

The Poiesis of Charles Dickens's Night Walks

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Abstract

The case of the article is six of Charles Dickens' articles based on his walks in London. The theoretical approach of the article is Heidegger's conception of poiesis, in particular his central concept *Geschehnis der Wahrheit* (unconcealment of truth), which is regarded as a notable element of Dickens' wish for social reform and his societal critique. This has the context of Dickens' work as a reporter and editor of his periodicals *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. The article demonstrates how the walks as poiesis gave rise to what it calls a topographical narrative structure. In the article it is argued that poiesis in the form of walking was central to Dickens' social critique as it was manifest in his journalism.

Keywords: Poiesis, Dickens, Heidegger, London, Walking

As a reporter, Charles Dickens used the long nocturnal walks he took in London as the source of articles published in his journals *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. It is the concept of poiesis which will be employed in the article to explain how Dickens' walks were more than inspirational, and how they were part of

shaping his ideological world view. It is asked in the article how walking can have a function not only in the creation of literature, here specifically Dickens' journalism, but also of a world view, here specifically Dickens' societal critique. For this purpose, with an eye to the tie between urban, nocturnal walking and the shaping of Dickens' societal critique, the form of poiesis tested in the article will be based on Martin Heidegger's understanding of the concept, which is poiesis as an interpretation of "Being" and an ontological mode of disclosure (*Entbergen*), and poetical production is an occurrence of "unconcealment of truth" (*Geschehnis der Wahrheit*). The article will analyse a selection of Dickens' articles to address this "unconcealment of truth", and how walking was an essential part of his process.

John Hollingshead, Dickens' apprentice in the editorial office of *Household Words*, connects Dickens' night walks with his writing: "When he was restless, his brain excited with struggling with incidents or characters in the novel he was writing, he would frequently get up and walk through the night over Waterloo Bridge, along the London, New Kent and Old Kent Roads, past all the towns on the Dover High Road, until he came to his roadside dwelling." (Hollingshead in Beaumont 2016, 351) When writing about the flaneur in his *Arcades Project*, Benjamin (1999, 426) quotes one of Dickens' letters to Forster, in which Dickens complains that he cannot write without the street noise of London, and in another letter to Forster (8 October 1844), Dickens connects his process of poiesis to walking the streets: "Put me down on Waterloo-bridge at eight o'clock in the evening with leave to roam about as long as I like, and I would come home, as you know, panting to go on." (Dickens 2012, 145)

Heidegger's Approach to Poiesis

The notion of poiesis understood as a general creation process, also as the aesthetic production of poetry, has taken on many meanings since Antiquity (Barck 201, 40-86). For the purpose of addressing the creation process of Dickens' night walk articles, we employ both Plato's treatment of poiesis and Martin Heidegger's understanding of poiesis. These two will be considered in the same light, as Plato asserted that all poiesis is striving for the eternal and bringing forth ideal, essential forms, and Heidegger's conception of poiesis has

the central assertion that poiesis uncovers truth. These two are combined in this article to understand specifically Dickens' night walk articles. Dickens walking in the nights of London is conceived as the poiesis of a range of articles and of a subsequent ideological outlook on various conditions of Victorian society.

We now focus on the function of the Platonic form of poiesis, which is related to insight and recognition in art and poetry and the search for eternal and perfect forms. We investigate how Charles Dickens' night walk articles had more than a mimetical function of depicting London and its people by night. How Dickens was not merely a reporter but also a reformer, who sought for improvements and for a perfect world. This utopian conception was far removed from the realities of the East End of London he walked through. It will be necessary to briefly introduce Plato's distinction between the poetical mimetical representation of human reality and the representation of utopian, divine and essential forms. This Platonic distinction is useful when addressing Heidegger's approach to poiesis, and it can describe how the mimetical, realistic description of Dickens' night walk articles gave birth to his societal, teleological critique both in these articles and in his other works.

In the *Symposium* (360 B.C.), Plato defines three general categories of poiesis (Plato, 42-43). The first is creation or to bring from not-being into being, as in the creation of the world and ideas by the gods as a reflection of themselves, and the second is how this is mirrored in human manufacture, where artisans turn ideas into practical products. In this category Plato includes artists and dramatists who work mimetically, and who create reflections of the world and of the divine ideas. However, Plato enlarges this perception of artists and dramatists into a third more general and wider category of poiesis as the production of poetry, and he asserts that all three kinds of poiesis strive after eternal and essential forms. In this way, poiesis is a combination of material production with insight and recognition. In the *Symposium* Plato then elevates poetry to the original divine transformation from non-being into being: "There is poetry, which, as you know, is complex; and manifold. All creation or passage of non-being into being is poetry or making, and the processes of all art are creative; and the masters of arts are all poets or makers." (Plato 360 B.C.)

We will now combine Martin Heidegger's understanding of poiesis with Dickens' combination of being a reporter and a reformer. Heidegger saw poiesis as an interpretation of Being and an ontological mode of disclosure (*Entbergen*), and he discussed how an ontological understanding of production (*Da-Sein*) can move to poiesis as a narrower understanding of it as production of poetry, where poetry becomes the essence of truth. The specific production of poetry is part of the pre-Socratic concept of *physis*, which is more than an understanding of the natural world. It is "the event of un-concealment of beings out of concealment" (Di Pippo 2000, 28.) Heidegger's concept of "Her-vor-bringen", which can be translated as not only "produce", but also "to bring into the light", is closely connected to the Platonic understanding of poiesis (Plato 360 B.C.). Heidegger writes:

Alles liegt daran, daß wir das Her-vor-bringen in seiner ganzen Weite und zugleich im Sinne der Griechen denken. Ein Her-vor-bringen, ποιησις, ist nicht nur das handwerkliche Verfertigen, nicht nur das künstlerisch-dichtende zum-Scheinen- und ins-Bild-Bringen. Auch die φύσις, das von-sich-her Aufgehen, ist ein Her-vor-bringen, ist ποιήσις. Die φύσις ist sogar ποίησις im höchsten Sinne. (1954/2000, 12)

In the chapter "Das Werk und die Wahrheit" in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, Heidegger asks the question about what artistic value is, and his answer is that it consists of the unconcealment or disclosure of truth (1935/1937/1986, 27), so that the value of a work of art is based on its process of poiesis that has uncovered truth.

With Martin Heidegger's understanding of poiesis as an interpretation of Being and an ontological mode of disclosure (*Entbergen*), where poetical production is an occurrence of or unconcealment of truth (*Geschehnis der Wahrheit*), the article will analyse a selection of Dickens' articles to address any "unconcealment of truth" in them, and how their different narrative mechanisms and their mode of creation based on walking may have combined journalistic reporting with an ontological production of truth.

Dickens's Journalism, Fiction and the Night Walk Articles

Charles Dickens' career as a reporter spanned most of his career, also alongside his achievement as a writer of novels. In addition to the 15 novels, plays, travelogues, novellas and short stories, he published more than 350 journalistic articles (Drew 2003). Both his fictional works and his journalism contain social critique; the latter based on journalistic observation, the effect of which also found its way into fictional form in the novels (Ackroyd 1996, 630). The night walk articles take a special place in his journalistic production as these articles demonstrate a causal and direct relationship between observation of social life and a resulting social critique.

As a young man, Dickens worked for *The Morning Chronicle* as a political reporter, and the largely non-fictional descriptions of situations and people, subsequently collected in book form in *Sketches by Boz* in 1839, were originally published in various periodicals and newspapers. He advanced from being a reporter to an editor; first of *Bentley's Miscellany* in 1837, and then he founded *Master Humphrey's Clock* with fictional content only, then *The Daily News* in 1846 until he gave over the editorship to John Forster after 17 issues, and in 1850, *Household Words* with the imprimatur "A Weekly Journal Conducted by Charles Dickens". It contained serialized works by Dickens and by other authors, e.g. Elizabeth Gaskell and Wilkie Collins.

Apart from fiction, this journal published non-fictional reports, news and diverse educational articles, e.g. about India rubber or self-acting railway signals. After a conflict with the publishers, Bradbury and Evans, Dickens closed the journal in 1859 and started *All the Year Round*, which was entirely his own. It had the same mixture of fiction and non-fiction, e.g. *Great Expectations* and "Night Walks".

Both *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* contained articles that attacked institutions and practices, attacks which were also present in Dickens' fiction. Ackroyd praises what he calls Dickens' "most effective writing... in his account of 'the doomed childhood that encircles you out of doors, from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the stars' or in his description of an emaciated weaver of Spitalfields", and Ackroyd concludes with an observation of "how the sparks of that genius fly off him in the course of his ordinary journalistic observation." (1996, 630) In his account of

the contents of *Household Words*, Mankowitz includes "treatment of paupers, factory conditions, prisons, sanitation, jerry-building, agricultural wages, education, divorce, trade unionism, prejudices and abuses of all sorts" (1976, 266), and Chesterton writes that "Dickens did help to pull down the debtors' prisons", and he "did leave his mark on parochialism, on nursing, on funerals, on public executions, on the Court of Chancery." (2001, 117). Dickens method was that "he destroyed those institutions simply by describing them" and "the chief glory of Dickens is that he made those places interesting" (121). In this connection, Chesterton calls Dickens "a very practical sentimentalist" (1858, 118). One of his rhetorical methods to advocate reform was pathos. Bagehot calls Dickens' wish to reform, "sentimental radicalism", and he compares it favourably with political and social methods: "How much of real suffering is there that statistics can never tell. How much of obvious good is there that no memorandum to a minister will ever mention!".

The Critical Context of the Night Walk Articles

Schlör's treatment of changes in the perception of nights in European metropolises with their "night life" sets up nocturnal contrasts, which are also encompassed in the night walk articles: criminality vs. security, sexuality vs. constraint. These excursions into the city night had the ambivalent appeal of uncontrollable aspects such as "disorder, vice, indecency, unfathomability" (1998, 25). In his walks, Dickens experienced these in his perception of London at night, and through a form of poiesis that included processes delineated by Chesterton, Freud and Simmel, and more recently by Ackroyd (1990), Sanders (2010) and Beaumont (2016). These experiences of an unfathomable nature could be the source of the night walk articles. These processes of poiesis in the night walk articles have the outcome of societal critique. Their unconcealment of truth of the conditions in London, it is argued in this article, must be subsumed under Heidegger's approach to poiesis.

In his biography of Dickens, Chesterton stresses the symbiosis between the streets of London and Dickens: "The street at night is a great house locked up. But Dickens had, if ever man had, the key of the street." (2001, 20) Chesterton's explanation of this symbiosis goes further than a mere direct mimetical relation, in which Dickens depicts the streets and its inhabitants in his fiction. Chesterton

explains that "He did not go in for observation... a priggish habit; he did not look at Charing Cross to improve his mind or count the lamp-posts in Holborn to practise his arithmetic. But unconsciously he made all these places the scenes of the monstrous drama in his miserable little soul". Chesterton regards Dickens' night walking the streets of London as a paradoxical foundation of the realism in Dickens' descriptions: "Indeed, that degree of realism does not exist in reality; it is the unbearable realism of a dream. And this kind of realism can only be gained by walking dreamily in a place; it cannot be gained by walking observantly." (21)

Chesterton echoes Sigmund Freud's theory of the creation of art with its source in dreams and daydreams (Freud 1908/1985). Freud compares the artistic process with the narrative character of dreams, which is based on personal repressions, and Freud sees a close relationship between night-time dreams and daydreams. Both share their roots in private phantasies, but Freud also points out that artistic production or poiesis manages to elevate these phantasies into a socially acceptable aesthetic form so that the reception of art can cause "the release of still greater pleasure arising from deeper psychical sources" (141). In contrast to the neurotic personality, the artist has such a strong sense of reality that his phantasies do not take on a pathological character. Something repressed, hidden and tabooed is (re)produced aesthetically so that it becomes enjoyable and acceptable. This form of poiesis with the disclosure of something hidden is, as we shall see below, not unlike Heidegger's concept of poiesis with its unconcealment of truth. With particular reference to "Night Walks" (Dickens 1860) Tambling connects dreams, walking and poiesis:

Three things come together in 'Night Walks': London as a dream-place with no resting-place for the walker in it; the city as a space which awakens the idea of "houselessness"; the novelist/essayist as the person who realises that his subject is being houseless, exposed to random dreams and random encounters which expose his madness, and who must write in relation to that. (2013, 235)

It is notable that the night in the night walk articles is not disenchanting as in the title of Schivelbusch's *Disenchanted Night. The In-*

dustrialization of Light in the Nineteenth Century (1988). The public street lighting of gas lamps offered the possibility of night life, and while Dickens shared the fascination with night life described by Schivelbusch, there is hardly any illumination in the scenes of London in the night walk articles, though London was one of the first big cities to be lit by gas (Schivelbusch 1988, 31). "A Nightly Scene in London" is indeed nightly: "It was a miserable evening; very dark, very muddy, and raining hard." (25), and its central action takes place in a street that is specified as dark. There is the same absence of light in "A Small Star in the East" where a location is without light: "It was a dark street with a dead wall on one side" (61). Similarly, the streets in "Night Walks" are not lit, and "the houseless eye looked out for lights in windows" (348). It is not until the last lines that gaslight is mentioned, as when Dickens is nearing his home "the conscious gas began to grow pale with the knowledge that daylight was coming", and the disenchantment of the night is disappearing. Walking in the dark, dreams, enchantment are all components of the poiesis of the night walk articles.

Just as Chesterton's assessment of Dickens' narratological relationship with the streets of London at night can be referred to Sigmund Freud's psychological account of poiesis, they both can be contextualised by Georg Simmel's psycho-sociological description of urban or metropolitan perception in "The Metropolis and Mental Life":

The psychological basis of the metropolitan type of individuality consists of the intensification of nervous stimulation which results from the swift and uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli... With each crossing of the street, with the tempo and multiplicity of economic, occupational and social life, the city sets up a deep contrast with small town and rural life with reference to the sensory foundations of psychic life. (1903/2000, 175)

As it is described by Simmel, this diversified and interrupted mode of perception in Dickens' poiesis will be employed in the analysis of the night walk articles below.

The Conditions of the Selection of the Texts

For an article to be included in the sample for analysis certain criteria must be met. It must have a first-person narrator, and the author-persona can be identified as Charles Dickens himself. An example of this process of identification can be seen in "Night Walks" (Dickens, 1860) where the author-persona is designated with a "pluralising identity" (Tambling (2013, 232), namely "I", "we", and metaphorically "Houselessness". Schön points out that this idea of houselessness is not only metaphorical, but concrete, and it is present in Dickens' journalism and in *Bleak House* as well: "Dickens was coming to believe that the housing issue was crucial, for above all it was poor housing – physical and mental – that crippled the poor." (1998, 220) Houselessness is a metaphorical narrative device, but it is also a social problem that Dickens portrays with this narratological device.

Other conditions are that the location of the article must be London, and the narrator must travel around on foot. However, the time of the articles is not limited to night, as significant narrative and thematic differences have been found between night-time and daytime articles. In chronological order, the sample then consists of:

- "Lying Awake", 1852, 30 October, *Household Words*
- "Gone Astray", 1853, 13 August, *Household Words*
- "A Nightly Scene in London", 1856, 26 January, *Household Words*
- "Wapping Workhouse", 1860, 18 February, *All the Year Round*
- "Night Walks", 1860, 21 July, *All the Year Round*
- "A Small Star in the East", 1868, 19 December, *All the Year Round*
- "On an Amateur Beat", 1869, 27 February, *All the Year Round*

The Night Walks Articles and their Heideggerian Poiesis

It is the narrative method and structure of "Lying Awake" that sets it apart from the other night walk articles. There is no social critique or unconcealment of truth, but only an introduction to the series of articles that have their immediate *raison d'être* in Dickens himself, who as a first-person narrator, is suffering from insomnia. Consequently, the location is his bed, and it is not until the last lines that he leaves it "to get up and go out for a night walk - which resolution was an acceptable relief to me, as I dare say it may prove now to be a great many more." (148) Dickens here states his programme of the

night walks and promises his readers more to come. He is not totally stationary in "Lying Awake". His mind wanders, and his narration is comparable to the literary technique of stream of consciousness (Booth 1961/1983, 163-165). The dream-like associations determine the structure of this narrative as in Freudian dreamwork. It is not as we shall see in other later articles, topography or their argument that provides a narrative structure. The associations are thematically connected though, to the subject of sleep and insomnia, and they range from literary allusions to Irving's Rip van Winkle and "Benjamin Franklin's paper on the art of procuring pleasant dreams" (145) to George III, jails and murders, a scary figure in a churchyard seen when a child, Saint Bernard, Niagara Falls, executions and whippings, a balloon ascent, and the Paris Morgue. Dickens questions whether the procession of these nightmarish scenes is based on reality or created or re-created by his imagination before he gets up and starts his night walk and his series of articles based on this walking method of creating articles.

"Night Walks" was published eight years later than "Lying Awake", in which Dickens had decided "to get up and go out for a night walk". He now begins where he left off, and refers to the initial article, "Some years ago, a temporary inability to sleep, referable to a distressing impression, caused me to walk about the streets all night, for a series of several nights" (348), and the method he used to combat insomnia was to get up immediately after lying down and walk briskly until he came home after sunrise. He experienced the comparable "restlessness of a great city" and he was brought into "sympathetic relations with people", who also had the object of getting through the night. Where dream-like associations fed the narrative of the former article, it is topography that structures this one, though Dickens draws a parallel between the inspirations and poiesis of the two in passing the mental asylum, Bethlehem Hospital. The sane observations of each day are changed by the dreamwork into unreasonable or imaginative narratives, and he writes "Dreams the insanity of each day's sanity" (350).

The route is mapped out in the article. Dickens walks from Haymarket, along Old Kent Road to Waterloo Bridge, past theatres on the south side of the Thames, past Newgate, the church Saint Sepulchre, the Bank, Billingsgate, King's Bench Prison and Bethlehem Hospital, Westminster Bridge, Houses of Parliament, Westminster

Abbey, the Courts of Law, St Martin's Church, Covent Garden for a cup of coffee and home again.

This route and its stations are the narrative structure of the article, which may be termed topographical narration. Each place inspires Dickens to consider appropriate themes connected to it. Though, or perhaps because, it is night-time one central theme and its landmarks are connected to societal discipline. The two prisons and the mental asylum are supplemented by figures of authority and discipline met with along the route. There are policemen, a toll keeper, a watchman, turnkeys, constables, and watchmen in cemeteries. Dickens's personal insomnia has now been transformed into a description of society full of disciplinary measures, which he unconceals or brings into light to use Heideggerian terms. This disciplinary approach is repeated by Dickens in "Wapping Workhouse" with its departments for the insane and for "the Refractories" (see below). In Covent Garden, Dickens notices the miserable children "who prowl about this place; who sleep in the baskets, fight for the offal, dart at any object they think they can lay their thieving hands on, dive under the carts and barrows, dodge the constables, and are perpetually making a blunt pattering on the pavement of the Piazza with the rain of their naked feet." (351) This observation gives rise to a brief admonition that these children are uncared for, and it is one of the worst sights Dickens knows in London, he writes. Dickens has brought the plight of these children out of darkness to be seen by his reading public.

The poiesis of "Gone Astray" combines traumatic childhood memories with a topographic narrative structure. The childhood memories are tempered with social satire, when the 40-year-old Charles Dickens recollects how he as an eight-nine-year-old boy, like Florence Dombey, was lost in the City. The topographical structure is a route from St Giles' Church, the Strand, Guildhall, the Temple Bar, Saint Paul's, the South Sea House, a theatre and finally a police station, from where he was fetched home by his father. The chronological structure is a whole day, and the final part of the narrative is during the night. The little boy sleeps twice during his trip, and he wanders about the City "like a child in a dream" (556). The social satire added to the narrative by the grown-up Dickens reminiscing is directed against the financial system of the City: "jobbery, rigging the market, cooking accounts,

getting up a dividend" (556). The poiesis of the brief article are typical of Dickens' night walk-articles: Topography, detailed observations of street life and characters, the night and sleep or his personal sleeplessness, and then Heideggerian *Geschehnis der Wahrheit*, here with a critique of the City.

"A Nightly Scene in London" from 1856 has a slightly simpler narrative pattern with its direct relation between Dickens' night walk with a friend and its result in a stark exposition or disclosure (*Entbergen*) of the miserable condition of houseless and starving people lying outside a workhouse in Whitechapel where the Ward is full. There is only this location in the article, and the article is short. Dickens, who expects the warden to recognize him as a public figure, enters into dialogue with five women "in the dark street, on the muddy pavement stones, with the rain raining upon them" (25). They are trying to sleep in the street, and after he has given them money for lodgings and food, he points out that this kind of charity is not sufficient, and with fervour he attacks the inhumane system of this kind of political economy (27).

The narrative structure of "Wapping Workhouse" is established topographically with the workhouse as the destination. When Dickens reaches it, he remarks to the readers that he is not recognized there. Dickens interviews the inmates of the workhouse, so that a large part of the narrative consists of dialogue. The inmates range from "the idiotic and imbecile", and with babies, women suffering from epilepsy and hysteria to aged and clear-headed ladies, also a woman he compares with Mrs Gamp. This is one of the many literary allusions to his own and others' works in the night walk articles. Personal impressions of Dickens with the personal pronoun "I" finally opens for observations and passages in which Dickens, the reformer, takes over from Dickens, the reporter, where he attacks Westminster's policies and the poor rates. As he makes his way home, he reasons "concerning those Foul wards. They ought not to exist: no person of common decency and humanity can see them and doubt it." (395)

It is only the star in the title of "A Small Star in the East" that refers to the night as this excursion takes place during "a drizzling November day." A direct statement by Dickens in this article connects his wish for reform both with Bagehot's "sentimental radicalism" and with the narrative form of the night walk articles. The first

half of the article describes the misery and abject poverty of the people living in the borders of Ratcliff and Stepney, and the second half is a response to this, as Dickens visits an efficient and caring children's hospital, run by volunteers, and almost a mirage of a future welfare state. When Dickens writes, "I felt as though the child implored me to tell the story of the little hospital in which it was sheltered to any gentle heart I could address. Laying my world-worn hand upon the little unmarked clasped hand at the chin, I gave it a silent promise that I would do so" (65). He concludes that "Insufficient food and unwholesome living are the main causes of disease among these small patients. So nourishment, cleanliness, and ventilation are the main remedies" (66). This article with its observations, which are rendered to the reader with visual and olfactory details, and with interviews of the people Dickens met on his walk, has a clear structure that is not only determined by the topographical route but just as much by its argumentative pattern, and Dickens' closing argument is an appeal to the reader to go see for himself. "A Small Star in the East" documents the ambition which Dickens announced for the publication of *All the Year Round*: "that fusion of the graces of the imagination with the realities of life, which is vital to the welfare of any community". (Dickens 1859)

Dickens revisits the children's hospital in another daytime article, "On an Amateur Beat" published a few months later. Dickens adds pathos to his description of the children at the hospital, when he follows the dog Poodles on its rounds to the patients. Again, this article has the topographical precision both with regard to the walking route, and also metafictionally explicit in the first line of the article, "It is one of my fancies, that even my idlest walk must always have its appointed destination." (300)

The article contains and develops the themes and narrative mechanisms in the earlier articles. As the title indicates, Dickens now identifies with the character of a police constable, and in the way he does this, he ironically criticises this societal function when he compares himself and his observations on his beat with a real constable, who chases and frightens a group of begging and starving children "with the air of a man who had discharged a great moral duty – as indeed he had, in doing what was set down for him." (301) Dickens continues the article with a general attack on society with the neglect of poor children in the streets of its capital

city. Schlör considers this kind of reporting a journalistic subgenre, calls it "Spies and Policemen" when reporters go into the centre of the criminal world (1998, 124), and a trope of this subgenre is "the path from the bright streets into the dark corners" (125). Only rarely did the reporter dare enter this underworld alone, as a rule the reporter accompanied a detective or policeman, and as the first of these, and as the prototype Schön sees Dickens' "On Duty with Inspector Field" from 1851, in which Dickens drives around London with the inspector.

In these night walk articles Dickens has employed his nightly walking observations, shaped them into narrative patterns, primarily topographical narration, and he has added his own persona. The result has been rhetorical with a disclosure or unconcealment of dire social conditions. The very process of production of these articles, or their poiesis, has been an intricate combination of mimetical nightly observations with a consequent unconcealment of truth (*Geschehnis der Wahrheit*) of Victorian society.

Conclusion: The Advantages of a Heideggerian Approach

The article has demonstrated how walking was indispensable for the poiesis of Charles Dickens's night walk articles and for his work as a campaigner and social reformer. This was in the context of his work as a journalist and as an editor of periodicals, which have been delineated in the article. Dickens's kind of poiesis was identified with Heidegger's conception of poiesis with its unconcealment of truth in its depiction of Victorian social conditions, and with Plato's ideal (Plato 360 B.C.) of a divine and essential world in artistic production with glimpses of a better world for the houseless paupers of London. The article has included contemporary descriptions of Dickens' creative method of walking, and how a more general Freudian description of poiesis, tied to the night and dreams, could be applied to Dickens' creative method. In its analysis of the sample of articles, it can be concluded that there is a development from Freudian personal dream-associations in "Lying Awake", towards Heideggerian societal "unconcealment of truth" in the later articles, that moved from night to the light of day in its critique of contemporary society.

In the article, different approaches to poiesis have been applied to the concrete production of Dickens' night walk articles. It has

been argued that it is Heidegger's concept of "Her-vor-bringen" with its double meaning of producing and bringing into light that can specifically embrace both the role of Dickens walking at night in London and his resulting general ideological societal critique with its Heideggerian un-concealment of Victorian social conditions and sufferings. It is this combination that merits the inclusion of Heidegger in Dickens' scholarship. Finally, it may be noted that from a narratological point of view another conclusion is that Dickens employed what can be called a topographical narrative structure directly based on his walks in London.

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