HÖLDERLIN'S SAPPHIC MODE
REVISING THE MYTH OF THE MALE PINDARIC SEER

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Revising the notion of Hölderlin the Pindaric prophet-poet, the essay presents a Sapphic counterpart in Hölderlin's poetry, and highlights the outstanding significance of Sappho for both the theory of lyrical poetry, gender politics, and the notion of symbolic female authority around 1800.

Hölderlinov sapfiški način: revizija mita o moškem pindarskem vidcu. *Članek revidira prepričanje o Hölderlinu kot pindarskemu preroškemu pesniku in predstavlja sapfično protiutež v njegovi poeziji, pri čemer osvetli izjemen pomen Sapfo tako za teorijo lirske poezije in politiko spola kot tudi za simbolni ugled žensk okrog leta 1800.*

Twentieth century Hölderlin scholarship has revealed with overwhelming success that Pindar was the key ancient model for Hölderlin's so-called "late" poems, i.e. those were written between 1800 and 1805 and widely considered his most outstanding works of art. Until very recently, however, little comparative attention has been paid to the fact that Pindar's odes were the pre-eminent authority in the genre of poetry not just from Plato to Quintilian, but likewise from the Renaissance editions of Pindar's works through Ronsard's *Odes Pindariques* (1550),[1] the English "Pindaricks" of the 17th century[2] and Opitz's dictum "*O meine lust/ Pindarisiren*" [Oh what a joy to Pindarize][3] all the way up to Klopstock, who was Hölderlin's most direct model for Pindarizing in German. Yet at the very moment – in or around 1800 – when Hölderlin is about to continue this tradition, a fundamental change occurs, or is felt to have occurred, as a result of which Pindar's work abruptly loses its significance. The topical notion of lyrical "subjectivity" entails, especially in German literature,[4] a break with any trans-subjective ambition to achieve poetic mediation between gods and humans, to assign religious significance to both poetry and the poet. The social and religious hierarchies which are appraised and strengthened in the specifically Pindaric sublime, the constitutive linking of lyrical expression to great deeds and model heroes with mythical genealogies, has ceased to

be a part of the notion of the "lyrical" which for modern readers is very much a "Romantic" concept. Pindar has become a mere figure of past literary history whose work is barely readable for modern readers of lyric poetry. The most distinctive feature, therefore, of any historical scrutiny of Hölderlin's "Pindaric" mode in the years 1801–1804 is this striking anachronism, which separates Hölderlin's Pindaric mode from all its predecessors since Ronsard. At the very moment in the history of Western European poetry when Pindar is finally being dethroned as the "*lyricorum longe princeps*" [the long-time prince of lyric],[5] Hölderlin devotes several years to translating and making "free adaptations" of Pindar.

In the critical discourse on poetry, most notably from Herder through Schlegel to Hegel, Sappho serves as the ancient model for the modern concept of lyric poetry which stresses the expression of subjective "passions". Some ancient sources even placed Sappho above Pindar. Strabo calls her, as though for want of a better category, a *thaumastón ti chręma*, a marvelous, wonderful "thing", for which there is nothing comparable in lyric poetry.[6] While Pindar's concentration on celebrating victors and great deeds is losing its long unquestioned credibility as a genuinely "lyrical" disposition, Sappho's pathography, or more precisely algography of erotic obsessions, of situations involving parting and the experience of aging, seem all the more topical for modern lyrical expression. The following study extends the series of Hölderlin's adoptions of literary models to include this enigmatic figure: it presents Hölderlin as a surprisingly consistent observer and re-worker of Sappho. The image of the (male-connoted) prophet and poet-seer is thus opened to a counterpoint which relates both the historical Sappho and the symbolic coordinates of the "lyrical" around 1800 to conceptions of "femininity", not least of the kind that subvert or transgress traditional gender roles. Sappho, it turns out, has been of outstanding importance for the definition of what passes as "lyrical" since the end of the 18th century, and Hölderlin has a considerable share in this self-definition of "lyrical poetry" through reference to the lesbian poetess. Sappho is also – and the two facts overlap – *the* historical name for the precarious position of female authority in art and thought, just as Diotima is *the* mythical name for this authority.

My argument will focus almost entirely on a close reading of the famous poem "Hälfte des Lebens" [Half of Life]. Written between 1800 and 1803, it appeared at the end of 1804 in Friedrich Wilman's *Taschenbuch auf das Jahr 1805* [*Pocket Almanac for the Year 1805*]. It is one of the group of nine poems which were the last to be published by Hölderlin himself. I will first highlight a very specific metrical feature and elaborate on its association with mythical, i.e. narrative content. Secondly, I will broaden the scope of the metrical analysis to a more comprehensive view of Hölderlin's poetic language. The third portion of this article will be dedicated to referring the metrical findings to Hölderlin's explicit theoretical poetics.

1. Sappho and Adonis in Hölderlin

1.1 The Sapphic *adoneus* as the metrical signature of the poem

The first observation I would like to make as the starting point is a metrical one. Whatever the title "Hälfte des Lebens" may mean, its formal properties resonate throughout the entire poem. Roughly equally distributed, rhythmically analogous word groups recur: as verse fragments in the expressions "*trúnken von Küssen*" [drunk with kisses], "*nüchterne Wásser*" [sober waters], "*Schátten der Érde*" [shades of earth]; and finally as an integral verse in the closing line "*klírren die Fáhnen*" [the banners flap]. The rhythmic match between title and closing line – "*Hälfte des Lében"*, "*klírren die Fáhnen*" – sets the strongest stress. In rhetoric this five-syllable pattern has a suggestive name: "*adoneus*". The name is derived from the ritual lament "*O ton Adonin"* [woe to Adonis],[7] which is found among the fragments of Sappho's odes. In the first book of her *Songs* the close of the Sapphic strophe generally follows the metrical pattern of this lament on the death of beautiful Adonis, which is why ancient grammarians gave the name *adoneus* to this group of syllables.[8] The name is well chosen: Sappho is by far the oldest known source for the Adonis cult, and her extant verses on Adonis suggest that she composed one or more songs for the Lesbic Aphrodite cult,[9] the annually recurring part of which was the lament over Adonis' early death. Making free use of Saussure's term, as further developed by Jean Starobinski, Michael Riffaterre, and Paul de Man, the Adonic verse pattern in Hölderlin's poem could be called a metrical "hypogram" discretely inscribed in the series of words.[10]

It was Klopstock's achievement to open up to German poetic language an abundance of new metrical and rhythmic possibilities by freely drawing on ancient ode meters. Hölderlin explicitly used Klopstock's metrical devices of adopting Greek modes as a key starting point for his own poetry. In Hölderlin, however, the whole range of Ancient Greek meters as canonized by Horace is largely reduced to the duality of the Asclepiadean and the Alcaic strophe.[11] Sappho's most famous strophic meter reappears only once in Hölderlin's odes, namely in "Unter den Alpen gesungen" [Sung Beneath the Alps] (II 44; 1801).[12] Even in Klopstock's extensive output of odes the Sapphic meter appears very rarely. Among his three isolated Sapphic odes, however, is one of his outstanding achievements: "Furcht der Geliebten*"* [Fear of the Beloved] (1753).[13] As in "Hälfte des Lebens", this poem uses the *adoneus* both as clausula, which conforms to Sappho, and as title, which is a feature altogether absent in Melic poetry.

Before concluding with the five syllables traditionally called *adoneus*, the Sapphic strophe runs through three metrically identical sequences: –u–u̲–uu–u–u̲.[14] In keeping with his general intention of avoiding metrical monotony ["Gleichgetöne"], Klopstock found something unsatisfactory in the triple repetition of the same metrical pattern before the closing *adoneus*. He therefore shifted the sole sequence of two short syllables in the Sapphic verse to a position behind the first long syllable in the first line and to a

position behind the second long syllable in the second line. Only in the third line did the two subsequent short syllables remain in their "original" position behind the third long syllable. With regard to the resulting metrical schema, it should, however, be borne in mind that in the context of German poetry the long syllable of the Greek meter means a stressed one (arsis), and the short syllable an unstressed one (thesis):

–**uu**–u–u–u–u
–u–**uu**–u–u–u
–u–u–**uu**–u–u
–uu–u

The result of Klopstock's innovation is generally referred to as a "*Wanderdaktylus*", a dactyl whose position moves forward from line to line. Hölderlin has adopted Klopstock's modification of the first two Sapphic lines; in addition, he changed the third line, the only Sapphic line left unaltered by Klopstock. He made the double thesis skip the position behind the third arsis, thus shifting it behind the fourth:

–**uu**–u–u–u–u
–u–**uu**–u–u–u
–u–u–u–**uu**–u
–uu–u

As a result of this minute additional modification, Hölderlin's Sapphic strophe suddenly concludes with a double *adoneus*. This novel feature simultaneously opens a different perspective on the first line as already modified by Klopstock: it also begins, unlike in Sappho, with an *adoneus*. The *adoneus* becomes a frame – in Hölderlin even a double frame – of the entire Sapphic meter:

Klopstock	Hölderlin
(**–uu–u**)–u–u–u	(**–uu–u**)–u–u–u
–u–uu–u–u–u	–u–uu–u–u–u
–u–u–uu–u–u	–u–u–u(**–uu–u**)
(**–uu–u**)	(**–uu–u**)

Thus the Adonic pattern which frames "Hälfte des Lebens" likewise frames Hölderlin's version of the Sapphic strophe. The coincidence clearly indicates that of all features of the Sapphic strophe, the *adoneus* attracted Hölderlin's most marked attention and therefore also deserves a similar degree of critical attention.

Apart from "Unter den Alpen gesungen" Hölderlin seems to have intended Sappho's integral strophic meter for the poem "Thränen" [Tears] (II 58). At least he noted the scheme of the strophe on the reverse of the sheet on which he wrote the poem (II 516). In its first two variants this poem bore a title which probably also motivated the metrical sketch: "Sapphos Schwanengesang" [Sappho's Swan Song] (II 515). In the third variant, however, the Alcaic form definitely prevails, and the new title erases any direct echo of a Sapphic ode. For "Hälfte des Lebens" this poem is all the

more suggestive, as it not only dates from the same period, but was prepared for the printer and published by Hölderlin together with "Hälfte des Lebens". Both poems take the form of a swan song conjuring up a beauty and love which is past; both poems bear traces of a self-effacing preoccupation with the Sapphic form.

This formal feature constitutes a highly distinctive philological datum of some significance. Sapphic odes which reproduce the ancient meter in German are extremely rare; those that erase their Sapphic references as soon as they make them are even rarer.

1.2 Sappho and Diotima

Hölderlin's novel *Hyperion* expressly mentions "Sappho" as the poetess about whom Diotima and Hyperion "spoke a lot" (III 168). Herder and Schlegel also have only one answer to the question of who *the* lyrical poet is: "Sappho".[15] She figures in the poetry of the period around 1800 – as she did in ancient rhetoric – as the epitome of the great female poet. Sappho is, as Rilke was later to say, "the small figure reaching out to the infinite that everyone /…/ had in mind when speaking of *the* poetess "[*die kleine, ins Unendliche hinaus gespannte Gestalt, die alle /.../ meinten, wenn sie sagten: die Dichterin*].[16] Schlegel extolled Sappho both as a model of the independent, "free" woman and as the historical model of Plato's mythical Diotima.[17] According to Aelianus, no less an authority than Plato called the poet from Lesbos "the Wise Woman"[18] – another bridge between Sappho and the Platonic Diotima. Schlegel said Diotima was as "necessary an idea for Socratic philosophy as the Madonna is to the Catholic religion".[19] Something analogous goes for Hölderlin's poetry. Diotima-Sappho is the Laura, the standard female reference in his poetry. Sappho, said Hölderlin in confirmation of the ancient tradition, was the "tenth Muse" (IV 196), and Diotima "the silent union of our thought and poetry" (III 221). While Freud and Lacan see the position of authority as a male gender role or, more precisely, as male power over the symbolic; while Kristeva's introduction of a female (counter)-authority is entirely confined to the pre- or trans-symbolic "*corps maternel*",[20] Schlegel's and Hölderlin's quest related to the names of "Sappho" and "Diotima", is aimed at the apparently impossible position of a female authority in the symbolic sphere.

Although it is only Diotima that Hölderlin evokes in his poems by name, Sappho's presence in them is not confined to the Sapphic strophe or the Sapphic *adoneus*. The "Hymne an die Menschheit" [Hymn to Humanity] and the "Hymne an den Genius der Jugend" [Hymn to the Genius of Youth] refer to the concept of "*Lesbic Gebilde*" [Lesbian works of art] (I 147) or "*Lesbic Gestalt*" (I 147) and link it to poetic "enthusiasm" and "*der Schönheit Allgewalt*" [the supreme power of beauty]. Since the days of Horace, if not earlier, the poetic modes of Sappho and Alcaeus are described as "Lesbic" or "eolic modes". Sappho's songs are indeed considered to be devoted to "*der Schönheit weitem Lustgefilde*" (I 147): to the creative arts,

beautiful customs, scented ointments, ornamental objects, beautiful movements and, not least the beautiful bodies of young women (and occasionally of young men). The desire for this beauty is nearly always colored by melancholy, even despair. Either the beautiful object of desire has eluded the "I" whose ardor it has aroused, or it resists attempts to woo it, or again it is presented as one who is just about to abandon Sappho; or it is imagined by the poetess, as a woman in her mid-thirties, as something basically over and done with, consigned only to memory. Thus the ritual lament for Adonis, which provides the model for the clausula of the Sapphic strophe, is in fact a key figure of Sapphic poetry.

In 1799, when Hölderlin was planning "to publish a poetic monthly", Sappho appears second on the list of authors whose "life" and "peculiar artistic character" were to be studied in "essays": "Homer, Sappho, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Horace, Rousseau, (as the author of Héloïse), Shakespeare" (VI 323). The canon of these authors reveals Hölderlin's strong affinity with the literary criticism of Herder and Friedrich Schlegel. The early essay *Geschichte der schönen Künste unter den Griechen* [History of the Fine Arts among the Greeks] contains more than a hint of what Hölderlin might conceivably have written about Sappho in the never-to-be-published monthly. Although Herder had noticed in the "tender glow" of the "Sapphic fire"[21] a mixture of "strength and gentleness, surge and ebb",[22] he had put the main emphasis on "female" gentleness. Hölderlin, on the other hand, stresses the "bold manly spirit", which "stands up in her chant"; not the gentleness, but the "inimitable passion" and the "ravishing" power of the "language in which Sappho portrays her feelings" (IV 196–197). Sappho has left a lasting and authoritative mark on the pathos of the erotic situational poem, on the recollection of the radiance and beauty of youth, and on acute reflections on aging.[23] If we combine the last two of these components of Sappho's lyrical cosmos, we come very close to the basic opposition in "Hälfte des Lebens".

In Hölderlin's view of Sappho's "life" the "bold" fire of her poems is juxtaposed with a depressing picture of her private existence. In dealing with Sappho's temporary banishment from her home town, the love affairs with the girls of her circle that regularly end in separation, her presumed rejection by the Adonis-like Phaon, and the legend of her suicidal leap from the Leucadian promontory, Hölderlin portrays a thoroughly "unhappy" figure (IV 196). She, "whose talents and education entitled her to demand so much", had been literally "excluded from any joy of life" and "not pitied by a soul"; from this "depressing" unhappiness, Hölderlin holds, not even Sappho's outstanding literary achievements could ultimately save her. Such profoundly sad formulations make Sappho's *vita* indistinguishable from Hölderlin's description of himself in his letters. Indeed, Hölderlin's preoccupation with Sappho shows numerous signs of identification. The description of the verses which Sappho wrung from her unhappy existence (IV 196–197) applies at least as much to Hölderlin himself as to the Sapphic ode. The combination of intense passion and cold observation corresponds exactly to Hölderlin's own poetic configuration of "enthusiasm" and "so-

briety" (IV 233), a tense configuration to which the Sapphic-Adoneic poem "Hälfte des Lebens" alludes in the predicate "*heilignüchtern*" [sacred-sober].[24]

Finally, Sappho and Hölderlin share a highly distinctive feature with regard to the history of their reception. Unlike Pindar, Alcaeus or Horace, indeed unlike almost any other famous lyricists in literary history, Sappho and Hölderlin have themselves been made the subject of literary fiction. There have been numerous legends and literary works about Sappho from ancient times to the present day, the 18th and 19th centuries being particularly productive in this regard.[25] The real or imaginary *vita* of a Pindar or a Horace has not exerted any such imagintive attraction, although the works of these writers as a whole have been far more influential than those of Sappho. Hölderlin is perhaps the only poet of the modern age about whom stories were written during his lifetime; in a heady mix of biographical data and fiction, they turned his poetic stature and private misery into literature.[26] It is surely no coincidence that the fascination with the names of Sappho and Hölderlin, whether as poets or as individuals, has a similar origin: both names evoke a vision of the highest lyrical authority in intimate association with unhappy love, desperate suffering, and suicide or madness. If this explosive mixture had been further enriched by the additional feature of sexual transgression (homo- or bisexuality) in Hölderlin's case, the fictional exploitation of the name Hölderlin might perhaps have been as great as that of Sappho. No matter how mediocre, bad, even kitsch, these narratives may be, they are an integral part of the image of Hölderlin at the end of his life; and one whose topical affinity with the Sappho legends has been not so much corrected as completely suppressed by the triumph of the Pindaric image of Hölderlin.

1.3 From *adoneus* to Adonis: "*Hälfte des Lebens*" as a rewriting of the ancient myth of beauty

The two polar strophes of "Hälfte des Lebens" correspond exactly to the polarity in Adonis' life as reported by Panyassis (a Greek poet of the 5th century B.C.). After his birth, Aphrodite took Adonis under her protection because of his beauty, but immediately afterwards, she entrusted his upbringing to Persephone. The latter, however, was reluctant to surrender Adonis when he had grown into a beautiful youth. Finally, Zeus had to resolve the dispute: for a part of the year he awarded Adonis to Persephone, and hence to the underworld, and for the rest of the year to Aphrodite.[27] The feast of Adonis in the Aphrodite cult marks the annual ending of the "Aphrodisian" half of his life; it also laments the bitter necessity of the other "half of life". Seen in this light, Adonis is a figure who arrives at half of life not just once, but periodically. In Latin antiquity, the polar regions and the seasons of Adonis were explicitly identified with summer and winter.[28] The feast of Adonis, like Hölderlin's poem, commemorates, indeed performs, the change from one to the other: at the height of summer, the

flora of the Adonis gardens and the images of the beautiful youth are borne down to the water. The act of throwing them into the water is a symbolic funeral that announces, with the loss of Adonis' beauty, the imminent onset of winter. Cries of woe accompany this symbolic change, in which the surface of the water marks the boundary between the upper and the underworld. The ritual lament for Adonis and Hölderlin's poem also concurs in making the absence of flowers symbolize the loss of both Adonis and the beauty of late summer.

The rhythmic pattern thus overlaps in several respects with its mythical horizon: in the medium of the *adoneus,* the myth of Adonis, of the shining presence and the melancholy absence of beauty, is "recounted" anew. To this extent the metrical hypogram can be read not only as the inscription of any *adoneus*, but more precisely of *the* eponymous Adoneus – that found in Sappho's verse *ô ton Adônin* ["*wéhe Adónis*"].[29] The recovery of a latent word or proper name as observed in Hölderlin's inscription of Adoneus can be related to Saussure's theory of "words beneath words", both hidden and replayed in verse. Apart from the metrical allusion to Aphrodite's mourning of Adonis, Hölderlin explicitly refers to this myth several times. There is, in fact, from Schlegel and Creuzer, through Shelley and Keats, a plethora of rewritings of the Adonis myth in Hölderlin's time. This is contemporary with a strong Romantic interest in what Schlegel in his Lyceum-fragment 119 called "Sapphic poems"[30] which he thought were of pre-eminent interest for contemporary literature. Particularly in the German context, the romantic Adonis and the romantic Sappho are correlated in multiple ways. In fact, their presence or absence, separately or in an associated fashion, amounts to a topical indicator of the distance between Schlegel's and Hölderlin's attitude to the Greeks on the one hand, and Winckelmann, Goethe, and Schiller on the other hand, who grant no significance to Adonis or Sappho, barely even mentioning them.

Beyond the metrical and thematic pattern, the reference to both Sappho and Adonis share a marked emphasis on female license in terms of sexual and gender roles. With regard to Sappho, this requires no further elaboration, as she notoriously represents the classic case of a female teacher having highly sexualized relations with her much younger disciples. Something similar holds, though less ambiguously so, for the female rites of Adonis: they were perhaps the most conspicuous acts of female dissatisfaction and resistance to Athenian gender rules. These rules implied that women had no say at all in public matters, and had to accept the fact that their husbands routinely directed their sexual and also emotional attention both to the vast number of available prostitutes of various kinds and to young men. In the context of the Adonic rites, the widely neglected and even routinely mistreated Athenian spouses publicly expressed their desire for a beautiful and tender young lover. It is not surprising, therefore, that these rites were not part of the official Athenian calendar, but only barely and unofficially tolerated. The references to these rites in Aristophanes and Plato make it quite clear that men perceived them as an outrageous attack on male authority, something amounting to a serious threat not only to the gender order,

but literally to the security of the state – as a matter for the Department of Homeland Security, if you like. For these reasons, the Adonic rite has, over the past two decades, attracted substantial attention from scholars of Greek antiquity interested in gender issues.[31] The discourse on Sappho and Adonis around 1800 very much prefigures this recent scholarly interest by essentially stressing the same agenda of gender conflict, female sexual license, and last, but not least, symbolic female authority.

1.4 Adonis und Narcissus

Although no beautiful youth appears on the scene of "Hälfte des Lebens", the specific features of the lament for Adonis also conjure up another key figure among mythological narratives of beauty, one that had already been associated with Adonis in ancient times, and even more so in Shakespeare's verse epic "Venus and Adonis": Narcissus. Narcissus' bending down to the water, beauty which inclines toward the surface of water, is a key image in Ovid's famous narrative. Narcissus is not standing at an immaculate well: he is bending down towards it. In Hölderlin, a similar downward movement determines a whole series of phenomena: yellow pears, wild roses, indeed the "land" itself and the "*holden Schwäne*" [graceful swans]. To the extent that all referents in the first strophe show an inclination towards the surface of the lake, the swans dipping [*tunken*] their heads in the water, their touching and crossing of the boundary between the surface and the underworld with their heads [Haupt], is the *telos* and outstanding event of the first half of the poem. Likewise rhythmically, there is a special stress on *tunkt* [dips]: it opens the first and only line in the whole strophe not to begin with an anacrusis.

Compared to Ovid, Hölderlin reinforces the gesture of inclining downwards to the lake by extending it to a multitude of natural phenomena. This creates an awareness of an undertow, a force of attraction emanating from beneath the surface of the lake, an assumed force which ever since Frazer's *Golden Bough* has been associated with the fear, well documented by ethnologists, of seeing one's own reflection in water.[32] It is a fear based on the assumption that reflections, like shadows, are not merely metaphorical simulacra, but real and vulnerable metonymic parts of the person reflected. More than that, they were considered to be the person's soul, which was in danger of being pulled below the surface of the water by evil spirits, causing the death of the reflected person. The presence of such a potentially dangerous undertow toward the reflecting surface of the lake permeates the radiance of the golden late summer or early autumn day in Hölderlin's poem. The gesture of "hanging down" over the water thus endows an image of perfect beauty with a tendency toward a fatal outcome. Here again, as with Adonis and Narcissus, a short life and imminent death are inherent features in the depiction of supreme beauty.

As the (imagined) *telos* that governs the direction of all stooping and dipping, the "water" is the last word in the first strophe. It conforms to the

allusions to Narcissus' stooping over the spring that the impact on the water destroys the beautiful and desired image and hence is directly followed by a mournful "*Weh*" [woe]. When Narcissus touches the water with his arms, all the beauty of the reflective image implodes and dissipates. Narcissus responds to this with the gestures of mourning the dead and accompanies them with a sorrowful "*eheu*" [alas] that the nymph Echo instantly reinforces with another.[33] "Hälfte des Lebens*"* translates this lament into German: *eheu* becomes *Weh*. The disintegration of the total image and of the desire that is directed at it is further reflected in the staccato-like interruptions which shape the flow of the sentence in the first line of the second strophe: "*Weh mir, wo nehm ich, wenn*".

The catastrophic change thus takes place in the vacant line between the words *Wasser* [water] and *weh* – and hence literally in the "empty" half of the poem. Much as Walter Benjamin has suggested, the caesura (whose significance lies in marking the absence of a positive signifier in the sequence of signs) becomes the critical moment where an inexpressible "truth" intervenes.[34] Only out of this moment of crisis, of a potentially traumatic turnaround does the very position of the speaking "I" emerge. It first appears both grammatically and as the subject of speech when the caesura is explicitly lamented. Echoed in a sequence of further "w" assonances, the caesura occurring between *Wasser* and *weh* switches the focus of the poem from over-ripe summer to piercing cold winter. The purely negative characterization with which the second strophe first operates, resembles the famous *ekphrasis* which Ovid gives of the spring, in which the fatal reflection of Narcissus occurs. This spring is surrounded by forest so dense that no sunbeam can penetrate it. The Latin *nullo sole* directly prefigures the situation of the unavailability of sunlight to which Hölderlin's "I" sees himself exposed. I am confining myself here to these very brief remarks on the Narcissus analogy in the imagery of the poem. A further elaboration of this topic could show that around 1800 the myth of Narcissus was central to reflecting the predicament of the poet and that Hölderlin's evocation of Narcissus has in fact some bearing on this *topos* of poetic self-reflection. The swan blends perfectly with this way of reading Hölderlin's poem, as the swan has a rich tradition both as the poet's image of himself and as an emblem of narcissistic self-centeredness.

2. The "melting pot" of Hölderlin's poetic language: the interplay of Sapphic, Alcaic, and Pindaric features

In Hölderlin studies, the first and to date only metrical interpretation of "Hälfte des Leben" is now tactfully referred to as a curiosity. In an anthology of German poetry entitled *Ewiger Vorrat deutscher Poesie* [Eternal Stock of German Poetry] (1926) Rudolf Borchardt rendered "Hälfte des Lebens", in a remarkable distortion of its graphic representation, as a fragment of a failed attempt at an Alcaic Ode.[35] According to Borchardt, only madness prevented Hölderlin from writing the whole poem in the manner

of the Alcaic ode.[36] Borchardt's explanation is all the less convincing, as Hölderlin when working on "Hälfte des Lebens" simultaneously edited and sent to the printer's five complete Alcaic odes, some of them newly written. Nevertheless, Borchardt's bizarre commentary contains an important insight into Hölderlin's poem.[37] As meanwhile has been shown for many of Klopstock's and Hölderlin's other "free" verse poems, "Hälfte des Lebens" can indeed at least partly be read as a recombination of fragments taken from the Alcaic ode.[38] Seen in this light, it represents a mixture – or in Hölderlin's words: an "interchange" of "tones" (III 148, VI 339) – which metrically refer both to the Adonic clausula of the Sapphic strophe and to fragments taken from the Alcaic strophe. In this highly specific blend of metrical features it resembles no other poem so much as "Hyperions Schicksalslied" [*The Song of Hyperion's Fate*], the second outstanding short poem by Hölderlin.[39]

Nevertheless both poems are in free rhythms in the full sense of the word, and "Hälfte des Lebens" also shares important rhythmic features of the great Pindaric Gesänge: above all, the tendency to accumulate strong word stresses using techniques of isolating the words against the flow of the sentence, especially by inserting multiple breaks between sentence, rhythm and line caesuras.[40] As these features of Hölderlin's language have been elaborately discussed elsewhere – though not specifically with regard to "Hälfte des Lebens" – I need not go into any detail here and return immediately to the metrical quotations that Hölderlin blends into his free rhythms. The combination of fragmented Sapphic and Alcaic patterns in his two outstanding short poems has a striking theoretical resonance, in that contemporary poetics define the strophic ode, indeed the lyrical muse itself, precisely in terms of the polarity of Sappho and Alcaeus. In his pivotal essay on the two authors from Lesbos, Herder wrote, "Alcaeus and Sappho, the man and woman from Lesbos, can be valued as the original models of the ode in its two main variants, the bold and the tender."[41] The Sapphic and Alcaic odes differ from the strophic meters "invented" by Pindar a good hundred years later, not only in their lesser extent and lower degree of metrical complexity, but also in giving another role to the (imaginary) voice. Pindar's songs, as Friedrich Schlegel pointed out, always give voice to a "public feeling", a collective content. They are lyrics for a choir, even "if they have never been sung by a choir."[42] Sappho's and Alcaeus' imaginary voices, on the other hand, represent strictly themselves: they make it "a principle to stress 'singularity' [*Einzelheit*] they are voicing", and "usually seek only to give the strongest and clearest expression to individual feelings".[43] This distinction formulates in the language of a contemporary known to Hölderlin the eccentric position that Pindar's poetry occupies in relation to the (modern) concept of the Lyrical. Hegel too identified – with all due respect for Hölderlin's revered authors Pindar, Klopstock and Schiller – the melic lyric (Sappho and Alcaeus) as the model of the lyrical mode as such: "Genuine lyrical reflection and passion develop in the so-called melic lyric."[44]

As a decidedly Pindaric poet, Hölderlin adopts a principled stance against this powerful "Romantic" consensus, shared even by Hegel despite consid-

erable resistance. "Hälfte des Lebens", on the other hand, *also* belongs to the field of lyrical poetry in the narrower sense of the word, for which Sappho and Alcaeus are the ancient "archetypes".[45] The simple opposition of the two ancient lyrical archetypes, Sappho and Alcaeus as "tender" and "bold" yields to a more complex differentiation already in Herder's programmatic essay *Alcäus und Sappho. Von zwei Hauptgattungen der lyrischen Dichtkunst* [Alcaeus and Sappho: On Two Main Genres of Lyric Poetry]: "Alcaeus, Sappho, and their friend Erinna invented or reworked lyrical modes that first lent the *ode* wings, so to speak, and became their sweet, eternal paragons. /…/ Each of these measures is marked by a *character of its own*; but they all strive to create a pleasant blend of strength and gentleness, surge and ebb, tension and relaxation of tones."[46] The tenderness of the Sapphic ode is thus coupled with "strength", and the boldness of the Alcaic with "gentleness". Each contains within itself the other as a subdominant. And it was this that fascinated Hölderlin. As he praised "unhappy Sappho" for her dual ability to portray the "gentle" both with "inimitable passion" and a cold analytical eye, he also noted in the "hotheaded Alcaeus" an analogous duplicity of strong passion and gentleness:

> Alcaeus wanted to attain fame as a hero, and was defeated: Alcaeus stirred dissension, and was banished /…/ With the same passion, /…/ with which Sappho portrays her feelings, Alcaeus speaks of battles and tyrants. At the same time, he is as masterly as Sappho is in striking the very opposite tones, namely the gentle and the Anacreontic. (IV 197)[47]

This chiastic reversal of the same features in the songs of both Sappho and Alcaeus applies also to the metrical form. Not only do the two poets make different use of the same basic meters of eolic lyric poetry, but each occasionally directly adopts the verse and strophe forms of the other: Alcaeus the Sapphic, and Sappho the Alcaic form.[48] In this sense Hölderlin's combination of Sapphic and Alcaic verse fragments draws on a basic principle of eolic lyric poetry itself. It extends to the sphere of metrical features what contemporary lyric theory had described – with regard to Sappho and Alcaeus as the two basic forms of the Lyrical as such – as a configuration of polarity and similarity, complementarity and mutual penetration.

Unlike Herder, Hölderlin and Schlegel rank Sappho as superior to the Alcaic pole of eolic lyric poetry. "Sappho," writes Schlegel, "was the best of her kind, as perfect as Sophocles, and as astonishing as Homer was of his."[49] Her "odes" [*Gesänge*] were a model of "perfect lyrical beauty".[50] (Pseudo-)Longinus had extolled the combination of apparently opposed features as the specifically sublime virtue of the gentle Sapphic "fire".[51] Herder, Hölderlin and Schlegel owe the fundamental feature of their portraits of Sappho – the combination of gentleness and passion – to Longinus's observation. In any event female authority in the field of poetic language appears to be one that "deconstructs" traditional polarities, including those of gender roles.

In view of all this, the discovery of Sapphic and Alcaic verses and verse fragments in Hölderlin's "Hälfte des Lebens" has rich implications. It re-

lates the poem, by virtue of its formal properties, to contemporary poetics which identify Sappho and Alcaeus as the "original models" of lyrical "beauty". Under the rubric of "perfect beauty", the beauty of a golden late summer or autumnal landscape, Adonis as the (male) substratum of the Sapphic *adoneus*, and the beauty of lyrical enthusiasm itself, all come together. In all three cases, moreover, beauty is bound up with a melancholy listlessness, hanging and wasting away.

Hölderlin's subtle configuration of fragments of canonical ode meters introduces new modes of meaning into the play of meter and rhythm that cannot sufficiently be grasped using the influential poetics of his predecessor, Klopstock. Klopstock remained true to the ancient theory of rhythm in that he saw in the temporal and stress patterns of syllable groups – i.e. in their purely material properties – an immediate expression of "passions".[52] The content of a poem may force us to make hermeneutical efforts at comprehension, and for this reason take longer to reach us than the declamation itself. The rhythmic form, on the other hand – its time, stress and caesura patterns – always affects our emotions instantaneously, "*schnell*",[53] as Klopstock says, and can also impart a great deal that is not contained in the words, and is thus "unsaid". The clear semiotic distinction between these modes of meaning inspired Klopstock to come up with a wonderful formulation: "*In einem guten Gedicht geht das Ungesagte umher wie in Homers Schlachten die nur von wenigen gesehenen Götter*." [In a good poem the Unsaid wanders about like in Homer's battles the gods, who are seen by but a few.][54] This finding applies as much to Hölderlin's poems as to Klopstock's, yet the way the unsaid is generated is fundamentally different. Although Klopstock's poems – beginning with the unique practice of schematically exhibiting their metrical pattern between the title and the first line – often create an impression of purely intellectual experimentation and excessively contrived rhythms, his theory is still aimed at the immediate "expression" of something that is not described and may not be fully said either, and hence – as Goethe famously put it – at "symbolic" correspondences of material linguistic patterns and emotions. By contrast, Hölderlin's late manner of using metrical allusions also has some markedly "allegorical" features. For the fragmented metrical quotations are not merely juxtaposed and contrasted for the sake of their material properties and their immediate expressive values; they are also designed to evoke fragments of historical knowledge from a period extending from the remote context of their first use to the contemporary debate on Sappho's and Alcaeus' odes as the basic models of the Lyrical. The metaphorical correspondences between rhythmic structures and emotion are thus superimposed by metonymic contiguity associations which charge the rhythm with semantic resonances of mythical, historical and theoretical significance. Making free use of Klopstock's beautiful sentence about the unsaid, one might say that these metrical allegories have something ghostly about them, all the more so from a historical distance; for they discreetly wander through the poems, almost incognito and invisible "like in Homer's battles the gods, who are seen by but a few."

The poems written after 1805, indeed Hölderlin's entire output after his last self-published work, mark a radical break with these metrically supported appearances of canonical Greek forms which were simultaneously adopted as models for the Romantic lyric. Against the background of this late *tabula rasa* the pain of parting expressed in "Hälfte des Lebens" entails an self-reflective dimension, in that the idealized patterns of the lyrical, before altogether disappearing from Hölderlin's work, are granted a final appearance as barely discernible metrical ghosts – just as the pluralized swans are hardly recognizable anymore as icons of the self-confident poet.[55] This notion of a final appearance on a stage about to be abandoned blends perfectly with the fact that the *adoneus* owes his name to a rite which mourns and laments a terrible loss. By paradoxically using the feature of the Adoneic clausula already for the title, Hölderlin immerses the entire scene from the very beginning in the prevailing sentiment of a mournful farewell, which he in fact is about to give to all the revered authors and models of the lyrical he had previously adapted to his own poetical language. Henceforth, immediately after this final staging in "Hälfte des Lebens", the grand lyrical modes of Greek antiquity fall silent. The traumatic catastrophe which permeates the often laudatory and wholly affirmative iambic-trochaic lines Hölderlin continued writing for much of the remaining "half of (his) life" (until his death in 1843), gains its full poetic momentum only if one senses the shadows these often forcedly banal rhymes conceal: their eradicating, denying, and silencing of the revered lyrical modes Hölderlin had consistently drawn and elaborated upon. "Hälfte des Lebens" still bears the traces, in fact engages in a complex final interplay which afterwards is only negatively audible through its absence and hence "expressionless" in Benjamin's sense: the icons (swan), historical model-heroes, and formal modes of what was termed "lyrical", especially in Germany circa 1800. Reading the poem in this light exposes the reader to a catastrophic breach in the very system of the language of poetry. If the Adonic rites perform a mournful burial of the object of desire, the Sapphic-Adonic verse in Hölderlin's "Hälfte des Lebens" anticipates, and in fact seals, the future absence of what in the preceding years used to be the position of love, female symbolic authority, and the mode of the "Romantic" Lyrical. Indeed, if there is a genuine poetical measurement of Hölderlin's much-discussed "madness" throughout the second half of his life, it is the absence of the Sapphic mode right after the publication of the poem "Hälfte des Lebens" – a publication which literally coincides with the end of the first half of Hölderlin's life. While both the Alcaic and the Pindaric mode occasionally reappear in Hölderlin's writing before he finally settles for rhymes and iambo-trochaic verse only, the Sapphic mode remains silenced once and forever, with no transition period and no exception. The disappearance of Sappho from Hölderlin's writing is concomitant with clinical madness becoming permanent.

It appears to be a worthy desideratum to think of a new sub-discipline of rhetoric – one I am tempted to call allegorical metrics – that might account for phenomena such as those I am addressing here. Like Benjamin's readings of other allegorical structures, such allegorical metrics depend on

extensive studies in historical semantics. In the case I am considering here, for instance, there is no direct way at all between identifying the pattern of an *adoneus* and determining its allegorical significance. Rather, my interpretation rests on an extensive study of Sappho's role in late 18th century poetics and hence of the issues involved when referring to her poetry in a specific moment of literary history. What I present here is but a small sample of these historical references which bring together questions of meter, rhythm, style, a strong interest in questions of gender and gender-crossing (the sublime poetess), and a highly specific notion of the "Lyrical".

3. The antagonism within the poem itself – a Sapphic element in Hölderlin's Pindaric hymns?

Hölderlin's explicit poetics from the period of the poems discussed here entail a radical break with any correspondence of form and content, any rhetorical *aptum,* and any classical-aesthetic notion of the harmony of structure of a work of art. According to Hölderlin, the achievement of artistic form does not consist in the brilliant presentation of its content, but in the compensatory overcoming of what it most lacks. While the preeminent experience of the Greeks – their "natural" and "inborn" inclination, according to Hölderlin – was "the fire from heaven", the "sacred pathos", their artistic aspiration went in the opposite direction of a striving to achieve the very qualities that were "alien" to them: namely "precision", "clarity of presentation" and "sobriety" (VI 425–426). For the moderns, Hölderlin diagnosed the opposite predicament: the striving for pathos against a given background of a sobriety of thought. In both cases, art achieves its mastery only against a force operating in the opposite direction, by constituting what Hölderlin called an "*Umkehr*",[56] an inversion of its own basis.[57] The negative reflection, the sudden change from beauty and abundance to barrenness and want that takes place in the myths of Adonis and Narcissus, as it does in Hölderlin's poem, is at the same time a basic figure of Hölderlin's poetics.

This figure very much anticipates Nietzsche's interpretation of the Apollonian beauty of the work of art – as a dream-like figure designed to subdue and even consign to oblivion an underlying Dionysian experience with the very opposite features.[58] In fact, Hölderlin has even used the strong concept of denial [*Verleugnung*] in order to emphasize the negativity at work in the apparent form of an artwork. He succinctly stipulated that the "ground" or experiential basis of a poem be "denied" by its "artistic character" [*Kunstkarakter*] (IV 150). As a result, the ground of any given poem must be sought in something that is almost made to disappear. The almost unreadable quality of the Adoneus-Adonis in "Hälfte des Lebens" and of the Sapphic dimension of Hölderlin's poetry in general may well be part of this necessary trajectory of "inversion" in which Hölderlin ultimately saw the decisive achievement of artistic form. The almost complete "denial" of the Sapphic meter and of all direct references to Sappho in the final version

of the ode "Thränen" which was first entitled "Sapphos Schwanengesang" might serve as an example directly highlighting a logic of this kind. Given the complementarity of the Sapphic and the Alcaic mode in contemporary poetics, one might even arrive at the conclusion that the marked quantitative preference for the Alcaic "*Kunstkarakter"* in Hölderlin's odes indicates an even greater affinity to the Sapphic "fire" and Sapphic "tears".

Following this line of thought, the suspicion arises that likewise in Hölderlin's great Pindaric cantos the effort of poetic negativity is also aimed at working its way through opposing and almost "denied" features. Since any "denial" retains traces of what is denied, Hölderlin's texts, by virtue of the theory they are based on, require us to be on the alert for effects based on tipping over into something else**,** for discreet breaches of their own tone. And indeed, many of the Pindaric hymns – nearly all of them, in fact – are pervaded by an obstinate recurrence of the (Sapphic) *adoneus*. The first five strophes of the "Pindaric" hymn "Der Einzige" [The Only One] all end in an *adoneus*: "*únter den Ménschen*" [among men], "*bín ich gegángen*" [I went], "*Gáste verbérget*" [harbor ye guests], "*ándere féhlet*", "*zähmte der Völker*" [tamed the nations]. At the end of the fourth strophe of "Patmos" the *adoneus* occurs in a similarly massive accumulation: "*Gróßen das Gróße*" [to the great what is great], "*Níe eine Waíde*", "*Bleíbet im Ánfang*", "*Géht dieses wíeder*". In his famous poem "Andenken" [Remembrance] Hölderlin used several discreetly inserted *adonei* to pave the way for what is perhaps his best known *adoneus* of all, one which closes not only the strophe, but also the poem, and is moreover the gnomic node of the composition: "*Was bleibet aber*, *stíften die Díchter*" [But that which persists is founded by poets]. It testifies to Hölderlin's mastery of the self-denying form that the free verse "*Was bleibet aber*, *stiften die Dichter*" could become a veritable commonplace without anyone noticing that the second half of the line is a perfect German *adoneus*.[59] The metrical hypogram quite literally gives the great Pindaric forms a Sapphic-Adoneic signature.

Pindar's own poems, by changing one or two verse positions, often modulate eolic into dactylic or iambic-trochaic meters, and vice versa. The use of eolic meters with subsequent "modulation out of them" is more "common" than the modulation of other metres into the eolic.[60] While employing analogous devices, Hölderlin's Adoneic strophe endings reverse the direction predominant in Pindar's modulation: they modulate *into* the eolic meter. However, the full complexity of the interplay of the Sapphic and the Pindaric in Hölderlin can only be grasped when taking into account that it was not least the lyric poetry of Sappho and Alcaeus, which by adding the older iambic and dactylic meters to the stock of eolic forms and applying methods of mutual reworking, prepared the way for Pindar's technique of varying and mixing traditional meters.[61] Polymetry is the very essence of Greek *melopoeia* from Sappho to Pindar: meters are introduced, varied, mixed with counter tones, allowed to flow into one another; this is the rhythmical basis of the lyrical *mousiké*. Thus the discovery of a mix of Sapphic, Alcaic and Pindaric patterns in "Hälfte des Lebens" can no longer be seen as a pathological indication of progressive disintegration, as

Rudolf Borchardt would have us believe. Rather, Hölderlin appears to have understood perfectly well that the lyrical languages of his Greek models were already themselves polymetrical cantos (*Gesänge*), full of "switching tones" and of employing metrical cross references rich in associations.

If Hölderlin's grand cantos (*Gesänge*) and "Hälfte des Lebens", in opposing combinations, make use of the same polar tones, they hence do so in freely drawing on the techniques of their Greek models. Through its correspondence of Adonic title and closing line, creating a stronger Sapphic element than any of the other late poems of Hölderlin, and its compositional penetration of the Sapphic with Pindaric and Alcaic elements, the poem provides a general insight into what Borchardt rightfully called the "melting pot"[62] of Hölderlin's language between 1800 and 1805. "Hälfte des Lebens" is definitely not a curiosity on the periphery of a completely different output. In his Pindaric phase, Hölderlin's poetic employment of formal negativity is always aimed at integrating the partly antagonistic Pindaric and Lesbic-eolic modes in a complex interplay. This fits in with the fact that Sappho's and Alcaeus' songs, whatever their focus on subjective feelings, founded a long tradition of the lyric – especially the female lyric – which is as "private" as it is eminently political. The political agenda of the late Hölderlin does not necessarily have to be assigned to the Pindaric gesture of wisdom and *paraenesis*.

The male Hölderlin as a Pindaric poet-seer is a product of 20th century reception which began with Hellingrath and was based on the concepts of "austere harmony" and "*vaterländische Gesänge*" (which may be approximately translated as fatherlandish cantos, but not as patriotic songs). Throughout the 19th century, the prevailing image of the poet was that of an all too sensitive, all too "soft" and, moreover, ethereally beautiful youth.[63] Nietzsche, a keen-eyed Hölderlin admirer long before the great editorial and scholarly undertakings of the 20th century began, had no trouble in praising Hölderlin both for the power of "being forcefully carried away by the lofty sweep of an ode" and for the apparently opposite tendency "to lose himself in the most tender sounds of melancholy [*Wehmut*]"; he saw both poles as ultimately "springing from the purest, gentlest soul".[64] Even Hellingrath, in addition to the "austere harmony", did not fail to recognize the "sweet sobbing swell or melting of the odes".[65] By declaring the great hymns in the Pindaric style to be Hölderlin's "genuine legacy", however, and seeing them as the "Word of God"[66] spoken in "austere harmony", he opened the way to a comprehensive recoding of Hölderlin which resulted in the Sapphic element being lost to view behind the over-ambitious male prophet-seer. In the previously prevailing "soft" and, in fact, explicitly "female" image of Hölderlin, the masculinity cult of the George circle left very strong and lasting traces; without this gender-reversal, Hölderlin would hardly have ended up becoming the pocket book companion of German soldiers.

Even the triumphant career of the concepts of "austere harmony" and "parataxis" (as one of several syntactic devices for austere harmony) may be largely due to Hölderlin's symbolic gender-change. Heidegger, Adorno

and most "deconstructive" readings of Hölderlin have in a variety of ways reinforced this trend, inaugurated by Hellingrath. The result has been a tendency in the last hundred years to forget what for Hölderlin's Romantic contemporaries was self-evident: that Hölderlin was also, if not primarily, an unsurpassed master of smooth harmony (*harmonía glaphyrá*). What is so unmistakable and irresistible in poems like "Heidelberg" or "Andenken", remains to various degrees and in various combinations an integral part of the other late poems as well. Sappho herself was considered by the most outstanding literary critics of Latin antiquity – Dionysius, Demetrius, and (Pseudo-)Longinus – as much a mistress of smooth harmony[67] as much as she was praised as a sublime poetess who forced together opposing elements within the narrow confines of a verse.[68] An eye for the balance between the "austere" and "smooth" factors in Hölderlin's work can only be (re)gained if the extremely successful demonstration of Hölderlin's succession to Pindar is restored to its proper proportion. The presence of the Sapphic *adoneus* in the midst of the "austere" hymns is but one of many elements pointing in this direction.

Translated from the German by Ian W. Taylor

NOTES

[1] Cf. Thomas Schmitz, *Pindar in der französischen Renaissance. Studien zu seiner Rezeption in Philologie, Dichtungstheorie und Dichtung*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993 (= Hypomnemata 101).

[2] Cf. Penelope Wilson, *The Knowledge and Appreciation of Pindar in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, PhD Oxford, 1974; Rudolf Sühnel, "Pindars Musen-Anruf und die Englische Musik-Ode," in: Walther Killy (ed.), *Geschichte des Textverständnisses am Beispiel von Pindar und Horaz*, Munich: Kraus, 1981, pp. 219–242.

[3] Martin Opitz, *Buch von der deutschen Poeterey*, ed. Cornelius Sommer, Stuttgart: Reclam, 1970, p. 60.

[4] The English Romantics (Shelley, Coleridge, Wordsworth) continue the English tradition of "Pindaricks" even after 1800 as though no such break in the preeminence of the Greek poet-priest had occurred. Their "Pindaric" output inherits both the encomiastic speaking role and the political element of the Pindaric ode; but unlike Hölderlin the English Romantics do not attempt to recreate Pindar's verses on the level of meter and sentence structure, but continue to write in rhymed iambic verses. The approach to lyrical theory and the national literary context are likewise very different for Shelley and Hölderlin. Nevertheless it is to be regretted that Hölderlin's work has been far too seldom compared – especially by German Germanists – with the lyric poetry of his contemporaries in England. Cf. Michael Erkelenz, "Shelley's First *Pythian"*, in: Modern Philology 97 (2000), pp. 393–416.

[5] Quintilian, Inst. 10.1.61.

[6] Strabo XIII 617.

[7] Sappho Fr. 168 (Voigt). Cf. Fr. 117 B (Voigt).

[8] Cf. Marius Plotius Sacerdos, *Artes* grammaticae, in: *Grammatici latini*, vol. VI, ed. Heinrich Keil, Leipzig: Teubner, 1874, p. 516 and *Hesychii Alexandrini*

Lexicon, s.v. *adonion*. In the context under consideration, I can disregard the fact that in 20th century scholarship the very notion of an Adonic clausula of the Sapphic strophe has become highly disputed. For Hölderlin, the Adonic verse was undoubtedly as much a determining feature of the Sapphic strophe as it was for virtually every scholar up to Wilamowitz-Moellendorf. I have discussed this issue in more detail in Winfried Menninghaus, *Hälfte des Lebens. Versuch über Hölderlins Poetik*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2005, pp. 20–22.

[9] Sappho Fr. 140 (Voigt). Cf. Also Fr. 168 (Voigt).

[10] Ferdinand de Saussure, who introduced the term to literary analysis, thinks of the "hypogram" as a *thematic* word, typically a latent proper name, which is recovered from the text, and he even expressly excludes the meaning of signature (cf. Jean Starobinski, *Wörter unter Wörtern. Die Anagramme von Ferdinand de Saussure*, Frankfurt a. M./ Berlin/ Wien: Ullstein, 1980, especially pp. 23–25). Nevertheless the concept of a metrical hypogram used here is an analogy to Saussure's theory of a "*verbal latency* under the words". See also Michael Riffaterre, *La production du texte*, Paris: Seuil, 1979, pp. 75–88 and Paul de Man, "Hypogram and inscription," in: de Man, *Resistance to theory*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986, pp. 27–53.

[11] Cf. Wolfgang Binder, *Hölderlins Odenstrophe*, in: W. Binder, *Hölderlin-Aufsätze*, Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1970, pp. 47–75.

[12] Hölderlin quotations in the text are taken from *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Friedrich Beissner, Stuttgart: Cotta/Kohlhammer, 1948–1985. A Roman numeral indicates the volume, an Arabic one the page.

[13] Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, *Sämmtliche Werke*, Leipzig: Göschen, 1854, vol. 4, p. 96. The two other Sapphic odes are "Die todte Clarissa" (1750; ibid., pp. 68–69) and "Mein Wäldchen" (1778; pp. 244–245).

[14] Nowadays, however, the first eleven syllables of the third period are given a different metrical division than the first two periods, while the same notation is retained. Cf. Bruno Snell, *Griechische Metrik*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982, pp. 44–45 and Martin L. West, *Greek Metre*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1982, pp. 32–33.

[15] See Friedrich Schlegel, *Lucinde*, in: *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe*, ed. Ernst Behler in cooperation with Jean-Jacques Anstett and Hans Eichner, Paderborn/ München/ Wien/ Zürich: Schöningh, 1958 ff., vol. 5, p. 25 (henceforth all quotations from this edition are referred to as "KSA", followed by an arabic numeral indicating the volume); Friedrich Schlegel, "Über die Diotima," KSA 1, p. 115, Johann Gottfried Herder, "Alcäus und Sappho. Von zwey Hauptgattungen der lyrischen Dichtkunst," in: Herder, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bernhard Suphan, vol. 27, Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1881, pp. 182–198.

[16] Rainer Maria Rilke, *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge*, in: R. M. Rilke: *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 6, Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1966, p. 929. Cf. also Martin L. West, *Die griechische Dichterin. Bild und Rolle*. Stuttgart/ Leipzig: Teubner, 1996, especially p. 9 and pp. 12–15.

[17] Cf. Glenn Most, "Reflecting Sappho," in: Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies 40 (1995), pp. 21, 22, 25.

[18] Aelianus, *Varia historia* 12, 19. Cf. Plato, *Symposium* 235c.

[19] Schlegel, *Philosophische Lehrjahre*, KSA 18, p. 207.

[20] Cf. Julia Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur. Essai sur l'abjection*, Paris: Seuil, 1980.

[21] Johann Gottfried Herder, *Über die Neuere deutsche Literatur*, in: J. G. Herder, *Frühe Schriften 1764–1772*, ed. Ulrich Gaier, Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985, p. 362.

[22] Herder, *Alcäus und Sappho*, p. 186.

[23] Cf. also the publication of a recently discovered Sappho papyrus by Michael Gronewald and Robert W. Daniel ("Ein neuer Sappho-Papyrus," in: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 147 [2004], pp. 1–8). This impressive find permits a partial reconstruction of Fragment 58 (Voigt) devoted to the theme of aging.

[24] Schlegel has attested such a blend of "clearest reflectiveness" and "enthusiasm" to Pindar's odes (*Geschichte der europäischen Literatur*, KSA 11, p. 69).

[25] Cf. Most, *Reflecting Sappho*.

[26] Cf. the adaptations, extracts and bibliographical references concerning these texts judged by Adolf Beck to be nearly all "kitschy" and "sentimental" in VII 4, 293–308.

[27] According to Panyassis the time spent with Aphrodite was twice as long as that spent with Persephone (Apollodorus, *Bibl.* III 14.4). Other versions of the myth, however, divide the year into two halves (cf. Hyginus, *Astronomica* II 7).

[28] Macrobius, *Saturnalia* I 21, 1–6.

[29] Sappho Fr. 168 (Voigt).

[30] Schlegel, *Lyceumsfragmente*, KSA 2, p. 162.

[31] Cf. Eva C. Keuls, *The reign of the phallus. Sexual politics in ancient Athens*. New York: Harper & Row, 1985, and Eva Stehle, "Sappho's gaze: Fantasies of a goddess and young man," in: *Reading Sappho. Contemporary approaches*, ed. Ellen Greene, Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ London: 1996, pp. 193–225. For a critical review see Winfried Menninghaus, *Das Versprechen der Schönheit*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003, pp. 302–309.

[32] James Frazer, *The Golden Bough. A Study in Magic and Religion*. Part II (*Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*), London: Macmillan, 1955, pp. 77–100, esp. pp. 92–94.

[33] Ovid, *Metamorphoses* III 474–496.

[34] Walter Benjamin, "Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften," in: W. Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1, ed. Rolf Tiedemann und Hermann Schweppenhäuser, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974, pp. 123–201, here: p. 181–182.

[35] *Ewiger Vorrat deutscher Poesie*, ed. Rudolf Borchardt, München: Verlag der Bremer Presse**,** 1926, p. 354:

SKIZZE ZU EINER ODE

Hälfte des Lebens.

MIT gelben Birnen hänget und (– –) voll
Mit wilden Rosen – – das – – –
Land in den See: Ihr holden Schwäne
– – – – – – – – – –

– – – – – – – – – –
Und trunken – von Küssen – tunkt ihr das
– – – – – Haupt ins heilig
Nüchterne Wasser – – – – –

Weh mir wo nehm ich, – wenn es Winter ist
Die Blumen – und wo – den Sonnenschein
Und Schatten der – – – Erde
– – – – – – – – – –

– – – – – – – – – –
– – – – – – – die Mauern stehn
Sprachlos und kalt; im – – Winde
Klirren die Fahnen – – – – –

[36] Rudolf Borchardt, "Hölderlin und endlich ein Ende," in: Borchardt, *Gesammelte Werke,* vol. 4 (*Prosa I*), ed. Marie Luise Borchardt, Stuttgart: Klett, 1957, pp. 469–470.

[37] Cf. Michael Knaupp, *"Hölderlin und endlich ein Ende,"* in: *"Le pauvre Holterling"* – Blätter zur Frankfurter Ausgabe Nr. 8, Frankfurt am Main: Roter Stern, 1988, pp. 98–194, and Gerhard Neumann, *Rudolf Borchardt: Der unwürdige Liebhaber*, in: *Zeit der Moderne – Zur deutschen Literatur von der Jahrhundertwende bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Hans-Henrik Krummacher and Bernhard Zeller, Stuttgart: Kröner, pp. 90–91.

[38] Eduard Lachmann, *Hölderlins Hymnen in freien Strophen. Eine metrische Untersuchung*, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1937, pp. 16–17 and 314–318.

[39] Karl Viëtor, *Die Lyrik Hölderlins. Eine analytische Untersuchung.* Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1967, pp. 116–117.

[40] Cf. Rudolf Krieger, "Sprache und Rhythmus der späten Hymnen Hölderlins," in: Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft 22 (1928), pp. 256–291; Dietrich Seckel, *Hölderlins Sprachrhythmus* (= Palästra 7), Leipzig: Mayer & Müller, 1937; Hannes Maeder, "Hölderlin und das Wort. Zum Problem der freien Rhythmen in Hölderlins Dichtung," in: Trivium 2 (1944), pp. 42–59.

[41] Herder, *Alcäus und Sappho*, p. 183.

[42] Schlegel, *Geschichte der lyrischen Dichtkunst unter den Griechen*, KSA 11, p. 201.

[43] Schlegel, *Geschichte der europäischen Literatur*, KSA 11, p. 61–62.

[44] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, in: G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke* (Theorie Werkausgabe), 20 vols., Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970, Bde. 13–15, here: vol. 15, p. 466.

[45] Norbert von Hellingrath characterized *Hälfte des Lebens* as a "*lyrical* poem in the narrow sense" (in: Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Norbert von Hellingrath, vol. 4 [*Gedichte 1800–1806*], Berlin: Propyläen, 1943, p. 5.). Because *Hälfte des Lebens* generally turns up in lyric anthologies, some Hölderlin connoisseurs tend to suspect that the poem is not part of the genuine Hölderlin canon at all, but rather an occasional adaptation to the "Romantic" taste of the public and the exoteric medium of the Almanach – ultimately a sacrifice by Hölderlin to "the triviality of the merely Romantic" (cf. Wilfred L. Kling, *Lese(r)arbeit. Hölderlins "Der Winkel von Hardt" und die Nachtgesänge*, in: "*Le pauvre Holterling" – Blätter zur Frankfurter Ausgabe* 4/5 (1980), pp. 77–88, here: pp. 79–80; Rainer Nägele, *Text, Geschichte und Subjektivität in Hölderlins Dichtung: "Uneßbarer Schrift gleich,"* Stuttgart: Metzler, 1985, pp. 121–123, and Hölderlin's letter to Friedrich Wilmans dated December 1803, VI 436). However, already the poem's contemporary reception casts doubt on this hypothesis. Hölderlin's contribution to the Almanach of which *Hälfte des Lebens* formed part met with strong expressions of dissatisfaction and rejection; it was certainly not perceived as a catchy exercise in a popular lyrical style (cf. VII 4, 22–23 and Harro Stammerjohann, *Ein Exempel aus der Wirkungsgeschichte Hölderlins: Hälfte des Lebens*, in: *Études Germaniques* 21 [1966], pp. 388–393).

[46] Herder, *Alcäus und Sappho*, p. 186.

[47] Quintilian (*Institutio oratoria* X 1, 63) likewise praised Alcaeus for his wealth of opposing tones.

[48] Cf. Alcaeus Fr. 34, 41, 42, 45, 66, 68, 69, 150, 283, 308, 362 (Voigt) and Sappho Fr. 137 and 168 C (Voigt).

[49] Schlegel, *Vorarbeiten zur Geschichte der verschiedenen Schulen und Epochen der lyrischen Dichtkunst bei den Hellenen*, KSA 1, p. 596.

[50] Schlegel, *Über das Studium der Griechischen Poesie*, KSA 1, p. 319. Cf. also Schlegel, *Vorarbeiten zur Geschichte der verschiedenen Schulen und Epochen der lyrischen Dichtkunst bei den Hellenen*, KSA 1, p. 595, and Hölderlin IV 196.

[51] Longinus, *De sublimitate* 10.3. As to Hölderlin's reading of Longinus see Albrecht Seifert, *Untersuchungen zu Hölderlins Pindar-Rezeption*, München: Fink,

1982, pp. 70–79, and Martin Vöhler, *Hölderlins Longin-Rezeption*, in: Hölderlin-Jahrbuch 1992–1993, pp. 152–172.

[52] Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, *Vom deutschen Hexameter*, in: F. G. Klopstock, *Gedanken über die Natur der Poesie*, ed. Winfried Menninghaus, Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1989, pp. 127 und 136.

[53] Ibid., p. 148.

[54] Klopstock, "Von der Darstellung," in: Klopstock, *Gedanken über die Natur der Poesie*, p. 172.

[55] Vgl. Michael Jakob, *"Schwanengefahr". Das lyrische Ich im Zeichen des Schwans*. München: Hanser, 2000, pp. 240–268.

[56] The concept of "Umkehr" (inversion, turning, turnabout) is used by Hölderlin – superimposing the theoretical concept of *peripeteia* in tragedy with the rhetorical concept of inversion and the spiritual notion of an inner turnabout – in the *Anmerkungen zum Ödipus* (V 202) and the *Anmerkungen zur Antigonä* (V 271).

[57] Cf. Walter Hof, *Hölderlins Stil als Ausdruck seiner geistigen Welt*, Meisenheim am Glan: Hain, 1954, pp. 90–91 and Manfred Frank/ Gerhard Kurz, ",ordo inversus'. Zu einer Reflexionsfigur bei Novalis, Hölderlin, Kleist und Kafka," in: *Geist und Zeichen. Festschrift für Arthur Henkel*, ed. Herbert Anton, Bernhard Gajek and Peter Pfaff, Heidelberg: Winter, 1977.

[58] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, in: Nietzsche, *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, München: dtv/ de Gruyter, 1980, vol. 1, pp. 47, 57, 64–65.

[59] To give just a few other examples of Adoneic strophe endings in Hölderlin's Pindaric odes: "Wie wenn am Feiertage" ("Bäume des Haines", "Kräfte der Götter", "Seele des Dichters", "heiligen Bacchus", II 118–120), "Der Mutter Erde ("Wolke des Wohllauts", "Herz die Gemeinde", "Laute gegründet", II1 23–125), "Die Wanderung" ("besser zu wohnen", "Ahnen gedenken" "Milde gerühret", "Wolken des Ida", "kommet, ihr Holden", II 138–141), "Der Rhein" ("Küsten Moreas", "Rasen des Halbgotts", "Seele gegeben", "die er gegründet", "werden getrachtet", "nenn ich den Fremden", "alte Verwirrung", II 142–148), "Mnemosyne" ("áber was íst diß", "féhlet die Traúer", II 194). Lachmann (*Hölderlins Hymnen in freien Strophen*, p. 99) and Gaier (*Hölderlin. Eine Einführung*, Tübingen and Basel, Francke, 1993, p. 228) mention the frequency of this group as a clausula in the hymns, without recognizing them as instances of adoneus.

[60] West, *Greek Metre*, p. 65.

[61] Cf. Snell, *Griechische Metrik*, pp. 44–57, for the significance of eolic lyric poetry for this development, especially pp. 48–50.

[62] Rudolf Borchardt, "Hölderlin und endlich ein Ende," p. 470.

[63] See, for instance VII, 4, pp. 124, 130–131, 214–217, 272, 298, 304.

[64] Friedrich Nietzsche, "Brief an meinen Freund, in dem ich ihm meinen Lieblingsdichter zum Lesen empfehle" (1861), in Theobald Ziegler/ Klaus H. Fischer, *Hölderlin und Nietzsche*, Schutterwald: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2001, p. 48.

[65] Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4, ed. Norbert von Hellingrath, p. XIX (Preface).

[66] Ibid., p. XI (Preface).

[67] Demetrius, *De elocutione* 127, 140–141 and 166; Dionysius, *De compositione verborum* 23.

[68] (Pseudo-)Longinus, *De sublimitate* 10, 3.

■ HÖLDERLINOV SAPFIŠKI NAČIN: REVIZIJA MITA O MOŠKEM PINDARSKEM VIDCU

Ključne besede: nemška poezija / Hölderlin, Friedrich / avtopoetika / literarni vplivi / Sapfo

Key words: German poetry / Hölderlin, Friedrich / literary influences / Sappho

Od začetka 20. stoletja veljajo Hölderlinove pesmi iz let 1801–1805 za njegovo »pravo volilo« in pesnik-svečenik Pindar za njegov antični zgled. Študija odkriva kompleks ritmov, tem in mitičnih obzorij, ki so doslej prezrto (anti)gravitacijsko središče omenjenih pesmi in zahtevajo revizijo uveljavljene podobe o Hölderlinu. Antična referenca za to je pesnica Sapfo. Razprava pokaže, da je njena patografija erotičnih obsesij, situacij razhajanja in izkušenj staranja izjemno pomembna za definicijo tega, kar od konca 18. stoletja imenujemo »lirično«, ter da je Hölderlin znatno sodeloval pri tej samodefiniciji »lirike«, in sicer na osnovi svojega ukvarjanja z lezbično pesnico.

Vodilo celotne študije je slavna pesem »Hälfte des Lebens«, po objavi katere (1804) sam Hölderlin ni tiskal nobene več. V analizo Hölderlinovega jezikovnega ustvarjanja so vključeni mitološka obzorja pesmi, Hölderlinova filozofija »lepote« in osrednji vidiki njegove teorije pesnjenja.

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