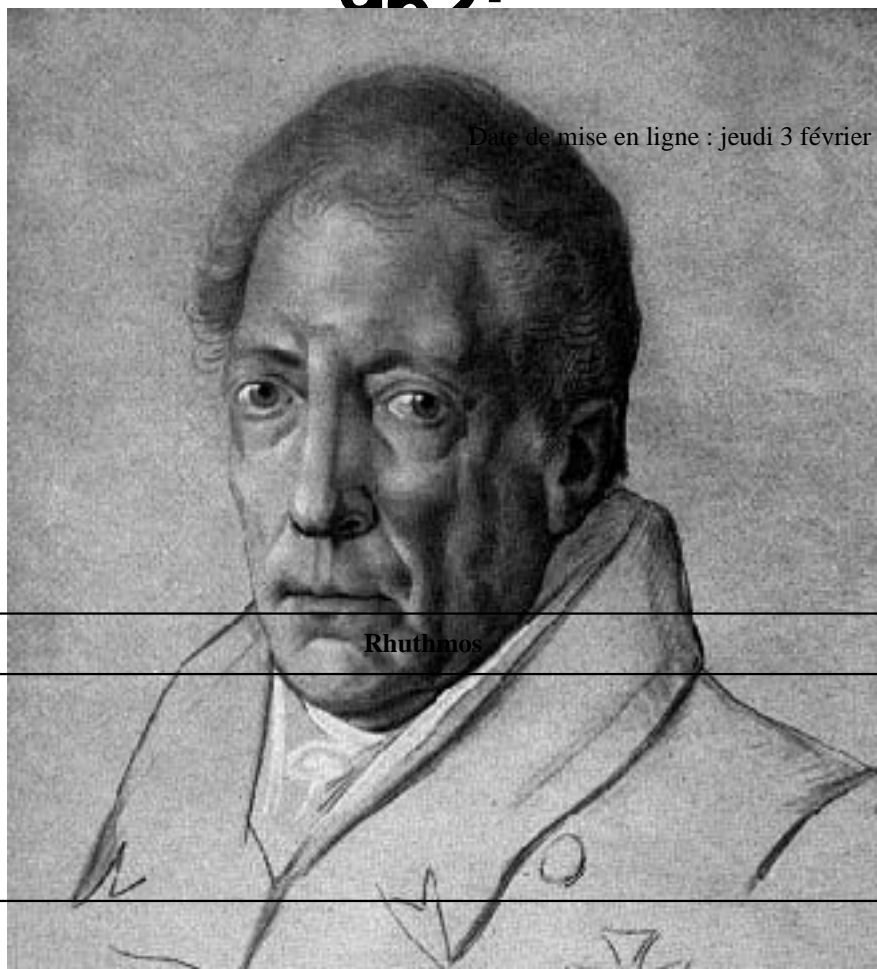


Extrait du Rhuthmos

<http://www.rhuthmos.eu/spip.php?article271>

Hölderlin's "Patmos" and Meter's



Friedrich Hölderlin's 1802 "Patmos" poetically answers a theological challenge. Dedicated to the Landgraf von Homburg, it responds unsolicited to the count's call for a poem that might counter contemporary Biblical exegesis, originally addressed to Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock. [1] And indeed, a poetic refutation could hardly be more appropriate, when it comes to Enlightenment theologians : One of the most scandalous texts of the era, Hermann Samuel Reimarus' fragment, "Über die Auferstehungsgeschichte" ("*On the Resurrection-Story*"), published posthumously by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, rests its arguments upon poetic logic. Although probability and logical deduction form no small part of his argument, Reimarus' rhetoric returns again and again to poetic terminology. He calls for the whole resurrection myth to be scrapped, since none of the Evangelists' accounts are "einstimmig" (*one-voiced*), nor do they "sich reimen lassen," (*let themselves be rhymed*). [2] In fact, looking more closely at the conclusion to Reimarus' published fragment, poetic principles seem trump the work of reason :

Saget mir vor Gott, Leser, die ihr Gewissen und Ehrlichkeit habt, könnet ihr dies Zeugnis in einer so wichtigen Sache für einstimmig und aufrichtig halten, das sich in Personen, Zeit, Ort, Weise, Absicht, Reden, Geschichten, so mannigfaltig und offenbar widerspricht ? [...] So, daß ich frei sagen mag, es sei fast kein einziger Umstand, von dem Tode Jesu an bis zu Ende der Geschichte, **darin ihre Erzählung zusammen zu reimen wäre.** [3]

Tell me before God, Readers, you who have conscience and honesty, could you hold this testimony in such an important matter to be coherent (lit : one-voiced, *einstimmig*) and upright, which in so many ways and so openly contradicts itself in person, time, place, way, intent, speech, and story ? [...] So that I might freely say, there is hardly a single circumstance about the death of Jesus up to the end of the story, **where its narrative might be rhymed together** ? (emphasis mine).

The ultimate appeal is to the rhyme of a narrative. To be sure, the phrases "sich reimen lassen" and "einstimmig" can work as commonplaces, distanced from the connotations of poetic rhyme and voice. [4] Nonetheless, the rhetoric is significant, for it brings philosophical and theological argument into the sphere of poetics, where rhyme and harmony are the standards.

The implications of this intersection between poetics and theological argument are crucial. The success of either will be contingent upon the standard of measure Reimarus has chosen - rhyme ; the persuasiveness of his arguments, and thus his theology, depends upon correspondence, "rhyme," "single-voicedness." But there are other measures. If Reimarus' poetic logic demands the harmony of rhyme, a counterargument from Klopstock would present the best antidote, indeed. For Klopstock's *Uvre* not only counters Reimarus' polemical refutation of the resurrection (and this is surely what the Landgraf von Homburg had in mind, when he commissioned the poem) ; it also polemicizes against rhyme. Within his poems, Klopstock will call rhyme a "böse[n] Geist" (*evil spirit*, ln. 7) and "Wortgepolter" (*word-rumbling*, ln. 8) : a "Wordpoltergeist." [5] Against rhyme, in both his poetic compositions and theoretical writings, Klopstock promotes a form of rhymeless metrical organization, whose scansion-units are not abstract stress-patterns, but rather, semantic units called "Wortfüße" (*word-feet*). [6] The most significant morphemes of these "feet" will, in turn, have the greatest stress *and* duration, so that the combination of "Wortfüße" in different patterns yield different *tempi* and "Zeitausdrücke" (*time-expressions*). [7] To make matters more complicated, these "Wortfüße" are not individual "words" at all, but rather, whole phrases, such as "des Herrn Zorn" "the rage of the god," which he scans

. [8] Although line- and strophic schemas will repeat, poetic parallelism moves according to different parameters here : not the return of the identical tones, but iterations of paced movements of significance, are to determine poetic sense. Here, the desire not for language to approach "Einstimmung" (*agreement, one-voicedness*) in sound and

speaker's return to his present. Throughout, the "Sophokles-Anmerkungen" will be an important standard of measure for the highly singular limits between which "Patmos" moves, and which it will ultimately elude.

In the "Anmerkungen zur Antigonä," Hölderlin describes the primary tendency (*Haupttendenz*) of Greek representations (*Vorstellungen*) "... **sich fassen zu können**, weil darin ihre Schwäche lag," "to be able to grasp / contain themselves, since therein lies their weakness." [17] A representational tendency, in other words, is defined by weakness, as a movement towards a lack. And for Hölderlin's Greeks, this is the lack of being able to grasp or contain oneself. Insofar as this lack conditions the "Haupttendenz" of representation, it is also becomes the limit and horizon of representation, its measure. For the Greek Christians of "Patmos," too, the effect of Christ's death upon his disciples emerges "wenn, ein Räthsel ewig füreinander / **Sie sich nicht fassen können** / Einander...", "when, eternally a riddle for one another, they cannot grasp / contain themselves /one another" (140 - 42). The language of the "Anmerkungen" repeats verbatim, as the Christian sect of "Patmos" unsuccessfully strives against its dissolution - at the very moment Christian monotheism would disseminate. Shortly after, Hölderlin will describe the fruit of their loss as "der Wurf des Säemanns, wenn er faßt / Mit der Schaufel den Waitzen, / Und wirft, dem Klaren zu, ihn schwingend über die Tenne" or "the throw of the sower, when he grasps the wheat with the shovel and throws it to the wind, swinging over the thrashing floor" (152 - 154). [18] Here, "fassen" and absolute dissemination coincide, as the tendency towards cohesion produces its opposite : the weakness (*Schwäche*) of incoherence from which it sprang. If this "weakness" would lead to the spread of the Christian sect, the success of dissemination remains indebted to the failure of Hölderlin's Christians to meet their ancient measure : "sich fassen zu können," "to grasp / contain themselves."

Much later, however, the picture changes for the modern poetic voice of "Patmos." As the speaker turns from visions of the ancient Greek Christians to his own vision, he states :

| | |
|---|--|
| Im Zorne sichtbar sah' ich einmal | Visible in rage I saw once the master(s) |
| Des Himmels Herrn, nicht, daß ich seyn sollt etwas, sondern | of heaven, not, so that I should be something |
| Zu lernen. Gütig sind sie, ihr Verhaftestes aber ist, | but rather, to learn. Goodly they are, but their |
| So lange sie herrschen, das Falsche, und es gilt | most-hateful-thing, is, as long as they rule, the false, |
| Dann Menschliches unter Menschen nicht mehr. | and then the human no longer holds among humans. |
| Denn sie nicht walten, es waltet aber | For they do not prevail, but it-prevails the fate of |
| Unsterblicher Schicksaal, und es wandelt ihr Werk | immortals and it-changes their work on its own, |
| Von selbst, und eilend geht es zu Ende | and rushing it goes to an end (171 - 78). |

[19]

With these words, Hölderlin recalls what he names the "primary tendency in the representations of our time" (*die Haupttendenz in den Vorstellungsarten unserer Zeit*) in his "Sophokles-Anmerkungen." That is, "etwas treffen zu können, Geschik zu haben, da das Schicksaallose... unsere Schwäche ist," "to be able to meet something, to have fate, since the fateless is our weakness." [20] Without warning, fate intrudes into the poem for the first time, in the speaker's (modern) time, a time where the "Schicksaallose" (*the fateless*) is both *our weakness* and *primary tendency*. To be sure, the speaker will not meet fate (*treffen*) ; nor is it a fate that could meet him - he speaks of "Unsterblicher Schicksaal," or the fate of the immortals. Nonetheless, the poem abruptly veers towards an articulation of fate as the all-powerful force, which governs world and immortals alike. The immortals do not "walten ;" their fate does. For all the obscurities of this passage, one thing is clear : the suddenness and force with which fate appears in Hölderlin's language belies a "Haupttendenz," and soon enough, this tendency turns into a hope that fate might move from the sphere of the "Unsterbliche[n]" to us. In the next verses, the speaker calls the modern hope - which is precisely not the Christian one for "Erlösung" (*salvation*) - a "Loosungszeichen," or "fate-sign," which might become

the "Stab des Gesangs" (*staff of song*) (182 - 83).

This movement between two limits, ancient and modern, a gathering and a fate, is presaged in the resonance between "Patmos," a place-name, and its near-homonym *Patmos*, fate. These mark spheres of measure as different as cartographical fixity and an absolutely contingent meeting ; as different as the proximity "sich fassen zu können" entails, and the indeterminate distance "Ge-schick" (from *schicken*, to send out) must traverse. But when the tendencies traced in the "Sophokles-Anmerkungen" specifically emerge in "Patmos ;" when, perhaps tragically, a categorical turn takes place from space towards far-off fate, the poem significantly sets itself in-between, and thus outside, any one measure.

The first and shortest verse of the poem ("Nah ist [...] "Near is [...]") repeats Hölderlin's translation of the word for "measure" itself, when Oedipus' first announces Creon's arrival in *Oedipus Tyrannus* : *ἄλλ' ἄρα μὲν ἴσθι* "for his is within-measure so as to hear," which Hölderlin translates, "Nah ist er, daß man hört," "Near is he, so that one hears" (83). "Nah ist : " this is to be *ἄλλ' ἄρα μὲν ἴσθι*, within range - within a measurable spatial sphere. But the nearness ceases as the next line of "Patmos" continues, "und schwer zu fassen der Gott," "and difficult to grasp, the god" (2), placing the god beyond the possibility of the "grasping" (*fassen*) it names. Something immeasurable, ungraspable intervenes at the moment that measure is evoked in the opening words of "Patmos ;" something that exceeds the measure of nearness. Nonetheless, as nearness returns in the speaker's language, the "God" transforms - to a space. When the speaker is about to approach the island Patmos, the phonetic figures of the first verses : "**Nah ist / und schwer zu fassen der Gott**" recur :

Und da ich hörte, der nahegelegenen eine
sei Patmos
verlangte mich sehr,

And as I thereupon heard
of the near-lying ones [i.e. islands], one be Patmos,
I longed very much

Dort einzukehren und dort
der dunkeln Grotte zu nahn.

to turn in there
and there to near the dark grotto (51 – 56).

Although a general movement in the poem might be traced from Greek to modern tendencies this movement is already visible in the "journey" of the speaker to "Patmos" at the start of the poem. The nearness of the god coincides with the difficulty of "grasping" (*fassen*) him, which gives way to a "Geschick" or "fate" in the most literal sense - toward the island of "Patmos" itself. (The words for "fate" in German (*Geschick*, *Schicksal*) have everything to do with sending, having been sent (*schicken*, *geschickt worden sein*) ; thus it is overdetermined when the fate of the speaker is a journey. He is, to be more exact, "sent" *geschickt* on his journey, insofar as a "genius" *Genius* (19) drives him from his home and thus dispatches him elsewhere.) To sum up ; Touching one tendency in words propels the speaker of Patmos in a different direction ; measures shift, as does the very shape of the "Gott," who reechoes now as the "Grotte." From the one who might be (with difficulty) grasped, he becomes the place to which one is propelled.

At this point, however, the speaker turns from *his* narrative of a journey, to a general description of the acoustic space of Patmos - where the "Grotte" might be neared. If the god is no longer mentioned, there is something godly about the way this space supports a gathering and a moment of hearing - a highly specific, poetic gathering of time, space, speech, of measured steps and word.

| | |
|--|--|
| Gastfreundlich aber ist | Guestfriendly however is she |
| Im ärmeren Hauße | in poorer house |
| Sie [die Insel Patmos] dennoch | nonetheless |
| Und wenn vom Schiffbruch oder klagend | And when from shipwreck or lamenting |
| ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | |
| Um die Heimath oder | over the homeland or |
| Den abgeschiedenen Freund | the departed friend |
| Ihr nahet einer | one of the strangers nears her |
| Der Fremden, hört sie es gern, und ihre Kinder | she hears it gladly and her children |
| Die Stimmen des heißen Hains, | the voices of the hot grove, |
| Und wo der Sand fällt, und sich spaltet | and where the sand falls and |
| ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | |
| Des Feldes Fläche, die Laute | the field's surface splits, the tones |
| Sie hören ihn und liebend tönt | they hear him and lovingly it intones/resounds |
| Es wieder von den Klagen des Manns. [...] | again from the laments of the man.[...] (61 – 73). |

[\[21\]](#)

The island hears and her children, the "Stimmen des heißen Hains" (*the voices of the hot grove*, 69) hear as voices. And as these vocal listeners hear (72), an indeterminate echo "es" resounds, intones (72) the laments of the island-guest. But the relation between the listening landscape and the stranger that traverses it is more intricately interwoven than this. The island's listening process - which includes the catastrophic reshaping she undergoes, as sand falls and surface splits - offers itself to be heard as the effects of the stranger's steps, as he versifies the sandy earth (in *both its literal and figurative senses* : plowing and producing song). [\[22\]](#)

Since this marks one moment when poetic measures consummately meet I linger here. Two simple clauses enclose the precondition and realization of the stranger's arrival : Patmos is "guestfriendly" (*gastfreundlich*) and ultimately "it resounds from the laments of the man" (*[es] tönt wieder von den Klagen des Manns*). In between come two complex clauses, one which determines the temporal coordinates of his advent : "And when, lamenting, one nears her" (*Und wenn ... klagend... ihr nahet einer*) ; the other, its spatial coordinates, "And where the sand falls and the field's surface splits" (*Und wo der Sand fällt und sich spaltet / Des Feldes Fläche*) - both of which conclude "she hears him" (*hört sie es gern*) and "they hear him" (*sie hören ihn*). These clauses align through lexical and grammatical parallelism the 1) hearing the *lamenting stranger* and hearing 2) the *falling sand* and *splitting surface* - as complementary aspects of the same moment. And indeed they are "Gleichzeitig" (*of the same time*), for metrically, they show the same scansion - which, in the terminology of Hölderlin's day, means that they have the same "Zeitausdruck" (*time-expression*). [\[23\]](#) The falling of sand and splitting surface correspond to the stranger's lamenting approach as its highly precarious, shifting location, which becomes what it is as he nears (and speaks). [\[24\]](#)

I pursue this resposion further. In the passage "Und wo der Sand fällt, und sich spaltet des Feldes Fläche, die Laute, sie hören ihn, und liebend tönt es wieder von den Klagen des Manns" (*and where the sand falls and the field's surface splits, the tones, they hear him, and lovingly it intones/resounds again from the laments of the man*), the pronoun "ihn" (*him*) agrees both with the preposed "Sand" *and* the postposed "Mann" - which themselves agree in

rhyme. The grammatical ambiguity of "ihn," suspended between two rhyming referents, binds the falling sand and splitting earth and the coming, lamenting man. So inextricably, that only *heard together* does echo appear "von den Klagen des Mann" (*from the laments of the man*). For this reason, as a component of the lament - albeit performed by another agent, the land - the falling sand and splitting earth offer themselves to be read with respect to the man's footsteps. And indeed, it is remarkable that the (metrical) feet of his approach and their opening match, given the irregular rhythms of the whole strophe. One can only grasp it in the speaker's own words : "Sie hören ihn" (*they hear him*), the sand beneath the man's feet, the sound of his voice, as inseparable as the meter and words of a poem - as the space of the island transforms with his nearing. They are "Nah [...], daß man hört," "near, so that one hears." Through modern metrical strategies, an ancient measure is - nearly - met.

Henceforth, however, this poetics of nearness disappears - as though its very articulation were a transgression. Immediately, the poetic narrative departs from its projected, potential arrival upon Patmos, to the youthful travels of the Apostle John and the death of Christ. Lexically, the words "nah" and "nahen" never return - nor is there a place to near. For henceforth all place names disappear, and an opposite tendency emerges : the radical negation of landscape imagery, so crucial to the first strophes and to the possibility for a culminating nearness upon Patmos.

I turn to the culminating moment of this negation - of nearness, of space - which comes after the twice-told departure of Christ from the world. It comes, in fact, in the strophe that structurally answers the one I have dwelt upon, within the larger measures of the poem. If "Patmos" was approached in the fifth strophe, space is completely ravaged in the tenth of this fifteen-strophe ode, marking its middle third. [25]

| | |
|---|--|
| Wenn aber stirbt alsdenn | But when [the one] dies then |
| An dem am meisten | on whom most of all |
| Die Schönheit hieng, daß an der Gestalt | beauty hung, [so] that on the form |
| Ein Wunder war und die Himmlischen gedeutet | a wonder was and the heavenly-ones pointed |
| Auf ihn, und wenn, ein Rathsel ewig füreinander | towards him, and when, eternally a riddle for one another |
| Sie sich nicht fassen können | They cannot grasp themselves |
| Einander, die zusammenlebten | one another, who lived together |
| Im Gedächtniß, und nicht den Sand nur oder | in memory, and it takes away not only the sand or |
| Die Weiden es hinwegnimmt und die Tempel | the pastures and seizes the temples, |
| Ergreift, wenn die Ehre | when the honor |
| Des Halbgotts und der Seinen | of the demi-god and those-who-belong-to-him |
| Verweht und selber sein Angesicht | disperses and even the highest-one |
| Der Höchste wendet | turns his face |
| Darob, daß nirgend ein | over it, [so] that not a single |
| Unsterbliches mehr am Himmel zu sehn ist oder | immortal in the heavens is to be seen any more or |
| Auf grüner Erde, was ist diß? | upon green earth, what is this? (136 – 151). |

Here, an indeterminate "es" becomes the subject of a radical destruction : "und nicht den Sand nur oder / Die Weiden es hinwegnimmt und die Tempel / Ergreift," (*and it takes away not only the sand or the pastures and seizes the temples*). By the end, all that remains is the original difference between heaven and earth, reminiscent of Genesis, "daß nirgend ein / Unsterbliches mehr **am Himmel** zu sehn ist oder / **Auf grüner Erde**" (*so that not a single immortal in the heavens is to be seen anymore or upon green earth*) - and even this difference threatens to elide by the comparison that binds them : both lack a single immortal. In this sense, it is blasphemously reminiscent of

Genesis - and philosophically involved in an absolute reduction to of space. This marks the ultimate break from the measure of nearness and gathering, whose culmination was projected upon Patmos, then disarticulated until now. This also has to do with the poem's attempt to meet a foreign measure that repels it.

As limits transform beyond recognition, after the possibility of nearness, "sich fassen zu können," is fully negated, the poem posits a new $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$, affirming the modern measure of fate - "es waltet aber Unsterblicher Schicksaal" (*it-rules however the fate of the immortals*)- which is followed by the anticipation and arrival of a "Loosungszeichen" (*fate-sign*), as though fate were met with its sign's invocation. Insofar as it is "niederwinkend" (*signaling-downward*) this "Loosungszeichen" also seems to arrive as $\frac{1}{4}$, which comes from $\frac{1}{2}$, to fall. [26] Nonetheless, this is no meeting that belongs to our time and conditions. Broken over a double enjambment between strophes, this staff or "Loosungszeichen" moves only from the heavens to the dead. Of it the speaker says: "Die Todten weket / Er auf, die noch gefangen nicht/ Vom Rohen sind" (*It awakens the dead, who are not yet imprisoned by the raw / unripe*). [27]] An otherworldly message meets an otherworldly destination more foreign than Greece.

The modern hope - at least as "Patmos" presents it - is beyond our time, and in order to retreat from this apocalyptic moment, the poem resorts to a new - old - measure : rhyme : [28]

| | |
|---|--|
| So, wie ich glaube, mich lieben | So, as I believe, love me |
| Wie viel mehr <u>dich</u> , | how much more [do they love] you, |
| Denn eines weiß <u>ich</u> , | for one thing I know, |
| Daß <u>nemlich</u> der <u>Wille</u> | that namely the will |
| des ewigen Vaters viel | of the eternal father |
| Dir <u>gilt</u> . <u>Still</u> ist sein Zeichen | means much to you. Silent is his sign |
| am donnernden <u>Himmel</u> . Und Einer | on the thundering heaven. And One stands |
| steht darunter | below it |
| Sein Leben lang. Denn noch lebt Christus. | his life long. For still lives Christ. |
| Es sind aber die Helden, seine Söhne | But the heroes, his sons, |
| Gekommen all und heilige Schriften | all came and the holy scriptures |
| Von ihm und den <u>Bliz</u> erklären | from him and the deeds of the earth |
| Die Thaten der Erde <u>bis</u> <u>izt</u> , | till now clarify the lightening |
| Ein Wettlauf unaufhaltsam. Er aber ist dabei. | a concurrence unstoppable. He however is there. |
| Denn seine Werke sind | For his works are |
| Ihm alle bewußt von jeher. | All known to him from ever (197 – 211, emphasis mine). |

But this strategy quickly explodes, as one rhyme-pair brings together "Bliz" (*lightening*) and "izt" (*now*). From here breaks forth a verse of nineteen syllables, the longest of the poem. Far from containing the poetic matter, the measure of rhyme produces a new rupture. When the next and final strophe suddenly breaks off anew, "Zu lang, zu lang schon ist[...]," (*too long, too long already is*, ln. 212) it first seems to refer to *this* - and to rue the poem's latest transgression. From here, the poem closes with a revision of the "Loosungszeichen," (*fate-sign*) "der Stab des Gesangs" (*staf of song*), with its famous last lines: "Unwissend, der Vater aber liebt, / Der über allen waltet / Am

meisten, daß gepfleget werde / Der veste Buchstab, und bestehendes gut / Gedeutet. Dem folgt deutscher Gesang" (*Unknowingly, the father however, who prevails over all, loves most that the solid letter shall be tended and withstandingly well interpreted. German song follows it*, 222 - 226). In place of a meeting, the poem anticipates a pursuit, a following of the "Buchstab," (*letter*) - with no end in sight. We are far from the nearness of "Patmos," the reach of fate and the reassurance of rhyme. Instead, the poem and its "we" are simply left... far. Left to think, to devise - perhaps to answer unsolicited the call that resounds in the measureless caesura of Hölderlin's closing line.

[1] He states, "Die heutige Philosophen, Aufklärer, Aufräumer verwässern die Schrift und die Theologie unter dem Vorwand der Sprachkenntnis. Ist Jemand unter uns, der diese Sprachen wie die Muttersprache versteht, der sie weit tiefer ergründet hat als die neueren Exegeten... so ist das Klopstock. Er legt die Schrift anders aus wie sie [...]." Cited in Jochen Schmidt, *Hölderlins geschichtsphilosophische Hymnen : :Friedensfeier9, :Der Einzige9, :Patmos9* (Darmstadt : Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990) 185.

[2] Hermann Samuel Reimarus' "Über die Auferstehungsgeschichte" was published posthumously as a fragment in 1777 by G.E. Lessing in his journal *Zur Geschichte und Literatur. Aus den Schätzen der Herzoglichen Bibliothek zu Wolfenbüttel* and collected in Lessing's *Gesammelten Werken* vol. 7 (Berlin : Aufbau Verlag, 1956) : 778 - 812, 791, 810.

[3] Remiarus, *Über die Auferstehungsgeschichte*, 810. All translations are mine.

[4] In their *Deutsches Wörterbuch* the brothers Grimm include the following, definition of REIMEN : "3. übertragene bedeutung / a. reimen transitive, mit einander in einklang bringen, zu einander in beziehung setzen, den zusammenhang zweier dinge einsehen" "3. metaphoric meaning. / a. to rhyme transitive, to bring into one-tone with one another, to set [things] in relation to one another, to see the correlation of two things" Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* vol. 14, Sp. 670.

[5] See "An Johann Heinrich Voß." in *Klopstocks Oden* Bd. II (Leipzig : Georg Joachim Göschen, 1798) 77 - 80, 77.

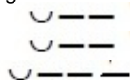
[6] Klopstock opposes, in fact, the "Wortfuß" to the "künstlichen Füße" of traditional metrics, which create metrical groups that disregard semantic groupings. Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, "Vom deutschen Hexameter" in *Gedanken über die Natur der Poesie : Dichtungstheoretische Schriften* ed. Winfried Menninghaus (Frankfurt am Main : Insel Verlag, 1989) 60 - 156, 129. I claim that Klopstock promotes his metrical theory in both his theoretical writings and poetic oeuvre, because many of his odes would be preceded by strophic schemes, which reflect the methods of scansion he develops. See the facsimile of Klopstock's 1771 *Oden und Elegien* ed. Jörg-Ulrich Fechner (Stuttgart : Metzler, 1974). The essay "Vom deutschen Hexameter" first appeared in the third volume of his 1769 edition of his Christian epic, *Der Messias*. Klopstock, *Der Messias* vol. 3 (Halle : 1769).

[7] Klopstock, "Vom deutschen Hexameter," 112 - 13.

[8] Klopstock, "Vom gleichen Verse : Aus einer Abhandlung vom Silbenmaße" in *Dichtungstheoretische Schriften*, 35 - 53, 51.

[9] See Winfried Menninghaus, "Nachwort" in Klopstock, *Dichtungstheoretische Schriften*, 259 - 361, esp. "Dichtung als Tanz," 319 - 326.

[10] For example, in scanning "Am Thron rollt die Heerschaar, als göß sie ein Meer weit aus"



, "rollt" and "göß," both scanned as "long" syllables, are short, accented syllables. Klopstock, "Vom Sylbenmaaß," 48.

[11] Throughout, I cite "Patmos" by line number alone. I have used the "Reinschrift," presented to the Landgraf von Homburg in 1802, as it is printed in *FHA* Bd. 7 *gesänge* 1 ed. D.E. Sattler et al (Frankfurt am Main : Stroemfeld / Roter Stern, 2000) 426 - 445.

[12] In fact, the very letter from Hölderlin's friend Isaac von Sinclair, which states "Er habe dem Landgrafen sein Gedicht gebracht, er habe es mit vielem Dank und Freude aufgenommen," also addresses Hölderlin's new translation of Sophocles, "Du möchtest dem *Boehendorff* daher den Sophokles hinsickn, wenigstens den ersten Band : auch was Du sonst fertig hättest, wollte er suchen, einem Verleger zu geben" Sinclair to Hölderlin, 1802 in *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe* Bd. II, ed. Michael Knaupp (München : Carl Hanser, 1992) 923.

[13] Hölderlin, "Anmerkungen zur Antigonä" in *Friedrich Hölderlin : Sämtliche Werke : Frankfurter Ausgabe* Bd. 16 *Sophokles* ed. D.E. Sattler et al. (Frankfurt am Main : Stroemfeld / Roter Stern, 1988) 411 - 21, 411. Hereafter I abbreviate this edition *FHA*, followed by volume and page number.

[14] Hölderlin, *Pindar* in *FHA* 15, 208 - 23, 212 - 13.

[15] See Émile Benveniste, "med- et la notion de mesure" in *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes* vol 2 (Paris : Éditions de Minuit, 1969) 123 - 132.

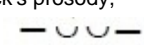

[16] See Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Les ruses de l'intelligence : La mêtis des Grecs* (Paris : Flammarion, 1974).

[17] Friedrich Hölderlin, "Anmerkungen zur Antigonä" *FHA* 16, 418.

[18] For a discussion of these verses, see Andrzej Warminski, "'Patmos' : The Senses of Interpretation" *MLN* 91 (1976) 478 - 500.

[19] In Hölderlin's German, the nominal phrase "des Himmels Herrn" names singular object of sight, pointing to "the master of heaven." Nonetheless, the masculine accusative "Herrn" quickly becomes a plural subject - "Gütig sind sie" (*goodly they are*), as though the "e" were elided in the masculine plural "Herren," "masters." I try to reflect this ambivalence in the translation.

[20] Friedrich Hölderlin, "Anmerkungen zur Antigonä" *FHA* 16 418.

[21] In scanning "Schiffbruch" and "Sand fällt" as two stressed syllables, I depart from twentieth-century German prosody and take up Klopstock's tendency to render both parts of compounds formed from two substantives, or both members of a substantive-verb phrase, as stressed. This is consistent throughout his theoretical writings on verse. See examples in Klopstock, "Vom Silbenmaße" 38 - 50. Nonetheless, the publication of Klopstock's odes, many of which he prefaces with metrical schemes, sometimes shows deviations from this "rule." See "Unterricht" in *Oden*, vol. 2. (Leipzig : Georg Joachim Göschen, 1798) 36 - 37. So, too, in scanning "oder" as two short syllables, I attempt to follow Klopstock's prosody, according to which "Freud' oder Schmerz" presents a choriambus 
. See "Der rechte Entschluß" in *Oden* vol 2, 53. Conjunctions are highly variable in scansion, however, and depend upon position : As the first word of a verse, Klopstock often scans "Oder" as trochee 
. See "Mein Wissen" in *Oden* vol. 2, 58. Here my scansion differs slightly from the excellent metrical analysis of the whole poem that appears in Boris Previsic's *Hölderlins Rhythmus : ein Handbuch* (Frankfurt am Main : Stroemfeld, 2009) 284 - 93.

[22] Awareness of this etymology is crucial not only to modern discussions of verse and meter, but also - in a quite different, and no less interesting way - to Julius Caesar Scaliger's discussion of verse, where, instead of deriving verse from *vertere* (to turn - also while plowing the field), he derives it from *vertere* (to clear away, to plough). Julius Caesar Scaliger, "Versus. Caput V" *Poetices libri septem : Sieben Bücher über die Dichtkunst* Bd. 1 Books 1 - 2 ed. and transl. Luc Deitz (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt : frommann-holzboog, 1994) 464 - 465. That Hölderlin was familiar with Scaliger is evident in his *Magister-Specima*, where, despite the infrequency of citations, Scaliger's name appears several times. See "Geschichte der schönen Künste unter den Griechen biß zu Ende des Perikleischen Zeitalters" in *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe* Bd. II, 11- 27, 15 and "Versuch einer Parallele zwischen Saolomons Sprüchwörtern und Hesiods Werken und Tagen," in *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe* Bd. II, 28 - 39, 29.

[23] See Klopstock. "Vom deutschen Hexameter" in *Dichtungstheoretische Schriften* 60 - 157, 126.

[24] My reading differs from the many attempts that have been made to discuss this passage. Much has been made of the strange verses that disrupt the evocation of the "Kinder" of the island, from the apposition "Laute" and the main verb to which they belong - splitting the epithets and syntax, like the field itself. Cyrus Hamlin has read the falling sand in relation to Patmos' arid climate, which might give way to a geographical catastrophe, an avalanche of a rocky crag that falls, causing the "Spaltung" of the surface, under the pressure of the overintensive sunlight. Cyrus

Hamlin, "Hermeneutische Denkfiguren in Hölderlins >>Patmos<< in *Hölderlin und Nürtingen* ed. Peter Härtling and Gerhard Kurz. (Stuttgart : J. B. Metzler, 1994) 79 - 102, 93 f. This reading ignores, however, the way this "Spaltung" is literally embedded in a language that heralds the stranger's arrival, bound to the circumstances of this event. Charles de Roche, following Karlheinz Stierle, reads it as reference to an iconographic tradition that represents the land of Patmos as split - a Grecian island, where the new era of Christianity marks a break from the old era of antiquity - to which nonetheless appears juxtaposed in paintings such as Poussin's "Johannes auf Patmos" (1644 - 45) and Altorfer's image of the same scene : in the middle, Johannes binds and splits the two worlds and times. See Charles de Roche, *Friedrich Hölderlin Patmos : Das scheidende Entscheidung des Gedichts* (München : Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1999) 58 - 59. Nonetheless, this reading ignores the way the "Spaltung" would happen any and every time "wenn einer der Fremden sie nahet." The splitting is not only bound to the moment when John the Seer and Apostle arrives. Although each of these readings might be supported in part by this cryptic passage, there is still room to tread new ground.

[25] Syntactically, both are also strikingly similar, insofar as they suspend temporality with the repetition of the indeterminate "wenn" (*when, whenever, if*) - which conjunction does not appear once in the verses between these strophes.

[26] Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (Paris : Klincksieck, 1999) 905 - 906.

[27] I point out that "roh" can also mean "unripeness" - one of the definitions offered in the Grimm brothers' *Deutsches Wörterbuch* - especially in light of the earlier strophe in the poem, where Hölderlin conflates the New Testament parables of the sower and the separation of the wheat for the chaff. This foregoing strophe the semantic field of the harvest field, preparing us to hear the resonance of "roh" with "unripeness."

[28] Not only would Klopstock criticize this, but so, too, would Hölderlin, who writes in his "Rezension zu Siegfried Schmid's >Herione<" that rhyme ladens a poem "statt mercurialischer Schwingen an den Sohlen zu tragen" in *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe* Bd. II, 111 - 14, 114.