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Heidegger's Vision**

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Poetry of F. Hölderlin in M. Heidegger's Vision

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Abstract

Poetry is one of the main subjects of Martin Heidegger's philosophy, and poetry of Friedrich Hölderlin is one of his main subjects of interpretation. This article is dedicated to Heidegger's interpretation of Hölderlin's poems: '*Heimkunft*' ('Homecoming') and '*Wie wenn am Feiertage*' ('As on a holiday'). In the first poetic work the concept of *Homeland* (further the homeland) is developed, and in the second one dwells upon the concept of *Nature* (further nature). The concepts of homeland and nature are considered in their relations with *Being*, which is the main subject of Heidegger's philosophical thought. Heidegger applies his hermeneutical method to analyzing poetic texts. And to interpret Heidegger's texts, devoted to poems of Hölderlin, the author also uses hermeneutical method.

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Introduction

After ‘the turn’ Heidegger’s philosophical thought has been under the strong influence of poetry, and primarily – the poetry of Hölderlin. ‘Heidegger held three series of university lectures on Hölderlin’s poems “The Rhine” and “Germania”, “Remembrance”, and “The Ister” in the academic sessions 1934–5, 1941–2 and 1942 respectively, together with a number of other addresses spanning the years 1936–8’ (Pattison, 2000 P. 165).

Heidegger's philosophy can be defined as a hermeneutical philosophy. The hermeneutical method, developed by Heidegger, can truly be considered as a revolutionary one, because of its influence on the development of hermeneutics and phenomenology. In the work ‘*The Origin of the Work of Art*’ (‘*Der Ursprung der Kunstwerkes*’) Heidegger (2008) attempts to show, how the art of hermeneutical interpretation opens us an access to life as such event in which the truth is revealed.

The truth in art reveals itself as a truth of a thing which later finds its expression in a work of art. And poetry by Heidegger, due to its affinity with philosophy, is considered even more than just the basic kind of art. In fact, he refers to art in a whole as to poetry, because it is in poetry that the language performs its function of ‘building the foundation’ for all sorts of art. Poetry creates the being of things. The being is only possible thanks to the words of poetry, which allow the things to appear.

Jean Bofre (2007), a disciple and a follower of Heidegger, who did major studies on his works, states that the main merit of Heidegger was once again raising the question of Being and reviving the discussion the problem of Being, since It is to be considered as the main subject of philosophy.

Heidegger understands language and poetic art ontologically. Being is opened by Heidegger in the interpretations of such poems of F. Hölderlin as ‘*Heimkunft*’ (‘*Homecoming*’) and ‘*Wie wenn am Feiertage*’ (‘*As on a holiday*’). Heidegger reveals the truth of Being, applying phenomenological method: first, he reduces the notion to its original meaning, then he reinterprets the neglected meanings, but in relation with the meaning, which is found. Being is opened as a symbol, as his phenomenological interpretations are not only ontological, but also symbolic.

Heidegger follows the direction of his teacher E. Husserl (1982), which was to return ‘to the things themselves’, contemplating on the creation of art. But the more he moves away from the techniques of phenomenological method, the more he comes to using the possibilities of language, and primarily, the poetic language, to understand what Being is.

Heidegger understands poetry as the essence of art: not in a restricted sense of a literary genre, but in as a creation of word in general. Poetry is so highly appreciated not only due to its role of ‘the medium of truth’, but also due to its role as an intermediary for all the other art, because any work of art is originally thought in the language (Kusch, 1981 P. 201).

Reflections on poetry are in the center of Heidegger's thoughts. We get acquainted with Heidegger's hermeneutic experience in his book *'Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry'*. His explanations were originally published as separate interpretations of particular poems. 'These elucidations, – Heidegger (2000 P. 21) writes, – belong within the dialogue of thinking with a form of poetry whose historical uniqueness can never be proved by the history of literature, but which can be pointed out by the dialogue with thinking'.

Hölderlin's poem 'Homecoming' in Heidegger's Interpretation

Homecoming in the poem of Hölderlin is conceived by Heidegger as Homefinding. To find the homeland is the same as to enter the field of its being. But it is possible to enter only in the open space, that's why the homeland has to be revealed. It has to be revealed by the poet that returns to its protecting rooms. The seeking of the homeland is one of the main motives of the poem. And he, 'is still seeking something', though 'what is sought, however, does come to meet him', and it is near (Heidegger, 2000 P. 33).

The homeland there is not simply a private corner, but the place of people's residence. This place in the poem extends to national boundaries. 'But the treasure, the German ... is still reserved,' – Hölderlin complains (Heidegger, 2000 P. 33). What is the innermost of the homeland, which remains hidden for Hölderlin? The inner essence and the stored truth of the homeland is its history. The history of the homeland, an unfolded thread of events, is its fate. 'The homeland's own special nature was a gift of destiny' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 33). This gift has been not still found and defined. It is hidden, because are absent those, who would be willing to take care of it.

A. A. Grugan (1972 P. 134) writes that 'the poet is seeking his Heimat', he wants to find his origin. Though his Heimat is at home, it would be a mistake to establish the identity between Heimat and Home. Heimat is a source of being. 'The Source, – as Heidegger writes, – is the origin of the spirit of the stream which conceals in itself the poetic fullness of the ownmost character of the Heimat' (Ibid. P. 134). And it is essential addition of Grugan (Ibid. 134) that 'the Source is what reserves itself, what holds itself back, and as such its discovery, although already somehow made, "remains, still, what-is-sought"'.

The poet seeks what is hidden. He is on the way to his home. But we see that in the poem two ways appear. The first way is a path of the poet; the second way is a path of the homeland. The purpose of the first path is not to cross the line of the second path, but to merge with it in a single trajectory. Thus the fate of the poet becomes akin to the fate of his homeland, and his voice conjugates with the voice of the homeland. But how can the poet become intimate with the homeland? Only if happens the meeting, the meeting of his unconcealment with the unconcealment of the homeland. The

unconcealment shows itself in the form or in the outlook (Aussehen), in which the being truly reveals itself.

The homeland meets the poet friendly, beaming to him. And the poet is happy due to this friendly glow of the homeland. Heidegger (2000 P. 32) notices that the poem 'Homecoming' is illuminated by the word 'joyful'. The joyful light of the homeland, which is shining to the poet, is the truth of the poetic work, as it has been poeticized by Hölderlin. But what is the hidden essence of the homeland that emanates the joyful? Or, otherwise, what makes the poet joyful? This hidden is the nature as the inner essence of the homeland. The homeland is the whole world that is deployed out of the depths of the earth. The world as openness and unconcealment, and the land as closeness and concealment, playing and waging war with each other, are two main sides of existence of nature. The nature that gives life to everything is the first gleam of Being.

Thanks to Heidegger's interpretation of the poem, we can see that the nature stretched from the sky to the earth, and thus all things have come to life. Through a cloud the nature connects 'heavenly ether' and black valley. So the cloud 'opens itself up to the lofty brightness of the heavens, while at the same time it "covers" "the yawning valley"' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 34). But the cloud is appeared in that openness, which is created by the nature. The look of the cloud meets the look from 'the open brightness' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 34). And only this brightness allows the cloud to see. The open view of the cloud is only possible in the initial openness. This openness as the brightest space is at the same time the most invisible and the darkest for the human eyes. The ability to penetrate into the essence of things, into their inner nature is the same as the ability to compose, because 'to compose is to find' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 34). Or we can say that to poeticize is to open. The poeticized being is an enlightened being.

Heidegger thinks that the main meanings of the poem are enclosed in epithets and adjectives such as "bright", "cheerful", "joyful" and so on. These epithets are not just the words that express the certain properties of existence, but the words that express existence itself as a whole. So the cheerful is the cheerfulness and the cheering. The epithets of Hölderlin, in Heidegger's view, are one whole, as they all are only manifestations of the holy nature. The cloud resides in the cheering light. It 'is cheered in this gladness' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 35). The cheerfulness is the essence of joyful. So the joy and the cheerfulness are identical entities. The cheerfulness is a mood to be free and to stay in the fullness of being. The cheerfulness is a mood to be visible and to be in the perfect image of oneself. The cheerfulness as a pure essence everything makes cheerful. The light gives to all the joy of the cheerfulness.

The poem reveals the problem of lost the intimacy with things. People are surrounded by the beautiful nature, but they walk by and do not see its hidden sacred essence, that's why the nature leaves people behind. Even the steps of the sacred nature have disappeared. Only at home can a poet still see the nature in its true existence. The glowing holy faces of the

homeland greet him. At home he is met by angels: 'the angels of Home' and 'the angels of Year'. The angel of 'Home' is a 'the brightening earth' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 35). 'Home' is the place, where people live together. The land of Germany is native for the poet, 'the earth houses the peoples in their historical space' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 35). The second angel, the angel of "Year", is in broad sense the angel of time. The time consists of four seasons. The seasons don't simply pass into each other, but they are in a constant game of overflowing substances – "in the 'mingled' play of fiery brightness and frosty darkness" (Heidegger, 2000 P. 36), flourishing land and snowy emptiness. Those angels protect people.

The mountains, 'the highest messengers of the earth' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 36), aspire to reach the weightlessness of 'the angels of Year', as they want to be not only the peaks of the earth, but also 'the peaks of time' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 37). In the poem the mountains reach the clouds, which are compared with the heaven hills, and the rays of light go through those hills. Those beams of light, that illuminate the mountains, are not sacred ones. There is the highest light – 'pure opening' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 37). In this opening, that is the eternal joy and where the invisible light shines, lives God. But divine nature, the way Heidegger understands Hölderlin, is the first Being. God is only secondary to nature; he lives within the nature, in its invisible light.

Heidegger suggests that people will be able to understand what the divine nature is, if they get closer to their visible nature in their homeland, as 'the wafting "air" and the lightening "light" and the "earth" which blossoms with them' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 38) are only possible in the space of this shining nature. This unity of Ether, Earth and Light has the essence of the triune. Ether, Light and Earth are the eternal gods. Only with them the wanderer feels the link with the homeland, their shine fills him with joy. In a later edition Hölderlin calls the angels gods, thus expressing more distinctly their nature which is the second after the first divine nature.

Heidegger writes that the poet has 'a clearer view of gaiety' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 39). The poet sees that the face of cheerful is reflected in the greeting face of native land that meeting him. When Heidegger interprets the poem he uses his favorite methods of repeating the words and changing their grammatical forms. Such words as joyful and the most joyful are two levels of the essence of joy. The most joyful as an absolute form dominates over the simple form of joy, that's why the joyful 'is brightened up only by the most joyful' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 39). How can the joyful rise to the level of the most joyful? The joyful in a zero degree of comparison should become the joyless, to which it is closer, in order to become the most joyful or the absolute form of joy.

So the eagles primarily have to live in the darkness in order to soar high in the subsequent time, because they have to gain power, which allow them to fly so high. Great power is acquired only in the darkness, as only in the darkness they can be tested for the strength of the spirit, and only in the darkness the severe depression for the lost grandeur of the true absolute being

appears in their souls. So Hölderlin laments that ‘the sons of the Alps’ choose ‘lightly built bridges’, as their attempts to find something holy will be ‘futile’ (Heidegger, 2000 P. 40).

The joyless can return to his existence as joy only through the new process of self-creation. To achieve this purpose it should again return to the chaos from which all things arise. From the first source it gets new essence for its existence – it becomes the most joyful, but gradually it will again lose his superlative qualities. The poet, who has known a parting with the homeland, who has experienced a true depression, becomes a real patriot and a true son of his native land. Thus the ‘faithfulness’ to the homeland is grown (Heidegger, 2000 P. 37). Only at home is a desired wealth, only at home is a true intimacy with the origin of the most joyful. So only in the native Swabian homeland, but not ‘beneath the Alps’ the poet can feel genuine joy (Heidegger, 2000 P. 41).

Heidegger (2000 P. 42) thinks that Hölderlin doesn’t randomly give to the homeland the name ‘Suevien’, because this name reflects the homeland’s ‘the most inherent’ features. The mother ‘Suevien’ dwells near ‘the hearth of the house’”, and ‘glow of the fire’ ‘gives air and light to gaiety’. The homeland is the light that brings lucidity, but the streams of the first light are extended from the eternal fire of the hearth. And the poet after a long wandering is again encouraged by the light of the homeland, which is spread from the hearth.

Poetry has the power to perpetuate the things by giving names to them. And Hölderlin's elegy ‘Homecoming’ in Heidegger’s words (2000 P. 44) ‘is the homecoming itself, and still it comes to pass as long as its words ring like a bell in the language of the German people’. Hölderlin has preserved forests, mountains and clouds in a bright temporary moment, that is the eternity of the poetic words.

It is difficult to name the cheerful god, as there are not enough ‘sacred names’ for him. The cheerful god, who cheers and sanctifies everything, is difficult not only to name, but also to comprehend. Without knowledge of the deep essence of the holy it is not possible to give the appropriate names to the holy things, therefore ‘the eternal search for the secret treasure, which is the knowledge of the holy’ remains (Heidegger, 2000 P. 53). The poet can know it in the homeland, but it’s difficult, because the treasure as a greatest mystery tends to stay in the eternal concealment.

The poet gives the appropriate names to celestials, to which he is close. And the most difficult thing for the poet is to find the initial name for Highest. The poet should meet with God, he should come pure and naive before Him, as Hölderlin points in his work ‘*The poet’s mission*’. Then God, remaining invisible to the poet, can put into the poet’s heart his thoughts. God’s thoughts become the poet’s songs. These songs the poet composes in the language of harmony and rhythm.

Hölderlin's poem 'As on a holiday' in Heidegger's Interpretation

The other poem, 'Wie wenn am Feiertage...' ('As on a Holiday'), according to Heidegger, has not been fully understood. The main event in the poem is the disclosure of the world. Let us look at the world. The farmer comes to the field in the morning of the holiday day. 'Here all work has ceased. And the god is nearer to man' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 74). The storm has passed after the stifling night, but it hasn't spoiled the harvest, as the arable is not flooded. Still the peals of thunder, which strikes fear, are heard. The seedlings are still turning green, so it is early summer or late spring. The storm, that has brought rain, is a beneficence of heaven to the earth. Stronger the sun begins to heat. And 'the forest stands in the still light of the sun' (Heidegger, 2000. P. 74). The farmer is glad that the threat has passed, and on his arable fruits will grow. Heidegger (2000 P. 75) points out that Hölderlin compares the poet with the peasant, who as well as the peasant is happy to the grace of the world. Hölderlin is happy to 'the powerful, divinely beautiful nature', which keeps the poets in 'a light embrace'.

Nature is a symbol of the whole poem. Nature inspires the poets to create their works. "'Wonderful" is the omnipresence of nature', - Heidegger (2000 P. 75) writes. She is present in all, that's why it is impossible to grasp her. There is nothing special, through which she could be described and explained. Nature is so inclusive, that each man can find himself in her embrace. That's why understanding nature by force can't bring the positive results. Such attitude to nature would lead only to destruction of the holy. By the presence of nature all being, all existence, all things are permeated. That is an inexplicable and elusive power of nature. Nature is 'powerful' and she is 'divinely beautiful' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 76).

The poets, when they create poetry, are 'in the embrace' of this nature. While they are near to the divine beauty of nature, they can straight contemplate all the shades of her moods. And if nature sorrows, then the poets sorrows too. Staying in the eternity, nature from time to time becomes sadness or goes to sleep. In the sadness nature returns to the traveled path, remembers, as in the memory of nature nothing disappears. So past comes back to the present and serves as the basis for the future. Nature is filled with the presentiments of the future. She fills the poets with these forebodings, and they begin to prophecy. Thinking they foresaw. That is why it is important for the poets from time to time to stay in a quiet sadness, in which they can be filled with the presentiments of nature.

G. Aylesworth stresses that the essence of Hölderlin's gods is time. The time is a true holy god. That's why gods as time are invisible, they exist, but we can't know about their existence. Much more they are invisible, much lighter they are. These gods are embodied in nature. And Aylesworth (1988 P. 11) notices that Heidegger distinguishes Hölderlin's *Natur* from the Greek *physis*, which is fundamental for the metaphysical tradition". That's why 'he re-interprets "*physis*" in light of *Natur*'.

The source of the nature is chaos, which is understood by Heidegger not as a disordered mixture, but as a gap, as a horrifying dehiscence (from Greek *χαίνω* – dehiscence), in which all is lost and at the same time first finds a place for existence, because it is void, it is an open space for the location of things. Then the law begins to work in the chaos, the law gives the strength to existence of being, that has stood out and firmed root in the chaos.

Everything in the world is mediated by the law of nature, that is everything in the world refers to it, but the nature herself, first specifying this area of relations, isn't in any dependent relationship. Nature isn't mediated by anything, she as openness is immediate. Nature everything creates and everything revives. It acts not only in the world of people, but in the world of gods or angels.

In Hölderlin's poem the chaos is only holy, because only what that gives the whole principle is sacred. Heidegger (2000 P. 85) writes, that 'Hölderlin therefore calls "Chaos" and "confusion" "holy"'. It is impossible to see the chaos in its original holy form, as it exists in the invisible and indistinguishable light. This invisible and inaccessible holy light may, as believes Heidegger, foresee only visionaries, only true poets. They see this holy in the shining light, because the very holy, as mentioned, is light. The rays of the holy penetrate into their souls, and through this inner light they see the world.

All existing wakes up with nature by virtue of her awakening power, and all existing enters into new space of the world that is created by her. Created by nature new space in the future continues to be the one with her. Everything in the world is mediated by nature, that is everything in the world refers to it, but nature herself, first specifying this area of relations, isn't in any dependent relationship. Nature isn't mediated by anything, she as the openness is an immediate. And mediated God or man never can achieve her.

Nature in the Ancient Greek language sounds like φύσις. 'Φύσις, φύειν means growth' (Volskiy, 2007 P. 117). Nature grows from her source and her growth is a full disclosure of her essence in the world, then nature returns back to her source, and this return of nature is not a closure and disappearance of herself, but the concealment of her essence in the earth. 'Φύσις, meaningful as the word-base, means climb into the open, illumination of those lucidity, in which in general only something may appear, inscribe itself in its contours, show itself in its "visibility" (εἶδος, ιδέα) and thus appear as of this or that' (Volskiy, 2007 P. 117). Nature is a house or light of hearth. The essence of nature of the divergence and convergence in the lumen, and 'divergence of the lumen of lightening', as the "hearth and home of the light" is too Φύσις' (Volskiy, 2007 P. 119). The fire brings warmth and brightness, and even heat. The essence of bright is lightening all things. The fire is an original light and openness, in the space of which all comes to its existence.

Arousal of nature, as Hölderlin describes this sacred act, occurs in ringing and thunder, because 'its awakening comes to pass in "storms"' (Heidegger, 2000 P. 88). Arousal of nature takes place in the eternal cycle of sleep and cheerfulness. Hölderlin writes about the purpose of the poet.

And the purpose of the poet is to be in the co-presence with nature in her states of concealment and uncolcealment. ‘The poet in “Wie Wenn am Feirtage...”, – writes Gosetti Jennifer Anna (1999 P. 219), – which Heidegger associates with the historical founding of truth in the lightening-moment of destiny, is shown by de Man to emerge only after the storm, in contrast to the historical hero’.

In an arousal of nature is felt an inspiration by a new day of creation. Her inspiration stems from excess of the power, that she is ready to stream in the forms of new lives, which must now as her creations continue her existence in a new form. So in a new form of existence nature continues to come into the world – it’s her eternal presence. Such her new existence isn’t defined by the original chaos, but it’s defined by the spirit of the law. Nature as the spirit is incarnated in all existing things and acts as a holy law. The spirit works in the world as power of distinguishing and connecting, ‘separating everything, “spirit” remains attached to everything’ (Heidegger, 2000 P. 89).

If the poet wants to get closer to the language of nature and truly reflect it in its own language, he must be prepared for shocks. Holy without shocks are impossible to cognize and retain. So poetry can be dangerous, because holy can burn the poets and they can fall into madness. But ““Only now” that the thoughts of the communal spirit are first manifest does the song of the poet's soul succeed’ (Heidegger, 2000 P. 91), as holy invades to the poets not as revelation of horror, but as radiance of blessing.

The light rays of high nature can’t penetrate into the souls of the poets directly. So the poets need the help of mediators, and such mediators are gods that are closer to the holy. So ‘a god, – Heidegger (2000 P. 90) writes, – must throw the kindling lightning-flash into the poet's soul’. Only God from widely poured light of nature can take a bit, throwing it on the ground as a thin beam. Thus by the tip of this beam holy nature reaches the consciousness of the poet. Caught under the holy beam, thrown by God, the soul of the poet is shaken by ‘the opening up of the holy’ (Heidegger, 2000 P. 91). The poet then tries to understand what has been opened to him in this vision and after that he looks for suitable words. In the found words the poet opens to people the essence of holy, because the holy itself seeks to reach people. George Pattison (2000 P. 171) writes that ‘the poetic word has often been called ‘divine’, and Heidegger too represents the poet as a mediator between gods and mortals’.

Only if the poet has a ‘pure heart’ and only if he has ‘innocent hands’ (Heidegger, 2000 P. 93), only then can he in safe and sound reflect in the words that the pure beam, which was thrown by God. As ‘the holy is the terror of universal shaking and is the immediate’, that’s why, Heidegger (2000 P. 94) writes, a poet is necessary. Through the words of the poet as by the weapon the holy chaos tends to invade the world in order to disrupt the established laws, which seem unshakeable to people. Hölderlin writes, that the poetic word sounds like the ‘clang of arms’, because in the ringing awakens again chaos as a great shock (Heidegger, 2000 P. 94).

The essence of holy is interpreted by Hölderlin also as the ‘eternal heart’ (Heidegger, 2000 P. 94). Through this image, as Heidegger thinks, Hölderlin seeks to explain the cause of suffering in the universe. The

suffering arises from the very beginning, since the holy gives to god a part of its nature, and god 'by offering itself to the decisiveness of the ray' shares his essence with the poet, and the poet that takes risk of falling into madness gives himself to the people (Heidegger, 2000 P. 96). But the holy thus is never diminished.

J.A. Gosetti (1999 P. 126) thinks that 'Hölderlin's poetry is that of Being's self-concealing sending. The specificity of locale in Hölderlin's poems – landscapes, rivers, particular sites and experiences – is thought by Heidegger as the intimacy of Being and its eschatological "coming"'. For what is a new coming of the holy, on which indicates with confidence Hölderlin in his poetic world? It must adopt the beginning of new incalculable time in the history. The arousal of nature is the beginning of this invasion of the holy in the world. And Hölderlin writes in his poetry about this upcoming meeting. His poetic speech is the speech of the holy, because the very holy seeks to enter into his words.

Results & discussion

Thanks to Heidegger's interpretation of poetry with the help of the method of phenomenological hermeneutics we could discover the poetry of Hölderlin. So what important in the poetry of Hölderlin is revealed to us? The main thing is Being as the initial light and as the cheerfulness. The cheerfulness is the same as the joy. The joy and the cheerfulness are the states of nature as unconcealment. But nature from time to time goes to sleep, she comes into the state of concealment. Nature is close to the poet in the homeland. Holy nature as true Being is Chaos and Order, Origin and Spirit. Holy nature is older than time and space, that's why she is a source of human time and space. But she is also older than the gods. The poet in the poem is imbued by nature's mood, and the poet captures all the nuances of nature's feelings.

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