Towards a Poetics of Place: Heidegger, Hölderlin, World, and Earth

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I. Introduction: Poetics, *Poiesis*, and *Techne*

Since this is a paper on Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), it seems fitting for me to begin by problematizing a common word. So I will do so. So much talk about poetics seems to have forgotten the meaning of the word. To deal in poetics means, of course, to consort with poems, and I will have much to say about poems in what follows. But I think that the ecological theme of this conference and the ethical theme of my paper call for a more radical understanding of poetics than simply that which has to do with poems. So let me, in a Heideggerian *kehre*, turn to the Greeks for some help with this matter. The word I am probelmatizing, and I hope clarifying, is poetics, and I want to do that by talking about how *poiesis*, making, shines through the word poetic and allows for a clearer understanding of human dwelling in a world upon an earth than would otherwise be had. I will not problematize "world" and "earth" any more than they already have been; this conference has given us many shades of meaning to think about, and I think that my paper could work with any one of them.

Plato tells us *he gar toi ek tou me ontos eis to on ionti, hotooun aitia pasa esti poiesis*: "For of anything whatever that passes from non-being into being, the whole cause is *poiesis* (*Symposium* 205b). This word, *poiesis*, is variously translated poetry or composing, and in the context of the *Symposium* this is correct. But the verb form, *poieo* means making or producing. One is tempted to say that poems, *poiesis*, are the purest form of making, *poieo*, for they most faithfully bring to light that which is already there prior to the act of making. For this reason it is unwise to translate *poiesis* as creation, for that word is bound-up in post-Christian minds with the notion of *creatio ex nihilo*, a non-Greek concept which understands the creative act to be not a crafting, a *techne*, but a something from nothing. Whatever the merits of this concept for theology, it is ruinous in the realm of ecological poetics, as I hope will become clear as I go on.

Reading *poiesis* as making allows us to see that, returning to the words of Plato, everything that is at all is made from something else, and in turn reveals something beyond itself, and while this magnificent circularity might drive the logicians among us mad, it is a wonderfully compelling picture in the ecological realm.

Moreover, *techne* as craft or skill or even art shows us something in the heart of technology which might surprise us, namely, that technology is concerned with revealing, and this is surely not inherently wicked or dangerous. It certainly is not for Heidegger, who says that "what is decisive in *techne* does not at all lie in making and manipulating nor in the using of means, but rather in the aforementioned revealing. It is as revealing, and not as manufacturing, that *techne* is a bringing-forth" (1977: 13). Technology for Heidegger is a mode of revealing something; the difference between the sort of revealing that is poetic and the sort of revealing which is found in modern technology is the heart of the problem for Heidegger, for modern technology, too, is a revealing, "a challenging, which puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such" (14). This storing is a standing reserve [*Bestand*] which is no longer poetic in itself, but is merely an objectified stock which can be quantified, used, and replaced. This "standing reserve" in the technology essay is a return to the critique of *Vorhandenheit* (present to hand) in *Being and Time*, and is one of the places to seek for continuity between the earlier and later Heidegger, if you like such distinctions.

In *techne* there is a separation from the maker and the made, though of course there is no standard definition of *techne* in Aristotle, Plato, or Heidegger. The crafty or malleable nature of nature is what allows for humans to build worlds upon it, and if there is not an order in nature, if there is not a certain regularity, following Aristotle, *techne* is impossible. So it is inevitable that humans build worlds upon the earth, since earth is there for the building. That we can build means that we can know, and *episteme* is linked to *poiesis* and *techne* by Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1139b 15ff) and Heidegger (1977: 12). If we could not build, we could not even know the world, strange as that sounds. Our *poiema*, our works, must be careful and appropriate for our earth, for *auto gar esmen poiema . . . ktisthentes esti ergois agathois*: "For we are his *poiema* . . . created for good works" (Eph 2.10), St. Paul tells us. Because we know, we build, and because we build, we know. It thus behooves us to carefully consider what and how we build our worlds upon the earth, and how our building reveals, conceals, and preserves the earth. When our building is a dwelling, it makes something, it is *poiesis*, is a poetics. It can create something awful, or it can create something lovely, rewarding, and enduring. What it makes depends on whether or not our building is a dwelling, and what kind of dwelling it is.

II. Dwelling and Poetics

Dwelling, *wohnen*, is a word that figures prominently in the later Heidegger, and it is central to his approach to technology, world, and earth. Heidegger says, "we attain to dwelling, so it seems, only by means of building" (1971: 145). There are a number of ways one could read this, the most pernicious perhaps being that our dwelling upon the earth is only achieved through a manipulation of the world, and thus any building will do. But this means-end schema is already too limited, to bracket out the ethical problems with it, for Heidegger points out that "to build is already to dwell" (146). "*Ich bin*, *du bist* mean: I dwell, you dwell" (147), so to dwell is to be. The way we *are* (*bauen, bin*) on the earth is *wohnen*, dwelling. There is a profound ethic implied in all this, caught up with ideas about the ways humans carry themselves on the earth, and how we build the worlds we inhabit. Can it be that our worlds are expressions of who we are, who we have become? A poetics of place teaches us that this is the case whether we know it or not; from the emergence of *homo sapiens* as tool-using creatures to the planned colonization of other planets, humans show who we are by what we make, what sorts of *techne* we produce and how it fits with the earth which is the location of our grandiose world building, and how *poietic* these worlds are. Our dwelling must be a fitting-in-with, if you will, a creative appropriation of the earth in our worldbuilding, one which allows the earth to reveal what it will reveal and conceal what it will conceal. Heidegger says that dwelling, "to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature. *The fundamental character of dwelling is this sparing and preserving*" (1971: 149). *Poietic* dwelling, then, will be peaceful, appropriate, and free. Not a bad aspiration.

My understanding of dwelling in this paper relies heavily on the *poietic* or productive aspect inherent in any concept of dwelling. That is, to dwell is to fully and freely inhabit a place with everything that is always already there and coming to light in its ownmost being. Dwelling is a measure of appropriateness, and as such is not deontological. One cannot say what will in every situation and on every occasion be appropriate dwelling: finding this out is what is poetic, what makes the making a concernful dwelling-with. *Poiesis* is not creation from nothing, it is not cut off from the world. It is a *techne* and so must remain in contact with the world which is its matter. Acosmic, *ex nihilo* creation leads to abuse – but a *poiesis* of place will never be cut off from the earth; it will be formative of place, and emerge from the earth of its own accord. But how capable are we of actually

dwelling poetically, and what might such a thing mean? Heidegger is adamant that "only if we are capable of dwelling – only then should we build" (160). Part of what such a dwelling means is a sparing and a preserving of what constitutes the building; as Heidegger puts it, "dwelling is always a staying with things" (151). Poetic dwelling is peacemaking of the highest order, for it seeks to make itself from what it finds, and to increase value, novelty, freedom, and harmony in the world it creates upon and in concert with the earth.

My thesis is simple: poetry is a letting come and a letting-be (a Heideggerian *Gelassenheit*) which poets, in the last analysis, craft but do not create. Similarly, a world building which allows earth to be earth attains to dwelling through an appropriateness which is craft, *techne*, and making, *poiesis*, but not creation *ex nihilo*, for there is *never nothing there*. Only when building builds with the assumption that the building is *ex nihilo*, from nothing and upon nothing but *fiat*, does building have to draw upon technology as standing reserve and enframe (*Ge-stell*) the building in a world which does not dwell upon the earth, but in its own strength, and in the hubris of its builders. Such a world building manifests no epistemic humility, and shows no awareness of that place of humans within the fourfold realm (*das Geviert*) of earth and sky, mortals and gods, the conceptual model Heidegger adopts in his later writings to try and explain the unified mainfold of reality in all its relational interconnectedness. When world building and poetic letting-come are the same thing, when they both participate in the same letting-be of what emerges as true in the instance of becoming, poetry reveals itself as the "primal form of building" (227), and as a concernful dwelling-with. When building becomes poetic, second-order creation, mortals dwell in their worlds upon the earth, under the sky, before the gods.

III. Poetry and Poetics

What has any of this to do with poetry, however? To be sure, I have outlined what I think to be some very compelling arguments for a wider understanding of the word poetic, grounded more in the original meaning of the word as "productive" than in any given instance of what is called a poetics. I have even given a rudimentary form to what a poetics of place might be, namely, a way to ground our world making in a more earth-grounded consciousness, and since this paper is entitled "*Towards* a Poetics of Place," this might be enough for now. However, because poetics are, in fact, inevitably tied up with poetry, and since Heidegger turned to poetry in his later philosophy, I will now bring my barely clear understanding of *poiesis* to bear on the poet that looms largest

in the Heidegger canon, Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843), and his late poem *In Lieblicher Bläue*, "In Lovely Blue," which in turn forms the subject matter for Heidegger's 1954 essay ". . . Poetically Man Dwells . . ." By listening to what Hölderlin has to say about poetic dwelling, and by thinking about Heidegger's reading of the poet, I hope to sharpen a few of my points and maybe provide one or two practical ethical directions for building on the earth.

One of the first problems one faces in reading poetry, particularly poetry having anything to do with nature or the earth, is the charge of romanticism. Yet if poetry is as close to unmediated, first-order discourse as human language can get (as has been argued by many decidedly un-romantic thinkers), surely it must be right that poetry can help us situate ourselves in terms of the earth. However, as Foltz (1995) rightly says,

> "This is not, of course, to say that we must sit down and read some poems before setting out to encounter nature. Nor does it imply that we ought to assume some sort of artificial, aesthetic attitude when we go outdoors. If it is within the poetic that the essential belonging-together of word and thing first come to pass, then we need only to listen. For when nature speaks to us, it does so poetically – gathering itself together in its richly significant and manifold primordiality" (158).

All this is true; but it is still an overly romantic view of the poetic, in the full sense of the word *poiesis* that I have outlined here and that I am sure is at least mostly correct. Foltz is right (following Heidegger) that poetry shows or unconceals (167), but I believe such a poetic dwelling *shows* because it is causative, it *makes* something. It is not a static or passive receiving, but rather it calls dwelling forth into the light of *ereignis*, the event, what Mugerauer (1995) calls the "event of the unfolding of an intelligible world" (72).

Hölderlin, as perhaps a quintessential romantic poet, nevertheless breaks the romantic mold when it comes to the revelatory role nature may play. His language is unconventional, his odes classic and yet disturbing, his hymns sad and yet hopeful. He damages the German language in his writing, and stretches it as all poets do in order make it "tell the best," as Whitman puts it (1990: 179). Heidegger finds in him the poet muse for all his later thought. He is especially interested in a segment of verses from "in Lovely Blue" (Hölderlin: 1984: 249) which run:

> Well deserving, yet poetically
> Man dwells on this earth.

Of these lines, Heidegger writes:

> "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 . . . . [T]he 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" (1971: 215).

This phrase – "poetic creation, which lets us dwell, is a kind of building" – is the key to a poetics of place, uniting world and earth.

How does this unity come about? "The poet makes poetry only when he takes the measure," according to Heidegger (225). How does this happen? How does one dwell poetically? In part, "by saying the sights of heaven in such way that he submits to its appearances as to the alien element to which the unknown god has 'yielded'" (225), that is, by building without mastery, by understanding that human dwelling takes place as finite mortality, on earth under the sky. The human view is not the view *sub speciae aeterni,* nor is it even God's view (*pace* Spinoza); there is no view from everywhere, so to speak. When mortals say the sights of heaven, we say it from the earth, under the sky, and we say it (when we say it rightly) fully aware of the alien which remains before us as remainder and which cannot be subsumed into our world. In part, this is what Heidegger means when he says that the earth is what conceals. As Whitman says in *A Song of Rolling Earth* (1990: 180):

> The best of the earth cannot be told anyhow, all or any is best,
> It is not what you anticipated, it is cheaper, easier, nearer,
> Things are not dismiss'd from the places they held before,
> The earth is just as positive and direct as it was before.

Such is a view that knows all things in the fourfold to be in their place. Sadly, it is certainly the case that much of modern technology has taken the "view from everywhere" to be its own especial purview, as themes of modularity, interchangeability, and planned obsolescence have come to the fore in the last century.

By contrast, a poetic dwelling and a poetic technology, that is, a *techne* that knows itself to be *poiesis*, is always a dwelling which dwells in the face of the other-oriented earth. Such a poetic dwelling acknowledges the alien hiddenness of the concealed earth, the sheltering and verdant greening which is the home-base of all building which truly dwells in its being built, and which is not brought into the light of unconcealedness by the mere building of a world. Worlds are built, but not all building is a dwelling. If a house be built without dwelling, how sad it is; how much more tragic if an entire world be built without ever truly being inhabited by mortals who dwell on the earth, under the sky, and before the gods. Using the standing reserve of technology, worlds may be

built which never achieve a concernful dwelling-with, but are simply violent erections of human structures of domination over the earth. Think of the skyline of any city you know. Modern cityscapes intend to house humans in high places, above the earth, against the sky – notice the adversarial language in English. Of course, in areas where land is scarce, or where sprawl is unwanted (and where is sprawl not unwanted?), building upwards is an attempt to dwell in a world which preserves the earth, is it not? So we cannot be essentialist in our condemnation of technology; as Heidegger points out often enough, technology is simply the way mortals see the world these days, it is not an option. He even says at the end of the technology essay that we may yet be astounded by the possibility that "the essence of technology may come to presence in the coming-to-pass of truth" (1977: 35). The question concerning technology is the question of dwelling in the technological, or more precisely, in the way technology may or may not be a place where truth is allowed to come to pass (33).

IV. Poetics and the Utopian Measure

Let me return now to Hölderlin. The poet writes a bit further down in the poem quoted earlier:

> Is there a measure on earth? There is none.
> No created world ever hindered
> The course of thunder.

What can this mean? I think it a crucial passage for a poetics of place, for it reveals the limits of Hölderlin's own romanticism and the concern which mortals must now have about their dwelling on the earth. The poet says that earth and world exist in a reciprocal relationship, but he privileges *die Erden* over *die Welten des Schöpfers* in this verse. How can the created world hinder the course of thunder? We cannot afford to be so sanguine about the relationship between world and earth, however. The created world or worlds which modern technology engenders hinders and exploits and effects the natural course of the earth in a thousand large and small ways, forcing the earth to yield in a bitter unconcealment, and stockpiling it as a standing reserve. We all learn with Heidegger that worlds are what we build in order to dwell, and yet we do not think (again, with Heidegger) that world and earth necessarily compete with one another. Indeed, in a poetic dwelling they cannot and never do, for when we live creatively upon the earth, our worlds reflect it. "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" (Heidegger, 1971: 227). Creativity is not easy, however, and this in part explains the

success of the strip-mall and the gated, suburban cul-de-sac: whatever else they are, they are in many ways convenient, safe, dependable, and easily replicated in almost any environment. This much at least must be said for them. But a poetic dwelling can and must do better.

Is such a hope for a better dwelling utopian? Without getting into a complicated analysis of utopian societies and the function of utopian symbols, I want to suggest that it is anything but utopian. Like Plato's *Republic* or Aristotle's *Ethics*, such utopian visions are directions, means, not ends or goals; they are eschatological visions which have to be proleptically appropriated, else they remain forever in the realm of "final things" and pie-in-the-sky kingdoms to come which cannot hold the imagination. As Hart has persuasively argued, human self-understanding (which is another way to say world) is always already constructed out of what we can imagine in terms of what is revealed, or, as he puts it, imagination increases the phenomenological range of the given (Hart, 2001: 248). In addition, we must remember Hölderlin's own words, that there is no measure on the earth. Humanity dwells on the earth, but the measure for its dwelling is in the sky, with the gods. Earth is the proper realm of mortal thought, if the earth is earth, sky is sky, and gods are gods. Perhaps such a dwelling is utopian, in its own way, *atopia*, no single place, for it is the *eudaimonic* intention of every building that it be a dwelling, a poetic place of mortals, earth, sky, and gods.

Gods manifest in the sky? The poet says he believes this, *dieses glaub' ich eher*, and it is at least as hard to conceive of an honest human dwelling on the earth as it is to think of gods in the sky. For the poet, and perhaps for us, it is an article of faith which informs and conforms building into dwelling, for within the fourfold the gods are as important as any other part. Just as mortals are a needed part, so too are the gods. The fact that we are confronted in Hölderlin's poems with gods who have departed is not *prima faciae* a reason for concern, but neither is it cause for humans in our building to aspire to the place of the gods, and in our drive to make heaven on earth, produce nothing but a technological hell. As Heidegger famously quipped, "*Nur noch ein Gott kann uns retten*," that is, "Only a god can save us. The sole responsibility that is left for us is to prepare a sort of readiness, through thinking and poetizing, for the appearance of the god or for the absence of the god in the time of foundering; for in the face of the god who is absent, we founder" (1993: 107). Heidegger's critics have accused him of waiting for a theophany. I would argue that there are worse things for which one can wait.

V. Poetics and the Divine Measure

I think that Heidegger is correct when he says that humanity is measured by the "measure taking of poetry" (1971: 223), and thus I think living poetically has an incalculable *ethic* sheltered within it. Humans built our worlds in the space, the span, between earth and sky. "Because man *is*," Heidegger says, "in his enduring the dimension [i.e. the span of 'on the earth' and 'beneath the sky'], his being must now and again be measured out" (223). Poetry is a measuring (223) and a building (215), then. But as a measuring, it is not a mechanical, objectifying enframing (*Ge-stell*), but a *Gelassenheit*, a letting-be and a "letting-come of what has been dealt out" (224), and so is a measure of appropriateness, an Aristotelian mean, a plumb-line whereby world is built on that which is sheltered in earth, and attains to dwelling. What is the measure of humanity? Poetry, a poetic dwelling, an appropriate building or making of a place for mortals on the earth, beneath the sky, before the gods. But Heidegger presses the issue, and asks after the measure not only of mortals, but of poetry itself, the making-dwelling which is a kind of seeing and a kind of saying. He says that the measure of poetry is "the godhead" (224). What can this mean?

The godhead is the measure of poetry. Human poetic dwelling on the earth beneath the sky and before the gods is *measured* by the godhead, but for mortals to dwell with the gods within the fourfold the gods must be gods and mortals must remain mortals; humanity cannot measure itself by the measure of the godhead, but neither can humanity measure its own *poietic* dwelling by a purely human measure, for this would be to try to be gods and not mortals, to reach beyond the finitude of human existence and to take our own place over the earth, above the sky, and without the gods – a position too often taken by technologically-inebriated humanity, drunk on its own creative hubris. If we follow Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin, that the divine is the measure for poetic dwelling (and I suggest that we do for the time being), we are then thrown upon the question, What do mortals and gods share? or What in the poetic measure is accessible to mortals for the rudimentary beginning of our concernful dwelling on the earth? To paraphrase Heidegger, What sight of the gods surprises us into a concernful dwelling? Well, what does our poet say about this? In the same section of the poem we are considering (Hölderlin, 1984: 250):

May a man look up
From the utter hardship of his life
And say: let me also be like these? Yes.
As long as kindness, the pure,
Endures within his heart,
Man may not unhappily measure himself
Against the gods.

Freundlichkeit? Kindness? Is such a seemingly pollyannish answer to the problem of worldly dwelling upon a increasingly ravaged earth even allowed in the face of what seem to many to be insurmountable problems? It depends upon what one means by kindness, of course, as these things often do. Certainly an *un*kind, adversarial approach to dwelling has not done anyone much good in the long run. Not being able to see the earth for the world has doomed more than a few, I am afraid, and kindness is more than just being nice. Nevertheless, even just being nice is preferable to many if not most of the approaches to world building we humans have often taken.

There is a far deeper sense of kindness that I think we need to consider, however, one in line with the *poietic* project I have undertaken in this paper. There is a more fundamental sense in which kindness is an appropriate way for humanity to measure itself within the fourfold, and thus "create poetry from the very nature of the poetic," as Heidegger says, and "dwell humanely on the earth" (1971: 229). Kindness comes from the Old English adjective *gecynde*, meaning natural, native, or fitting, and is closely akin to the Germanic *kundiz*, "natural, native." In a very real sense, then – at least in a poetic sense, which is the best sort, philosophically – being kind is being natural, the most natural thing for mortals to be. I say this, of course, without getting into ethical theory, which would complicate matters further than I could take them in this paper. But in terms of Hölderlin's poem, and the use to which we can put it in a search for a poetics of place, kindness is a key to appropriate dwelling, and is a measure which places mortals in creative relation to the gods. We could do worse than to seek to be natural and fitting, whether it be in environmental architecture, energy policy, or the search for appropriate technologies, though of course debates about the meaning of natural and fitting would have to take place. One meaning that we have established, of course, is kindness. In concrete terms, one finds such kindness in (for example) Aldo Leopold's well-known land ethic: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community; it is wrong when it does otherwise" (1966: 240). We might argue if "right" and "wrong" are the best words, but surely we could agree that this ethic is at least kind in its scope and

intention.

When we measure our dwelling by kindness, that is, when we build be letting earth be earth, sky be sky, gods be gods, and mortals be mortals, the worlds we build dwell upon the earth, and that poetically, because we make a place in the place which is *our* place. And we mortals do have a place, and part of mortals being mortals is building (for only in building do we attain to dwelling), but our building and dwelling must be a creative (that is, a *poietic*) making with what is already *there*, that is, the *Zuhandenes*, that which is ready-to-hand though not held in reserve in sheer presence as *Vorhandenes*. Such a *poiesis* is anything but *ex nihilo*, however, but rather is a letting be of what is always already there, and a powerful participation in its emerging into the light of *aletheia*, the truth of its unconcealedness. This is what it means to be kind in a poetic way, to be *gecynde*, or natural, native, and fitting. Please note that this is anything but a romantic view – it is not a longing for a return to a primal state, and is not pessimistic or anachronistic. It is I hope a bold step into a future building not yet made, and in a sense "not made with hands," as the biblical texts tell us (Acts 17.24, 2 Cor 5.1), a future dwelling not yet undertaken. It is a vision of a world founded upon the earth as a dwelling for mortals who know they are mortals and find their immortality in that knowledge, a kind measure of human creative appropriation of what always already lies before it, a poetry which admits to dwelling (Heidegger, 1971: 227).

Such a dwelling is always *poietic*, or productive of new ways to dwell, precisely *because* it is kind. I say this because the Indo-European root of kind or *gecynde*, and some of you may have already guessed this, is *gene-*, to give birth to beget, from which we get such words as gender, generate, genealogy, and gene, as well as miscegenation and genocide. It gives the Greek *gonos* and *genesis*, and Sanskrit *janah* or offspring, and the Latin *germen* for germ and germinate. It lies deep in the heart and beneath the soil of words like pregnant, nation, cognate, innate, benign and malign, and the French know it as *née*, of course, but also as *renaissance* and *Noël*! See how much comes from kindness! Or to be more precise, see everything to which kindness is kin – genocide as well as Christmas. Perhaps kindness as the measure of human dwelling is not such an arbitrary measure after all. For if kindness, *gecynde*, stems from the ancient root of birthing and bringing forth, *gene-*, then all the more reason to see kindness as the best and most sure measure of poetic dwelling, *poiesis*, the making which is a bringing forth of what is unconcealed and ready-to-hand in its freshness, its freedom, and its integrity.

VI. Some Conclusions

To conclude, it seems that we have come full circle. Having begun with poetics, we end with a poem, and having begun with language, we end with it as well. And yet it is only a beginning, a movement towards a poetics of place, towards the place where we can fully understand what it means to dwell creatively on the earth, and build worlds which connect with the earth and are founded on the earth without being human fundamentalisms of any sort. I hope that I have made you think more carefully about what a poetics of something is, what it means to say that something is poetic and productive without being quantifiable and marketable. I also hope that my readings of Heidegger and Hölderlin have helped us advance the conversation further than it was when we started. Now that we have read and thought about small pieces of Hölderlin's poem, I will end by reading the whole section under consideration, with the hopes that our newfound understanding of *poiesis* and poetics will allow the truth of the poet's words to come into the light of unconcealment:

> But the gods,
> Ever kind in all things,
> Are rich in virtue and joy.
> Which a man may imitate.
> May a man look up
> From the utter hardship of his life
> And say: let me also be like these? Yes.
> As long as kindness, the pure,
> Endures within his heart,
> Man may not unhappily measure himself
> Against the gods.
> Is God unknown?
> Is he manifest in the sky? This I tend
> To believe. Such is man's measure.
> Well deserving, yet poetically
> Man dwells on the earth.

Thank you.

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