

Christopher Yates

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Studia Philosophiae Christianae 49/4, 87-108

2013

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

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CHRISTOPHER YATES
Grove City College, USA
ccyates@gmail.com

POETIZING AND THE QUESTION OF MEASURE

Abstract. This paper examines Heidegger's short 1944–45 lecture course, *Introduction to Philosophy – Thinking and Poetizing*, recently published in an English translation by Phillip Jacques Braunstein (Indiana). The course presents a unique and penetrating treatment of what, for Heidegger, is (1) the compelling place of *mitdenken* and *mitdichten* in the fundamental nature of philosophizing, and (2) the precise relationship of these elements to questions of human guidance, dwelling, and willfulness. I argue that, so doing, the text clarifies Heidegger's uneasy position regarding the place of 'poetizing' in the work of imagination and reason. His ongoing engagement with Nietzsche and Hölderlin is here distilled such that we find a specific rubric for tracing Heidegger's subtle, though decisive, attention to the connection between thought's intrinsically 'productive' character and poetry's refining 'projective' artistry. This connection becomes apparent when the discourse of the course is paired with the focus of his later text, *Poetically Man Dwells* (1951).

Keywords: poetizing, poetry, imagination, measure, will, reason, philosophy, representation, guidance, questioning, poiesis

*Where are you, the Contemplative! What always must
depart, at times, where are you, Light?*
Friedrich Hölderlin, *Chiron*

1. Poetizing as possibility and problem. 2. Toward guidance and reflection. 3. The dimension for every measuring act.

In the Freiburg winter semester of 1944–1945 Martin Heidegger began a lecture course entitled *Introduction to Philosophy – Thinking and Poetizing*¹. The endeavor would prove short-lived, as he was called up into

¹ M. Heidegger, *Introduction to Philosophy – Thinking and Poetizing* (1944–45),

the *Volkssturm* after the second session. With the recent appearance of this material in translation for the first time we have reason to revisit this curious, albeit fragmentary, meditation on a tension intrinsic to a work of thinking that is by no means ‘introductory’ in the usual sense. Specifically, we have cause to consider how the question of *mitdenken* and *mitdichten* is neither an isolated errand within the being-historical itinerary, nor a mere remainder attached to the turn toward poetic essence in the 1930s. Rather, this course compels us to ask: on what basis and in view of what aim does Heidegger announce that “it is necessary, from out of a *dire need* that is barely felt, to pay attention to thinking and poetizing with a few indications”² Certainly the discourse of need, distress, and/or plight is decisive for Heidegger in texts such as *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)* (1936–38) and *Basic Questions of Philosophy* (1937–38), but the distillation of this discourse within the problematic of ‘poetizing’ is a matter we have yet to resolve, and indeed a matter Heidegger himself continued to navigate at least until the 1950s. I will argue that the meaning of this ‘need,’ thus specified, consists in the charge to recognize an interrelationship that is not only intrinsic to all philosophizing, but also encapsulates perhaps the most precise formulation of that position which characterizes the ‘end’ or limit of metaphysics and the ‘leap’ into inceptual thinking.

I begin with a brief account of the dilemma ‘poetizing’ presents Heidegger in the late 1920s and 1930s. This context should help us appreciate how *Dichten* names a point of orientation for themes employed in 1944 but not explained in full, namely: Willfulness, production, creation, and dwelling. I then investigate the stated project of the course and address the manner in which the relationship between poetizing and thinking comprises such a decisive preparatory matter for Heidegger’s sense of the task of philosophy. Owing to the unfinished

transl. P.J. Braunstein, Indiana UP, Bloomington 2011. Hereafter *Introduction*. The translation follows *Martin Heidegger Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 50: *Einleitung in die Philosophie Denken und Dichten*, ed. P. Jaeger, Vittorio Klosterman, Frankfurt a.M. 2007, 1990. Pagination for this and other texts appears as English/German with reference to the *Gesamtausgabe* (GA) volumes.

² M. Heidegger, *Introduction*, op. cit., 41 (GA 50: 136) (my emphasis).

nature of the course, I then suggest how the underlying impulse may be found in more developed form in his 1951 text, *Poetically Man Dwells*³. My chief contention will be that poetizing becomes, for Heidegger, a matter through which a fundamental attention to, and experience of, *measure* may be reinscribed in reflection.

1. POETIZING AS POSSIBILITY AND PROBLEM

Prior to the thematization of *Dichtung* and its cognates in the so-called ‘turn’ of the 1930s, Heidegger accredits poetry with bearing “the elementary emergence into words, the becoming-uncovered, of existence as being-in-the-world”⁴. This sense of unconcealment, as it pertains to the project of fundamental ontology, is paralleled by his emphasis on the *imagination* in the 1929 *Kantbuch*⁵ and its preceding lecture course. There he suggests that the power of imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) is “not just the mid-point ‘between’ pure intuition and pure thinking, but rather the mid-point in the sense of center and *root* (*das Zentrum und die Wurzel*)”⁶. Within the A Deduction especially,

³ M. Heidegger, *Poetically Man Dwells* (1951), in: *Poetry, Language, Thought*, transl. A. Hofstadter, HarperCollins, New York 1971. The translation follows Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 7.

⁴ M. Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (1927), hereafter *Basic Problems*, transl. A. Hofstadter, Indiana UP, Bloomington 1988, 171–172, 244. The translation follows Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 24.

⁵ M. Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1929), transl. R. Taft, Indiana UP, Bloomington 1990. Hereafter *Kant*. The translation follows Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 3.

⁶ M. Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason* (1927–28), transl. P. Emad, K. Maly, Indiana UP, Bloomington 1997, 195 (GA 25: 287). The translation follows Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 25. He further adds: “in this way the transcendental power of imagination reveals itself more and more as a structure of possibility, i.e., in its making possible of transcendence as the essence of the finite self” (94; GA 25: 131–132; see also 106–107; GA 25: 150). If one endeavors to ‘lead back’ pure intuition and pure thinking he will find that the imagination “loses not only the character of an empirical faculty of the soul which has been picked up, but also the restriction, hitherto in effect, of its essence to the root-Being (*Wurzelsein*) for the theoretical faculty as such” (106–107; GA 25: 151).

imagination could be considered the “primordial productivity of the ‘subject’”⁷. This means the cognitive faculties, the “‘creative’ capacities of the finite human creature”, depend on the same creative, innermost ground of finitude that contains the primordial understanding of Being. Heidegger says this point would ‘rattle’ the metaphysical understanding of Being and he laments Kant’s inability to see this through⁸.

But Heidegger, as well, appears to retreat from this ‘primordial productivity’ in the years following, a hesitation that likewise complicates his ensuing interest in that kind of unconcealment constituted essentially through *Dichtung* and *Poiesis*. We are well aware that the radical devotion to ἀλήθεια in, most notably, *On the Essence of Truth* (1930) remains decisive in *Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry* (1935) and *The Origin of the Work of Art* (1935–36); but we are also aware this progression is not reducible to a ‘poetic’ variation on the primordial productivity of Kantian *Einbildungskraft*. The creative ground of finitude does not simply constitute or translate readily into a species of thought oriented toward bringing-forth or poetizing beings in their unconcealment. Why is this so? And why might this difficulty accentuate the significance of a later meditation on the interrelationship between *Denken* and *Dichten*? One reason is the exercise and ontology of *production* Heidegger finds surfacing in the *willful* representations of Idealist reason. In his 1936 course on Schelling’s *Freiheitschrift* (1809), for example, he wrestles with the manner in which the will to *representation* assures the ontological acumen of absolute knowing, a tendency founded in

⁷ M. Heidegger, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (1928), transl. M. Heim, Indiana UP, Bloomington 1992, 210 (GA 26: 272). Hereafter *Logic*. The translation follows Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 26.

⁸ Had Kant acknowledged and heeded the ontological weight of the imagination, it would have required him to “raze his own building” (M. Heidegger, *Logic*, op. cit., 210; GA 26: 272). The transcendental subject would have to become the finite *Dasein*, for whom the imagination is fundamental to the possibility of any native understanding of Being (see M. Heidegger, *Kant*, op. cit., 154; GA 3: 219–220). Alas, “the question of the being of the *Dasein* as such is simply not raised” (M. Heidegger, *Basic Problems*, op. cit., 153; GA 24: 218).

the assertion: “primal being is will (*Ursein heißt Wollen*)”⁹. Specifically, he finds in Schelling’s account of divine and human becoming an “idea of production (*Herstellen*) which all too easily obtrudes itself”¹⁰, one presumably rivaling the privileged ‘emergence’ afforded poetry in fundamental ontology. The same concern arises in his lectures on Nietzsche between 1936–1940. In *The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics* he adopts the phrase, the “poetizing character of reason (*Das dichtende Wesen der Vernunft*)” as, it would seem, a title for the fate of the transcendental imagination since Kant¹¹. “The development of reason,” says Nietzsche, “is adjustment, invention, in order to make similar, identical the same process that every sense impression goes through!”¹² Poetizing in this sense denotes a necessary inventiveness in the exercise of reason which “must always occur before there can be thinking in the usual sense” (95/178). Nietzsche’s insight is that reason is underway as a prefigurative, commanding force invested in efficacy by way of securing constancy in the entities it determines. The question of course is to what extent the ‘poetizing character of reason’ names a matter of necessity or of prognosis? Is thinking party to *Dichten* in a way ever destined for *Wille* and *Machen*, or is there a horizon of reflective poetizing in which ‘production’ does not so easily obtrude and occlude the integrity of elemental unconcealment? Heidegger’s reading tends to be more descriptive than critical, but when the productive heart of poetizing beats the drum of representational thinking the fate of reason’s creative essence clearly becomes question-worthy (*Fragwürdige*),

⁹ M. Heidegger, *Schelling’s Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom* (1936), transl. J. Stambaugh, Ohio UP, Athens, Ohio 1985, 96, 165, in reference to Schelling’s words. Hereafter *Schelling’s Treatise*. The translation follows Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 42.

¹⁰ M. Heidegger, *Schelling’s Treatise*, op. cit., 118–119 (GA 42: 207).

¹¹ M. Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes III and IV: The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics; Nihilism* (1939), transl. D.F. Krell, HarperSanFrancisco, San Francisco 1987, 1982, vol III §15, 97 (GA 47: 177). Hereafter *Nietzsche III*. The translation follows Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 47.

¹² From Nietzsche’s *On the Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life* (1873). Cited at *Nietzsche III*, 94 (GA 47: 177).

if not dubious¹³. One well wonders whether poetizing is a dilemma that would not seem an advisable theme for an ‘introduction’ to philosophy. And yet, Heidegger has every interest in broadening the scope and implications of this very matter.

2. TOWARD GUIDANCE AND REFLECTION

The title for Heidegger’s 1944–45 course is, as it were, an argument. He believes an introduction to philosophy is a task that shall only come into its own if reflected through the lens of the thinking-poetizing relation. Having introduced the difficulties attending this relation, I now want to consider the course proper and highlight several ways in which Heidegger develops the theme and specifies the longstanding problem of production as something intrinsic to the creative character of thought yet ill-ordained if bereft of a grounding conception of *hervor-bringen* (bringing-forth) in *her-stellen*.

Freiburg students would have heard the play of *Denken* and *Dichten*, but may have been perplexed by the indication that in this echo itself there is the resonance of what is intrinsic to a life of genuine reflection (*Besinnung*). ‘Thinking and poetizing’ signals nothing short of “that region itself within which the human *as* the reflective-thinking being (*das andenkend-denkende Wesen*) sojourns”¹⁴. Philosophy is the

¹³ He explains, for example: “Representing (*Vorstellen*) must be self-certain because it now becomes the *re-presenting* of objects that is established purely on itself, that is, as bound up with a subject. In self-certainty, reason makes certain that with its determination of objectivity it secures what is encountered. It thus places itself in the scope of a ubiquitously calculable certainty. Thus reason becomes more explicitly than ever before the faculty that forms and images to itself everything that beings are. Hence it becomes the imagination (*Einbildungskraft*), without qualification, understood in this way. If we emphasize that Kant ‘only’ more clearly foresaw and expressed this essence of reason for the first time as a whole and in terms of the actual dimensions of its capacities as a faculty, this ‘only’ should in no way diminish the Kantian doctrine of transcendental imagination. The only thing we wish to do and can do here is to concentrate on rescuing this step of Kantian thinking by noting that it is incomparable (*Unvergleichliche*)”. M. Heidegger, *Nietzsche III*, op. cit., 96; GA 47: 180.

¹⁴ M. Heidegger, *Introduction*, op. cit., 3 (GA 50: 92).

realm of human sojourn (*Aufenthalt*) and not a field or discipline one elects to enter or introduce¹⁵. This is Heidegger's first corrective, and we may call it a positional one: philosophy already comes with the territory of human reflection. Even so, and even if there are distinguished "thinking ones" among the thinking beings, the position faces the qualitative predicament of a general "thoughtlessness" that "has its root in a loss of reflection (*Besinnungslosigkeit*)"¹⁶.

Thus situated, Heidegger's diagnosis runs as follows: humans are reflective, reflection entails a movement or sojourn in a region of "what-remains-to-be-thought (*Zu-dekende*)," but the sojourn can also consist in a condition of homelessness, a crippling of dwelling (*Wohnen*) such that we must learn to become more thoughtful. At stake then is the human inheritance and practice of reflection, and the juxtaposition of a birthright region and a pervasive "loss of reflection"¹⁷. The sensibility is Socratic: *doxa* conceals *sophia*, and provocations toward the question-worthy are pressed into a position of incongruence. Therefore, Heidegger continues, "there is need of a guide (*Anleitung*) to become at home in philosophy. Through this guiding, our thinking, which is not always at home (*Zuhause*) in what is its most own, learns to dwell and thus becomes a more genuine (*eigentlicheres*) thinking"¹⁸. We must not mistake this language as metaphorical appeal. If the need for 'guidance' is what summons the work of thought here underway, the destination to which we are guided will consist in a homewardness manifest as dwelling what Heidegger describes as "the native sojourn-

¹⁵ Philosophy is not a science that we normally stand outside of, for "there is no such outside-separated from human existence – that could constitute the abode of philosophy where humans would first need to proceed in order to be in philosophy" (*Ibid.*, 1).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2 (GA 50: 91). Heidegger's formulation of this predicament is a familiar one and recalls, for example, the condition of the average everyday understanding of beings and truth in *Being and Time*. But the present formulation is a touch more harrowing, and is nevertheless of essential importance to the project he proposes.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2–3 (GA 50: 92).

¹⁸ *Ibid.* Heidegger repeats the need: "a guide (*Anleitung*) is required in order for humans to become more at home (*zuhause*) and to learn genuine dwelling where they always already sojourn, although ineptly and unadvisedly". *Ibid.*, 11, cf. 52.

ing in the realms in which the human belongs”¹⁹. Guidance, moreover, is characterized by a pair of *eigen* (‘own’) cognates recalling ‘appropriation’: *eigentliches* (the ‘more genuine’ thinking) and *Eigentum* (the ‘property’ in which thinking is at home).²⁰ But in what way does considering the relation between thinking and poetizing enable us to become more at home in genuine thinking?

In order to attain guidance, Heidegger continues, we must allow the interrelation of thinking and poetizing to show itself in two figures, Nietzsche and Hölderlin: “But what would it be like if we were to look for poetizing and thinking where they encounter us at a peculiar necessity of their historical interrelation, that is to say with Nietzsche who as a thinker is a poet, and with Hölderlin who as a poet is a thinker? Both *are* both in a distinguished reciprocal relationship between thinking and poetizing. Yet this interrelation is characterized and rooted completely differently in Nietzsche’s thinking and in Hölderlin’s poetizing”²¹.

Neither Nietzsche nor Hölderlin are, in their own right, *the* guides per se. The *interrelation* between thinking and poetizing is the guide. And though we are “touched and attracted by a vaguely intuited connection between the two [elements]”, it is the manifestation of this “nearness” *in* these thinkers that draws our attention to them.²² To appreciate the guidance of such nearness we must follow Heidegger as he initiates a further corrective by way of describing that specific matter of *questioning* through which the focus on all that is *eigen* (and therefore guiding) typically attains traction: the inevitable and pervasive ontological posture toward that which *is*. How this questioning stands with respect to our intended homeward journey remains to be seen, though one could well

¹⁹ Ibid., 3 (GA 50: 92).

²⁰ The reference to ‘appropriation’ pertains of course to *Ereignis*. Though *eigen* is not the root of *Ereignis*, there is an audible reference of which Heidegger was no doubt aware. See Richard Polt, *Heidegger: An Introduction*, Cornell UP, Ithaca, N.Y. 1999, 146.

²¹ Heidegger, *Introduction*, 6 (GA 50: 95). He further notes: “In Nietzsche and Hölderlin’s thinking and poetizing, poetizing and thinking are interwoven with one another in a single and wondrous way, if not completely joined together [*verfügt*]”. Ibid., 13.

²² Ibid., 5 (GA 50: 94).

anticipate that such a terrain of questioning especially in the metaphysical tradition contributes more to the homelessness of our sojourn than our genuine dwelling. “We are constantly and everywhere thinking that which is,” he observes, “even if we are only rarely aware of this thinking. Therefore, we often only fleetingly grasp that which is. We barely have an understanding of the way of being in which beings, so diversely spoken of and compelled (*betriebene*), show themselves to us”²³. All thinkers are preoccupied with solving the dilemma of the ‘is’²⁴, though few, it seems, recognize the phenomenological disclosures assumed in such a question. The first element incumbent upon guidance, then, is that we acknowledge a prior guidance, an interrogative ontological momentum shaped by what he elsewhere calls the ‘guiding question’ (*Leitfrage*). So doing, we begin to see there is something in this preoccupation with the ‘is’ that reveals our homelessness and thoughtlessness. We have been guided in a circle, wherein beings are accredited as the real (*Wirkliche*), then reified into the plane of objectivity (*Gegenständlichkeit*), even if there remains the lingering suspicion: “By what right does the objective precisely count as that which is?”²⁵ An interrogative guidance, and all that it assumes about presence and representation, must give way to

²³ Ibid., 3–4 (GA 50: 93).

²⁴ Ibid., 15 (GA 50: 105). Elsewhere he observes: “In every thinker’s fundamental thought [*Grundgedanke*] is thought that which gives the ‘ground’ for what that thinker thinks. The thinker thinks that which is. The thinker thinks beings. The thinker thinks beings in the sole consideration that beings are and what they are. (...) Every thinking of a thinker says what beings are, what feature pervades beings. Thinking speaks the main trait of beings in its main thought”. Ibid., 36.

²⁵ Ibid., 4 (GA 50: 94). This interrogation of the so-called ‘is’ obviously pertains to the itinerary of fundamental ontology in reawakening the question of the meaning of ‘being’ (*Seinsfrage*) in a way that seeks to avoid the Modern metaphysics of subjectivity and representational thinking, as well as the longstanding prejudices that ascribe to being superlative universality, indefinability, conceptual self-evidence, and/or standing presence. However, within the precise focus of the course at hand, the allusion is not an idle rehearsal of the Heideggerian enterprise in the more originary; rather, it is a specified way of setting the recovery of genuine reflection in motion. Moreover, it names a matter that we are to have in view as we attend to the interrelation of thinking and poetizing in the noted figures.

a relational guidance. To heed the guidance of the thinking-poetizing relation is, somehow, to break this circle from within its own cycle of questioning. The relation may allow us to revisit the assumption, for example, that “the subjectivity of the subject determines the objectivity of the object”, and reappraise the obscurity of “the difference between beings and being” such that it returns to its proper “question-worthiness”²⁶. In view of this possibility, Heidegger announces: “Part of what is peculiar to the thinker and the poet is that they receive their meditation (*Sinnen*) from the word and shelter it in saying, such that thinkers and poets are the genuine preservers of the word in language. Then thinking, just as much as poetizing, always has its distinction in the fact that they are always a saying and a meditation (*Sinnen*) wherein the awareness (*Besinnung*) of what is, is expressed in language”²⁷.

The important ‘meaning’ of this statement notwithstanding, of immediate consequence is what it ‘does’. It highlights how the figures in which guidance is to be found exercise their meditation (*Sinnen*) and awareness (*Besinnung*) in a receptive way – they offer potential guidance because they are themselves guided. If we are to become, as Heidegger notes, “more thoughtful as the thinking ones that we already are,” then it will serve to remain alert to “how being sends itself to the human”²⁸; notably, the action in this sentence reverses the language of compulsion (as *betriebene*) noted above, and the language of ‘preservation’ is borrowed from the lexicon of *The Origin of the Work of Art*’s care for the work-being of truth in artistic works. One way this peculiar attention takes shape is through a confrontation (*Auseinandersetzung*) with Nietzsche’s doctrines of *the will to power* and *the eternal return of the same*. Three items are worth noting on this score.

First, as a thinker of that which *is*, Nietzsche holds that “all beings are, insofar as they are, will to power”²⁹. This position contains,

²⁶ Ibid., 23 (GA 50: 115), 37 (GA 50: 129).

²⁷ Ibid., 5 (GA 50: 95).

²⁸ Ibid., 11 (GA 50: 102).

²⁹ Ibid., 7 (GA 50: 97). Heidegger also discusses Nietzsche’s decision to name the will to power “the essence (*Wesen*) of beings (*Essenz*)” and asks: “Is the principle even

says Heidegger, the “fundamental” and “concealed destiny of Western thinking”³⁰. Will to power and eternal return contain a fundamental thought that consists in the poetizing of an ontology of will a factor consistent with items noted in our introduction. Zarathustra is the case in point: Nietzsche’s “poetizing [of this figure] becomes necessary as a *sign* of the completion of Western metaphysics”³¹ – the judgment that the being of beings is finally reducible to willfulness. Likewise, the doctrine of the eternal return of the same “is the thought of absolute mastery, not only over beings but over being”. Being, then, “is the will to power as absolute subjectivity”³². The thought is expressed by way of poetizing, and its content affirms poetizing as the essence of that which is. The extent to which Nietzsche received his thoughtfulness *from* being is not entirely clear, but Heidegger does attach a sense of historical inevitability to the culminating ‘sign’: “Whenever we constantly dig, bore, and think deeper into beings under the surface of beings, then we will find the fact of the ‘will to power’”, and “Nietzsche is the name for an age: the epoch of the development and installation of the mastery of the human over the earth”³³. In view of the larger goal-attaining guidance for reflection and dwelling – we may at least say that the interrelation of thinking and poetizing in Nietzsche appears to such a degree that the summary balance of all that ‘is’ is decided by way of reflecting the willful, poetizing essence of fundamental thinking itself.

Second, and related, Nietzsche’s ontology is constituted by a deployment of two poetizing elements which we know to be rather

demonstrable? If not, was the principle of the being of beings then just invented, fantasized (*erdichtet*), poetized (*gedichtet*) by Nietzsche? What is this poetizing, and what is it doing in thinking?” (Ibid., 40). Here Heidegger emphasizes the aspect of ‘willing’, a mode of becoming which, as it were, does not and cannot evidence a clear conception of “the being-character of this being (*Seinscharakter dieses Seins*)”. Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 8 (GA 50: 97).

³¹ Ibid., 14 (GA 50: 104).

³² Ibid., 62–63 (GA 50: 160).

³³ Ibid., 39 (GA 50: 132), 64–65 (GA 50: 85).

charged: *production* and *creation*. Early on Heidegger allows that “our thinkers and poets produce (*hervorbringen*) us in our essence,” but the question remains “as to whether we are essentially still great and noble enough to let ourselves be brought forth (*hervorbringen zu lassen*) into our essence”³⁴. This qualification suggests a positive, essential view of production. Turning, however, to the question of what certain of Nietzsche’s aphorisms reveal about his “fundamental experience and fundamental attunement”³⁵ as a thinker, the tenor of production grows complicated. “Almost two thousand years and not a single new god!”³⁶ The author of *The Antichrist* is not celebrating the death of God per se, but revealing his “essential thought” that “The God and the gods are a ‘product’ (*Erzeugnis*) of the human”. The human being is first and foremost the “creating one”, and “everything that is” is taken to be a human product³⁷. The decisiveness in such a view appears untroubled by a possible distinction between product in the sense of *machen* and production in the sense of *hervorbringen*. Moreover, Kant’s notion of the genius (who receives his gift from nature) thus undergoes an anthropomorphic resettlement: “Genius and the creative are the indication and standard for that which obtains in truth and deserves care”³⁸. Heidegger’s exposition then turns a more critical corner when he considers the larger modern determination of human essence: “The thought of the creative human or, stated more clearly, the thought that the human achieves its highest fulfillment in creativity and as genius. (...) is founded on the modern determination of the essence of the human as the subject setting-itself-upon-itself, by which all ‘objects’ are first determined as such in their objectivity (*Objektivität*)”³⁹.

He has sounded this note before. But now, oriented by the theme of guidance, further accents are available to him. The indications are that

³⁴ Ibid., 12 (GA 50: 102).

³⁵ Ibid., 16 (GA 50: 105).

³⁶ As quoted in M. Heidegger, *Introduction*, op. cit., 17 (GA 50: 107).

³⁷ Ibid., 18–19 (GA 50: 109).

³⁸ Ibid., 19–20 (GA 50: 110).

³⁹ Ibid., 20 (GA 50: 111).

a poetizing course of thought has indeed offered a species of ‘guidance,’ but one rooted in the “up-rising (*Aufstand*) of the human into the will,” a bringing-forth that “only admits the world as object” and establishes reification (*Vergegenständlichung*) as “the fundamental comportment to the world”⁴⁰. If this is the attunement won by the destiny of poetizing-thinking in the modern age, then is it the kind of interrelation Heidegger has in mind when he solicits guidance for genuine human reflection and dwelling? The answer, we may surmise, is ‘no,’ or at least ‘not entirely,’ but the state of affairs is not as simple as choosing one option for guidance and poetizing over another. Nietzsche, to his credit, understood the homelessness resulting from “the rationality of mediocrity”⁴¹ and sought to utter the “suffered word (*das erlittene Wort*)” to an age of languishing thought⁴². We have then a thinker who preeminently poetizes, but who also produces Zarathustra as the “highest uprising (*Aufstand*) of the modern essence of the human (...) the will willing itself”⁴³. We are reminded of Schelling’s primordial will and perhaps Hegel’s sublation of reason – common touchstones for what Heidegger calls the metaphysical ‘impasse’ of German Idealism. Still, in receiving this tension itself, to put it one way, we do recover our sojourn, but do not yet know what it is to indwell it in a more genuine, reflective way.

The decisiveness of the production issue for the thinking-poetizing impulse brings us to a final signpost: *Greek* poetizing and the problem

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Heidegger explains: “Nietzsche saw a mediocrity and narrowness everywhere around him; [he saw] rationality [*Verständigkeit*] that merely calculates, which cannot envision the great, looming historical decisions and is therefore also incapable of preparing humanity and the peoples (*Völker*) for them”. Ibid., 29 (GA 50: 120).

⁴² Ibid., 29 (GA 50: 120), 32 (GA 50: 123). On this theme of suffering, Heidegger refers to Nietzsche’s comment in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1882–1885): “The suffering of the higher human is not its low point; rather, there is still something higher as its height”. Ibid., 32 (GA 50: 124). He elsewhere speaks of an experience characterized as “essentially suffering (*Leiden*),” such as in the case of Hölderlin’s later poetry. See M. Heidegger, *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected ‘Problems’ of ‘Logic’* (1937–38), transl. R. Rojcewicz, A. Shuwer, Indiana UP, Bloomington 1994, 151–152.

⁴³ M. Heidegger, *Introduction*, op. cit., 34 (GA 50: 126).

of *measure*. Nietzsche is indicative of this matter because the production and creation embodied in his thought are a departure from Greek ποιεῖν/ποίησις. That is not to suggest a determinate Greek advantage over Nietzsche per se, but to highlight a difference that will catalyze the question-worthiness of the guiding interrelation. What is this difference? According to “the Greek experience of *being* as the basis” ποιεῖν is the bringing-forth of beings into unconcealed presence. This bringing, specifically, involves modes of receiving, giving, and positioning – the kind of ‘making’ that is not reducible to human action (*Aktion*), passion (*Passion*), or a self-enacted activity devoted to the production of something *new*. These distinctions set in motion a reinscription of a more originary ποίησις in the idea of pro-duction (*her-stellen*) and the meaning of *hervor-bringen*. “That which is brought forth in the bringing-forth (*hervor-bringen*),” says Heidegger, “is not something new but is rather the ever more ancient of the ancient (*das Ältere des Alten*)”⁴⁴. The guidance intended in thinking and poetizing thus comes down to a question of the kind of compulsion and receptivity operative in thought’s basic position and mood. It comes down to a confrontation between a poetizing centered on willfulness and one centered on unconcealment. That the modern metaphysical drift toward *Objektivität* and *Verständigkeit* privileges subjective creation and mastery suggests a forgetting of the Greek experience and understanding of ποίησις. Nietzsche, one could say, suffers even more than he knows⁴⁵. If, moreover, truth (as ἀλήθεια) informs the essence of Greek ποίησις then we are compelled to ask: “what truth accords with [Nietzsche’s] poetizing?” and “does poetizing, especially the poetizing of the poet, not stand under the law of truth?”⁴⁶ These questions further ‘dignify’

⁴⁴ Ibid., 21–22 (GA 50: 112–113).

⁴⁵ Heidegger notes: “Nietzsche’s thoughtful saying is distinguished by an uncommon negligence. This has broad and far-reaching metaphysical reasons, and can therefore not be remedied by a didactic correction”. Ibid., 38. But still more pointedly: “Why Nietzsche himself is unable to think wither the essence of truth or certainty, or even that of justice. The thought of values blocks everything. The final testimony of the forgetfulness of being”. Ibid., 64.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 35 (GA 50: 127).

the realm of the question-worthy in which the reflection moves⁴⁷, and serve to situate Heidegger's inquiry again within his well-known reflections on the essence of truth. As well, they attest to the preeminent question of *measure* lingering in the larger quest for guidance. That is, to ask after the standing of truth in poetizing is to accentuate the constitutive matter of measure by which poetizing serves the receptivity and/or compulsions of thought. But how does the question of measure catalyze the problem of guidance and genuine reflection? How might measure support our homeward trajectory?

The issue of *measure* (*Maß*) is not derivative of the Greek or modern experiences of poetizing, but encircles them. It appears as a semblance of standard, receptivity, and decision – all bearing on the passage from thoughtlessness and homelessness to reflection and dwelling. Heidegger asks: “Is there a standard (*Maß*) for measuring along with which thinkers we are allowed to think (*mitdenken*) and along with which poets we are allowed to poetize (*mitdichten*)? (...) Or is the burden of the correct choice decreased for us by the fact that the decisive (*maßgebende*) thinkers and the decisive poets themselves provide

⁴⁷ Ibid., 48 (GA 50: 143–144). On this score, Heidegger explains: “All real reflection (*Besinnen*), with each of its steps, immediately progresses deeper into the realm of the question-worthy (*Fragwürdige*). The latter is different from what is merely dubious (*Fragliche*), which occurs in many forms. It appears as the uncertain, as the undecided, and as the unexplained”. Ibid., 48–49 (GA 50: 144–145). Elsewhere Heidegger remarks: “Even where Nietzsche, as a thinker who ‘goes over,’ does ultimately twist free from Platonism *and* from its inversion, he still does not achieve an originary interrogation of the truth of Being and of the essence of truth, an interrogation that would lead to an overcoming”. See M. Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)* (1936–1938), transl. R. Rojcewicz, D. Vallega-Neu, Indiana UP, Bloomington 2012, 171 (GA 65: §110: 218–219). The translation follows Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 65. Without an openness for its truth, and without even a site for the distress which might recall Being's happening in this openness, Being must maintain in un-disclosedness what is proper to the essence of truth. See M. Heidegger, *On the Essence of Truth* (1930), transl. J. Sallis, in: *Martin Heidegger: Pathmarks*, ed. W. McNeill, Cambridge UP, Cambridge 1998, 148 (GA 9: 89). The translation follows Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 9.

the standard (*Maß*) according to which we grasp and assess (*ermessen*) the essence and the necessity of thinking and poetizing?”⁴⁸

Since we have found the thinking-poetizing relation in Nietzsche to be premised on a construal of production and willfulness, we cannot simply adopt his measure. Even so, Heidegger turns the predicament back upon a call for further preparation in our own affectivity. In short, the question of measure arises as what is first in the order of our ability to be guided. We are *not* to produce or create the standard by which we will be guided into the homeward direction afforded by the thinking-poetizing relation. Instead, as ones open to the showing or sounding of the measure, we take up a position of *mitdenken* and *mitdichten*. How, after all, “are we to hear and receive this standard (*Maß*), if we are inexperienced with what thinking is and with what poetizing is. (...) if thinkers and poets are to speak to us and if another claim is to meet us through them?”⁴⁹ This call for attunement already strips us of conceptual mastery. Knowing becomes a matter of following, of accompaniment and receptive readiness: “We are only affected and can only be affected if we can answer to the voice of the thinker and the poet, and that means to abide in the answer, or to learn to abide”⁵⁰.

Focused upon measure, then, Heidegger’s original positional corrective stands further developed. His language of affectivity, resonance, and abiding indicates a homewardness underway in subduing our creative, productive mastery, and entering the habitation of the question-worthy⁵¹. The problem of measure draws us into the region

⁴⁸ M. Heidegger, *Introduction*, op. cit., 44–45 (GA 50: 140). He later notes: “[W]here is there a measure (*Maß*) with which we can ascertain the essence of thinking and the essence of poetizing? If there is a measure here, who provides it? Where and how do we find the standard measure-setting (*Maß-Gebende*) for our contemplation that reflects on thinking and poetizing?” Ibid., 55.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 45 (GA 50: 140).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Says Heidegger: “All real reflection arrives in the realm of the question-worthy instantly and with every step. Stated more adequately, reflection already *is* in this realm. The question-worthy is what is decisive (*Maßgebende*) for contemplation”. Ibid., 49. Though the remark does not supply an ‘answer’ for the question of measure, much

of reflection, the very same realm in which thinking and poetizing correspond. Heidegger likens this to a mode of “remembrance” by which the position of dwelling is recovered from beneath the cluttered uprisings of willful reification. It is the “single free space,” the *Spielraum* grounding the inevitable question, “What now is?”⁵² As a realm of sojourn, reflection consists in an abiding decision to name a path of thinking and a space of dwelling. All told, we must not mistake these specifications as ‘amendments’ to a poetizing gone awry, but a recovery of the essential interrelation by way of entering back into the constitutive depths of production. The fundamental matter of measure, that is, arises as what is primary in the outworkings of reason’s inherently creative, figurative vocation. As such it prepares the way for the guiding interrelation to show itself in its positional, perhaps dimensional, aspect, as opposed to subsisting merely in the obtrusions of its efficacy.

3. THE DIMENSION FOR EVERY MEASURING ACT

Earlier I described Heidegger’s course title as an argument. In a sense it is the only argument. Everything else is a rigorous preparation. In order to attain a dwelling in genuine reflection we must learn to receive the measure for the kind of sojourn that is already underway in the drift of poetizing thought. The necessity is as pronounced as it is difficult to satisfy. We must learn to forgo the reflex to master the ‘is’ and, so doing, listen for a deeper *poiesis* beneath our rational and creative production. So doing, the preparation amounts to something like *kenosis* – we dignify the question-worthiness of this creative essence in thinking to such an extent, and to such difficulty, that our emerging grasp on the problem of reflection renders us open to reflection. But what about Hölderlin? What does his thoughtful poetizing say to our homelessness? If space permitted, we would do well to look back at

less a framework in which the thinking-poetizing relation would appear, it does anticipate an intersection between what is a preparatory problem and what is the intended destination of the larger quest for dwelling.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 53 (GA 50: 149), 58 (GA 50: 154).

Heidegger's 1935 text, *Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry* and rebound from there. Even so, and in light of Heidegger's itinerary since 1945, it is more fruitful to proceed directly to several elucidations that come in his 1951 text, *Poetically Man Dwells*. Here, I believe, we find the enactment of the preparatory work set forth in the lecture course discussed above.

The matter for this text is a familiar one: The question of the necessary relationship between poetic measure-taking (*Maß-nehmen*) and human dwelling. In this case, however, the kind of 'guidance' Hölderlin's fundamental words (as opposed to Nietzsche's fundamental thought) provide is more immediate than preparatory, more underway than under review. Of first importance is the standpoint from which the thought of the text unfolds. This standpoint is signaled on the opening page, where the text's title also names its task: to *hear* the *resonance* of Hölderlin's phrase ("poetically, man dwells") from within his poem's own dimensional work. We thus begin in a position of receptivity – the very standpoint ultimately manifest in the lecture course – poised to hear the phrase in its full standing, and thereby discover "dwelling and poetry (*das Wohnen, Dichten*) in terms of their essential nature (*Wesen*)"⁵³. By no means, however, has 'thinking' fallen out of favor, for the standpoint assumes the essential relation by which thinkers and poets bring forth "*the highest reality in the domain of imagination*"⁵⁴. Without a mindfulness of the guidance and dwelling at stake in the lecture course we run the risk of assuming *Poetically Man Dwells* to be simply a meditation on the poetic quality of this domain, or a romantic inflection of earth over world, agnosticism over onto-theology. Better attuned, we are prepared to revisit the affectivity and receptivity so crucial to a reinscription of unconcealment at the grounds of poetizing production. To receive or hear the poem from this position, that is, is to partake of the "nature of poetry as a letting-dwell (*Wohenlassen*)"⁵⁵. In this 'letting' the scope of 'production' undergoes a certain refine-

⁵³ M. Heidegger, *Poetically Man Dwells*, op. cit., 212 (GA 7: 192).

⁵⁴ M. Heidegger, *Contributions*, op. cit., 312 (GA 65: §192: 247).

⁵⁵ M. Heidegger, *Poetically Man Dwells*, op. cit., 213 (GA 7: 193).

ment that accords with the saying and sending ‘of’ being noted above. Heidegger submits all human speaking to the antecedent appeal of language itself the “telling of language (*Zuspruch der Sprache*)”⁵⁶. As well, he specifies the predicament of production by speaking in terms of ‘building’; as meritorious, poetic dwelling attunes us to “another way” of building, a building that listens from the *earth* as a scene of bestowal and exposure. The distorting notion of poetic ‘flight’ toward the future or poetizing mastery of the present stands undone by the discovery that poetry “is what first brings man onto the earth, making him belong to it, and thus brings him into dwelling”⁵⁷. At the same time, the notion of ‘sojourn’ is specified in terms of the ‘between’ (*Zwischen*), the dimensional position in which measures are taken. Heidegger explains: “The upward glance (*Aufschauen*) passes aloft to the sky, and yet it remains below on the earth. The upward glance spans the between of sky and earth. This between is measured out for the dwelling of man. We now call the span thus meted out the dimension (*die Dimension*)”⁵⁸.

Recalling the aims of the earlier course, the guiding interrelation becomes manifest from within the concrete particulars of poetic vision from the standing of this vision with respect to the clearing for all disclosedness. In short, we find here the origins of poetizing bracketed from the ready leap to inventive, instrumental reason. Thinking will always already have begun with a glance, a span, and thus a projection of dimensions enabled by what does and does not appear outright as opposed to a willful production assuring its authority on the basis of an ontology of will. Measurement precedes making, and indeed glance precedes maker. To stress the dimensional in this regard, then, is to accentuate the poet’s measuring glance as a work of dwelling that is already and immediately a primordial work of grounding commensurate with the essential ‘opening’ of ἀλήθεια – something distinct from

⁵⁶ Ibid. He explains: “For, strictly, it is language that speaks. Man first speaks when, and only when, he responds to language by listening (*hören*) to its appeal”. Ibid., 214; GA 7: 194.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 215–216 (GA 7: 195–197).

⁵⁸ Ibid., 218 (GA 7: 198).

the willful representation of the 'is.' Measurement, in this sense, is not an instrumentalizing practice of man, but 'is' man's essential mode of dwelling: "According to Hölderlin's words, man spans the dimension by measuring himself against the heavenly. Man does not undertake this spanning just now and then; rather, man is man at all only in such spanning"⁵⁹. The verbal sense of 'spanning' amplifies the dynamic identity of poetry and thought, what we first encountered in the 'sojourn' intrinsic to the thinking-poetizing relation. Earthbound and upward, measure-taking "gauges (*ermißt*) the between, which brings the two, heaven and earth, to one another". Such gauging is a measure-taking shorn of all directive *ideas* and archetypes, which nonetheless affords man his "security" and 'endurance'⁶⁰. Poetry, as this measure-taking, is an essential activity resembling creative bestowal in which the measure is taken by way of reception from the dimensions of the between. Consider the following statement against the backdrop of the early deference to poetry in *Being and Time*: "In poetry there takes place what all measuring is in the ground of its being. Hence it is necessary to pay heed to the basic act of measuring. That consists in man's first of all taking the measure which then is applied to every measuring act. In poetry the taking of measure occurs. To write poetry is measure-taking, understood in the strict sense of the word, by which man first receives the measure for the breadth of his being"⁶¹.

Every measuring act. With this statement the Kantian creative character of reason, and all that passes in its wake, is recalled to its roots. The birth of all measuring resides in an event of basic reception. That is not to suggest Heidegger has simply supplanted the homelessness of the lecture course with the *Zwischen* of the poet⁶²; rather, he has allowed a particular poem from the pen of a particular poet – for whom

⁵⁹ Ibid., 218 (GA 7: 199).

⁶⁰ Ibid., 219 (GA7: 199).

⁶¹ Ibid., 219 (GA 7: 199). See also M. Heidegger, *Contributions*, op. cit., 314 (GA 65: §192: 247).

⁶² See E. Cioflec, *Der Begriff des "Zwischen" bei Martin Heidegger: Eine Erörterung ausgehend von "Sein und Zeit"*, Alber Verlag, Freiburg 2012.

the interrelation of thinking and poetizing is of vital consequence – to speak and show the first stirrings of authentic reflection. Nietzsche, on the basis of what we have read, could not do this, for he was too much in the grip of headlong poetizing. Hölderlin's 'man' is far more mortal, for he is mindful of the original metric for his words and works, and thus poised to create by way of bestowal more than determination.

There is of course much more to be said regarding the pertinence of *Poetically Man Dwells* to the guidance afforded by the thinking-poetizing relation. But what we begin to grasp is an apprenticeship of production and creation to the heedfulness of poetic measure-taking, the abiding dimension of reflective sojourn. Considered in concert, this text and the earlier lecture course may well suggest a new rubric for interpreting Heidegger's 'turn' toward inceptual thinking in the 1930s and onward, a time in which he allows the thematic of the 'imagination' together with the creative character of reason to shatter outward toward projection, and there gather anew, reinscribed in the creative work of thought. We might consider, along such lines, how *The Origin of the Work of Art* and *Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry* already reveal an engagement with the problem of poetizing and the productive tenor of thought, how this preoccupation remains underway in the fugal chords of the *Beiträge*, and is then refined in the 'guiding' poetic imagination to which our focal texts attest.

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