

“. . . POETICALLY MAN DWELLS . . .”

The phrase is taken from a late poem by Hölderlin, which comes to us by a curious route. It begins: “In lovely blueness blooms the steeple with metal roof.” (Stuttgart edition 2, 1, pp. 372 ff.; Hellingrath VI, pp. 24 ff.) If we are to hear the phrase “poetically man dwells” rightly, we must restore it thoughtfully to the poem. For that reason let us give thought to the phrase. Let us clear up the doubts it immediately arouses. For otherwise we should lack the free readiness to respond to the phrase by following it.

“. . . poetically man dwells . . .” If need be, we can imagine that poets do on occasion dwell poetically. But how is “man”—and this means every man and all the time—supposed to dwell poetically? Does not all dwelling remain incompatible with the poetic? Our dwelling is harassed by the housing shortage. Even if that were not so, our dwelling today is harassed by work, made insecure by the hunt for gain and success, bewitched by the entertainment and recreation industry. But when there is still room left in today’s dwelling for the poetic, and time is still set aside, what comes to pass is at best a preoccupation with aestheticizing, whether in writing or on the air. Poetry is either rejected as a frivolous mooning and vaporizing into the unknown, and a flight into dreamland, or is counted as a part of literature. And the validity of literature is assessed by the latest prevailing standard. The prevailing standard, in turn, is made and controlled by the organs for making public civilized

opinions. One of its functionalities—at once driver and driven—is the literature industry. In such a setting poetry cannot appear otherwise than as literature. Where it is studied entirely in educational and scientific terms, it is the object of literary history. Western poetry goes under the general heading of “European literature.”

But if the sole form in which poetry exists is literary to start with, then how can human dwelling be understood as based on the poetic? The phrase, “man dwells poetically,” comes indeed from a mere poet, and in fact from one who, we are told, could not cope with life. It is the way of poets to shut their eyes to actuality. Instead of acting, they dream. What they make is merely imagined. The things of imagination are merely made. Making is, in Greek, *poiesis*. And man’s dwelling is supposed to be poetry and poetic? This can be assumed, surely, only by someone who stands aside from actuality and does not want to see the existent condition of man’s historical-social life today—the sociologists call it the collective.

But before we so bluntly pronounce dwelling and poetry incompatible, it may be well to attend soberly to the poet’s statement. It speaks of man’s dwelling. It does not describe today’s dwelling conditions. Above all, it does not assert that to dwell means to occupy a house, a dwelling place. Nor does it say that the poetic exhausts itself in an unreal play of poetic imagination. What thoughtful man, therefore, would presume to declare, unhesitatingly and from a somewhat dubious elevation, that dwelling and the poetic are incompatible? Perhaps the two can bear with each other. This is not all. Perhaps one even bears the other in such a way that dwelling rests on the poetic. If this is indeed what we suppose, then we are required to think of dwelling and poetry in terms of their essential nature. If we do not balk at this demand, we think of what is usually called the existence of man in terms of dwelling. In doing so, we do of course give up the customary notion of dwelling. According to that idea, dwelling remains merely one form of human behavior

alongside many others. We work in the city, but dwell outside it. We travel, and dwell now here, now there. Dwelling so understood is always merely the occupying of a lodging.

When Hölderlin speaks of dwelling, he has before his eyes the basic character of human existence. He sees the “poetic,” moreover, by way of its relation to this dwelling, thus understood essentially.

This does not mean, though, that the poetic is merely an ornament and bonus added to dwelling. Nor does the poetic character of dwelling mean merely that the poetic turns up in some way or other in all dwelling. Rather, the phrase “poetically man dwells” says: poetry first causes dwelling to be dwelling. Poetry is what really lets us dwell. But through what do we attain to a dwelling place? Through building. Poetic creation, which lets us dwell, is a kind of building.

Thus we confront a double demand: for one thing, we are to think of what is called man’s existence by way of the nature of dwelling; for another, we are to think of the nature of poetry as a letting-dwell, as a—perhaps even *the*—distinctive kind of building. If we search out the nature of poetry according to this viewpoint, then we arrive at the nature of dwelling.

But where do we humans get our information about the nature of dwelling and poetry? Where does man generally get the claim to arrive at the nature of something? Man can make such a claim only where he receives it. He receives it from the telling of language. Of course, only when and only as long as he respects language’s own nature. Meanwhile, there rages round the earth an unbridled yet clever talking, writing, and broadcasting of spoken words. Man acts as though he were the shaper and master of language, while in fact language remains the master of man. When this relation of dominance gets inverted, man hits upon strange maneuvers. Language becomes the means of expression. As expression, language can decay into a mere medium for the printed word. That even in such employment of language we retain a concern for care in speaking is all to the good. But this

alone will never help us to escape from the inversion of the true relation of dominance between language and man. For, strictly, it is language that speaks. Man first speaks when, and only when, he responds to language by listening to its appeal. Among all the appeals that we human beings, on our part, may help to be voiced, language is the highest and everywhere the first. Language beckons us, at first and then again at the end, toward a thing's nature. But that is not to say, ever, that in any word-meaning picked up at will language supplies us, straight away and definitively, with the transparent nature of the matter as if it were an object ready for use. But the responding in which man authentically listens to the appeal of language is that which speaks in the element of poetry. The more poetic a poet is—the freer (that is, the more open and ready for the unforeseen) his saying—the greater is the purity with which he submits what he says to an ever more painstaking listening, and the further what he says is from the mere propositional statement that is dealt with solely in regard to its correctness or incorrectness.

“ . . . poetically man dwells . . . ”

says the poet. We hear Hölderlin's words more clearly when we take them back into the poem in which they belong. First, let us listen only to the two lines from which we have detached and thus clipped the phrase. They run:

Full of merit, yet poetically, man
Dwells on this earth.

The keynote of the lines vibrates in the word “poetically.” This word is set off in two directions: by what comes before it and by what follows.

Before it are the words: “Full of merit, yet” They sound almost as if the next word, “poetically,” introduced a restriction on the profitable, meritorious dwelling of man. But

it is just the reverse. The restriction is denoted by the expression “Full of merit,” to which we must add in thought a “to be sure.” Man, to be sure, merits and earns much in his dwelling. For he cultivates the growing things of the earth and takes care of his increase. Cultivating and caring (*colere, cultura*) are a kind of building. But man not only cultivates what produces growth out of itself; he also builds in the sense of *aedificare*, by erecting things that cannot come into being and subsist by growing. Things that are built in this sense include not only buildings but all the works made by man's hands and through his arrangements. Merits due to this building, however, can never fill out the nature of dwelling. On the contrary, they even deny dwelling its own nature when they are pursued and acquired purely for their own sake. For in that case these merits, precisely by their abundance, would everywhere constrain dwelling within the bounds of this kind of building. Such building pursues the fulfillment of the needs of dwelling. Building in the sense of the farmer's cultivation of growing things, and of the erecting of edifices and works and the production of tools, is already a consequence of the nature of dwelling, but it is not its ground, let alone its grounding. This grounding must take place in a different building. Building of the usual kind, often practiced exclusively and therefore the only one that is familiar, does of course bring an abundance of merits into dwelling. Yet man is capable of dwelling only if he has already built, is building, and remains disposed to build, in another way.

“Full of merit (to be sure), yet poetically, man dwells. . . .” This is followed in the text by the words: “on this earth.” We might be inclined to think the addition superfluous; for dwelling, after all, already means man's stay on earth—on “this” earth, to which every mortal knows himself to be entrusted and exposed.

But when Hölderlin ventures to say that the dwelling of mortals is poetic, this statement, as soon as it is made, gives the impression that, on the contrary, “poetic” dwelling snatches

man away from the earth. For the "poetic," when it is taken as poetry, is supposed to belong to the realm of fantasy. Poetic dwelling flies fantastically above reality. The poet counters this misgiving by saying expressly that poetic dwelling is a dwelling "on this earth." Hölderlin thus not only protects the "poetic" from a likely misinterpretation, but by adding the words "on this earth" expressly points to the nature of poetry. Poetry does not fly above and surmount the earth in order to escape it and hover over it. Poetry is what first brings man onto the earth, making him belong to it, and thus brings him into dwelling.

Full of merit, yet poetically, man
Dwells on this earth.

Do we know now why man dwells poetically? We still do not. We now even run the risk of intruding foreign thoughts into Hölderlin's poetic words. For Hölderlin indeed speaks of man's dwelling and his merit, but still he does not connect dwelling with building, as we have just done. He does not speak of building, either in the sense of cultivating and erecting, or in such a way as even to represent poetry as a special kind of building. Accordingly, Hölderlin does not speak of poetic dwelling as our own thinking does. Despite all this, we are thinking the same thing that Hölderlin is saying poetically.

It is, however, important to take note here of an essential point. A short parenthetical remark is needed. Poetry and thinking meet each other in one and the same only when, and only as long as, they remain distinctly in the distinctness of their nature. The same never coincides with the equal, not even in the empty indifferent oneness of what is merely identical. The equal or identical always moves toward the absence of difference, so that everything may be reduced to a common denominator. The same, by contrast, is the belonging together of what differs, through a gathering by way of the difference. We can only say "the same" if we think difference. It is in the carrying out and

settling of differences that the gathering nature of sameness comes to light. The same banishes all zeal always to level what is different into the equal or identical. The same gathers what is distinct into an original being-at-one. The equal, on the contrary, disperses them into the dull unity of mere uniformity. Hölderlin, in his own way, knew of these relations. In an epigram which bears the title "Root of All Evil" (Stuttgart edition, I, 1, p. 305) he says:

Being at one is godlike and good; whence, then,
this craze among men that there should exist only
One, why should all be one?

When we follow in thought Hölderlin's poetic statement about the poetic dwelling of man, we divine a path by which, through what is thought differently, we come nearer to thinking the same as what the poet composes in his poem.

But what does Hölderlin say of the poetic dwelling of man? We seek the answer to the question by listening to lines 24 to 38 of our poem. For the two lines on which we first commented are spoken from their region. Hölderlin says:

May, if life is sheer toil, a man
Lift his eyes and say: so
I too wish to be? Yes. As long as Kindness,
The Pure, still stays with his heart, man
Not unhappily measures himself
Against the godhead. Is God unknown?
Is he manifest like the sky? I'd sooner
Believe the latter. It's the measure of man.
Full of merit, yet poetically, man
Dwells on this earth. But no purer
Is the shade of the starry night,
If I might put it so, than
Man, who's called an image of the godhead.

Is there a measure on earth? There is
None.

We shall think over only a few points in these lines, and for the sole purpose of hearing more clearly what Hölderlin means when he calls man's dwelling a "poetic" one. The first lines (24 to 26) give us a clue. They are in the form of a question that is answered confidently in the affirmative. The question is a paraphrase of what the lines already expounded utter directly: "Full of merit, yet poetically, man dwells on this earth." Hölderlin asks:

May, if life is sheer toil, a man
Lift his eyes and say: so
I too wish to be? Yes.

Only in the realm of sheer toil does man toil for "merits." There he obtains them for himself in abundance. But at the same time, in this realm, man is allowed to look up, out of it, through it, toward the divinities. The upward glance passes aloft toward the sky, and yet it remains below on the earth. The upward glance spans the between of sky and earth. This between is measured out for the dwelling of man. We now call the span thus meted out the dimension. This dimension does not arise from the fact that sky and earth are turned toward one another. Rather, their facing each other itself depends on the dimension. Nor is the dimension a stretch of space as ordinarily understood; for everything spatial, as something for which space is made, is already in need of the dimension, that is, that into which it is admitted.

The nature of the dimension is the meting out—which is lightened and so can be spanned—of the between: the upward to the sky as well as the downward to earth. We leave the nature of the dimension without a name. According to Hölderlin's words, man spans the dimension by measuring himself against

the heavenly. Man does not undertake this spanning just now and then; rather, man is man at all only in such spanning. This is why he can indeed block this spanning, trim it, and disfigure it, but he can never evade it. Man, as man, has always measured himself with and against something heavenly. Lucifer, too, is descended from heaven. Therefore we read in the next lines (28 to 29): "Man measures himself against the godhead." The godhead is the "measure" with which man measures out his dwelling, his stay on the earth beneath the sky. Only insofar as man takes the measure of his dwelling in this way is he able to *be* commensurately with his nature. Man's dwelling depends on an upward-looking measure-taking of the dimension, in which the sky belongs just as much as the earth.

This measure-taking not only takes the measure of the earth, *ge*, and accordingly it is no mere geo-metry. Just as little does it ever take the measure of heaven, *ouranos*, for itself. Measure-taking is no science. Measure-taking gauges the between, which brings the two, heaven and earth, to one another. This measure-taking has its own *metron*, and thus its own metric.

Man's taking measure in the dimension dealt out to him brings dwelling into its ground plan. Taking the measure of the dimension is the element within which human dwelling has its security, by which it securely endures. The taking of measure is what is poetic in dwelling. Poetry is a measuring. But what is it to measure? If poetry is to be understood as measuring, then obviously we may not subsume it under just any idea of measuring and measure.

Poetry is presumably a high and special kind of measuring. But there is more. Perhaps we have to pronounce the sentence, "Poetry is a *measuring*," with a different stress. "Poetry is a measuring." In poetry there takes place what all measuring is in the ground of its being. Hence it is necessary to pay heed to the basic act of measuring. That consists in man's first of all taking the measure which then is applied in every measuring act. In poetry the taking of measure occurs. To write poetry is measure-

taking, understood in the strict sense of the word, by which man first receives the measure for the breadth of his being. Man exists as a mortal. He is called mortal because he can die. To be able to die means: to be capable of death as death. Only man dies—and indeed continually, so long as he stays on this earth, so long as he dwells. His dwelling, however, rests in the poetic. Hölderlin sees the nature of the “poetic” in the taking of the measure by which the measure-taking of human being is accomplished.

Yet how shall we prove that Hölderlin thinks of the nature of poetry as taking measure? We do not need to prove anything here. All proof is always only a subsequent undertaking on the basis of presuppositions. Anything at all can be proved, depending only on what presuppositions are made. But we can here pay heed only to a few points. It is enough, then, if we attend to the poet’s own words. For in the next lines Hölderlin inquires, before anything else and in fact exclusively, as to man’s measure. That measure is the godhead against which man measures himself. The question begins in line 29 with the words: “Is God unknown?” Manifestly not. For if he were unknown, how could he, being unknown, ever be the measure? Yet—and this is what we must now listen to and keep in mind—for Hölderlin God, as the one who he is, is unknown and it is just as *this Unknown One* that he is the measure for the poet. This is also why Hölderlin is perplexed by the exciting question: how can that which by its very nature remains unknown ever become a measure? For something that man measures himself by must after all impart itself, must appear. But if it appears, it is known. The god, however, is unknown, and he is the measure nonetheless. Not only this, but the god who remains unknown, must by showing *himself* as the one he is, appear as the one who remains unknown. God’s *manifestness*—not only he himself—is mysterious. Therefore the poet immediately asks the next question: “Is he manifest like the sky?” Hölderlin answers: “I’d sooner/Believe the latter.”

Why—so *we* now ask—is the poet’s surmise inclined in that

way? The very next words give the answer. They say tersely: “It’s the measure of man.” What is the measure for human measuring? God? No. The sky? No. The manifestness of the sky? No. The measure consists in the way in which the god who remains unknown, is revealed *as* such by the sky. God’s appearance through the sky consists in a disclosing that lets us see what conceals itself, but lets us see it not by seeking to wrest what is concealed out of its concealedness, but only by guarding the concealed in its self-concealment. Thus the unknown god appears as the unknown by way of the sky’s manifestness. This appearance is the measure against which man measures himself.

A strange measure, perplexing it would seem to the common notions of mortals, inconvenient to the cheap omniscience of everyday opinion, which likes to claim that it is the standard for all thinking and reflection.

A strange measure for ordinary and in particular also for all merely scientific ideas, certainly not a palpable stick or rod but in truth simpler to handle than they, provided our hands do not abruptly grasp but are guided by gestures befitting the measure here to be taken. This is done by a taking which at no time clutches at the standard but rather takes it in a concentrated perception, a gathered taking-in, that remains a listening.

But why should this measure, which is so strange to us men of today, be addressed to man and imparted by the measure-taking of poetry? Because only this measure gauges the very nature of man. For man dwells by spanning the “on the earth” and the “beneath the sky.” This “on” and “beneath” belong together. Their interplay is the span that man traverses at every moment insofar as he *is* as an earthly being. In a fragment (Stuttgart edition, 2, 1, p. 334) Hölderlin says:

Always, love! the earth
moves and heaven holds.

Because man *is*, in his enduring the dimension, his being must now and again be measured out. That requires a measure which

involves at once the whole dimension in one. To discern this measure, to gauge it as the measure, and to accept it as the measure, means for the poet to make poetry. Poetry is this measure-taking—its taking, indeed, for the dwelling of man. For immediately after the words "It's the measure of man" there follow the lines: "Full of merit, yet poetically, man dwells on this earth."

Do we now know what the "poetic" is for Hölderlin? Yes and no. Yes, because we receive an intimation about how poetry is to be thought of: namely, it is to be conceived as a distinctive kind of measuring. No, because poetry, as the gauging of that strange measure, becomes ever more mysterious. And so it must doubtless remain, if we are really prepared to make our stay in the domain of poetry's being.

Yet it strikes us as strange that Hölderlin thinks of poetry as a measuring. And rightly so, as long as we understand measuring only in the sense current *for us*. In this sense, by the use of something known—measuring rods and their number—something unknown is stepped off and thus made known, and so is confined within a quantity and order which can always be determined at a glance. Such measuring can vary with the type of apparatus employed. But who will guarantee that this customary kind of measuring, merely because it is common, touches the nature of measuring? When we hear of measure, we immediately think of number and imagine the two, measure and number, as quantitative. But the *nature* of measure is no more a quantum than is the *nature* of number. True, we can reckon with numbers—but not with the nature of number. When Hölderlin envisages poetry as a measuring, and above all himself achieves poetry as taking measure, then we, in order to think of poetry, must ever and again first give thought to the measure that is taken in poetry; we must pay heed to the kind of taking here, which does not consist in a clutching or any other kind of grasping, but rather in a letting come of what has been dealt out. What is the measure for poetry? The godhead; God, there-

fore? Who is the god? Perhaps this question is too hard for man, and asked too soon. Let us therefore first ask what may be said about God. Let us first ask merely: What is God?

Fortunately for us, and helpfully, some verses of Hölderlin's have been preserved which belong in substance and time to the ambience of the poem "In lovely blueness. . . ." They begin (Stuttgart edition, 2, 1, p. 210):

What is God? Unknown, yet
Full of his qualities is the
Face of the sky. For the lightnings
Are the wrath of a god. The more something
Is invisible, the more it yields to what's alien.

What remains alien to the god, the sight of the sky—this is what is familiar to man. And what is that? Everything that shimmers and blooms in the sky and thus under the sky and thus on earth, everything that sounds and is fragrant, rises and comes—but also everything that goes and stumbles, moans and falls silent, pales and darkens. Into this, which is intimate to man but alien to the god, the unknown imparts himself, in order to remain guarded within it as the unknown. But the poet calls all the brightness of the sights of the sky and every sound of its courses and breezes into the singing word and there makes them shine and ring. Yet the poet, if he is a poet, does not describe the mere appearance of sky and earth. The poet calls, in the sights of the sky, that which in its very self-disclosure causes the appearance of that which conceals itself, and indeed *as* that which conceals itself. In the familiar appearances, the poet calls the alien as that to which the invisible imparts itself in order to remain what it is—unknown.

The poet makes poetry only when he takes the measure, by saying the sights of heaven in such a way that he submits to its appearances as to the alien element to which the unknown god has "yielded." Our current name for the sight and appearance

of something is "image." The nature of the image is to let something be seen. By contrast, copies and imitations are already mere variations on the genuine image which, as a sight or spectacle, lets the invisible be seen and so imagines the invisible in something alien to it. Because poetry takes that mysterious measure, to wit, in the face of the sky, therefore it speaks in "images." This is why poetic images are imaginings in a distinctive sense: not mere fancies and illusions but imaginings that are visible inclusions of the alien in the sight of the familiar. The poetic saying of images gathers the brightness and sound of the heavenly appearances into one with the darkness and silence of what is alien. By such sights the god surprises us. In this strangeness he proclaims his unfaltering nearness. For that reason Hölderlin, after the lines "Full of merit, yet poetically, man Dwells on this earth," can continue:

. . . Yet no purer
Is the shade of the starry night,
If I might put it so, than
Man, who's called an image of the godhead.

"The shade of the night"—the night itself is the shade, that darkness which can never become a mere blackness because as shade it is wedded to light and remains cast by it. The measure taken by poetry yields, imparts itself—as the foreign element in which the invisible one preserves his presence—to what is familiar in the sights of the sky. Hence, the measure is of the same nature as the sky. But the sky is not sheer light. The radiance of its height is itself the darkness of its all-sheltering breadth. The blue of the sky's lovely blueness is the color of depth. The radiance of the sky is the dawn and dusk of the twilight, which shelters everything that can be proclaimed. This sky is the measure. This is why the poet must ask:

Is there a measure on earth?

And he must reply: "There is none." Why? Because what we signify when we say "on the earth" exists only insofar as man dwells on the earth and in his dwelling lets the earth be as earth.

But dwelling occurs only when poetry comes to pass and is present, and indeed in the way whose nature we now have some idea of, as taking a measure for all measuring. This measure-taking is itself an authentic measure-taking, no mere gauging with ready-made measuring rods for the making of maps. Nor is poetry building in the sense of raising and fitting buildings. But poetry, as the authentic gauging of the dimension of dwelling, is the primal form of building. Poetry first of all admits man's dwelling into its very nature, its presencing being. Poetry is the original admission of dwelling.

The statement, *Man dwells in that he builds*, has now been given its proper sense. Man does not dwell in that he merely establishes his stay on the earth beneath the sky, by raising growing things and simultaneously raising buildings. Man is capable of such building only if he already builds in the sense of the poetic taking of measure. Authentic building occurs so far as there are poets, such poets as take the measure for architecture, the structure of dwelling.

On March 12, 1804 Hölderlin writes from Nürtingen to his friend Leo von Seckendorf: "At present I am especially occupied with the fable, the poetic view of history, and the architectonics of the skies, especially of our nation's, so far as it differs from the Greek" (Hellingrath V², p. 333).

". . . poetically, man dwells . . ."

Poetry builds up the very nature of dwelling. Poetry and dwelling not only do not exclude each other; on the contrary, poetry and dwelling belong together, each calling for the other. "Poetically man dwells." Do *we* dwell poetically? Presumably we dwell altogether unpoetically. If that is so, does it give the lie to the poet's words; are they untrue? No. The truth of his

utterance is confirmed in the most unearthly way. For dwelling can be unpoetic only because it is in essence poetic. For a man to be blind, he must remain a being by nature endowed with sight. A piece of wood can never go blind. But when man goes blind, there always remains the question whether his blindness derives from some defect and loss or lies in an abundance and excess. In the same poem that meditates on the measure for all measuring, Hölderlin says (lines 75–76): “King Oedipus has perhaps one eye too many.” Thus it might be that our unpoetic dwelling, its incapacity to take the measure, derives from a curious excess of frantic measuring and calculating.

That we dwell unpoetically, and in what way, we can in any case learn only if we know the poetic. Whether, and when, we may come to a turning point in our unpoetic dwelling is something we may expect to happen only if we remain heedful of the poetic. How and to what extent our doings can share in this turn we alone can prove, if we take the poetic seriously.

The poetic is the basic capacity for human dwelling. But man is capable of poetry at any time only to the degree to which his being is appropriate to that which itself has a liking for man and therefore needs his presence. Poetry is authentic or inauthentic according to the degree of this appropriation.

That is why authentic poetry does not come to light appropriately in every period. When and for how long does authentic poetry exist? Hölderlin gives the answer in verses 26–69, already cited. Their explication has been purposely deferred until now. The verses run:

. . . As long as Kindness,
The Pure, still stays with his heart, man
Not unhappily measures himself
Against the Godhead. . . .

“Kindness”—what is it? A harmless word, but described by Hölderlin with the capitalized epithet “the Pure.” “Kindness”—

this word, if we take it literally, is Hölderlin’s magnificent translation for the Greek word *charis*. In his *Ajax*, Sophocles says of *charis* (verse 522):

Charis charin gar estin he tiktous aei.

For kindness it is, that ever calls forth kindness.

“As long as Kindness, the Pure, still stays with his heart” Hölderlin says in an idiom he liked to use: “with his heart,” not “in his heart.” That is, it has come to the dwelling being of man, come as the claim and appeal of the measure to the heart in such a way that the heart turns to give heed to the measure.

As long as this arrival of kindness endures, so long does man succeed in measuring himself not unhappily against the godhead. When this measuring appropriately comes to light, man creates poetry from the very nature of the poetic. When the poetic appropriately comes to light, then man dwells humanly on this earth, and then—as Hölderlin says in his last poem—“the life of man” is a “dwelling life” (Stuttgart edition, 2, 1, p. 312).

Vista

When far the dwelling life of man into the distance goes,
Where, in that far distance, the grapevine’s season glows,
There too are summer’s fields, emptied of their growing,
And forest looms, its image darkly showing.
That Nature paints the seasons so complete,
That she abides, but they glide by so fleet,
Comes of perfection; then heaven’s radiant height
Crowns man, as blossoms crown the trees, with light.