BOOK FORUM

Of an Alien Homecoming: Reading Heidegger's "Hölderlin"

by Charles Bambach

COMMENTERS:
Ian Alexander Moore
Krzysztof Ziarek

INTRODUCTION: SCOTT CAMPBELL

In this issue of *Gatherings*, we are inaugurating what may become a new feature of the journal, namely a *Book Forum*. In October of 2022, the Heidegger Circle held a session at the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP) on Charles Bambach's book *Of an Alien Homecoming: Reading Heidegger's "Hölderlin"* (SUNY Press, 2022). That session led to the idea that the journal could host a *Book Forum* so that book authors might respond directly and immediately to their critics. Hence, this *Book Forum*. Ian Alexander Moore and Krzysztof Ziarek comment on the book. Following those comments, Charles Bambach highlights features of his book and has an opportunity to respond to their comments.

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A Tale of Two Heideggers – and Two Hölderlins?

Ian Alexander Moore

Wurzel alles Übels.
Einig zu seyn, ist göttlich und gut; woher ist die Sucht denn
Unter den Menschen, dass nur Einer und Eines nur sei?

The Root of All Evil.
Being at one is godly and good; yet whence this obsession
Shared among men that there be One and just one thing alone?
– Hölderlin[1]

In early 1976, aware of his impending demise, Heidegger copied out excerpts from five of Hölderlin's late poems and requested that they be read aloud, "slowly and straightforwardly," at his funeral (GA 16: 749). Included in his directive were references to the volume from which Heidegger was citing as well as to its editor. This was the fourth volume of Norbert von Hellingrath's edition of Hölderlin, which was officially published in 1916, the same year in which Hellingrath, as Heidegger would often remember, fell on the frontline at the battle of Verdun.[2] Heidegger's request may seem a minor detail. It is, in any case, easy to miss. Yet, as Charles Bambach shows in his magisterial study *Of an Alien Homecoming*, behind the name "Hellingrath" lies the tale of Heidegger's lifelong fascination with Hölderlin as the sole mouthpiece of German and hence Occidental salvation. The filmmaker Hans-Jürgen Syberberg has suggested that we in the twenty-first century are not in a good position to understand what Heidegger had in mind when he was lecturing on Hölderlin during the period of National Socialism. Like no other, Bambach's historical, political, and philosophical contextualization of

Heidegger's interpretation of Hölderlin puts readers in that position or at least brings them much closer to it.

Of an Alien Homecoming: Reading Heidegger's "Hölderlin" has many merits. It traces Hölderlin's influence on key terms of Heidegger's later corpus: homecoming and dwelling above all, but also remembrance, the poetic, the holy, and the fourfold, to name just a few. It persuasively shows how Hölderlin became "the decisive figure" (xxiii)[3] for Heidegger after his failed Nazi Rectorate. And it situates Heidegger's engagement with Hölderlin during the traumatic and tempestuous years of 1934–1948 in the context of cultural shifts and political events, including the profound effects of the Great War and the Treaty of Versailles on German identity and its revanchist resentment, the invasion of the Soviet Union and the concomitant mass production of wartime editions of Hölderlin's poetry, the founding of the Goebbels-endorsed Hölderlin Society in 1943, the Zero Hour in which Germans presumed to start fresh after their Nazi ambitions had been laid waste or "felled" (the so-called *Kahlschlag*), the Allied occupation and denazification proceedings, and postwar revelations about and responses to the Shoah. Heidegger's "Hölderlin," often untimely, is nevertheless always responding to the philosopher's times.

In what follows, I will focus on three issues that arose for me as I was studying Bambach's book: (1) why read Heidegger's interpretation of Hölderlin, (2) the extent to which there are conflicting forces not only in the philosopher but also in the poet, and (3) the relationship between myth and philosophy.

1. A TALE OF TWO HEIDEGGERS, OR, WHY WE SHOULD READ HEIDEGGER'S "HÖLDERLIN"

Of an Alien Homecoming exposes conflicting tendencies within what Bambach calls Heidegger's "use and abuse of Hölderlin" (104), thereby indirectly offering a lesson for today. On the positive side is Heidegger's insight into ethical dwelling, which is less a matter of conformity to principles regulating the behavior of subjects than a matter of thoughtful openness and responsiveness to the mystery of being itself. On the negative side, Heidegger never gives up on Hellingrath's nationalist version

of a "*secret* Germany" and "Reich" (cited on 47) that is accessible only to those Germans with ears to hear the prophetic voice of Hölderlin – or rather of a certain Hölderlin: not, to be sure, the Hölderlin of the Nazi Party, but one nevertheless cleansed of any Jacobin and Asiatic sympathies. In Bambach's estimation, it is Hellingrath's version of Hölderlin as savior of the Germans that motivates Heidegger's interest in the poet. "Ultimately," Bambach writes,

> what matters for Heidegger is Hölderlin's status as the herald of a future Germany, one whose authentic identity remains concealed to all but the few who know how to attend to the poet's call. It is this commitment to Germany's future – and its sense of a national mission to save the West from the nihilism of the world's night – that will fundamentally shape Heidegger's whole approach to the poet. Heidegger was hardly the first to co-opt Hölderlin's poetry for the sake of the German national mission, but the way he was able to conscript Hölderlin's unique language for his own philosophical vision of German exceptionalism has been unparalleled in the history of the Hölderlin reception. (xxiv)

If the elucidations offered by Heidegger *the man* are nationalist, exclusionist, and – especially in the wake of the *Black Notebooks* – racist (not to say, with Adorno, "fascistic to [their] innermost core" [cited on xxvii]), there is nevertheless another Heidegger, a Heidegger who recognizes constitutive uncanniness and alterity and "the profound experience of separation, scission, and alienation that lies at the heart of all homecoming" (5). Throughout his study, Bambach is careful to give voice to both "Heideggers," but it should be asked whether, when one of these Heideggers is caught up in "racialist exclusion and condemnation" and "deadly political uses/misuses" (xxix), it is enough to speak of the other Heidegger's "insight into the revolutionary power of Hölderlin's poetic language" (xxxi), of an "intensity" and "disclosive power" unparalleled "since Hellingrath" (Gadamer, quoted on xxxii),

or even of a unique contribution to ethics to motivate the risk of reading him. Perhaps Bambach does not wish to go this far, but a more pressing reason suggests itself: we should read the "monstrous site" of Heidegger's Hölderlin as one to which we, too, "are riveted" (to borrow a phrase from Reiner Schürmann).[4] The tensions embodied by the two Heideggers or by "Heidegger" in inverted commas (to mark this site of tensions) are not bygone problems to be studied for the sake of the historiographic record but tensions pulling us – and pulling us apart. We should read "Heidegger," then, and his fraught confrontation with Hölderlin in particular, because "we" are more like "Heidegger" than many of us might like to admit.[5]

2. A TALE OF TWO HÖLDERLINS? ON ALIEN HOMECOMING AND NOMADISM

It should also be asked whether there are not merely two opposed ways of reading Hölderlin within Heidegger's oeuvre but two "Hölderlins" in the body of work signed "Friedrich Hölderlin": not only the Hölderlin who gives the lie to nationalist cooptation, but also the Hölderlin who lends himself to and even invites it. This question can be approached by way of an extended reflection on homecoming.

Bambach is clear from the outset that homecoming cannot be directed toward "a factical entity waiting there to be possessed" (xxi). We never return exactly to what we leave behind, since place, and not just our perception of it, changes with time. But how are we to understand homecoming in relation not to a demarcated region of the earth but to something putatively more essential, namely, what it means to *be* German? (Other questions, which cannot be treated in detail here, arise as to what counts as German and whether a non-German is able to answer this. Let me just note that, for all their talk of the primacy of the German *language,* it is hard to image Hellingrath and Heidegger including among the ranks of Germans – and hence as capable of hearing Hölderlin's fateful word – those living outside predominantly German-speaking territories, however fluent in the language they may be, or even Germans of foreign ancestry "assimilated" within the mainland. It is

hard to imagine them agreeing with Karl Wolfskehl, a Jewish member of the George Circle who had fled Germany in 1933, when he claimed *Wo ich bin ist Deutscher Geist*, "German spirit is where I am," even though it was Wolfskehl who had coined the phrase "secret Germany" many years prior. The same might be said of the German of Walter Benjamin and Paul Celan, despite Heidegger's late, albeit blinkered, admiration for the latter.)

There seem to be three answers to the question concerning the meaning of homecoming in Bambach's book. The first stresses *return*, even if it is to something never possessed but only long "kept in store" (GA 12: 37/165). It involves coming *back* home *by way of* the alien. Here a certain reading of Hölderlin's famous letter to Böhlendorff is pivotal. Just as the Greeks were able to come into their own only by mastering an element foreign to them, namely, "Hesperian" or "Junonian sobriety," so the Germans can become who they are only when they expose themselves to "sacred pathos" and "heavenly fire" (cited on 96). Whether this fire will come from the Near East or even the Americas (as Hölderlin suggests in the poem "Remembrance") or whether it can be found solely in Hellenic antiquity (as Heidegger insists), the journey or voyage does not begin blindly but foresees a return. This focus on return, which threatens to exploit if not enslave the foreign for its own ends, is largely – although not exclusively – characteristic of Heidegger's engagement with Hölderlin, his protestations to the contrary notwithstanding (see 204 and 217 citing GA 53: 179/143).

The second sense of "alien homecoming" emphasizes the adjective as constitutive. Although Hölderlin bequeaths to Heidegger the tripartite historio-geographic model of origin, departure, and return, Bambach identifies several moments in Hölderlin's poetry and correspondence that privilege departure. For example, in Hölderlin's "Bread and Wine" fragment, the "colony" that "spirit loves" need not be read, with Heidegger, as the colony of the German motherland, thus in the sense of colonialist expansion, but rather – and despite Hölderlin's use of the Latinate *Kolonie* (from *colo*, "I cultivate") – in the Greek sense of *apoikia*, emigration without expectation of return (171–72). Or perhaps it would be better to

say: "*should* not be so read with Heidegger." For, Bambach also uses the terms "contorted," "transgressive," "tendentious," and "exclusionary" (169, 152) to characterize Heidegger's reading, which shifts the conflictually intimate balance between native and foreign toward autochthony and which, in conjunction with the interpretation of "Remembrance," fails to heed Hölderlin's affirmative allusions to the French Revolution and cannot imagine, by "brown women," anything other than tanned Greeks.

And yet, there are times in his book when Bambach hesitates in his assessment of Hölderlin himself. Bambach not only acknowledges that "Hölderlin did unquestionably embrace the mystery of the Graeco-German bond" (156) but parenthetically raises the possibility that Hölderlin's well-intentioned appropriations of the foreign might be less benign or pacific than they appear. Rather than acts in which one comes into one's own through dialogical encounter with the other, these appropriations might instead be arrogations or unjustified expropriations, even if not as violent or myopic as Heidegger's. Bambach writes:

> If for Hölderlin the very name and topos of "Greece" represents a contested space of appropriative engagement (and arrogation) of Near Eastern, Jewish, Christian, Asiatic, and "Oriental" influences, for Heidegger this will appear otherwise. "Greece" and its Ionian legacy will be cleaved off from Asia minor and will stand as the self-generated, autochthonous flowering of pure Hellenic genius, the inception of a Western history in which "Jerusalem" will stand as the Other to "Athens." (220)

Elsewhere in the book, Bambach uses the word "arrogation" to describe three things: Heidegger's misuse of Hölderlin for the sake of German regeneration (321 and 323, where Bambach gives *Vereinnahmung* as the German equivalent and offers "expropriation" and "takeover" as additional translations); Heidegger's arrogation of the status of an exile in a corrupt modernity (325); and the "arrogation and arrogance" that characterize one pole of Heidegger's interpretation of Hölderlin, the other

being "an ethical attunement to the hiddenness of being" (13). Thus, with his parenthetical, Bambach seems to locate not only Heidegger but also Hölderlin within the first sense of "alien homecoming," that is, homecoming by way of the alien. Even if Bambach means to refer to the way the Greeks arrogated to themselves foreign elements, this could still hold for Hölderlin to the extent that he is taking the Greeks as guides.

Should we not therefore exercise a similar caution when reading Hölderlin as Bambach teaches us to exercise when reading Heidegger on Hölderlin? Are there not two Hölderlins here, too? Were not Derrida and Levinas justified in their suspicion of the Swabian poet? Was not Paul Celan, however much he learned from him, justified – at least in some small way – when he declared in French, in conjunction with the bicentennial celebration of Hölderlin's birth, *il y a quelque chose de pourri dans la poésie de Hölderlin*, "there is something rotten in Hölderlin's poetry"?[6]

Suspicion can be healthy and should not entail dismissal. But we should distinguish whether a given idea in an author we are interpreting is at the center or on the margin of their thought, especially when this idea stands in tension with another idea animating that author's work. Bambach persuasively shows how Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin is moved by both centripetal and centrifugal forces, by an exclusionary myth of a hidden Germany – or even more narrowly of a hidden Swabia – and by a manner of a dwelling that is open to alterity and to self-transformation, although the movement toward the center no doubt predominates. Can we not say that the same forces are at work in Hölderlin himself, albeit in inverse proportionality? If so, then Hölderlin's vision does not look so "vastly different" from Heidegger's, as Bambach claims (123). There is instead only a difference in force or emphasis.

Bambach might reply at this point by drawing attention to a third, oxymoronic sense of "alien homecoming" in his monograph, namely, the "nomadology of the self" (166) that he maintains is present in Hölderlin's poetry (173, 217, 302). Yet would not the affirmation of nomadism, a term used for those without permanent abode or wanderers

without destination, necessitate relinquishing not only terms such as rootedness and autochthony (*Bodenständigkeit*), but also notions such as homecoming and perhaps even dwelling – and hence ethics as *ēthos*? There may be "hints and allusions" (170, 204) in Hölderlin or even in Heidegger that point in a nomadic direction (see, for example, GA 10: 57–58/PR 38), but it is questionable whether nomadology represents the core of Hölderlin's thinking. At any rate, more work needs to be done on whether and how it can be made compatible with the other senses of alien homecoming outlined above.

Derrida would be helpful in this endeavor. Bambach records Derrida's suspicion of Hölderlin (106) but later adduces a citation from *Geschlecht III* in support of the nomadological reading of the poet: "Derrida," writes Bambach,

> points to a different kind of "journey, the path open toward adventure, path-breaking, what strikes open a new *via rupta*, a new route for a new dwelling, and there, in the dependency or movement of this other line, we have, instead of nostalgic withdrawal toward the original dwelling, colonial expansion, the future as the adventure of culture or of colonization, of the dwelling that is cultivated and colonized starting from new routes." (Cited on 320)

Yet for Derrida colonial expansion "isn't contradictory" to but rather compatible with the "nationalist circle."[7] Aeneas is thus essentially no different from Odysseus.

3. MYTH AND PHILOSOPHY

Further, if, to speak with Deleuze and Guattari, Hölderlinian nomadology entails deterritorialization without reterritorialization, does it not also, to speak with Rudolf Bultmann, entail demythologization? If it is "mythic time that gives both Hellingrath and Heidegger license to de-historicize Hölderlin and to make him the voice for their own political/philosophical visions of the German future" (62), it is not as though

Hölderlin's own poetry did not operate according to such a conception of time, however influenced it may also be by the progressive time of the French Revolution. During Bultmann's heyday, it was commonplace to ask, "What will be left of the Gospel when its mythological language is subtracted?" We might ask the same of Hölderlin and Heidegger. What remains when "the law of homecoming and return" (xxviii), "the law of being un-homely as a law of becoming homely" (cited on 4), and "the essential law of Western and German humankind" (cited on 5) are stripped of their mythological garb? What is Hölderlin without Germania? What is Heidegger without a *geheimes Deutschland*?

One might attempt, with Károly Kerényi and Furio Jesi, to distinguish between genuine and technified/deformed myth. Bambach himself moves in this direction at the end of his introduction, where he associates "the promulgation of a new *mythos*, a revolutionary call [. . .] following the tradition of the George Circle with its embrace of the *poeta vates* (the poet as prophet)" not with nationalist arrogation but with "abiding poetically in being" and "finding our home upon the earth in an epoch of homelessness and deracination" (29; cf. 35, 37). But how extricable are these two takes on the Hellingrathian *mythos*? And if myth itself is not the problem, how to prevent being duped by the deformed versions and falling victim to images that become "all-too-timely" as Heidegger fell "victim to the all-too-timely German image of Hölderlin bandied about by his contemporaries" (55–56)?

At this point, philosophy might be summoned, not to banish the poets and their supposedly deceitful *mythoi*, but to reclaim its voice in the old quarrel and draw some distinctions. Yet, despite the metaphor of the poet and philosopher as standing on separate mountain peaks, Heidegger does not simply grant poetry a place alongside philosophy or thinking; he defers to the figure of the *poeta vates* or *Dichter als Führer* (as one influential work of the George Circle from 1928 was titled),[8] or at least to his own idiosyncratic reading thereof. This brings us to another set of questions, which concern the status of philosophy or thinking (Bambach does not rigorously distinguish the two) in Bambach's assessment of Heidegger's dialogue with Hölderlin.

Earlier, I quoted a passage from the preface to *Of an Alien Homecoming* in which Bambach speaks of Heidegger's "unparalleled" "*philosophical* vision of German exceptionalism" (xxiv; emphasis added). On the same page, however, Bambach contends that the chauvinist scope of Heidegger's readings of the poet – in other words, precisely that which is dazzled by the vision of German exceptionalism – derives from prejudices inherited "before Heidegger learned how to think philosophically"; it is these "nonphilosophical assumptions that implicitly betray the task of thinking that Heidegger sets for himself" (xxiv). This ambiguity concerning the status of philosophy runs throughout Bambach's book (see 10, 41, 91, 99, 135, 172, 251, 277, 309). It is unclear whether, on his view, the myth of the secret Germany is simply unphilosophical and, if so, what this would entail regarding the status of Heidegger's history of being. Is the latter so bound up with this myth that it, too, must be declared unphilosophical, or can it be sufficiently purged of prejudicial storytelling? Heidegger, for his part, critiques the separation of *mythos* and *logos* (GA 8: 12/10).

In either case, how should we understand Heidegger's claim, cited affirmatively by Bambach, that "he who thinks greatly, must err greatly" (cited on 29, but cf. 309, where Bambach deems it "dismissive self-aggrandizement")? One possibility opened up by Bambach, especially toward the end of the book, is that a philosophy worthy of the name would privilege alterity, which is presumably why Bambach can call Hölderlin's motifs of "wandering, migrating, traveling, wayfaring, journeying, and setting sail" "fundamental *philosophemes*" (173; emphasis added; see also 158: "philosopheme of the Other"). Accordingly, Heidegger would not have committed errors *of* thought; he would have erred *from* thought. The movement of Heidegger's *thought*, then, would be centrifugal or, to use a Hölderlinian word, eccentric, even if Heidegger *the man* never stopped centering it around *one* people, *one* land, and *one* language (a centering that could be called, following Hölderlin's epigram cited above, the "root of all evil").[9] Our task would be to read the thinker against the man.

NOTES

1 Friedrich Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4: *Gedichte 1800–1806*, ed. Norbert v. Hellingrath (Munich: Georg Müller, 1916), 3 (my translation).

2 In his final months, Heidegger always had the second edition of this volume (Berlin: Propyläen, 1923), "the only printing worthy of the poet," to hand. See Martin Heidegger and Imma von Bodmershof, *Briefwechsel 1959–1976*, ed. Bruno Pieger (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2000), 143, 153, as well as GA 16: 823.

3 Charles Bambach, *Of an Alien Homecoming: Reading Heidegger's "Hölderlin"* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2022). In-line references, when not preceded by "GA," refer to this book.

4 Reiner Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 515. Bambach speaks of Heidegger's "monstrous contradictions" (222) and, like Schürmann, compares him to Oedipus.

5 See Francesco Guercio and Ian Alexander Moore, "Heidegger, Our Monstrous Site: On Reiner Schürmann's Reading of the *Beiträge*," *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 42, no. 1 (2021): 93–114.

6 As reported by André de Bouchet in a later article: "Tübingen, le 22 Mai 1986," *Hölderlin-Jahrbuch* 26 (1988–1989): 353.

7 Jacques Derrida, *Geschlecht III: Sex, Race, Nation, Humanity*, trans. Katie Chenoweth and Rodrigo Therezo (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 132.

8 Max Kommerell, *Der Dichter als Führer in der deutschen Klassik* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1928).

9 Interestingly, the distich appears on the first page of Hölderlin-text in volume 4 of Hellingrath's edition, which today reads like an unheeded warning in plain sight.

The Futural Arc of Poetic Homecoming

Krzysztof Ziarek

Before reading Bambach's book, my engagement with Heidegger's "Hölderlin" had been limited to the question of poetry in his late essays. I never felt enticed to plunge into Heidegger's lecture courses on Hölderlin, suspecting that I would find the discussion of the national and the German likely less than inspiring, principally because of my interest in the transformative task of thinking. Still, it is clear that at least partially the impetus of the preparatory thinking of meditative thinking (*Besinnung*), especially the critique of power and violence underlying the opening toward releasement (*Gelassenheit*), comes from the 1935–45 decade, including the Hölderlin courses. In this context, Bambach's book is unique and indispensable, as it treats carefully and comprehensively the four Hölderlin courses, "The Western Conversation," and the later essays, interlacing their themes with remarks from the *Black Notebooks* and letters, and placing them in conversation with the cultural and political climate of the times. The book follows the historical sequence of Heidegger's texts on Hölderlin, which is crucial for two reasons: rapidly and significantly changing historical circumstances and the evolving contours of Heidegger's idiomatic reading of Hölderlin. Bambach's writing is not only cogent and lucid, but also thorough and accessible, allowing even non-specialists to follow his line of thinking. Putting the name "Hölderlin" in quotation marks signals Bambach's approach to two contested issues: 1) Heidegger's departure from literary interpretation, 2) the emphasis on Hölderlin's "unthought" in elaborating poetic dwelling. This is now *the* study to go to for engaging with Heidegger's "Hölderlin" and an indispensable reading for all those wanting to continue the conversation about the importance (including the pitfalls) of Heidegger's "Hölderlin."

This short response will focus on the arc of Bambach's argument: "an alien homecoming" as the relation between homecoming, poetic dwelling, and foreignness. This is in part because Bambach uses this constellation of terms to mark Heidegger's departure from Hölderlin's more welcoming attitude toward otherness. The detailed delineation of the proximities and differences from Hölderlin is perhaps the most noteworthy contribution of Bambach's study. Agreeing with this approach, I situate it with regard to parallel developments in Heidegger's thought: the critique of power and its relevance for understanding metaphysics as ontotheology and for preparing a futural poetic mode of dwelling. One can discern five related tracks in Heidegger's texts from the relevant time period: Hölderlin, Nietzsche, early Greek thinking, the *Ereignis*-manuscripts, and now also the *Black Notebooks*. While these attempts are most radical and exploratory in the *Ereignis*-manuscripts, they are also in evidence in the other four tracks. The courses on Nietzsche and Hölderlin stage a complicated and conflicted confrontation with their appropriations by the Nazi regime, with a view to the potential for a Germany not based on the "new" or "racial" science. The lectures on Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Parmenides in turn aim at exploring the possibility of the other beginning for thinking, one not overdetermined by the Platonic-Aristotelian articulation of Greek thought into metaphysical philosophy (ontotheology), and especially by its post-Hellenistic development.

Bambach's comprehensive and nuanced analysis of "alien homecoming" focuses on the relation between homecoming, poetic dwelling, and foreignness, in part to demonstrate Heidegger's departure from Hölderlin's more welcoming attitude toward otherness. As part of this discussion, Bambach negotiates between the transformative direction of poetic dwelling, the role of alienness, and German exceptionalism analyzed specifically in the context of Heidegger's comments on National Socialism and remarks on *Judentum*[1] – which is left untranslated here for reasons that should become apparent soon – and Jews. Since the remarks on *Judentum*, analyzed in the context of Nazi Germany, become the litmus test in Bambach's diagnosis of the role

of foreignness and the overall direction of Heidegger's vision of homecoming, especially in its difference from Hölderlin's, it is important to draw attention here to their relation to Heidegger's twin critique of power and of Christianness (*Christentum*) crucial to his confrontation with the ontotheological underpinnings of Western thought. Though not always directly stated, those underpinnings are also in play in Heidegger's remarks on the national, the German, National Socialism, and the Occident (*Abendland*).

Heidegger's remarks on *Judentum* are few, mostly brief, and relatively undeveloped. Nonetheless, they make clear the stereotypes of Jewishness Heidegger resorts to. Considering their philosophical import within Heidegger's corpus is, however, harder, precisely because these are infrequent and rudimentary notes, confined to the years 1939–1946. Keeping to the context of the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger's remarks on *Judentum*, without ignoring their anti-Judaic prejudice, could be considered jointly with and in light of his more extensive account of Christianness (*Christentum*), whose brunt Heidegger provocatively names "*Anti-Christentum*" (GA 97: 199). To my knowledge, Heidegger never uses the term *Anti-Judentum*, and the term "anti-Semitism" appears once in the *Black Notebooks*, when Heidegger describes it as foolish and condemnable (GA 97: 159). In the first volume of the *Black Notebooks* (1931–1938), there are no mentions of *Judentum*, while there are over fifty references to *Christentum*, with frequent scathingly critical, even sarcastic remarks directed at it as well as at National Socialism and German society. Many remarks point to Heidegger's critical stance on race and "racial science." In toto, the first four volumes of the *Black Notebooks* contain numerous remarks on *Christentum*, which Heidegger distinguishes from Christianity (*Christlichkeit*). *Christentum* does not designate religion, a community of believers, or the Christian worldview. Instead, *Christentum* names the domain in which being is determined in its manifestation by Christian, or more broadly, monotheistic thought:[2] the domain which Heidegger sees as part of onto-theo-logy. Grounding being through the idea of creation, *Christentum*, instead of keeping being in question, produces its decisive metaphysical determination. This

critique of *Christentum*, clearly in evidence in Heidegger's lecture course "The Ister," may help contextualize the function of gods, Greekness, and Christianity in Heidegger's "Hölderlin."

Heidegger's attempt at non-metaphysical thought proceeds through a critique of metaphysics, as a kind of anti-metaphysics, understood not as destruction or abolition but as a critical encounter in the manner of a confrontation (*Auseinandersetzung*). In this context, Christianness (*Christentum*) names the domain, the -ness or *-tum*, i.e., the home (from the Proto-Indo-European root of *dom*), in which the question of being comes as it were pre-answered, grounded through the notions of creation and an all-powerful transcendent divinity, as well as by the operations of power (power (*Macht*), violence (*Gewalt*), machination (*Machenschaft*), later enframing (*Gestell*)) stemming from it. This foreclosure of the question of being into *Christentum* allows power not only to hold sway but to continue overpowering itself toward a planetary reach. This singular casting of Christianness (*Christentum*) specifically with regard to being – as it were prior to questions of culture or religion – suggests correlation with terms like Greekness, Germanness, Russianness, Jewishness and Americanism (*Griechentum*, *Deutschtum*, *Russentum*, *Judentum*, and *Amerikanismus*). Although these overgeneralized, even stereotyped terms remain difficult to judge, they can be approached – perhaps thinking beyond Heidegger – through the prism of the remarks Heidegger makes about the domain of what is proper (*Eigentum*) in *Das Ereignis*. If we treat the early *Black Notebooks* as philosophical or at least quasi-philosophical commentary, then GA 71 provides a perspective that may help us understand Heidegger's insistence on distinguishing between Christianness (*Christentum*) and Christianity. *Eigentum* is translated perceptively by Rojcewicz as the *domain* of what is proper, a kind of event's "proper-dom" or "own-dom," an opening of and from the event.[5] "Properdom" names the possibility of the event's opening being into its ownmost sway (*Walten*). The remarks on *Eigentum* from 1941–1942 suggest that *Christentum*, and perhaps the other *-tums* Heidegger deploys in the 30s and 40s, can be considered with regard to how they decide, ground, or foreclose the question of being.

The sway of Christianness (*Christentum*), beyond religious belief and the cultural-political domain of Christendom's institutions, signifies in Heidegger's often caustic comments the collapse, the ruination, of the question of being. That is perhaps why most of Heidegger's acrimony in the *Black Notebooks* is directed at Christianness (*Christentum*) and in the second order at National Socialism for its failure to open to questioning the metaphysically foreclosed understanding of being. This does not mean that the assignation of Russianness (*Russentum*), Americanism (*Amerikanismus*), and above all *Judentum* to the "same" foreclosure of being is not marked by stereotyping. As Michael Marder writes, "the problem with Heidegger's anti-Semitism is his failure 1. to turn the figure of the Jew, let alone 'international Jewry,' which he parades on the pages of the *Black Notebooks*, into a question and, worse still, 2. to interrogate the very logic and necessity of coming up with a concrete figuration of a clandestine 'agency,' if you will, for the nihilistic completion of metaphysics."[4] Heidegger indeed never directly questions the relation between Christianness (*Christentum*) and *Judentum* from the perspective of being, or interrogates the differences not only between but also within Christian and Judaic cultures. With regard to the question of being he treats them as a monotheistic monolith – onto(mono)theology? – basically employing what looks like the stereotypical Christian cultural appropriation of the Judaic. That said, there are multiple "agencies" Heidegger designates as responsible for the nihilistic completion of metaphysics: the primary one, with the most power and influence, is Christianness (*Christentum*), and its offshoots: the capitalistic one named *Amerikanismus* or the Christian-Bolshevik one designated sometimes as Russianness (*Russentum*).[5] I can only point here to the drift of Heidegger's questioning on the hinge between the event's *Eigentum* and the various incarnations of the *tum/dom/* house where being is no longer in question: *Christentum*, *Judentum*, *Amerikanismus*, *Russentum*, and also *Deutschtum* – which is why, as Bambach illustrates convincingly through analyzing Heidegger's forceful readings of Hölderlin, at issue is a futural secret Germania, to which a turn (*Kehre*) or a coming (*Kunft*) might be possible.

Reflecting on Heidegger's vision of homecoming and poetic dwelling, Bambach writes, "...Heidegger never properly acknowledges the full otherness of the foreign. Rather, for him, the foreign presents a way station on the path of spirit's journey to self-recognition" (300). Yet, although Heidegger does not place sufficient emphasis on the otherness of the foreign, what he accentuates already in *Being and Time* is the recognition of the constitutive un-homing in Dasein. Heidegger's focus is the un-home (*Un-heim*) as the abyss (*Abgrund*), the abyss pervading the home with nothingness. In this context, should we perhaps interrogate the distinction between the uncanny (*das Unheimliche*) and the foreign (*das Fremde*), as well as the possibility of openness to the un-home (*Un-heim*) at the core of home (*Heim*) and homeland (*Heimat*)? In one version of several statements about the un/homely, Heidegger remarks that "The Ister satisfies the law of becoming homely as the law of being unhomely" (GA 53: 202/164). The homecoming (*Heimkehr*) Heidegger ends up pursuing through Hölderlin and beyond is not only futural but also pervaded by the uncanniness (*Unheimlichkeit*) intrinsic to language in its spatio-temporal saying. Language—I believe Bambach agrees—not land or people (*Volk*), ends up being the main determinant of the national for Heidegger. The homecoming (*Heimkehr*) is thus not only *to* home but *of* home and *within* home: it does not eliminate the unhomely but hinges on it. Travel through the foreign does not return us to what was before or let us gain what is properly familiar but rather inaugurates the familiar *properly* as the abode of the un/homely. "Such [poetic] dwelling springs from a becoming homely in being unhomely [*Unheimischsein*], from the journeying of locality [*Ortschaft*]" (GA 53: 173/139). That is why

> this poetry demands of us a transformation in our ways of thinking and experiencing, one that concerns being in its entirety. We must first dismiss our allegedly "natural" representations of allegedly geographically "actual" rivers and allegedly historiographically actual poets and human beings; we must first altogether let go of the actuality of such actual things [*die Wirklichkeit dieses Wirklichen*] as providing our supposed measure of truth,

> so as to enter that free realm in which the poetic is. (GA 53: 205/166–67)

Citing Heidegger's remark that thinking needs to think "the first beginning of the Greeks – a beginning that remained outside of Judaism and that means outside of Christianity" (GA 97: 20), Bambach reads it as confirmation of Heidegger's exclusion of Jews from the consideration of such a future abode. At the same time, in the context of "The Western Conversation" he points out that "Heidegger stresses a homecoming to the West as origin rather than to a narrowly drawn 'German' homeland" (289), as there homecoming concerns the entire Occident (*Abendland*). In the "Postscript" Bambach observes that "Journeying and being *unterwegs* [underway] – the hallmarks of Heideggerian thinking – are reserved for the German elect" (324). Without downplaying Heidegger's nationalism, if we follow the quotation from the *Black Notebooks*, the first beginning is not only beyond *Judentum* but also beyond *Christentum*. This is confirmed by Heidegger's remarks on metaphysical Christianity in "The Ister" course. What does this mean for Heidegger's consideration of Germania? Are there any Germans, or any *Abendland*, outside the sway of Christianness (*Christentum*) and its power-laced cast of being? Would those "Germans" perhaps be the elect few Heidegger mentions in *Contributions*? And what about the fact that the very notion of *unterwegs* is explicitly laced with Daoist thinking, perhaps breaking open the Western-centric perspective and bringing the Asiatic emphatically into the play of distinct beginnings? If the West is sometimes described as spanning Athens and Jerusalem, then what can be mapped out in Heidegger's thought is a very distinct topography, different from Jaspers's – still "metaphysical"? – revival of the axial age. It eschews centers and weaves its ways through "peripheries": Ephesus, Miletus, Eleia, Basel, Donaueschingen...and then the road branches off to Luyi in Chinese Henan, the presumptive birthplace of Laotse, perhaps even to something like "mental Russianness" ("*geistiges Russentum*"): intellectual, spiritual Russian-dom, which may still remain, Heidegger hopes, in reserve beyond the imperialism of Russian Bolshevism or Sovietism. And we should not forget that the wanderings of the locale of thinking

in Heidegger trace the paths of the demi-god rivers, non-human but also non-monotheistic. While thinking always unfolds in its "locality" (*Ortschaft*), this site is ever underway (*unterwegs*), its poetic fluidity is river-like, and in this sense non-territorial, its traversal half-divine.

Another context important to consider for Heidegger's "Hölderlin" is the critique of power, violence, and sovereignty (*Macht*, *Gewalt*, and *Herrschaft*) in the *Ereignis*-manuscripts from 1936–1944. What indications are there of Heidegger's critique of power in his Hölderlin lectures?[6] In *Mindfulness* Heidegger critiques the operations of power as imperial, total, planetary, and operating through a planetary operation (*Einsatz*) (GA 66: 18). In the section of GA 69 entitled "The Essence of Power" he writes about power's tendency to empower itself and to continue to overpower any level it attains, to "the exclusion of every outside that is not itself. Alone determining the essence of beings" (GA 69: 55). Power is without goals and "needs no bearers." Even powerlessness or impotence (*Ohnmacht*) is borne by power. In this context, Heidegger ventures perhaps his most radical thought of the power-free (*das Macht-lose*), marking freedom from the dialectic of power and powerlessness. At stake in poetic dwelling is freeing a beyond to power, which Heidegger sometimes describes as gentleness (*Milde*). Is this sense of the letting free of power – despite the rhetoric of the national and German exceptionalism in the Hölderlin lectures – not guiding Heidegger's interest in the poetic from 1936 onward? What happens to the sense of the mission and exceptionalism when Heidegger's critique of power, violence, and sovereignty (*Macht*, *Gewalt*, and *Herrschaft*) as well as of the planetary power of capital from the *Ereignis*-manuscripts is considered?

Bambach's study makes a valuable contribution also to understanding Heidegger's "late" works, especially their explorations of the role of language and poetic thinking in Heidegger's critique of the essence of technology. From this perspective, one issue that emerges is the potential impetus that Heidegger's thinking receives from Hölderlin's poetry, not only in terms of ideas about the relation between poetry and philosophy, language, homecoming, or dwelling, but also in shaping Heidegger's language for the new, "poetic" thinking. How much does Heidegger's

mode of thinking and writing bear the imprint of his engagement with poetry more broadly, and with Hölderlin's poetic work in particular? For example, there are the quasi-tautological or paratactic phrases, the hyphenation of key terms, and the mobilization of the polysemous momentum of German prefixes as language forces marking the paths for a thinking that is an alternative to philosophy and its predilection for propositional statements. And there is the approach to translation as thinking underway, which revisits, rephrases, and recharges the old and well-known texts, and, in the same gesture, modifies the path of Heidegger's own thinking. In other words, what is the debt to Hölderlin of the poetic idiom of thought under development in Heidegger at least since the mid-1930s?

NOTES

1 *Judentum* can be translated, depending on the context, as Judaism, Jewishness, Jews, or Jewry. Since my supposition here is that Heidegger uses and coins various substantives with the suffix "-tum" in order to indicate not human beings but an ontological dimension, that is, the domain of a certain way of being, one could render *Judentum* as "Jewishness," so that it corresponds to other similarly formed terms: Christianness, Greekness, Russianness, etc.

2 See Christoph Schmidt, "Monotheism as a Metapolitical Problem: Heidegger's War Against Jewish Christian Monotheism," in *Heidegger's Black Notebooks and the Future of Theology*, ed. Mårten Björk and Jayne Svenungsson (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 131–57. See also Heidegger's remark on the influence exerted by "the Jewish doctrine of creation" and the "Jewish 'mindset,'" in *Die Stege des Anfangs* (forthcoming; passage available in Ian Alexander Moore, "On the History and Future of Heidegger's Literary Estate, with Newly Published Passages on Nazism and Judaism: Klaus Held's *Marbach-Bericht*," *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual* 10 (2020): 226–27.

3 Martin Heidegger, *The Event*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), passim.

4 Michael Marder, "The Other Jewish Question," in *Heidegger's Black Notebooks*, ed. Andrew J. Mitchell and Peter Trawny (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 98.

5 Seen from the perspective of the question of being, the terms with the suffix *-tum* become an array, which opens the possibility that such terms do not refer directly to (human) beings, but rather to the modes in which being comes to be revealed in these domains. That is why these terms might perhaps be rendered into English as Greekness, Germanness, Russianness, Christianness, Jewishness, etc., designating, however problematically or even uncritically, ways in which being comes to light and gets enmeshed with power in these particular domains.

6 In this context, GA 66, 69, 70, 71 and 78 are of particular import. For a discussion of nonviolent force in Heidegger's undelivered 1942 lecture course on Anaximander (GA 78), see Krzysztof Ziarek, "The Nonviolent Enjunction of Being: Heidegger on *Gewalt*," *CR: The New Centennial Review*, 14.2. (2014): 73–77.

Heidegger, Hölderlin, and Homecoming: A Response to Moore and Ziarek

Charles Bambach

I wish to thank both Ian Moore and Krzysztof Ziarek for thoughtfully engaging my book, *Of an Alien Homecoming: Reading Heidegger's "Hölderlin."* I appreciate the seriousness of their questions, especially their focus on the multiple senses of "alien homecoming" that shape the book. Part of the problem of trying to understand Heidegger's complex relation to Hölderlin involves understanding Hölderlin's own interpretation of homecoming as he explains it in the Böhlendorff letter:

> We learn nothing with greater difficulty than to freely use the national…. It sounds paradoxical. But I will say it yet again and submit it to your test and your free employment, that in the progress of culture, the truly national becomes of limited advantage.… But the own-most [*das Eigene*] must be learned as well as the foreign [*das Fremde*]. That is why the Greeks are unavoidable for us. Only we will not follow them in our own [*das Eigene*], our national, since, as said, the *free* use of *one's own* is most difficult.[1]

To understand the differences between Greeks and Germans, and the reversal that Hölderlin deems so essential for each to achieve its proper identity, requires that we first come to grasp what is foreign. In the Greeks, Hölderlin wants to say, Germans confront their own proper origin – but, through the logic of reversal, this proper origin is experienced as something foreign, strange, or alien. The path to one's own identity requires a turning that needs to be experienced both as

a reversal and a return. One needs to journey abroad to understand the national so that the return homeward can provide a perspective of distance from the nearness and propinquity of the proper. In this act of distantiation lies the possibility and hope of poetic freedom. To freely use the national, then, means to traverse the boundaries of nations in an effort to come to a sense of how what is native within us can only become native through a journey into what is foreign. This logic of return – which serves as the basis of Hölderlinian homecoming – becomes essential to understanding Heidegger's own relation to Hölderlin. On this reading, homecoming is then *alien* by virtue of its need to confront something foreign that appears as a risk to one's nativity, nationality, and native identity. And yet for Heidegger there is a profound contradiction at the heart of his understanding of alien homecoming. On the one hand, Heidegger's own rendering of the law of becoming homely indicates the need for an other who is foreign, alien, strange, different, multiple, and unfamiliar. As he reflects on "the mysterious concealment of the intertwining relations toward the foreign and one's own," he offers something like an ethical insight into the heart of human dwelling. In a remark from the "Ister" lectures from SS 1942 that appears as if it were written by Levinas, Heidegger claims: "The relation to the foreign is never a mere taking over of the Other" (GA 53: 179/143). Moreover, as he puts it in these same lectures: "The essence of one's own is so mysterious [*geheimnisvoll*] that it unfolds its ownmost essential wealth only from out of a supremely thoughtful acknowledgment of the foreign" (GA 53: 69/55). Here we find an ethical attunement to that which is not our own that serves as the basis for a Hölderlinian ethos of poetic dwelling. On the other hand, in Heidegger's Hölderlin lectures we find another form of alien homecoming that privileges the German *Volk* as the sole hope for recovery (*Verwindung*) from the machinational destiny of Western metaphysics and technology. On this reading, we find such rebarbative comments as these that Heidegger wrote to his brother Fritz in the postwar era: "I find the changing of street signs and a Heinrich Heine Street wholly uncalled for because it is senseless in Meßkirch."[2]

Moreover, we cannot help but notice these kinds of overdetermined readings in his attempt to relate spirit to the foreign "colony" from Hölderlin's famous "*Brod und Wein*" fragment (stanza 9).[3] Here Heidegger invariably privileges the ownmost over the alien even as he defines the foreign only in relation to the native homeland. Hence, he can think of the foreign as "the still unappropriated homeland," the other whose alterity is thought only and ever in terms of the proper, the native, the homely, and the selfsame. Within such a configuration, remembrance will be thought of as "a thinking ahead [*Vordenken*] to the other of the foreign. That is one's own" (GA 52: 193/164). Heidegger reinforced this privileging of the proper throughout his Hölderlin lectures.

But Moore asks whether we should exercise a similar caution about alien homecoming not only when we read Heidegger on Hölderlin, but when we read Hölderlin himself. Moore questions whether perhaps "the same forces are at work in Hölderlin himself" as in Heidegger – namely the tension between the forces that pull towards the homeland and those that move towards "a way of dwelling that is open to alterity and self-transformation"? To put it simply, "what is Hölderlin without Germania?" As Moore puts it: "were not Derrida and Levinas justified in their suspicion of the Swabian poet? Was not Paul Celan, however much he learned from him, justified – at least in some small way – when he declared in conjunction with the bicentennial celebration of Hölderlin's birth that 'there is something rotten in Hölderlin's poetry'?" Moore pursues this because he sees something "oxymoronic" about Hölderlin's discourse of "the nomadology" of the self. Let me try to address these issues. First of all, I would agree with Moore that there are at least two Hölderlins; indeed, there are a proliferation of different Hölderlin masks and incarnations within the reception of the 20th century. What it would mean to find two Hölderlins within the poet's own corpus raises all sorts of interpretive questions. I have tried to pursue these in my own work on the relationship between Hölderlin and Paul Celan. Celan, like Heidegger, seizes upon the Hölderlinian trope of remembrance (*Andenken*) and its call to properly mourn the absent dead who perished without a hopeful possibility of future homecoming.

Hence, Heidegger can write: "*Remembrance* does not think back to personal experiences; rather, it thinks ahead toward the essential destiny of the poet" (GA 4: 86/111, tm). For him, "*Remembrance* is the poetic abiding in the essence of the poet's fateful vocation which, in the festive destiny of Germany's future history, festively shows the ground of its founding" (GA 4: 150/171, tm). But Celan will not follow Heidegger here. Nor will he grant him the historical privilege of appropriating Hölderlin for the purposes of sanctifying Germany's future "destiny." On Celan's reading, Hölderlin's own language remains dangerous, so dangerous that when he cites it in poems such as "Tübingen, Jänner," "I drink wine," and "Ars Poetica 62," he remains profoundly suspicious of its use and deployment.

What Celan's oblique style of textual reference/citation in these poems shows is how fraught with danger Hölderlin's poetic oeuvre remains. And yet, in the face of such danger, Celan continues to engage him. He does so, however, in concealed and indirect ways. Hence, where Heidegger weaves a narrative of futural hopes sprung from originary sources, Celan challenges this precarious discourse by concentrating on what lies before him in the present. In Celan's verse we find caesurae, enjambments, hard jointure, and disruption such that everything appears fragmented, disjointed, in need of suture – much like Celan's relation to Hölderlin himself. Hence, when it comes to Moore's question about "the two Hölderlins," I would follow a different track. Such an intervention does not deny the difficulties involved in reading Hölderlin through the lens of German history, but it also does not confine his writings to the same politically toxic vision of German national destiny as those of his right-wing followers.

We find, of course, in the Hölderlin-reception of the 1930s a crude and perilous misuse of the poet's oeuvre for an ideological imperative to German national ascendancy. Here Hölderlin's language, which means of course the German language, will be deployed in coded locutions to assert the racial-linguistic supremacy of the German *Volk* over other peoples and nations. For Jewish poets such as Celan, this linguistic derogation would culminate in what he termed "the thousand darknesses of

death-bringing speech."[4] In crucial and multiform ways, Hölderlin would come to occupy a central place in Celan's own work, not merely as a poet, but as the symbol for a certain kind of German national identity and vocation raised in the name of "Hölderlin." That is, for Celan (as well as for those Jews such as Derrida and Levinas) there was indeed "something rotten" in Hölderlin's poetry. And yet Celan did not dismiss Hölderlin's poetic insights or relegate them to the dustbin of German literary history. Instead, Celan took up the challenge of engaging Hölderlin's language in a profound and abiding way, never forgetting how it was co-opted by his brown-shirted admirers, even as Celan himself was also attuned to its poetic power and mystery. For him, Hölderlin's own descent into madness came to serve as a cipher for the long history of racial-historical madness that beset the German *Volk*. Celan's reaction to Hölderlin was certainly marked by ambiguity and bifurcation. On the one hand, he knew all too well that Heidegger's way of approaching Hölderlin's poetic diction was saturated in the brine of National Socialist homeland (*Heimat*)-discourse. On the other hand, Hölderlin's excursions into the possibilities of poetic language – especially its way of challenging the technical language that has come to define modern culture – led him to embrace the project of thinking the relation of poetry and philosophy in an essential way that came to him through Heidegger's readings of Hölderlin.

Celan was well aware of the dangers to thinking posed by Heidegger's emphasis on homeland (*Heimat*), returning home (*Heimkehr*), and homecoming (*Heimkunft*), but he never abandoned his engagement with Hölderlin. Rather, his ties to the poet are marked by a nuanced admiration and an awareness of Hölderlin's unyielding influence, not only on the German poetic tradition, but on his own work. If even Celan never abandons his ties to Hölderlin, I think the suspicion that there are "two Hölderlins" at work here proves dangerously hyperbolic. There is no denying that the palimpsest of the Hölderlin-reception in Germany is marked by a ruinous malignancy of national insanity (*Wahnsinn*). But the work of Hölderlin also harbors many lessons for those attuned to the anti-fascist impulses within German thinking. These are, most poignantly, questions that each of us needs to raise as we confront the difficulties of reading both Hölderlin and Heidegger's "Hölderlin."

Yes, of course, we must acknowledge the difficulties of reading Hölderlin through the palimpsest of 20th-century interpretation, especially in the Jewish reception of Levinas and Derrida. Hölderlin's poetry lends itself to such wildly contested readings. And yet I would not wish to place the egregious political errors of 20th-century German interpretation at the feet of Hölderlin. If, during and after the First World War and then inevitably in the war that followed, Hölderlin became a symbol of German national destiny at the expense of other nations and peoples, we can also find a different Hölderlin in the revolutionary student movement in Germany during the late 1960s.

Following the left-wing work of figures such as Theodor Adorno, Ernst Bloch, Pierre Bertaux, Robert Minder, and Peter Weiss, Hölderlin became the symbol of a new German self-reflection that demanded accountability, for the sins of the father, as it were. Nonetheless, I do not wish to present a "pristine" and flawless (*fehlerfrei*) version of Hölderlin's work here. There have been many figures within the Hölderlin reception (*Hölderlinrezeption*) who have voiced their worries about the later uses of the poet for their own purposes. But here I want to underline one striking difference between Heidegger and Hölderlin, one that I locate in a reading of poems such as "Die Wanderung," "Andenken," "Tinian," "Kolomb," and "Heimkunft," where Hölderlin expresses his deep love of travel and wandering, especially of journeying to Asia, the Americas, the Arctic, and Africa. This deep and abiding preoccupation with travel was combined with Hölderlin's interest in geology, cartography, topography, astronomy, climatology, and geopolitics, so much so that the Hölderlin scholar Helmut Mottel has come to speak of "Hölderlin's Nomadology" as an important element within his poetic corpus.[5] Hence, while acknowledging Heidegger's emphasis on Hölderlin as the poet of returning home (*Heimkehr*) and return, I want also to recognize Hölderlin as the *nomadic* poet of wayfaring and exploration, of a nomadology of wandering that looks to the open sea and to the life of mariners as the proper sphere for poetic journeying – and for poetic remembrance (*Andenken*). Here *remembrance* is understood not simply as what we do in an act of remembering. It is, rather, grasped as an indication of what happens to

us when we open ourselves to the temporal displacement and dislocation that time effects upon us when we turn back to the locus of memory.

I would also like to address Krzysztof Ziarek's comment concerning the unhomely (*das Unheimliche*), a question that preoccupies Heidegger, especially in the "Ister" lectures. As Ziarek suggests, this question about uncanniness proves crucial for Heidegger. Uncanniness pervades the human being's journey upon the earth, so much so that Dasein's very way of being is confronted by the abyssal character of its sojourn. For Heidegger, there is something unhomely (*unheimlich*) at the core of homeland (*Heimat*) and the homely (*das Heimliche*). That which is un-homely (*das Unheimliche*) does not stand over against the homely (*das Heimliche*) as its other; rather, uncanniness emerges from out of the very center of the homely as something intimately pervading it. This is precisely what Heidegger interrogates in his SS 1942 "Ister" lectures with his discussion of the first choral ode from Sophocles's *Antigone*. On Heidegger's reading, Antigone (far more than Creon) steps out of the site of the unhomely of her own power. And unlike her father Oedipus, she *knowingly* "takes it upon herself to be unhomely" (GA 53: 136–137/109). Such a decision, if it is to be authentic, "must spring from a belonging to the hearth and thus stem from a kind of being homely" (GA 53: 132/106). What matters here above all, for Heidegger, is Antigone's authentic resolve to embrace her fate as the one who embodies "the supreme uncanny" (GA 53: 129/104). If, like Creon, her uncanny expulsion from the hearth of being (*Hestia*) were occasioned by a mere presumptuousness (*Vermessenheit*) that measured all beings from the horizon of subjective volition and self-assertion, then such a movement would merely result in the forgetting and forfeiture of being. But because her unhomeliness emerges out of "a 'thoughtful remembrance' [*Andenken*] of being" that thinks of this unhomeliness as but a preparatory passageway to a homecoming at the hearth of being, Antigone succeeds in fulfilling the fundamental law of human history as "becoming homely in being unhomely." As Heidegger expresses it: "Antigone *is* the poem of being unhomely in the proper and supreme sense" (GA 53: 151/121).

Because what is one's own lies all too near, properly dwelling in such nearness (*Nähe*) is the most difficult precisely because its proximity unthinkingly inures us to what is genuinely our own within it. For this reason we first need to journey into the foreign in order to come into what is our own since this very movement away from the proper brings with it a "thoughtful remembrance" or *Andenken* of the proper. According to Heidegger, the dramatic action within the play *Antigone* by the character Antigone brings about just such a movement since it confronts us with the decision of dwelling authentically within the uncanny, and indeed doubly so, since the uncanny here appears as what is foreign to the Germans – namely, as the *Greek* form of being unhomely precisely as a way of (authentically) becoming homely.

For Heidegger, it is this sense of the uncanniness of human existence that marks the very appearance of Dasein as tragic since "human beings themselves in their own essence are a *katastrophe*: a reversal that turns them away from their own essence" (GA 53: 94/77, tm). This sense of not-being-at-home even – and precisely when – we are at home will come to mark Heidegger's own interpretation of *Antigone*.

In *Of an Alien Homecoming*, I have tried to show that this discourse about the proper way of human dwelling is yet another way for Heidegger to raise the question of "originary ethics." Such a question involves both tarrying/abiding in a native abode as well as journeying outward into the foreign. It involves an awareness that to be able to dwell in the proper, native, and homely, we must first abide in the abode of the unhomely, the uncanny, the improper. This is what distinguishes us as the exception among beings, that we both inhabit and are inhabited by an inescapable uncanniness that pervades our *ethos*.

So, yes, I would certainly welcome Ziarek's suggestion that the possibility of openness to the unhomely (*unheimlich*) lies at the core of what is homely (*heimlich*) and of homeland (*Heimat*). But we also need to remember that for Heidegger, few of us are like Antigone. That is, few of us *knowingly* embrace the unhomeliness (*Unheimlichkeit*) at the center of our existence. Instead, we find strategies of evasion and comfort that inure us to the uncanniness that pervades our way of being.

All of Heidegger's efforts here are aimed at opening this relation to our notice, of attempting to make us ever more mindful of our need to address the uncanny essence of our own canny attempts to evade that which cannot be evaded: the abyss at the heart of being, the *Abgrund* that, as the ungrounded ground of all that is, pervades every human venture to ground its own home. We see this in the way Heidegger ends his "Ister" lectures (SS 1942) when he writes of Hölderlin's poetry: "This poetry demands of us a transformation in our ways of thinking and experiencing, one that concerns being in its entirety" (GA 53: 205/166). As part of this transformation, Heidegger enjoins us to "let go of…our presumptive measure of truth, so as to enter that free realm in which the poetic is" (GA 53: 205/167). He then raises a question which Hölderlin famously posed in one of his late poems, "In lovely blueness": "Is there a measure on earth?" and he reminds us that Hölderlin answered this question by avowing "There is none" (GA 53: 205/167). As we confront this lack of earthly measure as the "token of hopelessness and despair," Heidegger asks us to think a different measure, perhaps even a poetic measure, that might shelter the truth of the poetic word (GA 53: 205/167). In turning to such a word, Heidegger's thinking holds forth the hope that in intimate nearness to this word "we might suddenly be struck by it[s]" unrelenting power (GA 53: 205/167). To live in nearness to this word would then open the possibility of what it might mean were we to live commensurately with the promise of poetic dwelling.

Now let me turn to Ziarek's thoughtful questions about two other themes in the Heidegger of the 1930s–40s: Christianity (*Christentum*) and power. Ziarek is right to emphasize the fuller context of Heidegger's remarks on Judaism (*Judentum*) without ignoring their anti-Judaic prejudice. Heidegger is so strongly opposed to *Christentum* because it is so powerfully tied to the idea of "creation," which instead of keeping the dynamics of being open and free, closes off the sense of being's unfolding through what Ziarek terms "its decisive metaphysical determination." I couldn't agree more. Such an understanding of being as something "created" leads to the forgetting of being. Heidegger goes so far as to read this tradition's notion of monotheism as providing the basis for

"modern systems of total tyranny" (GA 97: 438). And here is where I should acknowledge the insightfulness of Ziarek's commentary.

As Ziarek notes, Heidegger's animus toward *Christentum* and its creation doctrine lies in its failure to embrace the very question of being, instead foreclosing this question in advance of such questioning by supplying pregiven answers to the questions posed. Again, Ziarek is right to show that Heidegger "never directly questions the relation between *Christentum* and *Judentum* from the perspective of being." His notion of monotheism forestalls such an approach. For both *Christentum* and *Judentum* are tied to Heidegger's planetary understanding of machinational dominion that renders all beings as standing reserve. Hence, I find Ziarek's playful suggestion that Heidegger's ontotheology can be grasped as an onto(mono)theology a helpful one. Against this background, we should remember that not only Jews and Christians serve as the artificers of machination. America, England, and the West will serve this function as well, as will Bolshevism and Fascism, and, by the end of the 1930s, even National Socialism. Even here, however, we find the traces of Heidegger's own national-regional predilections, for in the *Black Notebooks* he remarks: "In its essential sense 'Catholicism' [*'das Katholische'*] is in its historical provenance Roman-Spanish, utterly un-Nordic and completely un-German" (GA 95: 326/254, tm).

Ziarek also emphasizes what he calls "the twin critiques of power and of *Christentum*." As Ziarek shows, what pervades Heidegger's texts much more than a latent anti-Semitism is the direct and frontal attack on *Christentum*. For Heidegger, *Christentum* becomes the focus of critique precisely insofar as it comes to be synonymous with the reign of machination within the history of beyng. With this mono-theological drive to ground being in the idea of creation (*ens creatum*), *Christentum* forecloses the question of being by grounding it in the idea of a creator-god who functions as a meta-subject imbued with the power to determine beings. The death of god proclaimed by Nietzsche bespeaks for Heidegger not a crisis of faith in a divine being as much as it does a shift in the history of beyng towards oblivion of being (*Seinsvergessenheit*) and/as abandonment by being (*Seinsverlassenheit*). The idea of a creator god

becomes transformed here through the machinations of the Cartesian subject bent on calculation, planning, production, control, and dominion (GA 69: 36–44/33–40). In this way, the Christian metaphysical conception of power that yields its fruit in the epoch of positionality (*Gestell*), *Christentum* "goes forward by means of the unleashing of the essence of power into machination" (GA 69: 80/68, tm). Heidegger's critique ignores the many differences between Judaic and Christian conceptions of the godhead, however, and simply collapses them into what Ziarek terms "a monotheistic monolith." This Judeo-Christian god reigns supreme over the natural world in a way that adumbrates the calculative rationality of the human being whose sovereign power lies in controlling the world as an object there for a subject. Against this metaphysical imperative towards the power of subjectivity, Heidegger invokes Hölderlin's gods as the heralds of another beginning of Western thinking on the other side of power and violence. As Heidegger expresses it in *Mindfulness*, or *Besinnung*: "Beyng – the *powerless*, *beyond power and lack of power*, better, what is outside of power and lack of power, and essentially unrelated to such" (GA 66: 187–188/166, tm).

As Ziarek points out, the discourse about power and machination belongs squarely in any discussion about Heidegger's discourse on *Christentum*, especially since he does not truly distinguish between Christian-Jewish traditions in any direct way, but simply links both to their shared belief in monotheism. As he traces the consequences of power in Heidegger's own work, Ziarek shows how *Christentum* holds sway over more than the realm of faith or religion. It does so in tandem with the technics of positionality (*Gestell*), "bringing the human to reveal itself as a being intrinsically capable of being a resource." In other words, *Christentum* both sets up and carries out the technical disposition of our lives in such a powerful way that it contributes to the functional calculus of positing, positioning, placing, and proposing that come to dominion in the epoch of positionality (*Gestell*). It is as a response to this centuries-long narrative within the history of being towards dominion and power that Hölderlin's poetic language offers us an opening towards another beginning of thinking.

So yes, Hölderlin does serve Heidegger here as the poet who poetizes the power of the powerless, the power of *physis* that is free from the power imperatives of human command.[6] Ziarek asks pointedly: how are we to situate this Heideggerian reflection on "letting free of power" with Heidegger's emphasis on "mission and exceptionalism" in the Hölderlin lectures? I might add this question – how are we to reconcile the moments in Heidegger that express the deepest sense of poetic attunement to the earth with Rector Heidegger's insistence on the self-assertion of the German university? More crudely stated, how are we to think together Hölderlin and Hitler? There are few easy answers to these questions since Heidegger himself never poses them in this way. Instead, he thinks them through his discourse about the native and the foreign that plays itself out in his reading of Sophocles's *Antigone* and Hölderlin's "Ister" hymn.

If the question of authentic dwelling is, as I believe, at the heart not only of the "Ister" lectures but of all Heidegger's late work, then perhaps we need to read these lectures in at least two counterturning ways. That is, on the one hand, we need to read them as offering genuinely profound philosophical insights about dwelling and homecoming in the face of the uncanny homelessness that threatens the human being at its very core. On the other hand, we also need to read them as advancing a racialist ontology of national self-identity that problematizes Heidegger's whole relation to the history of Western thought. This is Heidegger's legacy to us. I believe we need to confront this uncanny paradox that lies at the heart of Heidegger's thinking. Such an insight renders our relation to him and his work ever more difficult, ever more precarious. Here the very fact of our relation to Heidegger is suffused with ever greater risk and danger, perhaps even a "danger" that does not let itself be rescued or overcome by any "saving power" – not even that of Hölderlin or his gods.[7]

NOTES

1 Friedrich Hölderlin, "Letter to Böhlendorff," trans. Dennis Schmidt, *On Germans and Other Greeks: Tragedy and Ethical Life* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2001), 165/ *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe in drei Bänden*, III, ed. Jochen Schmidt (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 204), 460.

2 Martin Heidegger's letter to his brother Fritz in *Heidegger und der Antisemitismus*, eds. Walter Homolka and Arnulf Heidegger (Freiburg: Herder, 2016), 127–128. Heidegger's implication here is that renaming Meßkirch streets to honor Jews seems hardly commensurate with the world historical crisis facing the Germans.

3 Friedrich Hölderlin, DKV, I: 747 and Martin Heidegger, GA 4: 89–90/114; GA 52: 189/161–162; GA 53: 157/126; GA 75: 140, 191.

4 Paul Celan, *Selected Prose and Poetry*, trans. John Felstiner (New York: Norton, 2001), 395/*Gesammelte Werke* III (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 186.

5 For the range of Hölderlin's interest in these various scientific disciplines related to travel and wandering, cf. Alexander Honold, *Hölderlins Kalender: Astronomie und Revolution um 1800* (Berlin: Vorwerk 8, 2005); David Constantine, *The Significance of Locality in the Poetry of Friedrich Hölderlin* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1979); Helmut Mottel, "*Apoll envers Terre*": *Hölderlins mythopoetische Weltentwürfe* (Würzburg: Ergon, 1998), 115–179. See also Martin Anderle, *Die Landschaft in den Gedichten Hölderlins* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1986) and Jürgen Link, *Hölderlins Fluchtlinie Griechenland* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020).

6 Cf. for example, Hölderlin's verses in "Die Wanderung," vv.72–78 that speak of "himmlische Milde."

7 Charles Bambach, *Of an Alien Homecoming* (Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 2022), 226.