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Review of Eva Kocziszky, *Mythenfiguren in Hölderlins Spätwerk*

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Kocziszky attempts to explicate the function of the Greek myths in Hölderlin's late writings, primarily the annotations to his translations of Sophocles's *Oedipus* and *Antigone*. She interprets these myths broadly, and in her discussions explores the figures of the centaur (here her textual basis is "Das Belebende," Hölderlin's translation and commentary of one of the Pindaric fragments), Oedipus, Antigone, Danae, and the "Muse," Greece itself, as tragic figures whose significance emerges as one considers their relationship to the poetological, historical, political, and also profoundly personal concerns expressed in Hölderlin's work. Following Jean LaPlanche's observation that poetry and disease share a common discourse in Hölderlin's work, she is interested in elucidating those paradoxical points of simultaneous creativity and destructiveness in the poet's writings, in order to speak, provocatively, of the "intellectual failure" (*denkerisches Scheitern*) of Hölderlin's poetic enterprise (8–9, 152–54).

The centerpiece of her study, the discussion of Oedipus, Antigone and Danae, takes its theoretical point of departure in the essays Hölderlin wrote during his first stay in Homburg, specifically the fragment "Über Religion." The "Gott der Mythe," which Hölderlin discusses here as the dialectical synthesis of intellectual and historical relationships, constitutes, Kocziszky maintains, the "philosophical sense of the tragic occurrence," which is Hölderlin's chief concern in his Sophocles annotations (32). Moreover, Kocziszky finds that Hölderlin's discussion here of the *homo religiosus* (one who lifts himself above necessity to an infinite relationship with his "sphere") also bears importantly on the Sophocles annotations. But this elevation becomes increasingly problematic, indeed tragic, in the later context: Oedipus interprets the oracle "zu unendlich," making himself the "nefas" and

the point of tragic collision between the human and the divine. The poet's optimistic vision in the *Religionsfragment* of a "gemeinschaftliche Gottheit" shared by individuals' different gods and different spheres also gives way to a tragic view of colliding, irreconcilable views of the gods, particularly in the dispute between Creon and Antigone. Here, the tragic impetus does not arise, according to Kocziszky, from Antigone's appeal to a subjective view of god (her recourse to "mein Zeus")—the *Religionsfragment* prescribes such a view—but from the newly won tragic view of the later Hölderlin that the individual gods cannot be reconciled with one another. There is no "gemeinschaftliche Gottheit" in *Antigone*, but only the tragic collision of views of the divine. Here she sees a continuation of themes developed in the Empedocles project, with the difference that Hölderlin does not valorize the Empedoclean/Antigonean view of the divine (characterized as "aorgic," rebellious, opposed to law, formality and tradition) in his *Antigone* commentary, but ascribes to both views a degree of legitimacy and sees both succumbing to a tragic fate (73). Kocziszky's interpretations of Oedipus and Antigone range more widely than can be discussed here in detail, including an interpretation of "In lieblicher Bläue" as a continuation of Hölderlin's Oedipus commentary, and a discussion of the relationship between Antigone and Niobe. Here Kocziszky finds an example of the Romantic motif of the "cold heart" (drawing on Manfred Frank's study), where a too exalted, infinite form of love tragically transforms into its opposite: the spiritual death, or petrification, of the heart.

Hölderlin comments at some length in his notes on the Sophoclean chorus where reference is made to Danae: "Sie zählete dem Vater der Zeit [...]." Kocziszky takes the view that in the annotation of this passage Hölderlin is not explicating Antigone, but rather defining an ideal ("höchste Unpartheilichkeit") that contrasts with the behavior of both Creon and Antigone: the ideal of "dieses vesteste Bleiben vor der wandelnden Zeit," which becomes possible through yet another conceptualization of Zeus as "Vater der Zeit" (89). Kocziszky then sets this new conceptualization in a historical-philosophical framework, arguing that Danae's "Vater der Zeit" is to be equated with the "eigentlicher[er] Zeus" of the Hesperian age discussed later in Hölderlin's annotations. Thus this "corrective" to Antigone's behavior anticipates at the same time an epochal shift: from Greek tragic disso-

lution to the Hesperian tragedy of living in an empty continuum of time without fate, lacking all Greek fervor and enthusiasm (99–100).

These considerations lead Kocziszky to her final chapter, where she turns to Hölderlin's conceptualization of the tragic myth of Greece. Tracing Hölderlin's preoccupation with Greece throughout his literary career, she observes a transformation in the relationship between Greece and Hesperia: from the idea that Greek culture reaches its full maturity in the "fruit" of Hesperia (*Thalia-Fragment*), to increasing skepticism that mediation between the two epochs was possible ("Lebensalter"). The task of mediation in the broadest sense (between the divine and the human, between the dialectical movements of history)—which assumes tragic form in the mythic figures discussed above, and which also defines in terms no less tragic Hölderlin's own poetic mission—is doomed to failure, argues Kocziszky: the poles of his thought finally diverge so greatly as to render resolution impossible.

Kocziszky's study, while richly nuanced, patient in detail, and broad in focus, is marked throughout by a certain unevenness of analysis: at times brilliantly insightful, at others impressionistic, lacking a degree of philological rigor. However, her provocative conclusions bring a new perspective to the study of the late Hölderlin.

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