited soul"; i.e. the human subject, the poet, can only "intimate", gesture, towards this intuition through his or her work, through their "highest aspirations.". However, as is also stated, this intuition can be "known by the spirit". The question that arises is what is meant here by the term "spirit". In another, contemporaneous, text On the Operations of the Poetic Spirit, Hölderlin offers a much longer explanation of how he understands this term and its relationship to the individual poet. At the beginning of this text he writes,

Once the poet is in control of the spirit, once he has felt and appropriated, has held fast and assured himself of the communal soul which is common to everyone and proper to each, once he is furthermore certain of the free movement, of the harmonious alternation and progressive striving wherein the spirit tends to reproduce itself within itself and within others...

Wenn der Dichter einmal des Geistes mächtig ist, wenn er die gemeinschaftliche Seele, die allem gemein und jedem eigen ist, gefühlt und sich zugeeignet, sie festgehalten, sich ihrer versichert hat, wenn er ferner der freien Bewegung, des harmonischen Wechsels und Fortstrebens, worinn der Geist sich in sich selber und in andern zu reproduciren geneigt ist...[36]

In this passage the spirit is defined as the "communal soul", as that which is proper to all people, but also it is that with which they cannot have an immediate relation. Rather the spirit is seen as an autonomous unity, capable of "reproducing itself within itself and within others". This characterisation suggests that the "poetic spirit" is to be understood as another of the synonyms for the Absolute. This is clarified later when it is stated that the spirit can be defined in terms of a necessary conflict between the two poles of unity and differentiation.^[37] This can be linked back to the formulation of the unity of Beauty as the "one differentiating in itself" which is given in Hyperion. Furthermore it can also be related to the comments made previously that the unity of the Absolute must be constantly transcended; i.e. the Absolute is to be understood as a process rather than a static entity which must be worked towards and attained. As Christoph Jamme argues in his article Hegel and Hölderlin, the unity of the Absolute - the "oneness" of the spirit - cannot be understood as referring to a static determination of Being. Rather, Jamme contends that,

Hölderlin develops a new thought:

1/This being not merely *is* something, but that it *becomes* something. Its essence is "premonition" (*Ahnung*) and "longing" (*Sehnsucht*); it intuits (*ahnt*) its future development in existing things, whereby it intuits (*Anschau*) itself.

2/ There is an "excess of inwardness" (*übermass des Innigkeit*), and "excess of spirit in oneness" (*übermass des Geistes in der Einigkeit*). In other words, there is a Oneness that must proceed out of itself because otherwise it cannot "feel itself", cannot become conscious of itself.^[38]

These processes can both be seen to be occurring in Hölderlin's description of the movement of the "poetic spirit". They are effected through the aesthetic production. The aesthetic work - i.e. the tragic mode - is essential for this

process. Hölderlin clarifies this point in the essay On the Operations of the Poetic Spirit, when he observes,

However since the poetic spirit cannot know the world in itself nor of itself, an external object is necessary, and indeed such through which the individuality, among several neither merely opposing nor merely relating but poetic characters which it can assume, be determined to assume some specific one...

Da er [der Geist] aber sie [die Welt] nicht durch sich selbst und an sich selbst erkennen kann, so ist ein äußeres Object nothwendig und zwar ein solches, wodurch die reine Individualität, unter mehreren besondern weder blos entgegensezenden, noch blos beziehenden sondern poëtischen Charakteren, die sie annehmen kann, irgend Einen anzunehmen bestimmt werde...[39]

Here the relationship between the poetic spirit, the poet and the work is made most explicit. The spirit must become manifest through the work of art. The point of contact between the poet who has an "intimation" of the spirit, and the spirit itself, is the work, and in particular the tragic form. Furthermore, this is to be understood as a two way process, for through the engagement with the process of the poetic spirit, the poet enters into a relation with the Absolute. Hence as is later stated, man's destiny [Bestimmung] is to seek to,

Know himself as a unity contained within the divine - harmoniously opposed and, vice versa, the divine, unified, harmonious opposed within himself as unity. *For this is possible only in beautiful, sacred, divine sentiment...*

...daß er sich als Einheit in Göttlichem - Harmoniscentgegengesetztem enthalten, so wie umgekehrt, das Göttliche, Einige, Harmoniscentgegengesetzte, in sich als Einheit enthalten erkenne. *Denn diß ist allein in schöner heiliger, göttlicher Empfindung möglich.*[40]

This passage can be seen to encapsulate the threefold relationship between humanity, the Absolute and the work. The reciprocal nature of this relationship is made clear. Both man and the divine strive to achieve unity through the recognition of their mutual interdependence. This is mediated via the aesthetic realm, via a "beautiful, sacred, divine sentiment". However the possibility that this unity may actually be achieved is brought into question by the qualification that is added to this statement, for man's striving towards this unity is described as a "vain" (*vergebens*) striving. This remark again highlights the dynamic nature of this process, which prevents the unity from being understood as a goal towards which the process is aiming. Rather all that can ever be given is the process, the continual flux and movement of the component parts. There is no point "outside" this process from which a universal judgement or claim can be made. This also helps to explain why the tragic mode gives only the "metaphor" of an intellectual intuition. For although the tragic mode can be viewed as the "site" around which this process rotates, it can never be understood to provide a ground, or point of unification. The tragic mode is itself part of the process and therefore it has no foundational privilege. The form of unity given through intellectual intuition is gestured towards in the tragic mode, but the intuition itself cannot be presented directly. By definition immediate access to the Absolute cannot occur, because the mode itself is the site of mediation. It is the point at which the Absolute enters temporality, enters history, thereby automatically instituting division into the whole. The unity of the Absolute is a paradoxical unity for it is defined in terms of fission and internal division. Furthermore, it is only through division that the unity can be intimated. This point is summarised by a remark in the Difference of Poetic Modes essay where Hölderlin states that,

The unity present in the intellectual intuition manifests itself as a sensuous one precisely to the extent that it transcends itself,...in this striving for separation of the divisible infinite, which in the state of highest unity of everything organic imparts itself to all parts contained by this unity, in this necessary arbitrariness of Zeus there actually lies the ideal beginning of the actual separation.

Die in der intellectualen Anschauung vorhandene Einigkeit versinnlicht sich in eben dem Maaße, in welchem sie aus sich herausgeht...in diesem Streben des theilbaren Unendlichen nach Trennung welches sich im Zustande der höchsten Einigkeit, alles organischen, den in dieser enthaltenen Theilen mittheilt, in dieser nothwendigen Willkür des Zeus liegt eigentlich der ideale Anfang der wirklichen Trennung.[41]

When the unity of the Absolute is manifest in the tragic mode it necessarily must transcend itself, and thus is presented as a "sensuous unity"; i.e. it becomes divided into component parts, it is manifest through the tragic form. The unavailability of this process, the necessity of the Absolute to transcend itself and be understood in relation to time, is highlighted by Hölderlin's use of the oxymoronic phrase the "necessary arbitrariness of Zeus" to describe this process. In Greek mythology Zeus is the God who overthrows the unity of the heavens through the killing of his father Chronos, as an act of vengeance for the swallowing of his brothers.[42] As a result of this killing, the leadership of the universe is split between the Gods who each control a realm, thus bringing about its division into separate spheres. This act of division destroys the former unity, introducing both a difference between the realms of sky and sea, earth and heaven and the problem of how these separate realms are able to interact. In this act of division there "lies the ideal beginning of the actual separation"; i.e. this is explanation for all separation within the temporal sphere. It explains the incomplete, unfulfilled nature of humanity's experience

insofar as it is never able to gain access to the Absolute in an unmediated manner. Likewise, it also explains the subjection of the Absolute to time and history.

However this "real separation" also refers to the poetic process itself, for Hölderlin uses this as the starting point for understanding the underlying structure of the tragic form itself. He states,

From here the separation proceeds until the parts are in their most extreme tension, where they resist one another most strongly. From this conflict, it returns into itself, namely where the parts...cancel one another and a new unity originates.

Von diesem gehet sie fort bis dahin, wo die Theile in ihrer äußersten Spannung sind, wo diese sich am stärksten widerstreben. Von diesem Widerstreit gehet sie wieder in sich selbst zurück, nemlich dahin, wo die Theile...sich aufheben, und eine neue Einigkeit entsteht.[43]

In this passage it is clear that Hölderlin is referring to the actual dramatic structure of the tragic form. The form is developed out of the conflict between the protagonists, there is a struggle between opposing forces albeit manifest in human or "divine" form. However here Hölderlin also proposes that a form of reconciliation or unification emerges out of this struggle, the opposing forces "cancel one another and a new unity originates." How though, is this "new unity" to be understood, when throughout this discussion I have argued for the impossibility of the realisation of unity understood as totality? An answer can be given, if it is accepted that in this text two separate levels of argument are occurring and at this point the two become conflated. The first argument is a philosophical, primarily ontological argument concerning the relation between the Absolute and the subject and the possibility of interaction between the two, which is resolved - although not in a positive sense - via the aesthetic

process. The second argument is primarily poetological and can be characterised as an attempt to provide a structural analysis of the nature of the poetic forms. These two arguments necessarily must meet in the discussion of the tragic form because of the fact that it is described as "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition". However, as I argued earlier, the metaphoric nature of the relationship between the form and intellectual intuition precludes any suggestion that the latter is actually "given" in the tragic form. Hence the "unity" which is mentioned above, must not be understood as referring to the possibility of the achievement of the intellectual intuition itself through the aesthetic work, but rather must be seen as part of the description of the structure of the tragic form. When the above passage is read as an outline of the structure which underlies the tragic form, then the "new unity" which is achieved can be seen as the interpretation which can be given at the end of the drama. A reading can occur which incorporates the tragic form as a whole, it is given at the end in the light of the insights which have been gained. However this is not to deny the existence of an intrinsic link between the two levels of argument in this text. In fact, the link is made explicit in the statement that I quoted earlier when Hölderlin remarks that "in this striving for separation of the divisible infinite...*there actually lies the ideal beginning of the actual separation.*" The Absolute's need to transcend its unity, to move outside itself is the underlying premise of the tragic form, and is enacted within it. The structure of the tragic form can be seen to mirror the process of the Absolute, as encapsulated in the biological metaphors in Hyperion, whereby it moves outside itself, only to return to itself. However, again, the "metaphoric" nature of this process must be reiterated insofar as the unity which is achieved occurs only hypothetically. It occurs in the realm of "real separation" - i.e. in time -

thus the ideal reconciliation and unification can only be intimated. It, in itself, cannot be realised.

In this chapter I have shown the theoretical presuppositions which underlie Hölderlin's understanding of the poetic modes. How, though, can this theory be related to Hölderlin's attempts to write a tragic drama? To answer this question it is now necessary to turn to closer analysis of Hölderlin's drama Empedocles and the two theoretical texts which accompany it, The Ground to Empedocles and Becoming in Dissolution.

Chapter 4.

The Example of Empedocles.

4.1. Introduction.

Whilst preparing the drafts of the second volume of Hyperion for publication, Hölderlin was already contemplating writing a tragic drama based around the life and death of the Greek philosopher, poet and statesman Empedocles. In fact, Empedocles is mentioned briefly in the final chapters of Hyperion. Hyperion recalls how, in the depths of despair after the death of Diotima, he followed in the footsteps of Empedocles and went to the summit of Etna to contemplate his fate.^[1] However, in relation to Hölderlin's own attempts to write the "modern" tragedy of Empedocles, it is apposite to note that Hyperion decides he should not - or perhaps cannot - undergo the same fate as Empedocles. He is full of "uncertainties" and doubts and feels that the ultimate act of suicide cannot be justified. He lacks sufficient faith in himself and in his beliefs to undertake such an act. Hyperion's inability to follow Empedocles into the mouth of Etna can be seen to prefigure the problems which Hölderlin faces in completing his drama. During the period between the commencement of the first draft and abandonment of the entire project in late 1799, Hölderlin writes three different drafts of the drama and two accompanying essays in which he tries to explain the theoretical premises with which he is working. None of the drafts of the drama are in any way complete; in fact each draft is successively more fragmentary. The theoretical essays also remain incomplete, suggesting that Hölderlin could not resolve the problems he was confronting from either a poetic or theoretical perspective.

In this chapter I shall limit discussion to the two theoretical essays, The Ground for Empedocles and Becoming in Dissolution. Whilst the dramas

themselves, and the differences between them, are extremely interesting, it is outside the scope of this study to discuss them in detail.^[2] Rather, my concern lies in showing how Hölderlin's theoretical understanding of the tragic form is developed and problematised by his attempt to relate his theoretical beliefs to the practical task of creating a drama which reflects and enacts these beliefs. I shall first discuss The Ground for Empedocles. This text was written in between the second and third drafts of the drama, and is Hölderlin's clearest attempt to relate his theoretical position to the details of the dramatic presentation. After highlighting the problems and impasses which this text creates for the Empedocles project, I shall then examine Becoming in Dissolution. On first reading this text does not seem to be related directly to the Empedocles project for it is very abstract and it is only in the final paragraphs that Hölderlin mentions the tragic drama. However, as I intend to show, this text can be read as the culmination of Hölderlin's poetological project for within it, the limits of the project are confronted. The position which Hölderlin must then confront will, as I shall show in Chapter 5, force him to seek to adopt an alternative way of approaching the tragic drama.

4.2. The Ground for Empedocles.

The Ground for Empedocles can be divided into two main sections. First, there is an introductory passage and the "General Ground". In this section of the text Hölderlin provides a purely theoretical discussion of the nature of the tragic modes. Secondly, there is the specific "Ground for Empedocles" in which Hölderlin relates the theoretical discussion of the tragic modes to the Empedocles project. I shall examine these two sections in turn, highlighting the way in which they relate to the discussion in the previous chapter, whilst also

attempting to pinpoint the problems inherent in the project which lead to its eventual failure.

At the beginning of the text Hölderlin establishes the features which are central to the tragic mode. He writes,

The tragic ode begins in the highest fire; the pure spirit, the pure inwardness has transcended its border, it has not sufficiently moderated those connections of life which are necessary and which, as it is, already strive for contact...and thus through the excess of inwardness, there has originated a discord which the tragic ode figures forth right at the outset in order to depict the pure.

Die tragische Ode fängt im höchsten Feuer an, der reine Geist, die reine Innigkeit hat ihre Grenze überschritten, sie hat diejenigen Verbindung des Lebens, die nothwendig, also gleichsam ohnediß zum Contact geneigt sind...nicht mäßig genug gehalten, und so ist durch Übermaas der Innigkeit, der Zwist entstanden, den die tragische Ode gleich zu Anfang fingirt, um das Reine darzustellen.[3]

Here Hölderlin shows how the unity of the Absolute must necessarily be transgressed, the Absolute must "transcend its borders" in order for it to become manifest and known in the temporal realm. The tragic form is the medium which demonstrates this process. The Absolute - "the pure spirit" - is characterised by an "excess of inwardness", hence it must always attempt to overcome this limitation. The tension inherent within Hölderlin's conception of the Absolute is here made clear, for the process which he describes can only operate at extremes. The tragic ode "begins in the highest fire"; i.e. in order for the pure to be depicted it can only be presented through its extreme opposite, through extreme differentiation. Hence the tragic ode "figures forth" discord; conflict is an essential element of the tragic. However, as Hölderlin then makes clear, the conflict is only part of the tragic process, its ultimate aim is to gesture towards the way in which the parts can be reconciled back

into a whole. For the whole to be presented it must be split into, and appear as, its opposite. Then via the poetic process itself, through the tragic presentation, the unity of the whole is suggested. This is not to be understood as a purely circular process, in which the reconciliation attained is identical to that which is presupposed at the beginning of the process. Rather, in coming into contact with its opposite, in presenting itself via what it is not, the unity which is attained at the end of the process is necessarily different, for it is aware of, and acknowledges the process itself. Hölderlin outlines the form of dialectic which is presupposed by this process when he writes,

...[the ode] must transcend the extremes of differentiation and non-differentiation into that quiet thoughtfulness and sensitivity where it must necessarily feel the struggle of a more forced thoughtfulness, hence has to accept its initial tone and character as opposites and has to transcend towards the latter...

...sie [d.h. die tragische Ode] muß aus den Extremen des Unterscheidens und Nicht-unterscheidens in jene stille Besonnenheit und Empfindung übergehen, wo sie freilich den Kampf der einen angestregteren Besonnenheit nothwendig, also ihren Anfangston und eigenen Charakter als Gegensatz empfinden, und in ihn übergehen muß...[4]

The process describes the way in which the tragic ode holds in tension the "extreme of differentiation" and "non-differentiation" which brings forth a third stage which is characterised by "quiet thoughtfulness and sensitivity" where the necessity of the oppositional process is recognised as such and is hence reconciled. However, the reconciliation which occurs here is not a totalising solution for it recognises the necessity of difference. The unity which is achieved is a unity of unity and difference, which arises out of "the experience and knowledge of heterogeneity" ("aus der Erfahrung und Erkenntniß

des Heterogenen") and is inherent to the process. Furthermore, this recognition ensures the open ended nature of the process, and allows for its continuation.

Hölderlin makes the relationship between this theoretical explanation of the process which underlies the tragic ode, and the poetic process itself much clearer in the second section of the text entitled "General Ground". Here he distinguishes between the tragic ode, the tragic poem, and the tragic dramatic poem. This distinction between the three different poetic forms can be associated with the three types of poetic mode - the lyric, the epic, and the tragic, - which I discussed in the previous chapter.^[5] Furthermore, as may be expected from the argument which I there established, Hölderlin considers that it is in the latter - the tragic dramatic poem - that the relationship with the Absolute is most clearly demonstrated. Hölderlin proceeds to outline the differences between the three tragic forms by referring to how they are able to present the necessary "inwardness" of the Absolute. He argues that in the tragic ode this is demonstrated primarily through the ode's form and its "direct effects". In the tragic poem these aspects become more pronounced, a more "profound inwardness" is displayed because "the sensation is no longer expressed in an immediate manner; it is no longer the poet and his own experience which appear". (*"Die Empfindung drückt sich nicht mehr unmittelbar aus, es ist nicht mehr der Dichter und seine eigene Erfahrung, was erscheint"*) This insistence that the poet should not present his or her own experience directly through the work is taken to extreme in the characterisation of the tragic dramatic poem. In this form the poet expresses the "divine" which he "senses and experiences in his world". However, in order for this to occur the poet must deny his or her own experience of the relationship with the unity of the divine. Hence Hölderlin writes,

...yet to the extent that this image of inwardness always denies and must deny its ultimate foundation...the less the image can express the sensation in an immediate manner; it must deny it with regard to form as well as to subject matter; the subject matter must be a more daring and foreign parable and example of it; the form must bear more the character of the opposition and separation.

...aber wie dieses Bild der Innigkeit überall seinen letzten Grund in eben dem Grade mehr verläugnet und verläugnen muß...um so weniger kann das Bild die Empfindung unmittelbar aussprechen, es muß sie so wohl der Form als dem Stoffe nach verläugnen, der Stoff muß ein kühneres fremderes Gleichniß und Beispiel von ihr seyn, die Form muß mehr den Charakter der Entgegensetzung und Trennung tragen.^[6]

Here the effects of the imperative that the unitary nature of the Absolute must necessarily be denied in its presentation are made clear. This is exemplified through both the subject matter and the form of the tragic drama. Hölderlin argues that the subject-matter of the drama must be "Another world, other events, foreign characters", but yet there must also be an "intrinsic kinship of the parable with the basic subject matter". However to make this "kinship" apparent it is necessary that the form of the drama is able to present the relationship in the most "lively" manner; i.e. the tragic-drama is necessarily structured around conflict. The relationship between the mode of presentation and that which is presented - between the poet and the Absolute - is described as an, "analogical relationship". This remark can be related to the discussion in the previous chapter concerning the "metaphoric" relationship between the tragic form and the intellectual intuition. Both the analogical and the metaphorical relationship presuppose an unstated third term in which the actual "meaning" of the relation is given. However in order for this third term, the underlying "meaning" of the work, to be presented the relation between the two component parts must be in the most extreme tension. Hence the demand that the subject-

matter of the drama must be as "foreign" as possible. Hölderlin outlines the full effects of this process when he writes,

...tragedy is dramatic with regard to its subject matter and form, i.e. it contains a third, more foreign subject matter, different from the poet's own mood and world, which he selected because he considered it sufficiently analogical to convey into it and preserve in there, like a vessel, his total sensation...Precisely because he expresses the deepest inwardness, the tragic poet denies altogether his individuality, his subjectivity, and thus also the object present to him; he conveys them into a foreign personality, into a foreign objectivity.

...das Trauerspiel seinem Stoffe und seiner Form nach dramatisch, d.h. es enthält einen dritten von des Dichters eigenem Gemüth und eigener Welt verschiedenen fremderen Stoff den er wählte, weil er ihn analog genug fand, um seine Totalempfindung in ihn hineinzutragen; und in ihm, wie in einem Gefäße, zu bewahren...Eben darum verläugnet der tragische Dichter, weil er die tiefste Innigkeit ausdrückt, seine Person, seine Subjectivität ganz, so auch das ihm gegenwärtige Object, er trägt sie in fremde Personalität, in fremde Objectivität...[71]

In this passage, Hölderlin isolates the reasons why the dramatic form is chosen as the most suitable for conveying the "foreign". In the drama the poet becomes invisible for in the dramatic presentation a totally different "world" is presented. This is not to deny the existence of a relation between the two, for this is inherent in the presupposition of an analogical link between the dramatic presentation and the world of the poet. This explains Hölderlin's statement that the poet's world is transported and preserved in the dramatic presentation "like a vessel". However, the nature of the analogical relation is such that the world which is created on the stage is separated from the world of the poet insofar as the dramatic presentation has its own internal logic which does not

necessarily correspond to anything outside of itself. For example the drama defines its own internal time-scale, its own location, its own conventions as to what can logically be presented or occur. Furthermore, whilst the characters who appear in the drama may speak the words written by the poet, the poet himself is never presented - hence Hölderlin's comment that in the work the poet "denies altogether his individuality, his subjectivity." In the staging of the tragic drama, in the presentation of the poet's thoughts via the third person actor, the poet loses any sense that it is his or her self that is being presented. Hence the work gains an autonomy of its own, it loses any claim to being the possession of one individual subject. Furthermore in the actual structure and staging of the drama, the "extreme of differentiation" which is intrinsic to Hölderlin's understanding of the process of the "poetic spirit" is also attained through the individual characterisation. As Hölderlin states, the poet conveys his or her thoughts into "a foreign personality, into a foreign objectivity", hence their thoughts are spoken through multiple voices, through each individual character who, in the staged presentation, gains an autonomy, a subjectivity of their own. The tragic-drama, when viewed as a text written by the poet is a singular entity, but when it is presented as a dramatic entity, it is fissured automatically into component parts as new individuals, new personalities are constructed and given on the stage; hence the claim that the tragic-dramatic form enacts the "extreme of differentiation".

Hölderlin's insistence on the necessity of the presentation of the "foreign" in the tragic drama contains resonances of the issues which arise in the first letter to Böhlendorff which I discussed in Chapter 2. Although this letter was written two years after the Ground, I think that parallels between the two texts can be found, particularly with respect to the way in which the relation

between that which is "one's own" and that which is "foreign" is understood. In both texts, Hölderlin is aware of the displacement which is necessary in order for the relationship with that to which one is closest to be presented. Paradoxically this closeness can only be given through the relationship that is developed with the foreign. Hence, in relation to the arguments of the letter to Böhlendorff this means that one can only understand "one's own" through developing a relation with that which is foreign. Similarly, in the discussion of the tragic-dramatic form, it is only through the presentation of the "foreign personality, "foreign objectivity" that the nature of the Absolute can be intimated. However in the Ground, it appears that Hölderlin's concern lies primarily in establishing the relationship in purely theoretical terms. This discussion takes place on a theoretical level which is informed by an awareness of the necessity for it to be historically specific and situated but Hölderlin is as yet unaware of the full implications of this imperative. However as I now intend to show, the need to think historically becomes more acute and problematic when Hölderlin moves to discuss the specific example of the drama Empedocles, and to relate the theoretical system which I have just outlined to the way in which it is manifest through the actual drama. For when the focus of the discussion is placed upon the specific figure of the hero of the drama - in this case Empedocles - the issues of the relation between the foreign and the national, the Greeks and Modernity, start to come to the fore and become intertwined. Furthermore, I think it is no accident that these issues arise within the context of the discussion of the relevance of a specific dramatic tragedy.

In the first paragraph of the second section which is entitled "Ground for Empedocles", Hölderlin restates the argument he has put forward previously

using slightly different terminology. He redefines the reciprocal relation between humanity and the Absolute in terms of the relation between nature and art, using the Aristotelian formulation that art (*techne*) is the perfection of nature (*phusis*)^[8] However Hölderlin's understanding of this relation differs from Aristotle's in that he insists on the mutual reciprocity of this relationship: each side "compensates for the shortcomings of the other". This mutual compensation enables the completion, perfection, ("*Vollendung*") of the whole to be attained. However the nature of this completion, of this whole, is problematic because "this life exists for sentiment, not for knowledge.". In order for this unity to be known through knowledge - for humanity to be able to fully comprehend the nature of the Absolute - a more radical process must occur. Rather than a state of mutual reciprocity between both elements being proposed where each side complements the other, a more dynamic process must be entered into so that the "opposed sides interchange". They transcend their own borders

...until through the progression of the opposed reciprocal effects the two originally united [principles] meet again as in the beginning, only that nature has become more organic through the forming cultivating man, through the formgiving drives and forces as such, whereas man has become more aorgic, universal, infinite.

...bis durch den Fortgang der entgegengesetzten Wechselwirkungen die beiden ursprünglich einigen sich wie anfangs begegnen, nur daß die Natur organischer durch den bilden cultivirenden Menschen, überhaupt die Bildungstriebe und Bildungskräfte, hingegen der Mensch aorgischer, allgemeiner, unendlicher geworden ist.^[9]

Through the process described here, each side becomes subject to the nature and constraints of the other, thereby gaining a fuller awareness of the nature of the whole which they together constitute.^[10] This movement can be related to

that described earlier, where the Absolute must necessarily transcend its unity, moving to the extreme of differentiation, and in so doing creating a new determination of the nature of the relationship between unity and difference. In undergoing this process, both elements are necessarily changed so that the unity which is achieved is necessarily different to that which is presupposed at the beginning. The radical nature of this process is indicated by Hölderlin's use of the terms "*Bildungstriebe*" and "*Bildungskräfte*". As I argued in Chapter 2, these terms refer to the active, forward moving drives which motivate the progress of the culture and which are to be differentiated from the given, "positive" elements which hinder this progress. Hence the term "*Bildung*" refers here not only to the formgiving elements of this process, but also to the underlying drive to education and culture, which is inherent within it.^[11]

However, it is at this point that Hölderlin brings a new element into the discussion of the process, which reintroduces the question of the relationship between this dialectic movement and tragedy. Having discussed the nature of the process of continual division and reconciliation and the form of knowledge which is attained, he writes,

In the middle there lies the struggle and death of the individual, that moment when the organic discards its subjectivity, its particular existence which had not become an extreme, when the aorgic discards its universality not, as in the beginning by way of an idealistic fusion, but in real, supreme struggle...at this birth of the highest hostility the highest reconciliation appears to be the case.

In der Mitte liegt der Kampf, und der Tod des Einzelnen, derjenige Moment, wo das organische seine Ichheit, sein besonderes Daseyn, das zum Extreme geworden war; das aorgische seine Allgemeinheit nicht wie zu Anfang in idealer Vermischung, sondern in realem höchstem

Kampf ablegt... dieser Geburt der höchsten Feindseeligkeit die höchste Versöhnung wirklich zu seyn scheint.[12]

In this passage Hölderlin suggests that the struggle between the two opposing elements is exemplified in the drama through the actions of one individual - the tragic hero. An individual, the central figure of the tragedy, comes to embody the struggle between the opposing elements, between nature and art. The two opposing sides are brought in to relation with each other through the "struggle and death" of the individual. In this process the "highest reconciliation" appears to occur. However the provisional nature of this reconciliation is highlighted, not only by the conditional language which is used to describe the process, but also by the fact that later in the description Hölderlin describes the "uniting moment" as a "*Trugbild*", a phantasm. Again the dynamic nature of this process is made clear insofar as there is no moment of stasis. Reconciliation is offered, but this occurs simultaneously with the moment of highest struggle, with the death of the individual. How, then, is this process to be understood? How is it demonstrated through the tragic form?

Hölderlin does not provide direct answers to these questions, for after outlining in detail the process I have described above, he alters the emphasis of the discussion, beginning the next paragraph by addressing the figure of Empedocles directly. He writes,

Thus Empedocles is a son of his heaven and of his time, of his fatherland, a son of tremendous oppositions of nature and art in which the world appeared before his eyes. A man within whom those oppositions are united so intimately that they become one within him...

So ist Empedokles ein Sohn seines Himmels und seiner Periode, seines Vaterlandes, ein Sohn der gewaltigen Entgegensetzungen von Natur und Kunst in denen die Welt vor seinen Augen erscheint. Ein Mensch, in

dem sich jene Gegensätze so innig vereinigen, daß sie zu Einem in ihm werden...[13]

In turning the discussion from the general to the particular, Hölderlin places the figure of Empedocles at the centre of his exposition of the nature of the tragic form. Furthermore the relation between Empedocles and his society is immediately made apparent; he embodies all the forces which are at play within his society, he is the only individual who is capable of sustaining its contradictions. However, it can also be noted that Empedocles can only achieve his role and destiny within the society through his death. Hence a few paragraphs later it is not surprising to discover Hölderlin describing Empedocles as "*das Opfer*", i.e. a victim or sacrifice. The double-edged significance of this term can be understood better by relating it to the previous discussion of the ambiguous nature of the term "*Schicksal*", fate or destiny, which also appears with increasingly regularity in this discussion. Just as "*Schicksal*" can be interpreted positively or negatively - in fact the two are also not necessarily mutually exclusive - so too can the term "*das Opfer*". Empedocles is described as "a victim of his time", yet this victimisation is necessary in order for his society to realise itself. Hence the sacrificial connotations of this term, for in becoming a victim, for dying for his society, he is also apparently offering solutions for the problems of his society and time. Hölderlin clarifies the relationship between "*das Opfer*" and "*Schicksal*" when he writes,

the destiny of his epoch, the tremendous extremes out of which he grew...demanded a sacrifice where man in his entirety becomes actual and visible as that wherein the destiny of his epoch seems to dissolve, where the extremes seem to unite actually and visibly in one but therefore are united too closely...

das Schicksal seiner Zeit, die gewaltigen Extreme in denen er erwuchs...(es) erforderte ein Opfer, wo der ganze Mensch das wirklich und sichtbar wird, worinn das Schicksal seiner Zeit sich auflösen scheint, wo die Extreme sich in Einem wirklich und sichtbar zu vereinigen scheinen, aber eben deswegen zu innig vereinigt sind...[14]

The figure of Empedocles unites the tensions and oppositions of his society. He exemplifies the struggle between the conflicting claims of art and nature, the organic and the aorgic. In order for the "extreme tensions" of his epoch to be resolved, an individual is needed who can be seen to actually sustain these contradictions. However, as Hölderlin makes clear in the above passage, in becoming involved in this process, the individual necessarily has to be annihilated. They must perish ("untergehen") so that the wider, more universal significance of the act can be realised. Then the actions of the individual can be viewed from the perspective of the process as a whole. The necessity that the death of the individual is seen to exemplify the process as a whole can be related to the comments which were made in the previous chapter concerning the relationship between the idea of Beauty and the way in which it can be manifest in and through the realm of the finite. These arguments can be seen as a development of Bellarmin's statement in Hyperion that "beauty reaches maturity out of its fate". Here this process is identified specifically with the tragic form. Hölderlin expands this point when he writes,

...all tragic individuals who in their characters and utterances are all more or less attempts to solve the problem of destiny, and who are cancelled to the extent that they are not universally valid unless, on the other hand, their role, their character and its utterances present themselves as something transient and momentary, so that the one who seemingly solves destiny most completely also

presents himself most clearly in his transitoriness and, in the progress of his attempts, most evidently as victim.

...allen tragischen Personen, die alle in ihren Charakteren und Äußerungen mehr oder weniger Versuche sind, die Probleme des Schicksaals zu lösen, und alle insofern und in dem Grade aufheben, in welchem sie nicht allgemein gültig sind, wenn nicht anders ihre Rolle, ihr Charakter und seine Äußerungen sich von selbst als etwas vorübergehendes und augenblickliches darstellen, so daß also derjenige, der scheinbar das Schicksaal am vollständigen löst, auch sich am meisten in seiner Vergänglichkeit und im Fortschritte seiner Versuche am auffallendsten als Opfer darstellt. [15]

From these statements it is clear that Hölderlin does not intend these comments to refer simply to the individual example provided by Empedocles, but to all tragic figures. The fate/destiny of the tragic individual is intricately bound up with a wider fate/destiny which, in terms of Hölderlin's theory, is to be understood as the relation between the Absolute and history. In fact it is this latter relation which gives the individual who is involved in the process the status of being a tragic individual. The conflict which occurs does not simply take place on the level of the individual subject, rather the individual is being used to embody the wider, more important conflict between the two opposing forces of nature and art. Hence, in one sense the individual is, in themselves, unimportant for they are understood to be nothing more than a conduit for this struggle. However, conversely they are also of the utmost importance for it is only through this individualisation of the struggle, through its portrayal in the actions of the tragic individual, that the contact between the two sides is manifest. Hence the statements that I made earlier regarding the status of the work of art as the site of mediation between the Absolute and the subject can be narrowed down further by stating that it is the tragic individual who is the locus for the interaction between the opposing sides. Furthermore, as Hölderlin

reiterates it is only through the tragic individual's death that this relationship becomes apparent. The "transitoriness" of this relationship is crucial, for it is this which gives it specificity. The relationship between the Absolute and the individual can only be manifest and understood from a historical perspective. However, as a consequence of this each tragic individual is only able to "solve" the problem of destiny for their own time, their own history. Therefore although the "found solution must transcend into the universal" this does not ensure that a universal solution *per se* has been given, rather it is only one specific moment within an ongoing process. Each tragic individual may be seen as an attempt to "solve the problem of destiny", but the solution which occurs is specific both to that individual and to their time. In the rest of the Ground Hölderlin proceeds to emphasise the necessity of considering the specificity of each tragic individual by linking the theoretical framework which he has earlier outlined to specific aspects of Empedocles' story and character. The discussion that follows arises out of the statement that precedes this analysis: "Thus his time is individualised in Empedocles". Hölderlin illustrates this point by examining the different conflicting positions embodied by Empedocles.[16]

It is this analysis of the specific tragic individual which is perhaps one of the clues to understanding the failure of the Empedocles project as a whole. As I have argued throughout this section, Hölderlin repeatedly emphasises the fact that the tragic individual must be seen to embody the problems and contradictions of their own time. This demand for historical specificity is essential to the wider argument in which the discussion of the tragic individual is placed. The question which therefore arises out of this imperative concerns the relationship between Hölderlin's own time and the figure of Empedocles. Is Empedocles a suitable tragic individual for Hölderlin's own time? The answer

that comes immediately to mind is negative, for it appears untenable that the story of an ancient Greek can have relevance to the modern time. However this answer is too quick for it ignores the remarks which are made in the "General Ground" which I discussed earlier concerning the poet's need to express his or her "own mood and experience" through choosing "analogical, foreign subject matter". The poet's own time can only be portrayed by means of analogy and displacement, it requires "a third, more foreign subject matter, different from the poet's own mood and world". This need for displacement explains Hölderlin's choice of Empedocles as the subject for his tragic-drama, and thus prevents any quick answers as to the failure of the Empedocles project from being given. However, even if it is accepted that Hölderlin's choice of Empedocles as the subject of his drama fits his own theoretical premises, another question based upon these premises can be asked. This concerns the suitability of the choice of Empedocles as the "foreign subject matter" which will allow the poet's own world to be conveyed. Does a suitable "analogical" relationship exist between Hölderlin's own mood and world and that of the drama he creates? The incompleteness and failure of all three drafts indicates not. However, this negative answer creates more questions than it solves, for it does not give any explanations as to why the analogical relationship cannot be developed in this case. Does the failure point towards the unsuitability of Empedocles story as an analogy of the modernity experienced by Hölderlin? Or does it point towards a more fundamental problem with the theoretical premises upon which Hölderlin bases his understanding of the role of the tragic individual? Furthermore, even if the latter question is proved to be wrong, who could be seen to be the tragic-individual, who is able to embody the "solutions" for the problem of "*Schicksal*" within Hölderlin's modernity?

At the present, I shall delay attempting to provide answers to these questions for they introduce many new issues and problems. However, what emerges from this discussion is that these questions are related intrinsically to the issues that were raised in the previous chapters regarding the relation between Germany and Greece, Antiquity and Modernity. What is at stake in these questions is the problem of how Hölderlin can start to understand the nature of his own time, specifically how the intrinsic relation between the work of art and the time, the historical situation, out of which it emerges is to be understood. It is in this point that the relationship with the previous chapters becomes most apparent, for the issues raised are similar to those which arise out of the question as to what constitutes the "modern" and the "national" for Hölderlin. Furthermore as I suggested at the end of the second chapter, it is perhaps no accident that in the first letter to Böhlendorff, Hölderlin makes the remarks concerning the nature of modern tragedy directly after discussion of the relationship between Antiquity and Modernity.

However, before these questions are addressed directly, I want to examine Hölderlin's text Becoming in Dissolution which was written directly after he abandoned the final draft of Empedocles. I think that this text holds the key to understanding why Hölderlin moves away from attempting to write his own drama and turns to the translation of Sophocles.

4.3. Becoming in Dissolution.

My discussion of Becoming in Dissolution will again be necessarily selective, for I do not intend to provide a close reading of this text. Rather I wish to use the analysis of this text to highlight some of the problems which are latent in the previous discussions and which have a direct relevance to both the Empedocles project and the subsequent theoretical Remarks. From a broader

perspective, I want also to relate these problems to the wider themes and concerns of this study. In particular I want to show the relationship which exists between the problems which are raised within these texts and the earlier discussion of Aristotle's conception of mimesis.

In the previous chapter I outlined Hölderlin's systematised understanding of the mutually reciprocal relation between the poetic work and the wider philosophical theory which it both informs and underpins. The question I wish to consider with respect to Becoming in Dissolution concerns the status of the process which has been described. In the previous discussion I highlighted the problems inherent in Hölderlin's description of the role of the tragic hero, arguing that the moment wherein the hero fulfils his function within the wider theoretical framework becomes problematised by its transitory, illusory and hence "non foundational" status. The process which is described is a dynamic one, where the "meaning" of the actions of the hero can only be understood in relation to the process as a whole. However the question which arises from this formulation is whether it is possible to gain a vantage point from which to survey the process as "a whole", for surely by definition, there is no "outside" of the process itself from where such metastatements can be made. A similar problem exists with respect to the theoretical texts such as On the Operations of the Poetic Spirit. Here the immediacy which is integral to the process which is described, is called into question by its own structure. This is illustrated most clearly by the statement that the tragic mode is the metaphor of the intellectual intuition. As I argued earlier, the displacement which is suggested by this formulation is integral to the process itself. However, in turn, this challenges its claims to foundational status.

Hölderlin addresses these problems in the essay Becoming in Dissolution. Like many of the texts discussed so far, this text exists only in a fragmentary provisional form. It dates from 1800, directly after Hölderlin abandoned the third and final draft of Empedocles, and is written in the margin of this manuscript.^[17] Hence it must be seen as an integral part of the Empedocles project. However, unlike the Ground to Empedocles, the text is not concerned primarily with the project of the construction of the tragic drama, but rather addresses the wider issue of how the theoretical processes underlying the drama can be understood. In this text Hölderlin brings together the issues which he has raised earlier in the Operations essay, with the questions that have arisen out of the Empedocles project concerning the relations between the individual and the Absolute, the finite and the infinite, and the position from which this process is to be viewed.

The links with the Empedocles project become apparent in the first paragraph of the text. Hölderlin describes the "particular relation of reciprocity" that exists between nature and man which, when the two are considered together, constitute "a special world that has become ideal". It is clear that this relation is similar to that between nature and art which is described in the Ground. The constitutive elements are implicated within a mutually reciprocal relationship where each requires the other in order to overcome their limitations and to create a new, higher, but equally reciprocal, configuration. Hence the movement of the Absolute, of spirit, is constituted through the constant figuring and refiguring of its constituent elements. This is a process which is in constant flux for although a "new world" is brought forth in the relation between the component elements, this "world" is in its turn automatically taken up into another "new yet also particular relation". This movement is identified as a

process of continual decline/dissolution and positive becoming. However, these component elements of the process do not constitute separate, singular events - there is not a moment of becoming which is then followed by a subsequent decline - rather the events are concurrent, they cannot be considered apart from each other. Hölderlin explains this movement when he states,

For the world of all worlds, the all in all which always *is*, only *presents* itself in all time - or in the decline, the instant or, more genetically, in the becoming of the instant and in the beginning of time and world, and this decline and beginning is - like language - expression, sign, presentation of a living yet particular whole which in its effects becomes like the former ones...

Denn die Welt aller Welten, welche immer ist und seyn muß, deren Seyn als das Alles in Allen angesehen werden muß, stellt sich nur in aller Zeit - oder im Untergange oder im Moment, oder genetischer im werden des Moments and Anfang von Zeit und Welt dar, und dieser Untergang und Anfang ist wie die Sprache, Ausdruck Zeichen Darstellung eines lebendigen aber besonderen Ganzen, welches eben wieder in seinen Wirkungen dazu wird...[181]

The process described in this statement outlines how the Absolute, defined as "the world of all worlds, the all in all which always is", becomes manifest in and through the temporal world. It can only be presented as time, for in a certain sense, it can be nothing other than this time: "the all in all... only presents itself in all time". As Hölderlin then explains the "decline, the instant" and "the becoming of the instant" are all inextricably linked together. Each moment contains, within flux, all three possibilities; hence each moment creates time and world anew. It is this process in itself which constitutes the Absolute. The Absolute is not to be viewed as an object which can be attained, as a transcendental goal which can be worked towards. Rather the Absolute is simply the process of continual becoming, the movement of decline and becoming

of each instant in time. Hence, as Hölderlin, states each moment is to be viewed as "expression sign presentation of a living yet particular whole". The process of signification operates like a language; it provides a complex series of indicators, references towards the whole, but it can never provide the whole in itself. Just as language can never bring the objects to which it refers to presence - in fact, it questions the possibility of achieving "presence" understood as pure presence, the presentation of the thing in itself - the process which Hölderlin is here describing also undermines any suggestion that the Absolute can be grasped "in itself". The fact that Hölderlin describes this process in terms of an analogy with the structuring of language, is important for it again brings the question of mediation and transmission into the discussion.^[19] Whilst on the surface it may appear that what is offered here is another alternative transcendental system, the emphasis which is placed on the materiality of the process can be seen as a recognition, however tentative and undeveloped, of the tension inherent within any claim to provide unmediated access to the Absolute. The "whole" which Hölderlin describes is both "living and particular"; it is only presented in the particular instant, in a certain configuration and manifestation. Furthermore, what is presented is only a "sign" an "expression" of the whole. Here there is a recognition of the mediated nature of what is presented, or perhaps more accurately, a recognition that there is nothing apart from this mode of presentation. However, this is not to be understood as a limitation or fault, for what is of most importance is the process; the individual moment of presentation is only one particular instant which will be necessarily surpassed. Hölderlin continually reiterates the primacy of process over stasis. At the beginning of the next paragraph he writes,

The decline or transition of the fatherland (in this sense) is felt in the parts of the existing world so that at precisely that moment

and to precisely that extent that existence dissolves, the newly-entering, the youthful, the potential is also felt. For how could dissolution be felt without union; if, then, existence shall be felt and is felt in its dissolution, then the unexhausted and inexhaustible of the relations and forces must be felt more by dissolution than vice versa. .

Dieser Untergang oder Übergang des Vaterlandes (in diesem Sinne) fühlt sich in Gliedern der bestehenden Welt so, daß in eben dem Momente und Grade, worinn sich das Bestehende auflöst, auch das Neueintretende, Jugendliche, Mögliche sich fühlt. Denn wie könnte die Auflösung empfunden werden ohne Vereinigung, wenn also das Bestehende in seiner Auflösung empfunden werden soll und empfunden wird, so muß dabei das Unerschöpfte und Unerschöpfliche, der Beziehungen und Kräfte, und jene die Auflösung mehr durch diese empfunden werden, als umgekehrt...[20]

In this statement Hölderlin again emphasises the close association between dissolution and becoming, stressing how this movement is not to be viewed as a continual process of decline, but rather that it is the process of dissolution which also guarantees the emergence of the new. It is only through the dissolution of that which exists that "the newly-entering, the youthful" is given. This motif of the new emerging through decline underlies all of Hölderlin's theoretical works. It can be associated explicitly with the earlier discussion of Hyperion and the notion that the idea of beauty can only be manifest through its decline, and also the suggestion in the letter to Neuffer of November 12th 1798 that the "pure can only present itself in the impure." [21] Hence it is clear that the term dissolution must not be understood negatively; dissolution is not simply a necessary stage in the process, a state which allows the new to emerge, rather it is, in itself, an integral element of the new. This explains Hölderlin's statement that "existence shall be felt and is felt in its dissolution". It is only through the decline of the instant that the

"unexhausted and inexhaustible of the relations and forces" can be felt. In dissolution, then, the future is offered. However, this future is not fixed or preordained - dissolution does not presuppose any idea of determination - rather what is given is the potential for the future. Hence the description of the relation of the forces and relations which are in play as "unexhausted and inexhaustible". Rather than being understood as a form of limitation and control, dissolution opens up a multiplicity of possibilities for the future. It ensures continual progression from instant to instant. Hölderlin summarises this process succinctly when he comments,

However, the *possible* which enters into *actuality* as that *actuality* itself dissolves, is actualised and brings about the sensation of dissolution as well as the recollection of that which has been dissolved.

Aber das Mögliche, welches in die Wirklichkeit tritt, indem die Wirklichkeit sich auflöst, diß wirkt, und es bewirkt sowohl die Empfindung der Auflösung als die Erinnerung des Aufgelösten.[22]

This statement encapsulates the movement which has been described above. Through the dissolution of the existing actuality, that which was present as potential itself becomes actualised. This movement is acknowledged through the "sensation of dissolution and the recollection of that which is dissolved". This description again emphasises the material nature of the process. Dissolution is not simply an intellectual notion, a hypothetical occurrence, but refers to an actual event which is perceived through sensation. This point is reinforced by the continued use of terms denoting feeling and sensation in the previous paragraph; e.g. "*Empfinden*" and "*geföhlen*". However the dynamic nature of this process ensures that the "new" state which is gained is automatically also involved in the dissolution. In terms of the actual on-going process as it has been outlined hitherto, no point of stasis can be achieved. It is difficult

therefore to see how any form of reflection can occur which will allow the process to be identified as such. For if all that occurs is the simultaneous process of becoming and dissolution, how can a position be found from which it can be spoken about? A provisional answer to this problem is provided in the final statement of the above quotation where Hölderlin argues that the sensation of dissolution is accompanied by "the recollection of that which has been dissolved". This addition of the concept of memory and recollection complicates the definition of the process of becoming and dissolution, for it introduces the possibility of reflection. In allowing "the recollection of that which has been dissolved" to be part of the process of the dissolution, Hölderlin is able to introduce continuity into the system. Rather than the process being seen as a blind movement from moment to moment which is totally non-reflexive and lacking in coherence, the inclusion of recollection allows the possibility that meaning may be constructed. For if dissolution is accompanied by recollection of what has occurred, then explanations and narratives may be constructed which give weight and meaning to the present. The present can be explained by recourse to what has occurred before.

In the paragraphs which follow, Hölderlin outlines the function of recollection in greater detail, and it becomes clear that this concept is fundamental to the process he describes. He argues that there are two forms of dissolution, which he names the "so-called actual dissolution" (*"sogenannte wirkliche Auflösung"*) and "idealistic dissolution" (*"idealische Auflösung"*). The former refers to the actual process itself as it occurs within and through time, in fact it is that which constitutes time. It is the basic movement from moment to moment which is inherent to the process. The latter - the idealistic - refers to the process when it is understood reflectively, when the movement is seen in relation to a

wider theoretical schema, where the process gains explanation and meaning. The difference between the two can be characterised with respect to how they are defined. The "so-called actual dissolution" is simply process *per se*; by definition no reflection can occur. However in the "idealistic dissolution" the process can be identified as "process", the movement from moment to moment defined as "time", and qualities and definitions can be attributed to what occurs. This takes place because of the function of recollection within the process; through recollection, reflection occurs and hence awareness of what is recollected is gained. Hölderlin also appears to suggest that there is a difference in how the two forms of dissolution are experienced. The "actual dissolution" is described as "an object of fear" (*ein Gegenstand der Furcht*), which is experienced in terms of pain and suffering. This is because what is presented through the process, appears as a "real nothing" (*da hingegen die Auflösung an sich, ein Bestehendes scheint, reales Nichts*).^[23] However, no explanation is given as to what is meant by the term "real nothing", despite the fact that it appears regularly within the text.^[24] One possible interpretation can be achieved by comparing the definitions of the two forms of dissolution. It can be argued that the actual dissolution is described as a "real nothing" because, due to its lack of reflectivity, it is unable to convert the actual lived experience into "experience" understood in the idealistic sense of recollecting - hence assimilating - that which has occurred. This lack of reflectivity means that the actual dissolution cannot be talked of conceptually, for the moment that this occurs, the dissolution is understood from the perspective of idealistic dissolution. Hence "actual dissolution" cannot be defined theoretically, or, at the very least, anything which is said is a distortion of the experience, for by definition, no value or meaning can be attributed to it. This explains Hölderlin's difficulty in defining the term from a theoretical

perspective for it is impossible to discuss on a theoretical level, because in so doing it is automatically elevated to the level of the idealistic dissolution. To define is in a certain sense to control and limit; the actual dissolution is always in opposition to limitation, hence Hölderlin's description of it in terms of fear and pain, for it is precisely that which is outside the control of conceptual thought and which threatens its authority.

This interpretation can be substantiated further by examining what is stated concerning the idealistic dissolution, for, as may be expected, Hölderlin here provides a much more detailed explanation. He argues that the process of dissolution which has been described possesses its own "peculiar character between being and non-being". This state is common to both forms of dissolution. However, the idealistic dissolution is distinguished from the actual through the way in which this latter state is transformed through the process of recollection. Hölderlin explains how recollection occurs when he writes that in the state between "being and non-being",

...the possible becomes real everywhere, and the actual becomes ideal, and in the free imitation of art this is a frightful yet divine dream. In the perspective of ideal recollection, then, dissolution as a necessity becomes as such the ideal object of the newly developed life, a glance back on the path that had to be taken, from the beginning of dissolution up to that moment when, in the new life, there can occur a recollection of the dissolved and thus, as explanation and union of the gap and the contrast occurring between present and past, there can occur the recollection of the dissolution. This idealistic dissolution is fearless. (p.97)

...wird überall das Mögliche real, and das wirkliche ideal, and diß ist in der freien Kunstnachahmung ein furchtbarer aber göttlicher Traum. Die Auflösung also als Nothwendige, auf dem Gesichtpuncte der idealischen Erinnerung wird als solche idealisches Object des neuentwickelten Lebens, ein Rückblick auf den Weg, der zurückgelegt

werden mußte, vom Anfang der Auflösung bis dahin, wo aus dem neuen Leben eine Erinnerung des Aufgelösten, und daraus, als Erklärung und Vereinigung der Lücke und des Kontrasts, der zwischen dem Neuen und dem Vergangenen stattfindet, die Erinnerung der Auflösung erfolgen kann. Diese idealische Auflösung ist furchtlos.[25]

In these statements Hölderlin suggests that through "the perspective of ideal recollection", the process which has been undergone is recalled and a narrative is constructed; an explanation is given in which a "meaning" is attributed to the actual dissolution - hence this becomes "the ideal object of the newly developed life". In a certain sense, through the act of recollection the nature of the past is determined; the past is made static, its meaning "fixed", "solidified". Hence the statement that there is gained the recognition that this was the "path that had to be taken". The dynamic state of dissolution, the movement from moment to moment is understood as a necessary process. In this "fixing" of the process it is transformed from the meaningless, frightening, undetermined movement of actual dissolution into an explainable and necessary occurrence. Thus the "idealistic dissolution is fearless". This statement is double-edged for it refers both to the neutralisation of the process - in the transformation from actual to ideal dissolution the horror of the "real nothing" is removed - and also to the fact that the perspective of ideal dissolution is one that is insurmountable, it is a position of power and control. From this perspective the past can be explained, and meaning given to events. Hence as Hölderlin then writes,

The beginning and end point is already posited, found secured; and hence this dissolution is also more secure more relentless more bold, and as such it therefore presents itself as a reproductive act by means of which life runs through all its moments and in order to achieve the total sum, stays at none but dissolves in everyone so as to constitute itself in the next...Thus, in its recollection, dissolution

fully becomes the secure relentless daring act which it is because both of its ends stand firmly.

Anfangs- und Endpunkt ist schon gesetzt, gefunden, gesichert, deswegen ist diese Auflösung auch sicherer, un aufhaltsamer, kühner, und sie stellt sie hiemit, als das was sie eigentlich ist, als einen reproductiven Act, dar, wodurch das Leben alle seine Punkte durchläuft, und um die ganze Summe zu gewinnen, auf keinem verweilt, auf jedem sich auflöst, um in dem nächsten sich herzustellen...Also in der Erinnerung der Auflösung wird diese, weil ihre beiden Enden fest stehen, ganz der sichere, unaufhaltsame kühne Act, der sie eigentlich ist.[26]

In recollection the process of dissolution becomes fixed, as Hölderlin states the "beginning and end points" are "found and secured". Recollection demarcates the limits of the process of dissolution, it defines its boundaries, organising that which is to be recalled. This does not mean that recollection is a static, solidified act which attempts to halt the process of dissolution, for only the limits, the "ends" of the process are determined. Between the "beginning and end points" the process of dissolution and continual movement still occurs. Hölderlin makes this clear when he states that the idealistic dissolution "presents itself as a reproductive act by means of which life runs through all of its moments". As I stated earlier, the process of dissolution is identical in both the actual and idealistic dissolutions. What differs is the way in which the process is experienced and understood. This is highlighted by the fact that the idealistic dissolution is described as a "reproductive act", where the actual dissolution is recalled on the level of the idealistic dissolution. What, though, is meant by the term "reproductive act" when it is applied to the process of recollection? Does this suggest that something akin to a process of mimesis is operating here? Is recollection a mimetic act? I want to argue that the answer

to these questions is positive and that Hölderlin's account of idealistic dissolution contains a mimetic component.

Earlier in the text, Hölderlin connects his description of the process of idealistic dissolution with "the thoroughly original [nature] of any truly tragic language, the forever-creative" ("*das durchaus originelle jeder ächttragischen Sprache, das immerwährend schöpfrische*"). This association implies that the process of dissolution allows for the emergence of the "thoroughly original" tragic language. It is described as "forever-creative" because the continual process of dissolution provides it with a constant source of new material as each experienced moment becomes taken up into the idealistic dissolution. The process of recollection is thereby understood as a creative act. For although as Hölderlin states it "moves from the infinite-present to the finite past", this apparently "backwards" move must also be seen as the creative act which occurs within, and for, the "infinite-present". The recollection that occurs through the reproductive act is not an attempt to retrieve or return to what has occurred previously, rather it is through this act that the present is created and gains weight and meaning. It is what secures the present against the threat which is posed by the "actual dissolution", which is still always on-going. However through recollection this threat is held at bay. Recollection creates a narrative which gives the present meaning; by assimilating, recalling the past, continuity is ensured. Earlier I argued that the mimetic act is not to be understood as a static imitation or reproduction of an already existing entity, but rather is to be defined in terms of an active, creative process. This is substantiated by Ricoeur's definition of the process which I discussed in Chapter one: "Imitation or representing is a mimetic activity inasmuch as it produces something...the action is the "construct" of that construction that the mimetic activity consists

of."[27] It can be seen that this definition fits the process of recollection as it has here been described. Ricoeur's analysis emphasises the productive element of mimesis which creates the objects of the mimetic relationship through the process of construction. Similarly, recollection constructs the past for the present; through the act of recollection that which has dissolved is recalled in order to secure meaning for the present. Furthermore, I would go so far as to argue that not only is a notion of mimesis operating here, but it also presupposes and entails a cathartic component. As I stated earlier, the move from the actual to the idealistic dissolution through the introduction of recollection, alters the experience of dissolution from one of fear and pain to one that is "fearless". Through recollection the experience is neutralised and controlled. This can be seen to be analogous to the cathartic experience understood as a form of purification or purgation, whereby the sentiments of "fear and pity" become transformed through representation to produce pleasure. In both cases, through reproduction the threat, the horror is contained and controlled. Through the reproductive act, the "re-presentation", a framework which guarantees meaning and coherence is put into place. In Hölderlin's system, recollection operates as catharsis, for once both "end points" are secured, that which was fearful and unnameable is excluded and transformed.

Having established that recollection entails a form of mimetic production, a subsidiary question needs to be addressed before it is possible to assess the full implications of this analysis for other aspects of Hölderlin's theoretical writing. This question concerns the relationship between the theoretical formulation of recollection that Hölderlin establishes in Becoming in Dissolution and the work of art. On what level does recollection take place? Is it an action attributed to a subject, or does it occur through textual production? The

remarks that Hölderlin makes in this text are ambiguous, but appear to suggest that the process of recollection can occur through both, often in a manner that is interconnected. The reason for this ambiguity lies in the fact that the process of recollection is also that which constitutes the individual as subject. Therefore it is difficult to speak of an individual who recollects, for it is only through this act that the "I" is constituted. Hence at the end of the text Hölderlin describes the relationship between the present - the infinite new - and the recollection which accompanies this moment - the finite old - in terms of a "tragic union" where,

... there develops then a new individual in that the infinite-new individualises itself in its own appearance by acquiring the appearance of the finite old

...entwickelt sich dann ein neues Individuelles, indem das Unendlichneue, vermittelt dessen, daß es die Gestalt des endlichalten annaham, sich nun in eigener Gestalt individualisirt.[28]

In this process the "new individual" is created through identification with that which is given in recollection. However, as Hölderlin then proceeds to show, this is only one moment in an ongoing process whereby the "new individual" automatically then itself enters into opposition with that out of which it has arisen.[29] Although Hölderlin will refer to this positing using the Fichtean terminology of the "I" and the "Non-I", this is not to be understood as the act which founds the system, but rather is one moment in an continually alternating process. The "individual" which is given through this process is not grounded in this moment. It cannot be understood as a moment of origin in the Fichtean sense. Rather the status of the "individual" in this system is always in question. As I will argue later, this has profound implications for other aspects of Hölderlin's theoretical position. However before these implications can

be outlined in any detail, it is necessary to return briefly to the relationship between recollection and the work of art, for it must not be forgotten that the ideas expressed in Becoming in Dissolution are inextricably linked to the Empedocles project. At various points in the text Hölderlin seems to suggest that the process of idealistic dissolution is enacted in the construction of the work, in particular the tragic work. In a passage that I quoted earlier, Hölderlin states that the peculiar character of dissolution between "being and non-being" is demonstrated in the "free imitation of art" where it is a "frightful yet divine dream." Later in the essay Hölderlin also connects the process he has described with the tragic form, and explains why it cannot be related to either the lyric or the epic forms. These remarks suggest that there is an intrinsic relationship between the tragic form and the process of dissolution, whereby the process is enacted in and through the structure of the tragic form. The tragic form provides the paradigm example of the process of dissolution and becoming which Hölderlin perceives to underlie all life. Through this form the process of dissolution is transformed from the state of "actual dissolution" to that of "idealistic dissolution". This point can be substantiated further by relating these remarks to those which have been outlined earlier concerning the nature of the tragic form. Throughout this chapter I have shown how Hölderlin's poetological and theoretical concerns are inextricably bound to his analysis of the tragic form. Therefore it is not surprising that the description of the process of Idealistic Dissolution is given in terms of its manifestation in and through the tragic form. For if it is correct to argue that this process of becoming and dissolution is to be understood as the process of the Absolute, the movement of the "poetic spirit", then, as has been argued earlier, this must necessarily occur in and through the work. The

"work" is the site of mediation which brings the terms into relation and in which the "presentation of a living yet particular whole" is given.

Does this mean, though, that this process occurs only within the work, or is the tragic work being employed as an example of a more universal process? An answer to this problem can be found by examining how the term "work" is to be understood. If the term is taken to refer simply to the "work of art" understood as an individual entity - e.g. the tragedy Empedocles - then it is clear that Hölderlin's theory is inherently limited and is unable to fulfil its own claims. However, if the term "work" is broadened so that it refers to the process of production, understood as not limited simply to individual works of art but rather as indicative of the creative process as a whole, then an alternative understanding may start to be developed.[30] This wider interpretation is based upon the claim I made earlier that recollection is to be understood as a mimetic act. In this context, mimesis is viewed in terms of poiesis; i.e. as a form of production. Recollection occurs in and through language; this can be substantiated by the definition I quoted earlier where Hölderlin links the process of dissolution to "the thoroughly original nature of any truly tragic language, the forever-creative" (*"Das durchaus originelle jeder ächttragischen Sprache, das immerwährendschöpfrische"*). It is in and through language that the process of dissolution comes to be understood. Language is the medium in which, and by which, dissolution is given. It is the "forever-creative" (*das immerwährendschöpfrische*) nature of language that generates recollection, that produces and gives meaning to dissolution. Hence language itself is primary to the processes described. If it can be accepted that the "work" is understood to refer to the operations of language itself, to its definition as "forever-creative", to its productive "poietic" capacity, then

Hölderlin's theory can start to be re-evaluated. First this wider definition of "work" enables the positing of an intrinsic relationship between the subject and the "work". Earlier I argued that the subject is constructed through recollection. In terms of this broader understanding of the "work", this then means that the subject is understood to be constructed in and through the operations of language. The coherence and continuity of the subject - the "I" - through time is premised upon the generative process of recollection. Therefore the subject is to be understood as an entity which is constructed in and through language.^[31] This then challenges the possibility that recollection is to be understood as an act undertaken by an autonomous subject for it is through recollection that the subject is constituted. Furthermore, because of the dynamic, ever on-going nature of the process of recollection, no point of stasis is achieved and thus the "subject" can never be grounded. All that is given is the on-going process of construction of "meaning" in and through language. However the "meaning" and "knowledge" which is gained is necessarily self-referential and self-validating. The status of the claims that are made are validated by the presuppositions inherent in the system. This is because of the cathartic element that is present in the process of recollection. As I argued earlier, recollection is a process of control and ordering; it transforms the chaotic, unstructured experience of dissolution, imposing onto it an ordered theoretical explanation. However, what must not be forgotten is that the explanation of the process is itself part of the process of control and limitation. Recollection constructs its own status and validity through the explanation of its operation. Hence Hölderlin's text is itself caught up in the process which is being outlined. By definition the process of recollection must also be inherent within the development of Hölderlin's own explanation. Thus the process is inherently self-referential, and its claims ungrounded. There is no

point external to the system from where the process can be objectively described, for any description is always already caught up in the mechanism which it is attempting to outline. Furthermore, if this process occurs only at the level of language this in turn challenges any transcendental claims that are made by the system. This is because although the system may wish to assert these claims, they are automatically brought into question by the necessarily "retrospective" nature of the process by which they are made. Any claim is always made through the filtering mediation of recollection, which is an activity that occurs only through language, and thus is inherently unstable.

Does this analysis mean that Hölderlin's whole project is therefore inherently flawed? The response to this question is dependent upon what Hölderlin's "project" is conceived to be. If it is assumed that Hölderlin's texts are intended to provide an analysis and explanation of a theoretical schema which will provide clear-cut answers concerning epistemological and ontological problems then it is clear that the project has failed. However throughout this discussion Hölderlin's antipathy to this form of thought has been made clear. The project of developing an "infinite progress of philosophy"^[32] is one that underlies all of his work. Inherent to this conception of the "project" is a belief in its open-ended nature. Rather than positing a transcendental goal which must be worked towards, Hölderlin's project is consummated in the actual operation of the process. This consummation is not the sterile act of achievement - the seizing of the goal of "enlightenment" or "knowledge" - but rather one that replicates itself at every stage of the process. For those who demand answers and solutions this "system" may appear inherently unsatisfactory, for as was argued above, even the explanation of the process can itself be called into question. However, I want to argue that it is exactly this

point that makes Hölderlin's thought so provocative and ultimately problematic. In taking the question of textuality seriously - in acknowledging the medium of thought and the process of its construction - Hölderlin uncovers many of the impasses that will later prove critical to philosophical thought. Throughout this discussion I have highlighted the way in which Hölderlin continually refers to the process of recollection in terms of a "reproductive act" and I have shown how this is intrinsically linked to the work, understood as the creation in, and of, language. It is this emphasis which is placed upon language which creates the inherent tensions and problems within Hölderlin's thought. For as Hölderlin himself states in his explicit linkage of the process of dissolution with language, this language is defined not simply in terms of being "forever-creative", but also it is described as "truly-tragic" (*ächttragischen*). Why is the "forever-creative" also the "truly-tragic"? How is the term "tragic" in this context to be understood? One answer is simple and relates to the problem of the lack of ground or origin which is inherent within Hölderlin's position. This position is "truly-tragic" insofar as there is no possibility of stasis being attained and certainty gained. In positing process over stasis Hölderlin condemns thought to constant instability and deferment of certainty. Any certainty is gained only through recollection, and as this analysis has shown, this process is itself brought into question. For although recollection is supposed to provide stability to the process, by its very nature, its own claims must necessarily be challenged. Recollection provides an interpretation, a narrative but like all narratives its claims to recall the "facts" is necessarily open to question. This is why the "forever-creative" language is also the "truly-tragic", for this basic uncertainty is intrinsic to the process of recollection. No guarantee can be given of the "correctness", the "authenticity" of that which is recalled, created. Recollection offers simply one interpretation

among a myriad of possibilities. Two facts enable it to be conjectured that Hölderlin himself was perhaps only too aware of these latent problems. First, this text is one of Hölderlin's last attempts to outline his position in a philosophical, theoretical form. After this he returns to writing poetry, in particular the later odes and hymns which contain meditations on the problems with which the theoretical writings wrestle.^[33] Secondly, when Hölderlin again attempts to outline his position in a theoretical manner in the Remarks on Oedipus and Antigone, he isolates Sophocles from the other tragedians, for Sophocles knows how to depict man's understanding as a "wandering below the unthinkable". This phrase may apply equally as well to Hölderlin's own thought. Recollection is a response to the "unthinkable" but, yet, it does not provide the necessary answers and solutions that Hölderlin requires.

In order, therefore, to understand the full implications of Hölderlin's theoretical position I now will turn to a closer examination of the Remarks. For it is in these texts that the full extent of the problems which underlie Hölderlin's position can be found. The crisis which is latent in the formulation of recollection becomes manifest when Hölderlin returns to consider the problem of the relationship between Greece and Germany from the perspective of his translation project.

Chapter 5.

Hölderlin, Greece and Tragedy.

5.1. Introduction

It is in Hölderlin's final productive years - namely the period from 1801-4 - that his interest in the dual problems posed by Germany's relation to Greece and the task of writing a tragedy converge in the project of translating Sophocles drama's Oedipus Rex and Antigone. From an early age, Hölderlin displays an interest in translating Greek works into German,^[1] but it is only after the failure of the Empedocles project that he turns to the task in earnest, not only engaging in the Sophocles translations, but also embarking on the translation of Pindar's Odes.^[2] In this chapter my interest lies not in the details of these translations - interesting and important though they are - but rather in attempting to understand how this project as a whole brings to a crisis the problems that have emerged in the previous chapters concerning the mimetic relation to Greece and the project of writing a "modern" tragedy. This crisis occurs because Hölderlin's translation project is not to be understood as a "mere" attempt to render the Greek intelligible in the German. Rather all the theoretical and poetological issues and concerns that I have outlined previously are brought to bear on the process of translation. Thus the project of translation is not a merely incidental in relation to Hölderlin's other work - note that the greatest of the hymns are also written at this time^[3] - but rather is pivotal to understanding how Hölderlin attempts to solve the problems and impasses that his earlier work has highlighted. This point is confirmed by the fact that Hölderlin also offers accompanying Remarks in which he outlines some of the ideas which underlie his interpretation and translation.^[4] It is these Remarks on Oedipus and Remarks on Antigone which will be the main

focus of this chapter. My aim is to explore in greater depth some of the issues raised in these Remarks in order to throw light on the issues discussed previously and to attempt to offer some conclusions into the insights contained - however tentatively or obliquely - within Hölderlin's work. However before turning to examine the texts in detail, I want first to confront the the question of why Hölderlin attempts the translation project at all. What concerns - theoretical or otherwise - underlie Hölderlin's translation of Sophocles?

5.2. The Task of the Translator

In his seminal text The Task of the Translator, Walter Benjamin isolates Hölderlin for particular mention, making the following comments. He writes,

It is the task of the translator to release in his own language that pure language which is under the spell of another, to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his re-creation of that work. For the sake of pure language he breaks through decayed barriers of his own language... In [Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles] the harmony of the languages is so profound that sense is touched by language only the way an aeolian harp is touched by the wind.^[5]

These comments could be used equally well to summarise Hölderlin's views on the function of translation, for he is not interested in simply providing a one to one version of the Greek, whereby the "success" of the translation depends on its accuracy in relation to the transmission of the individual "meaning" of the original words. Rather Hölderlin conceives of the process of translation as an opportunity to render the work in such a way as to make it able to "speak" to a new community of readers and listeners. Hence, as Benjamin says the "task of the translator" is a creative task, a task of liberation, in which the translator creates a new work through the "re-creation" that occurs in the act of translation. A mimetic process therefore underlies the project of the

translator. This mimetic process is not to be understood as the static *imitatio* conception of mimesis, rather it is the more active, creative Aristotelian process of mimesis understood in terms of *poesis* that is invoked. This point provides the first, and most important connection with the arguments presented in previous chapters. In moving to translations of Greek texts, Hölderlin is still engaged in the issue of the mimetic relation between Greece and Germany, though he approaches the problem from a new perspective. Many of the ideas and concerns which emerged from the underlying presence of the mimetic relation - both in the specific discussions of the relation to Greece and the tragedy - also surface within the project of translating Sophocles. Hölderlin himself points towards some of these continuing connections in comments that he makes in letters to his publisher, Friedrich Wilmans. On September 28th 1803 he writes,

I hope to present Greek art, which is foreign to us because of national convenience and defects with which it always surrounded itself, in a more lively fashion than the public is accustomed to. To accomplish this I will highlight the oriental more than did the Greeks who denied it, and I will improve on their artistic defects where they occur.

Ich hoffe, die griechische Kunst, die uns fremd ist, durch Nationalkonvenienz und Fehler, mit denen sie sich immer herum beholfen hat, dadurch lebendiger, als gewöhnlich dem Publikum darzustellen, daß ich das Orientalische, das sie verläugnet hat, mehr heraushebe, und ihren Kunstfehler, wo er vorkommt, verbessere.^[6]

These remarks can be linked directly to the issues that arise out of the discussion of the first letter to Böhlendorff. It is clear that Hölderlin is again drawing attention to the split that he perceives in the art of a culture between that which is natural to it and that which is foreign. Hölderlin's desire to "highlight the oriental" which the Greeks "denied", arises out of the argument

given in the letter to Böhlendorff concerning the difficulties of gaining access to, and using, that which is natural. If the terminology of the Böhlendorff letter is interposed here it can be stated that it is through highlighting the oriental that Hölderlin is able to show the "fire from heaven" and "sacred pathos" which was natural for the Greeks, but which they were unable to gain access to, and employ manifestly, in their art. Therefore through the act of translation Hölderlin is intending to allow the unstated of the text to speak; in other words, translation frees the Greek work from the constraints which its own time imposed. However this act of translation also has a function in the modern world. Implicit in Hölderlin's argument is the assumption that the Moderns also need this act of translation in order to allow the Greek text to have meaning for the modern. However this does not suggest that the Greek text must be merely made intelligible to the Germans, for this would not allow the "oriental" aspect of the text to be brought forth. In fact this approach - which is simply blind imitation and appropriation - is exactly what Hölderlin warns against in the letter to Böhlendorff, for as he states there, it is not possible simply to imitate the Greeks in the hope that this will allow the modern work to achieve greatness. Rather the text must be approached in such a way that it can be given a voice which will speak to the German people in a new way; hence the text must be presented in a "more lively fashion than the public is accustomed to". It is this imperative which caused Hölderlin's translations to be pilloried when they appeared originally, for on first sight they seem to lack the rigour and accuracy in relation to the original which is demanded of a so-called faithful translation.^[7] However when the theoretical imperatives which underlie the translations are taken into consideration the reasons for their (apparent) idiosyncrasies can start to be discerned. For as Benjamin argues in the passage that follows the earlier quotation, the act of

translation cannot be simply understood as a desire to want to turn the original language be it "Hindi, Greek, English into German" rather what is required is the reverse process; namely the motivation underlying the process of translation must be a desire to turn German into "Hindi, Greek, English".^[8] Very similar sentiments underlie Hölderlin's own understanding of the process of translation. Translation is not simply the revival of the dead corpse of a text, an attempt to breathe life into a moribund entity by giving a new audience access to it. Rather it is an active process of creation - as Benjamin states it is a "liberating act" which "re-creates" the work. When the process of translation is understood in this way then explanations for Hölderlin's decision to translate Sophocles tragedies can start to be developed.

These explanations can be derived by further consideration of how Hölderlin's project of translation can be understood as a mimetic process which carries through some of the demands of his earlier theoretical position, particularly with respect to the problem of creating modern tragedy. As I argued in relation to the letter to Böhlendorff, in order for the work to have relevance, and be representative of the modern it must recognise the importance of the Greeks, but also it must not be paralysed by their example; for apart from the "living relationship and skill" the moderns cannot have anything "identical with them". However the problem of attempting to write a modern tragedy has been shown in the "failure" of the Empedocles project. Therefore if, as I think it is correct to assume, Hölderlin is still concerned with finding a way of allowing the tragic form to function in the Modern, then the Sophocles translations can be seen as an attempt to approach the problem from a different perspective. In the earlier discussion of the Ground to Empedocles, I mentioned Hölderlin's description of the relationship between the mode of presentation and that which

is presented as an "analogical relationship": the poet chooses as the subject for his or her drama "Another world, other events foreign characters" but there is always an "intrinsic kinship" between this world and the world of the poet. In the conclusion of the discussion of the Empedocles project, I questioned whether its failure could be attributed partially to the absence of this "intrinsic kinship" between poet and subject matter; i.e. the narrative of Empedocles does not have an intrinsic relation to the modernity of the poet. Can, however, the process of the translation of Sophocles be viewed as another attempt to forge the "intrinsic kinship" between poet and work in order to enable the tragedy to have relevance for modernity? On the surface it may appear that there are few similarities between the actual act of creating a drama, and the project of translating one that already exists. Yet, if it is accepted that the task of translation which Hölderlin undertakes is itself a creative task, then the possible plausibility of such a connection can start to emerge. If, for the sake of the argument being developed here, it is assumed that the failure of the Empedocles project is due in part to the absence of this "intrinsic kinship" then it is perfectly possible to suggest that Hölderlin turns to the translations of Sophocles in order to attempt an alternative approach to the impasses he has reached. The reason for the choice of a translation of Sophocles as offering an alternative can be linked to the arguments that have arisen out of the discussion of the letter to Böhlendorff. The point that is of particular relevance to this argument concerns the necessity of acknowledging the importance of the Greeks whilst at the same time not remaining in slavery to their ideas and forms. If it is accepted that Hölderlin's translations are not simply an attempt to revive the Greek text in the German, but rather presuppose an active process of creation whereby the German language is brought closer to the Greek, thereby creating a reciprocal relationship between

the texts, then it can be argued that Hölderlin is attempting to develop a relationship which is very similar to the "intrinsic kinship" that is essential to the theoretical process described in the Ground. Therefore, although it first may appear that there is a discontinuity between the earlier, more theoretical writings and project of translating Sophocles, a subtler, more intrinsic, link can be proposed. The theoretical presuppositions which underlie the methodology of Hölderlin's translations are necessarily similar to the process of poetic composition as outlined in the Ground. This point can be emphasised by returning to Benjamin's description of Hölderlin's translations, quoted at the beginning of this section, where the relation between the original text and the translation in Hölderlin's work is described using the metaphor of the relation between the wind and the strings of the aeolian harp. This metaphor fits exactly with the way in which Hölderlin conceives of the "intrinsic kinship" between the subject matter and the form in which it is presented, for although both are distinct entities, their actual meaning and significance can only be given and understood through the process of their interaction. In translating Sophocles, Hölderlin develops a new text which transforms the Greek into German, but which also simultaneously gives new meaning and relevance to the German and Greek texts, via their close yet unstated relationship. This relationship occurs because the translation process is understood in terms of a creative mimetic/poietic relation in which , again using Ricoeur's formulation, "the action is the "construct" of that construction that the mimetic activity consists of"^[9]. This formulation again highlights the importance of the present as the site of the mimetic activity; thus the significance of Hölderlin's translations for his own modernity. The translations transpose the Greek texts into the Modern, thereby creating a text which necessarily is a reflection of, and reaction to, the time in which it was conceived. Therefore the translations

must be understood as being of, and for, Hölderlin's time. Hölderlin's translation project cannot be understood as separate or secondary to other aspects of his work. Both the poetry written at this time, and the translations are addressing the same problem, namely they are attempts to find or create a voice which can reflect Hölderlin's experience of his own modernity.

In the light of this final point I want to suggest a further - much more speculative and tentative - connection between the project of translation and Hölderlin's earlier more theoretical work. At the end of the previous chapter I highlighted the importance that Hölderlin placed upon the concept of "*Erinnerung*" in relation to the creative process. I argued that it is through "*Erinnerung*" that the poetic process occurs: in fact, it is the process which underlies the whole of Hölderlin's theoretical schema. The previous discussion of "*Erinnerung*" was conducted on an abstract level, and although I made brief allusions to the role that the concept played in Hölderlin's poetry, I did not offer any explanations as to how the concept operated on a more practical level. However, I now want to suggest that the project of translation can itself be considered part of the process of "*Erinnerung*"; i.e. the project of translating Greek into German is an act which allows the Greek work to be re-called for the modern. In the previous discussion of "*Erinnerung*" I highlighted the fact that Hölderlin's definition of the concept presupposed a mimetic component; it is described as "a reproductive act". Furthermore it was reiterated that it was a process that occurred in and through language. It can be seen that there are resonances and similarities between this description of the re-productive act which creates and gives weight and meaning to the experience of the present and the analysis of the task of translation which I have given above. Through the translation of the Greek text into the German, Hölderlin is enabling the memory

of the Greeks to be retained. However this is not a simple act of recalling the lost historical past, which still retains a distinction between that which is defined as the past and hence inaccessible and alien, and the present time. Instead, Hölderlin translates the Greek for the present, in order to challenge the present's complacency regarding its own belief in its self-knowledge and security. Translation, understood as part of the process of recollection, is a task which is undertaken in order to allow the acknowledgement of the necessary links with that which is past, but its structure also points towards the necessary displacement and discontinuity between past and present, antiquity and modernity. This is because, as Hölderlin will state in the Remarks on Antigone, translation must operate in such a way as to bring the Greek text "closer to our mode of representation". If the Greek text is to have a meaning for the Modern, it must be recalled, re-created in a manner which allows it speak to the Modern time. Hence the transpositions and dislocations between the original text and the translations, again point to the necessary gulf between the Greeks and the Moderns. If translation is considered to be part of the process of "*Erinnerung*", then it reinforces the idea that the past which is recalled, remembered through the act of recollection, is one that is created and fictionalised. There cannot be any possibility of the process being understood as the retrieval of the origin or ground of the present. Instead this act points towards the absence of any such possibility.

It is premature to attempt to draw any conclusions concerning the effects of this connection between the process of "*Erinnerung*" and the task of translation. However it is clear that if in the course of the project of translating Sophocles, Hölderlin uncovers some of the "answers" to the questions he has been wrestling with concerning how he is to understand the nature of his own

modernity - i.e. if the translation of Sophocles opens up a diagnosis of the nature of the malady of the modern which directly affects the aims and intentions of the poetological project - then this may in turn point towards the possible problems inherent to the process of "Erinnerung".

Before these problems can be addressed it will be necessary to examine the issues that are raised in the Remarks. In the course of this discussion I think I have shown that the issues which underlie the project of translation are inextricably linked to Hölderlin's earlier concerns. Therefore, in discussing the Remarks I wish to pursue the continuity between the Remarks and the earlier work. Hölderlin is still engaged with similar issues; in particular the possibility of finding the relevance of tragedy to the modern.

5.3. The Remarks on Oedipus and Antigone. Preliminary Comments.

The Anmerkungen zum Oedipus and Anmerkungen zum Antigone were intended initially to form part of a much larger theoretical work which would accompany the Sophocles translations and in which Hölderlin would present his interpretation of the dramas. However, as with so many of Hölderlin's projects, this larger work never materialised. Any attempt to understand Hölderlin's later interpretation of the function of tragedy has therefore to rest upon these two short, but extremely dense, texts. As many commentators have pointed out, the two texts are constructed in an identical manner.^[10] In the first section of each, Hölderlin describes the technical structure of the tragic form and how this is related to its content. In the second section he gives an analysis of specific passages of the dramas in order to outline his own interpretation of the work and to show how this affects the process of translation. Finally, in the third section, Hölderlin offers an interpretation of the wider significance of

the tragedy. In the Remarks on Oedipus this is described in terms of the relationship between Man and God as shown through the structure of the tragedy. In the Remarks on Antigone, the argument is related to the relationship between Modernity and Antiquity and the necessary changes that must be made to the drama in order to give it relevance to Hölderlin's experience of his own time and country. As the texts share these structural similarities, I intend to examine them together in order to highlight the comparisons and distinctions between them. As I suggested earlier these two texts bring together two main themes within Hölderlin's work - the relation between Antiquity and Modernity, and the status of the tragic form - and therefore the analysis will need to establish whether these texts offer any new insights into the problematic nature of the mimetic relation which is both internal to these themes, and which also draws them into relation with each other. This is because the translation project, in its attempt to render the Greek into the German whilst at the same time making the German more Greek, necessarily brings together not only the "structural" problem of Greece's relation to Germany, but also transposes the questions concerning the internal structure of the Greek tragic form and the status of the dramatic representation discussed in chapter one into the discussion, necessarily complicating the analysis. The issues which are brought together in the Remarks can be summarised in a schematic manner by stating that these texts provide the focus for the discussions of the "vertical" mimetic relationship between Greece and Germany and the "horizontal" relationship between the internal components of the tragic dramatic structure. However this schematisation does not describe adequately the complexity of the relationships, for they cannot be considered as existing in separate spheres. They must necessarily interact and thereby affect and influence each other. Although it may initially appear easy

to categorise the main theme of each of the sections of the Remarks it will soon become apparent that the "technical structure" of the tragedy cannot be considered in isolation from the arguments given in the third section concerning the wider significance of the tragic form. All elements of Hölderlin's analysis are necessarily interrelated. However, in the interests of clarity I will examine each of the sections in turn, giving an analysis which will allow the links to develop in a cumulative manner.

5.3. The Technical Structure of Tragedy.

Hölderlin begins his discussion of the technical structure of tragedy by establishing the reasons as to why this should be considered important. He argues that in recent times works of art have been judged according to the effect which they engender, rather than with respect to how they are constructed. This argument contains the assumption that it is the lack of external criteria for judgement - based upon rules of structure and form - which has led to the denigration of both the work of art and the position of the artist within society. Hence the artist is treated as being superfluous or additional to the needs of the society; they are considered to provide mere entertainment and pleasure rather than being part of its basic constitution. In order to rectify this state of affairs Hölderlin argues that poetry should be elevated to the status of "the *mechane* of the ancients". This demand is tempered by the admonition that this request should not be understood as a simple advocacy of the return of Greek ideals and values, for "the difference of times and institutions" must also be taken into consideration. This is, of course, a qualification which is implicit in all of Hölderlin's discussions of the use of the Greek "model". The type of link between the Greeks and the Moderns which Hölderlin wants to establish is clarified by his statement that,

Modern poetry, however, lacks especially training and craftsmanship, namely that its mode of operation can be calculated and taught, and once it has been learned, is always capable of being repeated reliably in practice.

Der modernen Poësie fehlt es aber besonders an der Schule und am Handwerksmäßigen, daß nemlich ihre Verfahrungsart berechnet und gelehrt, und wenn sie gelernt ist, in der Ausübung immer zuverlässig wiederholt werden kann.[111]

In order for modern poetry to achieve greatness it must comply with certain rules of composition and structure. These rules are not arbitrary, rather they are set down in advance and must be adhered to by the artist. Both Aristotelian and Platonic theory are present in Hölderlin's demand for the need for rules for the "lawful calculation" of poetry. The link with Aristotelian poetics is clear and connects with the debate mentioned earlier about whether the work of art must be judged in accordance with the effects it creates - the "*Wirkungsästhetik*" of the *Sturm und Drang* writers - or whether it is measured against external, universal rules of composition; i.e. as is exemplified by the Aristotelian model.[12] The Platonic element arises in the presuppositions which underlie the theory. In arguing for specific rules and laws of poetic composition it is proposed that they will enable the "beautiful" to be engendered. How this notion of beauty is to be understood is problematic. Whilst it may initially be supposed that this remark is referring to a static transcendental idea of beauty, it must be remembered that throughout his earlier work, Hölderlin argues against a static understanding of the ideal of beauty. For although beauty is posited as the highest idea in and through which everything is united, this can be only understood in relation to a process of decay and decline. There is no unmediated access to the idea. It is this modified understanding of the Platonic theory which underlies Hölderlin's

description of the "lawful calculation...through which beauty is engendered". The laws of composition which are outlined do not provide a guarantee for the creation of the "beautiful" work of art, rather they are part of the process of the bringing forth of the Absolute in which the artist is engaged. The work is the site of mediation, it brings together the divergent elements which make up the process of the aesthetic Absolute. The laws of composition are necessary in order for the process to obtain direction and meaning, for if the work of art is seen as the site of mediation - in the case of tragedy it is "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" - then certain rules must be observed which will allow the tragedy to function and be recognised as tragedy. The processes which Hölderlin has described in the earlier essays such as On the Operations of the Poetic Spirit take place within the constraints of specific art forms - in fact the constraints of the form are part of the process. Hence the necessity for the establishment of "certain and characteristic principles and limits" ("*...besonders sicherer und charakteristischer Prinzipien und Schranken*").

The reasons for the emphasis which is placed upon the necessity for rules and calculation becomes clearer when Hölderlin then proceeds to make a distinction between the content of the work and the "lawful calculation". Hölderlin argues that the content of the work - its "living meaning" ("*der lebendige Sinn*") - cannot be determined in the same manner as the technical structure of the work. The full power of the work of art arises out of the relation ("*Zusammenhänge*") which develops between the content and the technical structure of the work, its "calculable law" ("*kalkulablen Gesetze*"). Therefore it can be seen that in the completed work of art neither form nor content can be considered separate from one another. The work of art is created in and through the relation and tension between the constituent parts, which although necessarily distinct, must be

brought into relation with each other. As I will show in the course of this analysis one of the most important, and potentially problematic, elements of Hölderlin's understanding of the tragic form is the emphasis which is placed upon the relation between form and content. The issue which underlies the emphasis placed upon relation relates back to the question which has arisen throughout this study concerning the relation between the parts and the whole; i.e. how the individual particular instance relates to both another instance and also to the universal.

After outlining the intrinsic relationship between form and content, Hölderlin turns to establishing the characteristics of the "law, the calculation" of the tragic form. He states that the component elements of the work "representation, sensation and reason, appear in different successions yet always according to a certain law." No indication is provided as to how these elements are manifest within the work, although it could be inferred that they refer to the qualities attributed to the different forms of poetry in the Differences essay. Thus the statement that these elements "appear in different successions" could be interpreted as referring to the various configurations of the qualities associated with poetic forms and styles within different works of art. The law of the lyric is necessarily different to that of the tragic, yet as was argued earlier, each of the forms necessarily includes elements of the others. However, although each of the forms includes elements of the others, one form is always dominant. Which form is understood to be dominant is determined by the underlying "calculable law" of the form. Thus, as Hölderlin then states, the law of tragedy exists "more as a state of balance than as mere succession". This suggests that tragedy is a form that is internally cohesive; its internal logic guarantees the coherency of the structure. Hölderlin then makes the

following statement which is intended apparently to follow on from, and clarify, the previous remark concerning the balanced nature of the law of tragedy. He writes,

For indeed, the tragic *transport* is actually empty and the least restrained.

Thereby in the rhythmic sequence of the representations wherein *transport* presents itself, there becomes necessary what in poetic metre is called caesura, the pure word, the counter-rhythmic rupture; namely in order to meet the onrushing change of representations at its highest point in such a manner that very soon there does not appear the change of representation but representation itself.

Der tragische *Transport* ist nemlich eigentlich leer, und der ungebundenste.

Dadurch wird in der rhythmischen Aufeinanderfolge der Vorstellungen, worinn der *Transport* sich darstellt, das, was man im Sylbenmaaße Cäsar heißt, das reine Wort, die gegenrhythmische Unterbrechung nothwendig, um nemlich dem reißenden Wechsel der Vorstellungen, auf seinem Summum, so zu begegnen, daß alsdann nicht mehr der Wechsel der Vorstellung, sondern die Vorstellung selber erscheint.[13]

In these few complex sentences Hölderlin outlines why the law of tragedy is identified as balanced. In the tragic form it is necessary for the on-going movement of representation to be broken in order for the structure of the drama to be controlled. This moment of rupture is described in terms of the device of the caesura, which in poetic metre is an interruption in the rhythm of a line of verse, - most importantly in the classical hexameter - creating a break and disturbance. However it is clear from the manner in which Hölderlin describes the function of the caesura within the tragic form that in this context the term acquires new weight and meaning. This is because the caesura

is equated with the "pure word", i.e. it is the moment at which there does not appear "the change of representation, but representation itself." How does Hölderlin intend this moment of "representation itself" to be understood? One possible explanation could be to link the moment of the caesura with the tragic *Transport* that is mentioned previously. Hölderlin is apparently employing the term *Transport* in its 18th century French meaning associating it with rapture and ecstatic enthusiasm which removes the subject from normal experience into a state of loss of control and absence of boundaries. This sense of the term is still present in the contemporary English use of the term when it is used in the context of someone or something being "carried away"; i.e. "transported" by an experience. Thus in the use of this term, Hölderlin suggests that in the tragic presentation the effect of the succession of representations is so powerful that an experience akin to "*transport*" is created. However in order to impose control upon this effect, the structure of the tragic form contains a device which halts, literally "caesuras", the tragic "*transport*". This device occurs at the "highest point" in the drama, and it is at this point that "representation itself" is given. The moment of the "representation itself" is equated with a moment of cleavage and absence. However what is the nature of this representation if it can be only be described as absence? Does this indicate that within these remarks there is an implicit critique of the possibility of pure presentation?

Before this question can be addressed directly it is necessary to describe Hölderlin's own description of the function of the caesura in more detail. In the paragraphs that follow the introduction of the concept of the caesura, it is clear that Hölderlin's employment of the term is primarily technical. The problem of the nature of the representation that occurs at the moment of the

caesura is not confronted in a direct manner. Instead Hölderlin proceeds to discuss the function of the caesura in terms of the way it creates an internal balance within the structure of the work, through the control of the succession of the rhythm of representation. Although the argument is conducted with reference to the technical structure of the work, it necessarily must refer implicitly to the action occurring within the individual work. This bond between content with structure again highlights the intrinsic relation between these two elements, relates to the discussion of Ricoeur's analysis of Aristotelian mimesis in Chapter One. In the course of this discussion I emphasised the correlation which Ricoeur establishes between mimesis (imitation of action) and *muthos* (the process of emplotment, "the organisation of the events"). Both terms are understood in a dynamic manner and thus an equivalence between them is established. This equivalence can be summarised by Ricoeur's statement that "Imitating or representing is a mimetic activity inasmuch as it produces something, namely the organisation of events by emplotment".^[14] The process of representation cannot be divorced from that which is produced, which, in terms of the Aristotelian theory, is the plot, "the organisation of events". A similar form of equivalence underlies the connection between structure and content within Hölderlin's work. The position of the caesura is dependent upon the rhythm of representation". The rhythm is not independent of the content of the work, rather it is engendered through the relation of the content ("*der lebendige Sinn*") to the structure ("*das Kalkulable gesetz*"). Therefore the caesura occurs in different places within different works; in Antigone the caesura lies nearer the end of the play, whilst in Oedipus it occurs towards the beginning. In Antigone the caesura's function is to "protect" the ending of the work from the beginning. In Oedipus it is the reverse; the first half must be "protected" against the second half. Thus the caesura can be understood as that which

creates and sustains the tension between the two halves of the drama. This point is clarified further by the identification of the speeches of Tiresias with the moment of caesura. Although Hölderlin does not make the link explicit, it can be seen that Tiresias' intervention can be identified with the Greek dramatic device of Peripeteia, the moment of the complete reversal of events. After identifying the speeches of Tiresias with the moment of the caesura, Hölderlin describes the nature of the intervention:

He enters the course of fate as the custodian of the natural power which, in a tragic manner, removes man from his own life-sphere, the centre of his inner life into another world and into the excentric sphere of the dead.

Er tritt ein in den Gang des Schicksaals, als Aufseher über die Naturmacht, die tragisch, den Menschen seiner Lebenssphäre, dem Mittelpuncte seines innern Lebens in eine andere Welt entrückt und in die exzentrische Sphäre der Todten reißt.[15]

The speeches of Tiresias constitute a radical break in the drama, whereby the protagonist is violently removed from one "life-sphere" into another world. It is the point at which their fate is revealed, although as in the case of Oedipus, they can still refuse to recognise or succumb to it. After Tiresias has spoken there can be no return to the prior state of affairs, the rhythm of the action is irretrievably altered.

Having outlined how Hölderlin describes the technical function of the caesura, it is now necessary to return to confront the question of its wider significance and meaning. It is clear that in the context of the Remarks it is intended that the caesura is only to be considered as a technical device, introduced to describe the mechanism which ensures the internal equilibrium of the tragic form. However elements are present within this description which widen its significance and introduce broader questions concerning the nature of

representation itself. To understand the exact nature of this problem it is necessary to return to the description of the constituent elements of the poetic modes given in the Differences essay and in particular to attempt to relate the statement given there that the tragic mode is the "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" with the remarks concerning the caesura. At first sight it appears difficult to establish any connections between the ideas expressed in these two texts, for there appears to be no point of common reference apart from their shared interest in tragedy. In fact it could even be suggested that Hölderlin's apparent refusal to engage with the question of the nature of the "representation" itself indicates that by this late stage in his work he has moved away from any attempt to present theoretical "philosophical" issues in a poetological form.^[16] If this point of view is accepted then the statements concerning the figure of the caesura can be read as referring merely to facets of the technical presentation of the staged drama. However, even if the text is read solely on this level, questions start to arise which challenge the possibility of a "simple" reading being given. This is because even if it is assumed that Hölderlin is "merely" discussing the nature of dramatic representation, it is clear that he is exposing - intentionally or otherwise - a fundamental aporia concerning the nature of the process of representation. This aporia arises out of the fact that the moment in which "representation [*Vorstellung*] itself" appears is equated with the caesura; i.e. the moment of cleavage and rupture. Therefore even from the perspective of the staged dramatic presentation [*Darstellung*], this statement seems to present a challenge to the conventional (ultimately Platonic) notion that a representation is necessarily a representation of something. This problem becomes more acute when it is related to Hölderlin's earlier formulation that the tragic mode "is the metaphor of an intellectual intuition". This is because one might assume,

given the arguments which Hölderlin presents in his earlier writings, that the moment of "representation itself" could be equated with the possibility of intellectual intuition; i.e. it would be the foundational moment wherein the object (here representation) is present to itself. However what is suggested by the description of the moment of the cesura is that the tragic presentation, rather than pointing towards the possibility of the grounding of the transcendental subject through the representation in itself, instead points towards the abyssal nature of the process of representation. Rather than the representation being given as present to itself - i.e. as the moment of pure unmediated self-presentation - all that is given is a moment of unmediated absence which undermines any possibility of certainty.

The validity of this interpretation can be developed further by examination of a short, fragmentary text, The Significance of Tragedies^[17] which is contemporaneous with the Remarks. In order to see how the logic of Hölderlin's argument in this text relates to the problem under discussion it is necessary to quote the text in full. Hölderlin writes,

The significance of tragedies can be understood most easily by way of paradox. Since all potential is divided justly and equally, everything original appears not in original strength, but in fact, in its weakness, so that quite properly the light of life and the appearance attach to the weakness of every whole. Now in the tragic, the sign in itself is insignificant, without effect, yet the original is straightforward. Properly speaking, the original can only appear in its weakness; however to the extent that the sign is itself posited as meaningless = 0, the original, the hidden foundation of any nature, can also present itself. If nature properly presents itself in its weakest manner, then the sign when nature presents itself in its most powerful manner is = 0.

Die Bedeutung der Tragödien ist am leichtesten aus dem Paradoxon zu begreifen. Denn alles Ursprüngliche, weil alles Vermögen gerecht

und gleich getheilt ist, erscheint zwar nicht in ursprünglicher Stärke nicht wirklich sondern eigentlich nur in seiner Schwäche, so daß rechtheigentlich das Lebenslicht und die Erscheinung der Schwäche jedes Ganzen angehört. Im Tragischen nun ist das Zeichen an sich selbst unbedeutend, wirkungslos, aber das Ursprüngliche ist gerade heraus. Eigentlich nemlich kann das Ursprüngliche nur in seiner Schwäche erscheinen, insofern aber das Zeichen an sich selbst als unbedeutend = 0 gesetzt wird, kann auch das Ursprüngliche, der verborgene Grund jeder Natur sich darstellen. Stellt die Natur in ihrer schwächsten Gaabe sich eigentlich dar, so ist das Zeichen wenn sie sich in ihrer stärksten Gaabe darstellt = 0.[18]

The "paradoxical" logic of this text can be linked to that of the earlier Homburg writings which I discussed in the previous chapter. In particular there are resonances of the statement made in the letter to Neuffer of November 12th 1798 which I discussed in Chapter 3, that the "pure can only be presented through the impure". However in this fragment this idea is presented as intrinsic to the process of tragic dramatic representation: in attempting to ascertain the "significance of tragedy" Hölderlin highlights how the tragic drama is the site in which this notion is realised. The argument which is presented in this fragment focusses upon the manner in which the structure of the dramatic presentation allows the Absolute - in this fragment described in terms of "the original" ("*das Ursprüngliche*") - to be manifest. Hölderlin argues that it is in the moment at which the sign is most insignificant that the "hidden foundation of any nature can present itself". This is explained using the strange phrase that it is the point at which the "sign = 0"; i.e. it is the moment of the breakdown of the process of representation, for the sign loses all value, it is characterised by an absence. Thus in this moment of absence, "nature presents itself in its most powerful manner." The parallels between the process described in this text and moment of the caesura are

evident. In both texts it is the moment of the breakdown of the traditional structure of representation - the moment at which the sign = 0 - which is also understood as the site of the manifestation of "representation itself" or "the original". What, therefore, can be inferred from these texts concerning the structure of the process of representation? Furthermore what does this imply about the process of the presentation of the Absolute, and the foundation of the subject through speculative thought?

Two equally problematic conclusions can be drawn, one concerning the nature of dramatic presentation, the other, the wider issue of Hölderlin's overall theoretical project. First, with regard to the issue of the nature of the dramatic presentation, it can be seen that in calling into question the possibility of "representation itself", Hölderlin reopens the problem of the status of the dramatic image. This is because the hierarchy of object of representation and representation is broken down, so that the problem of what lies "behind" the presentation is reintroduced. The traditional Platonic schema whereby a representation is necessarily a representation of something else, is questioned by the fact that "representation itself" is described in terms of absence; in the terminology of the above fragment, the "sign = 0", it is presented in its "weakest manner". This introduces the possibility that there may never be anything other than the event of presentation, because it challenges the assumption that there is "something" behind the other instances of presentation. Therefore this also questions the accuracy of using the terminology of truth and falsity in relation to a representation - under the Platonic schema a representation is only an image and thus is of secondary importance - rather it can only be discussed in terms of presence and absence. Furthermore, these terms cannot be understood as stable referents, for the

status of that which is presented is always indeterminate. This is because on the one hand, something is given in the dramatic presentation - a figure stands before us on the stage - whilst, on the other, no claims can be made as to the status of the figure; its "presence" is ontologically indeterminate. It is at this point that the second, wider conclusion can be introduced. If the Platonic schema of truth and falsity is called into question, then this necessarily also challenges the status of the autonomous subject who is viewing the drama. Once the divisions which separate the subject from the representation are broken down, there are no independent criteria to separate that which is presented from the observer of the presentation. All become participants on the stage of representation. Whilst it may be argued that from a "common sense" point of view this argument is fallacious because we all can distinguish between a representation on stage and the subject, the "I" who observes, this criticism is incorrect insofar as it is based upon the Platonic premise of a rigid differentiation between appearance and reality, and also presupposes the notion of an independent transcendental subject. What Hölderlin's text points towards is the difficulty in sustaining the notion of an independent, self-grounded, subject. This is illustrated most clearly by re-evaluating the statement that the tragic mode "is the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" in the light of the arguments that have arisen in the course of the discussion of the Remarks. If the statement is seen to refer to the tragic mode as a whole - i.e. the overall structure of the tragedy is interpreted as a metaphor of the process whereby intellectual intuition might occur - then it appears that the point at which the subject should be grounded is defined in terms of absence. Even in the work of art, in the positing of an aesthetic Absolute, there can be no possibility of certainty or ground. This is because the aesthetic presentation necessarily calls into question the possibility of pure presentation - the premise upon which the

idea of the possibility of intellectual intuition is based. However this does not necessarily mean that there is a conflict and contradiction between the statement that the tragic mode "is the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" and the arguments which point towards the impossibility of the achievement of this form of intuition in the Remarks. It could be suggested that the tragic mode is precisely "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" insofar as it demonstrates the problems which are inherent to the project of establishing the autonomy of the subject through speculative thought. Hölderlin's understanding of the dramatic presentation points towards the need for a different understanding of the status of the subject and of the relationship to that which eludes the process of representation. Up till now I have referred to the moment of the caesura as a moment of absence. However in the light of this discussion, such terminology is problematic insofar as it still retains elements of the Platonic notion of "something" which is not present. Instead I want to suggest that perhaps in the figure of the caesura we are given the seeds of an alternative to the traditional forms of conceptual thinking, a way of marking that which lies outside of the grasp of conceptual thought without subsuming it back into traditional categories. It is this different form of relationship which, I would suggest, Hölderlin starts to gesture towards in the final two sections of the Remarks, and to which I shall now turn.

5.5. The Meeting of Man and God.

It is in the third section of the Remarks on Oedipus that Hölderlin gives his fullest description of the tragic presentation and the processes which it contains. The comments made in this section start to establish how, and why, the tragic form can be seen to provide a different understanding and access to

that which lies outside and eludes the processes of conceptual thought. In the presentation of the tragic form there is an opening onto a radical otherness; what is given is a world in which the conventional - yet essential - constraints and barriers are removed and the consequences of such unleashing are violently demonstrated. Hence Hölderlin commences the third section with the statement,

The presentation of the tragic rests principally on the fact that this enormity - the manner in which God and man couple, and how the power of nature and what is innermost to man become one in wrath - comprehends itself through the boundless becoming-one purifying itself through boundless separation.

Die Darstellung des Tragischen beruht vorzüglich darauf, daß das Ungeheure, wie der Gott und Mensch sich paart, und gränzenlos die Naturmacht und des Menschen Innerstes im Zorn Eins wird, dadurch sich begreift, daß das gränzenlose Eineswerden durch gränzenloses Scheiden sich reinigt.[19]

The language of this statement immediately establishes the full force underlying the tragic form. The process which is contained within its confines and constraints is described by the German term "*das Ungeheure*" which has connotations of something which is "tremendous" "overwhelmingly powerful" or "mighty", but also "monstrous" and "an enormity". In this context the term does not refer to an object or thing, but rather to a state of affairs, specifically the process wherein the God and man couple.[20] This event is *das Ungeheure* because it is a violation of the boundaries which necessarily must constrain and limit both sides. The sense of this violation can be understood through the translation of *das Ungeheure* as "an enormity" for this latter term originates from the latin "*ēnormis*"; "*ē*" meaning "out of", "*norma*" meaning "rules".[21] Therefore the process wherein God and man couple is precisely an "enormity" for it is the breaking out of, the transgression of the normal rules

which delimit their separate natures. The presentation of the tragic form is *das Ungeheure* because it shows the consequences of the transgression of normal constraints and boundaries; in fact, the presentation becomes the site of the transgression. In the course of the presentation of the tragic form, God and man "couple" ("*sich paart*"); i.e. the boundary separating the infinite and the finite is removed and they are conjoined. The aberrant nature of this coupling is compounded by the fact that the term "*sich paart*" also has sexual connotations, referring to the mating of animals. Thus this coupling is also *das Ungeheure* in the sense of an aberration; two different forms are brought together, creating an event which is a monstrosity, transgressing the natural boundaries.

How is this coupling - the uniting of man and God in wrath - to be understood? It could be assumed that this process is simply an intensified version of the process outlined in the Ground to Empedocles. Using the terminology of that essay one might argue that "man" can be equated with the Organic and with the realm of art, whilst "God" can be associated with nature and the Aorgic. As was argued in relation to the Ground, these two component elements are necessarily in opposition to each other, but it is only through their "interchanging" ("*verwechseln*") - the dialectical process whereby each passes over into the other thereby gaining exposure to the opposing condition - that the "higher unity" of the opposition can be attained. On a first reading of the above passage it could be assumed that Hölderlin is describing an identical type of relationship and process. The two opposing forces - man and God - are brought together in the tragic presentation, they unite and through this act their separation and individual identity is reinforced, albeit on a higher level. Hence Hölderlin's description of the process as the "boundless becoming one

purifying itself through boundless separation". However this formulation does not appear to offer the same degree of reconciliation as is given by the description of the process in the Ground. This is because the transgression involved is much more violent and unnatural. In the Ground each side of the equation of Nature and Art needs to pass over into the other in order to gain completion. In the Remarks on Oedipus, the unity gained through the joining of man and God is described in terms of "wrath" ("*der Zorn*")^[22]; the conjoining of man and God occurs only through immense struggle and at the highest degree of intensity. However, it is through this struggle that *das Ungeheure* "comprehends itself" ("*sich begreift*"). This might suggest that this act of comprehension could be equated with the higher form of understanding gained through the process described in the Ground. The problem with this interpretation concerns the form that the "self-comprehension" takes. What form of reconciliation is achieved in the "boundless becoming one purifying itself through boundless separation", particularly if we recall that this process is defined as *das Ungeheure*, with all the connotations that this term contains? Whilst it is clear that Hölderlin is suggesting that some form of reconciliation occurs through this process, it is problematic to simply assume that this can be interpreted as the achievement of a higher understanding or fulfillment, similar to that which is posited in relation to the process described in the Ground. In the later text the process is described in terms of violent transgression and violation. It is an extreme act which challenges and destroys the limits of reason, thus preventing the reconciliation from being understood in conceptual terms. The process of reconciliation, of self-comprehension, is a purifying act, but no indication is given as to how this purification can be understood. All that is stated is that the process is the "boundless becoming-one purifying itself through boundless separation". This description indicates

the necessary continuity and dynamic nature of the process but does not provide any explanation as to its actual nature. The process of "self-comprehension" is internal to *das Ungeheure*; it is that which motivates and ensures its continuation, but its actual nature cannot be defined. In fact, it is problematic even to attempt to discuss this self-comprehension in conceptual terms, for it is precisely that which calls into question the efficacy and potentiality of conceptual thought.

At this point in the text Hölderlin provides no further account of how this process of purification can occur. Instead he turns to explaining how this process is made manifest in the structure of the tragic dramatic form. The arguments and explanations he puts forward refer specifically to the structure of Oedipus Rex and the interpretation of the "meaning" of the drama which he has given in the previous section. In this section he has argued that Oedipus' destiny arises out of his desire to know the "truth" concerning his own identity, and the fact that he interprets the words of the oracle "too infinitely" and is tempted into "*nefas*".^[23] That is, Oedipus is not satisfied in simply gaining a practical, "civil" ("*bürgerliche*") solution to the problems facing his country. Rather he must find the specific answer, he attempts to offer retribution for the crime that has been committed, thereby taking on the role of the priest. This is why Hölderlin states that Oedipus is tempted into *nefas*, for in engaging in this quest he aspires to the role of the Gods, thus entering into opposition with them. Not only does he want to acquire certainty of knowledge, he also desires to be able to act as the arbitrator of destiny and fate. However, such a role is not allowed to man, and this incessant desire to "know" leads to his destruction. This is because the quest gains a momentum of its own, as Hölderlin writes,

Hence...the wonderful wrathful curiosity, because knowledge - after it has torn through its barriers - as if intoxicated in its magnificent harmonious form, which can remain, for the time being is spurred by itself to know more than it can bear or contain.

Daher...die wunderbare zornige Neugier, weil das Wissen, wenn es seine Schranke durchrissen hat, wie trunken in seiner herrlichen harmonischen Form, die doch bleiben kann, vorerst, sich selbst reizt, mehr zu wissen, als es tragen oder fassen kann.[24]

Oedipus is taken over by the desire for knowledge and certainty as to the identity of the killer of Laius and the bringer of the plague on the city. However this also necessarily must involve him in a quest to "know" himself. This desire can never be sated, for this form of absolute knowledge which he seeks belongs only to the Gods. The desire to know gains a momentum of its own which forces the normal constraints and barriers which protect man to be "torn through". Once these barriers have been transgressed, Oedipus is caught up in a process which he cannot control. In desiring complete knowledge - however unconsciously - Oedipus aspires to being a God. Therefore in Oedipus Rex it is through this desire to know that the process of the "coupling of man and God" occurs. In the structure of the tragedy this is shown by the juxtaposition of dialogue and chorus, and the manner in which the use of language and different poetic forms gradually build up until "Everything is speech against speech, one cancelling [aufhebt] the other." The process whereby the speeches cancel each other, negating the validity of what has just been stated, removes the possibility that any overall stable meaning or interpretation can be achieved. The effect of this process is cumulatory, for although each new speech challenges or contradicts that which has gone before, it cannot be eradicated. Therefore the alternative opinions and interpretation build up, creating a chaotic interplay of possible explanations and opinions, none of which

can be verified independently in order to test their claim to truth or accuracy. Thus the drama has the overall structure of a "*Ketzergericht*", a court of inquisition, wherein man is tried for his transgression of the limits of reason and knowledge.

However in the statements following the description of the structural composition of the tragedy, it appears that Hölderlin intends his analysis not only to apply to Oedipus Rex, but rather to the structure of the tragic form in general. This becomes clear when Hölderlin returns to discussing the way in which the tragic form portrays the relation of man and God. The description that is given suggests that if the drama has the structure of a court of inquisition it is not the actions of one individual which are under scrutiny; rather the whole process which underlies the "meaning" attributed to the actions of that individual is put on trial. For if the underlying "meaning" and value of the tragic form is premised on its being seen as the site in which the limits of reason and understanding are questioned - and it must not be forgotten that the tragic form is also "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" - then the implications which can be drawn for the wider project of finding a way in which to approach that which lies outside of the boundaries of conceptual thought can start to be developed. This is because the questioning of limitation which occurs in the presentation of the tragic form can also be understood as a critique of conceptual thought. Thus the tragic form must also be seen to provide the potential for developing an alternative understanding of the relationship to that which lies outside of the limitations of conceptual knowledge.

To start to understand how Hölderlin may be providing this alternative understanding it is necessary to work through the statements he makes in some

detail. Therefore, in order to follow the line of argument that is employed I will firstly quote the passage in full. Hölderlin writes,

...in the scenes the frightfully solemn forms, the drama like a court of inquisition, as language for a world where under plague and confusion of sense and under universally inflamed prophecy in idle time, with the god and man communicating themselves in the all forgetting form of unfaithfulness so that the course of the world will show no rupture and the memory of the heavenly ones will not expire, because divine unfaithfulness is best to hold onto.

At such moments man forgets himself and the God and turns around like a traitor, admittedly in a holy manner - In the most extreme limit of suffering there exists nothing but the conditions of time and space.

In this [limit], man forgets himself because he exists entirely in the moment, the God because he is nothing but time; and either one is unfaithful, time because it takes a categorical turn in such a moment, and in it [i.e. time] beginning and end cannot be coordinated at all; man because in this moment he has to follow the categorical reversal and thus is entirely unable to resemble the beginning in what follows.

...in den Auftritten die schrecklich feierlichen Formen, das Drama wie eines Kezengerichtes, als Sprache für eine Welt, wo unter Pest und Sinnesverwirrung und allgemein entzündetem Wahrsagergeist, in müßiger Zeit, der Gott und der Mensch, damit der Weltlauf keine Lücke hat und das Gedächtniß der Himmlischen nicht ausgehet, in der allvergessenden Form der Untreue sich mittheilt, denn göttliche Untreue ist am besten zu behalten.

In solchem Momente vergißt der Mensch sich und den Gott, und kehret, freilich heiliger Weise, wie ein Verräther sich um, - In der äußersten Gränze des Leidens bestehet nemlich nichts mehr, als die Bedingungen der Zeit oder des Raums.

In dieser vergißt sich der Mensch, weil er ganz im Moment ist; der Gott, weil er nichts als Zeit ist, und beides ist untreu, die Zeit,

weil sie in solchem Momente sich kategorisch wendet, und Anfang und Ende sich in ihr schlechterdings nicht reimen läßt; der Mensch, weil er in diesem Momente der kategorischen Umkehr folgen muß, hiermit im Folgenden schlechterdings nicht dem Anfänglichen gleichen kann.[25]

In the process described in this passage it is clear that the tragic presentation not only exposes the limits of man's experience, but also shows the limitations of the God. The tragic presentation reveals the nature of the God's relation to man and the mutual dependency of the two. Hence Hölderlin's statement that the tragic form shows the unfaithfulness of both God and man; in the course of the tragic presentation both overstep their limits and transgress the boundaries which separate them. Why, though, is the transgression of limitation described in terms of unfaithfulness? To what or whom are they being unfaithful? The answer to these questions lies in the statement that the act of unfaithfulness prevents the "course of the world" from showing any "rupture" and the "memory of the heavenly ones" not to expire. These remarks indicate that the act of transgression - the act of unfaithfulness - is actually that which sustains and reinforces the boundaries and limits between man and God. It is only through the act of transgression that the boundaries are recognised as such. Man and God are both unfaithful insofar as they overstep their own spheres - i.e. they are unfaithful to their own nature - but in turn this act reiterates their own role and position. How exactly is this unfaithfulness demonstrated? Hölderlin argues that the unfaithfulness arises out the act of "forgetting" which occurs in the course of the drama. Man forgets both himself and God, and "turns around like a traitor". This act of treachery can be equated with the transgression of limitation. Man forgets the boundaries which define the limits of his existence, overstepping the limits of reason and

understanding through his desire to "know". As a result he exposes himself to "the most extreme limit of suffering". How, though, is this limit to be understood? By what rules is it constituted and regulated? The answer to these questions can be found in the language which Hölderlin employs to describe the process which arises at the extreme limit. He states that at the extreme limit of suffering what is given is "nothing but the conditions of time and space". Also at this point both man and God undergo a "a categorical reversal" ("*der kategorischen Umkehr*"). Both these descriptions employ Kantian terminology. This might suggest that the limits of reason and understanding to which Hölderlin refers, are the limitations and constrictions of the Kantian system. How, then, can the process which Hölderlin describes be understood if it is interpreted in relation to the Kantian system? Hölderlin argues that at the most extreme limit of suffering, man "forgets himself because he exists entirely in the moment", God "forgets himself because he is nothing but time". At the extreme limit both God and man forget the limitations which the Kantian system imposes upon them, and transgress its boundaries. Through this act of transgression both man and God are freed from the traditional notions which circumscribe their own identity; hence the moment of forgetting is to be understood as a moment of liberation. However each is also instantly "unfaithful" to this moment. This is because although the limit of extreme suffering is understood as the site of transgression, this transgression is automatically annulled; man and God are brought back under the control of the constraints of the system. At the "most extreme limit" time is unfaithful "because it takes a categorical turn and in it [time] beginning and end can no longer be coordinated". That is, time subjects itself to the categories, to the pure concepts of the understanding.^[26] This means that time becomes subject to the constraints of human understanding, it comes under the control of the "I",

and therefore can only be comprehended through the forms of understanding available to the "subject". Hence under the demands of the Kantian system, all that can be given is a representation of time, not time in itself. Time is unfaithful precisely because it cannot be given in itself, it can only be presented through its representation in relation to the human categories of understanding. However as Hölderlin states earlier in the passage this "all-forgetting moment of unfaithfulness" is also the manner in which God communicates himself to the world. In a certain sense, the God's subjection to the system, to limitation, is necessary for his presence can only be communicated in a mediate manner. God must necessarily be unfaithful to himself - to his true nature - in order for him to be known. In presenting himself as time, God communicates the absence of the Gods - i.e. the Gods understood in terms of the Greek Gods who have an immediate relation with man - from the world. The absence of the Gods, announced in the God's subjection to the categorical reversal, reinforces the radical cleavage and break between the Greek and Modern world views.

Why, then, is man also unfaithful? Hölderlin states that "in this moment [man] has to follow the categorical reversal and thus is entirely unable to resemble the beginning in what follows." That is, man must also be brought back under the constraints of the system, specifically he must become subject to the limits which are imposed by the "categorical reversal" of the God. In following the reversal of the God, man must also become subject to time; i.e. in Kantian terms, man can only be understood in relation to the pure form of intuition, time. This means that man must recognise himself as a necessarily limited being who is subject to finitude. This explains why man is "unfaithful" to himself, because in the Kantian system, the "I" can only be viewed as an empty logical

construction. Man is unfaithful to his own identity, for he cannot know himself as himself, he can only understand himself through his subjection to the form of pure intuition; i.e. he can only know himself as he appears in time.^[27] The possibility that his identity can be self-grounded is denied, because in the Kantian system intellectual intuition could only be possible for a being that is not subject to time; i.e. an eternal, self-grounded being.^[28] If this interpretation is accepted, what conclusions can be drawn concerning the underlying meaning of the tragic form? Hölderlin appears to be suggesting that the tragic form demonstrates the limits of the Kantian system. Although the tragic form reinforces the constraints of the Kantian system because man is shown to be a limited being who is necessarily subject to finitude, it also questions the system's own claims to truth and self-verification. In showing that the God can only be presented in time, Hölderlin implicitly challenges Kant's assumption that God is one of the regulative ideas of pure reason which are independent of the limitations of human understanding.^[29] This points towards an internal contradiction in Kant's system, and suggests that if God must be subject to time, then the whole project itself must also be considered to be subject to this limitation. Conceptual forms of thought are limited because they too are necessarily conceived by human understanding - i.e. they are conceived in time - and thus are subject to the contractions of finitude. The "desire to know" which Hölderlin sees as motivating the tragic form, must be understood as conceptual thought's - i.e. system thought's - will to totality and completion. However, in this analysis, Hölderlin turns this desire to know against itself, and in so doing highlights its limitations and weaknesses. In the tragic form, the transgression of the limit of reason brings forth an awareness of its limit. In the course of the presentation, it is shown that the limits which constrain the actions of man and God arise out of the constraints of a

specific - conceptual - mode of understanding. What is shown by this interpretation of the function of the tragic form is the limits of the Kantian modes of thought. It is precisely this realisation that the limits which are demonstrated through the tragic form are the limits of a specific form of understanding which allows the possibility that the tragic form can also be seen to provide an alternative way of thinking the relationship between man and God. This is because this analysis implicitly challenges the claims that are made for the necessary superiority of conceptual thought. Earlier I stated that it was problematic to attempt to ascertain exactly the nature of the process of *das Ungeheure*, because it evaded the confines of conceptual thinking. However in the light of the analysis I have given here which has highlighted the inherent weakness of conceptual modes of thought, it could be suggested that it is precisely in examining the manner in which *das Ungeheure* functions, that an alternative way of approaching the process presented in the tragic form can be developed. This is because *das Ungeheure* provides the opening onto that which lies outside the constraints of conceptual thought for it is that which always evades its constrictions.

However, before the possibility of an alternative reading is developed in any detail I want to relate the theoretical arguments given above to the way in which the tragic form is realised as a dramatic presentation. In particular it is necessary to link these arguments to the discussion in the previous section concerning the technical structure of the tragic form. It could be assumed that the moment of "categorical reversal" could be equated with the moment of the caesura, for Hölderlin's descriptions of both processes appear to share common characteristics and qualities.^[30] Both occur at the moment of highest intensity, and they have a focal role in the construction of the overall argument. However

it is problematic to make this connection explicit because although it is possible to develop an extended analysis of the function of the caesura, Hölderlin makes clear that he is employing the term primarily in its technical sense and is using it to refer to a specific moment in the structure of the tragedy. Hence his statement that the caesura arises through the speeches of Tiresias. The process which I have just outlined is more general and refers to the hero's progression through the course of the tragedy. Therefore, whilst the caesura defines a specific moment in the unfolding of the tragedy, the whole process cannot be reduced to this one moment. Hölderlin makes this clear by the comments with which he ends the Remarks on Oedipus. After giving the description of the tragic process, including the moment of the categorical reversal, Hölderlin states "Thus Haemon stands in Antigone. Thus Oedipus himself in the middle of the tragedy of Oedipus Rex." The description which is given in the final section of the Remarks on Oedipus must be read as a summary of the whole process which the tragic hero undergoes. The fate of both characters indicates the consequences of challenging the authority of the limits which separate man and God and demonstrates the effects of the categorical reversal most vividly. Once Oedipus is aware of the full effect of his transgression he blinds himself and is subsequently exiled from his country, whilst Haemon commits suicide having failed to save Antigone. This illustrates Hölderlin's statement that after the categorical reversal man is "entirely unable to resemble the beginning in what follows". After the main protagonist realises the full horror of the transgression that has occurred, the way in which he constructs and understands the narrative of his life irredeemably alters. The interpretation that has informed his actions prior to the moment of reversal is no longer correct, and cannot be reconciled with the insight which he is given.

Thus the links which connect the beginning and end of the narrative of his life are cut irreconcilably.

In linking the analysis of the technical structure of the drama with the remarks concerning the "meaning" of the process I have focussed upon the details of the internal construction of the tragedy. It is necessary now to return to the wider question of how the tragic form also presents the possibility of developing an alternative understanding of the relation between man and God. At the beginning of this section I stated that in the presentation of the tragic form there is an opening onto radical otherness. In the light of the reading I have given of the Kantian overtones of Hölderlin's analysis of the tragic form, this description may seem singularly inappropriate. However I want to argue that an alternative relationship can be seen to be given, albeit in a more circuitous manner. Hölderlin's analysis concentrates upon the internal dynamics of the tragic form, showing how its tensions and contradictions constitute the coming together of the two opposing sides, man and God, the finite and the infinite. This analysis demonstrates the impossibility of the finite gaining knowledge of the infinite through its own limited resources; i.e. the tragic form can be understood as providing an illustration of the hubris of conceptual thought - hence the alternative interpretation of the statement that the tragic form "is the metaphor of an intellectual intuition" which I gave at the end of the previous section, namely that the tragic form is precisely the "metaphor of an intellectual intuition" insofar as the problems which are exposed in the course of the drama highlight the limits and failings inherent to this concept. However I want to suggest that when tragic drama is viewed as a whole - when, perhaps, it is viewed from the perspective of the aesthetic rather than the conceptual - then it becomes possible to see how the dramatic

presentation offers an alternative relation to that which evades conceptual thought. As I stated earlier, Hölderlin's description of the tragic process as *das Ungeheure* gestures towards the fact that the tragic presentation can never be reduced to, or controlled by, the constraints of conceptual thinking. However, in viewing the process in terms of an aesthetic process, i.e. in seeing it as a dramatic presentation in which the relationship between man and God is shown and explored, not reduced to a conceptual analysis - then the possibility of an alternative understanding starts to present itself. This can be developed by re-examining Hölderlin's statement that the tragic drama allows "the memory of the heavenly ones" to be held onto. The tragic form does not give an unmediated access to the infinite, it does not present the God directly, or achieve the actual apotheosis of the hero. Instead in the enactment of the drama a "memory" of the Gods is provided. This "memory" necessarily enforces the separation of man and God, but yet at the same time it guarantees that the Gods are remembered; i.e. the tragic form gestures towards a gap, an absence within the experience of the observer of the drama which cannot be fulfilled through their own limited strivings. The otherness exposed by the drama gestures towards that which is necessarily absent from the world of the present; it shows the impossibility of unmediated access to the Absolute, the Gods no longer walk this earth; rather as Hölderlin writes in Brod und Wein, "Though the gods are living/ Over our heads they live, up in a different world." ("Zwar leben die Götter/ Aber über dem Haupt droben in anderer Welt").^[31] Yet at the same time this very absence creates a space in which the Gods can - and, perhaps, must - be remembered. The form in which this remembrance can best take place is through the aesthetic presentation. The necessity of the centrality of the aesthetic presentation to Hölderlin's thought is again reinforced. The aesthetic presentation becomes the site in which the

alternative relation to the infinite is played out. This is most clearly evident in the later poetry, which refers constantly to the absence of the Gods, yet paradoxically it is this very absence which allows the poet to speak, thus creating an alternative intimated relation with the Gods.[32] However the task of translating Sophocles can also be seen to be part of this process, for as I argued earlier, the underlying motive of the translations is to allow the Greek text to gain a relevance for Hölderlin's modernity. Sophocles' text can also be considered as a site in which an alternative - and perhaps, specifically, Modern - relation to the Gods can start to be established. Hölderlin suggests the form which this alternative relation should take, relating it specifically to his experience of his own modernity in the final section of the Remarks on Antigone. It is to this even more elusive part of these late texts that I will now turn.

5.6. "...Wandering Below the Unthinkable..."

At the beginning of the third section of the Remarks on Antigone, Hölderlin provides a summary of the processes which underlie the presentation of the tragic form. He states:

As has been hinted at in the Remarks on "Oedipus", the tragic presentation has as its premise that the immediate god is wholly one with man (for the god of an apostle is more mediate, is highest understanding in highest spirit), that the infinite enthusiasm grasps itself infinitely, that means in oppositions, in consciousness, which consciousness cancels out, dividing itself in a holy way, and the god, in the figure of death is present.

Die tragische Darstellung beruht, wie in den Anmerkungen zum Oedipus angedeutet ist, darauf, daß der unmittelbare Gott, ganz Eines mit dem Menschen (denn der Gott eines Apostels ist

mittelbarer, ist höchster Verstand in höchstem Geiste), daß die unendliche Begeisterung unendlich, das heißt in Gegensätzen, im Bewußtseyn, welches das Bewußtseyn aufhebt, heilig sich scheidend, sich faßt, und der Gott, in der Gestalt des Todes, gegenwärtig ist.[33]

In these comments, Hölderlin expands his definition of the process of the tragic presentation, building on the description he has given in the Remarks on Oedipus. The oppositional relationship described in this passage can be linked to the process where the man and God "couple" ("*sich paart*"); the event which is described as *das Ungeheure*. As Hölderlin states, this event provides the basis of the interpretation of the tragic presentation; all consequent actions can be referred back to this moment. The other elements of the tragic presentation described in this passage can also be linked to the discussion of the Remarks on Oedipus. The process whereby "the infinite enthusiasm grasps itself infinitely, that means in oppositions" can be read as an alternative formulation of Hölderlin's statement that *das Ungeheure* comprehends itself through the "boundless becoming-one purifying itself through boundless separation". In both descriptions the process is self-perpetuating, moving onwards in a dialectical progression. In this progression, God and man come together, becoming wholly one, ("*ganz Eines*"). However, as was stated in the previous section, this coming together must be understood as a violation which cannot be tolerated, hence each cancels out the other. This act of cancelling out, paradoxically also reinstates the individuality of the component elements, for it forces them apart. However, as is suggested by the comment that "the God is present in the figure of death", this act of return cannot be understood as a restoration of their previous identities for once each side has become involved in the process - once man and God have met - their own natures are irreconcilably altered. Thus the

statement that "the God is present in the figure in death" can be interpreted as referring to the previous discussion of the effects of the "categorical reversal"; i.e. the God (time) is equated with death, because he can only make himself felt in and through time. God's communication of himself to man is a communication of the necessary finitude of man's existence. God's self-communication demonstrates the limited nature of man's existence, reinforcing the necessary division between God and man.

After giving his explanation of the process which underlies the tragic form, Hölderlin then complicates his analysis by reintroducing the problem of how the details of the tragic presentation must be altered in order for it to be relevant to the modes of thought and representation of his own time. He draws a distinction between the manner in which the scenes are presented in the Greek presentation and in the modern "re"-interpretation by focusing upon the way in which the "word" seizes the main protagonist, revealing their fate. The "word" can be equated with the pronouncements of Tiresias, wherein the nature of the transgression is revealed to society causing the mechanism of retribution to be brought into action.^[34] Hölderlin argues that in the Greek mode of presentation the "word" is "more mediately factual" [*mittelbarer factisch*] because it takes hold of the more sensuous body [*den sinnlicheren Körper*], whilst in the mode of presentation of the modern time, the word is more immediate because it takes hold of the "more spiritual body" ("*den geistigeren Körper*"). In the Greek presentation, the word must be viewed as "deadly-factual", because "the body which it seizes actually kills". ("*Das griechischtragische Wort ist tödtlichfactisch, weil der Leib, den es ergreift, wirklich tödtet.*") In the Greek presentation, the "word" is mediate, because its decree can only be effected through the action of an agent, it does not attack the transgressor directly.

Rather it can only be carried out by another, hence the statement that "the body which it seizes actually kills". This process is illustrated by the actions of Creon in Antigone. Once Creon believes that Antigone has violated the laws of the city, he moves against her in order to bring about retribution for the transgression she has committed. However as the course of the tragedy unfolds, it is clear that the effects of the pronouncement of the "deadly-factual" word are not limited to the actions of Creon. Antigone also considers Creon guilty of transgression because by forbidding the burial of her brother he is violating the laws of the dead. Hence the ambiguity which arises in ascertaining who is guilty of violating the laws. This clash between two types of law - the religious and the civil - is conducted primarily on a linguistic level, each side accusing the other of misinterpreting the "word" of the law. The tragic conclusion of the drama - of the main protagonists, only Creon survives having witnessed the deaths of his wife and son, as well as Antigone - bears witness to Hölderlin's description of the "deadly-factual" nature of the Greek presentation. However, the argument that Hölderlin then proceeds to develop, indicates that this interpretation of the Antigone must be viewed as a specifically Greek understanding of the story, which must necessarily be modified in order to give it relevance to Hölderlin's modernity. Hölderlin writes,

For us, because we stay under the more authentic Zeus, who not only inheres between this earth and the wild world of the dead, but also forces the progress of nature, which is eternally hostile to man, on its way to another world, more decisively onto earth, and because of this the essential and ""vaterländisch"" representations must be completely other, and our art must be ""vaterländisch"", so that their forms are selected according to our world view and their representations "vaterländisch"

Für uns, da wir unter dem eigentlicheren Zeus stehen, der nicht nur zwischen dieser Erde und der wilden Welt der Todten innehält,

sondern den ewig menschenfeindlichen Naturgang, auf seinem Wege in die andre Welt, entschiedener zur Erde zwinget, und da diß die wesentlichen und vaterländischen Vorstellungen groß ändert, und unsere Dichtkunst, vaterländisch seyn muß, so daß ihre Stoffe nach unserer Weltansicht gewählt sind, und ihre Vorstellungen vaterländisch...[35]

From this passage it is clear that the difference between the Greek and Modern world views arises out of the fact that the Moderns "stay under the more authentic Zeus"; i.e. the difference between the two cultures is based upon their relationship with the Gods. What, therefore, does Hölderlin mean by the term "the more authentic Zeus"? The most obvious interpretation would be to suggest that Hölderlin is referring to the changes which must be introduced in order to make the drama correspond to the modern, necessarily Christian world-view. Zeus must be replaced by the Christian trinitarian conception of the Godhead. However this interpretation - to which many commentators adhere^[36] - fits problematically with Hölderlin's description of the function of the "more authentic Zeus". Whilst it could be argued that the statement that the more authentic Zeus "inheres between this earth and the wild world of the dead" is a reference to the role of Christ as mediator between man and God, it is difficult to interpret the next statement that he "forces the progress of nature, which is eternally hostile to man...more decisively onto earth" in a specifically Christian context. Whilst it would be foolish to attempt to deny entirely that Hölderlin is referring to the changes which the acknowledgment of the Christian world-view must bring to the interpretation, I want to suggest that in these statements Hölderlin is not concerned primarily with theological issues. Rather what is at stake are questions concerning man's experience of his relationship with his own time. Hölderlin's world-view is necessarily influenced by his Christian beliefs, but this does not mean that the interpretation he offers can

be automatically assumed to be an unproblematic affirmation of Christian doctrine. Instead, Hölderlin's interpretation must be seen as an attempt to come to terms with the uneasy relationship that exists between orthodox Christian beliefs and the prevalent ideas and mood which influence Hölderlin's experience of his own modernity. These two modes of thought are not necessarily compatible and, as is evidenced by much of his later poetry, one of Hölderlin's most persistent concerns is the attempt to find a way in which his experience of his own time can be reconciled with his faith.^[37] This uneasy relationship between Hölderlin's Christian beliefs and his interest in current modes of thought can also be discerned in the Remarks. As I argued in relation to the Remarks on Oedipus, Hölderlin's analysis suggests that in modernity, God can only be shown through unfaithfulness, through his exposure to time, whereby God then becomes defined through his absence. The focus of this analysis is concerned much more with humanity's relationship to the Gods rather than an attempt to reinstate the orthodox Christian viewpoint. Hence the statement that "we" exist under the "more authentic Zeus" can be interpreted as referring to the way in which the dominant mode of thought - i.e. Kantian thought - is able to present man's relation to the Gods. What this analysis shows is that in the forms of thought which are appropriate to Hölderlin's modernity - in fact, in a certain sense they can be seen to contribute to the creation of this modernity - man's relation to the God is always subject to the strictures and limitations of time. This relation is necessarily historically situated and determined.

This interpretation is reinforced by statements that are made in the second section of the Remarks on Antigone, where Hölderlin outlines the changes which have to be made in the translation from Greek to German. He argues that in

order to bring the translation "closer to our mode of representation" one should change "Zeus" to "father of time or father of earth". This is because it is "his [i.e. Zeus'] character to reverse the striving from this world to the other into a striving from another into this world." In describing Zeus as "father of time", Hölderlin is emphasising the way in which the God can only be shown in time.^[38] The account which is given reiterates the necessity for the forms of representation to be appropriate for the era in which they arise. This can be linked to Hölderlin's statement that because "we" live under the "more authentic Zeus...the essential and *vaterländisch* representations must be completely other", so that the "forms are selected according to our world view and their representations *vaterländisch*".^[39] It is Hölderlin's understanding and experience of his own time which provides the justification for the change of terminology. It is clear that this argument is very similar to that put forward in the earlier discussion of the first letter to Böhlendorff. The main imperative of this letter - the demand that "we" can have nothing similar to the Greeks except "a living relationship and skill" - is reiterated through the demand that the "essential" and "'*vaterländisch*' representations must be completely other" to those of the Greeks. Hölderlin's world view is necessarily different to that of the Greeks. Therefore to translate Sophocles effectively - i.e. to make the text representative of Hölderlin's own time - he must alter the forms of representation in such a way as to make them "*vaterländisch*". When stated in this manner it appears that Hölderlin's task is not too problematic, for he must simply be able to reflect the concerns of his time. However here the admonition that occurs in the first letter to Böhlendorff must not be forgotten, for as Hölderlin warns "the free use of one's own is the most difficult". The demand that "our poetry must be *vaterlandisch*" is perhaps more problematic than it first appears, for hidden within this statement is the assumption that the

artist is able to discern clearly what is truly representative of their time. Furthermore, with respect to the process of translation, this also presupposes that the art form can be made to have a relevance for the time in which the translation is conceived. These issues are brought into the foreground when Hölderlin turns to characterising the changes which must be made to the Greek text so as to make it more "*vaterländisch*". He states,

... since our poetry must be *vaterländisch* so that its themes are selected according to our world-view and their representations *vaterländisch*, for us, then, the Greek representations change insofar as it is their main tendency to grasp themselves, which was their weakness; on the other hand, it is the main tendency in the mode of representation of our time to "hit the mark", to have a destiny, since the absence of destiny, the *dysmoron* is our weakness...thus the Greek modes of representation and poetic forms are also more subordinated to the *vaterländisch* ones.

und unsere Dichtkunst vaterländisch seyn muß, so daß ihre Stoffe nach unserer Weltansicht gewählt sind, und ihre Vorstellungen vaterländisch, verändern sich die griechischen Vorstellungen insofern, als ihre Haupttendenz ist, sich fassen zu können, weil darin ihre Schwäche lag, da hingegen die Haupttendenz in den Vorstellungsarten unserer Zeit ist, etwas treffen zu können, Geschick zu haben, da das Schicksallose, das *δυσμορον*, unsere Schwäche ist...Und so auch sind die griechischen Vorstellungsarten und poetischen Formen mehr den vaterländischen subordinirt.[40]

These enigmatic comments contain the root of the problem which Hölderlin confronts in his attempt to translate Sophocles in a way which will allow the texts to have a relevance for his own time. Again, the problem which these comments expose can be linked directly to the issues raised in the first letter to Böhlendorff, concerning the relationship between that which is foreign and that which is "natural" to the artist. As was stated earlier, Hölderlin argues

that it is only through appropriating that which is foreign to a culture that the artist is able to approach that which is most natural for them, because the "free use of one's own is most difficult". In these comments, Hölderlin reformulates these ideas in terms of the "main tendency" of each culture. In order for the culture to become representative of itself and its time, it must be able to identify that which is lacking, it must understand where its weakness lies. Hence Hölderlin identifies the main tendency of the Greeks in terms of their attempts to "grasp themselves", because they are aware that their weakness is their inability to comprehend their own nature. This analysis can be substantiated by the comments which Hölderlin makes in the letter to Böhlendorff. Here it is stated that the Greeks excel in that which is foreign to them, "their talent for presentation", but they cannot easily gain access to that which is natural for them, namely the "fire from heaven". However what Hölderlin seems to be suggesting in these later remarks on tragedy, is that in the tragedy the Greeks can be seen to be attempting to understand their own nature. The main tendency which is demonstrated in Greek tragedy is the Greeks' attempt to grasp that which is natural to themselves. However, an ambiguity is present in Hölderlin's comments which makes it difficult to decide whether this attempt to "grasp themselves" is to be considered a positive or negative trait. It could be argued that level of insight which is shown in tragedy indicates that it should be considered to be the art form which is truly representative of the Greek culture. Yet it must not be forgotten that Greek tragedy flourishes at a time of crisis for the Greek state, suggesting that the insights which it showed may also have been too much to bear. The "main tendency" of the Greeks - their desire to "grasp themselves" - may well be understood as a fatal weakness, which contributes to their demise.

After outlining the characteristics of the Greek art forms, Hölderlin then moves on to consider those of his own time. He states that the weakness of his own time is the "absence of destiny" ("*das Schicksallose*").^[41] Hence the main tendency of the contemporary artforms is "*etwas treffen zu können, Geschick zu haben*". It is extremely difficult to decide how these two phrases are to be interpreted for both are highly ambiguous and possess differing connotations. "*Etwas treffen zu können*" is a colloquial term which can be translated roughly using the English phrase "to hit the mark", or to "designate something", whilst "*Geschick zu haben*" could mean either "to have a skill" or "have a destiny, fate". The term "*Geschick*" also arises in the first letter to Böhlendorff, and in this context it was interpreted as meaning "skill". However in this situation I think that it is more appropriate to read it as referring to possessing a fate or destiny. Thus it can be suggested that Hölderlin's argument is that because the weakness of his time is the "absence of destiny/fate", ("*das Schicksallose*") the main tendency of the artwork must be to create and reflect this absence. However, paradoxically it is through the articulation of this absence that an understanding of the Modern is reached, because in a certain sense it can be understood as giving meaning to the present. This act of giving meaning re-invests the present with a sense of its own fate, albeit that the concept of fate becomes rigorously redefined in order to allow it to reflect the contemporary worldview. Therefore Hölderlin's description of the main tendency of his time as "*etwas treffen zu können*" can be interpreted as referring to the way in which the work of art must attempt to articulate the exact nature of the present. It is for this reason that Hölderlin then states that in the process of translation, the Greek forms of representation must become "subordinate" to the "*vaterländisch*". In order for

the work of art to represent and have meaning for its own time, it must reflect the artist's experience of his or her present.

However this analysis still begs the question as to why Hölderlin considers the translation of Sophocles to be of such importance. Why, in an age which is characterised as "*das Schicksallose*", does Hölderlin turn to translating Greek tragedy? On the surface it would appear that tragedy, in its Greek form - insofar as it presupposes a rigid societal structure in which concepts such as destiny and fate have meaning and power - is a singularly inappropriate art form to use to attempt to approach the questions of the nature of the modern era. The answer to this problem can be found through closer examination of the effects of making the Greek forms of representation "subordinate" to the *Vaterländisch*. Throughout this discussion I have emphasised Hölderlin's demand that the translation is an attempt to allow the Greek text to address the demands and concerns of the present. Furthermore Hölderlin also makes clear that it is often necessary to gain a distance from that which one assumes to be representative of one's own time. Hence the cautionary remarks that are made in the letter to Böhlendorff concerning the naive appropriation of the Greek forms, because apart from the "living relationship and skill" we should have "nothing else in common with them". However this does not mean that the Greeks should be abandoned entirely, for as Hölderlin goes on to state "what is one's own ("*das Eigene*") must be learned as well as that which is foreign. This is why the Greeks are so indispensable for us". When these comments are considered in relation to the statements made in the Remarks it is possible to begin to understand why the translation of the Greeks is still valuable. In translating the Greek, Hölderlin is provided with the opportunity of "learning" what is "one's own" ("*das Eigene*"). The Greek text is altered in order to allow it to

represent contemporary concerns, but also in this juxtaposition of the Greek and modern world views, a distance is gained from the "familiar" understanding of the present. The process whereby the Greek art forms are made "subordinate" to the "*vaterländisch*" ones is not to be understood as a complete eradication of the Greek. Rather in the translation of the tragedy, the Greek and *vaterländisch* forms of representation are brought into relation with each other, in order that the "familiarity" of the present forms of understanding and representation can be disturbed. The translation is used to highlight the concerns of the present, but at the same time it also challenges and questions these concerns.^[42] This can be seen most clearly in the analysis which I have given of the way in which the process of the tragic presentation is reinterpreted in a Kantian framework. The tragic presentation becomes the site in which the limits of the claims of the Kantian forms of thought are tested out. Hölderlin's translation of both Oedipus and Antigone alters the focus of the drama by introducing the concerns of modernity. This is demonstrated best by Hölderlin's interpretation of Oedipus which becomes an exploration of the limits of human conceptual knowledge. Hence the demand that the Greek forms must become subordinate to the "*vaterländisch*" is not to be read as a naive attempt to appropriate the Greek text for nationalistic ends. Hölderlin is not attempting to write the "*Ur*"-German tragedy.^[43] Instead, the demand for "*vaterländisch*" representations must be viewed as a critical gesture, wherein the ideas and concerns of the age are explored in greater depth by transposing them into a "foreign" form and seeing how they fare. This interpretation is confirmed by the statements with which Hölderlin concludes the Remarks on Antigone. He states:

For us such a form [*die vaterländische*] is suitable precisely because the infinite, like the spirit of the states and of the world, cannot

be grasped other than from an askew perspective. The *vaterländisch* forms of our poets, where there are such, are still to be preferred, for such do not exist merely in order to understand the spirit of the time but in order to hold onto and feel it once it has been comprehended and learnt.

Für uns ist eine solche Form gerade tauglich, weil das Unendliche, wie der Geist der Staaten und der Welt, ohnehin nicht anders, als aus linkischem Gesichtspunct kann gefaßt werden. Die vaterländischen Formen unserer Dichter, wo solche sind, sind aber dennoch vorzuziehen, weil solche nicht blos da sind, um den Geist der Zeit verstehen zu lernen, sondern ihn festzuhalten und zu fühlen, wenn er einmal begriffen und gelernt ist.[44]

These remarks indicate that Hölderlin's belief in the value of the aesthetic presentation remains undiminished. The function of the *vaterländisch* forms of art is to provide an alternative way to approach the theoretical issues of the time. The comment that this form is important because the infinite can only be grasped from "an askew perspective" can be seen to be continuing the ideas that were first introduced in the letter to Schiller of 4th September 1795, where Hölderlin argues that it is only in the aesthetic presentation that a relation to the absolute can be given.[45] Although, as I have shown, Hölderlin's understanding of the nature of the relation to the absolute alters in the eight years between these two texts, the belief remains that it is only through the aesthetic presentation that man is able to gain a full understanding of this relation. This is shown by Hölderlin's comment that the *vaterländisch* forms allow the spirit of the age to be held onto and felt once it has been "comprehended and learnt". This distinction - which on first reading appears difficult - highlights the crucial function played by the aesthetic forms. In the aesthetic presentation the ideas which define and distinguish the particular "spirit of the time" are animated and in a certain sense given life. The

theoretical ideas of the age offer only a conceptual understanding of the time which lacks vitality and completeness. The function of the artist who attempts to present the *vaterländisch* forms, is to allow the concerns of the prevalent conceptual ideas to emerge in their work in order for the "spirit of the time" to be reflected and thereby better understood. However, as has been indicated by the earlier discussion, this process is not to be understood as a blind appropriation and affirmation of the current conceptual modes of thought. Rather the *vaterländisch* forms of art become the site through which the possibility of critique is offered. This is because the form does not merely enable the ideas to be reflected in a conceptual manner, but rather "holds onto and feels" them; i.e. the *vaterländisch* forms reflects the true "spirit of the time" because they are able demonstrate the full effects of the prevalent modes of thought. The *vaterländisch* form animates, gives life to the conceptual modes of understanding, allowing the underlying presuppositions to be presented and questioned.

This point can be illustrated most clearly by returning to the question of the effect of Hölderlin's translations on the tragic presentation and the way in which the translations are constructed in order to allow the presentation to have relevance for Hölderlin's time. What conclusions can be drawn from Hölderlin's analysis concerning the nature of the "modern" tragic form? Furthermore, what does this analysis indicate about the nature of Hölderlin's experience of his own modernity? In order to address these questions it is necessary to return to the earlier discussion of Hölderlin's statement that the weakness of his time is its "absence of fate/destiny"; i.e. his age is "*das Schicksallose*". In this discussion I argued that the *vaterländisch* art form in one sense reflects this weakness, yet at the same time, this recognition of the

"absence of destiny" as such brings forth an alternative understanding of the "fate" of the modern. Hölderlin illustrates how this "alternative" understanding can be developed in relation to the tragedy by returning to the discussion of the way in which the death of the hero occurs and the meaning which is attributed to this death. Having given his description of the weaknesses of the Greek and modern ages, Hölderlin writes,

And hence *the deadly factual*, the actual murder with words has to be considered more a specifically Greek artform, subordinate to a more *Vaterländisch* one. As can well be demonstrated, a *Vaterländisch* one may be more deathly-factual than deadly factual: it ends not in murder and death, for the tragic must be comprehended herein, but more in the manner of Oedipus at Colonus, so that the word from the inspired mouth is frightful, and kills, not Greek, in the athletic and plastic spirit where the word seizes the body so that it is the latter which kills.

Und so ist wohl das tödtlichfactische, der wirkliche Mord aus Worten, mehr als eigentümlich griechische und einer vaterländischen Kunstform subordinirte Kunstform zu betrachten. Eine vaterländisch mag, wie wohl beweislich ist, mehr tödtendfactisches, als tödtlichfactisches Wort seyn. nicht eigentlich mit Mord oder Tod endigen, weil doch hieran das Tragische muß gefaßt werden, sondern mehr im Geschmake des Oedipus auf Kolonus, so daß das Wort aus begeisterem Munde schrecklich ist, und tödtet, nicht griechisch faßlich, in athletischem und plastischem Geiste, wo das Wort den Körper ergreift, daß dieser tödtet.[46]

In this statement Hölderlin suggests that the interpretation of the tragic presentation is altered greatly by the changes that are made to make it a *vaterländisch* art form. The Greek presentation culminates in actual murder and death. However, in the *vaterländisch* form, the focus of the drama is altered so that what is of interest is not the processes of retribution, but rather the subsequent consequences which this process brings into operation. One could

perhaps go so far as to argue that Hölderlin's description of the *vaterländisch* art form alters the focus and definition of the tragic presentation so much that it can no longer be understood as tragedy. In creating a work which has relevance for an age which is marked by an "absence of destiny" the tragedy must apparently lose those elements which mark it out as tragedy. At the very least it can no longer be understood using the criteria which are used to define the Greek form of tragedy. Changing the focus of the interpretation of the drama from the actual death of the protagonists to their "spiritual" death alters the way in which the terrible events which occur when man challenges the role of God is understood. As I argued in relation to the analysis of Oedipus, what is demonstrated in Hölderlin's modern re-interpretation of the tragedy is the absence of the relation to the Gods. The transgression, the *nefas*, which the tragedy is founded upon, is understood not so much as a crime against the Gods, against the prevalent order, but rather is viewed as a violation by man of his own limitation. The modern re-interpretation of the tragedy shows the limits of man's finite historical consciousness, it demonstrates the impossibility of escaping from the constrictions of conceptual thinking. The actual horror of the confrontation with the power of the Gods which is indicative of the Greek tragedy - the "real death" - is transformed into the horror of the realisation of their absence. Hence Hölderlin's statement that in the modern presentation the "word" is immediate because it seizes the "spiritual body". The realisation of the absence of the Gods is both literal and figural. It is literal insofar as it again highlights the irrevocable break between the Greek and modern worlds; it emphasises that man's understanding is necessarily historically situated, and thus limited. The belief in the possibility of an immediate relation to the Gods of the kind which (apparently) occurs in the Greek world is removed; again, "the Gods live over our heads!"^[47] The

absence is figural in the sense that the term "Gods" itself is brought into question for it must necessarily be reinterpreted and understood in a "modern" sense. That is, the statement that the "Gods" are absent from the modern world must be seen to refer to the lack of immediacy, the impossibility of the achievement of an unmediated relation to the Absolute. The certainty of the status of the I which is asserted in the Idealist understanding of the concept of intellectual intuition is necessarily challenged. Hence the negative interpretation which I have given of Hölderlin's statement that the tragic is "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition."

In his analysis of the tragic presentation Hölderlin demonstrates the limitations of the modes of thought of his time. The analysis of the function of tragedy within the modern presents us with an image of man's existence as a "wandering below the unthinkable"^[48]; i.e. we are marooned within a world which is constructed and given meaning through conceptual modes of thought, which outlaw the possibility of thinking of an "other" relation to the "unthinkable". However this does not mean that the possibility of this "other" relationship is totally excluded. As I stated at the end of the previous section, the tragic form not only demonstrates the limits of the conceptual modes of thought, but also when it is considered as an aesthetic phenomenon, offers an alternative presentation of the relation to that which lies outside of conceptual thought. Throughout this study I have emphasised the way in which the mimetic presentation always necessarily exceeds the conceptual constraints which are imposed upon it. In its actual presentation the art form always challenges the statement that it is merely a work of art. Instead it must be seen as the site in which other worlds, other interpretations and possibilities are given. In relation to the arguments put forward here, it can be suggested that through

the re-interpretation of the tragedy, Hölderlin is able offer a new and deeper understanding of his own time. This presentation reflects the concerns of his age thus necessarily redefining how the term "tragedy" is to be understood. This new understanding is encapsulated by the statements from the first letter to Böhlendorff which I quoted earlier, where Hölderlin writes,

For this is the tragic for us: that, packed up in any container, we depart very quietly from the realm of the living, and not that, consumed in flames, we atone for the flames we are not able to control.

And indeed! The former moves the innermost soul just as well as the latter. It is not such an imposing destiny, but it is a profounder one...

Denn das ist das Tragische bei uns, daß wir ganz stille in irgend einem Behälter eingepakt vom Reiche der Lebendigen hinweggehn, nicht daß wir in Flammen verzehrt die Flamme büßen, die wir nicht zu bändigen vermochten.

Und wahrlich! das erste bewegt so gut die innerste Seele wie das letzte. Es ist kein so imposantes, aber ein tieferes Schicksaal.^[49]

These comments point towards the need to acknowledge that the form of tragic presentation which is representative of the Modern must necessarily be different to that of the Greek. What is important is for the art form to reflect the concerns of the time in which it arose. Hence Hölderlin's approval of Böhlendorff's drama. In an age which is characterised as "*das Schicksallose*", there cannot be any grand exits. Empedocles may jump into the fire of Etna but no one will pay any attention to the deed or herald the golden sandals left on the rim as signs of his apotheosis. Instead "our" fate is to slip away quietly without ceremony. This is the destiny of the Modern. However even in simply attempting to articulate this destiny, Hölderlin goes some way to giving it meaning and value. In a certain sense the acknowledgement of the

"senselessness" of this experience provides it with a value; for as Hölderlin states this modern destiny may be the more profound. The question that still remains though is how this profundity is to be understood, and who is capable of communicating it. Hölderlin's answer is that this is the role of the poet and dramatist - the proponents and practitioners of the *Vaterländisch* forms of art - whose task is to "feel and hold onto the spirit of the age once it has been comprehended and learned". However, as is shown by the example of Hölderlin himself, who is prepared to listen to the words of the poet? As he writes, "...and what to do or say in the meantime I don't know, and who wants poets at all in lean years?"[50]

Conclusion.

Hölderlin; Our Contemporary?

To conclude this study it is necessary to return from the "foreign" of Hölderlin's text to the present and to show briefly how the arguments which I developed in previous chapters are related to the contemporary concerns and problems which I outlined in the Introduction. In the course of this study I have focussed upon two main issues. The first concerns the way in which Hölderlin confronts the problematic relationship between Ancient Greece and 18th century Germany. Secondly I have highlighted the problems which arise out of Hölderlin's attempts to understand the function of tragedy in his age. Furthermore, as I have shown through the arguments which have been developed, these two concerns are not mutually exclusive. That is, the problems which arise in the course of Hölderlin's investigations into the relationship between Greece and Germany necessarily affect the way in which the question concerning the nature of modern tragedy is understood. Thus, as I argued in Chapter 2, Hölderlin reassesses the relationship between the modes of thought of his own time and Ancient Greece by demonstrating that this relationship can never be one of simple imitative replication. The problems of Hölderlin's modern world cannot be solved by recourse to the classical example. The reason for this is twofold. First, as Phillipe Lacoue-Labarthe points out in his article "Hölderlin and the Greeks", the ancient world cannot function as an origin or ground. The Greeks cannot act as "the model" for the Germans because Greek culture is necessarily divided. The Greek culture with which the Germans are presented cannot be understood as the "true" culture of Greece - i.e. the natural of the Greek - because the only way in which the Greeks are able to develop a cultural identity is to move into the foreign, that is, to appropriate what is

not theirs. What is presented as "Greek" is not the natural identity of Greece, but rather the identity which they appropriated. Hence, as Lacoue-Labarthe argues, Greece cannot be imitated because Greece "in itself" did not exist.^[1] The notion of Greece as a unified realm against which all subsequent cultures are to be measured is a myth. The second consequence of this breakdown of the Greek "model" is irreconcilably to distance Hölderlin's time from the Greeks. Once Greece has been removed as the model, it becomes clear that Germany must seek to determine its own identity. Whilst Germany can still learn from the example of the Greeks, its identity cannot be based on theirs. Rather, as Hölderlin argues in the first letter to Böhlendorff, all that they can have in common is "a living relationship and skill".

At the same time as Hölderlin is developing his understanding of the relationship between Greece and Germany, he is also concerned with establishing an alternative "aesthetic" philosophy. This project is motivated by the desire to find a form of thought that will be capable of addressing and reflecting the needs of his time. Hölderlin feels that purely "theoretical" modes of thought will never be fully effective for they cannot express or address the nature of the Absolute completely. As he writes in his letter to Schiller of 4th September 1795, theoretical thought can only establish an "asymptotic relation" with the Absolute. It is only in the aesthetic presentation that the relation to the Absolute can be given. Hence, as I showed in chapters 3 and 4, between 1798 and 1800 Hölderlin develops his so-called "poetological" writings in which he addresses the philosophical concerns of his time from an aesthetic perspective. In these analyses the tragic form becomes central to Hölderlin's thought, for it is defined as "the metaphor of an intellectual intuition." Hölderlin argues that the relation to the Absolute can be best presented in and

through the "tragic-dramatic" form. However, as I showed in my analysis of the text On the Difference of the Poetic Modes, Hölderlin's project proves problematic because his analysis of the tragic form starts to undermine the theoretical premises upon which the project is built. These problems are exacerbated further by Hölderlin's Empedocles project. As I argued in Chapter 4, through his attempt to write a tragedy premised upon his theoretical beliefs, Hölderlin is forced to confront the question of how these beliefs can be put in practice in such a way as to be effective. Hence he has to confront the problem of whether it is possible to develop a tragedy which is relevant to his own time. As I showed throughout the analysis which I gave in chapters 3 and 4, the problem to which Hölderlin returns constantly concerns the conflict between his theoretical understanding of the relation between humanity and the Absolute, and the way that this has to be understood from a historical perspective. It is this problem which, I would suggest, causes Hölderlin to abandon the Empedocles project and to turn to the translation of Sophocles. He realises that his poetological project is still too theoretical, for it is unable to address the concerns of his own time directly. Hence his decision to turn to the translations can be understood as an attempt to address the problems which he perceives in his own time from a different perspective. Furthermore, as I argued in the introduction to Chapter 5, in these translations Hölderlin brings the problem of the relationship between Greece and Germany into confrontation with the issues which arise out of the poetological writings and the Empedocles project, and in particular the question concerning the nature and function of modern tragedy.

Hence the Sophocles translations and the accompanying Remarks can be understood as Hölderlin's response to the problem of finding a way in which the work of art can be given relevance to his time. In these texts Hölderlin

addresses the question of the function of the tragic form. In so doing he attempts to demonstrate how the Greek world can be made relevant to the Modern, whilst simultaneously using his translation of the Greek text as a way of offering a critique of the contemporary modes of thought. Hence the Remarks on Oedipus and the Remarks on Antigone can be read both as an analysis of the Greek texts which allows the Greek world to speak to the modern, and also as a way of creating a text which reflects and addresses the contemporary situation. As I showed in the analysis which I developed in Chapter 5, the Remarks can be interpreted as Hölderlin's attempt to expose the aporias and dilemmas of his contemporary modes of thought. His analysis illustrates the limits of theoretical thought, and at the same time demonstrates the problem of trying to think "outside" of these limits. His text is able to gesture towards the "other" of conceptual thought - towards that which cannot be presented, cannot be thought - but is itself also constrained by the limits which it exposes. Hence through his translation of Sophocles, Hölderlin is able to reinterpret the function of tragedy so as to allow the form to speak of, and to, his own time. However, the question remains as to the status of Hölderlin's "reinterpretation" of Sophocles, for it could be argued that the aporias and limitations which are revealed through the translations indicate the impossibility of a modern tragedy. That is, the limits which Hölderlin's analysis exposes, shows that his "modern" age is irreconcilably alienated from the situation in which tragedy can have meaning. Hölderlin's interpretation of Sophocles exposes the tragedy of Hölderlin's own situation, whilst simultaneously rendering the tragic form itself redundant. In introducing the imperative that the work of art must be "*väterlandisch*", Hölderlin reveals the impoverishment of his time, for it illustrates the constrictions and limitations which are imposed upon the artist or thinker. Furthermore, this imperative also

exposes the fragility of thought, for it challenges the assumptions upon which the systems of thought are built.

Having summarised the arguments which I have developed in the previous chapters it is now possible to turn to address the question of their relevance to our own time. In the Introduction to this study, I mentioned that the reason why I chose to focus on Hölderlin - rather than a more mainstream thinker - was Lacoue-Labarthe's comment that Hölderlin was a "modern" thinker; i.e. the problems which he confronts can be seen to be relevant to our situation. What, therefore, can be found within the analysis which I have given, which can be used to substantiate - and perhaps develop - this claim?

In order to answer this question it is first necessary to define what is implied by the use of the term "modern". In response to Lacoue-Labarthe's description of Hölderlin as "modern" it could be argued that the use of this term is in itself an indication that "we" are distanced from Hölderlin. This is because our contemporary modes of thought have "surpassed", "overcome" the constrictions of the modern, and that the multiplicity of discourses in which we engage can be interpreted as signs that "we" are "post-modern" thinkers. However, I think that this form of "periodization" is in itself indicative of "modern" forms of thought. Therefore, in attempting to establish what we might understand by the description "modern", I shall employ the analysis and definition which J.F. Lyotard gives in his paper "Rewriting Modernity". Here Lyotard argues against the description of our contemporary time as "post-modern" by commenting,

...we have to say that the postmodern is always implied in the modern because of the fact that modernity, modern temporality, comprises in itself an impulsion to exceed itself into a state other than itself... Modernity is constitutionally and ceaselessly pregnant with its postmodernity.[2]

In attempting to offer a definition of the "modern" Lyotard chooses to oppose it to the "classical age". He argues,

Rather than the postmodern, what would be properly opposed to modernity here would be the classical age. The classical age involves a state of time (let's call it a status of temporality) in which advent and passing, future and past, are treated as though, taken together, they embraced the totality of life in one and the same unity of meaning. For example, this would be the way that myth organizes and distributes time, creating a rhythm of the beginning and the end of the story it recounts, to the point of making them rhyme.[3]

This distinction between the modern and the classical is, I think, pertinent and useful in relation to this discussion, because it helps to establish why Hölderlin can be described as a modern. It can be argued that it is precisely the unified "classical age" against which Hölderlin reacts. In his analysis of the relationship between Greece and Germany, Hölderlin is implicitly criticising those who hark back to the possibility of retrieving this form of unity. Furthermore, as I argued earlier, Hölderlin's analysis exposes the "mythical" nature of such beliefs. Greek culture is, and always was, divided. Hence Hölderlin is situated in the position from which the "unity" of the classical age can only be understood as a utopian dream. In Hölderlin's account of his experience of his own time, the ends of the story cannot, and will not, "rhyme". This perhaps also helps to explain why the tragic form is rendered redundant and why Hölderlin cannot complete Empedocles. If it is accepted that even Hölderlin's account of the structure of tragedy presupposes a concept of unity and balance then it can be suggested that Hölderlin's modernity does not possess this unity. Despite the fact that the tragic form is constructed around conflict and disorder, it presupposes the existence of a coherent belief structure

for the conflict is itself generated from the tensions which occur when these belief structures clash. However, in the modern time such belief structures are absent, or are reduced to codified moral beliefs which lack credibility, and therefore the unity which sustains the tragic conflict is absent. This point can be substantiated by referring to the earlier discussion in the introduction to Chapter 4 when I mentioned Hölderlin's reference to Empedocles in Hyperion. I commented that, in reference to Hölderlin's inability to complete The Death of Empedocles, it is telling that the "modern" Hyperion chooses not to follow the example of Empedocles and throw himself into the mouth of Etna. Hyperion remains poised on the lip of the volcano, not because he is frightened of the act of suicide, or because he does not desire apotheosis, but rather because the difference in times means that such an act cannot be given value or meaning. Hyperion declares,

...one must think more highly of oneself than I do before, thus unbidden, one can flee to Nature's heart, or whatever else you may be pleased to call it, for believe me! as I am now I have no names for things and all before me is uncertainty.

...aber man muß sich höher achten, denn ich mich achte, um so ungerufen der Natur ans Herz zu fliegen, oder wie du es sonst noch heißen magst, denn wirklich! wie ich jetzt bin, hab ich keinen Nahmen für die Dinge und es ist mir alles ungewiß.[4]

The imitation of Empedocles' act has no place in Hyperion's or, it may be inferred, in Hölderlin's age. For, as Hyperion remarks, in his time he has "no names for things". All before him is "uncertainty". Without names, without the external certainties, tragedy cannot occur, for it is necessarily constructed around established names and beliefs. In the "modern" age it is impossible to think so highly of oneself that one declares oneself a God. This is not because such a declaration is viewed as foolhardy, but rather that such terms have no

meaning; Hyperion has "no names" in which, or for which, he could dedicate his act. Hence the conditions for the tragic act are absent. Hyperion's life story may contain elements which we consider "tragic", but it can never aspire to the status of tragedy. In fact in Hyperion's statement, it is possible to hear resonances of the remark of Christa Wolf which I discussed in the Introduction to this study: "Aren't we beyond all proclamations and prophecies and so beyond tragedy."

However, even if, in the light of this discussion, it is accepted that Hölderlin can be described as a "modern", what relevance can his texts have for us? Why are Hölderlin's theoretical texts of value? Before these questions are addressed from a positive perspective, it is necessary to establish what role Hölderlin's texts cannot perform. This is because one of the most important conclusions towards which Hölderlin's thought gestures, is the need always to be aware of the problematic relationship between one's own time and the historical past which informs and constructs the present. To suggest, as the title given to this conclusion does, that Hölderlin is "our contemporary" does not mean that the problems which he confronts and the solutions which he develops can be transposed into the contemporary situation unchanged. Whilst parallels can be discovered between Hölderlin's position and our own, this does not mean that our situations are identical. As Hölderlin writes in the letter to Böhlendorff with respect to Germany's relation with the Greeks, whilst their situations may appear alike, in the solutions which are developed "we must not have anything the same as them." Similarly in "our" relation with Hölderlin we must not assume that because we have identified Hölderlin as "modern", our experiences of our own times are the same. Hölderlin's analysis of the necessary difference between cultures and eras highlights what Lacoue-Labarthe describes as the

"chiasmic" structure of history; that is to say the fact that the relationship between times is inherently asymmetrical. For a culture to survive and progress it must define its own identity in relation to what has gone before, but this must be understood as an active creative process, rather than a blind imitation of already existing ideas. Hence, to define this process using the terminology of another of the main themes of this study, Hölderlin indicates that the mimetic relationship between a culture and its predecessors should be understood in terms of process - as the active production and generation of culture - rather than the static re-production of already existing modes of thought and expression.

Therefore, when comparisons between Hölderlin's texts and our time are being developed this necessary distance must always be remembered. However, I think that the close examination of Hölderlin's work which I have given can provide an account which is useful for helping us to understand some of the problems of our present. In conclusion, I shall indicate briefly where further fruitful comparisons may be developed and explored. First, as I mentioned in the Introduction to this study, the fact that Hölderlin's theoretical writings have been marginalised by the mainstream of philosophical thought is itself interesting for it suggests that Hölderlin's work does not quite fit into "accepted" modes of thinking. One reason I would suggest, why Hölderlin does not "fit", is that in taking the aesthetic project to its logical conclusion - i.e. by attempting to develop an "aesthetic" philosophy in and through the analysis and development of actual works of art - he comes up against impasses and problems similar to those which confront the thinkers of the late 20th Century. This point can be exemplified by referring to my discussion of language in the third section of Chapter 4. Here I argued that Hölderlin can be differentiated

from his contemporaries in that he takes seriously the question of the means by which and through which philosophical ideas are transmitted. He realises - however indistinctly - that language is not simply the vessel in which pure ideas and thoughts are transmitted, but rather that these ideas can only be constructed in and through the medium of language. Hence he can be seen to prefigure some of the recent discussions of the necessary "textuality" of thought. Secondly, in relation to my discussion of the Remarks in Chapter 5, it is clear that in these texts Hölderlin is confronting the problem of how it is possible to address that which lies "outside" the boundaries of conceptual thought - in a certain sense these texts can be read as an exploration of how it is possible to think "the unthinkable". Hence, in relation to the recent discussions of the possibility of thinking at the limits of a tradition which I mentioned in the Introduction to this study, it is possible to suggest that Hölderlin's text may provide some guidance. Hölderlin's comment that it is the task of the poet to "grasp and feel" the spirit of an age, once it has been "comprehended and learnt", is of importance because it offers an alternative way of approaching the apparent sterility and impotence of purely "theoretical" modes of thought. In this remark Hölderlin provides reasons and justifications for the need of philosophy to take aesthetic forms of thought seriously. The poet has a freedom which is denied to the philosopher, and is able to gain insights into their own situation; the poet is able to intimate that which philosophical - i.e. theoretical - modes of thought cannot articulate. Hölderlin's writings help to explain and justify why the poets should be welcomed back into the city of philosophers. Third, and finally, in relation to the question of how "we" should confront tragedy, I think Hölderlin's discussion of the problems of creating a "modern tragedy" can be used to help us understand our experience of the apparent "lack of tragedy". The analysis which Hölderlin

provides of the changes which must be made to Sophocles text in order to allow it to address the concerns of his time exemplify why "our" experience of tragedy can be considered analogous to the description which he provides in the first letter to Böhlendorff of the "authentic" modern tragedy. As Hölderlin shows in the Remarks, the modern world is defined in and through its experience of "the unthinkable"; an "unthinkable" that can truly not be thought, because as Hölderlin comments through the character of Hyperion, we "have no names" in which to try to construct our understanding of this "unthinkable". Although as I have made clear throughout this study, our relationship to Hölderlin cannot be understood in any way to be identical, insofar as he and we can be described as modern - that is, what we have in common is the experience of the fracturing and disruption of our respective times - I think that Hölderlin's insights into the "less impressive" but "profounder" nature of the modern experience of the tragic are of value. This is because Hölderlin teaches us to find ways of re-evaluating this experience, not so as to attempt to revive tragedy, to create "modern tragedy", but rather in order to find different ways of understanding our own present. The absence of tragedy is understood therefore not as a negative assessment, but rather as the recognition and acknowledgement which is necessary in order to allow alternative approaches and responses to our experience of the "modern" to be developed.

For Hölderlin, this alternative approach was to turn back to the creation of his poetry; to find a voice in which he could speak of the intimated relation with the absent Gods. For ourselves, another approach must be found. Hölderlin can gesture towards the possible routes which may be taken, but it is up to us to decide which way to go. We must determine our own route for our own "wandering below the unthinkable."

Endnotes.

Abbreviations.

The following abbreviations are used throughout the notes;

- i/ FA. = Hölderlin, F. Sämtliche Werke. (Frankfurter Ausgabe) ed. Sattler, D.E. (Frankfurt: Stroemfeld/Roter Stern, 1978-1992 cont.)
- ii/ StA. = Hölderlin, F. Sämtliche Werke. (Grosse Stuttgarter Ausgabe.) ed. Beißner, F. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1943-1985.)
- iii/ Hyperion. = Hölderlin, F. Hyperion and Selected Poems. Ed. Santner, E. (New York: Continuum, 1990)
- iv/ Pfau. = Hölderlin, F. Essays and Letters on Theory. Trans. & Ed. Pfau, T. (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988.)
- v/ Poems. = Hölderlin, F. Poems and Fragments. Trans. Hamburger, M. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.)
- vi/ Myth. = Vernant, J.P. and Vidal-Naquet, P. Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece. Trans. Lloyd, J. (New York: Zone Books, 1990.)

Introduction.

- 1.i/ Nietzsche, F. Human all too Human. p. 264 Translation substantially modified. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Abt. 4 Bd.3. p. 106.
- ii/ Wolf, C. Cassandra. Trans. Van Heurk, J. (London: Virago Press, 1991,) p.164. Voraussetzungen einer Erzählung: Kassandra. p. 27.
- iii/ Hölderlin, F. Poems. pp.602-3.
2. As Hans Robert Jauß shows in his article "Literarische Tradition und gegenwärtiges Bewußtsein der Modernität" in Literaturgeschichte als Provokation, pp 11-67, this desire to establish a rigid separation between past and present can be traced back as far as the 5th century AD, when the early Christian church attempts to differentiate itself from the Roman world-view. The opposition between "ancient" and "modern" is then reassessed and re-established at each point of historical crisis and change. Each "modern" society redefines the "ancient" against which it is set. Furthermore, the balance of the relationship between these terms alters, depending on whether the "ancient" is

viewed as a lost "golden age" to which the "modern" aspires to return, or a primitive era which the achievements of the "modern" have managed to overcome. It is this distinction which forms the basis of the most well-known debate between ancient and modern; i.e. the debate engendered by Charles Perrault in 1687, French Classicism's *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*. It is against this background that the German reassessment of the "modern" takes place. As Jauß argues in his Sections six to eight (pp.35-50) of "*Literarische Tradition...*", after the 1780's with the rise of Classicism and Romanticism, the meanings attributed to the terms ancient and modern become complicated and confused because the different movements interpret the terms in conflicting ways. It is not until the mid-nineteenth century and the work of Baudelaire that a new - and distinctly "modern" - definition of the "modern" is given. Jauß argues that this new understanding of the modern marks the final development of the history of the word. It can be summarised by the remark which Baudelaire makes in *Le Peintre de la Vie Moderne*. "*La modernité, c'est le transitoire, le fugitif, le contingent, la moitié de l'art, dont l'autre moitié est l'éternel et l'immuable.*" (The modern, it is the transitory, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the unchanging.) (Jauß, p.55)

3. Throughout the period from 1865 to 1875 Nietzsche is obsessed with the Greeks. This period includes the early philological writings on the Greek philosophers, the publication of the *Birth of Tragedy*, the notes which constitute the projected "companion-piece" to this work often referred to as *The Philosophers Book*, and the publication of the *Untimely Mediations*. Throughout the *Nachlass* Nietzsche makes repeated attempts to come to terms with the Greeks. In relation to the main theme of this study it is of note that many of the problems with which Nietzsche grapples are almost identical to those which appear in Hölderlin's work. Both writers are obsessed by the figure of Empedocles, both attempt to write a dramatic tragedy based upon the events of his death. Furthermore, both thinkers are attempting to develop an "aesthetic philosophy" which will be able to overcome the limitations and 'onesidedness' of theoretical modes of thought. In this early work Nietzsche shares a great affinity with much of German Romantic thought, (see for example Max Baeumer's paper "Nietzsche and the tradition of the Dionysian" in O'Flaherty, *Studies...* 1976.) and close investigation of the links would be very productive. In fact,

this study was conceived initially as a comparative investigation of Hölderlin's and Nietzsche's work on tragedy. However, the demands of time, space and clarity - the three regulative ideas of thesis writing - necessarily curtailed this project. I can therefore only gesture here towards the links that exist between the two thinkers, although in the future I hope to return to examine them in more depth.

4. Nietzsche, Human all too Human. For details see note one.

5. The response which this sense of loss and absence evokes is varied. In The Writing of the Disaster, Maurice Blanchot argues - or more appropriately, demonstrates - that the only form of writing that can reflect and respond to the present crisis is a discourse which is fragmentary and makes no claim to closure or mastery. The disaster to which the title of this work refers is the unnameable, the undecidable; i.e. the impossibility of ever ascribing meaning and certainty to the present. Even the work of those thinkers who apparently revel in the breakdown of traditional structures and meaning - and here I am referring to writers such as Baudrillard and those who follow his form of analysis e.g. Kroker et al. - displays a latent sense of loss and desperation. The manic celebration of the "post-modern" modes of culture covers over an underlying nihilism which, rather than simply rejoicing in its freedom, also highlights the vacuity of the present.

6. I am using the term "Grand Narrative" and "metanarrative" in the sense in which they are employed by J.F. Lyotard in his works such as The Postmodern Condition and Le Differend. In the former text Lyotard writes, "I will use the term *modern* to designate any science that legitimates itself with reference to a metadiscourse of this kind making an explicit appeal to some grand narrative, such as the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth...if a metanarrative implying a philosophy of history is used to legitimate knowledge, questions are raised concerning the validity of the institutions governing the social bond: these must be legitimated as well. Thus justice is consigned to the grand narrative in the same way as truth. Simplifying to the extreme, I define *postmodern* as incredulity toward metanarratives." (pp.XXIII-XXIV.)

7. This chapter title only appears in the English translation, not in the original French. However, it aptly describes the attitude which Lacoue-Labarthe considers to be appropriate in relation to the present.

8. The tradition of thought to which Lacoue-Labarthe refers can be described broadly as the interpretation of the history of philosophy which is developed in and through Heidegger's thought. Lacoue-Labarthe understands the history of philosophy as the development of a certain determination of Being. As he argues, the "exhaustion" of philosophy becomes "apparent at the very point when philosophy began to question itself, in the tension that constituted it as such, the meta-physical tension. Or, in other words, from the moment when, after the thesis on being, in which philosophizing has its essence, had irreversibly become thesis on being as thesis, all the theses which succeeded it - whatever the style or the aims of the most recent great philosophies (accomplishment, restoration, overturning, liquidation, or transcendence of philosophy) - have been engulfed in a will to thesis" p.4.

9. Lacoue-Labarthe, Heidegger, Art and Politics, p. 3 and 4.

10. This discussion of "doing wrong" arises in the course of a chapter in which Lacoue-Labarthe attempts to understand how Heidegger's involvement in Nazism and subsequent silence on the Holocaust can be addressed. He wants to be able to find a form of language that will express his unease and disapproval of Heidegger's action, but because of the breakdown of traditional ethical systems of thought he is unable to find a discourse which can legitimately express his feelings.

11. Lacoue-Labarthe states, "We are, of course, forced to live and act according to the norms and prescriptions of ethics, i.e. norms and prescriptions derived from the old ethical systems, but no one can any longer be in any doubt...that we are in this regard entirely without resources. It is no doubt still possible to answer the question "How are we to judge"? It is certainly no longer possible to answer the questions, "From what position can we judge?" "In the name of what or whom"? For what we are lacking now and for the foreseeable future, are names, and most immediately 'sacred names', which in their various ways governed, and alone governed, the space (public or other) in which ethical life unfolded." p. 31.

12. Wolf writes, "If I may formulate a poetological problem so soon, let it be this: There is and there can be no poetics which prevents the living experience of countless perceiving subjects from being killed and buried in art objects. So, does this mean that art objects ("works") are products of the alienation of our culture, whose other finished products are produced for self-annihilation?...My overall concern is the sinister effects of alienation, in aesthetics, in art, as well as elsewhere." (Cassandra. p.142)

13. Wolf, C. Cassandra. see note 1.

14. That is, the society out of which Greek tragedy arose was itself fractured and troubled by dissent. Thus, although the tragedy addresses the concerns of the society as a whole, it could be possible to suggest that unified community which is presupposed by the structure of the performance is itself a myth. For further discussion of this point see Chapter One.

15. The obsession with Greece is shown in all forms of artistic presentation. Schiller and Goethe, working within the Classicist tradition, produce many plays and poems based on Greek myths (eg. Goethe's Iphigenia) or honouring Greek society and traditions (eg. Schiller's poems "*Die Götter Griechenlands*" and "*Das Ideal und das Leben*" etc).

16. In the Romantic tradition, between 1794 and 1800 Friedrich Schlegel is preoccupied with his project of producing his History of the Poetry of the Greeks and Romans. This project was never fully realised, only the first part was published in a completed form in 1798. However other shorter articles and fragments that were published as part of the Athenaeum project (eg. the Dialogue on Poetry.) all show an overwhelming preoccupation with understanding the culture and thought of Greece. In Idealist philosophy Schelling offers the first systematised interpretation of Greek tragedy in the Tenth Letter of the Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism. (for further discussion of this text, see note 21 Chapter Three.) This is then developed in the System of Transcendental Idealism (1800), where the analysis of the work of art is placed at the centre of the system, and a more sustained analysis is then provided in the Lectures on the Philosophy of Art. (1802-3). Hegel first uses the model of tragedy in 1802, in his text "On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law." In this text, Hegel sees the relationship and struggle between the particular and the Universal as being acted out through the structure of the tragedy. To illustrate

how this struggle occurs and is reconciled he uses the example of Aeschylus's Orestia. As Peter Szondi explains in his essay "The Notion of the Tragic" in On Textual Understanding, "by interpreting the tragic process as the self division and self-reconciliation of the moral nature, Hegel makes its dialectical structure apparent for the first time... In Hegel the Tragic and the dialectic coincide." (p.50) As Szondi then goes on to suggest "the Phenomenology places the Tragic (though without calling it by that term) in the centre of the Hegelian philosophy, interpreting it as the dialectic governing a morality, that is to say, as the spirit in its stage of true spirit." (p.54.) (For further discussion of this "theoretical" interpretation of the function and role of tragedy see Szondi's book Versuch über das Tragische.) It is Hegel and Schelling who introduce the "theoretical" interpretation of tragedy which has become dominant within subsequent theories of tragedy. However, as I argue in the main text, this interpretation subsumes the tragic form into the wider system of thought, using it to exemplify a theoretical process, thus neutralising its effects as a dramatic form. This fact alone separates Hölderlin from Schelling and Hegel, for his theory incorporates the dramatic elements of the tragedy, as well as its internal structure.

17. Lacoue-Labarthe, P. "Caesura of the Speculative" in Typographv. p.208.

18. Ibid. p.209-10.

19. Lacoue-Labarthe's analysis often collapses together various disparate parts of Hölderlin's text without stating where they originate. This is particularly true of his statements concerning Hölderlin's interpretations of Sophocles. Later in the essay "Caesura", he claims that for Hölderlin Antigone is the most Greek of tragedies, whilst Oedipus is the most modern. However, whilst on the surface this interpretation may appear correct, when Hölderlin's own texts are examined it is very difficult to make this interpretation fit. Hölderlin himself never expressly makes this claim, rather it appears that Lacoue-Labarthe develops this reading from vague references and chance remarks that are scattered throughout the texts. However, it would be equally possible to offer a different interpretation which challenges the validity of these terms. In fact later in the essay, Lacoue-Labarthe himself seems to want to question whether the use of the terms "ancient" and "modern" are appropriate. (See the arguments that are developed from p. 222 onwards in Typographies.) However, even if Lacoue-Labarthe is using these terms as a heuristic device in order to

further his own argument, such an approach simply confuses, rather than clarifies the discussion of what are already highly elliptical and ambiguous texts. It is for this reason that I have decided not to confront Lacoue-Labarthe's arguments head on, rather preferring to develop my own interpretation. However, where my interpretation either coincides or disagrees radically with Lacoue-Labarthe's I indicate this in the notes.

20. Ironically enough, critics who interpret Hölderlin's work from a literary perspective often use the greatness of the poetry as an opportunity to denigrate a philosophical approach to his work. However in these instances they are not deriding the paucity of Hölderlin's philosophy, but rather wish to claim that in the light of the poetry, the philosophical approach per se is redundant. Hopefully in this study I will achieve a balance between these two points of view.

Chapter 1.

1. Plato. The Republic. Trans. A. Bloom (New York: Basic Books inc, 1968) 398a p.76. All subsequent references to The Republic are taken from this edition unless otherwise stated .

2. The possibility that this procedure can be interpreted in two mutually exclusive ways, is substantiated by the fact that the rituals described here and the adornments which are placed upon the poet can be related to both the celebrant and the sacrifice. Elsewhere, Plato refers to fillets of wool as the dress appropriate for the celebrant, or for the adornment of a victor, and the libations of myrhh are those which were used for celebratory rituals. However, the sacrificial victim was treated in a very similar manner, being anointed with libatory liquids and dressed in special clothing and adornments. The treatment of the poets can be understood to combine the rites of Ostracisation and of the Scapegoat (the *Pharmakon*) which were instituted in 6th century Athens; the city chooses a person as a sacrificial victim whom they honour for a year and then banish from the city as a form of purging of any possible crime. (For further discussion of this ritual, see Vernant Myth p.132-5. and also Burkert, Greek Religion. pp.82-4.)

3. I am aware that by focussing solely on The Republic, it could be argued that I have ignored the discussions of mimesis that occur in other places in

Plato's texts, most importantly in the Cratylus and the Theatetus. I concentrate upon the Republic because this is the only text in which the problem of dramatic mimesis is confronted directly. In other texts Plato's discussion is much broader for it considers imitation understood in a much wider sense. For example, in Cratylus Plato discusses the "imitative" relation between words and that which they name. Thus, primarily because of limitations of space, I focus my discussion on the text which has most relevance to the specific theme of this study, tragedy. For further discussion of the function of mimesis in other texts of Plato, see Gerald Else's discussion in Plato and Aristotle on Poetry and Andrew Benjamin's paper "Interpreting Reflections" in his book Art, Mimesis and the Avant-Garde. pp.7-43.

4. The festival itself took place in Athens over the space of one week, at a set time of year (early spring, mid-March), with one preliminary day of processions and feasting, when the statue of Dionysus was paraded from its temple, out into the countryside and then returned into the city and set in the place of honour within the open-air theatre. The probable order of events at the festival was "contest of ten boys' dithyramps (one from each tribe) and contest of ten men's dithyramps (one from each tribe) on the first day; contest of five comedies on the second day; contest of the three tragic ensembles (each with three tragedies and a satyr play) on the next three days." (Winkler, Nothing to Do with Dionysos p. 5. note 3.) However other events took place also, marking the festival as a truly civic occasion. (See note 7)

5. This kind of interpretation is exemplified by Stanford in his book Greek Tragedy and the Emotions where he writes, "the performances at the City Dionysia were part of a religious celebration in the sacred precinct of Dionysos with his high priest enthroned in the front row... The performances were preceded by sacrifices and libations." (p.11.) There is no mention of the civic aspect of the festival, nor of the apparent disjunction between the fact that, although it is dedicated to Dionysus, there is an apparent lack of Dionysian excessive entertainment. (See note 6.)

6. For further discussion of this point see the Introduction to Nothing To Do With Dionysos? Ed. by Winkler and Zeitlin, and also Vernant's article "The God of Tragic Fiction" in Myth.

7. Among the events that occurred which reinforce the civil nature of this festival were the distribution of honours to citizens; the judging of the contest by one general from each of the 10 to 12 main tribes, who performed libations to the god before taking on the role of judge; the display of tributes from the cities of the Athenian Empire, and also the display of the gains of war; and finally the parade of the orphans of the city whose fathers had been killed in battle and had been brought up at the expense of the state. For further discussion of these points and their relation to the ideology of the state, see the articles by Longo, Goldhill and Winkler in Nothing to do with Dionysus.

8. Goldhill, S. "The Great Dionysia and Civil Ideology" in Nothing to do with Dionysus, p.114.

9. *Ibid.*

10. This is shown most clearly by an examination of the plot of Aeschylus' trilogy the Oresteia. In this set of three plays the quarrels of the family and their subsequent downfall is irretrievably linked to the fate of the state. Similarly in Euripides' Bacchae the tragic confrontation arises out of the challenge which the women pose to the order of the state when they leave their regular duties and move into the hills. The plot develops in such a way that the downfall of Thebes becomes mirrored in the destruction of Pentheus' family.

11. There are only records of two plays which do not fit into this schema, and which record contemporary events. The first is mentioned by Herodotus, in VI, 21, where he refers to the reception given to a play by the poet Phrynicus entitled The Fall of Miletus first performed in 494 BC, which uses as its theme the injuries that the Persians had inflicted upon the town of Miletus only two years previously. He writes; "the whole theatre broke into weeping; and they fined Phrynicus a thousand drachmae for bringing to mind national calamities, their own which touched them so nearly, and forbade forever the acting of that play."

The other play is Aeschylus' The Persians, which records the defeat that the Persians had suffered at Salamis eight years earlier. However this play differs from the one mentioned above in several crucial ways. It is written from the point of view of the defeated aggressors, thereby placing the Athenians as victors, and it is also set in the land of the aggressors, rather than on Greek

soil. Therefore a form of geographical and cultural displacement occurs, which ensures that the observer is distanced from the action.

Apart from these two instances, I have found no other record of tragedies whose plots are set contemporaneously with their performance. Therefore it seems justified to argue that a displacement from the present is a consistent, if not quite invariable feature of Greek tragedy.

12. For further discussion of this point see Chapters 3 and 4 of Goldhill's book Reading Greek Tragedy. In Chapter 3 Goldhill argues that it is in the "areas of overlap between *oikos* and *polis*, public and private, that tensions may be seen developing that bear closely on the institution of tragedy. For the ideology of the *oikos*...often fits uneasily with the ideology of the *polis*." [p. 73.] In Chapter 4 Goldhill proceeds to demonstrate how this tension is manifest in the Antigone where the arguments between Antigone and Ismene, Creon and the chorus revolve around the correct meaning and interpretation of the terms *philos* and *ekthros*, (friend or kin versus enemy or foe.) Goldhill argues that the tragic confrontation arises from different interpretations and values which are put on these terms by the family and the state.

13. Vernant, Myth p. 26.

14. Whilst the conventions of recital of the epic involved the reciter acting out the story which he was telling, this was not a truly dramatic depiction of the events; i.e. the reciter may well have adopted different voices and mannerisms for different characters, but there was not the literal embodiment which occurs in the dramatic event. Furthermore the interjection of passages of third person narration and description also act to differentiate the epic recital from the tragedy. For further discussion of this point see Else, The Origin and Early Form of Greek Tragedy Chapter 3. p.69-70.

15. Vernant, "The Tragic Subject: Historicity and Transhistoricity" in Myth. p.243.

16. See Vernant "Intimations of the Will in Greek Tragedy" in Myth. pp. 49-85.

17. E.g. the reaction of the chorus to Oedipus' re-emergence blinded;
What madness swept over you? What god,
what dark power leapt beyond all bounds,
beyond belief, to crush your wretched life-
Godforsaken, cursed by the gods.

I pity you but I cant bear to look,
I've much to ask, so much to learn,
so much fascinates my eyes,
but you....I shudder at the sight.
Oedipus the King. Trans. Fagles, line 1435.

And then compare this with Oedipus' reply to the chorus' questioning of "What superhuman (*daimon*) drove you on?", "But the hand that struck my eyes was mine alone - no one else - I did it all myself." This is the first action of Oedipus that is not determined, thus the chorus learns of the possibility of self determination, yet this is contradicted by the events which have preceded this act.

18. This process can be considered analogous to the description which Paul Ricoeur gives of the process of reading a text in his essay "Appropriation" in Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences. Here Ricoeur writes "to understand is not to project oneself into the text; it is to receive an enlarged self from the apprehension of proposed worlds which are the genuine object of interpretation".(p.183) As Ricoeur then argues in the rest of the essay, this process does not presuppose or retain a stable "ego-subject" who remains separate from the process of interpretation. Rather it engenders a form of "self-understanding". However as Ricoeur states in the conclusion to the essay "By the expression *self*-understanding, I should like to contrast the *self* which emerges from this understanding of the text to the *ego* which claims to precede this understanding. It is the text, with its universal power of unveiling, which gives a *self* to the *ego*". I intend the relationship between the observer of the drama and the dramatic presentation to be understood in these terms.

19. In fact, as Gerald Else suggests, in order for Plato to expel the poets from the Republic, he has to define his employment of the term mimesis very specifically so as to give himself sufficient justification for his actions. Else argues that not only does Plato have to link the term mimesis specifically to dramatic imitation - for the term normally had a much more general connotation - but he also had to describe the practitioners of the art of imitation using very precise language linking their actions with those of the "Thaumiopoiis" (Θαυμαιοποιός) that is bracketing them with jugglers, conjurers, magicians, all professions and activities which lack prestige in the Greek state. For the details of this - convincing - argument see Chapter two of Else's book Plato and Aristotle on Poetry, p.17 - 47.

In his article "The Birth of Images" in Mortals and Immortals, Jean-Pierre Vernant agrees with Else's argument and also points out that Plato has to redefine and limit the meanings of other terms which are associated with images and semblance. He argues that "In the texts of the sixth and fifth centuries, neither *eikazein* and *eikasía* nor *dokein* and *doxa* nor *phainein* and *phainomena* had yet taken on the essentially negative connotation attributed to them in the philosophical system where, by the same move, Plato founds the first general theory of imitation and simultaneously cuts the image off from the real and from knowledge." (p.181).

20. Ricoeur, P. "Metaphor and the Problem of Hermeneutics" in Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences. p.180.

21. Republic. 376c, p.53.

22. The conventions of Greek dramatic performance stipulated that there should be three actors who would perform all the parts. The actors were rated in order of status, with the best part being given to the most highly acclaimed actor. This convention provides interesting insights into how the Greeks perceived and interpreted the plays; eg In Antigone the first actor took the part of Antigone, thereby indicating that her character was seen to be the most important. Creon was played by the third actor. The chorus was originally made up of members of the audience, and its role was only later formalised into a set group of 15 members, one of whom took the role as spokesman for the group.

23. Republic 394d-e. p.73.

24. Ibid. 395c. p.74

25. Ibid. 395d. p.74 (trans. slightly modified using Jowett's translation.)

26. Ibid. 597e. p.280.

27. Ibid. 595a-b. p.277.

28. Ibid. 602b. p.285.

29. See the discussion from 606a to 608d in the Republic where Plato establishes that poetry generally will only appeal to the baser elements of Human Nature, and diverts people from study of the higher qualities of justice and virtue.

30. For further discussion of how the *Pharmakon* operates as a site of contradiction and dispersal within Plato's texts, see Derrida's article "Plato's Pharmacy" in Dissemination. Here Derrida does not specifically link the *Pharmakon* with dramatic mimesis, but rather concentrates upon how it disrupts the relation between the notion of writing and truth upon which Plato's theory depends.

31. Republic 500c-d. p.179-80.

32. Ibid. 398b. p. 76.

33. This is shown by the argument that Plato puts forward at 598 (p.280-1) where he argues that the painter only imitates the appearance of an object, not how it actually is. This also means that he or she will only ever be able to show part of an object; they cannot present the whole object. This is used to indicate that the image is therefore far removed from the truth. Plato states, "Then the imitator is a long way off the truth, and can reproduce all things because he lightly touches on a small part of them, and that part an image".

34. It could be argued that the interpretation I have put forward concerning Plato's understanding of the function of the work of art is one-sided because I have ignored the remarks that are made about the artist in the Phaedrus. In the middle of this text, Plato outlines four types of the divine madness which provides the afflicted with access to higher knowledge. The third form of madness is attributed to the Muses. Plato writes that this form of madness "seizes a tender, virgin soul and stimulates it to rapt passionate expression, especially in lyric poetry, glorifying the countless mighty deeds of ancient times for the instruction of posterity. But if any man comes to the gates of poetry without the madness of the Muses, persuaded that skill alone will make him a good poet, then shall he and his works of sanity with him be brought to naught by the poetry of madness, and behold, their place is nowhere to be found." (245. p. 57.) These comments are often interpreted as Plato's attempt to rehabilitate the position of the work of art. This is substantiated by reference to the arguments which Plato develops subsequently where he states that beauty is the highest form of all and that the love of beauty is the fourth and highest type of divine madness. However, although Plato places beauty at the centre of his description, it must be remembered that he is referring to the form of beauty, not to beauty understood as an aesthetic

phenomenon. The images of beauty in the world remind the lover of "true beauty", giving him or her access to knowledge of the true forms. Hence the rehabilitation of art serves only to reinforce Plato's metaphysical schema. Furthermore, it only refers to certain forms of artistic practice which are subordinated to the demands of the wider metaphysical schema. This is substantiated by the statements that are made in sections 247c - 248e, where Plato outlines the various incarnations to which the soul may be assigned. The highest incarnation is as "a seeker after wisdom or beauty, a follower of the Muses and a lover". (p.79.) This corresponds to the qualities which are associated with divine madness. Plato proceeds to outline the other possible incarnations in order of rank. The sixth of the nine possible incarnations which he lists is as "a poet or other imitative artist". Hence it is clear that the "lover of beauty" cannot be equated with the artist. The arguments which I outlined earlier in this note cannot be read as a vindication of the status of the work of art. Even in this text - which on first reading might be thought to re-evaluate art - Plato denigrates the majority of the forms of art, particularly mimetic art. For further discussion of this text see Else's comments in Plato and Aristotle on Poetry.

35. cf. Vernant's comment in "The Birth of Images" in Mortals and Immortals, "Plato gives the image its own form of existence and bestows on it a particular phenomenal status. Defined as semblance, the image possesses a distinctive character that is all the more marked, since from now on, appearance is no longer considered as an aspect, a mode, a level of reality, a kind of dimension of the real, but rather as a specific category confronted with "being" in an ambiguous relation of the "faux-semblant". This specificity implies, as its counterpart, the expulsion of the image from the realm of the authentically real, its relegation to the field of the fictive and the illusory, and its disqualification from the point of view of knowledge." (p.181).

36. Aristotle, Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument. Ed. Else. p. 31.

37. Ibid. p.1.

38. Ibid. p.124.

39. Ibid. p.238.

40. The slightly unusual neologism "emplotment" is the translator's rendering of Ricoeur's term "*la mise en intrigue*". Literally the term means the staging, the production of the plot.

41. Ricoeur. Time and Narrative. p.34.

42. Ibid. p.35.

43. Aristotle. Poetics. p.252.

44. This is not to say that Aristotle's theory is completely independent of other aspects of his theoretical thought. However, unlike Plato he does not allow the metaphysical premises of his theory to legislate for every single aspect of the work of art. Furthermore, his metaphysics does not denigrate the work of art, rather the work is evaluated using criteria which is specific to aesthetic judgement.

Chapter 2.

1. Pfau, p. 140. StA. Vol. 6,1. p.307.

2. Earlier in the letter Hölderlin has chastised the German people for their "conceited domesticity" and argued that they suffer from "a lack of flexibility, of drive, of manifold development of strengths." He welcomes the emergence of Kantian philosophy which he believes will help to challenge and shake the Germans out of their complacency. Hence later in the letter he states that "Kant is the Moses of our nation who leads it out of Egyptian apathy into the free solitary desert of his speculation..."

3. With respect to the interpretation of Aristotle's Poetics which I gave in the previous chapter, it is interesting to the note that "universal ideals" to which the classicist theorists appeal, are based upon the statements that Aristotle makes in this work. Thus, although in the previous chapter I argued that Aristotle's text is not intended to be prescriptive - it is a descriptive account of the features which make up a tragedy - by the early 17th century it has developed canonical status and is seen to provide universal rules for aesthetic composition. However, this interpretation of Aristotle fails to recognise that he is speaking of the process of mimesis; it understands mimesis as a concept rather than a process. Thus in Aristotle's description of the work of art as

the "imitation of nature", the emphasis of the interpretation is placed upon the actual object of imitation, rather than the process whereby it is engendered.

4. This cyclical conception of historical progression can be traced back to the Renaissance. As Karl Menges argues in "Herder and the 'Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes'" in Eighteenth-Century German Authors and their Aesthetic Theories. ed. Critchfield, R. and Koepke, W., "The cyclical notion extends back into the Renaissance, where the idea of progress had already prompted Italian Humanists to level "an historical minded criticism against the idea of perennial Rome" despite their unquestioned veneration of Antiquity. The theoreticians of fifteenth century thus anticipated the later struggle in France in that they engaged in a comparative discussion of the ages, based on the premise that that the republics of Venice or Florence should be considered as equal to the city states of Sparta or Athens, as the works of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio to those of ancient Greece or Rome." (p.156 - 157.)

5. Menges, K. Ibid. p.157.

6. For details of the historical background to the Quarrel of Ancients and Moderns, and the development of Enlightenment thought see Peter Gay's book The Enlightenment: The Rise of Modern Paganism. especially Book One, "The Appeal to Antiquity." pp.31 - 197. For a slightly outdated - but very entertaining - account of the rise of German Classicism see E.M. Butler's book, The Tyranny of Greece over Germany.

7. Winckelmann, J. "Thoughts on the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks" in German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism. Ed. Nisbet, H.B.. p. 33.

8. The ideals of Greek art around which Winckelmann develops his theory can be seen to be influenced by neo-Platonic interpretations of the nature of the Forms. The ideals to which Winckelmann aspires are the ideals of beauty, simplicity and tranquillity. Thus, in the light of the arguments which i presented in the previous chapter, it is perhaps not surprising that his theory advocates a form of mimesis understood as simple *imitatio*.

9. For further discussion of Schiller and Schlegel's relationship to the Quarrel see R.J. Jauß' article "Schlegels und Schillers Replik auf die 'Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes'" in Literaturgeschichte als Provokation p. 67 - 107. Reasons of space and time prevent me from considering F. Schlegel's work in

any form. However, for an extremely detailed discussion of Schlegel's response to the Quarrel and his relation to Hölderlin, see Jonathan Steinwand's PhD. dissertation, Mnemonic Images: The Gender of Modernity in Schiller, Schlegel and Hölderlin. especially Chapters Three and Four.

10. Schiller introduces this idea in Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man. It is developed further in On Naive and Sentimental Poetry.

11. For example as Helga Madland argues in her article "Imitation to Creation: The Changing Concept of Mimesis from Bodmer and Breitinger to Lenz" in Eighteenth-Century German Authors... F.G. Klopstock can be seen to exemplify this point of view. Madland writes, "Klopstock unhesitatingly rejects the imitation of the classics. In his view, "the prototype is the tree, imitation is the shadow, which is either always either too long or too short, never the true shape of the tree." "Imitation is shadow without sap and strength, formation without beauty." Instead of following established and normative rules of poetics, Klopstock urges the poet to turn inward and listen to his inner spirit." p.30.

12. In the article mentioned in the note above, Madland shows how Gerstenberg realises that there are two conflicting interpretations of mimesis prevalent in his age. She writes, "Gerstenberg recognized that as the phrase "imitation of nature" had rolled through the centuries, it had created a considerable amount of confusion. Imitation of nature had evolved to mean both the imitation of reality and the adherence to classicist rules. In order to clarify the matter, he divides imitation into two categories, imitation of models ("*Nachahmung von Mustern*") and imitation of nature ("*Nachahmung der Natur*"); the imitation of existing models can be subdivided into two modes, which he calls *Nachäffung* and *Nacheifern*. *Nachäffung*, the mindless imitation of foreign literature, is unequivocally rejected. *Nacheifern*, or emulation, however, is on a somewhat higher scale..." p.32.

13. Madland, H. Non-Aristotelian Drama in Eighteenth Century Germany and its Modernity: J.M.R. Lenz. p.123.

14. Pfau, p.39. Translation modified. It is important to note that Pfau translates the term "*Angenommen*" as "appropriated". However, in this context a more accurate translation is "assumed" or "adopted", as I have used. This distinction is necessary because the term "appropriated" also appears in the

translation of the letter to Böhlendorff. In this context this translation is accurate because it refers to the German term "*anzueignen*". Thus it can be seen that the reader who approaches the texts in translation could be forgiven for assuming that there is a direct relationship between the ideas which Hölderlin is expressing in these texts. However, as is made clear in the original German, Hölderlin does not imply any such relationship. FA. Vol. 14. p. 92.

15. For discussion of how Hölderlin's work can be situated within the context of 18th century German debates concerning the "quarrel" see the article by Ernst Behler, "The Force of Classical Greece in the Formation of the Romantic Age in Germany" in Paths from Ancient Greece, Carol Thomas, ed., (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), p.118-139.

16. Pfau, p.39. FA. Vol. 14. p. 92.

17. Hölderlin's use of the term *Bildungstrieb* is unique. The term has appeared previously in 1780 in the work of the biologist Blumenbach in his treatise "*Über den Bildungstrieb*". In this essay Blumenbach uses the term in relation to the growth and development of plants. (For further details of Blumenbach's work see Lange p.144) However, Hölderlin employs the term to denote the force or drive which motivates the artist's desire to create. Throughout the text I have not attempted to offer a translation because the term *Bildung* has several meanings which become interrelated and intertwined in Hölderlin's usage. Whilst *Bildung* means both "cultivate" or "educate" (as it is used in the term *Bildungsroman*), it also means "form" and "image" thereby linking the term with issues concerning representation and presentation. It is also likely that Hölderlin is attempting to make an implicit distinction between his understanding of this term and Schiller's terms *sinnlichen Trieb*, *Stofftrieb* and *Spieltrieb* which are introduced in the twelfth letter of On the Aesthetic Education of Man, (1794-5). For a discussion of the wider meaning and function of *Bildung* see H.G. Gadamer, Truth and Method p. 10-19. Here Gadamer shows how, in the latter half of the 18th Century, the term develops a multiplicity of meanings and connotations. He concentrates specifically on the way that these meanings are brought together in Hegel's work.

18. Pfau, p.39. FA. Vol. 14. p.92.

19. Schiller, F. "On Naive and Sentimental Poetry" trans. Elias, J. in German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism, H.B. Nisbet, ed., (Cambridge: CUP, 1985) p.194.

20. The anxiety of influence which Hölderlin suffered with respect to Schiller should not be underestimated. In fact, only 18 months prior to the writing of the Perspectives Fragment, Hölderlin wrote a long letter to Schiller in which he discusses the problem of influence, both of an individual or a culture, upon a writer and admits to Schiller that "I am overwhelmingly dependent upon you." (*vor Ihnen dependir' ich unüberwindlich.*) StA. Vol. 6,1. p.241. However, in the later writings, from approximately 1800 onwards, Hölderlin's own voice can be discerned clearly.

21./ Casimir Ulrich Böhlendorff (1775-1825) was a friend of Hölderlin's from 1799 onwards. He was a minor writer and traveller, who became influenced by the second generation of German Romantics, eg Tieck and Runge.

22. This letter is contemporaneous with several of Hölderlin's poems concerning the nature of Germany and the destiny of a people and land. See for example, Germania and Der Rhein

23. Unfortunately this drama is lost and therefore it is impossible to decide whether the remarks made in this letter concerning tragedy refer specifically to Böhlendorff's drama, or if they can be read as having a more universal significance.

24. Translation taken from Szondi, Peter. "Hölderlin's Overcoming of Classicism" Trans. Timothy Bahti. Comparative Criticism Vol.5 (1983). p.251-270. I have chosen to use this translation rather than Pfau because it remains much more faithful to the original. StA. Vol. 6,1. p.425-6.

25. The emphasis which Hölderlin places upon the necessity of law and regulation with regard to the process of poetic composition separates his views from the mainstream ideas associated with Romantic thought. Hence when Hölderlin speaks of the "free use of the national" he is not referring to any notion of "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" or other similar ideas which have come to be seen as synonymous with Romantic thought.

26. Bahti, p.251. (see note 24 for details). StA. Vol. 6,1. p.426.

27. This account remains problematic to the extent that in the Perspectives essay, Hölderlin has described the Greeks as the culture in which the desire to "to form the unformed" could be achieved. In terms of this description, the Greek culture cannot contain anything which is prior or "positive". However, I think that by time of the letter to Böhlendorff, Hölderlin has modified his views and no longer sees Greece as a unique, autogenous culture that has no precedents. This can be substantiated by the occasional comments throughout his later writings concerning Egyptian culture, and the possible relation between Egypt and Greece. This is particularly evident in the third and final draft of the drama The Death of Empedocles where Hölderlin introduces the character of the Egyptian seer Manes, who acts as Empedocles' tempter. For further discussion of the validity of this interpretation see p.19-22 of Warminski, Readings in Interpretation (for details see note 35).

28. Winckelmann J, "Thoughts on the imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks", trans H.B. Nisbet in German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism, H.B. Nisbet, ed., (Cambridge: CUP, 1985) p.33.

29. Bahti p.251. StA. Vol. 6,1. p.426.

30. Ibid.

31. One of the most important proponents of this interpretation is Lawrence Ryan in his work, Hölderlin's Lehre vom Wechsel der Tone. For a discussion of the problems inherent in this approach see Szondi's book Hölderlin-Studien. (Frankfurt-a-M. 1967) p.129-142.

32. As Szondi states in the introduction to his article, his interest lies not only in outlining the arguments given in the first letter to Böhlendorff, but also in showing what it does not say. One of the main interpretations he argues against is the so-called *Väterlandische Umkehr*, whereby the interpreters - e.g. Wilhelm Michel, Hölderlin's Abendlandische Wendung (Jena 1923)- argue that this letter sets out Hölderlin's mission as a poet of the German nation, wherein he turns away from the example provided by the Greeks and attempts to set out the conditions necessary for the emergence of a authentically German voice. For Szondi's - convincing - arguments against this interpretation see p.256-61 of Overcoming of Classicism.

33. Szondi, Overcoming of Classicism p.262.

34. Ibid.

35. Warminski, A. Readings in Interpretation: p.33

36. In his article "Hölderlin and the Greeks" in Typographies P. Lacoue-Labarthe emphasises the radicality of Hölderlin's interpretation of the relation between Greece and Germany. He argues that in Hölderlin's work "we find one thing, first of all, that is completely unprecedented in the age: namely that *Greece, as such Greece itself*, does not exist, that it is at least double, divided - even torn. And that what we know about it, which is perhaps what it was or what is manifested of itself, is not what it really was - which perhaps never appeared. In the same way, correlatively, the modern West - what Hölderlin never identifies simply with Germany, but calls, more generally, Hesperia - does not yet exist, or is still only what it is not." (p.242) I return to discuss the full implications of these remarks in the conclusion of this study.

37. Hölderlin makes this statement in the Remarks on Antigone (1803), in the context of outlining what he perceives as the main weaknesses of Greek and Modern culture. The Greek's weakness is their "tendency to comprehend themselves", whilst the Modern's is their "absence of destiny, the *dysmoron*". This remark can be linked to the earlier discussion of the brief comments in the letter to Böhlendorff concerning the nature of the modern tragedy, which is characterised by a lack of external structures which could validate and uphold the tragic process. If the Modern's weakness is an absence of destiny, (*dysmoron* means literally "lack of *Moirai*; i.e. fate) then this helps to explain why the experience of tragedy in the modern is described as "quiet departure" rather than an "act of atonement".

Chapter 3.

1. For a resumé of the historical and philological dispute surrounding the exact authorship of this fragment see the introductory section of David Farrell Krell's article The Oldest Program towards a System in German Idealism, in Owl of Minerva 1985, Vol 17, Pt no.1 pp. 5-19, especially pp. 6-8. The most detailed and thorough discussion of all aspects of this text is to be found in the essays collected in Mythologie der Vernunft: Hegel's "Ältestes Systemprogramm" des deutschen Idealismus, ed. Christoph Jamme and Helmut

Schneider, (Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1984.). The first chapter of this book is devoted to the debate concerning the authorship of this text.

2. As David Farrell Krell points out in his article mentioned in note 1, this collapsing together of the theoretical and practical postulates goes against the basic tenets of the Kantian system, for it breaks down the basic distinction between ethics and metaphysics which Kant wishes to uphold. However as Krell moves on to argue, the emphasis on practical reason is not simply a distortion of Kant's theory by Fichte for in places Kant "had asserted the primacy of pure practical reason, "because all interest is ultimately practical" (Critique of Practical Reason. A 219) But if this is so then *all* ideas in philosophy are postulates. Kant's keystone and conclusion, namely, absolute freedom, would now have to become the *first* principle of philosophy." (p. 13, Krell)

3. Krell, System-Program Fragment. p.9.

4. Kant discusses the status of the "I think" in section #16 of Transcendental Deduction B. Here he describes the "I think" as a "representation which must be capable of accompanying all other representations, and which in all consciousness is one and the same" (p.153). The difference between Kant's and Fichte's understanding of the status of the "I" can be best clarified by comparing Fichte's position as it is outlined in the main text with the statements which Kant makes in the Transcendental Deduction, Sections 24-5, in the Critique of Pure Reason. Here Kant writes that "I have no *knowledge* of myself as I am but merely as I appear to myself. The consciousness of self is thus very far from being a knowledge of the self...I exist as an intelligence which is conscious solely of its powers of combination...[and] therefore can know itself only as it appears to itself in respect of an intuition which is not intellectual and cannot be given by the understanding itself, not as it would know itself if its *intuition* were intellectual" (p.169).

5. This essay was written as a public response to an attack on Fichte's work by Professor Schmid, a rival professor at Jena. It is useful because its polemical style provides a succinct summary of Fichte's views. For a discussion of the debate out of which the text arises see the Editor's preface in Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings, translated and edited by Daniel Breazeale, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1988.

6. Fichte, Early Philosophical Writings p. 330.

7. Krell, System-Programme Fragment. p.9.

8. *Ibid.* p.11.

9. A move towards discussing the aesthetic from the Kantian perspective may have been expected for a number of reasons. Firstly, as has already been stated, the first half of the System-Programme deals with Kantian themes and motifs, hence it may have been expected to continue. Secondly, the move back towards Platonic theory appears at first sight to be retrogressive, for it apparently reintroduces the Platonic metaphysical schema which the Kantian schema has attempted to throw into question and move beyond. In introducing the notion of an Idea of beauty that unifies all, the authors of the Programme are apparently uncritically advocating the imposition of an Absolute without providing any explanation as to why it fulfils the criterion of being the "idea which unifies all".

10. Near the end of the section in the Phaedrus, where Plato gives the allegory of the charioteer and his horses, an argument is given which establishes the Idea of Beauty as the highest of the Forms and sets it against knowledge. This is because beauty can be most clearly discerned on earth and hence the observer can be most easily led into contemplation of the Form of Beauty. Hence Plato writes, "Now beauty, as we said, shone bright amidst these visions, and in this world below we apprehend it through the clearest of our senses, clear and resplendent. For sight is the keenest mode of our perception vouchsafed us through the body; wisdom, indeed, we cannot see thereby...nor yet any other of those beloved objects, save only beauty; for beauty alone has this been ordained, to be most manifest to sense and most lovely of them all." (250c-d. p.93.) This can also be compared with Socrates account of Diotima's teaching in the Symposium, sections 210-212, in praise of the love of beauty. However, it must be noted that although Hölderlin's employment of the idea of Beauty originates from this Platonic formulation, in his later work - i.e. from the Homburg period onwards - he moves away from a "static" conception of Beauty. This occurs in conjunction with the development of a more historical perspective in Hölderlin's thought.

11. Phillipe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, The Literary Absolute. The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism. p.35.

12. Hölderlin spent many years working on his novel Hyperion and the project underwent many different changes and incarnations. He first mentioned writing the novel in 1792, and in 1794 Schiller published a first fragmentary section in his journal Neue Thalia. Other fragmentary drafts exist including a verse draft and a proposal for a section entitled Hyperion's Youth. The novel was published in its final form in two sections, Volume One appeared in 1797, and Volume Two in 1799. For the purposes of this study the most important features are the changes which occur in the underlying theoretical presuppositions of the novel. In the earlier versions of the novel, Hölderlin views the development of Hyperion's character as a movement from innocence to experience. This can be related to the discussion of the meanings of the term Bildung in Chapter 2, note 17, and more generally to the *Bildungsroman*. (Eg. Goethe's Wilhelm Meister.) However the description which is given in the final versions of the novel of the process of *Bildung* which Hyperion undergoes must not be understood simply in terms of a move into a state of enlightenment. This is because the kind of knowledge which is attained calls into question the status of the process of enlightenment, understood in a Rousseauian manner. The "education" of Hyperion is necessarily different from that of Emile or even Goethe's Wilhelm Meister. Hence the subtitle of Hölderlin's novel, The Hermit in Greece. Hyperion ends up isolated from his people, he cannot live in his native land, rather he chooses a life of isolation and contemplation, comforted only by his memories and a commitment to his belief in the beauty of nature. However as I argue in the main text, even this belief is tainted by sadness for in order to presuppose nature as a whole, as a unitary unifying force, he must also be aware of its necessary subjugation to time and fate. Hence the underlying mood of the novel is one of pessimism and resignation. The process of Bildung which he undergoes is unable to provide him with any positive solutions to the experiences and problems he faces. Therefore although the novel apparently ends positively with the heart and arteries metaphor of reconciliation, all that has preceded this image points towards its inherent flaws and problems. Hence Hyperion's final statement "So I thought. More soon" ("So dacht ich. Nächstens mehr") can be read as suggesting the provisional, open-ended nature of this conclusion; i.e. the certainty of this conclusion cannot be guaranteed, and the "more" which will follow "soon" could equally return Hyperion to his previous melancholy and gloom.

13. Hyperion. Santer, p.66. FA. Vol. 11. p.680.

14. Hyperion. Santer, p.67. FA. Vol. 11. p.681.

15. Hyperion. Santer, p.68. FA. Vol. 11. p.683. (Translation modified, so as to emphasise the Kantian terminology used in this passage.)

16. The commentators who argue that the move to the aesthetic constitutes a radical break with the first half of the System-Programme tend to be those who read the System-Programme from a Hegelian perspective, seeing the text as an early expression of Hegel's views. For example Otto Pöggeler describes the introduction of the aesthetic as "a tension, if not a complete breach". (Ed. *Jamme/Schneider Mythologie der Vernunft...* p.135, quoted in Krell System-Programme Fragment),) Hence the latter half of the text is seen to reflect the way in which Hegel comes under Hölderlin's influence in Frankfurt in 1795. The adoption of aesthetic Platonism in the latter half of the text is therefore viewed as a momentary move on Hegel's part which will be quickly surpassed as he then moves his attention away from the aesthetic into religion. However viewed from a Hölderlinian perspective, the two halves of the text do cohere, for the linking together of the concerns of the first half with the aesthetic is suggested elsewhere in Hölderlin's theoretical writings, for example On Religion which confronts the issues of politics and ethics and relates them to the aesthetic absolute.

17. Translation taken from the notes to Phillipe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy The Literary Absolute, p.132. StA. Vol. 6.1. p.181.

18. One of the most obvious uses of Schillerian imagery and motifs in Hyperion is the allusion to the Goddess Minerva which occurs in the previous quote in the main text. Schiller, in the 8th letter of The Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man uses exactly the same imagery in a very similar context. He writes, "Dare to be wise...Not for nothing does the ancient myth make the goddess of wisdom emerge fully armed from the head of Jupiter." "*Erkühne dich, weise zu sein...Nicht ohne Bedeutung lässt der alte Mythos die Göttin der Weisheit in voller Rüstung aus Jupiters Haupte steigen.*" (p.50-1)

19. It can be suggested tentatively that it is this characterisation of a "universal poetry" which separates Hölderlin's work from that of the Jena Romantics such as Schlegel and Novalis. For involved in the notion of universal poetry is the idea that all borders and boundaries which delimit genre will be

removed. However for Hölderlin - as I show in the main text - the genre distinctions remain in place and form the basis for his theoretical position, providing the intersection between the poetological and philosophical theory.

20. Hyperion. Santner, p.133. FA. Vol. 11. p.782.

21. This is best exemplified by the 10th letter of Schelling's Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism where the relationship between freedom and necessity is explained in terms of the fate of the hero in Greek tragedy. Although the question of tragedy is addressed in this letter, it is used only to illustrate the wider theoretical issues which Schelling is demonstrating. Hence the wider issues raised by tragedy become subjugated to the demands of the philosophical system which is being outlined.

22. The writings discussed in this section were written between 1798 and 1800 during one of the most settled periods of Hölderlin's life. Although he has had to separate from his "Diotima", Susette Gontard, he is still reasonably content, as is witnessed by the letters which have survived. He lives in Homburg for the majority of this period and most of his theoretical texts date from this time.

23. As is the case with most of the essays discussed in this section, the titles which I am using are editorial additions. To keep the discussion coherent I refer to the essays by the title given in the English translation by Pfau. However it must be noted that these titles do not always correspond to the titles in either of the German editions. To add to the confusion Pfau himself is not consistent in his translations of the titles of the essays. For example in the main text he entitles Hölderlin's essay "On the Operations of the Poetic Spirit", whilst in the notes he refers to it as "On the Process of the Poetic Spirit."

24. Pfau, p.83. FA. Vol. 14. p.369.

25. This discussion of the relationship between the poetic modes and their components can also be linked to Hölderlin's complex theory of tones, whereby the structure of a poem is calculated using formulaic expressions which ensure that each of the modes contains the correct balance of component parts. The tabular structure is most clearly demonstrated in the fragment Löst sich nicht die idealische Katastrophe... FA. Vol. 14. p. 170-1.

26. FA. Vol. 14. p.342. My translation.

27. This final letter of Volume One concludes with Hyperion and Diotima describing the beautiful future which lies in front of them, wherein "All shall be changed! From the root of humanity the new world shall spring! A new divinity shall rule over them, a new future brighten before them." Hyperion is heralded as "the teacher of our people, a great man!"

28. Hyperion. Santner, p.76. FA. Vol. 11. p.698.

29. Ibid.

30. The necessity of both the divine and nature's subjection to limitation creates the situation whereby the historical, temporal present becomes the site of mediation between spheres that had hitherto been kept rigidly separate. It is this point which has made several commentators link Hölderlin's discussion of the "one differentiating in itself" with Spinoza's pantheistic - as opposed to theodistic, hence transcendent - conception of God. Whilst it is clear that Hölderlin is influenced by the new, rediscovered philosophy of Spinoza - one of his earliest theoretical pieces is on Jacobi's letter Concerning the teachings of Spinoza - he does not subscribe fully to the Spinozist position that the terms God and Nature are interchangeable. (cf Spinoza Ethics Part IV. "For the eternal Being, which we call God or Nature...") Rather it is necessary for Hölderlin's thought that the divine and nature delimit separate spheres. This is most clearly shown in some of the later poetry where nature and the divine can be seen to be in conflict with each other, eg Der Rhein. However these separate spheres are brought into relation with each other in the movement, process of the Absolute.

31. StA. Vol. 6.1. p.351. My translation.

32. StA. Vol. 6.1. p.290. My translation.

33. The points made in this section can be summarised most clearly by the comments which Christoph Jamme makes in his article "Hegel and Hölderlin". Jamme writes, "The question as to the sense of alienation (*Entfremdung*) was formulated theologically by Hölderlin as the question of the sense of creation as God's self-externalisation (*Entäusserung*), leads the friends [i.e. Hegel and Hölderlin] to an analysis of the tragic and of fate, to a connection of beauty and sacrifice. The analysis of "fate" serves to answer how reconciliation is even historically possible under the conditions of disunion... The finite becomes a necessary component of the Absolute; God must become *time*...The simultaneity

of revelation and concealment, which distinguishes Hölderlin's heretical concept of God and which asserts "that the divine, when it emerges, can never be without a certain sorrow and humility", lays the cornerstone for the Homburg theory of art. When the state of harmonious oneness strives for externalisation, man is the "voice" and "sign" of the divine. Spirit steps forth only in the sign. The Absolute must itself suffer internal division, must go out of itself in order to express itself, to become form." (p.368-9) "Hegel and Hölderlin" in Clio (1986, vol 15, pp.359-377)

34. Pfau, p.84. FA. Vol. 14. P.370.

35. In an early text, dating from 1794-5, entitled Judgement and Being, Hölderlin has already questioned the efficacy of the Fichtean concept of intellectual intuition. In the second half of this short, but extremely dense fragment, Hölderlin directly addresses the problems which arise in the Fichtean system. He shows why he considers that the Fichtean conception of intellectual intuition falls short of allowing access to the original form of unity, "Being". Hölderlin gives his own definition of this "original unity" when he writes, "Being - expresses the connection between subject and object. Where subject and object are united absolutely, and not only in part...there and nowhere else can be spoken of *Being proper* as is the case with intellectual intuition." He then argues that,

this being must not be confused with identity. If I say: I am I, the subject ("I") and the object ("I") are not united in such a way that no separation could be performed without violating the essence of what is to be separated; on the contrary the I is only possible by means of this separation of the I from the I. How can I say "I" without self-consciousness? Yet how is self-consciousness possible? In opposing myself to myself, separating myself from myself, yet in recognizing myself as the same in the opposed regardless of this separation. Yet to what extent as the same? I can, I must ask in this manner; for in another respect it [the "I"] is opposed to itself. Hence identity is not a union of object and subject which simply occurred, hence identity is not = to absolute Being.

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

(Ich) nicht so vereinigt, daß gar keine Trennung vorgenommen werden kann, ohne, das Wesen desjenigen, was getrennt werden soll, zu verletzen; im Gegenteil das Ich ist nur durch diese Trennung des Ichs vom Ichs möglich. Wie kann ich sagen: Ich! ohne Selbstbewußtseyn? Wie ist aber Selbstbewußtseyn möglich? Dadurch daß ich mich mir selbst entgegensetze, mich von mir selbst trenne, aber ungeachtet dieser Trennung mich im entgegengesetzten als dasselbe erkenne. Aber in wieferne als dasselbe? Ich kann, ich muß so fragen; denn in einer andern Rücksicht ist es sich entgegengesetzt. Also ist die Identität keine Vereinigung des Objects und Subjects, die schlechthin stattfindet, also ist die Identität nicht = dem absolutem Seyn. (FA. Vol 17 p. 56

In the first two sentences of this section Hölderlin establishes how and why his understanding of "Being" has to be differentiated from the Fichtean notion of Identity. His argument is based upon the premise that an inherent contradiction exists between the two concepts. For Hölderlin it is essential that "Being" is a unitary concept, it cannot be separated into component elements without intrinsic violence being done to the concept. However, Fichtean identity is based upon the possibility of the separation of the original identity. Therefore as Hölderlin moves on to explain, the Fichtean statement of Identity which founds the system - the "I am I" - can only function through a process of separation and differentiation. To establish the identity of the I it is necessary first to oppose oneself to oneself, thus creating the distinction and division into the component elements of subject and object. It is only through this movement that self-consciousness can occur. However it is at this stage of the argument that Hölderlin introduces another objection to the Fichtean project. Having rehearsed the moves which allow for the recognition of the self through the process of separation after asking the question "how is self-consciousness possible?", he then questions the validity of the assumption that the I will automatically recognise itself through this division; i.e. how is the "I" able to recognise itself as itself, as the same, for as he then goes on to state "I can, I must ask in this manner; for in another respect it [the I] is opposed to itself". What is at stake within this slightly tortuous argument is an attempt to challenge the automatic assumption that the dialectical schema which underlies and motivates the dynamics of the Fichtean system is capable of

guaranteeing the necessary status of the unity of the "I"; i.e. the crux of Hölderlin's argument lies in the weight and significance which is attributed to the way in which the word "as" operates when it is asked to what extent the I recognises itself as the same. In terms of a strict Fichtean analysis a problem does not exist with this question for it is assumed that the third term of the dialectic automatically comes into play moving the emphasis from the questioning of the "as" towards the immediate assumption that it is recognised as the same, thus denying the possibility of a disruption of the dialectic. However, Hölderlin suggests that there are two interrelated factors which challenge this presupposition. Firstly there is the fact that separation has occurred, "the I is opposed to itself", with nothing to preclude the possibility that all that can occur is a process of infinite separation, and the impossibility of ever achieving self-consciousness. This interpretation of the second to last sentence of the section can be substantiated further by comments which Hölderlin makes in a letter to Hegel which is contemporaneous with the composition of this text. Here Hölderlin questions how the Fichtean Absolute "I" can ever achieve self-consciousness if it by definition "contains all reality; it is everything and outside of it is nothing; hence there is no object for this "I", for otherwise not all reality would be within in it." What ensues from these remarks and the arguments which follow is a questioning of the assumption that the Absolute would be capable of limiting itself in the manner suggested by Fichte, for Hölderlin assumes that by definition the Absolute cannot be restricted. Therefore according to this reasoning it is impossible for the necessary oppositions and restrictions to occur without either denying that the "I" is Absolute, or conversely accepting that the "I" is Absolute but concluding from this that no self-consciousness is conceivable.

Having outlined his interpretation of the Fichtean understanding of self-consciousness, Hölderlin concludes by stating; "Hence identity is not a union of object and subject which simply occurred, hence identity is not = to absolute Being." From this remark it is clear that Hölderlin considers that he has conclusively shown that the Fichtean concept of identity is not the same as his understanding of the term "Being".

For further discussion of the details of this text see Manfred Frank's article "*Intellektuale Anschauung'. Drei Stellungnahmen zu einem Deutungsversuch von Selbstbewußtsein*": Kant, Fichte, Hölderlin/Novalis." in Der Aktualität der

Frühromantik, Ed. Behler and Hörisch. See also Chapter 1 of Andrzej Warminski's book Readings in Interpretation.

36. Pfau, p.62. FA. Vol. 14. p.33.

37. Hölderlin writes, "once he [i.e. the poet] has realised that a conflict is necessary between the most original postulate of the spirit which aims at the communality and unified simultaneity of all parts, and the other postulate which commands the spirit to move beyond itself and reproduce itself within itself and others through a beautiful progression and alternation..." *"...wenn er eingesehen hat, daß ein nothwendiger Widerstreit entstehe zwischen der ursprünglichsten Forderung des Geistes, die auf Gemeinschaft und einiges Zugleichseyn aller Theile geht, und zwischen der anderen Forderung, welche ihm gebietet, aus sich heraus zu gehen, und in einem Schönem Fortschritt -und Wechsel sich in selbst und in anderen zu reproduciren..."* (Pfau, p.62. FA. Vol. 14. p.303.)

38. Jamme, C. Hegel and Hölderlin. in Clio (1986, Vol 15.) p.372.

39. Pfau, p.72. FA. Vol. 14 p.312.

40. Pfau, p.77. FA. Vol. 14. p.417.

41. Pfau, pp.85-6. FA. Vol. 14. p.371.

42. This version of the story is chronicled in Hesiod and Homer. However Hölderlin is also apparently conflating the Greek legend with the Roman version where Saturn is identified with Chronos and Jupiter with Zeus. In the Roman version, the reign of Saturn is seen as the Golden Age "in which men lived like gods and death was no more than sleep" (Dictionary of Mythology). Hence Zeus/Jupiter's overthrow of his father is seen as an act without motive, which offers another explanation as to why Hölderlin refers to the "necessary arbitrariness of Zeus". This interpretation is substantiated by the poem Nature and Art or Saturn and Jupiter, which is contemporaneous with this text. In this poem Hölderlin describes Saturn as "guiltless" and identifies him with the Golden age which Jupiter destroys. This poem is important for the whole discussion of the relation between the Absolute and Man, for in it Hölderlin establishes the primacy of the reign of Saturn, arguing that Jupiter is responsible for the divisions and conflict which exist in the world, but also states that a relationship with this earlier time is still possible, for Saturn's

name is still remembered by the singer and hence the poets can still find ways through their art, of remembering and witnessing to the past time.

43. Pfau, p.86. FA. Vol. 14. p.371.

Chapter 4.

1. At the end of the novel, Hyperion has been rejected by the Germans and is left totally isolated and is preparing to return alone to Greece. He recalls how he imitated Empedocles and went to the summit of Etna to contemplate his fate. He states "There I remembered the great Sicilian who, weary of counting the hours, knowing the soul of the world, in his bold joy in life there flung himself down into the glorious flames, for "the cold poet had to warm himself at the fire," said someone later to mock him. O how gladly would I have taken such mockery on myself!" *"Da fiel der große Sizilianer mir ein, der einst des Stundenzählens satt, vertraut mit der Seele der Welt, in seiner kühnen Lebenslust sich da hinabwarf in die herrlichen Flammen, denn der kalte Dichter hätte müssen am Feuer sich wärmen, sagt' ein Spötter ihm nach. O wie gerne hätt ich solchen Spott auf mich geladen!"* (Hyperion p. 126, FA. Vol 11. p.772.)

2. For a good introduction in English to the background to, and changes which occur in, Hölderlin's conception of the Empedocles project see M.B. Benn's introduction to Der Tod des Empedokles (OUP, Oxford, 1968) As Benn states, the most radical changes occur between second and third drafts of the drama, where Hölderlin brings his plan more in accordance with the theoretical position which he has set out in the Ground and in Becoming in Dissolution. In the third version the characters are altered and the technique is much more rigorously classical both in terms of adhering to Greek dramatic conventions of time and space, and also in metre and line structure.

3. Pfau. p.50. F.A. Vol. 13 p.868.

4. Ibid.

5. The linking of the 3 tragic forms - the ode, poem, and the dramatic-poem - with the three poetic modes - the lyric, the epic, and the tragic - may at first appear contradictory for it appears to be confusing the various categories. However, I think two explanations can be given which validate this

interpretation. First the Ground was written before the Poetic Modes essay and it is therefore not surprising to find Hölderlin using slightly different categorisations and names in the two texts. Secondly it must also be remembered that the names "tragic" "heroic" etc do not just denote one type of mode, but also constitute one of the characteristics of the modes themselves. Hence it is legitimate to state that there can be a "tragic ode" or "tragic poem", for the use of term tragic in these categories refers to a characteristic of the mode, not to a type of mode itself.

6. Pfau. p.51. F.A. Vol. 13. p.869.

7. Pfau. p.52. F.A. Vol. 13. p.869.

8. In the Physics at 199a Aristotle states that "...Thus if a house were one of the things which come to be due to nature, it would come to be just as it now does by the agency of art; and if things which were due to nature came to be not only due to nature but also due to art, they would come to be just as they are by nature. In general, art either imitates the works of nature or completes that which nature is unable to bring to completion. If, then, that which is in accordance with art is for something, clearly so is that which is in accordance with nature." (ed. Ackrill, New Aristotle Reader. p.107)

9. Pfau. p.53. F.A. Vol. 13. p.871.

10. Hölderlin uses the terms "organic" and "aorgic" which appear in this quotation in a very specific, yet idiosyncratic way. Pfau explains the difference between the two terms in the notes to his translation, arguing, "...Hölderlin's "organic" implies not a natural organism or the like, but designates the organised, reflected principle of the spirit and of art. Similarly the term "aorgic" does not refer to the merely lifeless but designates...the unreflexive, unrepresented disorganising manifestation of nature." (Pfau. p,168)

11. Hölderlin's exact understanding of the function of *Bildung* is discussed in much greater depth in the second section of the chapter Hölderlin and Greece., suffice to say that is not simply to be equated with either "education" or "formation" but rather to an active process which combines all these connotations of the word.

12. Pfau. p.53-4. F.A. Vol. 13. p.871.

13. Pfau. p.54. F.A. Vol. 13. p.872.

14. Pfau. p.56. F.A. Vol. 13. p.873.

15. Pfau. p.57. F.A. Vol. 13. p.874.

16. Hölderlin gives examples of three specific, potentially contradictory facets of Empedocles character, which the drama could highlight. He states that he lives in an "independent" situation, "1/ generally as feeling man, 2/ as philosopher and poet, 3/ as a solitary man tending to his gardens." However as Hölderlin then argues, none of these would make him a specifically dramatic character. Therefore he must be seen in relation to "a particular situation and with most specific motivation and task". Hence he has to be shown in his own particular battle with the universal. He must be engaged against the specific demands of fate and necessity. It is Empedocles' own singular desire to transcend the particular, to become immortal which then becomes the focus of the drama, and which Hölderlin uses to exemplify his wider theoretical position.

17. It is for this reason that Becoming in Dissolution is one of the most difficult texts to interpret. The draft exists only in a very fragmented form and contains many revisions and corrections, which are often overwritten. Also the text is given different titles by different editors; Beißner refers to it as Werden im Vergehen whilst Sattler in the later Kritische Ausgabe names it Das untergehende Vaterland. For the problems in dating the text, see Sattler's introductory remarks p.81, vol 14 Kritische Ausgabe.

18. Pfau. p.96. F.A. Vol. 14. p.174.

19. This point can be related to the earlier discussion on the function of metaphor in the essay On the Difference of the Poetic modes. In both instances, Hölderlin chooses to discuss the relation of the Absolute to the finite, to man, in terms of grammatical and linguistic structures. Hence the relationship which is suggested is always one that is mediated through language. This acknowledgement of the medium by which, and through which, philosophical thought is transmitted again separates Hölderlin from other contemporary thinkers, in particular Hegel.

20. Pfau. p.96. F.A. Vol. 14. p.174.

21. These ideas were discussed in depth in Chapter 3. The motif of the new emerging through the decline of the old is one that is established in the first

of the drafts for Hyperion and remains present throughout Hölderlin's theoretical writings up to and including the texts dating from 1800.

22. Pfau. p.97. F.A. Vol. 14. p.174.

23: This fragment of the text is one that is most corrupt and difficult to decipher. Consequently Beißner and Sattler render the line totally differently and in such a way that their readings contradict one another. The reason for the discrepancies lies in the fact that they disagree over how to interpret the sign "ō", which occurs in the text after the word "reales". Beißner ignores the sign totally rendering the sentence as "da hingegen die Auflösung an sich, ein Bestehendes selber wirklicher scheint und reales oder das sich Auflösende", thereby apparently suggesting that what actually appears is understood to be "real" or the "self dissolving". This reading is apparently achieved by interpreting the sign "ō" as the letter "o" and inferring that it must stand for "oder". However Sattler in the *Lineare Textdarstellung* p.94, l.96 comments, "Zur Auflösung des Zeichens ō vgl. in diesem Fragmentischer philosophischer Briefe, l.80 und die inhaltliche Parallele l.247." When these two instances are compared and the remark read in relation to the rest of the text, it appears probable that Sattler's reading is the more accurate. This is confirmed particularly by the fact that the characteristics that are attributed later to the "actual dissolution" include the statement that it appears as "reales nichts". As Hölderlin is discussing the "actual dissolution" at this point, Sattler's interpretation of the sign as denoting "Nichts" seems to be most accurate and creates the most coherent reading.

24. For the English reader who first approaches this text in translation, the problems that exist with it are compounded further by the fact that Pfau's translation is in places totally inaccurate. Pfau bases his translation upon the Stuttgart edition and some deviances from the Frankfurt edition are therefore to be expected. However, in some places the translation is wrong when compared with both editor's versions. This is particularly true of the long paragraph beginning on p.99 of the translation "Finally the idealistic dissolution..", p. 176, line. 249 onwards in the FA, Kritische Ausgabe. In this paragraph Pfau wrongly attributes the terms "jene" and "diese" getting them totally round the wrong way. Therefore the first line should read "Finally the idealistic dissolution differs from the so called real one (since the former [not "latter" as Pfau states] moves in reverse, from the infinite to the finite...) This mistake

is repeated 10 lines later in the paragraph, when the terms latter and former are again swapped round. In the original the passage states "*also die idealische Auflösung unterscheidet sich von der sogenannt wirklichen endlich dadurch, daß diese ein reales Nichts zu seyn scheint, jene, weil sie ein Werden des ideal individuellen zum Unendlichrealen, und des unendlichrealen zum individuell idealen ist, in eben dem Grade an Gehalt und Harmonie gewinnt, jemehre sie gedacht wird als Übergang aus Bestehendem ins Bestehende...*" (FA. p. 176) Pfau translates the passage as "the idealistic dissolution, then, finally differs from the so-called real one is [sic] that the former appears to be a real nothing while the latter, because it is a development from the real-individual to the infinite-real and from the infinite real to the ideal individual, gains substance and harmony the more it is thought of as a transition from existence to existence..." A more accurate translation of the passage would be "thus the idealistic dissolution finally is distinguished from the so-called actual dissolution, understood in that the so-called actual dissolution appears to be a real nothing, and the ideal dissolution - because it is a becoming of what is ideally individual into what is infinitely real, and of what is infinitely-real individually ideal - gains in content and harmony in precisely the degree to which it is thought of as a transition from one existing thing to another." The effect of this mistranslation is to attribute the characteristics of actual dissolution to the idealistic dissolution and vice versa thereby making the passage appear to contradict all that has been stated previously in the text.

25. Pfau. p.97. F.A. Vol. 14. p.175.

26. Ibid.

27. This can be related back to the discussion in the third section of Chapter One.

28. Pfau. p. 100. F.A. Vol.14. p.177.

29. Hölderlin continues this passage by stating "The new individual now strives to isolate itself from infinity precisely to the extent that from the second perspective the isolated, individual-old strives to universalise and dissolve itself into the infinite sentiment of existence." (p.100)

30. This does not mean that the term "work" is here being employed in the same sense as it used by the Jena Romantics, whereby the term "work" still refers in some sense to the actual work of art. Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe

clarify this point in Chapter One of The Literary Absolute, when they identify Hölderlin with the Romantics by referring to their common understanding of the relationship to infinity - the "asymptotic relation" that is suggested in the letter to Schelling of Dec 1795. However, they distinguish Hölderlin from the Romantics with respect to the question of the status of the "work". Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy write, "Yet unlike Hölderlin, and much closer to idealism, the romantics simultaneously postulate the motifs of a present, accomplished infinite in a work that the logic of the fragment stubbornly summarises within the contours of its ideal, and as a corollary to this, the potential infinite in itself as the actuality of the work" p.48.

31. This idea is also suggested briefly in the latter section of the Operations essay where Hölderlin states, "Just as cognition intuits language, so does language remember cognition".(p.79) ("*So wie die Erkenntniß die Sprache ahndet, so erinnert sich die Sprache der Erkenntniß*" p.158) Here, the idea that there is an intrinsic relationship between the act of recollection and cognition/knowledge can again be found. The relation between knowledge and the language in which this knowledge is expressed, understood, is premised upon the primacy of the act of recollection. It is through the "recollection" of the "cognition" that the "I" is constructed.

32. See the letter to Schelling of December 10th 1795, quoted in section 1.

33. For example the later poems such as Andenken and Mnemsoyne which deal specifically with the status and reliability of memory and recollection.

Chapter 5.

1/ The majority of the translation was completed between 1800 and 1802. However prior to this, Hölderlin is displaying an increasing interest in the works of Sophocles. He commenced translating Antigone after the the Empedocles project was abandoned. This draft was subsequently left and Hölderlin's attention turned to the translation of Oedipus. The bulk of this was translated in 1801, and then he returned to the Antigone translation. It is clear that Hölderlin had intended to also provide translations of Oedipus at Colonus and Ajax, although only brief fragments of these works survive. For a more

detailed outline of the process of composition see Beißner's commentary on the translations in StA. Vol. 5 p. 451.

2/ These translations of Pindar are important because Hölderlin employs principles which are similar to those involved in the Sophocles translations. However detailed consideration of these texts is necessarily outside the scope - and competence - of this study. For an introduction in English to these texts see chapter VII of R.B Harrison's comprehensive study, Hölderlin and Greek Literature.

3/ The scale of Hölderlin's productivity during this short period of time cannot be overstated. Not only was he engaged in the translation projects, but also he was drafting some of the greatest of the Hymns and Elegies; e.g. Germanien and Der Rhein and also Dichterberuf and Brod und Wein were all written between late 1800 and summer 1801.

4/ From comments which Hölderlin makes in letters to his publisher, Wilmans, it is clear that the Remarks are not the full scale introduction to the translations which he had planned. In fact in a letter dated 8th December 1803, he makes clear that he considers the Remarks do not "sufficiently" outline his "conviction regarding Greek art and the "meaning of the plays". However, despite at least two written declarations of the imminent appearance of the full scale introduction to the translations it never materialised. The translations were eventually first published by Wilmans in 1804 with the Remarks appended.

5/ Benjamin, W. "The Task of the Translator" in Illuminations p. 80-1.

6/ Hölderlin, F. StA. Vol 6,1. p. 434. My translation.

7/ The history of the critical reception of Hölderlin's translations is varied in the extreme. When they first appeared they were universally criticised not only in reviews, but also by people whom Hölderlin considered his friends and acquaintances. One of the most damning examples of this criticism are the remarks made by Voß, - a contemporary of Hölderlin's, whose father had translated and edited an earlier edition of Sophocles' tragedies - as David Constantine relates in his biography of Hölderlin. Voß states "What do you say to Hölderlin's Sophocles? Is the man mad, or only pretending to be, and is his Sophocles a covert satire against bad translators? The other evening when I was at Goethe's with Schiller I amused them both mightily with it. Try reading the fourth chorus in the Antigone. You should have seen Schiller

laugh.."(Constantine, Hölderlin. p271/381.) However, the translations have subsequently been re-evaluated and now they are seen to offer a unique, if provocative interpretation of Sophocles' dramas. For an outline of the critical reception of Hölderlin's later work - including the translations - see Otto Pöggeler's article "*Die Engen Schranken unserer noch Kinderähnlichen Kultur*" in Jenseits des Idealismus. Ed. Jamme and Pöggeler. For a discussion in English see Jeremy Adler's introduction to his translations of the Remarks in *Comparative Criticism* 5. (1983) pp. 205-44.

8. Benjamin takes this example from a quotation from Rudolf Pannwitz, whose work he considers to be "the best comment on the theory of translation that has been published in Germany." Benjamin quotes the following statement of Pannwitz from Die Krisis der Europäischen Kultur, to substantiate his own theory. Pannwitz writes, "Our translations, even the best ones, proceed from a wrong premise. They want to turn Hindi, Greek, English into German instead of turning German into Hindi, Greek, English...The basic error of the translator is that he preserves the state in which his own language happens to be instead of allowing his language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue...He must expand and deepen his own language by means of the foreign language." (Illuminations. p. 80-1)

9. Ricoeur, P. Time and Narrative. p. 35.

10. For example, in his article "*Poetische Logik: Zu Hölderlin's 'Anmerkungen zu Oedipus' und 'Antigonae'*" in Jenseits des Idealismus, Gerhard Kurz states "Die *Anmerkungen* sind jeweils gleich aufgebaut: im ersten Teil wird die Bedeutung des "allgemeinen Kalküls" für die Poesie überhaupt und für die Tragödie im Besonderen herausgestellt, im zweiten Teil wird die Tragödie interpretiert, an zentralen Reden, und im dritten Teil wird die Tragödie als Gattung interpretiert." (p. 83.)

11. Hölderlin, F. Remarks on Oedipus. Pfau, p. 101. FA. Vol. 16, p.249.

12. For example, Hölderlin's discussion of the positioning of the caesura and the necessity of achieving internal balance in the tragic form can be linked to Aristotle's insistence that the tragedy should contain the necessary unities of time and place, and that there should always be a discernible moment of peripeteia, around which the action is constructed. Hölderlin's analysis differs from Aristotle's insofar as he never specifically discusses the relationship

between the tragedy and the observer in terms of the cathartic effect of the performance. However it could be argued that Hölderlin does consider this relationship implicitly through the way in which the translation must modify the drama so that it can reflect the contemporary world-view. In so doing he gives the tragedy relevance for his own time thus allowing for the possibility that the contemporary observer can undergo a cathartic experience when they observe the dramatic performance. (This possibility is, of course, dependent upon a certain understanding and interpretation of Aristotle's use of catharsis. I am aware that some commentators - in particular G. Else - argue that catharsis is not to be understood as referring to an experience which the spectator undergoes, but rather is a process which is internal and integral to the structure of the drama.).

13. Hölderlin, F. Remarks on Oedipus. Pfau, p.101-2. FA, Vol 16, p.250. Translation modified. In particular I have altered Pfau's translation of the expression "*der Vorstellung selber*" from "the representation itself" to "representation itself". In this context, I think Hölderlin is not referring to a specific instance in the process of the presentation of the drama, but rather is making a statement concerning the nature of dramatic representation itself.

14. Ricoeur, P. Time and Narrative. p. 34.

15. Hölderlin, F. Remarks on Oedipus. Pfau, p.102. FA, Vol. 16, p.251.

16. See for example, David Constantine's comments on the Remarks in his study Hölderlin. He describes the texts as "fascinating, but often, especially those on Antigone, quite opaque or idiosyncratic to an unfathomable degree, and it is not advisable to labour over them for too long" (p.294) Whilst in defence it could be argued that it is not Constantine's intention to provide a detailed analysis of these texts, I think it is unnecessary to dismiss them in such a cavalier fashion. A more considered approach is shown by Klaus-Rüdiger Wöhrmann in his book Hölderlins Wille zur Tragödie. Wöhrmann provides a detailed analysis of Hölderlin's use of the term "intellectual intuition" tracing the way in which the term is developed throughout the earlier texts. However, he only refers to the Sophocles translations in the final three pages of the book, warning against basing one's understanding of Hölderlin's work primarily on these later texts. He argues that the later work is to be read as a symptom of the failure of Hölderlin's earlier project rather than seeing it as its logical conclusion.

However, at the same time as warning against spending too much time trying to unravel "*die Schwerverständlichkeit der Anmerkungen*", he also argues - correctly I think - that the later texts can only be understood in relation to the earlier work. He states that a "lopsided" interpretation is gained if one concentrates solely on celebrating their "madness", rather than seeing them as the culmination of Hölderlin's "theoretical" interests. (See Wöhrmann pp. 164-6.) However, even this more considered analysis suggests that the Remarks belong "...im Dunkel der späten Deutung" thus indicating that they merit less serious consideration.

17. The dating of this text is problematic. Beißner dates it as originating from the Homburg period (i.e. 1798-9) but Sattler dates it at least two years later making it contemporaneous with the Sophocles' translations. Sattler is able to substantiate this dating using various forms of evidence. For example he argues that the paper on which it is written corresponds to the type which Hölderlin was using for the Sophocles translations and some of the language which is used e.g the term "*Lebenslicht*" first appears in other writing which dates from this period. Therefore it is now generally accepted that the text dates from the later period approximately from 1801-2. For further discussion of the problem of dating this text see FA, Vol. 14 p.379.

18. Hölderlin, F. The Significance of Tragedies. Pfau, p.89. FA, Vol. 14, p. 383. Translation substantially modified.

19. Hölderlin, F. The Remarks on Oedipus. Pfau, p. 107. FA, Vol. 16, p. 257. Translation substantially modified.

20. Some commentators interpret the term "*das Ungeheure*" as referring to the actual persons involved in the tragedy. That is, through her transgression of the laws of the state Antigone becomes "*das Ungeheure*". In the eyes of the state she is a "monstrosity", an "aberration". However, I think that this interpretation does not take enough consideration of the process of transgression. It is not the individuals themselves who are to be seen as "*das Ungeheure*" - in a sense it could be argued that the tragic process destroys any notion of "individuality" - but the process in which they are caught up.

21. Etymology taken from Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary p.433.

22. As R.B Harrison points out in his book Hölderlin and Greek Literature. p. 169-70, the term "*der Zorn*" appears throughout both Hölderlin's later poetry

and theoretical writings. It not only signifies the conflict and struggle between man and God but also contains the connotation of being "divinely possessed". In entering into a relationship with the God, man loses any sense of self-identity; he is consumed by the proximity of the God.

23. In his discussion of Hölderlin's Sophocles translations in his book Antigones, George Steiner translates the term *nefas*, crime or transgression as "enormity". Referring to Oedipus' insistence that the identity of Laius' killer must be established and punished Steiner writes "In so doing, Oedipus succumbs to the temptations of *nefas*. The term signifies "enormity" more exactly, an enormity sprung from opposition to the Gods, from some violence done to natural destiny. Hölderlin would have known the term from Virgil and from Lucretius, in whom it is specifically associated with the world of the Furies." (p.78.) These statements support my translation of *das Ungeheure* as enormity, for the moment of *nefas*, the overstepping of the limit, is the moment of the meeting of man and God.

24. Hölderlin, F. The Remarks on Oedipus. Pfau, p.104. FA, Vol. 16, p. 253.

25. Hölderlin, F. The Remarks on Oedipus. Pfau, p.107-8. FA, Vol. 16, p. 257-8. Here I have modified Pfau's translation substantially because in places it is both inaccurate and inconsistent. In particular, Pfau is not consistent in his translation of the term "*Untreu*". In the first paragraph of this passage he renders the term as "infidelity", whilst in the third paragraph he uses "unfaithful". This means that the relationship between the processes described in both paragraphs is not shown. In the second paragraph, Pfau translates the phrase "*In der äußersten Gränze des Leidens*" as "in the utmost form of suffering". In translating "Gränze" as "form" rather than "limit", Pfau fails to pick up on the relationship between this process and the process which is described earlier when the "man and God mate". In both instances, this process takes place at the "limits". Also Pfau does not show clearly how the second paragraph is related to the third. In Pfau's translation it is difficult to ascertain what the word "it" with which the third paragraph commences, refers back to.

26. Kant makes this point clear in the introductory section of the "Transcendental Logic" in The Critique of Pure Reason. Here he provides the well known formulation "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without

concepts are blind. It is, therefore, just as necessary to make our concepts sensible, that is, to add the object to them in intuition, as to make our intuitions intelligible, that is, to bring them under concepts. These two powers or capacities cannot exchange their functions. The understanding can intuit nothing, the senses can think nothing. Only through their union can knowledge arise."(p. 93) Time can only be understood in relation to the categories, likewise as is stated later, man can only have knowledge through the representation of himself in the categories.

27. See Section 25 of "Transcendental Deduction B." in the Critique of Pure Reason. Here Kant states, "...In order to *know* ourselves, there is required in addition to the act of thought, which brings the manifold of every possible intuition to the unity of apperception, a determinate mode of intuition, whereby this manifold is given; it therefore follows that although my existence is not indeed appearance (still less illusion) the determination of my existence can take place only in conformity with the form of inner sense, according to the special mode in which the manifold, which I combine is given in inner intuition. Accordingly I have no *knowledge* of myself as I am but merely as I appear to myself." (p.168-9) my emphasis.

28. See Kant's statement at the end of the "Transcendental Aesthetic" in the Critique of Pure Reason, "... such intellectual intuition [i.e. *intuitus originarius* not *intuitus derivativus*] seems to belong solely to to the primordial being, and can never be ascribed to a dependent being, dependent in its existence as well as in its intuition, and which through that intuition determines its existence solely in relation to given objects." (p.90)

29. See Kant's discussion of the ideas of God, Freedom and immortality in "The Canon of Pure Reason." in Critique of Pure Reason, p.630-4.

30. In his analysis of the Remarks in The Caesura of the Speculative and in Chapter 5 of Heidegger. Art and Politics, Phillipe Lacoue-Labarthe tends to equate the moment of the caesura with the moment of categorical reversal, thereby turning the caesura into a conceptual term which describes the moment of the recognition of finitude. In the latter text, after giving a brilliantly succinct summary of the Kantian basis of Hölderlin's thought, Lacoue-Labarthe writes "...it is not perhaps impossible to raise the caesura to the rank of a concept, if not *the* concept, of historicity. A caesura would be that which,

within history, interrupts history and opens up another possibility of history, or else closes off all possibility of history." (p.45) Whilst objections to the elevation of the figure of the caesura to a concept cannot be sustained on technical grounds, I think that this move is problematic insofar as it reduces Hölderlin's discussion of the tragic process to this one concept. In so doing he ignores many of the statements that are made in the Remarks on Antigone concerning the way in which the work must be applicable to the time in which it is conceived. Thus, although it may be appropriate for Hölderlin to focus his discussion of the structure of the tragedy round the "meeting of man and God" it must be remembered that this is appropriate only for his own time. In elevating his analysis of the caesura to the rank of a concept, Lacoue-Labarthe is in danger of making the concept ahistorical. That is, in becoming the concept which governs the understanding of historicity, the caesura may no longer be relevant to the process which it is supposed to describe. It is for this reason that I am wary of the attempts to simply reduce all of Hölderlin's analysis of the tragic process to the moment of the caesura. The caesura has a meaning only in relation to the wider processes of which it forms a part.

31. Hölderlin, F. "*Brod und Wein*" stanza seven. Poems. p.248-9.

"But, my friend, we have come too late. Though the gods are living,
Over our heads they live, up in a different world.
Endlessly there they act and, such is their kind wish to spare us,
Little they seem to care whether we live or do not.
For not always a frail, a delicate vessel can hold them,
Only at times can our kind bear the Gods.

Aber Freund, wir kommen zu spät. Zwar leben die Götter,
Aber über dem Haupt droben in anderer Welt.
Endlos wirken sie da und scheinens wenig zu achten,
Ob wir leben, so sehr schonen die Himmlischen uns.
Denn nicht immer vermag ein schwaches Gefäß sie zu fassen,
Nur zu Zeiten erträgt göttliche Fülle der Mensch.

32. For example, in the last stanza of the poem "Voice of the People", Hölderlin writes,

"So their descendants heard, and no doubt such lore
Is good, because it serves to remind us of

The Highest; yet there's also need of
One to interpret these holy legends."

"So hatten es die Kinder gehört, und wohl
Sind gut die Sagen, denn ein Gedächtniß sind
Dem Höchsten sie, doch auch bedarf es
Eines, die heiligen auszulegen." (Poems p.182-3.)

Also in the elegy "The Archipelago", Hölderlin states,
"...Always, as heroes need garlands, the hallowed elements likewise
Need the hearts of us men to feel and mirror their glory."
"...Immer bedürfen ja, wie Heroën den Kranz, die geweihten
Elemente zum Ruhme das Herz der fühlenden Menschen." (Poems p.214-5)

Both these poems emphasise the reciprocal relationship between humanity and the Gods. The Gods need the poets to remember and recount the stories of the past in order to give them a position and value in the present. The poet acts as the "interpreter" of the Gods, his or her "reinterpretation" allows the relationship between man and god to be given a relevance for the present.

33. Hölderlin, F. Remarks on Antigone., Pfau, p.113. FA, Vol. 16, p.417.
Translation Modified.

34. This discussion of the "word" can be related to the statements I made concerning the function of the Caesura in section 5:2. The moment at which the "word" seizes the protagonist can be understood as the moment of peripeteia, the point at which the action reverses, sealing the fate of the hero.

35. Hölderlin, F. Remarks on Antigone. Pfau, p.113, FA, Vol. 16, p.418.
Translation modified.

36. For example, in his comments on the Remarks on Antigone Gerhard Kurz writes, "In den *Anmerkungen zur Antigone* bevorzugt Hölderlin die Vokabel "das reine Wort", synonym mit "Geist" oder "das Unendliche". Die Veränderung von "Vorstellung selber" zum "Wort", das den Menschen ergreift, deutet auf den geschichtsphilosophischen Index, den Hölderlin dieser Tragödie zuteilt: *Antigone* ist stärker als *Ödipus* die Tragödie des Übergangs von der griechischen zur christlichen Welt. Das "Wort" bezieht sich auf das griechische *logos* schon in seiner christlichen Bedeutung: das "Wort Gottes"..., das in der Welt Fleisch "Leib" ("*Poetische Logik*" in *Jenseits des Idealismus* p.100-1) See also the final

section of Meta Corssen's article "*Die Tragödie als Begegnung zwischen Gott und Mensch*" in *Hölderlin-Jahrbuch* Vol 3. pp.139-87, especially pp. 180-7.

37. This is exemplified best by poems such as Patmos and The Only One. In the latter poem Hölderlin attempts to mediate and forge a relationship between the ancient Gods and the Christian God, so as to allow himself better to understand his own time. This poem also demonstrates Hölderlin's problematic relationship with Christianity.

38. On first reading it appears strange that Hölderlin changes the term Zeus to "Father of time" because, as I argued in Chapter 3, in mythology Zeus is the son of Chronos who is traditionally thought of as the God of time. However, in this context, I think Hölderlin is using the phrase in a metaphoric rather than literal sense, and is referring to the way in which Zeus' killing of Chronos divides the unity of heaven and earth thus instituting finitude and temporality. Furthermore, it must be remembered that Hölderlin is explaining the changes that must be made to the text in order to "bring it closer to the modes of representation of our time". Hence the term "Zeus" cannot remain because it originates from a time in which the Gods had a more intimate relationship with man. However the mythology of Hölderlin's era lacks this form of intimate relationship - God can only communicate through his "unfaithfulness" - that is he can only be manifest through the finite, through what he is not. Therefore man's relation to the Gods can only occur in and through time, and the term "father of time" reflects this relationship more accurately.

39. Throughout the analysis of this text I have decided not to translate the term "*vaterlandisch*" so as to allow it to retain the resonances which it contains in German. This is because the term does not correspond completely to any of the English equivalents such as "national" or "patriotic". The closest equivalent in English would be the slightly clumsy neologism "fatherlandish". Furthermore, in other places Hölderlin uses terms which can be more specifically translated as "national" or "patriotic". For example, in the latter half of the final section of the Remarks on Antigone, Hölderlin specifically uses the term "*patriotische*", and in the first letter to Böhlendorff he refers to the "free use of the national", "*das Nationelle frei gebrauchen*" (StA. Vol 6.1. p.425) Both these examples suggest that Hölderlin wants to establish a distinction between "*vaterländisch*" forms of art and the wider terms "*das Nationelle*" and "*patriotische*". I think it could suggested that the

"vaterländisch" forms of art are not necessarily identical to that which is accepted as "*das Nationelle*".

40. Hölderlin, F. Remarks on Antigone. Pfau, p. 114. FA, Vol 16. p.418. Translation modified.

41. The Greek term which Hölderlin uses along with the term "*das Schicksaallose*" is "dysmoron" (δυσμορον) which can be translated as misfortune or bad fate. However this does not quite capture the full meaning of Hölderlin's use of the term. During a course of lectures on Hölderlin at the Collegium Phaenomenologicum in Perugia, August 1991, Françoise Dastur offered the following interpretation of the phrase, which is I think, much more provocative and pertinent to the argument I am advancing. She suggested that the term dysmoron could be understood as deriving from the idea of the "absence of moira", that is to the removal, displacement of fate. The Fates - that is the *Moraea* in Greek mythology - are not performing their duties properly. In a certain sense in the modern world, they are "dys"functional, their ability to influence the lives of mortals is impaired.

42. This point arises out of the earlier discussion of the need to choose suitable "analogical subject matter" for the drama, so as to allow the concerns of the present to be presented successfully. For further elaboration see the longer discussion in section one of this chapter.

43. This form of interpretation which links the translations of Sophocles with the later hymns was prevalent throughout the 1920's and 30's. In Nazi Germany Hölderlin was seen as the poet of the German nation, whose writings supported the nationalistic cause. Whilst it is impossible to deny that one of the most prevalent themes in Hölderlin's work is his desire to understand the spirit of his country, it must be understood that the relation between the poet and his country is complicated. As I hope I have shown in the course of this study, Hölderlin is not celebrating the glories of the German state, rather he is suggesting that the relationship between an individual and their own time is necessarily problematic. The poet's role is not to reflect the glories of their society but rather to offer critical comment and analysis.

44. Hölderlin, F. Remarks on Antigone. Pfau, p. 116. FA, Vol. 16, p. 421. Translation modified.

45. See the discussion of this text in Chapter Three, section 1.

46. Hölderlin, F. Remarks on Antigone. Pfau, p. 116. FA, Vol. 16. p. 418.
Translation modified.

47. Hölderlin, F. Bread and Wine. For details and further discussion see note 31.

48. This statement is taken from section two of the Remarks on Antigone where Hölderlin, after quoting Antigone's reply to Kreon's accusation that she is adhering to a custom and set of rules which is evil, comments "The amiable, the understanding in misfortune. The dreaming naive. The true language of Sophocles, since Aeschylus and Euripides know more how to depict suffering and wrath, yet less how to depict man's understanding as wandering below the unthinkable." (Pfau p.110.) ("Das Liebenswürdige, Verständige im Unglück. Das Träumerischnaive. Eigentliche Sprache des Sophokles, da Aeschylus und Euripides mehr das Leiden und den Zorn, weniger aber des Menschen Verstand, als unter Undenkbarem wandelnd, zu objectiviren wissen." FA, Vol. 16. p. 413.)

49. Hölderlin, F. Translation Bahti, T. StA, Vol 6.1. p.427.

50. As Hölderlin writes at the end of stanza seven of Bread and Wine.

"...But meanwhile too often I think it's
Better to sleep than to be friendless as we are, alone,
Always waiting, and what to do or say in the meantime
I don't know, and who wants poets at all in lean years?.."

"...Indessen dünket mir öfters
Besser zu schlaffen, wie ohne Genossen zu seyn,
So zu harren und was zu thun indeß und zu sagen,
Weiß ich nicht und wozu Dichter in dürftiger Zeit?..."
(Poems. p.250-1.)

Conclusion.

1. Lacoue-Labarthe writes in the concluding paragraph to his paper "Hölderlin and the Greeks": "Greek art is inimitable *because it is an art* and because the sobriety that it indicates to us is, or should be, nature for us. Our nature (sobriety) can no more take its bearing from their culture than our culture (sacred pathos) can take its bearing from their nature - which was never carried into effect.

In the chiasmic structure that shapes history, then, there is no longer any place, anywhere, for an "imitation of Antiquity" "It is probably not allowed for us" says the first letter to Böhlendorff, "to have with the Greeks anything *identical*".

Greece will have been, for Hölderlin, this inimitable. Not from an excess of grandeur - but from a lack of proper being. It will have been therefore, this vertiginous threat: a people, a culture, constantly showing itself as inaccessible to itself. The tragic as such, if it is true that the tragic begins with the ruin of the imitable and the disappearance of models." in Typographies. p. 247.

2. Lyotard. "Rewriting Modernity" in The Inhuman. p. 25.

3. Ibid.

4. Hyperion, Santner, p. 126. FA. Vol. 11. p.772.

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