



Hyperion

By Friedrich Hölderlin

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Hyperion is a novel of stirring lyricism, philosophical sublimity, and enduring influence. It stands among Hölderlin's most extraordinary achievements. A Greek hermit recounts the pivotal phases of his life, from his discovery of the vanished glory of antiquity, through his encounter with his beloved Diotima, who embodies his goal of merging with "the All of nature," to his participation in a Greek uprising against Ottoman Turkish tyranny. Hölderlin's sole novel has been celebrated for its musicality, the power of its cadences and tones to express a constant oscillation between extremes of grief and joy. Though Hölderlin's genius was not widely recognized during his lifetime, he has come to be regarded as one of the most significant and unique poets in the German language.

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Hyperion By Friedrich Hölderlin Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #627899 in Books
- Published on: 2008-04-28
- Released on: 2008-04-28
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 6.52" h x .70" w x 5.54" l, .60 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 236 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

In the euphonious movement of its prose, in the sublimity and beauty of the figures that appear in it, *Hyperion* makes an impression upon me similar to the beat of the waves of the troubled sea. Indeed, this prose is music, soft melting sounds interrupted by painful dissonances, finally expiring in dark, uncanny dirges. —**Friedrich Nietzsche**

The greatest lyric poets, for instance Hölderlin or Keats, are men in whom the mythic power of insight breaks forth again in its full intensity and objectifying power... —**Ernst Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, 1946**

But if there were words in which to grasp the relation between myth and the inner life from which the later poem sprang it would be those of Hölderlin. 'Myths, which take leave of the earth, / ... They return to mankind.' —**Walter Benjamin**

The German poet Friedrich Hölderlin unquestionably belongs in the intense company of Shelley, Kleist, Novalis, Lenz, and Büchner.... [Hölderlin] is one of the great writers' lives, full of intensity and movement, work and projects, abrupt departures and friendshipsit was reading Hölderlin that gave Rilke the impetus for his *Duino Elegies*. —**Michael Hofmann**

About the Author

Friedrich Hölderlin (1770–1843) is widely regarded as one of the greatest German lyric poets. In addition to his poetry and *Hyperion*, his only novel, he began work on a tragedy, *The Death of Empedocles*, which he never completed. The creative period of his life was cut short by a mental breakdown that confined him to a tower in Tußlingen from 1807 until his death in 1843. His work had a profound influence on Hegel, Nietzsche, Rilke, Heidegger, and Celan. Ross Benjamin is a freelance writer and translator living in Brooklyn. His work has appeared in *Bookforum*, *The Nation*, *The New York Times*, and other publications. His translation of Kevin Vennemann's *Nahe Jedeneu* (*Close to Jedeneu*) is forthcoming.

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Hyperion to Bellarmin

The dear soil of my fatherland again brings me joy and sorrow. Every morning I am now on the heights of the Corinthian Isthmus and, like a bee among flowers, my soul often flies back and forth between the seas that, to the right and left, cool the feet of my glowing mountains. One of the two gulfs especially should have delighted me, had I stood here a millennium ago. Between the glorious wilderness of Helicon and Parnassus where daybreak plays among a hundred snow-covered peaks and the paradisiacal plain of Sicyon, the shining gulf surged like a triumphant demigod toward the city of joy, youthful Corinth, and poured out the captured riches of all regions before its darling. But what is that to me? The cry of the jackal that sings its wild dirge among the stone heaps of antiquity startles me out of my dreams. Joy to the man whose heart is delighted and strengthened by a flourishing fatherland. I feel as if I were cast into the mire, as if the coffin lid were slammed shut over me, whenever someone reminds me of my own; and whenever someone calls me a Greek, I feel as if he throttled me with a dog collar.

Users Review

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Elizabeth Frizzell:

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