



Hölderlin and antiquity

The characteristic feature of antiquity in its work on German culture is that it can, in a mysterious way, keep pace with the change of our historical destiny. Whether it changes with the spirit of time and our image of history and internal orientation in the world, and antiquity for our spiritual life still maintains in all transformations the same ranking of our own possibilities that overcomes us. Today there is no sharper test of this attitude than the question of the relationship of Hölderlin to antiquity. Because this is a genuine, still unfinished event of our spiritual life, which began with the rising of Hölderlin's poetic work in our century. This contemporary of Schiller and Ghetto is more and more appearing as a contemporary of our own future, which, in particular, with passionate unresponsiveness, is followed by our youth, if he can hear the poet's word - a completely unique process in the spiritual history of the new age. It is the history of the work that has been postponed for a century. If the change of the image of the Greeks from Winkelman to Nietzsche seems to measure the extreme range of the Greek being - there is no doubt that after the humanistic and political picture of the Greeks, our image of antiquity is transformed again by penetrating the Hölderlin world. The gods of Greece gain new weight.

But the question of "Hölderlin and antiquity" is really intensified in the fact that Hölderlin's poetic existence, with the exclusion that distinguishes him even in the age of German classicism, is determined by his attitude towards antiquity. His poetic work, like his reflections on the theory of art, are as a whole an equally set-up and fateful decision-making.

It is not therefore an arbitrary relationship, one among others, as in the case of Goethe, Schiller, Kleist, or Jean Paul, when we examine the relationship of Hölderlin to antiquity. This is what we are asking about the basis of his being and the whole of his work. Hence, there is an inadequate and only literary-aesthetic research that would follow the influence of ancient poets and thinkers on Hölderlin, his image of the world, his poetic language, his style, the world of his material. It is certain that the Pindar Hymn Poetry is an essential assumption of the late Hymn of poetry, just as it is a permanent connection with an ancient tragedy essential to the whole of his work. However, Hölderlin's poetry cannot be understood only on the basis of what influences him as an antique educational tradition. It distinguishes him from the classic Weimar just because the ancient world does not meet as a material of education, but with the power of one exclusive requirement. Between the Greek and the homeland, between the ancient gods and Christ as a teacher of the Hessian-Germanic epoch, he resists the constant heart of the poet Hölderlin.

Today, it is commonly thought that the range of the spiritual being that overcomes us can turn into stages of spiritual development that is, as such, incalculable to our understanding. Hence, it must be considered a great fortune that the creator of the first great edition, Norbert von Hellingrath, has already opposed the idea that he would like to understand Hölderlin's homelands as a deterrent from the Greek model as a "hesperial turn" corresponding to the deterrence of German romanticism from the classicist ideal. Hellingrath thereby preserved the true range of the poetic essence of Hölderlin - or, to put it more correctly, he realized the tension between the Hellenistic and the Fatherland as the expression of Hölderlin's crust essence and the secret of his almost ancient size. Hence it will be appropriate for the view to rely on the actual peak of this tension, the great choral poetry of the poet's last creative years.

According to reports, Hölderlin seems to have shaken under the force of that tension in his first years of eclipse. Conversely, the novel "Hyperion", which takes place all over Greece, reflects the fatherland's longing for the poet in a foreign ruffle and a fruitful relationship that he gained in a great overwhelming speech addressed to German occasions. On the contrary, in the great anthems of the late times, this tension finds its poetic expression, and in the constantly renewed attempt of poetic fusion of all life-tested forces, its reconciliation.

Within this late poetic work, one anthem is precisely the construction of this duplication, the anthem "The Only One."

What is it
what makes me look old for the blissful coast
squeals, and I still love them more than
your homeland?

When we listen to the so-called anthem Christ, we obviously have a puzzle: the love of the old gods, which the poet recognizes at the beginning (and this admission repeats in many other songs), is the cause of Christ being far away, but on the contrary: guilty is too much love towards Christ (v. 48 et seq.). It is not about unbridling the jealousy of each other - the affection of the poet's heart, his love for the Only One is the defect that prevents the unification of Christ with the old gods. "I will never guess, as I want, measure" (verse 77).

In fact, this is what Hölderlin knew and shaped deeper than any other of the great guides of the German soul in Hellada: the problem of German classics is not that her special love for classical Greece cannot be fulfilled, but vice versa, that this love will not be united with the affection of the heart, which its western-Christian and homeland cannot fulfill on the "blissful shores of Ionia." We want to try to guess the song of Hölderlin's knowledge and to learn to better understand Hölderlin's attitude towards antiquity, as well as our own attitude. In view of the fragmentary character of the anthem, in the explanation we will use the motives of the later version (IV 231 et seq.), which remained in the draft.

The poet begins with his philosophy and asks what is the difference between the Greek life and the life in his homeland: by the fact that the gods appear among people, they marry with them, what God's image "lives among men" (v. 27). Lament, because of the end of those gods fulfilling the day of Greece, is the most famous known to us, the cradle of Hölderlin's singing, the lament who fluttered the novel about Hyperion and the magic created magnificent images of the desire of great elegies such as "Archipelago" and "Bread and wine". But the constant poet's philosophical self-confidence clearly shows what and why he so loves Greek life: that everyone "with sense and soul belongs to the world" and what precisely from here came special sincerity in character and relations, while in modern nations there is a "senselessness for a common honor and common property, "one" limitation "that all of them - and above all of the Germans - are paralyzed from within (III 366). Starting from this general insight, Hölderlin takes a principally positive attitude towards the philosophy of his time. Namely, he sees the role of Kantian-Fyeteism idealism and its awakening of "the great self-division of man's nature" in the education of the general, and in this, he observes one certainly unilateral, but as a "philosophy of time" the exact influence (III 367).

It is understood, from this generality that connects duty and law, is still a big step towards the way of life of the elderly. "But how much still remains to human harmony?" (III 368). The old people did not need what philosophy must do for today. With them, the life circle in which they felt to cooperate and co-exist, was wide enough that everyone from there spiced up the growth of one's own life. Hölderlin explains this by comparing him with a warrior who "feels bravely and more powerfully when he works with the rest of the army, and that is indeed so" (III 368). What is not only found in the feelings of individuals but transposes them as the real life force is "common divinity" (III 263 et seq.). It is just so in the marginal with one singing: "The sphere which is higher than the sphere of man is the sphere of God" (IV 355). This is, moreover, a general knowledge that all relations with the Greeks were religious, all of them are "finer, endless relationships of life," as Hölderlin says, which in our enlightened morality or labeling is regulated by our "steel concepts" (III 262 et seq.). "Religious" Hölderlin calls relationships "which, by themselves and for themselves, do not have to be seen as the spirit in the sphere in which these relations occur." This, with the presence of divine powers set and in their name exposed the life of the Greeks, is now, according to Hölderlin, right in relation to the modern "life of the snail" of those who watch the order and security i.e., He is the ultimate experience of the life of life.

Now the poet calls this love for the Greek Day of the Gods in the "Only" anthem as subordination or selling into "heavenly captivity". But captivity is the extortion of a stranger. What kind of suffering is it? Hölderlin's theoretical study, entitled "The point of view from which we should observe antiquity," is again offered to help us. It speaks of "subordination ... to which we have dealt with antiquity", subordination that is so encompassing and pressing, that all our speech about education and godliness, originality and autonomy, is only a dream, a mere reaction, "in the same way a slight revenge for subordination". On one occasion, Hölderlin writes to his brother using a grotesque picture: "And I, with all my goodwill, only tap my work and thought for these unique people in the world, and in what I do and what I say, I am often just more incoherent and clumsy, as I stand as a trapper with flat feet in modern water, I stumblingly up into the Greek sky." In doing so, he puts a deep foundation in idealistic philosophy to the fact that he pushes into this subordination. Namely, the man's desire for education, which is almost always weak in the new century, is only vigorously active in the souls of "self-thinkers" (the term is Fichte's), which is too exemplary in the educational material of antiquity. "Almost an immaculate grass that we cannot even learn through teaching or through experience," is the burden that pressures us, which threatens us to fall as well as the positive forms, "the luxury that their fathers produced," led to the breakdown of earlier nations. What Hölderlin describes here with full clarity is the illusion of classicism, mere humanism of education and the pressure of another's style.

But in this heightened danger, which is enhanced by historical awareness, at the same time, he sees a favorable opportunity to enable "the establishment of our own direction" by the knowledge of the essential directions of the desire for education at all. If we think about this turn which is only indicated in Hölderlin, we will suddenly find out the purpose and meaning of all the efforts in the theory of art that we find in his prose designs, his so-called philosophical writings. These attempts that were acquired by work on the ancient model concern almost all the same subject matter, the differences in the types of poetry, the principle that is preserved with austerity from antiquity. But this strictness of the old poets is what the poet hopes to be a blessing for himself. In his practical actions, the old poets represent him as a model for him. It is significant when, in the preface to his translation, Sophocles says that it was a work that was "bound in someone else's, but firm and historical laws. "Remarks to Oedipus" begin with a request for poetics according to the Greek model. He agrees with this when he writes to a young poet in a letter: "And that is why I respect the free, undoubtedly, fundamental understanding of art, because I consider it to be the world of Aegis that keeps the genius of the past."

But this Hölderlin's image of Greek understanding of art is by no means a recognition of classicism. On the contrary, precisely when he was studying antiquity, he came to the knowledge, as it is written in the famous letter to Behlendorf dated December 4, 1801, "that apart from the Greeks and with us, there must be the highest, namely, living relationship and destiny, we do not We should no longer have the same thing as they are. But one's own must be learned as well as others. Therefore, the Greeks are necessary for us. We will not just follow them in our own, national, because [...] the most difficult is the free use of one's own! "It is quite clear: the theory of art is more than it seems to be, it is an essential form of the poet's self-emancipation from the subordination of antiquity. That is why, in his last letter to Schiller, where he talks about the study of Greek literature, he says that he continues "until he regains the freedom that he easily took me at the beginning". The liberation of "the use of Greek letters", which eventually boasts, leads to a fundamental subordination of the Greek homeland, which will appear in a deep confrontation in "Remarks to Antigone."

So, this path of Hölderlin's reflection on art is in fact the way of liberation from subordination to antiquity. But is this subordination and that liberation the same as the ones our hymn speaks of? Is not the tearing of the shackles of classical aesthetics somewhat different from overcoming the over-love of the gods filled with the life of the Greeks? Of course there were words about education and devotion. And if the mind is designated as "holy lament", then it is not only thought of as a poetic reflection. The poetic word is a word in general, and the word is the effect and experience of the divine alone.

Connecting the spirit with the earth is not just a poet's task, in which the understanding of art helps him while he inspirational agrees with "Junín's Joy". The inspired force of the heart was constantly needed by the world of the lament of cold reason, in order to protect itself from "people's insults". Thus, Hölderlin can, in general, be able to "keep the spirit as a priest guarding the heavenly fire, which is his reason for him," in view of the "fervent wealth" of a man's heart. But it is too much love for Greece, which the poet speaks poetically, should she be surpassed at all? It is certainly not an exaggeration to a classical measure; it is, on the contrary, the very expression of deserved poetic freedom. A slanderer who longs for Greece and arouses the disappearance of the gods, carries with him a poetically transformed meaning. It is precisely when he denies himself to re-invade the gods and resurrect the dead, and it becomes apparent why the gods are still present:

But we have received a great deal of divine.
And the flame would be put into our hands,
and the coast and the sea. ("Calm", verses 63 et seq)

References

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