

Romantik

03

JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF ROMANTICISMS



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Romantik

The special theme of this volume of *Romantik* is ‘Renegotiations of romanticism’. Hence, the theme section addresses the ways in which romanticism continues to be renegotiated in post-romantic periods. This process of renegotiations pertains to production and reception. Artists renegotiate texts of the romantic era, just as those same texts are frequently renegotiated by critics, by historiographers, and by national ideologies.

The articles in this issue show that the influence of romantic works is both widespread and deep. As a set of ideas or a mode of thinking, romanticism has proved itself to be both enduring and protean. This issue provides a number of innovative analyses of how romanticism has been and continues to be renegotiated. The motive for inviting contributions examining the afterlife of romanticisms is to explore how we may understand romanticism as not just a past event, but as an ongoing process of cultural development. We may usefully situate romanticism both in its historical context and in ours. It is our hope that this issue will facilitate a dialogue between what romanticism was and how it continues to unfold in various cultural manifestations – as romantic legacies in its immediate aftermath, as contemporary debates, and as a vector of the future.

Several articles in the theme section discuss the question from the perspective of the artist: How is the artist and his/her work influenced by romanticism and/or particular romantic scholars? How does the artist engage with romanticism in order to use, question and/or interfere with it?

Other articles discuss the question from the perspective of reception: How has the idea of what we now call ‘romanticism’ been constructed over time? How were ‘new’ romanticisms constructed? And finally, which works have been canonised and memorialised, and for what (national) purposes?

The articles that belong in the cluster of ‘Renegotiations of romanticism’ are Mitchell B. Frank’s analysis of ‘New Romanticisms in Wilhelmine Germany’, Karin Sanders’s examination of ‘The Romantic Fairy Tale and Surrealism: Marvelous Non-Sense and Dark Apprehensions’, and Sigrun Åsebø’s article ‘Travelling Huts and Invading Spaceships: Marianne Heske, Tiril Schröder, and Norwegian Romantic Landscapes’. The issue also features a tripartite article, ‘Inger Christensen / Novalis / Philosophy of Nature’, by Anne Gry Haugland, Klaus Müller-Wille, and Silje Svare on the romantic legacies found in the work of the Danish

FOREWORD

author Inger Christensen (1935–2008), an international name who was considered the most eminent experimentalist of her generation and was often mentioned as a contender for the Nobel Prize in Literature. The individual titles of the linked articles on Inger Christensen are ‘Secret or Secretlessness?: On Poetological Dialogue and Affinities in Inger Christensen, Peter Waterhouse – and Novalis’ (Svare), ‘Native and Deep-Rooted: Positions in Inger Christensen’s Philosophy of Nature’ (Haugland), and ‘Dispersion, Countersymbols, and Mutual Representation: Inger Christensen’s *det* and Novalis’ *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*’ (Müller-Wille).

In addition to the articles featured in the theme section, this issue contains articles that analyse and shed new light on romantic works, including poetry, novels, and travelogues. These include Elisa Müller-Adams’s ‘Gender, Memory, and Interculturality in Caroline de la Motte Fouqué’s Historical Novel *Die Vertriebenen*’, Jennifer Wawrzinek’s ‘Hospitality and the Nation in Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark*’, and Per-Arne Bodin’s ‘The Romantic, the Gothic, and the Visual: Three Narratives about Amalia von Krüdener and the Russian Poet Fedor Tiutchev’.

This year, we would again like to thank NOP-HS for supporting the journal and to AU-Ideas for making it possible to print the large number of colour illustrations.

Welcome to *Romantik!*

The editors

New Romanti

NEW ROMANTICISMS IN WILHELMINE GERMANY

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MITCHELL B. FRANK

[ABSTRACT]

This essay examines and connects two related issues in the literature on the history of art of the Wilhelmine Period: the canonical shift in German romantic painting from the Nazarenes to Phillip Otto Runge and Caspar David Friedrich; and the attempt to position the work of contemporary German artists (often called new idealists) as a new romanticism. At this time, art historians like Richard Muther and Cornelius Gurlitt take on a romantic sensibility in their attempts to position contemporary German art on the international scene. With the development of new idealism in German artwriting, two new romanticisms were thus founded. Modern German art (the work of Anselm Feuerbach, Hans von Marées, Arnold Böcklin, Max Klinger, and others) was claimed within a romantic tradition. And romantic painting was conceptualized anew with the focus increasingly on Friedrich and Runge, and less on the Nazarenes.

.....

KEYWORDS *New Idealism, German Art Historiography, Richard Muther, Cornelius Gurlitt, Arnold Böcklin.*

From the fertile manure of naturalism there
sprang the blue flower of a new Romanticism.

(Richard Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*)

A few years ago I attended a colloquium on German romantic art entitled ‘Was ist romantisch an der romantischen Kunst?’ [What is romantic about the romantic art?].¹ The question struck me as one about negotiations and renegotiations with the past; what is romantic about romanticism surely depends upon who is doing the asking, when, and why. The question is subtly but critically different from a similar one that was asked seventy-five years earlier by Kurt Karl Eberlein in his book *Was ist deutsch in der deutschen Kunst?* [What is German in German art?].² Deploying *in* (in), as compared to *an* (about), Eberlein asked a question that he believed admitted only one correct answer. The essential nature of German art, Eberlein argued, lay in racial purity. His 1934 *Was ist deutsch in der deutschen Kunst?*, published with a swastika on the cover, was the culmination of work he had pursued in the 1920s, when he was trying to describe the nature of German romantic

painting in terms of different artistic lineages: Peter Cornelius's *Rheinfrankisch* restoration, Friedrich Overbeck's southern Catholicism, and Phillip Otto Runge and Caspar David Friedrich's northern line.³ For Eberlein, it was only the northern line that was truly German: '“Romantik” nennen wir die historische, geistige Erhebung der norddeutschen Neustämme, der Pommern, Schlesier, Preußen, die ihr dichterisches Zentrum Berlin und Jena, ihr künstlerisches Zentrum Dresden hatten' ['Romantic' is what we call the historical, spiritual elevation of the new clan of northern Germany, the Pomeranians, the Silesians, the Prussians, whose poetic centres were Berlin and Jena and whose artistic centre was Dresden].⁴

Eberlein's art-historical method, his *Kunstgeographie*, provides a strong contrast to the problems raised by the more open-ended query 'Was ist romantisch an der romantischen Kunst?' [What is romantic about romantic art?]. Such a question about romanticism suggests the possibility of multiple readings of the period and, consequently, the problems that arise from a variety of interpretations. This de-essentialising spirit is typical of postmodernism; it is a strategy common in an era of the death of metanarratives. In the 1990s, postmodernism and romanticism were frequently linked in books and anthologies on literary romanticism, with titles such as *Romancing the Postmodern* and *Romanticism and Postmodernism*.⁵ The simple reason for this connection is that issues associated with romanticism, like irony, subjectivity, mediation, and interdisciplinarity, are often examined in postmodern writing as well. But it should be noted that this attempt to de-essentialise romanticism is not something new to recent literary criticism. In his 1924 article 'On the Discrimination of Romanticisms', Arthur Lovejoy argued for the necessity to speak of different versions of romanticism, such as an anti-classical, naturalistic English romanticism, an artificial, self-conscious German romanticism, and a classical French romanticism.⁶ The more recent 'postmodern discovery of Postmodernism in Romanticism', as Edward Larrissy has put it, is less about dividing romanticism into a variety of national types. Rather it focuses more on 'how we decide what the past is and whether the interpreter's view is altering the evidence'.⁷ Such scepticism about historical detachment is ultimately related to a series of problems concerning subjectivity and totalizing knowledge. As Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy make clear, German romantic writers associated with the Jena circle developed '*theory itself as literature*' or a 'literary Absolute', which 'aggravates and radicalizes the thinking of totality and the Subject'. In other words, 'what interests us in romanticism is that we still belong to the era it opened up'.⁸

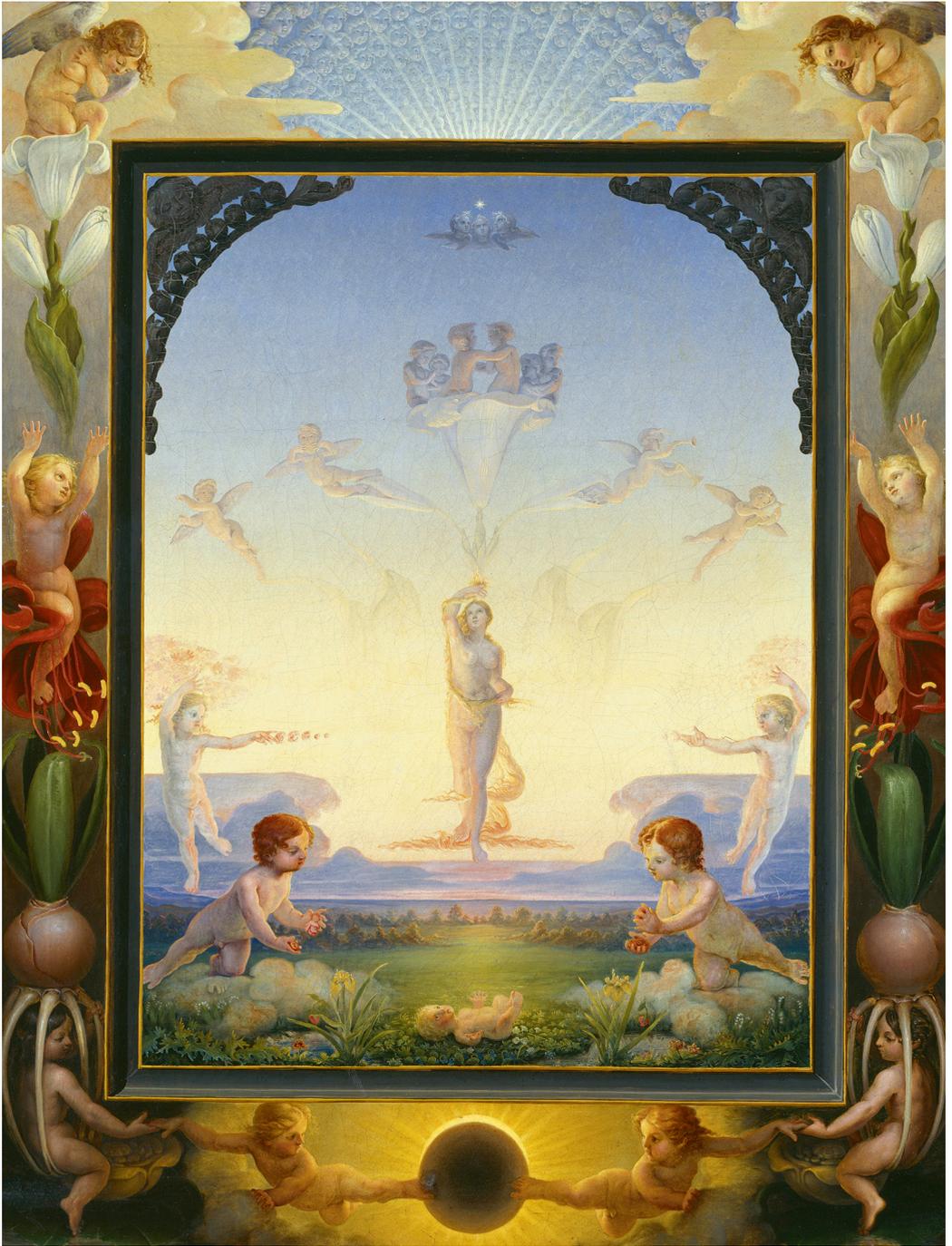
A New Romanticism in the Wilhelmine Era

Taking an historiographical approach to the question what is romantic about romantic art, I will focus on the second half of the Imperial era in Germany (1888–1918), when the nation under Wilhelm II pursued a *Weltpolitik*, a political course to turn Germany into a world power. Wilhelmine Germany is an important case study in the renegotiation of German romanticism for at least two reasons. First,

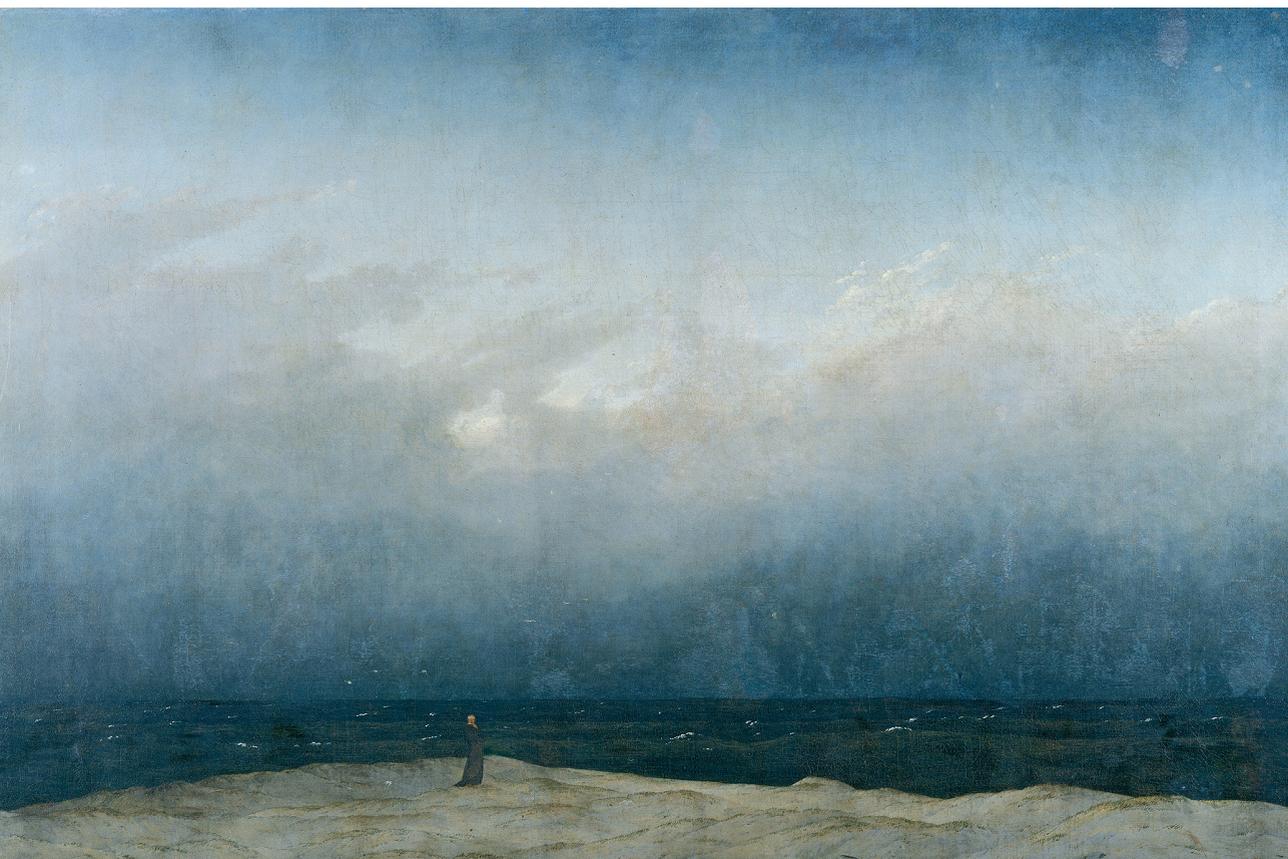


III. 1 [Friedrich Overbeck, *The Selling of Joseph*, 1816–1817. Fresco, 335 x 244 cm. bpk/Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, (previously Casa Bartholdy, Rome)/Klaus Göken.]

an important canonical shift occurred at this time: the replacement of the Nazarenes (Friedrich Overbeck (ill. 1), Peter Cornelius and others) with Philipp Otto Runge (ill. 2), and Caspar David Friedrich (ill. 3) as the leading proponents of German romantic painting.⁹ Secondly, art historians like Richard Muther and Cornelius Gurlitt, who in the 1890s wrote important surveys of modern art, used romantic terms to describe developments in contemporary German art and to situate these currents in an international context. These writers themselves show romantic sensibilities in their deep concern for the historian's subjectivity. What I would like to suggest is that these two issues are not unrelated. While the shift from the Nazarenes to Friedrich and Runge has been attributed to nationalist and modernist concerns, another important element of critical and historical



III. 2 [Philipp Otto Runge, *The Small Morning*, 1808. Oil on canvas, 109 x 85,5 cm. bpk/
Hamburger Kunsthalle/Elke Walford.]



III. 3 [Caspar David Friedrich, *Monk by the Sea*, 1809–1810. Oil on canvas, 110 x 171.5 cm. bpk/Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin/Jörg P. Anders.]

writing of the time was the attempt to position, through a rhetoric of mediation, the work of late nineteenth-century German painters as a new romanticism.

In the 1890s, artists such as Anselm Feuerbach, Arnold Böcklin, Hans von Marées, Adolf Hildebrand, and Max Klinger (now frequently called the *Deutsch-Römer*) were most often referred to as new idealists, a term that came from contemporary literary criticism. In his 1891 essay ‘Die Krisis der Naturalismus’, literature and art critic Hermann Bahr attributes the coining of the term ‘Neu-Idealismus’, which he describes as a ‘krummen und unglücklichen Titel’ [crooked and unfortunate title] to the Norwegian writer Arne Garborg.¹⁰ In the context of contemporary German art, the term can also be found in Cornelius Gurlitt’s 1893 essay on sculptor Adolf Hildebrand. In reference to the work of Hildebrand, Marées, Klinger, and Karl Stauffer-Bern, Gurlitt writes: ‘Neben den Altidealisten könnte man sie Neuidealisten nennen’ [Next to the old idealists, one could call them new idealists].¹¹ For Gurlitt, Hildebrand (ill. 4), uses his ideas and knowledge to reproduce living man, not momentary appearances.¹² Gurlitt emphasizes the point that Hildebrand is fundamentally different from older idealists, like



III. 4 [Adolf von Hildebrand, *Standing Young Man*, 1881–1884.
Marble, 183 cm high. bpk/Nationalgalerie,
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin/Klaus Gökén.]



III. 5 [Peter von Cornelius, *Hagen Sinks the Nibelungen Treasure*, 1859. Oil on canvas, 80 x 100 cm. bpk/Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin/Jörg P. Anders.]

the Nazarene painter Peter Cornelius (ill. 5), who worked only in the realm of ideas.¹³ According to Gurlitt, Hildebrand is a ‘realist’, because he uses nature as his model; he is also an ‘idealist’, because he does not merely imitate nature, but expresses his idea (*Vorstellung*).¹⁴ Gurlitt reproduces this dialectic in his 1899 survey of German nineteenth-century art. He describes the work of Feuerbach, Marees, Hildebrand, Böcklin, and Klinger as integrating, in different ways, realism and idealism.¹⁵

Richard Muther also uses the term new idealism in his 1893–1894 *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert* to describe the most recent anti-naturalistic trends in Europe, although unlike Gurlitt, Muther’s perspective is more European and his model of artistic development more a ‘theory of immanent exhaustion and reaction’, to borrow a phrase from Meyer Schapiro.¹⁶ New idealism, for

Muther, emerged when artists were no longer satisfied with depicting ‘modern life’ and wanted to depict ‘modern emotions’. Yet new idealism was still founded in a study of nature, which is ‘the Alpha and Omega of all art’.¹⁷ Although different in orientation, Gurlitt and Muther agree in treating new idealism as a synthesis of realist and idealist tendencies.¹⁸

In the context of the re-evaluation of romanticism at this time, what is of interest is that this new German art, this new idealism, is often described also as a new romanticism. Muther begins his discussion of the German new idealists with the claim: ‘From the fertile manure of Naturalism there sprang the blue flower of a new Romanticism’.¹⁹ Julius Meier-Graefe calls the *Deutsch-Römer*, although disparagingly, ‘Neu Romantik’ in his 1904 *Entwicklungsgeschichte der modernen Kunst*.²⁰ And in 1921, Hans Rosenhagen, following Muther and Gurlitt’s claim that a new German art developed after the rise of naturalism, suggests ‘new romanticism’ is a better term to describe the movement than ‘new idealism’.²¹

The ease with which art historians at this time used ‘romantic’ to describe developments in modern art has to do in part with the fact that this term has, of course, both chronological and typological meanings. It could refer to a temporal period, at first defined broadly as art of the post-classical period, and later, more specifically, as art of the early nineteenth century. In fact, romanticism was in the early nineteenth century called at times *Neuromantik* to distinguish it from medieval romances.²² On the other hand, ‘romantic’ can refer to a type of poetry or art, one that is often associated with expressive, quixotic, and imaginative elements.

Romanticism and New Idealism

The connection at the turn of the twentieth century between idealism and romanticism is curious, because in the early nineteenth century idealism was more closely associated with classicism than romanticism. In fact the critical terrain has shifted with the rise of realism in the nineteenth century: realism and idealism gained the ground where romanticism and classicism once stood.²³ Such binary thinking itself is, one could say, a legacy of romantic thought. A. W. Schlegel argued that oppositions like classical versus romantic and ancient versus modern were instances of the general rule that all basic forces in nature manifest themselves in polar opposites.²⁴ As for the early nineteenth-century pairings (ancient and modern, classical and romantic, naïve and sentimental), while they functioned differently for various authors, there is some general agreement that classical (or ancient or naïve) art was considered natural and cyclical, and had the possibility of perfect form, while modern (or romantic or sentimental) art was thought of as artificial, progressive, and always imperfect. The distinction is clearly made in Schiller’s influential 1795–1796 ‘Essay on Naïve and Sentimental Poetry’. While classical man is co-extensive with nature, Schiller argues, modern man is ‘in opposition with nature’ in his social relations, mode of existence, and manners. Because of this opposition and a consciousness of it, the sentimental poet no longer merely imitates nature, but ‘reflects on the impression the objects

make upon him and only on the basis of that reflection is the emotion founded, into which he is transported and into which he transports us'.²⁵ Schiller's categories are constructs that help him understand his feeling (every refined man's feeling, he says) when confronted by the simplicity of nature, whether it be the plant and animal kingdom or human nature (children, country folk, primitive races). The naïve is an image of 'our lost childhood', which fills us with 'a certain melancholy', because it portrays 'our supreme perfection in an ideal sense and transports us into a state of sublime emotion'.²⁶ There are two points I would like to emphasize here: the sentimental (modern) poet is always kept at a distance or mediated from nature; and the sentimental poet sets himself an impossible task, a longing (*Sehnsucht*) that cannot be fulfilled. These two concepts, mediation and longing, come to be central in defining new idealism.

I focus on Schiller's categories in the context of new idealism rather than, for example, on Friedrich Schlegel's distinction between the classical and romantic, for a variety of reasons, including the frequent association of Schiller with idealism and German national identity. As John Robertson made clear in 1905, the centenary of Schiller's death: 'To those crying for a fatherland, Schiller, with his imperturbable idealism, held out a fatherland of spirit'.²⁷ Moreover, Schiller's ideas about childhood, simplicity, and non-mimetic or idealistic art, are often repeated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by authors of different aesthetic and political stripe, from Julius Langbehn's nationalist and anti-Semitic diatribes in his bestseller *Rembrandt als Erzieher* of 1890 to the theoretical writings of Conrad Fiedler and Adolf Hildebrand.²⁸

There were thus political as well as art historical reasons for Karl Scheffler's republication of a section of Schiller's essay on naïve and sentimental poetry in 1915 in an article 'Die Realisten und die Idealisten', which appeared just after the outbreak of the First World War in *Kunst und Künstler*, a progressive monthly art journal that he edited and that was closely associated with the Berlin Secession.²⁹ Scheffler was a keen observer of artistic currents of his day. In his 1911 *Deutsche Maler und Zeichner im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, he had categorized painting according to realist and idealist poles: 'Anschauung ist das sinnliche Empfinden der Welt, ... der Begriff aber denkt über die Erscheinung und produziert die Idee' [Perception is the sensual feeling for the world, ... while conception reflects on the appearance and produces the idea].³⁰ The main difference between the two, between *Wirklichkeitsmalerei* [reality-painting] and *Gedankenmalerei* [thought-painting], is that 'die Anschauung malt, der Begriff zeichnet' [perception paints and conception draws].³¹ Like his mentor Julius Meier-Graefe, Scheffler categorized German art in general (although there were exceptions) as a conceptual and linear *Gedankenkunst* [thought-art].

Scheffler's categories were developed in a critical context in which German art was almost always seen in relation to French artistic standards. In the 1880s, French impressionism could still be rejected by art historians like Adolf Rosenberg, who claimed that 'Die Impressionisten wollen die Natur wiedergeben, nicht, wie sie ist, sondern wie sie das Auge eines einfachen, durch kein Raffine-



III. 6 [Anselm Feuerbach, *Ricordo di Tivoli*, 1867. Oil on canvas, 194 x 131 cm.
bpk/Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nationalgalerie, Berlin/BStGS.]

ment der Bildung beeinflussten Menschen sieht' [Impressionists do not want to reproduce nature as it is, but as it is seen by the eye of a simple man without any influence of refined education].³² But such a position was no longer tenable in the 1890s, when most German art critics and historians regarded French realism and impressionism as essential currents in modern art. While artists like Adolf Menzel and Max Liebermann were seen in the light of these trends, German art in general continued to be classified as idealist and imaginative, as Scheffler and Meier-Graefe make clear. In fact, it became a commonplace in German artwriting of this time to contrast the immediacy of French painting (whether it be in terms of the object in realism or the sense-perception in impressionism) with the distant and mediated art of Germany.³³ As early as 1887, Emil Heilbut (writing under his pseudonym Herman Helferich) described French landscape painting as objective, scholastic, and unimaginative in comparison to the modern, skilful (*kunstvoll*), and ideal art of Arnold Böcklin.³⁴

I have been arguing that in the second half of the Imperial period, *the* critical opposition in much art historical writing about modern art was realism and idealism, which replaced the earlier distinction between classicism and romanticism. These pairs, however, are similar in at least one respect. In both cases, an art of immediacy (classicism or realism) is opposed to a mediated art form (romanticism or idealism). It is, perhaps, for this reason that new idealism could be so easily described as a new romanticism. Schiller's essay, as discussed above, focused on mediating factors in sentimental art. This notion of mediation or 'romantic distance', as Hans Eichner points out, 'soon became a cliché'.³⁵ For example, in Clemens Brentano's *Godwi* (1801), Maria defines romanticism in the following terms: 'Everything which stands between our eye and an object to be seen at a distance, making it seem closer to us, but at the same time adding to the object something of its own, is romantic'. Godwi then replies: 'The romantic is therefore a telescope, or rather the colour of the lens and the effect the form of the lens has on the object'.³⁶

In the 1890s, new idealism was similarly labelled as an art of mediation or distance. Richard Muther describes new idealism through a Schillerian lens as sentimental painting. 'The austerity of the antique spirit', he writes of new idealist art, and Anselm Feuerbach (ill. 6) in particular, 'is tempered by the melancholy of the modern intellect'. Olympus is filled 'with the light, the mist, the colour and the melancholy of a later and more neurotic age, the modes of which are more rich in *nuances* -- an age which is sadder and more disturbed by human problems than was ancient Greece'.³⁷ In repeating Schiller's claims about the sick and melancholic character of the modern age, Muther recalls a series of oppositions, such as healthy/sick and closeness/distance, that go back to the first half of the nineteenth century.

The reception of the Swiss painter Arnold Böcklin (ill. 7), who was taken in the 1890s by many German critics and historians as the greatest living painter, is an interesting case in point. On the one hand, he is characterized as the paradigm of the naïve artist. Meier-Graefe writes of his physical, not intellectual strength.³⁸



III. 7 [Arnold Böcklin, *Villa by the Sea II*, 1865. Oil on canvas, 123.4 x 173.2 cm. bpk/Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Schack-Galerie, München/BSStGS.

Gustav Floerke speaks of his powerful nearness to nature.³⁹ Muther writes that he possesses ‘iron health’ and ‘is as inexhaustible as infinite nature herself’.⁴⁰ On the other hand, his work is also described as mediated by his imagination and, as importantly, his powerful memory. Böcklin never sketched directly from nature, we are frequently told:

Mit Erstaunen hörte man, daß er—trotz der außerordentlichen Wahrheit mancher Details jenes Bildes, wie der mit so ungewöhnlicher Feinheit wiedergegebenen Sonnenblitze—nie unmittelbar nach der Natur male.

[With astonishment one hears that—despite the extraordinary truth of many details of every picture, like the sunlight, which he reproduces with such unusual fineness—he never painted directly from nature.]⁴¹

Rather, he relied on his ‘außerordentliches malerisches Gedächtniß’ [extraordinary painterly memory] to recall all that he perceived to create imaginative works in his studio.⁴² With all new idealist artists, different forms of mediation are emphasized: Feuerbach’s melancholic temperament, Klinger’s imagination (ill. 8), and Marées and Hildebrand’s idealism.

A German Art of the Imagination

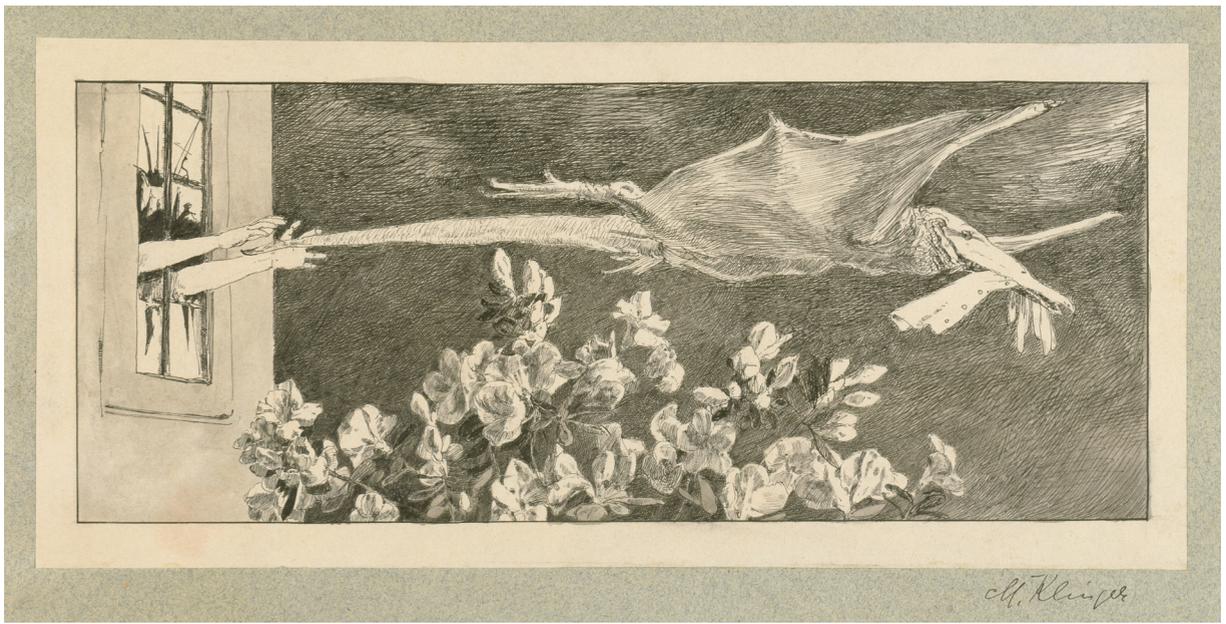
The mediation between artist and nature comes out most succinctly in the description of the new idealists as imaginative artists. In German artwriting at this time, ‘Phantasie’ is used in a variety of ways: sometimes in reference to the genius of the artist; other times in the context of its role in the process of perception and in creating ‘Vorstellungen’ [mental images]; and other times in reference to German intellectual ability in comparison with French sensuality. In all these contexts, ‘Phantasie’ is almost always related to perception and memory. In fact, in popular encyclopaedias of the day, an important distinction is often made between, on the one hand, ‘die reproduzierende Einbildungskraft’ [the reproductive imagination], or memory, which renews ‘schon dagewesene sinnlich anschauliche Vorstellungen’ [already concrete sensed perceptions], and, on the other, ‘die schöpferische Einbildungskraft’ [creative imagination], which builds new ones. But these new images are never divorced from sense perception. Imagination:

schafft eine neue Welt, wobei sie zwar die Elemente der erstern [die wirkliche Welt], die durch die ursprünglich empfangenen Eindrücke gegebenen Vorstellungen, als Bausteine verwertet, aber durch neue und originale Verbindungen derselben neue, originale Vorstellungsgebilde hervorbringt

[creates a new world, whereby it makes use of elements of the [given world] through ideas originally received as impressions, as building blocks, but through new and original associations brings forth new, original imaginary pictures].⁴³

This understanding of imagination as expressive could help a writer distinguish a work of art from mere imitation and, at the same time, keep it connected to sense perception. We see this employment of imagination in the construction of new idealism as a synthesis of realism and idealism.

At this time, when new idealism is being constructed as an art historical category, Runge and Friedrich begin to be viewed in terms related to this movement. While Cornelius, Overbeck, and other Nazarenes are marginalized as old idealists, the work of Friedrich and Runge is described, like that of the new idealists, as synthesizing realist and idealist trends. Scheffler explains that Runge and Friedrich cannot be categorized in terms of either ‘Gedankenmalerei’ [thought-painting] or ‘Wirklichkeitsmalerei’ [reality-painting], but as a mixture of the two. Runge naturalizes his perceptions at the same time as he monumentalizes feelings, while Friedrich’s paintings contain both ‘unmittelbar lebendige Anschau-



III. 8 [Max Klinger, *Abduction* from the series *Fantasies about a Found Glove Dedicated to the Lady who Lost it*, 1878. Pen and ink with wash, 9 x 22 cm. bpk/Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Sammlung Scharf-Gerstenberg /Volker-H. Schneider.]

ung' [immediate, living perception] and 'dialektischer Symbolismus' [dialectical symbolism].⁴⁴ Art historian Friedrich Haack, in his 1913 survey of nineteenth-century art, similarly writes of the difficulty in categorizing Runge and Friedrich, because the former attempted 'die Nature mit eigener starker Faust zu packen und zugleich in Symbolen zu sprechen'⁴⁵ [to seize nature with a strong fist and at the same time to speak in symbols], while the latter was dedicated to natural life at the same time that he 'war einer der wenigen damals, die die Stimmung einer Landschaft zu—fühlen und zu malen vermochten' [was one of the few at that time who could feel and paint the mood of a landscape].⁴⁶ The attempt to bring together the artistic intention of new idealist and romantic artists is, perhaps, most clearly expressed by medievalist Josef Strzygowski in a book he published on modern art in 1907. Strzygowski argues that Runge, in his work and writings, posed the problem of landscape as the expressive vessel of human thought and aspiration, a problem whose solution Friedrich attempted and Böcklin actually achieved.⁴⁷

New Romantic Art Historians

Romantic notions of distance and mediation are central concepts in the definition of new idealism. They are also important factors in how art historians, like Muther and Gurlitt, were positioning themselves in the scholarly field in com-

parison to older art historians, like Adolf Rosenberg. In his survey of modern art written in the 1880s, Rosenberg claimed that the historian has ‘die Pflicht, die Thatsachen aus dem Bereiche der subjektiven Meinungen herauszuheben und die Strömungen und Gegenströmungen zu analysiren, aus welchen sich die Folge der Thatsachen entwickelt hat’ [the duty to remove the facts from the area of subjective opinions and to analyse the currents and opposing currents from which the consequences of the facts have developed].⁴⁸ Muther and Gurlitt rejected such an empiricist stance and, as we will see below, showed great concern for their own historical position in the context of writing about modern art and for conceptualizing German art in European-wide developments. One could call Muther and Gurlitt optimistic nationalists in the sense that they believed that German art was about to take the lead on the world stage. As with their concept of new idealism, they thus write their histories Janus-faced, looking to both the past and future.⁴⁹

In his 1893–1894 *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, Muther sets his goal to write the first narrative history of modern painting, as compared to earlier histories, which, he believed, were mere chronicles of painters and works. Although Muther is not a terribly theoretically minded art historian, he does see problems with his task. I write ‘see’, because he uses visual metaphors throughout his introduction: he speaks of the ‘gaze’ of the historian and of ‘seeing’ only the first rank of artists. Muther’s primary visual problem turns out to be one of distance: ‘It is a pity that we cannot see what is too near any more than what is too far away.’⁵⁰ In modern times there is ‘a chaos of pictures’ and it is difficult ‘to discover the spiritual bond which connects them all’.⁵¹

To solve this problem of nearness, Muther first makes a general claim about his approach. Following Zola’s famous description of a work of art as ‘a piece of nature seen through a temperament’, Muther states: ‘in my book I shall give no more than a piece of art-history seen through the medium of a temperament’.⁵² This claim to subjectivity, that is, to an art history mediated by the art historian, is then countered with a more ‘objective’ position.⁵³ He believes he can gain distance on contemporary artists by studying them ‘objectively as though they were long dead masters’.⁵⁴ Just as we write about old artists who made new contributions, so Muther uses the criterion of novelty to determine which artists are important and to plot his evolution of modern art. Novelty is also Muther’s justification for his own undertaking. His text begins: ‘There is an entire series of books on modern art. A new one added to the list must needs prove its right to be called *new*’.⁵⁵ His narrative of innovation thus structures the past by imposing order on the chaos he sees. Through distancing techniques, he believes he can turn what is close and unintelligible into what is distant, yet familiar.

In his 1899 *Deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Cornelius Gurlitt is also concerned with self-positioning. Like earlier survey texts, he organizes his material chronologically and emphasizes the rise of landscape painting and realism. Gurlitt’s book, however, is peppered with personal anecdotes, discussions of philosophical thought, and frequent use of the first-person singular.⁵⁶ (Muther

later claimed that Gurlitt's text read like an exciting novel.)⁵⁷ This colloquial approach helps establish Gurlitt's subjective position, which he clearly enunciates in his text: 'Mein Urteil ist meines und ist nur soviel wert, als ich selbst wert bin' [My judgment is mine and is only worth as much as I myself am worth].⁵⁸ Gurlitt felt compelled to write his text by 'ein innerer Trieb' [an inner drive], as strong as that which compels an artist to paint.⁵⁹ Unlike Muther, Gurlitt does not shy away from a closeness to his material: his survey, he claimed later, was a type of autobiography.⁶⁰ As compared to Muther the realist, who claims that he depicts an objective world from a subjective position, Gurlitt the new idealist believes himself to be solely dependent on his own individuality and expects as much from others. If his judgments were taken as ruling, 'ich halte jeden solchen Sieg für eine Niederlage' [I would take such a victory as a defeat].⁶¹

Muther and Gurlitt both recognize the issue of the historian's subjectivity even if they come to different conclusions about how they position themselves. Their attempts to create an art history mediated by the position of the art historian can be understood as a legacy of romanticism, at least that is how Julius Meier-Graefe thought of it when he called historians like Muther, '*Neuerungsschwärmer*', a disparaging term that indicated their enthusiastic, emotional, and romantic tendencies.⁶² After Muther and Gurlitt attempted to secure a place in the canon for new idealism, it was demoted in Meier-Graefe's influential 1904 *Entwicklungsgeschichte der modernen Kunst* and in most later surveys. While Meier-Graefe discusses German art, his text is concerned with the only 'essential' artistic current, the French realist tradition, which culminated in Manet, whose works do not demonstrate 'an idea, a theory', but are rather unified organisms. Such a unity is common, Meier-Graefe argues, 'to all great—that is to say, to all instinctive—epochs, when artists were unconscious of any obligation to create for the pleasure of others'.⁶³

Muther and Gurlitt, acknowledging their subjective positions, described their scholarly activity along the lines of artistic creativity. Meier-Graefe, on the other hand, rejected such a model. He worked more like an evolutionary biologist or morphologist in describing art's formal development. His survey's title, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der modernen Kunst* [Evolution of modern art], suggests this analogy, as does his favourite metaphor of growth, the tree.⁶⁴ New idealism was omitted from this narrative of modern art, because it did not fit the formalist's notion of art as instinctive, or, in Schiller's terms, naïve. Taken as intellectual and mediated in nature, new idealism was antithetical not only to sensual French art, but also to a narrative structure based on formal considerations and progress. Because of the individuality of the artist in Germany, Meier-Graefe explains, no schools formed and tendencies arose arbitrarily. Modern German art history, according to Meier-Graefe, is thus only 'a chain of accidents'.⁶⁵

While Muther and Gurlitt champion new idealism and Meier-Graefe condemns it, the terms of the debate, however, have not really changed. New idealist art is considered German in terms of its romantic, conceptual, and mediated qualities. What changes with Meier-Graefe is the value given to such an artistic

enterprise. Art historians after Meier-Graefe who champion German art of the nineteenth century frequently do so along the same romantic lines. For example, the Munich art historian Georg Jacob Wolf, writing in 1919, uses the concept 'Deutsche Malerpoeten' to construct a narrative of German nineteenth-century painting. What links all the German painter-poets is 'Sehnsucht' [longing]: Friedrich's desire for pantheistic colour; the Nazarenes' for God; Schwind, Spitzweg, and Waldmüller's for a fairy-tale world; and Feuerbach, Böcklin, and Marées's for the Italian sun.⁶⁶

Two New Romanticisms

To summarize: in the second half of the Imperial period, art historians like Muther and Gurlitt take on a romantic sensibility in promoting new idealism, sometimes called a new romanticism. At the same time, romantic artists, like Friedrich and Runge, are described in similar terms to those used for the new idealists. An important question to ask is what are the implications of the concept of the 'new' (or 'neo')? How is German romanticism of the early nineteenth century, the 'old romanticism', understood after the development of a 'new romanticism'? The most important point, it seems to me, is that the relation between the new and the old is not uni-, but bidirectional. Concepts from German romanticism played an important role in how art historians defined new idealism, and concepts from new idealism played as decisive a part in re-conceptualizing German romanticism.

In terms of the understanding of the German romantic painting at this time, I would like to highlight three issues. First, the Nazarenes tend to be labelled at the turn of the twentieth century as (old) idealists and thus grouped with the classicists (or neo-classicists, as we now call them). Muther writes that the Nazarenes and the classicists were both mere imitators:

The Classicists had imitated with a certain cold erudition; so [the Nazarenes] imitated out of the depths of their emotion. As the former used the Greeks, so they used the fourteenth-century painters, as patterns of calligraphy from which they did their copies ...⁶⁷

Similar sentiments are voiced by Scheffler and others.⁶⁸ That neoclassical and certain romantic artists were described as idealists suggests how much the debates have changed with the rise of realism in European painting. The Nazarenes are still considered romantics, but romantics defined in terms of an old idealist tradition.

Secondly, Runge and Friedrich, as discussed above, were viewed as creating paintings that combine natural observation and artistic feeling or imagination. This synthesis of realist and idealist tendencies was a key component in how art historians, like Muther and Gurlitt, defined new idealism. Similarly W. von Siedlitz, claimed that Böcklin 'stellte die bewundernswerte Schärfe seines Auges in den Dienst ganz phantastischer Darstellungen aus einem Reiche von Fabel- und

Götterwesen' [put the admirable acuteness of his eye in the service of entirely imaginative representations from the realm of fable and mythology].⁶⁹ And Max Schmid emphasizes Max Klinger's training under the realist painter Carl von Gussow, but concludes that his perceptiveness and powers of observation were what allowed his imagination to thrive.⁷⁰

Finally, Friedrich and Runge were often categorized in terms of their individuality just as new idealism was characterized by Gurlitt, Muther, and Meier-Graefe not as a school like realism, impressionism or the Nazarenes, but as a group of artists who prized their individuality. Gurlitt, who developed his ideas on individualism from Langbehn ('Individualität haben, heißt Seele haben' [Having an individuality means having a soul]), entitled the chapter on new idealism in his 1899 survey of modern German art 'Die Kunst aus Eigenem' [Art of one's own].⁷¹ Museum director Hugo von Tschudi claimed that Marées, Feuerbach, and Böcklin took almost nothing from one another.⁷² The individuality of Friedrich and Runge is also emphasized at this time in comparison with the group efforts of the Nazarenes. Muther claimed that Runge 'would create new art, not by the repetition of what is already in existence, but by an independent penetration into nature'. He pursued his studies of nature, Muther explains, not as part of an academy but as an individual.⁷³ Meier-Graefe, moreover, begins his chapter on 'The Generation of 1890' in his *Entwicklungsgeschichte* with Runge as an example of 'great solitaires' in the history of modern German art, like the new idealists Feuerbach and Marées.⁷⁴

With the development of new idealism in German artwriting, two new romanticisms were thus founded. Modern German art, the work of Feuerbach, Marées, Böcklin, Klinger, and others, was claimed within a romantic tradition, and German romantic painting was reconceptualized with a new focus on Friedrich and Runge and a waning of interest in the Nazarenes.

Notes

- 1 This essay is based on a paper I delivered at the conference ‘Was ist romantisch an der romantischen Kunst?: Kunsttheorie und Künstlerpraxis’ at the Georg-August Universität Göttingen, 2009.
- 2 Kurt Karl Eberlein, *Was ist Deutsch in der Deutschen Kunst?* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 1934).
- 3 Kurt Karl Eberlein, ‘Kunst und Kunstgeist der Nazarener’, in *Die Malerei der deutschen Romantiker und Nazarener im besonderen Overbecks und seines Kreises*, ed. Carl Georg Heise (Munich: Kurt Wolff, 1928), 21.
- 4 Kurt Karl Eberlein, *Deutsche Maler der Romantik* (Jena: Eugen Diederich, 1920), 122. All translations unless otherwise indicated are my own.
- 5 Diane Elam, *Romancing the Postmodern* (London: Routledge, 1992); Edward Larissy, ed., *Romanticism and Postmodernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). See also Stephan Copley and John Whale, eds., *Beyond Romanticism: New Approaches to Texts and Contexts, 1780–1832* (London: Routledge, 1992); John Beer, ed., *Questioning Romanticism* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995).
- 6 Arthur Lovejoy, ‘On the Discrimination of Romanticisms’, *PMLA* 39, no. 2 (1924): 236–7.
- 7 Edward Larissy, ‘Introduction’, in Larissy, *Romanticism and Postmodernism*, 1.
- 8 Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Literary Absolute: The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism*, trans. Philip Barnard and Cheryl Lester (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 12, 15.
- 9 Although Runge and Friedrich’s paintings began to draw critical attention in the 1890s, it was the 1906 *Deutsche Jahrhundertausstellung* in Berlin that was a decisive moment of change in the reassessment of German romanticism. For some recent discussions of these issues, see Sabine Beneke, *Im Blick der Moderne: Die ‘Jahrhundertausstellung deutscher Kunst (1775–1875)’ in der Berliner Nationalgalerie 1906* (Berlin: Bostelmann & Siebenhaar, 1999); Mitchell B. Frank, *German Romantic Painting Redefined: Nazarene Tradition and the Narratives of Romanticism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), and Christian Scholl, *Revisionen der Romantik: Zur Rezeption der ‘neudeutschen Malerei’ 1817–1906*, with the assistance of Kerstin Schwedes and Reinhard Spiekermann (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2012). Scholl’s impressive study includes a thorough bibliography (original sources and secondary literature) on the subject of revisions of romanticism in the nineteenth century.
- 10 Hermann Bahr, ‘Die Krisis des Naturalismus’, in Hermann Bahr, *Kritische Schriften in Einzelausgaben*, ed. Claus Pias, vol. 2, *Die Überwindung des Naturalismus* (Weimar: VDG, 2004), 61.
- 11 Cornelius Gurlitt, ‘Adolf Hildebrand’, *Die Kunst unserer Zeit* 4, no. 2 (1893): 76.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 71.
- 13 The association of the Nazarenes with idealists began in the mid-nineteenth century. See Mitchell B. Frank, ‘Ingres and the Nazarenes’, in *Fictions of Isolation: Artistic and Intellectual Exchange in Rome during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Lorenz Enderlein und Nino Zchomelidse (Rome: Brettschneider, 2006), 67–78.
- 14 Gurlitt, ‘Adolf Hildebrand’, 71.
- 15 Cornelius Gurlitt, *Deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Georg Bondi, 1900), 596–656.
- 16 Meyer Schapiro, ‘On the Nature of Abstract Art’, in *Modern Art: 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: George Braziller, 1978), 188.

- 17 Richard Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, trans. Ernest Dowson et al., vol. 3 (London: Henry and Co., 1895), 551. For the original German text, see Richard Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, vol. 3 (Munich: G. Hirsh, 1893–94), 453.
- 18 It should be noted that in the 1890s, realism is at times distinguished from naturalism. The former is often considered an ahistorical stylistic category while the latter is considered a nineteenth-century phenomenon associated with Nietzsche, Balzac, and Zola. Philologist Christian Muff, for example, writes: ‘Idealismus und Naturalismus können sich so wenig vertragen wie Feuer und Wasser. Wohl aber vertragen sich Idealismus und Realismus sehr gut, ja wir müssen sagen, sie hängen so eng zusammen, daß sie einer des anderen nicht entbehren können’. [‘Idealism and naturalism get along together as badly as fire and water. But idealism and realism get along very well together; we can even say they are so closely connected that one cannot manage without the other’.] See Christian Muff, *Idealismus*, 2nd ed. (Halle: Richard Mühlmann, 1892), 32.
- 19 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 3:741. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3:603).
- 20 Julius Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, trans. Florence Simmonds and George Chrystal, vol. 2 (London: William Heinemann, 1908), 311. For the original German text, see Julius Meier-Graefe, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der modernen Kunst*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Hoffmann, 1904), 704.
- 21 Adolf Rosenberg, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*, 4th ed. (Bielefeld and Leipzig: Velhagen & Klasing, 1921), 576. Also see Emil Heilbut ‘Die neuen Erwerbungen der Nationalgalerie’, *Kunst und Künstler* no. 3 (1905): 32, for a description of Arnold Böcklin’s work as achieving a classicizing romanticism.
- 22 Hans Eichner, ‘Germany / Romantisch—Romatik—Romantiker’, in ‘*Romantic*’ and its Cognates / *The European History of a Word*, ed. Hans Eichner (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 149.
- 23 Adolf Rosenberg observed that the realists of the 1840s were in the 1880s considered Idealists. See Rosenberg, *Geschichte der modernen Kunst*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Fr. Wilh. Grunow, 1884–1889), 293.
- 24 See Eichner, ‘Germany / Romantisch—Romatik—Romantiker’, 136.
- 25 Friedrich Schiller, ‘On Naive and Sentimental Poetry’, in Friedrich Schiller, *Essays*, ed. Walter Hinderer and Daniel Dahlstrom (New York: Continuum, 1993), 204.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 181.
- 27 John Robertson, *Schiller: After a Century* (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and sons, 1905), 15. On Schiller’s reception at this time, see also Hans Mayer, ‘Schillers Nachruhm’, *Études Germaniques* 14 (1959): 374–85; and Nicholas Martin, ‘Introduction: Schiller After Two Centuries’, in *Schiller: National Poet—Poet of Nations: A Birmingham Symposium*, ed. Nicholas Martin (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), 7–21.
- 28 Julius Langbehn, *Rembrandt als Erzieher*, 45th ed. (Leipzig: C. L. Hirschfeld, 1900), 245–7; Konrad Fiedler, *Beurteilung von Werken der bildenden Kunst*, in *Schriften zur Kunst*, ed. Gottfried Boehm, vol. 1 (Munich: Fink, 1991), 33; Fiedler, *On Judging Works of Visual Art*, trans. Henry Schaefer-Simern and Fulmer Mood (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), 49–50; Adolf Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form in den bildenden Kunst*, 14th ed. (Strassbourg: Heitz, 1918), 114–5; Adolf Hildebrand, *The Problem of Form in the Fine Arts*, in *Empathy, Form and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873–1893*, trans. and eds. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikononou (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center, 1994), 269.
- 29 Karl Scheffler, ‘Die Realisten und die Idealisten’, *Kunst und Künstler* 13 (1915): 291–306.

- 30 Karl Scheffler, *Deutsche Maler und Zeichner im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: Insel, 1911), 3.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Rosenberg, *Geschichte der modernen Kunst*, 1:338. In the 1880s, French impressionism tended to be ridiculed in Germany by critics who chastised it for rejecting artistic principles of ideal beauty and omitting non-essential elements. See Beth Irwin Lewis, *Art For All?: The Collision of Modern Art and the Public in Late-Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 61.
- 33 As Jay Clark has demonstrated, new idealism specifically was promoted as ‘a native alternative to French Impressionism and Symbolism’. See Jay A. Clark, ‘Neo-Idealism, Expressionism, and the Writing of Art History’, in *Negotiating History: German Art and the Past*, ed. Jay A. Clark, special issue of *Museum Studies* 28, no. 1 (2002): 26.
- 34 Herman Hefnerich (Emil Heilbut), *Neue Kunst* (Berlin: Lehmann, 1887), 68.
- 35 Eichner, ‘Germany / Romantisch—Romantik—Romantiker’, 125.
- 36 As quoted in *ibid.* Brad Prager argues that the fundamental questions raised by Brentano’s novel, in which ‘fragmented, Romantic subjectivity is illustrated by way of references to visual perception through a glass or a lens’, concern ‘mediation’. See Prager, *Aesthetic Vision and German Romanticism* (Rochester: Camden House, 2007), 78.
- 37 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 3:558. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3:459). This quotation is from a description of new idealist painting in general, but Muther uses the same idea, almost word for word, in his discussion of Feuerbach. See Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 3:472. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3:409).
- 38 Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 2:132. (Meier-Graefe, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der modernen Kunst*, 2:449).
- 39 Floerke, *Zehn Jahre mit Böcklin*, 2nd ed. (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1902), 38.
- 40 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 3:760, 744. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3:620, 606).
- 41 Friedrich Pecht, *Deutsche Künstler des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts: Studien und Erinnerungen*, vol. 2 (Nördlingen: C. H. Beck’schen Buchhandlung, 1887) 196.
- 42 *Ibid.* For discussions of Böcklin’s extraordinary memory, see also Floerke, *Zehn Jahre mit Böcklin*, 42; Gurlitt, *Deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 623; and Fritz von Ostini, *Böcklin* (Bielefeld: Velhagen & Klasing, 1905), 29.
- 43 ‘Phantasie’, in *Meyers Konversations-Lexikon*, vol. 12 (Leipzig and Vienna, 1885–1892), 984. The division of *Phantasie* into two modes (reproductive and creative) in the encyclopedia literature goes back at least to 1817. See ‘Phantasie’, *Conversations-Lexicon oder encyclopädisches Handwörterbuch für gebildete Stände* (Stuttgart, 1817), 478–82. The distinction between reproductive and creative imagination was made in the early eighteenth century by Christian Wolff (1679–1754). See James Engell, *The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 95.
- 44 Scheffler, *Deutsche Maler und Zeichner*, 37–8, 41–2.
- 45 Friedrich Haack, *Die Kunst des XIX. Jahrhunderts*, 4th ed. (Esslingen a. N.: Paul Neff Verlag 1913), 202.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 205.
- 47 Josef Strzygowski, *Die bildende Kunst der Gegenwart: Ein Büchlein für jedermann*, (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1907), 220–1.

- 48 Rosenberg, *Geschichte der modernen Kunst*, 2:7.
- 49 For some recent discussions of German art survey texts at this time, see Beneke, *Im Blick der Moderne*, 16–29; and Scholl, *Revisionen der Romantik*, 475–519.
- 50 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 1:2. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 1:2).
- 51 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 1:3. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 1:3).
- 52 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 1:2. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 1:2).
- 53 Muther's subjective stance was noticed during his time. See H. A. Lier's review of Muther's *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert* in *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 5 [neue Folge] (1894): 219–23. For more recent discussions of Muther's work, see Rotraud Schleinitz, *Richard Muther: Ein provokativer Kunstschriftsteller zur Zeit der Münchener Secession. Die "Geschichte der Malerei im XIX. Jahrhundert": Kunstgeschichte oder Kampfgeschichte?* (Hildesheims: Georg Olms, 1993), 150–2; and Scholl, *Revisionen der Romantik*, 475–519.
- 54 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 1:7. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 1:6).
- 55 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 1:1. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 1:1). For a discussion of the issue of novelty in Muther's work, see Schleinitz, *Richard Muther*, 155–6.
- 56 Gurlitt had personal connections with artists and intellectuals in part due to his well-connected family: his father Louis was a well-known painter and his brother Fritz was a successful Berlin art dealer. See Jürgen Paul, *Cornelius Gurlitt: Ein Leben für Architektur, Kunstgeschichte, Denkmalpflege und Städtebau* (Dresden: Hellerau, 2003).
- 57 Muther, 'Gurlitt und ich', in *Aufsätze über bildende Kunst*, ed. Hans Rosenhagen, vol. 3 (Berlin: Ladyschnikow, 1914), 44.
- 58 Gurlitt, *Deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 496. On Gurlitt's subjectivity, see Paul, *Cornelius Gurlitt*, 89; and Scholl, *Revisionen der Romantik*, 477.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 As quoted in Paul, *Cornelius Gurlitt*, 86.
- 61 Gurlitt, *Deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 497.
- 62 See Kenworth Moffett, *Meier-Graefe as Art Critic* (Munich: Prestel, 1973), 48.
- 63 Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 1:257–8. (Meier-Graefe, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der modernen Kunst*, 1:148).
- 64 See, for example, Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 1:28. (Meier-Graefe, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der modernen Kunst*, 1:51). For the use of the tree metaphor in Meier-Graefe's writing, see Mitchell B. Frank, 'Recapitulation and Evolution in German Artwriting', in *German Art History and Scientific Thought: Beyond Formalism*, ed. Mitchell B. Frank and Daniel Adler (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 107–9.
- 65 Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 2:311. (Meier-Graefe, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der modernen Kunst*, 2:704).
- 66 Georg Jacob Wolf, *Deutsche Malerpoeten* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, n. d. [1919]), 3.
- 67 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 1:225. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 1:196).
- 68 Scheffler, *Deutsche Maler und Zeichner*, 10; Max Osborn, *Die Kunst von 1800 bis zur Gegenwart*, 8th ed. (Leipzig: Seemann, 1921), 27; T. de Wyzewa, *Les Chefs-d'oeuvre de l'art au XIXe Siècle*, vol. 4, La

- Peinture étrangère* (Paris: Librairie Illustrée, n. d. [1901]), 14; Max Schmid, *Kunstgeschichte des XI Jahrhunderts*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Seemann, 1904), 1.
- 69 Woldemar von Seidlitz, *Die Entwicklung der modernen Malerei* (Hamburg: J. F. Richter, 1897), 18.
- 70 Max Schmid, *Klinger* (Bielefeld and Leipzig: Velhagen und Klasing, 1906), 7ff. Gurlitt (*Deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 634) had similarly described Klinger's art in terms of realism and idealism, concluding: 'Aus einem Nachbildner der Menschen konnte er ein Schöpfer einer ihm eigenen Menschenwelt werden, aus einem Berichterstatter ein Dichter'. ('From a copier of men he was able to become a creator of his own world of men; from a reporter, [he became] a poet').
- 71 Langbehn, *Rembrandt als Erzieher*, 11. Gurlitt, after praising Langbehn's book, similarly writes: Eine Individualität haben, heißt Seele haben; eine geschlossene Individualität haben, heißt Stil haben'. ['Having an individuality means having soul; having a complete individuality means having style'.] See Gurlitt, *Deutsche Kunst des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 504–5, 596.
- 72 Hugo von Tschudi, *Die deutsche Jahrbundertaustellung Berlin 1906* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1906).
- 73 Muther, *The History of Modern Painting*, 2:9. (Muther, *Geschichte der Malerei im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, 2:8).
- 74 Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art*, 2:311. (Meier-Graefe, *Entwicklungsgeschichte*, 2:703).

The Romantic Fairy Tale and Surrealism

THE ROMANTIC FAIRY TALE AND SURREALISM

Marvelous Non-Sense and Dark Apprehensions

KARIN SANDERS

[ABSTRACT]

Romanticism and surrealism shared a fascination with the fairy tale. Yet each was beholden to specific historical moments and particular aesthetic demands. What they wanted were not the same. This article considers how the romantic fairy tale nevertheless functions as a 'seed' for surrealists. Contagions, commonalities, and contrasts between the two movements are briefly outlined. A selection of fairy tales by Hans Christian Andersen is used to demonstrate how a host of visual reinterpretations including lithographs, photo-collages, and video art by twentieth-century surrealists like Salvador Dalí and Max Ernst, and twenty-first-century avant-garde artists like Åsa Sjöström, have reinterpreted the latent possibilities of non-sense in the fairy tale: the marvelous, the absurd, and the dream-like. The article demonstrates that by evoking the dark-romantic sides of Andersen's works these avant-garde reconceptualizations in visual media predominantly point to shock, violence, war, and ecological disasters.

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KEYWORDS *Avant-garde, Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, Åsa Sjöström, H. C. Andersen.*

According to Winfried Menninghaus, 'scholarship on Romanticism has ... almost never taken seriously and literally the imperatives of chance, incoherence, and non-sense. In general, they were seen to be merely the function and drawback of that "tendency toward the profound, infinite sense," with which Friedrich Schlegel had characterized Romantic irony and the Romantic project *tout court*.'¹ But how can we 'take seriously' this imperative of chance, incoherence and non-sense in romanticism? One approach to this question would be to lift the matter from its historical moment, and juxtapose it with another moment in cultural history when the inversion of the ordinary, the fight against formal constraints in visual art and language, became an imperative, namely surrealism and the avant-gardes of the twentieth century. What forms of non-sense lie latent in the fairy tale for example? And to what degree can this genre serve as a link between romanticism and surrealism? What does it mean when Menninghaus points to a domestication of non-sense in the romantic literary fairy tale? Does the fairy tale's 'mysterious allegorical ciphers', as he calls it, soften and control the disruptive potential in the production of the marvelous or the irrational?

A long roster of commonalities can be lined up between romanticism and surrealism: the reaction against the hegemony of logic, a shared interest in the subconscious and in dreams, re-enchanting the world, and the infatuation with the marvelous, the belief in the powers of childhood, fragments, and the collage as aesthetic potential, and non-sense as a subversive promise. Romanticism and surrealism shared a fascination with the utopian and a penchant for the hyperbolic and kaleidoscopic; both discarded rigid formal frameworks to allow for spacious aesthetic expressions; both used the manifesto as a starting point. Some, such as Michael Lowry, even suggest that surrealism ‘represented the highest expression of revolutionary Romanticism in the twentieth century’.² Surrealism, he argues, shares early German romanticism’s ‘intense and sometimes desperate attempt to re-enchant the world’.³

Clearly, a limited focus on generalized commonalities can overlook important inflections both of specific romantic-surrealistic connections *and* of disparities; and they are manifold. Most important are the differences that stem from specific historical experiences, which also lead to differences in (aesthetic) intentionality: while romantics largely reacted to enlightenment values, surrealists reacted to a world blown asunder by World War I. The romantic aesthetic program was concerned primarily with literary theory; surrealists were preoccupied with the politics of aesthetic expression. And while the movements may use similar terminologies, such as the marvelous, the actual meanings of the terms have shifted.

Romanticism did not speak with one voice, neither did surrealism; likewise what romanticism wanted and what surrealism wanted were not the same. It is, however, outside the scope of this article to account for all of the complex modulations within and between the two movements. The aim of this article is narrower, namely to reflect briefly on contagions, commonalities, and contrasts between romanticism and surrealism vis-à-vis their shared interest in fairy tales, the marvelous, and non-sense (a concept linked primarily to Dadaism, albeit also operative in surrealism), and to consider a few examples of how surrealism and other forms of avant-gardes recovered and reconfigured what Menninghaus called ‘the imperatives of chance, incoherence, and non-sense’ in romanticism. I will limit my analysis to a selection of fairy tales by Hans Christian Andersen that have been reconceptualized in visual media by surrealists in the twentieth century, with a single compelling example from the twenty-first century.

Commonalities and Contrasts

In 1799 Novalis believed that the world had to be romanticized in order to recover and clarify its original meaning. 125 years later, in 1924, André Breton called for a surrealist realization of the world. ‘I believe’, he writes in the first *Surrealist Manifesto*, ‘in the future resolution of these two states, dream and reality, which are seemingly so contradictory, into a kind of absolute reality, a *surreality*’.⁴ Breton acknowledged early on in his manifesto a debt to early German romanticism; in fact he and other surrealists soon drank ‘deeply from the underground springs of Ro-

manticism' albeit in selective ways, to borrow Donald LaCross's expression.⁵ Contested realities and creation of new realities (often un-real or sur-real) allowed the enchanted and the marvelous special status in both romanticism and surrealism. The marvelous implied something potentially disruptive, outside sense, motivation, or rationale; but also something that could be harmonized or condensed into aesthetic forms. As suggested above, the term is shifty and always historically contingent. Breton was aware of this when he notes that: 'The marvelous is not the same in every period of history: it partakes in some obscure way of a sort of general revelation only the fragments of which come down to us: they are the romantic *ruins*, the modern *mannequin*, or any other symbol capable of affecting the human sensibility for a period of time'.⁶

For the romantics *chance* connoted contingency and the accidental, for the surrealists *chance* was most predominantly tested in automatic writing. Novalis' early dictum *Erzählungen, ohne Zusammenhang, jedoch mit Assoziationen, wie Träume* pointed to the importance of the associative and non-coherent, evocative of, but not identical with the surrealist call for free flowing automatism. If the surrealists in their celebration of arbitrariness aimed to suspend or negate a stable sense of the physical, romantics in turn used irony to suspend and negate a sense of the real as purely mimetic potential. For surrealists, as Rosalind E. Krauss has noted, mimicry lies as the very epicenter of the 'experience of reality as representation', in fact this experience 'constitutes the notion of the Marvelous'.⁷ Endless reproducibility therefore has its own compulsive beauty, to use a favored term by Breton. To romanticists, however, originality is compromised by reproducibility. Where the romantics privileged the singular poet as an exceptional being, the surrealists favored the concept of collectivity (at least in principle if not in practice). Thus the perception of originality differed in the two movements. While the romantics granted the genius privileged access to the aesthetic, the door was presumably open for all in surrealism.

As noted, a mutual inclination in romanticism and surrealism (to a large degree in its affinity with Dadaism) also involved forms of *nonsense* such as the incoherent, chance and so forth. Unlike everyday vernacular where non-sense has negative connotations, suggesting something we do not strictly need, non-sense can also become a gateway for the unintentional and hidden, beyond the realm of logic, but productive for the imagination. Susan Stewart in her study *Nonsense* argues that: 'nonsense depends upon an assumption of sense' and brings this into a formula of opposites:

While sense is sensory, tangible, real, nonsense is "a game of vapours", unrealizable, a temporary illusion. While sense is "common" and "down to earth", nonsense is "perfect", "pure", and untouched surface of meaning whose every gesture is reflexive. ... Nonsense always refers back to a sense that itself cannot be assumed.⁸

This tension and interdependency between sense and non-sense allows us to see *nonsense* as a dynamic possibility in aesthetic forms. The etymological meaning

of the word in English is: that ‘which is not sense; spoken or written words which make no sense or convey absurd ideas; also absurd or senseless action’, but it can also mean ‘unsubstantial or worthless stuff or things’ or even a ‘want of feeling or physical sensation’.⁹ Or it can be something that belongs to marginal beings; those who have not yet gained the ability to reason or those who have lost the ability to do so, like the child and the mad; romantic and surrealist staples. It is then as an extended meaning that I will be using the idiom non-sense here, not one that simply connotes gibberish-ness and gobbledygook, but one that includes a variety of forms excluded from common sense: the marvelous, the absurd, and the dream-like.

In the fairy tale, both romantics and surrealists found a genre in which they could celebrate the marvelous. The romantic fairy tale offered a resistance to civilization’s hegemony by insisting on the original, the primitive, and the childlike. In fairy tales, a host of *things* could be combined in new ways. Stones, animals, stars could be personified, and differences between consciousness and the unconscious erased. Psychological ambiguities, doubles and shadows, were eagerly contemplated in a genre where a split or fragmented world could be resurrected in new combinations, like the Phoenix. In short, the romantic fairy tale, with its mixture of animate and inanimate, the mystical and magical blended with the real, provided the kind of material that the surrealists were looking for.

Even so, it is ‘a misleading simplification’, as Marianne Thalmann has pointed out, ‘to identify the fairy tale with modern surrealism and to force this enigmatic label upon it’.¹⁰ Yet she maintains that the romantic fairy tale functions as a ‘seed’ for surrealism. She sums up the commonalities vis-à-vis the fairy tale:

Above all the fairy tale refutes the popular notion that the war generation was sentimentally enraptured by nature. Neither with longing nor serenity did the romantics look upon a panorama of mountains and valleys, rivers, ruins, pavilions, and grazing sheep. What these men [for example Novalis, Tieck, Bentano, and Hoffmann] saw was not a naively natural nature, but mysterious signs which could be singled out and become in this abstraction the means to magical spatial effects. *They did not wish to copy the world. They created it, responsible to themselves alone. Truth does not depend upon actuality. It must merely fill us with certainty. Through this intellectual selectivity, nature loses nothing of its greatness and the intimacy of its effects, as experience shows. The world is transformed by it to new realities. Reality which is contested appears again in surrealities.* This new attitude toward the forms of the world around us leads in turn to new relationships between forms which project themselves into the future and have a lasting effect on it.¹¹

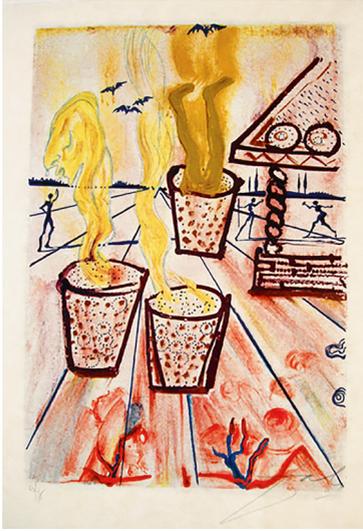
With its mixture of spontaneity, juxtapositions of conscious-unconscious elements, the fairy tale could transgress genre limitations. The relative elasticity of the genre (in its most artful incarnation) allowed Novalis to see it as anarchy, and Frederick Schlegel as chaos. Yet this kind of marvelous non-sense (chaos and anarchy as being beyond ‘sense’, in the meaning of reason and so forth) could also include ‘affirmative valorization’ (Menninghaus’ argument) in that it was

often ultimately domesticated under rules of aesthetic principles such as the arabesque. Menninghaus here points particularly to Tieck's fairy tales.¹² Whether Andersen domesticates his version of marvelous non-sense can be debated, as I will illustrate in the following.

Surrealizing Fairy Tales

In 1966 Salvador Dalí produced a series of lithographic interpretations of Andersen's fairy tales, including the famous ones with mermaids, snow queens, and red shoes, but also a few lesser known tales such as 'Pigen der trådte på Brødet' [The girl who stepped on bread] from 1859 and ' "Lygtemændene ere i Byen" sagde Mosekonen' ['The will o' the wisps are in town', said the bog woman] from 1865. 'Pigen der trådte på Brødet', crafted from a traditional folktale, tells the story of a girl whose vanity prompts her to violate the law of proper conduct: 'Du har vel hørt om Pigen, som traadte paa Brødet for ikke at smudske sine Skoe, og hvor ilde det da gik hende. Det er baade skrevet og trykt' [You have heard about the girl, I suppose, who stepped on the bread in order not to get her shoes dirty, and how badly she fared. It has been both written and printed].¹³ The question becomes: 'Hvor kom hun hen?' [Where did she end up?]¹⁴ Andersen's response is to first bury her in a cesspool with a smell so horrible 'saa at Menneskene maa daane derved' [so that humans would faint by the stench], and then raise the girl from the bog psychologically and spiritually through redemption.¹⁵ Deep in the bog the girl is suspended in a limbo, petrified, in more than one sense of the word, and submitted to the machinations of an uncanny realm.

In Dalí's 'The Girl who Trod on the Loaf' (ill. 1) things are literally turned upside-down. Three buckets of cesspool-connoting materials are placed on a gridded landscape. The bog is lifted, so to speak, to the surface, in pails. The bog is a liminal dark space into which you can sink and disappear forever; the peculiar materiality of the bogs, their in-between-ness, allows matter and psyche to merge in strange ways. In Dalí's lithograph two legs stick out of the top bucket, the feet are shoeless; the torso, arms and head buried deep in a substance oozing toxic-yellow fumes. Crow-like birds and stick-like figures inhabit the landscape, and a pagoda-like structure suggests perhaps a ceremonial stage. But the scariest detail lies in the bloody footprints or body-prints in the foreground, indicating a violent deed of sorts. The young girl's tenure in Andersen's bog realm is gruesome for sure, but to Dalí her tumble to the underworld seems to be less of her own doing and more a consequence of ritual sacrifice. A terrifying vision of a mutilated body! The upward and predominantly vertical flow of the lines does not seem to suggest the potential for divine salvation, as Andersen imagined, but gives the image of the fairy tale a sinister inflection. If Andersen's elevation of the girl from the bog can be seen as his way of lifting folk-tales into the presumed higher form of the romantic fairy tale (his own argument), Dalí's surreal vision seems to push the girl into a topsy-turvy world of non-sense: her head in the bucket is absurdly hilarious, but also alarming. Dalí does not illustrate but offers a reinterpretation



III. 1 [Salvador Dalí, *The Girl who Trod on the Loaf*, 1966. Colored lithograph on paper based on Dalí's original gouaches illustrating Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, 65.4 x 50.5 cm. © Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation/billedkunst.dk 2014.]

III. 2 [Salvador Dalí, *The Will o' the Wisps*, 1966. Colored lithograph on paper based on Dalí's original gouaches illustrating Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, 65.4 x 50.5 cm x 50.5. © Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation/billedkunst.dk 2014.]

in which Andersen's fictive world has changed; the fairy tale plot of vanity and moral redemption, but also of dark romantic uncanniness, has been overridden by a vision of another order that does not take the question of character (in several meanings of the word) into consideration. To Dalí the girl is no longer a girl but a gender-neutral stick figure stripped bare of its humanity.

This menacing potential is also noticeable in Dalí's examination of "Lygte-mændene ere i Byen" sagde Mosekonen'. The story plot in Andersen's text concerns the loss of the 'fairy tale' personified. It had vanished, we read, pushed into hiding by the terror of reality. 'Der var en Mand, som engang vidste saa mange nye Eventyr, men nu vare de slupne for ham, sagde han; Eventyret, der af sig selv gjorde Visit, kom ikke mere og bankede paa hans Dør; og hvorfor kom det ikke?' [Once upon a time there was a man who knew many new fairy tales. But now they had disappeared, he said. The fairy tale that used to visit, no longer came knocking on his door. Why not?]¹⁶

Published a year after Denmark's catastrophic war with Prussia and Austria in 1864, with a massive Danish loss of territory, Andersen used the brutality of warfare, the horror of the real, the many dead young men, to scare away the 'fairy tale'. The bog woman warns the storyteller that in the present time no one has time for frivolous fairy tales any more. Everyone has grown out of fairy tales so



III.3 [Salvador Dalí, *The Sandman*, 1966. Colored lithograph on paper based on Dalí's original gouaches illustrating Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, 65.4 x 50.5 cm.

© Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation/billedkunst.dk 2014 & Hans Christian Andersen's House /Odense Bys Museer.]

to speak; the boys need cigars, the girls need crinolines. No more fairy tales. Fairy tales along with other forms of literary fiction are therefore bottled in the bog woman's apothecary, a veritable surreal cabinet of wonders, including a bottle with Andersen's own 'Pigen der trådte på Brødet'. Some bottles are full of non-sense, like the one containing comedy; some are full of 'smudgy' liquids, like the scandal bottle. But the will o' the wisps' are loose, they have not been bottled up and they can take the shape of humans, and create a chaotic world. In Andersen's story it is the bog woman's tales of these creatures that eventually restore the storyteller's ability to tell tales. She knows that if you have seven four-leaf clovers in your pocket, one of which has six leaves (like Andersen's story-teller here) you are deeply imbedded in the realm of the marvelous, and in a world of non-sense that makes sense in its own right.

The subversive aspects of Andersen's fairy tale take a different form in Dalí's interpretation (ill. 2). If the red figure behind the massive door to the storyteller's dwelling is meant to be the personified fairy tale hiding, this romantic fairy tale personage has become a dangerous being with blood-stained hands. The red color stands in stark contrast to the deep blue night outside the door, with a floating umbrella (a nod to the sandman that brings sleep to the children's eyes). The night stars stare uncannily, as seen in another of Dalí's (paranoid) interpretations of Andersen's 'Ole Lukøje' [The Sandman] from 1841, in the shape of eyes hovering above the rooftops of a cityscape (ill. 3). The umbrella, an icon for sleep and dreams, both happy and dark in Andersen's storyline, is repeated by Dalí perhaps as a suggestion of protection from (potentially uncanny) elements of the night, but also as possibility of a new reality that can only be accessed via dreams.

For Andersen, childhood often functioned strategically as a disguise under which he could display illogical and absurd aspects of adult minds and behaviors. In contrast, Dalí's surrealist vision seems to produce a gloomy adult scenario from the childhood dream worlds, nightmarish, with elements of dark romanticism.

In 1969 Salvador Dalí also illustrated Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass*. The appropriation by surrealists like Dalí, but also Max Ernst, Dorothea Tanning, and others of Carroll's fiction and the visual representations of Alice's strange world has been extensively analyzed in scholarship and I will merely note here that the pre-surrealist and magical underworld of non-sense functions precisely to test Alice's sense – common and otherwise – in ways that echo the surrealists' use of the potentialities of non-sense.¹⁷

Collage as Shared Aesthetic Practice

Andersen's implicit evocation of the horrors of war in a fairy tale resonates in some small measure with surrealism's later reprocessing of fairy tale elements as a way to articulate problems of the real, including experiences of war. Max Ernst's 1920 photomontage 'The rossignol chinois' [The Chinese nightingale], a title borrowed from Andersen's 1847 fairy tale 'Nattergalen' [The nightingale], thus



III. 4 [Max Ernst, *Le rossignol chinois* [The Chinese nightingale], Photomontage de Max Ernst (1891-1976). Private collection. © Max Ernst/Billedkunst 2014 & © 2014. White Images/Scala, Florence.]

brings into play both sinister and strangely playful connotations of violence (ill. 4). If Andersen's tale addresses the clash between the real and the artificial and suggests two competing aesthetics, Ernst's collage in turn makes use of a bomb; ripped from its original setting in a scientific book of weaponry it becomes, in Dietmar Elger's words, 'a chimera of man and beast'.¹⁸ Underneath Ernst's theatrically staged and anthropomorphized contraption, furnished absurdly with a beak, an eye, arms, a scarf, and a fan serving as a tuft of feathers, we find the emblem of the war machine 'deprived of its lethal effect by being transformed into a peaceful "Chinese nightingale"'.¹⁹

The launch of surrealism came from a specific political moment, the First World War, and Ernst's nightingale illustration is a response to his first-hand experience from combat: a hybrid bomb-bird that draws on a romantic fantasy to make non-sense out of warfare. But Ernst's collage also reminds us that there is a certain shock effect at play. The romantic period was similarly marked by the Napoleonic war's brutality, or by other wars, like the Prussian-Danish war of 1864, used, as we saw above, by Andersen in ' "Lygtemændene ere i Byen" sagde Mosekonen'. For both romantics and surrealists the need to find release from the nervous agitation and the traumatic experiences that the chaos and catastrophic violence had caused was imperative. If romanticism largely seems to have funneled war experiences into journalism, gothic novels, and romantic nationalisms, or sublimated suffering to a purely subjective experience, surrealism displayed a willingness to embed war experiences more directly into the aesthetic. Case in point is Ernst's interpretation of Andersen's romantic nightingale, as demonstrated above, absurdly visualized as a response to the shocking and nauseating non-sense of war. When the world falls apart, it is the mission of romantic art, such as Andersen's work suggests, to tie the separated parts back together, connect the concrete and the abstract, and favor the naive, the marvelous, and so forth. But when the world falls apart, the fairy tale is also seemingly caught or dislocated from its proper place.

Ernst described his collage technique as 'the systematic exploitation of the chance or artificially provoked confrontation of two or more mutually alien realities on an obviously inappropriate level', which is to create a mutual 'poetic spark'.²⁰ Andersen's own well-known interest in the collage (ill. 5) is described by Mogens Davidsen in similar terms: 'It is remarkable that Andersen sixty years before Max Ernst used a similar technique and related compositions, whose meaning and explanation lies [*sic*] in the dark areas of the mind'.²¹

A host of other scholars have pointed to a similar correlation. Hanno Möbius suggests in *Montage und Collage* that Andersen along with Victor Hugo experimented with the collage without attaching a claim for artistic expression to the visual production. He nevertheless sees Andersen's large screens from 1873–1874 as early forms of the collages of the twentieth century and as precursors for a non-illusionistic photomontage.²² Diana Waldman, in her monumental study of the *Collage, Assemblage, and the Found Object*, gives Andersen pride of place early on in her introduction and sees him as an influence on both Max Ernst and Joseph



III. 5 [Hans Christian Andersen, *Agnetes Læse og Billedbog* [Agnete Lind's picture book], 1857. 23 x 17,5 cm. Hans Christian Andersen's House/Odense Bys Museer.]

Cornell. Jens Andersen sees Andersen as a 'paper-twist-reader' cutting both with pen and scissor creating visual collages and written montages. He offers a historical setting for Andersen's collage production and sees him as a 'forerunner' of cubist, Dadaist, and surrealist collage art: 'More than fifty years before the Cubists and Surrealists began cutting and pasting with newspaper fragments, colored paper, labels, and photographs, Hans Christian Andersen was actively making collages'.²³ Klaus Müller-Wille, however, and I agree, argues, along with Torben Jelsbak, that although Andersen's collage production between 1850 and 1874, and his use of materials such as newspapers, resemble later avant-garde collages and resonate with collage practices by Picasso and others, we cannot automatically assume that his works speak to an imagined modernity. Rather his collage works are fundamentally contingent on the heterogeneity of visual print culture that surrounded him at the time. Camilla Skovbjerg Paldam also agrees in her book *Surrealistiske Collager* and briefly notes that Andersen's collages should not be attributed to a genuine critical nerve in the avant-garde sense.²⁴

It is worth noting that Andersen's work with the large collage screens is seen by himself as a substitute for fairy tale production at a time when illness prevented him from writing: 'Jeg har søgt at lægge en poetisk Idee eller en historisk Fremstilling ind i hvert Blad og man siger at det Hele er som et stort broget Eventyr. Men hellere vilde jeg med Pen og Blæk have bragt et saadant paa Papiret end

her kun at udklippe Billeder og stille disse sammen i min Tankeforbindelse' [I have tried to include a poetic idea or an historical representation on each screen and one could say that the entire concept should be seen as a complex fairy tale. But I would rather have produced a fairy tale with pen and ink on paper than merely cutting images as I do here and combining them in my imagination].²⁵ Andersen's use of collages, then, although resembling later avant-gardism's techniques, is marked by a different intentionality than the one we see in Ernst's nightingale.²⁶

Mermaids and Eco-Aesthetics

Andersen's most celebrated fairy tale figure, the mermaid, is also a shared favorite in the romantic and the surreal catalogues, but again colored by dissimilar objectives. When Andersen wrote his famous fairy tale in 1837, mermaids had long been marked by cultural fascination, a favored creature (a kind of fatal female) by romantics as we see in La Motte Fouqué's *Undine* or in Johan Wolfgang Goethe and Walter Scott's versions of *Mélusine*. The surrealists saw in mermaids the potentiality for reconsidering both the morphology and the (often fatal) mentality of women. Breton's *Nadja* for example sees herself as *Mélusine*, a chimera. In the novel Max Ernst is asked, but refuses, to paint her portrait because he has been forewarned that she will harm him. 'With great skill' the narrator notes: 'she gives the striking illusion of reality, she briefly evokes the elusive character of Melusina. Then she asks me point-blank: "Who killed the Gorgon, tell me, tell!"'²⁷ *Mélusine* embodies the mythological personality precisely because 'she seems to have felt closest to herself'.²⁸ But *Nadja* grows mad, of course, and the mermaid association consequently becomes an example of the *convulsive beauty* with which Breton concludes his novel.

Consider also René Magritte's well-known 'L'invention collective' [Collective invention] from 1934 (ill. 6). Here a fish's head has provocatively substituted the tail of the mermaid. The song of the siren has been silenced, the myth inverted; in a non-sense process the mermaid is reversed, and things are turned upside down. The mermaid has been ironically re-imagined, but also fatally beached.

If we agree that surrealist art production is not bound to a specific historical time period, but continues to be a productive mode of contemporary artistic expressions in present times, we can include the Swedish film artist Åsa Sjöström's five-minute short trick-film called *Dea Marina* from 1997 in our reflections (ills. 7–9). Sjöström uses surreal elements and visual quotations to offer an uncanny rendition of Edvard Eriksen's iconic statue of Andersen's little mermaid in Copenhagen harbor. In her renaming of the mermaid to *Dea* (the Greek word for goddess) *Marina* (the Latin word for 'of the sea') the filmmaker signals that the romantic fairy tale statue has taken on a larger cultural inflection. Sjöström's Goddess of the Sea comes alive with a song, not as Ariel's in the Disney version with a longing for a human and not least a material world, but as a forewarning of a pending ecological disaster. *Dea Marina* sings about human connections



III. 6 [René Magritte *L'invention collective* [Collective invention] 1935. Oil on canvas, 73 x 116 cm. Private Collection. © Rene Magritte, The Estate of Magritte/billedkunst.dk 2014 & © 2014. BI, ADAGP, Paris/Scala Florence.]

with the surrounding sea, while an increasingly ominous sky looms above her; her eyes widening and staring directly and insistently at the spectator, a daunting signal of doom. The eyes are closed demonstratively again before she freezes back into immobility.

Sjöström's mermaid film also turns things around and draws heavily on surrealist vernacular with thick quotes from Magritte's other paintings (sky-blue doves marked with white clouds that fly around the mermaid and identical men in bowler hats photographing the mermaid) and from Dalí (melting clocks that drip down the mermaid's lap) or from other well-known pre-surrealist visual imageries, such as baroque artists Pieter Breughel (multiple Towers of Babel float down around the mermaid) and Hieronymus Bosch (grotesque figures from his paintings are cut out as floaters). All are thanked in the film credits. If Andersen's romantic mermaid vision challenged gravity as part of a spiritual quest, the surrealist vision in Sjöström's adaptation tests gravity differently; with numerous floating objects, figures of all sorts, fish, cups, dolls, and so forth, icons well known from the surrealist catalogues. The mermaid is the only stable object; she never moves from her stony-plinth. But her life is nevertheless in danger.

As seen next page (ill. 9), the transparency of the iconic Magritte doves brings fresh air into a polluted present, darkened by an ecological disaster that has already entirely blackened the mermaid herself. She resembles creatures of the sea



Ills. 7, 8, 9 [Åsa Sjöström, *Dea Marina*, 1997. Produced by Anna G Magnusdottir, Sweden and Unni DePresno, Norway for Little Big Productions. Photo: Andra Lasmanis]

contaminated by oil spill. The innocence of the romantic protagonist (here in the shape of Eriksen's sculptural rendition) is compromised, not by abject desires of the mermaid, but rather by the lost purity and innocence of nature itself. Nature and its ocean creatures (mermaids) are figuratively raped by the dark and demonic powers of pollution. We observe here, I would argue, both a romantic trope re-imagined and a surrealist vision re-considered. The surreal vernacular is used ironically, but also with a gesture of sincerity and urgency to counter the threat of the ecological disaster. That is to say: the icon (offered by the early twentieth century's sculptural idealization and domestication of Andersen's much more complex tale) is about to succumb to pollution, but is simultaneously and ironically surrealized (wiped clean by Magritte's doves) and potentially saved. Thus, in this instance, the surreal makes more sense than the non-sense of modern industrial toxic waste and smog.

Conclusion

Surrealists like Dalí, Ernst, and Magritte did not repeat what romantics like Andersen articulated. They offered new visions beholden to new sensibilities contingent on new historical experiences. Many aspects of Andersen's core and essence are stripped bare. Similarly, Sjöström's video art is far removed from the romantic fairy tale; in fact, it reflects not on the written text at all, but on the icon in the harbor, the logo of Copenhagen.

Nevertheless, the value of the romantic fairy tale to surrealism and other avant-gardes and the shared interest in an elastic relation between mind and matter allowed for new and marvelous (strange and fantastic) worlds to surface; realities have been tested and often subverted, and poetic language had to break free of conventions, mimic innocence, and be instinctive and improvisational. The 'emotional flexibility of language discovered by the romanticist', as noted by Anna Balakian, could turn into 'sudden, unexpected image[s]' in surrealism.²⁹ Surrealism, then, took seriously the question raised by Menninghaus above, regarding romanticism's 'imperatives of chance, incoherence, and non-sense' and discovered in romanticism a source of creativity that could be dislodged or liberated from the mastery of form that most romantics ultimately subscribed to. Surrealists and other avant-gardists could 'extract the unknown from the known, and let the sur-reality of concepts rise above the reality of objects' as Thalmann notes, and under 'the guise of unpretentious fairy tales' such as Andersen's, surrealists found the 'freedom to distort and deform'.³⁰ Here they discovered a way to maintain a measure of marvelous non-sense, but also dark apprehensions.

Notes

- 1 Winfried Menninghaus, *In Praise of Nonsense: Kant and Bluebeard*, trans. Henry Pickford (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 38.
- 2 Michael Löwy, *Morning Star: Surrealism, Marxism, Anarchism, Situationism, Utopia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 9.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1972), 14.
- 5 Donald LaCross, 'Introduction: Surrealism and Romantic Anticapitalism', in *Morning Star: Surrealism, Marxism, Anarchism, Situationism, Utopia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), viii.
- 6 Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, 16 (italics added).
- 7 Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The MIT Press, 1996), 112.
- 8 Susan Stewart, *Nonsense: Aspects of Intertextuality in Folklore and Literature* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 4.
- 9 Stewart, *Nonsense*, 4.
- 10 Marianne Thalmann, *The Romantic Fairy Tale: Seeds of Surrealism*, trans. Mary B. Corcoran (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1964), 14.
- 11 Ibid., 125–6 (italics added).
- 12 Menninghaus, *In Praise of Nonsense*, 39.
- 13 Hans Christian Andersen, 'Pigen der trådte på Brødet', in *Samlede værker*, ed. Klaus P. Mortensen, vol. 2 (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2003), 254. Translations of Andersen's texts are my own.
- 14 Andersen, 'Pigen der trådte på Brødet', 255.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Hans Christian Andersen, '“Lytemændene ere i Byen” sagde Mosekonen', in *Samlede værker*, ed. Klaus P. Mortensen, vol. 3 (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2003), 59.
- 17 For an excellent discussion of Alice's strange world and her importance for the surrealists, see for example Renée Riese Hubert's *Surrealism and the Book*, particularly the chapter called 'Surrealism and the Nineteenth Century' (pp. 149–88).
- 18 Dietmar Elger, *Dadaism* (n.p.: Taschen, 2004), 74.
- 19 Ibid., 74.
- 20 Here cited from Elger, *Dadaism*, 74.
- 21 Mogens Davidsen, 'Hans Christian Andersen and the Image', in *Hans Christian Andersen. A Poet in Time. Papers from the Second International Hans Christian Andersen Conference 29 July to 2 August 1996*, eds. Johan de Mylius, Aage Jørgensen, and Viggo Hjørnager Pedersen (The Hans Christian Andersen Center, Odense University Press, 1999), 433.
- 22 Hanno Möbius, *Montage und Collage. Literatur, bildende Künste, Film, Fotografie, Musik, Theater bis 1933* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2000), 210.
- 23 Jens Andersen, *Hans Christian Andersen*, trans. Tiina Nunnally (New York, Woodstock, London: Overlook Duckworth, 2005), 503.
- 24 Camilla Skovbjerg Paldam, *Surrealistiske collager. Underfulde billeder i kunst og litteratur* (Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2011), 31.

- 25 Hans Christian Andersen's brev til Mimi Holstein [Hans Christian Andersen's letter to Mimi Holstein] (March 17, 1874), accessed August 30, 2014, <http://www.andersen.sdu.dk/brevbase/brev.html?bid=15623&oph=1>.
- 26 Jens Andersen, in his biography, goes as far as to say that Andersen anticipated both Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis and Breton's surrealist manifestos. Also, Jette Lundbo Levy has argued, by way of Gunnar Ekelöf, that Andersen made use of a pre-surrealist imagination in his object tales and compares them to the surrealists' infatuation with *l'objet trouvé*, cf. Jette Lundbo Levy, 'Om ting der går i stykker. Ekelöf og Andersen', *Edda* 3, (1998): 259–68. Finn Hauberg Mortensen, however, warns against a simple comparison between Andersen and surrealism, because Andersen maintains the notion of a higher metaphysical order that organizes the manifest fragmentation of things. Finn Hauberg Mortensen, 'Ting og relation', in *H. C. Andersen. Modernitet & Modernisme*, eds. Aage Jørgensen and Henk van der Liet (Amsterdam: Scandinavisch Instituut. Universitet van Amsterdam, 2006).
- 27 André Breton, *Nadja*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 106.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 129.
- 29 Anna Balakian, *Surrealism: The Road to the Absolute* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 142–3.
- 30 Thalman, *The Romantic Fairy Tale*, 128.

Travelling Huts and Invading Spaceships

TRAVELLING HUTS AND INVADING SPACESHIPS

*Marianne Heske, Tiril Schröder,
and Norwegian Romantic Landscapes*

SIGRUN ÅSEBØ

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[ABSTRACT]

The article discusses the art of the contemporary artists Marianne Heske and Tiril Schröder, their quotations of romantic landscape, and the way this has been defined in art history.

Most readings of Heske and Schröder place them firmly in a contemporary context. By exploring the reference often made between the two artists and the concept of 'landscape' in art history, the article highlights how many readings, despite insisting on deconstruction in Heske and Schröder's art, still situate their art firmly in a narrative where landscape figures as a genre, where meaning is inherent, and where the artist serves as the visionary mind that sets the whole play off. Through a close reading of *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa* [Project Gjerdeløa] in relation to ideas of nationality and site as fixed, and to romantic constructions of the painter/scientist as a masculine structure, the article concludes that Heske and Schröder's art can be characterized as deconstructive and hybrid spaces. By inscribing meaning and value to hybrid space, their art represents a 'view from elsewhere' (de Lauretis), a view that can open doors to new conceptualisations of identity and the body.

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KEYWORDS *Landscape, Contemporary Art, Gender, National Identity, Marianne Heske, Tiril Schröder.*

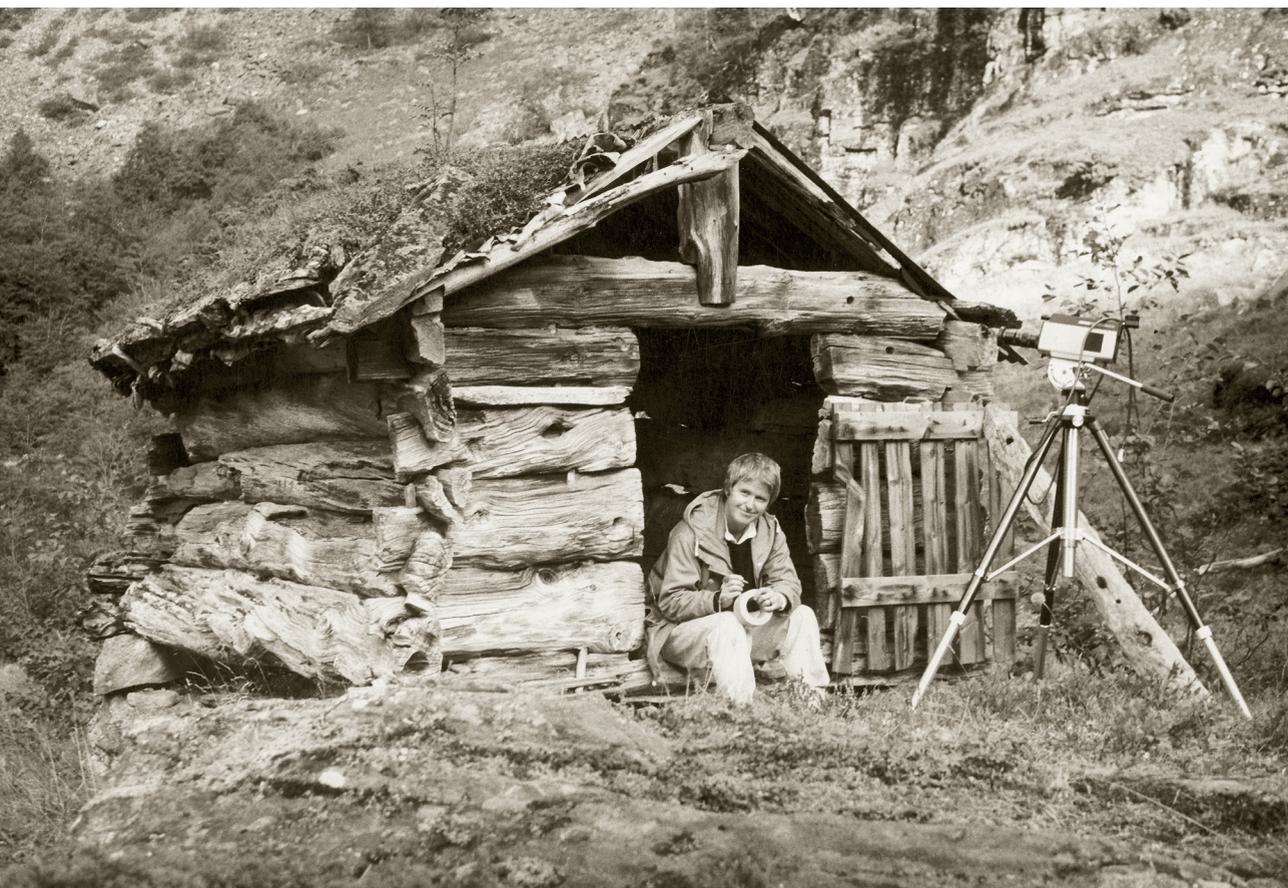
Landscapes are central to Norwegian art and culture. Spending time in the mountains is highly rated as a recreational activity and finding inner peace by overcoming the obstacles of nature and the body seems to be at the core of 'Norwegianness'. According to the catalogue for the 2008 exhibition *The Mountain in Norwegian Art* at the Henie-Onstad Art Centre, a well-established museum near Oslo, the mountain is at the heart of the Norwegian landscape tradition. More than anything else, the catalogue claims, it is the mountain that gives our nature its hallmark (i.e. makes our nature distinctly Norwegian). The mountains have formed and left their imprint on Norwegians for centuries.¹ With this in mind, the Henie-Onstad Art Centre sets out to investigate the Norwegian mountain as



III. 1 [Marianne Heske, *Project Gjerdeløa/The Tafford Hut*, 1980. Timber, 2.5 x 3.5 m. Private collection, photo: Marianne Heske.]

it has been represented in art and photography from the romanticist paintings by J. C. Dahl to postmodern artists such as Marianne Heske and Tiril Schröder.

In this article I want to take a closer look at Heske and Schröder and some of the works that were shown at this exhibition. The artists are both well known for referencing romantic landscapes, and it is the connection between Dahl and the romantics on the one hand, and Heske and Schröder on the other that I want to investigate. Unlike the catalogue for the exhibition, where contemporary art is seen as a (preliminary) end point to a story that originated in romanticism, I want to see Heske and Schröder's art as theoretical objects *quoting* romanticism as defined by the theorist Mieke Bal. According to Bal, art as representation inevitably engages with what came before. This engagement must be seen as an active intervention in or a re-working of the past. Quoting Caravaggio, or in my case the Norwegian landscape painter Dahl, obliterates old imagery and meaning and therefore changes his work forever. Understanding art as theoretical objects, Bal



III. 2 [Marianne Heske, *Project Gjerdeløa/The Tafford Hut*, 1980, Timber, 2.5 x 3.5 m.
Private collection, photo: Marianne Heske.]

approaches history as a diachronic space of meaning, letting contemporary art expose and discuss history and vice versa.²

In his introduction to *Landscape and Western Art*, Malcolm Andrews insists that landscapes, like all other genres, concepts, and objects within art history, are established by way of framing and the establishment of boundaries.³ Not only landscape, but also bodies and nations are produced by way of framing. Nations can be seen as imagined communities and national identity as a possible outcome of the work of a textual and cultural weave of meaning, positioning subjects and others within the imaginary landscape of the country. In this article I want to examine this intersection of landscape, nation, and body in the art of Dahl, Heske, and Schröder, and I will explore the feminist effect of Heske and Schröder's art.

How and to what effect can we say that Heske and Schröder intervene in the spaces of landscape at the intersection of nationality and gender?

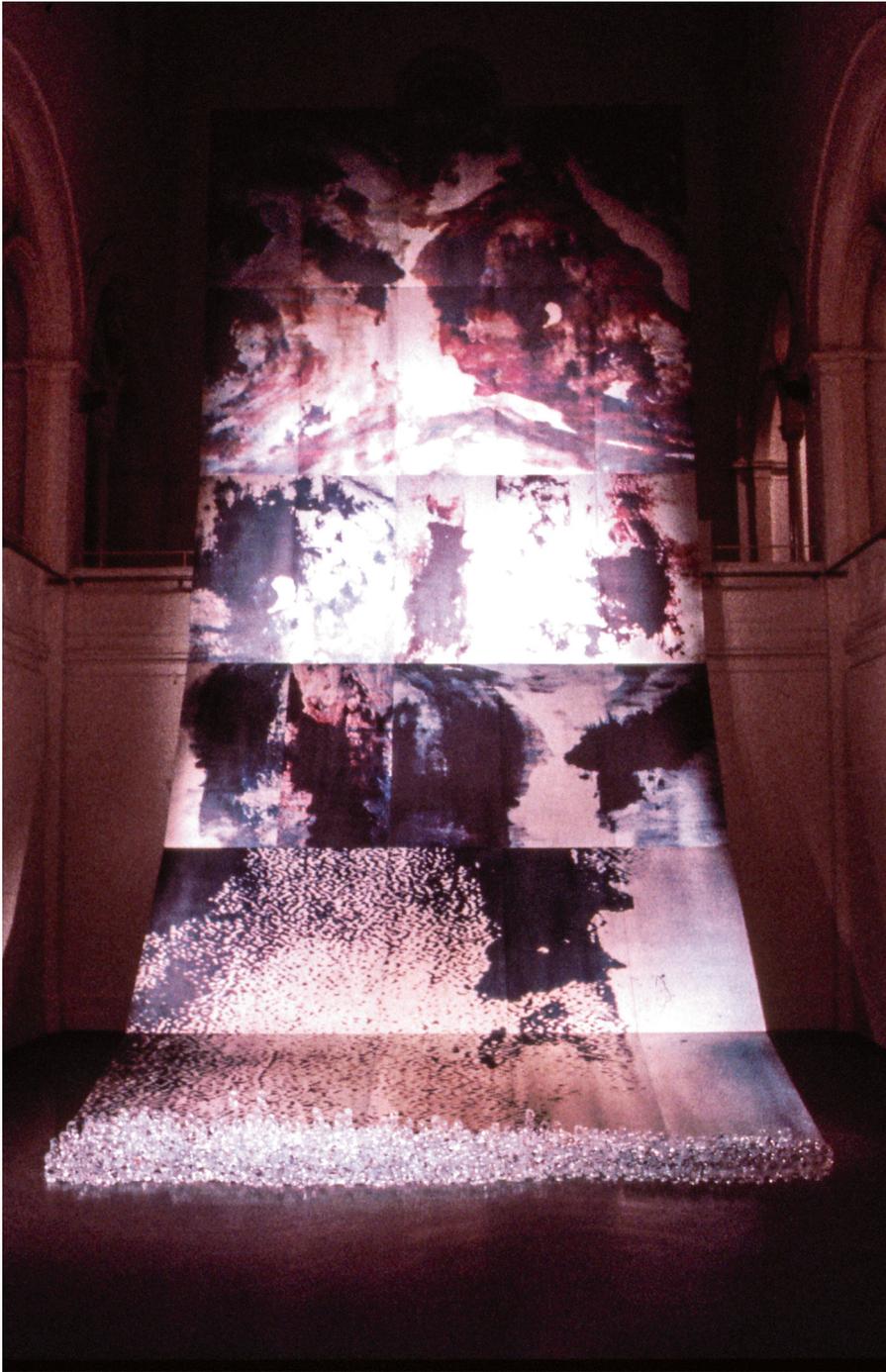


III.3 [Marianne Heske, *NN*, 1978, Bronze, 50 cm. Private collection, photo: Marianne Heske.]

Travelling Objects, Images, and Concepts

Marianne Heske is one of Norway's most renowned artists. Since the 1970's her art has been shown in a vast number of collective exhibitions and biennials, and she has had several solo exhibitions. To many Norwegians she is known for her connection to the small village of Tafjord. One of the first projects directly related to Tafjord is Heske's *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa* [Project Gjerdeløa] made for the Paris biennial at the Centre Pompidou in 1980. The project consisted in Heske's dismantling an old seventeenth-century hut, driving it to Paris, where it was put together again and kept on display for a year (ill. 1). The small hut was built of rough, hewn logs, the roof was covered with turf, and it had an open doorway. Since the seventeenth century the people who had used it for shelter had left small drawings or written their names on the inside and outside walls. The people visiting the Centre Pompidou were allowed to do the same. The staff at the Centre Pompidou had to take the role of 'nature' and provide water for the grass on the roof, and keep the timber and moss from drying out. After a year in Paris, Heske brought the hut back to Tafjord and reinstalled it in its original place (ill. 2).

If we turn to art history, the project is generally seen as an early example of conceptual art in Norway.⁴ When Marianne Heske decided to dismantle the hut



III. 4 [Marianne Heske, *Avalanche*, 1993. 12 x 5 m, 1001 doll's heads in crystal, video painting in the background: an acrylic print on aluminium, installation as shown in Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin. Henie Onstad Art Center and Astrup Fearnley Museum, photo: Marianne Heske.]



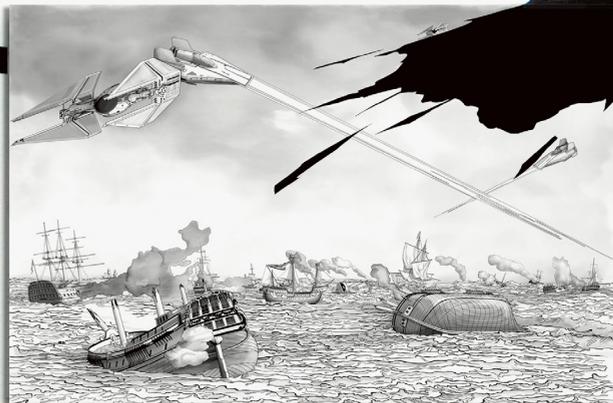
III.5 [Tiril Schrøder: *Ferme Ornée*, 2005. Digital aquarell on paper, mounted on aluminium sheets, acrylic paint on wall. Installation as shown at Overgaden, Copenhagen. The painting series consists of the following paintings: *Landscape with Car* (80 x 110 cm), *Landscape with House* (80 x 150 cm), *Landscape in the Shape of a Cartoon* (40 x 60 cm), and *Landscape with Waterfall* (80 x 80 cm). Private collection, photo: Tiril Schrøder.]

and transport it to Paris, she questioned the boundaries of the art institution and traditional views on art as an original object that is created by an artist, exhibited in a neutral white cube to be contemplated by passive viewers. By choosing an ordinary everyday object, Heske alluded to the ready-made, the apparently insignificant object that becomes art by being put into circulation by the artist and the art institution; art was as much about concepts as about the object itself. The fact that she decided to return the hut to its ‘natural’ environment also linked her art to land art, where art is made from nature’s own materials and placed outside the gallery space to escape modernist and capitalist ideas of art as a marketable object. This of course raises questions of site specificity, an important issue in art since the 1960s.⁵ By letting the visitors to the museum leave their inscriptions on the hut, Heske highlights the importance of the beholder in the construction of meaning, an important aspect in many art practices since in the 1960s. This last element is underlined by the French curator and theorist Nicolas Bourriaud. He sees Heske as one of the precursors of the relational art practices of the 1990s, a point to which I will return.⁶

Prosjekt Gjerdeløa in many ways falls neatly in place in Heske’s *oeuvre*. In addition to moving this hut to Paris, Heske has also sent a large stone from Tafjord

to the Italian island of Lido and back again.⁷ During the summer of 2014 she installed a large doll's head entitled *N.N.* in Torshovdalen. The doll's head has been a recurrent feature in Heske's art since the 1970s when she found a box of old doll's heads at a flea market in Paris. The head has been cast in a myriad of different guises. In *N.N.* from 1978 (ill. 3), Heske presents a bronze doll's head inscribed with the schema of phrenology. It is shown on a pedestal, as if it were a traditional portrait bust. Small glass replicas of the doll's head have been juxtaposed with Marianne Heske's video paintings in the installation *Avalanche* (ill. 4). Here the little heads prolong the pictured avalanche into our space. Heske's art is full of those kinds of images and objects that seem out of place, and characterizing it as an art of relocation, seems apt.⁸ Drawing on the work of the art theorists Craig Owens and Paul de Man, Gunnar Danbolt sees Heske's art as allegorical, as an art working with appropriations and fragments in a process where meaning is piled up and never fixed. Allegory works by distantiation, producing a gap between signifier and signified, and identity and inherent meaning of the symbol is questioned.⁹

Dislocation and questions of origin are important also in the art of Tiril Schröder, and many of her projects explore the theme of travel in various ways. In the painting series *Ferme Ornée* from 2005 (ill. 5), Schröder shows a contemporary car climbing steep mountain hills and places contemporary architecture into computer generated drawings that resemble romantic landscapes.¹⁰ In *Delusions of Adequacy* the technology is more advanced than the simple car; here the space ships from Star Wars circle over old ships in distress (ill. 6). Schröder juxtaposes contemporary technology and landscape, and the effect is described as disturbing by many. When the image of the car was shown at the exhibition on the mountain at the Henie Onstad Art Centre, Ingvild Pharo described it as surrealistic, claiming that the 'presentation of people and things made by people breaks sharply with the landscape'.¹¹ Schröder mainly works with imagery from popular culture such as comic books, cinema, computer games, and the virtual world, but she also uses catalogues for houses and magazines like *Vogue*. In visual form she reproduces the black lines of technical drawing and architectural drawings, and many of her images are also computer drawings. Critics have described her art as 'visual sampling'.¹² Øystein Ustvedt sees her as working with both daydreams and nightmares; the references to contemporary popular visual culture expose the underlying ideals and narratives as both utopian and desired, but still as forever distant.¹³ Heske and Schröder both make use of and comment upon new media; Heske uses video, the technology of the 70s and 80s in her art; Schröder makes computer drawings. The distortions of colour in Heske's video paintings make us aware of the technology used to produce images. Remediation is exposed as a process, where meaning is reproduced, produced anew and altered.¹⁴ According to Tone Hansen, Schröder's art is a typical example of what Nicolas Bourriaud calls postproduction; the contemporary artist's work is seen as parallel to that of a DJ, putting together already produced and circulated images anew, circulating and re-creating desire and meaning.¹⁵



III. 6 [Tiril Schröder, *Delusions of Adequacy*, 2007, Acrylic paint on canvas and on wall, 200 x 300 cm. Installation as shown at Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo. Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines and private collection, photo: Tiril Schröder.]

In hindsight, it is easy to place *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa* on the international art scene. The hut can figure as an introduction of new art modes to Norwegian art history, postmodern modes that are furthered by Heske and Schröder later on. At the time, however, a large part of the Norwegian public, including the art establishment, was angry. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was reluctant when it came to supporting the project financially; moving the hut was too costly and laborious, couldn't Heske just paint it? Marianne Heske herself foresaw some of the problems, stating she knew that: 'in Norway the hut would be regarded as a hut, whereas in France it would be seen as a piece of conceptual art'.¹⁶ The reaction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the criticism of the Norwegian public could easily be dismissed as the result of a lack of knowledge of conceptual art. But is the problem just a matter of convincing the provincial Norwegians to catch up with the urban French cultural elite and stop seeing a hut and start seeing a concept? If we accept that *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa* is first and foremost conceptual, what does this mean?

According to Mieke Bal, in her book *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*, concepts are tools of intersubjectivity. By way of concepts and lan-

guage, we communicate, understand the world and ourselves. But concepts do not come with internal and fixed meanings; they travel and cross imaginary borders between disciplines, scholars, historical periods, and geographically dispersed communities.¹⁷ The concept of 'art' is fundamental to art history, but what it means is relative to its use. 'Art' often appears to be descriptive, but as a concept it is programmatic and normative. The same can be said of the term 'landscape'.¹⁸ Seeing the hut as a piece of conceptual art, means accepting that the hut is *questioning* the concept of 'art', underlining meaning as a process. What we are faced with when encountering *Prosjekt Gjerdeloa* is in my view not simply art-as-concept, but also Norwegian-landscape/art-as-concept.¹⁹ So how do we generally understand the concept 'landscape', and the projects of Heske and Schröder?

The Spaces of Landscape

According to W.J.T. Mitchell and the book *Landscape and Power*, traditional art history tends to define landscape as a genre.²⁰ Whereas the nude deals with our understanding of the human and of ourselves, landscapes are meant to express man's natural ability to take pleasure in an aesthetic look at nature and his surroundings. In the introduction to his book, Mitchell claims there are mainly two different views of landscape that can be discerned in western art history.²¹ The modernist tradition focuses on landscape painting, and reads it as part of a general narrative of purification of the visual field. Landscapes are the last step on the way in the liberation of art from any narrative, and in the establishment of an aesthetic of disinterestedness. Art speaks to the innocent eye and not to the body. The other tradition focuses on interpretation. Landscapes are understood as allegorical structures or signs that may be interpreted or decoded. Landscapes can be read as expressing religious, psychological, political or other ideas. Reading British landscapes as expressing class relations or interpreting the landscapes of Dahl as a way of visualizing an ideology of 'Norwegianness' are examples of this latter tradition.

The problem with these two approaches, according to Mitchell, is that landscape in both cases is seen as a closed structure or a fixed concept, where meaning is produced and can be *found*. This often means taking the framing of 'landscape' as a concept for granted, and often reproducing the imaginary boundaries separating 'real' landscapes from uninteresting ones (mere nature), landscapes of national interest (the ones that are 'Norwegian') from local ones ('vernacular landscape'), or for that matter the boundaries separating landscapes expressing a universal (masculine) subject, from intimate and personal (feminine) ones.²² But as a concept, landscape is highly ambiguous. It can be used both to describe actual places as well as paintings or photographs, and the difference between place and represented space is often confused. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries we continue to read abstract paintings, land art, various forms of sculpture, installations or other media, as connected to the landscape tradition. In art history, stating that something is 'landscape', functions much in the same way as

stating that something is ‘art’, (or ‘conceptual art’). Once the concept is in place, a myriad of different meanings can be found, or rather *read into* it.²³

In Mitchell’s view landscape is a medium of exchange between the self and other, the human and the natural. As a representational practice, landscape must be understood as a site/sight for the inscription of power. According to Mitchell, an important aspect of dealing with landscape is our perception of space. Landscapes, he claims, always greet us as ‘space, as environment, as that within which “we” (figured as the figures in the landscape) find – or lose – ourselves’.²⁴ Mitchell points towards Michel de Certeau and his distinction between ‘place’ and ‘space’. Place refers to the specific location, to stability and to the ‘law of the proper’; nothing can be in two places at the same time. Space on the other hand, can be understood as a practiced place. Space refers to the way our physical and intellectual movements and distributions activate and rearrange what we perceive as constant, specific locations and sites.²⁵ Conceptualizing landscape as space, instead of as mere pictures, allows us to question not just the way something is represented, but also the art historical idea that landscape is about images and about looking. Instead of asking what landscapes show, are, or mean, we have to analyse what they do: *for whom* are they produced and for what purpose? Who is invited in, how are we invited, and what experiences, subjectivities, and bodies are left out? Are the landscapes of romanticism open to women’s and men’s bodies in the same way? And how are we greeted by Heske and Schröder?

In his discussion of imperialism in/as landscape, Mitchell also underlines a need to see landscapes as hybrid spatial structures. Landscapes are structures that take part in imperialist, masculinist, or other ideologies in complex ways, but they cannot be reduced to those theories. Landscape must not only be read as a discourse complicit with ideology, but also as a space for counterstrategies.²⁶ Landscapes might be hybrid structures that could be characterized as simultaneously imperial and anti-colonial, or in our case as romantic and anti-romantic, masculinist and anti-masculinist. And in the case of Heske and Schröder it is the hybridity of the spaces that can be read as having feminist effects.

According to Griselda Pollock, femininity is a complex concept. On the one hand it refers to an identity in the outside world and an imaginary space that women are expected to inhabit. Femininity is generally understood as linked to the body and to the emotions. In the case of landscape, women’s access to the spaces of meaning is a matter of negotiating the old idea of woman as body and as closer to nature than man. But as a space, femininity, on the other hand, may also be understood as a structure of meaning. According to Pollock, femininity also refers to the spaces ‘beyond the visible forms of gender, [it serves] to signal a radical alterity in relation to culture that dominates in the name of Man’.²⁷ Reading for femininity, according to Pollock, can potentially ‘open doors to critical confrontations with all forms of xenophobia’.²⁸ The feminist effect that comes about in the art of Heske and Schröder is not a result of their intentions, nor can it be drawn from their female bodies or any gendered experiences related to them.

The Hut in/and Norwegian Landscape

Although most art history books that claim to present an overview of Norwegian art generally trace it back to the Viking era or the Middle Ages, with specific focus on wooden crafts and architecture, particularly the stave churches, it seems hard to dispute the idea that Norwegian art originated in romanticism, and was fathered by landscape painter J. C. Dahl. According to art historian Gunnar Danbolt, Dahl was the first to realize that Norway did not only consist of nature, but also of landscapes that were worth painting.²⁹ The merging of German romanticism and Norwegian topography in the art and mind of Dahl liberated the visual field from its status as a supporting discipline in travel literature or as a handicraft. The moment of revelation, when Dahl finally *saw* that the virginal nature of the land was sublime, puts Norway in contact with international art, and a national tradition begins. This moment of revelation seems to haunt canonical Norwegian art history, and also appears in readings of Marianne Heske and Tiril Schröder.

Danbolt's narrative echoes other familiar stories of Dahl and romanticism. We find that it naturalizes landscape as a tradition by claiming that the transformation of the wilderness (nature) into a particular type of painting (romantic landscape) is simply a matter of a glance. A hierarchy is installed: Nature is *elevated* into landscape/art.³⁰ The work to distinguish between German romanticism and Norwegian land(scape) is done by putting weight on Dahl's travels to and in Norway.³¹ He might have brought with him inspiration and perhaps ideas, but his artistic practice is related to the actual land. Dahl walked the Norwegian mountains together with Johannes Flintoe, and when writing about these walks, Nils Messel in his article 'Oppdagelsen av fjellet' [The discovery of the mountain], underlines the difference between Dahl and German romanticism.³² Whereas German romantic painters used landscape as a symbol of the divine or to express ideas of spirituality, the Norwegian painters wanted to paint the Norwegian landscape as it appeared to the eye from that particular viewpoint. Norwegian painters were not dealing in ideas, but in 'reality': They painted the actual place. This naturalization of landscape as a genre and of the idea of identity as rooted in the land, can be found in many narratives. This argument from the catalogue for the exhibition *A Mirror of Nature* that toured the National Galleries of the Nordic countries in 2008 is typical: We live far apart, the climate is rough, and landscape simply imposes itself upon us. The argument is circular: The importance of the genre of landscape in the Nordic tradition testifies to the importance of nature, and vice versa.³³ Landscape is made both cause and effect in the narrative of Norwegian painting, and difference between signifier and signified, place and space is blurred.

If we read on in Danbolt's book on Norwegian art history, we find *Prosjekt Gjerdeloa* and Marianne Heske's video paintings of Tafjord under the heading 'Det norske landskapet i nye medium' [Norwegian landscape in new media]. Danbolt reads Heske's art as remediations of Norwegian landscape, using the



III.7 [J. C. Dahl, *Fra Hjelle i Valdres* [From Hjelle in Valdres], 1850. Oil on canvas, 42,1 x 58,9 cm. KODE Kunstmuseene i Bergen, photo: Antonio Cosentino.]

term remediation loosely.³⁴ The text does however underline an important point. Heske's art is seen as *negative* landscapes: What Heske is doing, is conjuring up landscape for our inner eyes by showing us fragments and fragments only.³⁵ So what kind of landscape unfolds before the inner eyes of the critics?

The French curator and theorist Nicolas Bourriard's text 'Marianne Heske and the Art of Relocation', printed in the catalogue for Heske's exhibition *Heaven and Earth* in 2010, does not seem to be in doubt. When encountering a hut, Bourriard immediately sees a landscape and a vision of nature, for as he states:

The cabin that Marianne Heske found, constructed from timber from the surrounding forests, seems at one with the natural surroundings. It almost seems embedded in the mountain like the pine or the birch, the glacier buttercup or the wood anemones in the crevices of the deep, winding inlets of the fjords.³⁶

The hut is no different from the birch, it is nature. Bourriaud's text forms an echo of romantic landscape paintings and the images of Dahl. Here the hut as a building type would typically be found in the middle space. In the painting *Fra Hjelle i Valdres* [From Hjelle in Valdres] (ill. 7) and *Fra Stalheim* [From Stalheim] (ill. 8) by Dahl, as in numerous other romantic landscapes, three spaces are juxtaposed: The foreground shows the plants, flowers, fauna, and geological characteristics of the particular place. The background is Mother Nature and what Danbolt with reference to Goethe calls the 'breath of the earth'.³⁷ The middle ground shows the steep Norwegian mountain and the peasants, farm houses, or objects of nature with particular cultural value, such as the old birch tree at Slinde or the stone in Dahl's *Vinter ved Sognefjorden* [Winter at the Sognefjord].³⁸ The hut, the stone, and the birch form our point of identification inside the framed image; they represent the Norwegian people, and the idea of culture as rooted in nature. The hut and the Norwegian people inhabit a space of negotiation between the land, as it is governed by natural laws and nature as it supersedes knowledge and becomes sublime.

When Bourriaud insists so strongly on the hut being a 'real' object, because it 'represents an authentic record about the way of life for a very specific group of human beings who belong to a specific place' and because its 'function constitutes the actual subject of the work', he seems to be repeating an old ideology.³⁹ The hut is understood both as an everyday object defined by its function *and* as a piece of nature: Norwegian culture is rooted in nature, in geographical space, and it is (almost) timeless.

Seeing the hut as a hut, many Norwegians would also see an example of the many huts, cabins, farms, and *seters* (shieling or summer farm) that are pictured in the romantic landscapes of Dahl. The hut shows a particular building technique typical of Western Norway, and an example of the everyday cultural practices that defined this area. But the logs and the turf also signify beyond this materiality. The Tafjord hut is so small and simple in structure, it could almost function as the Norwegian equivalent of the primitive hut in the theories of classical architecture put forth by Marc-Antoine Laugier in 1753.⁴⁰ It can be read as a symbol of Norwegian architecture, everyday life, art, culture, and spirit, and it connotes a whole range of huts and cabins, and the narratives and affects inscribed in them as space of meaning. As Ellen Rees has shown in *Cabins in Modern Norwegian Literature*, the cabin as site or place serves as an important space for the practice of national identity in Norway. The Tafjord hut can bring both the tradition of the summer farms and the erotic stories of the milk maids to the fore, as well as the masculine hunting cabins, and even the whole tradition of cabins in Norway.⁴¹ The origin of the hut is as much the space of romantic landscape as it is the actual place and everyday life of Tafjord. Its triviality is a result of the 'reality effect' produced by the constant representation of similar buildings as rooted in landscape and as spaces where we find our national identity as well as our individual selves.



III. 8 [J. C. Dahl, *Fra Stalheim* [From Stahlheim], n.d. Oil on canvas, 190 x 246 cm. Nasjonalmuseet for kunst, arkitektur og design, Oslo, photo: Jaques Lathion.]

The paintings and installations of Tiril Schröder can also be seen as negative landscapes. Whereas Heske's *Prosjekt Gjerdeloa* makes the hut appear as a removed hut, a fragment that needs to be reinserted into the image, Schröder has replaced the summer farm or hut with contemporary architecture or cars in the painting series *Ferme Ornée* (ill. 5). The detailed fauna is gone from the front space, the sky is no longer characterized by dramatically arranged clouds, but appears as an abstracted sun or a flat surface. This can be seen both as a simplification of the romantic landscape and as an underlying structure that needs to be adapted according to the place for which it is supposed to stand in.

The lost object that Heske places before our eyes can easily be filled with imaginary landscapes. In Schröder's case this is more difficult. The contemporary house and the car appear deserted. There are no traces of human bodies and

moreover no traces of humanity: There are no roads, no paths or fields. The car and the house appear to have been there since the beginning of history, much as the old huts, cabins, and *seters* of Dahl. We recognize the juxtaposition of pictorial spaces as a romantic element, where the images of popular culture make us aware of how visual culture and meaning production are a matter of sampling or referencing. We might envision the contemporary cabin as a contemporary version of the old poor farmer's cabin or hut, and see our contemporary walks in the mountains (after we have driven there by car) as parallels to the romantic roaming, and as rooted in landscape as well as in the Nordic feeling for nature. But the uneasiness of Schröder's image, what Pharo saw as its surrealism, drives a wedge between Dahl and Schröder, between the romantic ideas of the connection between body and land on the one hand, and our contemporary practice of those on the other. Our walks, or drives, in the mountains do not place us in line with the romantic explorer mapping his country. Schröder presents us with a flattened image of the idyllic dream of the cabin in the mountain, but the dream appears lost. The car, the cabin, and the spaceships all serve to dis-locate identity and make us aware of both the distance and the proximity between our world and romanticism.

Relational Objects and Hybrid Space

Nicolas Bourriaud is most famous for his readings of the art practices of the 1990s by way of the term 'relational aesthetics', first coined in 1996. His theories were a response to the many art practices of the 1990s that resembled the neo-avant-garde movements of the 1960s, but apparently lacked the utopian element characteristic of that period. According to Bourriaud, relational art is about producing spaces of encounter, social environments where people take part in shared activities; and it is an art form that takes the whole of human relations and their social context as a starting point, rather than an independent and private space. The art is about producing relations to the world.⁴² *Prosjekt Gjerdeloa* as a whole can, according to Bourriaud, be seen as a precursor to this idea of art as productive of the social and of relations.⁴³ When returned to Tafjord:

The cabin had acquired the status of a space of encounter between two distinct populations: the mountain hikers of Tafjord, and the Parisian museum visitors. Project Gjerdeloa presents itself as a meeting point, as a relational work before its time. It is not only about the transition of an object from one point to another, more importantly it is about the confrontation between two human groups.⁴⁴

Bourriaud's claim that the hut opens up for the negotiation of the boundaries separating self and other is interesting. The problem is that Bourriaud seems to claim that the hut and relational art practices create neutral spaces where stable and *fixed* identities meet.⁴⁵ Bourriaud somehow forgets to take into account the possibility that the two distinct identities might be inhabited by one and the

same person/group; what kind of relational space is created for the viewer who is confronted not only with the other, but also with a possible self? In Bourriaud's narrative this poses few problems. The Parisians might have understood that the hut was a piece of conceptual art, but judging by Bourriaud's text, they also somehow knew that they received not just a 'real' thing, but also *the* real thing: Norwegian landscape. The narratives that render the hut meaningful to visitors to the museum and hikers, French and Norwegians alike, are similar. The only thing separating them is the emotional attachment to the hut; to Norwegians it represented *our* self, a self that becomes 'other' before our very eyes. In the minds of most Norwegians, Marianne Heske was not just moving a hut, she was *removing* it, leaving an empty spot, or a hole in the imaginary canvas where Norwegian landscape is orchestrated.⁴⁶ The hut did not just cross several borders on its way from Tafjord to Paris, it exposed the imaginary boundaries that frame 'Norwegianness' and are crucial to our concept of 'art' and 'culture' in general.

The process of moving and reinstalling the hut also shows another important aspect, namely the difference in meaning and value represented by the places Tafjord and Paris. Tafjord as a site or place is outside the art institution, and it is only when the hut has passed through the sanctifying spaces of the Centre Pompidou that it can become 'art'. But this process in my view also problematizes an old dichotomy between Paris as a place of culture and art, and Norway as a space of nature. Conceptualizing the hut as a meeting place for two distinct groups reaffirms cultural essentialism. From an art historical perspective, where nature is only interesting once *elevated* into landscape/art, Bourriaud's text can also be read as reinstating a hierarchy where Norway is placed both at the originating and at the receiving end. The hut's status as art is dependent upon both German and Norwegian romantic ideas of nature and landscape, but it is also dependent upon the aura of France and of Paris as the capital of art. The trip undertaken by the hut can be seen as parallel both to those of artist's in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries seeking art, but it is also reminiscent of the Parisian world's fairs, Expos where nations would attempt to put their culture on display by means of contemporary versions of similar kinds of 'national' architecture. *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa* can be read both as actively promoting Norwegian culture and as an empty object being baptized as 'art' by the French art institution.⁴⁷

There is a highly complex play on the conceptual differences between place and space in *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa*. In many ways, Heske's art seems to be orchestrating romantic landscape, inviting us to fill in the gap between signifier and signified, and reinsert the hut in its 'original' position. But when trying to do so, the question of origin is constantly put to the fore: Is the origin of the hut the place of Tafjord or the spaces of romantic landscape? Is it a 'real' hut defined by its function or is it a symbol? Or is it perhaps defined by its function in a structure of meaning? The hut in many ways is a *lost* object. When the hut undertook the traditional Grand Tour from Tafjord to Paris and back, it emphasized the instability of culture and concepts. Our access to landscape is always already mediated. When we enter the spaces of Tafjord, whether real or imagined, paths

and meanings are always already there to structure and provide meaning to our experience. The hut as an everyday object and as a symbol in a larger structure is produced by travelling concepts and the merging of cultures that were never really separate in the first place.

In most narratives of Schröder and Heske's art, there is a strong tension and ambivalence between the romantic and the contemporary. Often the deconstructive aspects, the visual sampling and presentation of fragments are dismissed as ironic or surrealist. But in my view, the huts, cabins, cars, and spaceships should not be read as distant comments upon an already established tradition, but as active re-workings. Schröder and Heske interfere in the discourses of 'Norwegianness', not from a space *outside* of discourse, dismissing the whole idea of self as nature: They form hybrid spaces of meaning. The art puts itself forward as romantic, but does not provide us with the orchestrated space of romantic landscapes, where the object is given meaning and placed both as an object to our gaze and as a representation of our self. The Tafjord hut should not be seen as rooted, but as part of what we with Deleuze might see as a rhizome, where connections between semiotic chains are established and re-established in an ongoing process of becoming that has no distinct origin and no end.⁴⁸

Looking at Landscape and the Body

The human body is a prerequisite for the genre of landscape. The movements of the painter's body, the position of the eye overlooking the land, the human point of identification in the image all speak to and of us as bodies. But for something to be recognized as landscape, bodies must play only a supportive role in the representation. In romantic landscape painting, the human body is pictured as small, or it is interchangeable with trees, huts, or stone.

An important figure in the art of both Heske and Schröder is the romantic wanderer. In connection with Heske's work we find him mirrored in the presentation of Heske as an artist. Bourriaud's article starts with Heske's return to her birth place in Norway in 1980 after having spent ten years in London, Paris, and Maastricht. Arriving in Tafjord, she (immediately) *found* an old log cabin.⁴⁹ Bourriaud's narrative of the artist who returns to his/her native land and suddenly *sees*, echoes the story of Dahl's sudden perception. Danbolt underlines the same closeness to Tafjord as a place, hence producing it as a meeting in a romantic space where Heske can explore her roots.⁵⁰ And in the catalogue *The Mountain in Norwegian Art*, Ingvild Pharo explicitly sees Heske's travels around in Tafjord as a parallel to Dahl and Flintoe's walks in the Norwegian mountains in 1826. Sometimes the result of Heske's wandering is understood as ironic, but often she is placed firmly within the romantic image: Only 'the means is different', as Pharo claims.⁵¹ In my view the blurring of vision in the images, and the presence of the little crystal dolls' heads that prolong the avalanche into the space of the beholder, can be seen as deconstructing the look inscribed in romantic landscape.

The story of Heske's walking the mountains of Tafjord resembles a famil-

iar figure from both art history and cultural geography. The geographer Gillian Rose has discussed the concept of landscapes within cultural geography building on film theory and psychoanalytical theorizations of the masculine gaze. In her book *Feminism and Geography* from 1993, Rose claims that landscape as an object of study for geography is established by and for a masculine look. In landscape studies, geographers draw on the traditional metaphors feminizing landscape, by insisting on the beauty of the land, seeing it as Mother Nature or as a beautiful maiden. According to Rose, the pleasure of the geographer and the look cast upon landscape are related to western idea(l)s of masculinity, placing the subject of geography somewhere between the sensitive artist and the disembodied and objective scientist. The field worker is cast as an ideal and his work takes place in the tension between embodiment and disembodiment; you have to have walked the land in order to know it, but knowledge in its scientific/artistic sense is a matter of distantiating and objectification. The subject of geography, as for western science and cultural studies in general, is an autonomous, white man of the bourgeoisie.⁵²

This figure is easily found in Norwegian art history and landscape. It was only when Dahl in 1826 finally set out on a long walk in the mountains, after being educated in Copenhagen and Dresden, that the Norwegian mountains were finally *seen*, or discovered.⁵³ The act of seeing, or more precisely, access to this *specific* way of looking, is vital in the establishment of the boundary between ordinary land in Norway, and ‘Norwegian landscape’. The body of the painter/scientist is set apart from the peasant’s body and experience, and from the female body. The distinction between the wilderness and landscape in Danbolt’s narrative is sexualized and gendered in traditional ways: The wilderness and the sublime are feminized in the term ‘virginal nature’, and the painter is written out as masculine and visionary.⁵⁴ All it takes for him to transform his feminized material into landscape/art, is his mind. So what happens when Heske apparently repeats Dahl’s old venture into the (un)known?

As hinted at above, many of Heske’s installations draw on embodiment, a typical feature of installation art. However, Heske and Schröder’s art works do not represent any particular feminine point of view lodged in the body, and nor do they expose the experience of being objectified. In both Heske and Schröder, gender, identity, and the body appear unfinished and precarious. Heske and Schröder’s strategies can be understood as partly parallel to the strategies Catherine Nash describes in her article “Reclaiming Vision: Looking at Landscape and the Body” from 1995.⁵⁵ Heske and Schröder both expose the look that frames landscape by removing the human point of identification in the spaces of landscape. Heske takes the hut, removes it from its place as an object to a masculine bourgeois look. The masculine look has invested it both with erotic desire and with sexuality in literature, and with classed embodiment in the ideology of the peasant. Schröder’s house, car, and spaceships appear inhuman, as bodiless machines, and they can no longer carry the vision of the nation or of the masculine hero on a mission to conquer the maiden and map the land as his.

By exhibiting the hut, the cabins, and the stone, Heske and Schröder perforate the imaginary spaces of the national self, and they draw attention to embodiment. *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa* in many ways greets me as a space of affect, as space where my national self is shown as precarious. Not only does the imaginary romantic world become ‘real’ before my eyes, *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa* also makes me aware that my self is fragmented, and must constantly be reinstated and reproduced. The Tafjord hut will ‘die’ if the French do not water the turf and take care of it, and my self is literally in the hands of the other. The art works of Heske and Schröder do not place us in opposition to the seemingly disembodied eye of romantic landscapes, but open a hybrid space where the boundaries separating eye and body are constantly being contradicted.

Whilst the travellers in their *voyages pittoresques* of the nineteenth century could confirm their inner self and experience the sublime in front of the mountains, the space of the twentieth-century *voyage pittoresque* is more likely to be, ironically: space. By juxtaposing the romanticist ship wreck situation with the spaceships from Star Wars, Schröder makes us aware of how images and narratives travel, and how the masculine hero of science fiction or computer games in many ways harks back to the romanticist hero facing sublime nature or taking part in the conquering and mapping of territory. The spaceship from Star Wars is part of the same ideology of power, except that in Schröder’s space there is no relief and no obvious pleasure. In Schröder’s *Delusions of Adequacy*, masculinity is left to itself. We do not know whether the spaceship is about to attack or has come to the rescue, and there are no people or traces of people. Princess Leia is not there to justify the actions of the hero and to comfort the viewer. The poor people in the boats are perhaps already dead. The lonely masculine hero on a mission to save his galaxy or to discover the land and the mountains can find no relief and is denied the pleasures of having mastered the field: There is no natural other to his self. Landscape cannot mirror his autonomous subject, the eye is unable to transcend the field and master the sublime. Schröder makes us aware of how technical devices in the shape of cars, spaceships, but also computers and cameras give us access to landscape: Landscape is mediated. But by letting the technical devices stand in for the human body, as elongations of it, Schröder also exposes the human body and subjectivity as incomplete and fragmented.

The installations by Schröder in this article do not deal with or point towards femininity or the female body specifically. Schröder puts masculinity, and thereby gender difference, as structures on display. Heske’s art works to the same effect, but in Heske there is a more explicit negotiation of bodily boundaries. As mentioned earlier, the doll’s head is important. We find it in *N.N.* and in *Avalanche*. In many ways, the head functions as a stand-in for the body; we recognize it as a representation of the human. It is a body-fragment, but it does not necessarily present itself as such. The head, after all, represents the whole body and the person in portraits, the head holds the brain and perhaps even the human spirit. But since Heske has removed the painted eyes, the rosy cheeks, and any features

that make the head resemble a human head, the doll's head also hints at the skull and at death.

According to Selene Wendt, the head has become a hollow symbol, and by removing the rosy cheeks it also becomes a 'gender-neutral object'.⁵⁶ In my view this is only partly the case. Dolls connote femininity. Without their 'make up', i.e. the painted eyes and rosy cheeks, the faces have lost their feminine character, but as objects they still ring of girls. Sending an object associated with femininity around the world, sometimes made of stone from the place where it is exhibited, opens up for a discussion of the intersection of place and body, landscape as space and femininity as a social identity.

The scientific look preoccupied with mapping the world is questioned in the project *N.N.*, where the head is used as an illustration of phrenology. The physician Franz Joseph Gall was the main proponent of phrenology, studying the shape of human skulls to establish the psyche and personality embedded in the brain as the seat of the human soul. Phrenology constitutes a psychological equivalent to geographical investigations; the human body, or head, is treated in the same way as landscape; it is territory to be mapped, given meaning, and taken under control. Phrenology was a theory both of the human psyche in general, and of individual identity. Gall listed 27 moral and intellectual faculties and a distinct region of the brain for each of them. Individual character could literally be mapped by examining the head.⁵⁷ The wish to form a general scientific theory of identity, based on objective vision, links phrenology to the scientific ideal of cultural geography, and to art as they are described by Rose. An important aspect of Gall's theory was also a theory of sexuality, and Gall located pleasure and lust in the cerebellum.⁵⁸ One of the arguments put forward to back his theory, was the difference in size between the male and female neck: The male neck would generally be broader than the female. Masculine sexuality as active is both cause and effect in this theory.⁵⁹ In *N.N.*, Heske portrays the theory. Inscribing it on a doll's head might seem like an ironic comment, it is after all considered to be a pseudo-science. But in my view Heske's *N.N.* should also be read as intervening in the nineteenth-century two-sex model and the idea that one organ (the sex) can stand for body and identity as a whole.⁶⁰ *N.N.* intervenes at a critical point and deconstructs the idea that identity has its origin in one essential part of the body or can be found on the surface of the earth/body.

Viewed together with Heske's video paintings, where she has filmed avalanches in Tafjord, enlarged them, and printed the coloured pixels on metal plates, we see how Heske blurs the boundaries separating body and landscape: The head is studied as landscape, and landscape as an immaterial soul. Science and aesthetics seem intertwined, and it becomes impossible to keep up the spatial division between natural science and the mysticism of the concept of Mother Nature and our privileged place within the space of romantic landscape. The orchestration in Dahl's paintings, where we can oscillate between identifying with the bourgeois white man's neutral and free-floating eye and the peasant body/hut/stone inside the painting, is deconstructed. The erotic idea of landscape as an innocent virgin

who willingly accepts our wish to experience the sublime, falls to the ground. Both the pleasure of control and the erotic pleasure of objectification are lost, and we are unable to transcend and control the sublime.

Conclusion

I began this article by directing attention to the mountain, and the idea that the mountain is at the core of Norwegian identity. In the course of the analysis, I hope to have clarified some of the problems related to such an idea. If Norwegians have lived their lives with and by the mountain for centuries, why is it that the mountain is suddenly discovered only at the beginning of the nineteenth century? Why is it so obvious that what J.C. Dahl saw, when he looked at his land and the mountains, was landscapes, and not just huts, cabins, stone, trees or fields? And why do we insist that when Marianne Heske sends an old hut built in the seventeenth century from Tafjord to Paris she is actually remediating Norwegian landscape? Are Dahl and Heske part of the same project?

Most readings of Heske and Schröder place them firmly in a contemporary context, where references to art history and other visual traditions are common. Postmodern art is an art of quotations and of play with origins. By exploring the reference often made between the two artists and the concept of 'landscape' in art history, I hope to have shown how many readings that emphasize the deconstructive aspects of Heske and Schröder's art, often place their art firmly into a traditional narrative, where landscape figures as a genre. The many references to Heske's walks in the mountains of Tafjord and her sudden discovery of the Tafjord hut have elements of an old story of the visionary romantic artist, and treat landscape as an object to gaze at and not as a space of contested meaning. Heske's art is inscribed into a narrative of Norwegian landscape, and the play on the boundaries between place, as the specific parameters of a site, and space, the experience, meaning, and value invested in the practice of places. Moving the Tafjord hut from Tafjord to Paris and back deconstructs the whole idea of place as the *origin* of space: *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa* originates both in Tafjord as a place, and in national romantic landscape painting and visions of nature as spaces. But as conceptual art it also originated in the Centre Pompidou, a concrete site, where the art institution as space can play its part, and a site that is also connected to Paris as the capital of culture.

The question of a national landscape is contested in *Prosjekt Gjerdeløa*, and in the second part of the article I shed light on the gendered aspects of the national story of landscape. Heske and Schröder's art works can be seen as interventions in the spaces of the masculine hero of art history and cultural geography. As I stated in the introduction, Schröder and Heske are not feminist on account of their female bodies or because they express any kind of inherent identity. The feminist effect of the artistic practices of Schröder and Heske can rather be found precisely in their contestation of gender and the body as fixed spaces of meaning. It is because they create images that appear to be parallel to romantic landscapes,

and then contest them by exposing the framing of romantic landscape in stories of the masculine hero, of identity as body, and of culture as a matter of the actual Norwegian mountainside, that they can be claimed for feminism. They do not interfere in the space of romantic landscape from a position outside of discourse, but by giving meaning and value to hybrid space they represent what Teresa de Lauretis calls a 'view from elsewhere', defining this as 'the elsewhere of discourse here and now, the blind spots, or the space-offs, of its representations'.⁶¹ In this way their art opens for new conceptualizations of the body and of identity.

Notes

- 1 Karin Hellandsjø, 'Fjellet i norsk kunst: oppdagelse/formasjon/visjon', in Karin Hellandsjø, ed., *Fjellet i norsk kunst/The Mountain in Norwegian Art* (Oslo: Labyrinth Press/Henie Onstad Art Center, 2008), 7. Landscape and the tradition of walking in the mountains to enjoy the view also seems motivational when the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity every year finances a hike to Galdhøypiggen for immigrants of all nationalities; understanding Norwegian culture seems to go by way of the mountain.
- 2 Mieke Bal, *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 7.
- 3 Malcolm Andrews, *Landscape and Western Art* (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7.
- 4 Gunnar Danbolt, *Norsk kunsthistorie. Bilde og skulptur frå vikingtida til i dag* (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 2009) and Gunnar Danbolt, *Frå modernisme til det kontemporære. Tendensar i norsk samtidskunst etter 1990* (Oslo: Samlaget, 2014).
- 5 For a discussion of the changes in the concept of site specificity, see Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another. Site Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 2004).
- 6 Nicolas Bourriaud, 'Marianne Heske and the Art of Relocation', in Selene Wendt, *Marianne Heske* (Oslo: Stenersenmuseet, 2010).
- 7 For documentation of this project, see Marianne Heske, *The Stone Story* (Oslo: Labyrinth Press, 1999).
- 8 Nicolas Bourriaud, 'Marianne Heske and the Art of Relocation'.
- 9 Craig Owens, 'The Allegorical Impulse: Toward a Theory of Postmodernism', *October* 12 (1980): 67–86; Gunnar Danbolt, 'Fra symbolets identifikasjon til allegoriens distanse. Noen refleksjoner omkring Marianne Heskes festspillutstilling 1993', *Kunst og kultur* 2 (1994): 72–104. See also Gunnar Danbolt, *Norsk kunsthistorie. Bilde og skulptur frå Vikingtida til i dag* (Oslo: Samlaget 2006), 420.
- 10 The painting series consists of the following paintings: *Landscape with Car* (80 x 110 cm), *Landscape with House* (80 x 150 cm), *Landscape in the Shape of a Cartoon* (40 x 60 cm), and *Landscape with Waterfall* (80 x 80 cm).
- 11 Ingvild Pharo, 'Formation/Vision', in Hellandsjø, *Fjellet i norsk kunst/The Mountain in Norwegian Art*, 166.
- 12 A term I adopted myself in my review of Schröder's exhibition at the Galleri Bouhlou in Bergen in 2007. Sigrun Åsebø, 'Uhyggelig kunstnerisk sampling', *Bergens Tidende*, December 7, 2007. See also Tone Hansen, 'The Delicate Membrane of the Art Space', *Odd Magazine* 1 (2005).
- 13 Øystein Ustvedt, *Ny norsk kunst etter 1990/New Norwegian Art since 1990* (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2011), 165.
- 14 For a thorough discussion of the concept of remediation, see Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1999).
- 15 Hansen, 'The Delicate Membrane of the Art Space'. For Bourriaud's text, see Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002).
- 16 Marianne Heske, «Prosjekt Gjerdeløa»: Tafjord, Paris, Oslo, Tafjord (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1984). Also cited in Bourriaud, 'Marianne Heske and the Art of Relocation', 47.

- 17 Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 23.
- 18 Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, 28.
- 19 There are many concepts of art at work in Norwegian art history, and often they are not directly related to landscape. However the idea that Norwegian culture is rooted in landscape as a general concept seems to return in many different guises, and always to be present when we talk about landscapes. In Norway landscape does not give way to abstraction or to art for art's sake in the twentieth century, and the idea of Norwegian art *as* land(scape) seems to haunt art history and art criticism. Abstraction was in the interwar years and after dismissed with reference to the boundary separating nature from (urban) culture by art critics who insisted that cubist influence would be bringing artificial flowers into our garden. See Steinar Gjessing, 'Nyttevekster og kunstige blomster. Noen bemerkninger om modernismens kår i Norge. 1920–40', in *Statens 91. Kunstutstilling 1978* (Oslo: NP, 1978): 4–11. When abstraction entered the Norwegian art scene it was by way of landscape and French lyrical abstraction in the 1960s. And as we have seen, also conceptual art evolved through practices related to the landscape tradition; Marianne Heske's *Gjerdeloa/The Tafford Hut* is, as I have indicated above, considered to be one of the most significant works of conceptual art in Norway.
- 20 W. J. T. Mitchell, 'Introduction', in Mitchell, ed., *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002). See also Steven Adams and Anna Gruetzner Robins, eds., 'Introduction', in *Gendering Landscape Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).
- 21 Mitchell, 'Introduction', 1f.
- 22 Mitchell, 'Imperial Landscape', in Mitchell, ed., *Landscape and Power*, 5.
- 23 For a discussion of the concept of 'reading in', see Mieke Bal, *Looking In: The Art of Viewing* (Amsterdam: G+B International, 2001) or Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the Canon, Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art's Histories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).
- 24 Mitchell, 'Introduction', 2.
- 25 Mitchell, 'Preface', in Mitchell, ed., *Landscape and Power*, viii. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (University of California Press, 1984), 117.
- 26 Seen as part of a larger economy of vision, it could also be argued that landscapes offer themselves as spaces of freedom for women artists. Stinne Bo Smith, 'Outdoor Spaces', in *As Women Tell it: Nordic Women Painters 1880-1900* (Copenhagen: Kunstforeningen, 2002).
- 27 Griselda Pollock, 'Inscriptions in the feminine', in Catherine de Zegher, ed., *Inside the Visible: An Elliptical Traverse of 20th Century Art in, of, from the Feminine* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 1996), 70.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Danbolt, *Norsk kunsthistorie*, 165.
- 30 Familiar from older narratives such as Kenneth Clark's *Landscape into Art* (London: Penguin, 1952).
- 31 In the story of J. C. Dahl, German romanticism and Caspar David Friedrich often serve only as midwives in the birth of Norwegian painting, Norwegian landscape came from Dahl's body, or rather mind, and after its childhood years in Dahl's care it has continued to lead a life of its own.
- 32 Nils Messel, 'Oppdagelsen av fjellet', in Nils Messel and Marianne Yvenes, *Oppdagelsen av fjellet* (Oslo: Nasjonalmuseet for kunst, arkitektur og design, 2008).

- 33 See Torstein Gunnarson, Lena Ahtola-Moorhouse, Frode Haverkamp, eds., *A Mirror of Nature: Nordic Landscape Painting 1840–1910* (Copenhagen: Statens Museum for Kunst; Helsinki: Ateneum/Oslo: Nasjonalmuseet for kunst, arkitektur og design; Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, 2006); Karin Hellandsjø, ed., *Fjellet i norsk kunst/The Mountain in Norwegian Art*; or Messel, 'Oppdagelsen av fjellet'. For a discussion of this, see chapter 6 in Sigrun Åsebø, *Femininitetens rom og kvinnekroppens grenser. Å lese kunstens historie med A K Dolven og Mari Slaatteliid* (PhD diss., University of Bergen, 2011).
- 34 Danbolt draws attention to Heske's use of contemporary media, but does not explore the question of what effect the use of new media has on meaning.
- 35 Danbolt, *Norsk kunsthistorie*, 419.
- 36 Bourriaud, 'Marianne Heske and the Art of Relocation', 47.
- 37 Danbolt, *Norsk kunsthistorie*, 156.
- 38 The stone in *Winter at Sognefjorden* is not any stone. It serves as a *repoussoir*, but it also in many ways stands in for the 'wanderer'. From where it is, we can see across to Fimreite, where the battle between king Sverre and Magnus Erlingsson took place in 1184. The stone and the snow emphasize the general feeling, symbolizing cold, death, past. The Slinde Birch grew on top of an old grave.
- 39 Bourriaud, 'Marianne Heske and the Art of Relocation', 47.
- 40 Marc-Antoine Laugier's book *Essai sur l'Architecture* came in 1753, and the theory of the primitive hut is generally seen as both romantic in terms of nostalgia and in terms of grounding architecture in nature, it can also be seen as one of the first theories that insists on function as the primary feature of architecture.
- 41 Ellen Rees, *Cabins in Modern Norwegian Literature: Negotiating Place and Identity* (Maryland: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2014).
- 42 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relasjonell estetikk* (Oslo: Pax Forlag, [1996] 2007).
- 43 Bourriaud, 'Marianne Heske and the art of relocation', 48.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 47.
- 45 For criticism on this point, see Claire Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics', *October* 10 (2004): 51–79.
- 46 Tafjord is a small place surrounded by steep mountains, a privileged topography in the imaginary geography of 'Norwegianness'. Coastal culture may enter the narrative of landscape painting, but it rarely carries the same weight as a space where *national* identity is performed. For some reason we do not seem to have the same degree of 'Norwegianness' when we go fishing as when we go hiking in the mountains.
- 47 The religious metaphor of baptizing comes from Arthur Danto's classic article 'The Artworld', *The Journal of Philosophy* 61, no. 19 (1964): 571–86.
- 48 Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: Continuum, 2004), 7.
- 49 Bourriaud, 'Marianne Heske and the Art of Relocation', 47. And he goes on describing the landscape of Tafjord as place/space: '[I]n a completely isolated location within the overwhelming natural surroundings of the Scandinavian alps, accented by dramatic fjords cut from granite'.
- 50 Danbolt, *Norsk kunsthistorie*, 419.

- 51 Ingvild Pharo, 'Formation/Vision', 166f. Pharo claims Heske is dealing with 'an overwhelming experience of nature that is transformed, not so much into a metaphysical reality, but into an expansion of one's own consciousness'.
- 52 See particularly p. 107 in chapter 5, 'Looking at Landscape: The Uneasy Pleasure of Power', in Gillian Rose, *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 86–112. See also Tricia Cusack and Sighle Bhreathnach-Lynch, eds., *Art, Nation and Gender: Ethnic Landscapes, Myths and Mother Figures* (Hampshire, UK, and Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2003).
- 53 As Messel emphasizes, the peasants had of course known the mountains for centuries, but it was only when the white bourgeois walked them and made them the object of a disembodied scientific and artistic look that they entered history: They were looked at 'for their own sake', and not experienced as seen for their use to the farmer or as a way of transportation. Messel, 'Oppdagelsen av fjellet', 10.
- 54 Danbolt, *Norsk kunsthistorie*, 165.
- 55 Catherine Nash, 'Reclaiming Vision: Looking at Landscape and the Body', *Gender, Place and Culture* 3 (1996): 149–69.
- 56 Selene Wendt, *Marianne Heske* (Oslo: Stenersenmuseet, 2011).
- 57 Jason Y. Hall, 'Gall's Phrenology: A Romantic Psychology', *Studies in Romanticism* 16, no. 3 (1977): 305–17.
- 58 Michael Shortland, 'Courting the Cerebellum: Early Organological and Phrenological Views of Sexuality', *The British Journal for the History of Science* 20, no. 2 (1987): 173–99.
- 59 In the beginning of the twentieth century, long after phrenology had been deemed a pseudo-scientific theory, using phrenological theories to disqualify the suffragettes and their campaigns was also common. The effect of phrenology was harder on women than on white western bourgeois men. For a discussion of phrenology and the suffragette campaign, see Lisa Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women: Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign 1907–14* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).
- 60 Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Harvard University Press, 1996); Toril Moi, *Hva er en kvinne? Kjønn og kropp i feministisk teori* (Oslo: Gyldendahl Norsk forlag, 1998).
- 61 Theresa de Lauretis, as cited in Pollock, *Differencing the Canon, Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art's Histories*, 7.

Inger Christensen

INGER CHRISTENSEN / NOVALIS / PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE

[ABSTRACT]

The Danish poet and essayist Inger Christensen (1935–2009) has been labelled a modernist, a postmodernist, an experimentalist, and an exponent of systematic poetry. However, all through her works runs her preoccupation with early German romanticism, the philosophical and poetological writings of Novalis in particular. Christensen's complex relationship with Novalis has so far received little scholarly attention. The aim of this tripartite article is to fill this lacuna by shedding light on the various ways in which Christensen engages with Novalis and renegotiates his romantic heritage. Central to Christensen's poetics is a concept derived from Novalis: *hemmelighedstilstanden* [the state of secrecy]. Reading this concept in conjunction with the contemporary German-Austrian poet Peter Waterhouse's corresponding concept of *Geheimnislosigkeit* [literally: secretlessness], Silje Ingeborg Harr Svare explores Christensen's renegotiation of Novalis's philosophy of subjectivity and language. Anne Gry Haugland addresses the complex and radical philosophy of nature that resonates throughout Christensen's works. While this philosophy of nature is indebted to German romantic *Naturphilosophie*, it is also informed by recent developments in the natural sciences: drawing on concepts in contemporary science such as biosemiotics, scalar ratios, and self-organizing systems – Haugland outlines the scientific context for Christensen's philosophy of nature. Finally, Klaus Müller Wille explores the relationship between Christensen's long poem *det* [It] and Novalis's unfinished philosophical novel *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* [The disciples of Sais], showing that *det* is informed by Novalis's fragment on a structural, a diegetic, a rhetorical, and a conceptual level.

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KEYWORDS *Early German Romanticism, Poetics, Subjectivity, Peter Waterhouse, Philosophy of Nature, Science, Biosemiotics, Semiotics*

SECRET OR SECRETLESSNESS?

On Poetological Dialogue and Affinities in Inger Christensen, Peter Waterhouse – and Novalis

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The works of the Danish poet Inger Christensen hold a unique position in the last fifty years of Danish literature. For many years a candidate for the Nobel Prize in literature, Christensen, from her debut in the early 60s to her final volume published in 1991, wrote poems characterized by a striking duality: both avant-garde and classical; simple and enigmatic; literary and reflective, and at the same time immensely popular. In this article I will address one of these ambiguities, namely Christensen's enduring interest in the early romantic philosopher Novalis, an interest which may seem inconsistent with the frequent labeling of her poetry as late modernist, even post-modernist. I will examine Christensen's association with Novalis, most clearly expressed in her early work, *det* [It] and in her poetics *Hemmelighedstilstanden* [The state of secrecy], by tracing another kinship: between Inger Christensen and the younger Austrian poet Peter Waterhouse.

In the German-speaking areas, the contemporary Austrian poet Peter Waterhouse is one of those who, through publication and literary events, have helped to highlight the writings of Inger Christensen.¹ The poetic affinity between Christensen and the younger Waterhouse has also been noticed, and there is little doubt that she has had great influence on his development as a poet. Commenting on a Danish publication of Waterhouse's poetry, the renowned critic Torben Brostrøm writes how Christensen immediately comes to mind, and he states that Christensen reverberates as a 'processed echo' in Waterhouse's poems.²

Looking at the key poetological publications by these two authors, it nevertheless is the *contrast* which is most striking. Inger Christensen published *Hemmelighedstilstanden* in 2000, after her main lyrical works: *det* (1969), *Brev i april* [Letters in April] (1979), *alfabet* [Alphabet] (1981) and *Sommerfugledalen* [Butterfly valley] (1991). In the twelve essays collected in *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, and the 'Digt om døden' [Poem on death] which is also included in this volume, Christensen explores the intertwining of language and the world, concerning herself with language as such, as well as with the language of poetry. The title essay of *Hemmelighedstilstanden* was written in connection with Christensen's visit to the Viennese 'Schule für Dichtung' in 1992, an institution with which Waterhouse was at that time affiliated. In 1996, four years after Christensen's visit to Vienna, Waterhouse published his own literary poetics, entitled *Die Geheimnislosigkeit. Ein Lese- und Spazierbuch* [Secretless. A book of reading and walking].³ In this work,

Waterhouse propounds his idea of a transparency and openness between language and landscape. For Waterhouse, moving in language also means moving in a landscape, and vice versa. This transparency is emphasized by the book's main title, *Die Geheimnislosigkeit*. It is tempting to ask whether there exists any connection between Christensen's *Hemmelighedstilstanden* and Waterhouse's *Geheimnislosigkeit*. Do we find a total opposition in the way the relationship of language to the world is seen in these two books, as the contradiction in their titles might seem to imply? Or is there a deeper connection or a similarity between their poetological positions, making Waterhouse's emphasis on openness and transparency also relevant to the poetry and poetics of Inger Christensen? And, if this is the case, what might this correspondence tell us about the relevance of Novalis to the poetry and poetics of Inger Christensen?

These are the questions that I pursue in this article, using Peter Waterhouse's poetics as lenses on Inger Christensen's poetry as well as on her poetological texts. Firstly, I will sketch how the concept of 'secrecy' found in Inger Christensen's poetics is closely related to Novalis. I then proceed to outline what elements are involved in Waterhouse's poetological understanding of the relationship between language and world as open and secretless. Finally I shall offer a reading of two central poems from Christensen's early systematic composition *det*. Showing how central elements from Waterhouse's poetics can be recognized and applied in the reading of Christensen's poetry, I will at the end of the essay be able to address the strong association with Novalis which informs the concept of secrecy in Inger Christensen's poetics in *Hemmelighedstilstanden*.

Secrecy in Novalis and Secretlessness in Waterhouse

'Der Sitz der Seele ist da, wo sich Innenwelt und Außenwelt berühren. Wo sie sich durchdringen, ist er in jedem Punkte der Durchdringung' [The seat of the soul is located at the meeting-place of the world within and the world without. Where they interpenetrate each other, there it is at every point of interpenetration].⁴ In this fragment from Novalis's 'Blüthenstaub' we find, in concentrated form, a figure of thought which is perhaps the most consistent in his work – the analogy or correspondence between the interior and the external world. Another passage, this time from the tale of 'Hyazinth und Rosenblütchen', which is included in the unfinished novel *Die Lehrlinge zu Saïs* [The disciples of Saïs], points out that this correspondence is not about the external world being subsumed by the romantic ego: 'Wir verstehn natürlich alles Fremde nur durch Selbstfremdmachung – Selbstveränderung – Selbstbeobachtung' [We naturally understand everything unknown to us only by becoming unknown to ourselves – *changing ourselves* – considering ourselves].⁵ The analogy between the interior and the external world recurs in Novalis's aphorism where Inger Christensen has found her central poetological concept, the 'state of secrecy': 'Das Äussere ist ein in einen Geheimniszustand erhobenes Innere' [The outer world is an inner world, raised to a state of secrecy].⁶

The fact that the analogy between the interior and the external world is clear and frequently postulated in Novalis's writings does not make our understanding of it any easier. Pointing to the accentuation of the night and the dream in Novalis's thinking, Otto Friedrich Bollnow suggests that the connection between the interior and the external world should be seen as something deep set and unavailable to our everyday understanding.⁷ The philosopher Nicolai Hartmann offers another explanation. Emphasizing the activist imperative in this central analogy in Novalis, Hartmann ties its characteristics as secret and veiled to the as-yet unrealized, that is to a task given to us.⁸

As Inger Christensen explicates the relationship between language and the world that emerges in the poem by Novalis's term 'state of secrecy', she transfers an analogy concerning the self and the external world to questions of language and world, as when she states that Novalis by this 'søger den altomfattende sammensmeltning af ord og fænomen' [is searching the encompassing fusion of the word and the phenomenon].⁹ What, then, when it comes to Peter Waterhouse? Is the individual subject in any way involved in the relationship between language and the external world which he explores in his *Geheimnislosigkeit*?

Hans Eichhorn has pointed out that the transparency between language and the world denoted by Waterhouse's term 'secretlessness' comes into being through a combination of concentration and purposelessness.¹⁰ When Eichhorn emphasizes how both concentration and purposelessness require simultaneous movement in language and in landscape, he implies someone moving, a pedestrian, so to speak, or in other words a subject. It is worth noting that Waterhouse himself, in the essay 'Gedichte und Teillösungen' [Poems and partial solutions], presents the subjectivity in question as both not-knowing and not-doing.¹¹ It is my contention that both the concepts of concentration and purposelessness, and the pedestrian, as well as a certain disability on the part of the subject, are of relevance to Christensen's poetry. Concentrating on two central poems in the systematic poetic work *det*, I will be able to examine this thesis, before turning my attention back to *Hemmelighedstilstanden*. Can the parallel reading of Waterhouse's poetics and Christensen's poetry help explain her transfer of Novalis's analogy between the interior and the external world to questions of language and the world, and the ostensible anti-subjectivity of this operation? Can it clarify the secrecy associated in her poetics with the relationship between word and thing, language and the world?

'I see that there is nothing to see'
– Necessary Blindness in *det*

Inger Christensen's *det* is organized according to clear principles and with systematic rigor. However, variation and diversity are the most prominent features of this work, and we can detect in it both individual and collective voices. Part of what Christensen's work achieves is to show the interdependence and connection between an individual and a collective aspect of language. In the following

I shall comment on the two poems which conclude 'LOGOS', the main part of *det*, namely poems 7 and 8 in the section 'TEKSTEN universaliteter' [TEXT universalities]. The two poems contain a kind of solution to what, during the development of *det*, has proved to be a struggle to find a foothold in language. This struggle is tied to an individual position, an 'I'. However, the interconnections between individuality and collectivity in *det* ensure that the many threads and voices in this complex work are here bound together.¹²

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| TEKSTEN | universaliteter |
| 7 | 8 |
| Jeg ser at der ikke er noget at se | Jeg ser de lette skyer |
| Ser at jeg elsker dig blindt | Jeg ser den lette sol |
| Ser at jeg går ind i en tåge | Jeg ser hvor let de tegner |
| For at finde vej | Et endeløst forløb |
| Fordi jeg kan se at i tågen | Som om de føler tillid |
| Kan jeg ikke finde vej | Til mig der står på jorden |
| Ser at disse bevægelser i mig | Som om de ved at jeg |
| Er trofaste mod mig | Er deres ord |
| [TEXT | universalities |
| 7 | 8 |
| I see that there is nothing to see | I see the weightless clouds |
| See that I love you blindly | I see the weightless sun |
| See that I walk into a fog | I see how easily they trace |
| To find my way | An endless course |
| Because I can see that in the fog | As if they trust in me |
| I cannot find my way | Here on the earth |
| I see that these movements within me | As if they know that I |
| Are faithful to me | Am their words] |

Let me begin with the second of these two poems. The 'Jeg' [I] seeing 'de lette skyer' [the weightless clouds] and 'den lette sol' [the weightless sun] in the first lines suggests a transparency and simultaneity between the individual being and the physical, ambient world. Language, too, partakes in this mirroring and reciprocity. Language and words are presented as correlation and identity: 'Som om de føler tillid / Til mig der står på jorden / Som om de ved at jeg / Er deres ord' [As if they trust in me / Here on the earth / As if they know that I / Am their words]. Here, in the very last lines of the poem, our traditional conception of language as our vehicle for designating the objects of nature is turned upside down. What is being expressed is a notion of the self, the 'I', as the language of the clouds and the sun. Rather than the 'I' using language to represent the natural objects, we

have nature expressing itself through the 'I'. However, the twice repeated 'som om' [as if] (meaning: 'it's after all not so') contradicts the identification and transparency associated with language. Rather than similarity and identity, we have difference and distance.

Recalling Peter Waterhouse's central poetic concept of secretlessness, there is reason to point out how the simple clarity existing between the 'I', language, and the world, in this poem is counterbalanced by something secretive and complex, precisely through the twice repeated 'som om' [as if]. Linking the non-real, the only-apparent, to language and words in this poem might, however, seem to put too much emphasis on language. After all, the term 'words' appears here at the very end of the poem, almost casually, as a loose idea about the self as expression of the natural phenomena. Still, in the larger context of *det*, the question of the artificiality and non-identity of language is asked continually. The theme of the artificiality of language and the non-identity of language and world is pinned down early on in Christensen's work, and it is turned and flipped towards the very end. The fact that 'ordene er ikke ét / med den verden de beskriver'¹³ [words are not one / with the world they describe] is pointed out as something highly problematic. The lines 'Ordene bliver hvor de er / mens verden forsvinder' [The words stay where they are / while the world vanishes]¹⁴ give a compressed expression of what constitutes the point of disclosure and criticism in large parts of *det*. This general issue concerning language resounds with reiterated 'som om' [as if] and 'ord' [words] in the final poem in 'LOGOS'.

In poem 8, then, we find transparency (which is so central to Peter Waterhouse's poetics) as well as obscurity. As we read the previous poem (poem 7 in 'TEKSTEN universaliteter' quoted above) and consider poem 8 in this light, we are reminded of other salient features of Peter Waterhouse's poetics. Poem 7 opens with a peculiar mixture of blindness and vision: 'Jeg ser at der ikke er noget at se' [I see that there is nothing to see]. The following verses show how the lack of orientation is used as a principle precisely *for* orientation: 'Ser at jeg går ind i en tåge / For at finde vej / For at jeg kan se at i tågen / Kan jeg ikke finde vej' [See that I walk into a fog / Because I can see that in the fog / I cannot find my way]. In these lines we easily recognize Waterhouse's disabled self – and it is worth taking notice of the fact that this disabled self is not a dissolved self. On the contrary, the 'I's' conscious orientation towards blindness may very well be read as an intentional purposelessness. Given the fact that the world and the natural phenomena stand out with striking clarity in the following poem (poem 8), this clarity can certainly be read as the 'I's' *concentrated look* at the surrounding nature. Through the blindness of the self, that is the 'I's' disability or fundamental limitation, we find a purposelessness which carries us over from poem 7 to the attentive focus on nature in poem 8.

It is my contention that the central themes in these two final poems – the not-knowing self, characterized by a necessary blindness as well as a certain purposelessness and concentration, and the both secretless and secretive relationship between language and the world – recur as the unifying themes in *det* as a whole.

But are these themes in any way relevant to Inger Christensen's poetics *Hemmelighedstilstanden*? That is, should the apparent contrast between the poetological secretlessness of Peter Waterhouse and Christensen's poetics of secrecy rather be seen as a veiled continuity and a dialogue?

Poetological dialogue: Christensen, Waterhouse – and Novalis

The reiterated 'som om' [as if] in poem 8 reflects on a micro-level the overarching issues of *det* as a whole – issues concerning the separateness of language, its non-identity with things. In poem 8, however, the separateness of language is no longer debilitating, as in prior parts of *det*, but exists side by side with openness to the natural world. Returning to *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, we shall see that language's separateness from things in the world not only goes hand in hand with transparency and secretlessness when it comes to the external world, but actually is seen as a prerequisite for this transparency.

Returning to *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, we should consider Novalis, from whose work Christensen derives her central poetological concept of 'secrecy'. *Hemmelighedstilstanden* contains numerous references to Novalis, including a long quotation, in Christensen's own translation, from Novalis's text 'Monolog' [Monologue]. 'Monolog' was written in 1798 and deals with the relationship of language to the world. Although short, this text is often considered Novalis's most important philosophical statement. It sets out to define the true nature of language:

Es ist eigentlich um das Sprechen und Schreiben eine närrische Sache; das rechte Gespräch ist ein bloßes Wortspiel. Der lächerliche Irrtum ist nur zu bewundern, daß die Leute meinen – sie sprächen um der Dinge willen. Gerade das Eigenthümliche der Sprache, daß sie sich blos um sich selbst bekümmert, weiß keiner.

[Speaking and writing is a crazy state of affairs really; true conversation is just a game with words. It is amazing, the absurd error people make of imagining they are speaking for the sake of things; no one knows the essential thing about language, that it is concerned only with itself.]¹⁵

'Monolog' proceeds to proclaim an analogy between language and the world of natural objects: 'Sie machen eine Welt für sich aus – Sie spielen nur mit sich selbst, drücken nichts als ihre wunderbare Natur aus, und eben darum sind sie so ausdrucksvoll – eben darum spiegelt sich in ihnen das seltsame Verhältnißspiel der Dinge' [Their play is self-sufficient, they express nothing but their own marvelous nature, and this is the very reason why they are so expressive, why they are the mirror to the strange play of relationships among things].¹⁶ Although Novalis talks about 'mathematischen Formeln' [mathematical formulae], his observation applies to words as well – indeed, such a parallel between mathematical formulae and language is postulated by Novalis: both constitute a self-enclosed world and,

in so doing, reflect the external world. In Novalis's 'Monolog', then, we encounter the duality of secrecy and secretlessness that was present with such poignancy in the two poems from *det* discussed above. But what about the 'I' in *det* which 'ser at der ikke er noget at se' [see that there is nothing to see] and thus enters a self-limiting, necessary blindness – in order to make possible another form of vision? Is this self also present in 'Monolog' and in Inger Christensen's poetics?

In 'Monolog' subjectivity certainly seems at first glance to be present only to be mocked by language. However, the inversions which occur in the latter half of 'Monolog' change this view. Here the text's own performative paradox is being addressed. We are informed that language is by its very nature non-instrumental and non-communicative. In the second half of 'Monolog' this paradox is identified as the writer's paradox. How can I speak about the nature of language without at the same time betraying language by using it as a means of communication, the writer asks.

Without going into the details of Novalis's critical confrontation with the idealist philosophical tradition inaugurated by Fichte and his reflection-model of the self, it is nevertheless worth noticing how, towards the end of 'Monolog', the writer-I finds a solution to his own paradox by reconsidering his understanding of himself: 'Wie, wenn ich aber reden müßte? und dieser Sprachtrieb zu sprechen das Kennzeichen der Eingebung der Sprache, der Wirksamkeit der Sprache in mir wäre? und mein Wille nur auch alles wollte, was ich müßte?' [But what if I were compelled to speak? What if this urge to speak were the mark of the inspiration of language, the working of language within me? And my will only wanted to do what I had to do?]¹⁷ These reflections resonate with Novalis's explicit philosophical critique of the concept of the self in German idealism, represented by Fichte. In his *Fichte-Studien*, written a few years prior to 'Monolog', Novalis develops a critical reading of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*. He draws attention to language's difference, its non-identity with that which it names, but also the Fichtean understanding of the self as something which constitutes itself. Novalis's objection is directed against Fichte's idea that the self's objectifying grip on itself ('Ich bin ich' [I am I]) should be the basis of its self-knowledge and self-identity. When Novalis, in his *Vermischte Bemerkungen* [Miscellaneous remarks] (1797), writes that 'Ganz begreifen, werden wir uns nie, aber wir werden und können uns weit mehr, als Begreifen' [we will never understand ourselves entirely, but we are capable of perceptions of ourselves which far surpass understanding], this remark poignantly expresses how his rejection of the reflection-model of the self involves both a constraint and an extension, as can be seen in Manfred Frank's argument that we find a certain *romantic scepticism* in the thinking of Novalis and other Early German Romantics.¹⁸ In this line of scepticism, we find a reduction and a limitation of the human capacity for objective knowledge but also, as a function of this reduction, a defense for the individual which is also threatened to be revoked in our objectifying, generalizing thinking.

Returning to the poetry of Inger Christensen, the duality of constraint and extension inherent in Novalis's conception of the individual subject is easily re-

cognized in the two poems in *det* discussed above. The ‘I’ which in poem 7 ‘ser at der ikke er noget at se’ [see that there is nothing to see], and which ‘går ind i en tåge / For at finde vej / Fordi jeg kan se at i tågen / Kan jeg ikke finde vej’ [walk in the fog / To find my way / Because I can see that in the fog / I cannot find my way], and concedes that ‘disse bevægelser i mig / Er trofaste mod mig’ [these movements within me / Are faithful to me], can easily be seen as a version of an early-romantic subject. In this and the subsequent poem, blindness and fog open up a different kind of vision. Renouncing purpose and intention, the ‘I’ becomes able to see what it is surrounded by ‘[h]ere on earth’. If we recall the initial contrast between the concept of secretlessness in Peter Waterhouse and Inger Christensen’s state of secrecy, we may be able to see how the proximity of language to the world in Christensen’s poetry and poetics can be both obvious and secretive. The I must be brought beyond its own objectifying abilities in order for it to experience the very basic situation of standing on the earth with the clouds above, illuminated by the sun.

Notes

- 1 Waterhouse edited the anthology *Ein chemisches Gedicht zu Ehren der Erde. Auswahl ohne Anfang ohne Ende* (Vienna: Residenz Verlag, 1997) and participated with a short essay in *Die Weisse Ekstase* (Vienna: Folio Verlag, 2008), using drawings by the Austrian artist Johannes Zechner to illustrate excerpts from Inger Christensen's *det*.
- 2 Torben Brostrøm, 'Kirsebær smager sødt', *Information*, Juni 17, 1999, s.
- 3 Peter Waterhouse, *Die Geheimnislosigkeit. Ein Lese- und Spazierbuch* (Vienna: Residenz Verlag, 1996).
- 4 Novalis, *Schriften*, vol. II (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1960), 419. The English translation is from *Classic and Romantic German Aesthetics*, ed. J. M. Bernstein (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2003), 205.
- 5 Novalis, *Schriften*, vol. III, 429 (my translation).
- 6 Novalis, *Schriften*, vol. III, 103 (my translation).
- 7 Otto Friedrich Bollnow, 'Zum "Weg nach innen" bei Novalis', in *Festschrift für Eduard Sprangers 60. Geburtstag* (Berlin: H.Wenke, 1942), 119–40.
- 8 Nicolai Hartmann, *Die Philosophie des deutschen Idealismus, T.1: Fichte, Schelling, und die Romantik* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), 191.
- 9 It should be noted, though, that the exploration of language is of central importance also in Novalis's writings.
- 10 Hans Eichhorn, 'Der Spaziergänger. Versuch über Peter Waterhouse', *Edition Text+Kritik* 137, no. 1 (1998): 34.
- 11 Peter Waterhouse, "Gedichte und Teillösungen", in *Die Schweizer Korrektur*, ed. Urs Engeler, (Basel: Engeler, 1995), 61.
- 12 For the English translation, see Inger Christensen, *it*, trans. Susanna Niew (New York: New Direction Books, 2005), 223.
- 13 Inger Christensen, *det*, (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1969), 53.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Translated by Joyce P. Crick for *Classic and Romantic German Aesthetics*, ed. J. M. Bernstein (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2003), 214.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 *Ibid.*, 203. See, for instance, Manfred Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism* (New York: State University of New York Press), 2004.

NATIVE AND DEEP-ROOTED

Positions in Inger Christensen's Philosophy of Nature

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Central to Inger Christensen's philosophy of nature is the idea that the human language – including the language of poetry – may be perceived as part of nature.¹ We are connected with nature by being part of its multifarious forms, Christensen writes, that is, the language of poetry is indeed a form, a structure, in itself, but also a form which is continuous with the world that it describes.² The poet is indeed creative in her use of language, but the poem's examination of language and the world may just as well be viewed as a reflection of nature in itself: our way of thinking and creating languages (be it mathematical formulas or poems) is an example of nature's forms. When we think about the world through language, it is also the world thinking about itself.³

Inger Christensen's writings are rich in references to both science and literature, and by way of references her philosophy of nature points to Novalis, in particular, to his romantic *Naturphilosophie*.⁴ However, her philosophy of nature is also part of a larger trend unfolding across the canvases of art and science at the time she was writing. In the 1960s a perspective on nature was developed in a momentum that ran parallel to an increased environmental awareness. A number of shifts and changes in the scientific description of the world took place as new fields of research gained ground. Thus, Christensen's writings represent a time when new scientific discoveries (in the humanities and in the natural sciences) reshaped the perception of nature from viewing the human mind as something radically different from nature towards an understanding of human action and mind as being part of nature. In the natural sciences, chaos and catastrophe theory, models of complex self-organizing systems, and fractal geometry became new interdependent fields of research. This intellectual and scientific movement rekindled an interest in the relationship between the part and the whole, while also identifying universal principles of form that transgressed and challenged the traditional boundaries between the sciences of culture and the sciences of nature. Christensen's writings can be viewed as an expression of these trends. Through poetic language she formulates and explores the osmosis between human and natural processes and unfolds a perspective on nature that includes language itself.

In the essay *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, Christensen writes:

Poesien er bare én af menneskets mange erkendelsesformer, og der går det samme skel ned gennem dem alle, hvad enten det drejer sig om filosofi, matematik eller naturvidenskab. Et skel mellem dem, der tror at mennesket med sit sprog står udenfor verden, og dem der oplever, at et menneske med sprog er en del af verden; og at det derfor bliver nødvendigt at forstå, at idet mennesket udtrykker sig, er det også verden der udtrykker sig.

[Poetry is but one of the human forms of insight, and the same dividing line applies to all of them whether it be philosophy, mathematics or natural science. A dividing line between those who believe that man with his language is outside the world and those who think that man with his language is part of the world; and that is why it is necessary to understand that when man expresses himself, the world is also expressing itself.]⁵

Christensen places herself on the latter side of the dividing line. On the other side, we find the conception that nature is radically different from culture and that culture and language are applied to the world *from outside*, as it were. However, Christensen sees human language and culture as interwoven with and within the world. She uses the terms 'indfødt' [native] and 'indgroet' [deep-rooted] to describe humankind's place in this perspective on nature.⁶ This idea implies transcendence of the absolute dividing line between nature and culture, mind and body, and ultimately between language and the world: a post-dualistic poetics.

I will discuss three different aspects of this poetics – three assumptions in Christensen's philosophy of nature which play a significant role in her works and which have parallels in contemporary science. The three aspects are the idea of a semiotic community between the living, a focus on scalar ratios and division into levels, and finally the conception of the ability of matter to self-organize.

The Nature of Language

The conception of language as part of nature's idiom is based on a conception of the semiotic precondition of the living:

Jeg er nødt til at finde mening i verden, ikke fordi det er noget, jeg beslutter mig til, måske ikke engang fordi det er noget, jeg ønsker, men fordi jeg som en anden indfødt, på samme måde som et træ er indfødt, ja virkelig som en indgroet del af verden, ikke kan undgå at skabe mening, den mening, som er der i forvejen, og som ustandselig forvalter sin egen forvandling, som det vi forstår ved at overleve.

[I have to find meaning in the world, not because it is something I decide to do or because it is even something I want, but because I, as any other native, in the same way a tree is native, yes, really like a deep-rooted part of the world, cannot avoid creating meaning, that meaning which is already there and which incessantly manages its own transformation as that which we mean by surviving.]⁷

This passage is taken from a short essay first published in 1991. The title of the essay, 'Den naive læser' [The naive reader], refers to a special writing position described by Christensen: The poet pretends that language and not the poet is writing the poem. Thus, the poem is something that happens, something that emerges with the poet not as creator, but as reader. When Christensen calls her essay the naive *reader* and not the naive *poet*, it bespeaks this writing position. The title reflects the poet's relation to the world, a fundamentally semiotic relation: Living is creating meaning. One is only able to survive by interpreting the world and reading the world as signs. This does not apply to human life only, but to life in general. All life (whether it be trees, ants or humans) must read the world and adapt accordingly in order to survive, and human language (whether it be the language of science or art) is simply a refined variation of this basic semiotic condition of life.⁸

From the fields of phenomenology and cognitive semantics, we are familiar with the conception of the anchoring of cognition and language in the bodily experience and in the material 'being in the world'.⁹ But Christensen takes it further and regards this fact as a general condition of life. With the conception of a semiotic community between nature and man, Christensen approaches the research field of biosemiotics.¹⁰ Christensen does not use the term 'biosemiotics' in her writings, but this branch of scientific investigation is in its basic assumptions very similar to some of Christensen's wordings. Furthermore, biosemiotics is also historically and geographically close to her works (biosemiotics was established in Denmark at a time when Christensen's works were part of the cultural context – so perhaps poetry inspired science?). Biosemiotics shares a number of basic assumptions about levels, complexity and self-organization with the scientific trends already mentioned, and thus it outlines some important points of the new perspective on nature.

Biosemiotics – a scientific field based on the assumption that all living nature is supported by semiosis – is a new scientific field or, rather, a meta-science in the sense that biosemiotics is based on existing scientific knowledge, but provides a new general frame of understanding for the description of living systems. The Danish biochemist Jesper Hoffmeyer's doctoral thesis *Biosemiotik* [Biosemiotics] from 2005 [2008] is a seminal introduction to the field, but biosemiotics as a concept appears in articles from the 1990s, and the idea of biosemiotics has roots dating back even further.¹¹ According to biosemiotics, all living nature is supported by semiosis, and human language is a special variation on the semiotic condition to which everything is subjected. The human language variant differs due to the high volume of what biosemioticians call 'semiotic freedom', which refers to the fact that humans not only read the world through language, but are also capable of creating new fictional worlds in language.¹² But these fictional worlds are still rooted in the semiotic condition shared by life in general. We are – like nature for that matter – both created and creative: embedded in language, body, biology, and the world.¹³

Scale and Level

Inger Christensen's philosophy of nature is based on the idea that language is embedded in a greater order. This conception is prevalent in her works and she unfolds it especially on the level of form in her poetry, in the individual poems as well as in the overall structure of the works. Christensen is known for her predominant use of systems structuring the works. This applies in particular to her principal works *det* [It] (1969), *alfabet* [Alphabet] (1981), and *Sommerfugledalen* [The butterfly valley] (1991).¹⁴ Christensen's systems often bear references to processes of nature or to mathematics.¹⁵ But her use of systems also points to the conceptions of language as an embedded part of nature: by subjecting her poetical form to the system requirements she points out that it is not just the free creativity of the poet which determines the poem. The language of the poem is embedded in the system. By letting the creative process be governed by a system, the poet is thus repeating the embedded character of the language.¹⁶

Working with scalar ratios, levels and part-whole relationships is a characteristic feature both of Christensen's philosophy of nature and of her poetic strategies. It is important to emphasize that, according to Christensen, the fact that it is possible to find similarities not just between natural and cultural phenomena, but also between different scalar ratios, does not mean that the world becomes easy to grasp. Thus it is of great importance to Christensen that the similarity between part and whole is not an order that overrides the disorderly and makes the world predictable and comprehensible. On the contrary, Christensen points to a constant interaction between chaos and order at all levels, and emphasizes that what recurs at all levels is indeed the relationship between order and disorder, between form and formlessness, between life and death. It is a point made throughout Christensen's writings and it plays a particularly important role in the overall theme of inspiration and creativity in *Sommerfugledalen*.

Emergence and Inspiration

A basic question which Inger Christensen asks, as do contemporary trends in science, is whether or not nature itself holds potential for creation: the interpretation of the existence of creative powers in nature, generating new levels by emergent processes, took a decisive turn with the impact of the computer in the 1960s and 1970s. The immense increases in computing power made it possible to calculate what happens when elements interact in a system over time. By letting the computer calculate long enough it became apparent that emergent properties appear in both biological and physical systems, that is to say not only in animate but also in inanimate nature. Emergence may be interpreted as a term for a creative element in nature in the sense that nature can create something that is not implicit in its earlier stages. In the light of the concept of emergence, order and form are not created either by God or man but *from below*, from matter itself.¹⁷ In this context the word *self-organization* as a term for the phenomenon

of emergence is quite telling, because it emphasizes that we are dealing with an organization, a creation of form, which is not externally applied to the elements, but rather emerges from within the interacting elements themselves.¹⁸

The concept of emergence is interesting in relation to Christensen's philosophy of nature because her works continually revolve around the question of creation and inspiration, of what happens in the moment of inspiration when the poem, as Christensen puts it, suddenly writes itself – when the poet achieves the special state of self-abandonment, which Christensen, with a reference to Novalis, calls 'hemmelighedstilstanden' [the state of secrecy].¹⁹ It is a phenomenon Christensen describes as equivalent to the scientist's experience when a problem is resolved and the answer becomes obvious.²⁰ Christensen's philosophy of nature provides a radical interpretation of this phenomenon. When the poet in 'the state of secrecy' recedes as the creative and controlling subject, a space for the semantic creation process of language becomes available.²¹ The conception of 'the state of secrecy' is therefore a literary analogue to the conception of self-organization and emergence. The systems inserted into the work and governing its creation become a part of this strategy – and the inspiration unlocking the poet's 'state of secrecy' becomes a literary expression of the creative and form-organizing ability in matter. In this sense, both the processes and forms of the mind and art become just as real and natural as the very processes of nature.

Inger Christensen's philosophy of nature is thus based on a conception of nature as complex, level-divided, and self-organizing. As such, her philosophy of nature resembles the philosophy of nature related to significant scientific trends in her time. Combining reflections from numerous sources, from the Bible to chaos theory, on the relationship between language and nature, Christensen develops her philosophy of nature in an ongoing dialogue with literary and scientific traditions. Christensen is thus a writer who pursues her ideas through literature, science and philosophy across time. In so doing her writings reveal connections between romantic *Naturphilosophie* and recent tendencies in science and the arts. Though the scientific understanding of nature and natural processes has changed dramatically since the romantic period, Christensen's work suggests that romantic philosophers of nature and scientists of the twentieth and twenty-first century work along the same lines: Both share an interest in interpreting what it means to be human – in a perspective on nature where human beings and their language do not rise above nature, but are considered as part of nature.

Notes

- 1 This article is based on my thesis *Naturen i ånden – Naturfilosofien i Inger Christensens forfatterskab* [Nature in mind – natural philosophy in the writings of Inger Christensen], defended at the University of Copenhagen in 2012. The thesis investigates the complex and radical philosophy of nature which underlies Christensen’s writings. In my thesis, as well as in this article, I use the concept ‘philosophy of nature’ in the widest sense as reflections on the concept of nature not only in the fields of philosophy and science, but also in other disciplines. Thus, poetry can be said to contain a philosophy of nature if it includes considerations of the concept of nature and of man’s position in nature. In the writings of Inger Christensen, the philosophy of nature is found more or less in all the poems and novels and in the collections of essays *Del af labyrinten* [Part of the labyrinth] (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1982) and *Hemmelighedstilstanden* [The state of secrecy] (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2000).
- 2 Christensen, *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, 46.
- 3 Christensen expresses this thought in several essays, e.g. in the essay ‘Det er ord alt sammen’ [It is all words] in Christensen, *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, 57.
- 4 The articles by Silje Ingeborg Harr Svare and Klaus Müller-Wille in this volume unfold this connection.
- 5 Christensen, *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, 44 (my translation).
- 6 See passage quoted below.
- 7 Christensen, *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, 12 (my translation).
- 8 Christensen, *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, 12–6. The universal semiotic condition that all organisms must read the world in order to survive should not be taken as any specific argument concerning the logical or evolutionary priority of thought versus language in the evolution of our first human ancestors. There is an extensive debate in philosophy, linguistics, and a range of other disciplines about the respective priorities of language and thought. Christensen’s philosophy of nature is only relevant for these debates when seen as supporting a general anti-Cartesian stance held by many researchers who claim that both human spoken language and thought are rooted in natural semiotic processes seen in all organisms and not just the human species.
- 9 The French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty in particular plays an important role in Christensen’s writings. His phenomenology has also been important to cognitive semantics (as formulated by, e.g., George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) and for the development of biosemiotics.
- 10 See Haugland, ‘Sprogets natur’, *Kritik* 211 (2014): 65–72 for an introduction to Christensen and biosemiotics. See Haugland, *Naturen i ånden* (Copenhagen: Institut for Nordiske Studier og Sprogvidenskab, 2012), 201–9, for a discussion of the semiotic approach in Novalis, the Danish linguist Viggo Brøndal, and Jesper Hoffmeyer.
- 11 Jesper Hoffmeyer, *Biosemiotik. En afhandling om livets tegn og tegnenes liv* (Copenhagen: Ries Forlag, 2005). English version: Jesper Hoffmeyer, *Biosemiotics. An Examination into the Signs of Life and the Life of Signs* (Scranton, USA: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
- 12 Hoffmeyer, *Biosemiotik*, 222.
- 13 For an analysis of the duality between being created and creative as a theme in Christensen’s novel *Azorno* (København: Gyldendal, 1967), see Haugland, *Naturen i ånden*, 116–23.

- 14 All works in Inger Christensen: *Samlede digte* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1998). All three are available in Susanna Nied's English translation: *Alphabet* (New York: New Directions, 2001); *Butterfly Valley* (New York: New Directions, 2004); and *it* (New York: New Directions, 2006).
- 15 In *it*, the poems grow as a cell division from the word 'it' with the numbers three and eight as a guiding principle. In *Alphabet*, two systems meet, namely the alphabet and the Fibonacci sequence, the latter occurring in natural as well as cultural phenomena. In *Butterfly Valley*, Christensen uses the feedback structure of the crown of sonnets and the focus the crown of sonnets puts on the relation and similarity between part and whole to bring together processes in nature, mind and language.
- 16 Christensen writes about the numbers in *Alphabet* and the process of using numbers as a poetical strategy in Christensen, *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, 125–33. The use of systems as a poetical strategy in the writings of Christensen is also described in Tue Andersen Nexø, 'Vækstprincipper. Systemernes betydning i *alfabet*', *Passage 30* (1998): 77–89; Erik Skyum Nielsen, *Modsprogets proces* (Copenhagen: Arena, 1982); Erik Skyum Nielsen, *Engle i sneen* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2000); and Anne Gry Haugland, 'Mønsterdigtning. Betydningsvækst i Inger Christensens lyrik', *Kritik 155/156* (2002): 65–76.
- 17 For a discussion of the history of the concept, see David Blitz, *Emergent Evolution* (Boston: Kluwer, 1992). For an introduction to the concept, see Steven Johnson, *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software* (New York: Scribner, 2001).
- 18 The word *self-organization* is not new either, but it was of central significance in the systems theory of the 1960s and in the complexity research of the 1970s and 1980s as used by Stuart Kauffman, for example, in his *At Home in the Universe* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
- 19 Christensen, *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, 15, 40.
- 20 Christensen, *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, 45.
- 21 Haugland, *Naturen i ånden*, 218–9.

DISPERSION, COUNTERSYMBOLS, AND MUTUAL REPRESENTATION

*Inger Christensen's det
and Novalis's Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*

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The poet Inger Christensen is well known as a preeminent representative of the 'systematic' approach that characterizes Danish poetry of the 1960s.¹ However her work is not only inspired by the contemporary semiotic theories of French and American structuralism. She also alludes to French phenomenology and to the formal vocabulary of the Italian Renaissance.² While the references to these traditions have been explored previously, the close relation between Inger Christensen's writings and the aesthetics of German romanticism has been comparatively neglected.

Fortunately, two recently published PhD theses illuminate the significance of Christensen's affinity with German romanticism.³ In their studies both Anne Gry Haugland and Silje Ingeborg Harr Svare point out the obvious importance of Christensen's extensive use of quotations from Novalis in her long poem *det* [It] (1969) and in her collection of poetological essays, *Hemmelighedstilstanden* [The state of secrecy] (2000). Interestingly the two authors arrive at two totally different results. Whereas Haugland uses Christensen's relation to German romanticism to stress the importance of the philosophy of nature in her writings, Harr Svare takes her point of departure in the opposite hypothesis that Christensen's interest in romantic philosophy is based on considerations of language and the subject. Whereas Haugland stresses the clear differences between Christensen's modern philosophy of nature and the holistic thinking of the early nineteenth century, Harr Svare points to the astonishing similarities between Novalis's paradoxical and complex semiotic interests and Christensen's self-referential hermeneutics.

Inspired by these two studies, I would like to develop a third way to look at the relationship between Christensen and the aesthetics of German romanticism. In this context I will concentrate on the relation between Christensen's *det* and Novalis's novel *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* [The disciples at Sais], which is known to centre on 'the relationship between knowledge of nature and self-knowledge'.⁴ As mentioned above *det* contains several quotations from Novalis. Thus each of the eight poems in the section 'TEKSTEN konnexiteter' has an epigraph by Novalis. Despite the fact that the first of these epigraphs derives from *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, neither Haugland nor Harr Svare pay much attention to this particular text. My intention is to remedy this omission. I hope to show that Novalis develops a

poetical philosophy of nature which Christensen perpetuates in the framework of *det*. I shall begin with a longer presentation of *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* and then demonstrate how Christensen uses Novalis to develop her own epistemological writing methods.

Novalis' *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* as an Epistemological Treatise

Novalis wrote *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* in 1798 during his stay at the mountain academy Freiberg, where he devoted himself to widespread studies in science and philosophy. Friedrich Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck published the text – which remained a rather short fragment – in 1802 in the first edition of Novalis's writings. The novel has no proper plot but consists of dramatic monologues and dialogues in a lyrical and rhapsodic style. The first part of the novel 'Der Lehrling', told by an autodiegetic narrator, refers very abstractly to a community of disciples who are instructed by a teacher [Lehrer]. In the second part of the book, 'Die Natur', a group of travellers joins this community. In this part of the novel, it becomes even more difficult to relate the different passages of the text to specific voices or characters.

Earlier scholarship on the text centred on the religious and philosophical impact of these scraps of conversation. Later interpreters have clarified the relation between this impact and the complex artistic structures of the text.⁵ One could show that the two parts, 'Der Lehrling' and 'Die Natur', follow a triadic structured scheme. Because this scheme is characterized by an overarching 'Kompositionsfigur der gegeneinanderlaufenden Tendenzen' [composition figure of opposed tendencies],⁶ it does not constitute a closed totality, but invites the readers to incessant interpretations.

In the context of this short article it is impossible to give a full interpretation of Novalis's hermetic text. Instead I want to concentrate on the semiotic and epistemological models that are discussed in the doctrinal conversations of *Die Lehrlinge* and which Christensen refers to in her quotations from the text. The passage cited in *det* comes from the second part of Novalis's book and voices the opinion of 'Mehrere' [several]. That means that the personal pronoun 'wir' refers to an anonymous plural voice:

Wir brauchen nicht erst lange nachzuforschen, eine leichte Vergleichung, nur wenige Züge im Sande sind genug um uns zu verständigen. So ist uns alles eine große Schrift ... [Inger Christensen's omission]

[We do not need to investigate at length; a slight resemblance, a few indications in the sand are enough to inform us. Everything becomes a great Script ...] [Inger Christensen's omission]⁷

Christensen skips the final part of the sentence where the ‘several’ proclaim their almost unlimited cognitive capacity: ‘So ist uns alles eine große Schrift, wozu wir den Schlüssel haben, und nichts kommt uns unerwartet, weil wir voraus den Gang des großen Uhrwerks wissen’ [Everything becomes a great script to which we have the key; nothing is unexpected because we anticipate the evolution of the great time machine].⁸ With her omission Christensen stresses the dialogical gesture of Novalis’s text which – considered as a whole – abstains from formulating a closed doctrine and instead invites readers to think for themselves. Furthermore, the shortening of the quotation allows her to allude to the famous opening of Novalis’s text, where different natural phenomena are described as parts of a wondrous system of written signs which cannot be fixed in unalterable forms and which cannot be decoded with the help of one single key:

Mannigfache Wege gehen die Menschen. Wer sie verfolgt und vergleicht, wird wunderliche Figuren entstehen sehn; Figuren, die zu jener großen Chifferschrift zu gehören scheinen, die man überall, auf Flügeln, Eierschalen, in Wolken, im Schnee, in Kristallen und in Steinbildungen, auf gefrierenden Wassern, im Innern und Äußern der Gebirge, der Pflanzen, der Tiere, der Menschen, in den Lichtern des Himmels, auf berührten und gestrichenen Scheiben von Pech und Glas, in den Feilspänen um den Magnet her, und sonderbaren Konjunkturen des Zufalls, erblickt. In ihnen ahndet man den Schlüssel dieser Wunderschrift, die Sprachlehre derselben, allein die Ahndung will sich selbst in keine feste Formen fügen, und scheint kein höherer Schlüssel werden zu wollen.

[Men travel by many different paths. Whoever tracks and compares their ways will see wonderful figures arising; figures that seem to belong to the great Manuscript of Design which we descry everywhere, on wings of birds, on the shell of eggs, in clouds, in snow, in crystals, in rock formations, in frozen water, within and upon mountains, in plants, in beasts, in men, in the light of day, in slabs of pitch and glass when they are jarred or struck, in filings around a magnet, and in the singular Coincidences of Chance. In these things we seem to catch an idea of the key, the grammar to this Manuscript, but this idea will not fix itself into any abiding conception, and seems as if it were unwilling to become in its turn the key to higher things.]⁹

In one of her later essays, ‘Tilfældighedens ordnende virkning’ [The regulating effect of chance], Christensen does not simply quote this long passage; rather, the entire argument of the essay can be described as a long unfolding of this particular passage.¹⁰ Christensen uses Novalis’s text to illuminate her central idea that the relation between nature and language should not be described as an opposition, but rather as a form of structural analogy. Similarly, she is interested in the relation, thematised in *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, between the nature of language (or the nature of the mind) and the language of nature (or the spirit of nature). It is not just natural phenomena, such as crystals, mountains, plants or magnetic tracks, which are described as interpretable sign systems. The different methods, too – literally the ‘manifold ways’ – which the scientists use to discover these sys-

tems, are seen as signs to be interpreted. In this respect, the quotation does more than just express the old topos of the hidden book of nature.¹¹ This topos is combined with the astonishing concept that there are several ways or methods for interpreting these sign systems: ‘Men travel by many different paths’. This means that the language of nature is not described as a given semiotic system which can be represented in language in any simple way. On the contrary, nature’s semiotic system and its corresponding relations to other semiotic systems can only be analysed when the scientist produces them experimentally.¹² In this respect, science is described as a constant dialogue, i.e. a constant interaction with nature where the observer and the observed perpetually influence each other. *Die Lehrlinge* provides a detailed description of the corresponding semiotic experiments in which every new production of semiotic relations goes hand-in-hand with insight into more complex correspondences and analogies which, in turn, change the nature of perception:

Er [der Lehrer] sammelte sich Steine, Blumen, Käfer aller Art, und legte sie auf mannigfache Weise sich in Reihen ... Auf sein Gemüt und seine Gedanken lauschte er sorgsam. Er wußte nicht, wohin ihn seine Sehnsucht trieb. Wie er größer ward, strich er umher, besah sich andre Länder, andre Meere, neue Lüfte, fremde Sterne, unbekannte Pflanzen, Tiere, Menschen, stieg in Höhlen, sah wie in Bänken und in bunten Schichten der Erde Bau vollführt war, und drückte Ton in sonderbare Felsenbilder. Nun fand er überall Bekanntes wieder, nur wunderbarlich gemischt, gepaart, und also ordneten sich selbst in ihm oft seltsame Dinge. Er merkte bald auf die Verbindungen in allem, auf Begegnungen, Zusammen-treffungen. Nun sah er bald nichts mehr allein.

[He collected stones, flowers and every sort of insect, and set them out in many-fashioned lines. ... He listened heedfully to his own heart and to his thoughts. He knew not whither his longing was driving him. When he was older he wandered, beholding other countries, other seas, new skies, strange stars, unknown plants, animals and men; he descended into caves and marked how in courses and coloured strata the Edifice of the Earth had been built up. He manipulated clay into wonderful rock forms. At this time he found everywhere objects already known to him but marvellously mingled and mated, and strange vicissitudes often arose within him. Soon he became aware of the inter-relation of all things, of conjunctions, of coincidences. Ere long he saw nothing singly.]¹³

The scientific activity starts with the attempt to avoid given modes or schemes of perception which, for example, dissect nature by established taxonomies. Denouncing the ‘krankhafte Anlage der späteren Menschen’ [the morbid disposition of modern men] that is defined by insane ‘Theilungen, Zergliederungen’ [divisions, dismemberments] and ‘Zerspaltungen’ [splittings],¹⁴ the teacher’s production of a new series of objects leads to the recognition of astonishing equivalences. Trying to avoid differentiating between the diverse natural spheres, the teacher uses a method which could be described as a conscious form of ‘disper-

sion'. The dispersed perception leads to the simultaneous observation of objects normally separate from each other.

On first sight, the teacher seems to be interested in an experimental reinvention of a classical, analogical way of thinking which leads to an more genuine 'order of things'.¹⁵ However, as already noted, the tentatively established equivalences are of less importance than the cognitive effects of the teacher's practise, which, most of all, should change his mode of perception. The observation of similarities and correspondences joins together the observer's senses which have been artificially separated by education: 'In große bunte Bilder drängten sich die Wahrnehmungen seiner Sinne: er hörte, sah, tastete und dachte zugleich' [The perceptions of his senses thronged together in great variegated Pictures; he heard, saw, felt and thought simultaneously].¹⁶

Time and again, the disciples examine the aim of these experiments, which should result in a specific form of perception where the scientist influences nature whilst he is being physically and mentally influenced by the forces of nature:

Den Inbegriff dessen, was uns rührt, nennt man die Natur, und also steht die Natur in einer unmittelbaren Beziehung auf die Gliedmaßen unsers Körpers, die wir Sinne nennen. Unbekannte und geheimnißvolle Beziehungen unsers Körpers lassen unbekannt und geheimnißvolle Verhältnisse der Natur vermuthen, ...

[The substance of these impressions which affect us we call Nature, and thus Nature stands in an immediate relationship to those functions of our bodies which we call senses. Unknown and mysterious relations of our body allow us to surmise unknown and mysterious correlations with Nature, ...]¹⁷

In the light of these complex theoretical reflections on the sensuality of cognition, it is perhaps not surprising that the semiotic and perceptual experiments of the teacher are also described as a poetic activity. The disciples use metaphors of musical forces and affects to characterise the interplay between the manipulating and the manipulated forms of perception. In their eyes, the scientist literally plays on the instrument of nature. He tunes nature as an instrument ('das Instrument stimmen') and he is influenced by the moods of nature ('durch das Instrument gestimmt werden'): 'Der eigentliche Chiffriker wird ... auf der Natur, wie auf einem großen Instrument phantasieren können, ...' [The interpreter proper will ... improve on Nature as on some great instrument, ...].¹⁸ This claim also shows the way in which the disciples fuse the musical metaphor with the semiotic activity of ciphering and deciphering. In other words, they describe how the teacher uses semiotic or rhetorical transfers to change his fundamental mode of reading nature. Furthermore, this dynamic process of continuous ciphering and deciphering has as its final aim 'einem innig lebendigen Zustande zwischen zwey Welten' [a condition of relationship between two worlds] where subject and object, 'empfinden und denken' [feeling and thinking], 'Innenwelt' [the interior]

and 'Aussenwelt' [the external world], nearly coalesce.¹⁹ The experiments and their rhetorical devices are described more precisely in the beginning of the novel:

Er [der Lehrer] freute sich, Fremdlinge zusammenzubringen. Bald waren ihm die Sterne Menschen, bald die Menschen Sterne, die Steine Tiere, die Wolken Pflanzen, er spielte mit den Kräften und Erscheinungen, ...

[He [the teacher] took pleasure in bringing strangers together. Sometimes the stars became men to him, men as stars; stones were as animals, clouds as plants; he sported with forces and phenomena; ...]²⁰

The teacher uses the rhetorical figure chiasmus (Menschen-Sterne – Sterne-Menschen) to establish a new mode of thinking which allows him to modify the conceptual metaphors of his experience. He does not only attempt to comprehend stars by men. Rather, he uses the redoubled metaphor (stars as man, man as stars) to analyse the possibilities and the limits of this analogy. The importance of this specific chiastic way of thinking is also reflected in Novalis's *Das allgemeine Brouillon* [Notes for a romantic encyclopaedia] where he outlines a 'theory of the mutual representation of the universe' which rests on the following operation: 'Every symbol can be symbolized again by that which it symbolizes – countersymbols'.²¹ Especially the notion of 'countersymbols' – where the two parts of the metaphor ('stars' as tenor, 'men' as vehicle) are inverted ('men' as tenor, 'stars' as vehicle) – is connected to the use of chiasmus.

However, it must be emphasized that the epistemological argument summarized above does not remain unchallenged in Novalis's novel. Rather, the reader is confronted with other voices that explicitly ridicule the teacher's poetic form of natural science:

'Die andern reden irre', sagt ein ernster Mann zu diesen. 'Erkennen sie in der Natur nicht den treuen Abdruck ihrer selbst? Sie selbst verzehren sich in wilder Gedankenlosigkeit. Sie wissen nicht, daß ihre Natur ein Gedankenspiel, eine wüste Phantasie ihres Traumes ist.'

['The others rave', said a serious man to these last. 'Do they not recognise in Nature a true image of themselves. They consume themselves in a savage nescience. They do not know that their Nature is a conjuration of their thought, a barren phantasy of their dream'.]²²

As we will see in the next section it is precisely this conflicting combination of a highly metaphorical way of thinking and a critique of the metaphor, which Christensen will deepen and sharpen in the framework of *det*.

The conception of a 'Wunderschrift' in Inger Christensen's *det*

At first sight, it may seem inappropriate to compare a fragmentary novel of the early nineteenth century with a tightly-constructed long poem which is clearly influenced by the revolutionary mood of the 1960s. But following Christensen's own references in her essays, I would like to use my preceding elaborations to illuminate the way in which the close connection between *det* and *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* could further be examined.

Certainly, Novalis's reflections on the epistemological relevance of an experimental poetic thinking play a central role in Christensen's work.²³ Her poetological reflections centre on the critique of a simple representational thinking where language is seen in opposition to nature. Like the disciples in *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, Christensen works with a very ambitious concept of experimental poetic praxis by which she tries to re-establish the primordial correspondences between language and nature. At the same time, language is constantly defined as a natural phenomenon in her writings.²⁴ The correlating interest in the nature of language goes hand-in-hand with an interest in the languages of nature. In other words, Christensen tries to invent a complex, dynamic and self-emerging semiotic system – a *Wunderschrift* – that mirrors the network of equivalences established by the language of nature. Like *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, *det* is characterized by reflections on 'the morbid disposition of modern men' – a disposition characterized by insane 'divisions, dismemberments' and 'splittings' (quotes from *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, see above).

The cosmogony outlined in 'Prologos' (the first section of *det*) may serve as an illustration. 'Prologos' describes the decline of a vivid dynamic process that stiffens in fixed forms and finally freezes into the architectonic segmentation of urban life. However, the story of this progressive decline is subverted by the formal organisation of text that rests on ongoing dynamic interactions between typography and sound, visual and auditory elements, linguistic and mathematical structures.²⁵

The fundamental dynamic structure of the 'Prologos' offers the basis for an immense number of metaphors which produce astonishing similarities and correspondences in 'Logos' (the main part of *det*). The poem 'Scene integriteter 5' [Stage integrities 5] showcases the attempt to create an experimental *Wunderschrift*. In this poem, Christensen uses a catalogue of composite words to establish correlations and blendings between natural, architectonic and bodily concepts as well as between the interior and the external world:

vandtrapper stenhimle vindhuse
luftkældre regnhjerner sandkroppe
klippemund flodmave iskøn
snelunger kulhjerner skyfingre
saltnerver jordøjne hjertesorg

[watersteps stoneskies windhouses / aircellars rainhearts sandbodies / cliffmouths river-
stomachs icesexes / snowlungs coalbrains cloudfingers / saltnerve eartheyes heartache]²⁶

As the general similarities between the philosophical dimensions of Christensen's poetry and Novalis's thinking are sufficiently documented in Haugland's and Svare's doctoral work, it is not necessary to dwell further on this aspect here. My point is that Haugland's attempt to differentiate between, on the one hand, the holistic philosophy of nature in romanticism, and, on the other hand, the more complex models of whole-part-relationships in contemporary science, should be reformulated in the light of the advanced semiotic reflections in *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*. Novalis's text does not pay homage to a simple holistic thinking. On the contrary, its tropological observations could be used for critical reflections on the simple schemes and models of a holistic (mythical) world-view.

In essence, it could just as well be argued that Christensen's specific form of *Naturphilosophie* has more in common with Novalis's romantic concept of an experimentally and rhetorically inspired poetics of nature than with the trends in recent philosophy of nature to which Haugland refers. The close relation between Christensen's and Novalis's writing rhetorical strategies can be illustrated by their attempt to coalesce the constitution of a network of metaphorical correlations with an ongoing critique of metaphor. The criticism of the serious men in *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* (the men who accuse the disciples of 'savage nescience')²⁷ finds its counterpart in Christensen's overt critique of her own (and of Novalis's) metaphors:

[O]rdene er ikke ét
med den verden de beskriver.
Ord har ikke vinger.
Og de hverken har eller får blomster.

[[T]he words are not one / with the world they describe. /
Words do not have wings / And they neither flower nor will.]²⁸

The renewal of an analogical thinking and the attempts to poeticize science are thus explicitly criticized in both texts. Both *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* and *det* are characterized by a perpetual oscillation between naive enthusiasm and cool irony.²⁹ Christensen amplifies this oscillating effect by confronting Novalis's complex reflections on a *Wunderschrift* with the far more prosaic writing-theories of phenomenology and structuralism.³⁰

As mentioned above, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* is structurally sophisticated. The different chapters and subchapters of the novel follow a similar scheme of triadic patterns. This means that the interest in structural equivalences thematised in the discourse of the disciples is reflected on a formal level. One could say that the text is shaped as an organic whole. However, as Jury Striedter has shown, this organizing principle is subverted by intentional contradictions and incon-

sistencies.³¹ *det* is characterized by a similar contradiction. Despite the apparent correspondences between the individual parts of the poem (the three chapters ‘SCENEN’, ‘HANDLINGEN’ and ‘TEKSTEN’ of ‘LOGOS’ follow the same principle of eight subchapters each of which contain eight poems), the text cannot be described as a closed organic whole. Like *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, *det* must be described as a dynamic text informed by hidden inconsistencies and a principle of subtle displacement.

These general, structural similarities between *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* and *det* recur in the rhetorical form of the single poems. Christensen’s rhetoric is characterized by her frequent use of asymmetrical chiasmic structures:³²

Elskede verden
 der fungerer som et billede af verden
Elskede billede
 der fungerer som en forandring af verden
...
Vores samvær -liv
 er sexuel og derfor mental
eller mental og derfor sexuel
 aktivitet elskede!

[Beloved world / that functions as an image of the world / Beloved image / that functions as a change in the world / ... / Our life together / is a sexual and therefore mental / or is a mental and therefore sexual / activity my love!]³³

The complex interconnection between ‘the world’ and ‘the image’, the ‘mental’ and ‘the sexual’ is reminiscent of Novalis’s strategy of mutual representation and countersymbols.

Christensen, then, does not merely allude explicitly to Novalis’s text. The close relations between *det* and *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* show that she uses Novalis’s fragment on a conceptual, structural, diegetic and rhetorical level.

Notes

- 1 For a representative view, see Steffen Hejlskov-Larsen, *Systemdigtningen. Modernismens tredje fase* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1971).
- 2 For a representative view on the relation between Christensen and Maurice Merleau-Ponty see Christine Seedorf, 'Utopi og dementi. Inger Christensens poetik i spændingsfeltet mellem skabelse og opløsning af betydning', *Spring* 18 (2002): 115–24; Klaus Müller-Wille, 'Sprachschleifen. Zu einer Theorie der Präposition in Inger Christensens *det*', in *Topologie. Falten, Knoten, Netze, Stülpungen in Kunst und Theorie*, ed. Ralph Ubl and Wolfram Pichler (Wien: Turia und Kant, 2009), 427–55. For a representative view on the relation between *det* and Dante's *Divina Commedia* see Bernhard Glienke, 'Themen in Systemen', *Skandinavistik* 5 (1975): 97–112.
- 3 See Anne Gry Haugland, *Naturen i ånden. Naturfilosofien i Inger Christensens forfatterskab* (Copenhagen: Institut for Nordiske Studier og Sprogvidenskab, 2012); Silje Ingeborg Harr Svare, *Det umuliges kunst. Tidligromantisk aktualisering i Inger Christensens lyrik* (Oslo: Institut for lingvistiske og nordiske studier, 2014).
- 4 See Herbert Uerlings, *Friedrich von Hardenberg, genannt Novalis. Werk und Forschung* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1991), 354.
- 5 Herbert Uerlings offers a good and detailed but somewhat outdated research survey on *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* in his handbook; see Uerlings, *Friedrich von Hardenberg*, 353–82. The research of the last 20 years has been dominated by discourse-analytical studies on Novalis's relation to contemporary sciences. For a representative view see Jürgen Daibler, *Experimentalphysik des Geistes. Novalis und das romantische Experiment* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2001), 169–212; Maximilian Bergengruen, 'Signatur, Hieroglyphe, Wechselrepräsentation. Zur Metaphysik der Schrift in Novalis' *Lehrlingen*', *Athenäum. Jahrbuch der Friedrich-Schlegel-Gesellschaft* 14 (2004): 43–67; Angelika Jacobs, *Stimmungskunst von Novalis bis Hofmannsthal* (Hamburg: Igel, 2013), 127–65.
- 6 Jury Striedter, 'Die Komposition der *Lehrlinge zu Sais*', in *Novalis. Beiträge zu Werk und Persönlichkeit Friedrich von Hardenbergs*, ed. Gerhard Schulz (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970), 259–82, here 264.
- 7 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, here quoted from Inger Christensen, *det* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1969), 184. The English translation is quoted from Novalis, *The Disciples at Sais and other Fragments*, trans. F.V. M.T. and U.C.B. (London: Methuen & Co., 1903), here 110.
- 8 The German quotations follow Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, in *Novalis. Werke, Tagebücher und Briefe Friedrich Hardenbergs. Band 1. Das dichterische Werk, Tagebücher und Briefe*, ed. Richard Samuel (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999), 199–236, here 212–3. (Novalis, *The Disciples at Sais*, 110).
- 9 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 201 (Novalis, *The Disciples at Sais*, 91).
- 10 See Inger Christensen, *Hemmelighedsstadien* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2000), 60–92.
- 11 A history of the conceptual metaphor of the book of nature is offered by Hans Blumenberg, *Die Lesbarkeit der Welt* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1989), 233–66 (on Novalis).
- 12 Daibler, *Experimentalphysik des Geistes*.
- 13 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 202 (Novalis, *The Disciples at Sais*, 93).
- 14 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 205.

- 15 See Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses. Une archéologie des sciences humaines* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966). For a detailed analysis of the function of the early modern theories of signatures in the frame of *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, see Bergengruen, 'Signatur, Hieroglyphe, Wechselrepräsentation'.
- 16 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 202 (Novalis, *The Disciples at Sais*, 93). For a detailed analysis on the topic of the senses in the novel see Reinhard Leusing, *Die Stimme als Erkenntnisform – zu Novalis' Roman Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* (Stuttgart: Metzler und Poeschel, 1993).
- 17 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 220–1 (Novalis, *The Disciples at Sais*, 123).
- 18 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 222 (Novalis, *The Disciples at Sais*, 126). For details on the importance of the *Stimmungs*-concept in Novalis's poetological reflexions, see Jacobs, *Stimmungskunst*, 127–65.
- 19 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 220.
- 20 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 202 (Novalis, *The Disciples at Sais*, 93–4).
- 21 The English translation is quoted from Novalis, *Philosophical Writings*, trans. and ed. Margaret Mahony Stoljar (New York: State University Press, 1997). 'Wechselrepräsentationslehre des Universums' is quoted from Novalis, *Das Allgemeine Brouillon*, in *Novalis. Werke, Tagebücher und Briefe Friedrich Hardenbergs. Band 2. Das philosophisch-theoretische Werk*, ed. Hans-Joachim Mähl (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999), 471–718, here 499. The second translation is quoted by Novalis, *Philosophical Writings*, 132. 'Jedes Symbol kann durch sein Symbolisiertes wieder Symbolisiert werden – Gegensymbole' – see Novalis, *Das Allgemeine Brouillon*, 637. For details on Novalis's 'theory of the mutual representation of the universe', see Bergengruen, 'Signatur, Hieroglyphe, Wechselrepräsentation'.
- 22 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 213 (Novalis, *The Disciples at Sais*, 110–1).
- 23 See the references to Novalis in the essays 'Den naive læser', 'Hemmelighedstilstanden', 'Det er ord alt sammen' og 'Tilfældighedens ordnende virkning' in Christensen, *Hemmelighedstilstanden*, 12–6, 38–46, 47–60, and 60–92.
- 24 On Christensen's paradoxical concept of a primordial beginning that must be created see Klaus Müller-Wille, 'Black box und Geheimniszustand – Anfang(en) als Wiederholung in der skandinavischen Systemdichtung', in *Wiederholung. Literarische Verfahren und Funktionen*, ed. Inka Mülder-Bach and Roger Lüdeke (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 195–226.
- 25 Joachim Grage, 'Die Abwehr des Zufalls. Inger Christensen und die sprachbildende Kraft der Mathematik', in *Zahlen, Zeichen und Figuren. Mathematische Inspirationen in Kunst und Literatur*, ed. Andrea Albrecht, Gesa von Essen, and Werner Frick (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 510–28.
- 26 The present English Translation is quoted from Inger Christensen, *it*, trans. Susanna Nied (New York: New Directions, 2006), 81.
- 27 Novalis, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, 213 (see the full quotation at the end of part 2 of this article).
- 28 Christensen, *det*, 53 (Christensen, *it*, 49).
- 29 See Jacobs, *Stimmungskunst*, 147–58.
- 30 On Christensen's attempt to combine phenomenological inspirations with structuralist models see Klaus Müller-Wille, 'Sprachschleifen'.
- 31 See Striedter, 'Die Komposition der *Lehrlinge zu Sais*'.
- 32 For details on Christensen's corresponding rhetorical practices see Niels Lyngsø, 'Mimesis, mimicry, mise-en-abîme', *Kritik* 125–6 (1997): 90–9.
- 33 Christensen, *det*, 78 (Christensen, *it*, 75).

Gender, Memory, and Inter- culturality

GENDER, MEMORY, AND INTERCULTURALITY IN CAROLINE DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ'S HISTORICAL NOVEL *DIE VERTRIEBENEN*

ELISA MÜLLER-ADAMS

[ABSTRACT]

Caroline de la Motte Fouqué was one of the most productive women writers of the romantic and early Restoration period in Germany. This author of numerous novels and shorter prose has been re-valued by gender-orientated scholarly research as a writer who 'transgressed a number of gender and class boundaries'.¹ As an observer of the *Zeitgeist* and as a political writer, Fouqué was concerned with women's role in society and their contribution to the formation of a possible German nation. These political issues are not only discussed in her so-called *Zeitromane*, but are also central in her historical fiction, where also national and cultural boundaries are constantly crossed. Focussing on Fouqué's historical novel *Die Vertriebenen* (1823) [The displaced], the article combines perspectives on gender and intercultural issues to examine the function of narratives of foreign history in Fouqué's historiographical writing.

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KEYWORDS *Gender and Genre, Anglo-German Cultural Transfer, Traveling Genre, Translation, Border Crossing.*

Uns ist unser Vaterland fremd geworden; die Entwicklung der Zeit hat so viel daran verschoben, gerührt, beschnitten und hinzugethan, daß aus dem, was man National-Charakter nennt, ein Ding entstanden ist, von dem man nicht weiß, ob man darüber weinen oder lachen soll. Es thut uns daher Noth, das Eigenthümliche deutscher Natur aufzusuchen. Das aber können wir nur historisch-philosophisch ... Wir sollen dem zu folge die Geschichte unsrer großen Stammväter prüfend beachten, das was war, mit dem vergleichen, was ist.

[Our fatherland has become alien to us; it has been so much shifted, stirred, cut off and been added to by the development of the times that what we used to call 'national character' is now a thing, which one does not know whether to cry or laugh about. Therefore, it is necessary that we look for what is the characteristic of German nature. We can only do so, however, from an historical-philosophical perspective. ... We should thus critically regard the history of our great ancestors and compare what used to be with what is now.]²

In this passage from her pamphlet *Ruf an die deutschen Frauen* [A call to German women], published in 1813, the author Caroline de la Motte Fouqué outlines a concept of national identity that is based on awareness and knowledge of history. The pamphlet has a distinctive patriotic tone reflecting the militant patriotism that characterized the discourse in the German states fighting against Napoleon.³ Fouqué tries to remind her female compatriots of their duty to contribute to the development of the German *National-Charakter*, a national identity, Fouqué argues, that can only truly be formed if foreign, meaning especially French, influences are kept at bay.⁴

Fouqué's attitude towards nationalism, however, changes and appears to be moderated in the following years. However, questions of nation building, women's role in society and their contribution to the formation of a possible German nation remained central to Fouqué's literary and journalistic writings. These political issues are not only discussed in her novels set during the Revolution era or in her so-called *Zeitromane*, but they are also central to her historical fiction. These historical novels written in the 1820s are not set in Germany, but, in England, France, and Poland, thereby crossing national and cultural boundaries.

Every attempt to define the historical novel refers to the genre's unique combination of history and fiction.⁵ A mimetic understanding of the genre that primarily asks whether or not the novel mirrors historical events has, however, been replaced by a changed concept of the relationship between fiction and fact. Based on the insight that neither literature nor historiography reproduces past realities, but instead both of these produce narrative constructs; the historical novel is now seen as constructing models of history rather than referring to some kind of 'original'.⁶ From this perspective the question is less whether or not a historical epoch is represented authentically, but rather which themes and events are selected for the narration and which narrative strategies are used. To emphasize this productive and constructive potential of the historical novel Nünning suggests replacing the term *mimesis* with that of *poesis*:

Mit dem Terminus 'Poesis' soll somit schlagwortartig hervorgehoben werden, daß historische Romane nicht ein ihnen zeitlich oder sachlich vorausliegendes Geschehen abbildend darstellen, sondern eigenständige Manifestationsformen gesellschaftlichen Geschichtsbewußtseins darstellen und mit ihren erzählerischen Gestaltungsmitteln selbst neue mentale Modelle oder Vorstellungen von Geschichte erzeugen können.

[The term *poesis* highlights the fact that historical novels do not reproduce temporarily or factually preceding events, but that they are independent manifestations of social historical awareness and that they themselves produce through their narrative strategies new mental models or concepts of history.]⁷

This understanding of the genre is also the basis for a gender-orientated perspective on the historical novel. The gendered aspects evident in the formation process of the historical novel as a genre have repeatedly been pointed out: Women authors not only played a significant role in the development and success of the genre, the genre has also been shown to offer models for gendered memory construction and historiography.⁸ Although the complex relation between memory and gender has not been systematically theorized so far, an increasing number of literary studies combine a gender perspective with concepts developed by memory studies based on the insight that gender relations and practices of cultural remembering and forgetting are reciprocally intertwined and influence each other. Gender as a category is, on the one hand, not only relevant for what or who is remembered or forgotten, but also for the way in which men and women remember. On the other hand, cultural memory functions to legitimize or de-legitimize gender relations, to stabilize or subvert power hierarchies and social structures.⁹ As a *memory genre*, i.e. a genre that focuses on processes of remembering, the historical novel seems to be an obvious example to analyse with regard to the triad of gender, genre, and memory.¹⁰ With the Scottean model providing a very narrow norm for the genre, historical novels by women writers have long been ignored by research. However, studies on individual novels by female authors have shown that these texts not only focus on marginalized, female history but also develop alternative gender specific narrative strategies in order to narrate the past, thereby contributing to the innovation of the genre.¹¹ The historical novel is, however, not only a *gendered genre*. Comparative and intercultural literary studies, for example on Anglo-German literary relations, have shown that the historical novel is also a *traveling genre*, developed through intersections between writers and reading audiences across national, cultural, and linguistic borders.¹²

Focussing on Fouqué's historical fiction, this paper therefore combines perspectives on gender and intercultural aspects.¹³ We may begin by taking one example of Fouqué's historical fiction, the 1823 novel *Die Vertriebenen*, set in England at the time of Elizabeth I. This paper will hence try to explore the following questions: What does the genre of the historical novel offer as a platform for literary cultural transfer? What is the function of narratives of foreign or European history in Fouqué's historical novel in relation to her discussion of nationalism and women's contribution to the state? And finally, how is intercultural contact portrayed in the novel?

In order to do this, first, I want to introduce two concepts in Fouqué's work, on which she bases her idea of national identity: sociability and history. Secondly, with regard to the novel *Die Vertriebenen* I want to explore aspects of cultural transfer with a focus on the reception: what happens when the genre model is translated into German and then, as it happened, back into English? In a close reading of the text this paper will eventually address concepts of cultural exchange or intercultural memory as developed in the text.

Sociability and History as Gendered Aesthetic and Political Concepts between Openness and Isolation

Caroline de la Motte Fouqué is one of the most productive women writers of the romantic and early Restoration period in Germany.¹⁴ Although being rather successful and widely read at the time, Fouqué seemed to be forgotten soon after her death in 1831. Moreover, she disappeared from literary history, where she was, if at all, often only mentioned as the wife of the more famous Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué. In addition to a major study by Jean Wilde in the 1950s, Fouqué has, however, since the 1980/1990s been rediscovered and re-valued by gender-orientated scholarly research as a writer who, as Karin Baumgartner states, ‘transgressed a number of gender and class boundaries’.¹⁵ As a transition figure between romanticism and realism, or between the revolutionary period and the Restoration, Fouqué is analysed as an observer and chronicler of the *Zeitgeist*, who from a distinctive female perspective discusses gender roles and social models, and comments on her present as a time of upheaval and changes.¹⁶ Also, the political dimension of her work as ‘a woman and a politicized member of the aristocracy’ has been studied, clearly placing Fouqué in the public political discourse.¹⁷

As Baumgartner and I have argued, at the centre of Fouqué’s attempt to define a (German) national identity is her concept of sociability. Society, argues Fouqué, arises out of the natural human need to communicate and to complement each other. Sociability is thus a necessity, centre and origin of society. It is for Fouqué on the one hand the expression of a cultivated, aristocratic lifestyle (hence her focus on the *große Welt* [high society]),¹⁸ but on the other hand it functions as an aesthetic principle with conversation considered a form of art. This understanding of sociability is obviously informed by romantic social concepts. Since her marriage with Friedrich, Caroline Fouqué herself was part of the romantic circles she met and exchanged letters with fellow authors, and was involved in joint literary projects. Though Fouqué may not have been central to the Salons in Berlin, her lifestyle seemed to have been characterized both by aristocratic influences and the culture of the Salon. As Baumgartner has pointed out, Fouqué’s definition of the Salon and her concept of sociability differs from that of theorists such as Schleiermacher as Fouqué ‘insists on the political nature of sociability’.¹⁹ Women are of central importance in this concept: ‘Frauen bedingen stets den Geist der Gesellschaft’ [women always determine the spirit of the society].²⁰

This political aspect is central to Fouqué’s reply to Germaine de Staël’s *De l’Allemagne*, which is titled *Ueber deutsche Geselligkeit* (1814) [About German sociability], in which she sketches a concept of sociability that keeps a balance between openness and separation. While Fouqué, who by her contemporaries was sometimes compared to de Staël, considers *De l’Allemagne* an important work, she criticizes her French colleague for not having understood and therefore misrepresented Germany and the Germans.²¹ Fouqué agrees however, to some of de Staël’s

observations concerning ‘die Mangelhaftigkeit und verschobene Natur unsrer geselligen Bildung’ [the weaknesses and shifted nature of our social culture].²² The solution, for Fouqué, however, is not the imitation of the French language of conversation as this would not correspond to the German mind, which aims for ‘Mittheilung’ [communication], rather than virtuosity: ‘Wir sollen nicht länger zwischen eigenthümlicher und fremder Bildung schwanken, es steht uns wohl an Deutsch zu seyn’ [We should no longer sway between our own and foreign culture, we would do well to be German].²³ But on the other hand, she also argues against ‘chinesische Abgeschlossenheit’ [Chinese seclusion], as Germany could not isolate itself from European developments.²⁴ As ‘Heerd und Brennpunkt Europäischer Bildung’ [hearth and focus of European culture] it should rather seek to profit from foreign influences.²⁵

This rejection of chauvinism marks, as Baumgartner notes, a significant departure from the patriotic argument Fouqué made in her *Ruf an die deutschen Frauen* just one year earlier. And a couple of years later, in 1821, in her *Briefe über Berlin* [Letters about Berlin], Fouqué makes a similar point, this time she uses the Middle Ages as an example for a time of free cultural exchange in Europe, and as an ideal that should be aspired to. Like her concept of sociability, history provides a model for an identity that is not based on exclusion and separation but on openness and exchange.²⁶

Nichts nähert uns wieder der schönern Zeit des blühenden Mittelalters so sehr, als freies Verbinden mit dem Auslande, absichtliches Verschlingen geselliger, künstlerischer und wissenschaftlicher Beziehungen. ... Der Verkehr mit allen Nationen, die Richtung nach allen Himmelsgegenden dünkte ihm [dem Deutschen] nothwendig. Er befürchtete nie, sich gegen Andere zu vergeben: denn er besaß sich selbst in festen und bescheidenen Grenzen seines unerschütterlichen Selbst ... In diesem wechselseitigem Anerkennen unserer Nachbarvölker glaube ich ganz besonders das Fortschreiten allgemeiner Bildung zu entdecken ...

[Nothing brings us closer to the wonderful era of the prospering Middle Ages than the free connection with other countries, the conscious entanglement of social, artistic, and scientific relations. ... Then, [the German] thought it necessary to communicate with all nations, in all directions. He was never afraid that he might have something to lose because he was assured of himself within the fixed and modest boundaries of his unshakable self ... I believe that the progress of general culture lies in this mutual appreciation of our neighbouring nations.]²⁷

Fouqué’s focus on the past is significant here: The reference to the Middle Ages is not only an echo of the romantic idealization of medieval life, but, more importantly, is used as an ideal for an identity both based on cultural exchange and open to female agency. In her essay on Greek mythology, which is addressed to a female reading public, Fouqué had already outlined a concept of gendered memory: While women were excluded from an academic study of history, they, Fouqué

argues, are central to forming a collective memory, as even modern women are still connected and to the 'Allmutter', an ancient female divine principle, thus linking past and present. So after 1815 and the decline of the Salon as a female-centred cultural space, Fouqué turns to history to find models that show 'how women were able to insert themselves in the political framework of their days'.²⁸ Silke Arnold-de Simine reads Fouqué's treatment of the past in analogy to the contemporary development of the museum as an institution 'instrumental in establishing a sense of national history [and] identity'.²⁹ As such '... her practice of establishing tradition through the processes of musealisation – ... was highly contemporary'.³⁰ Fouqué's concept of history thus corresponds to her concept of sociability: Both can be used to promote female political agency and both are characterized by the idea of cultural exchange. Both aspects appear to be closely linked in Fouqué's historical writing.

Die Vertriebenen, the novel under discussion here, is part of a small group of historical novels in Fouqué's work, written in the 1820s, which portray aristocratic women. For Fouqué, the historical novel seems to be an appropriate vehicle to promote women's participation in politics, especially their contribution to questions of nation building.

Die Vertriebenen – Lost in Translation?

I will return to the gender aspect later, but first, I want to look briefly at the historical novel as *traveling genre* and analyse aspects of cultural exchange in *Die Vertriebenen* from the genre perspective. In the case of *Die Vertriebenen*, this perspective could be explored using a very broad meaning of the term *translation*.³¹ First, the novel translates foreign, i.e. English history for a German reading public. Second, it can not only be read in the context of the German reception of Scott and the model he provided for the genre, but, as it was translated into English and commented upon by English critics, it is also part of multi-layered discourse about cultural transfer in literature.

Die Vertriebenen are set in England and cover a time of about 20 years, from the death of King Edward VI to the reign of Elizabeth I. It is a time of conflict with religious wars being fought across Europe. However, the political key figures are not at the centre of the novel, but an aristocratic family only indirectly involved in the power politics, yet deeply affected by the events. The protagonist of the novel is the historical figure of Catherine, widowed Duchess of Suffolk, who, by her first marriage, is related to Jane Grey. Originally Catholic, Catherine turns to the new faith and marries a fervent Protestant, Sir Richard Bertie. When Mary Tudor becomes queen and after the execution of Jane Grey, Catherine first arranges for her husband to flee to the Continent, where she, although pregnant, follows him, escaping just in time. She takes with her a mysterious baby girl, which she finds on the journey adopting her under the name Rosamund. Later, it is alluded that the girl is Jane Grey's daughter secretly born in the Tower. The second volume tells the story of the family's flight through Europe. They first find

a temporary refuge in Wesel, where Catherine's son Peregrin is born, then they have to flee to Heidelberg, before finding shelter at the court of King Sigismund in Poland. In the third volume, the family has returned to England where Elizabeth now rules. Peregrin is a young, melancholic man, mourning for Rosamund, who, he had been told, died of the plague. Sir Bertie and Peregrin leave again to fight for William of Orange in the Netherlands, Sir Bertie dies in battle, Peregrin discovers that Rosa is not dead after all, but in order to protect her from her family's ambition to topple Elizabeth, had been married to the Count of Toulouse. When the Count dies, Peregrin and Rosa can finally marry.

After its publication, *Die Vertriebenen* was met with rather mixed reactions as German reviewers took issue with Fouqué's choice of topic and genre.³² Fouqué should have stayed with her domestic novels and romances critics claimed: The 'reviewers privileged the models developed by Scott and criticized Fouqué's novel as a feeble attempt at imitating the great'.³³ Gender and class are central issues in this criticism, as critics 'found fault with Fouqué's use of the historical novel as a female writer and an aristocrat'.³⁴ The reviewers focused on Fouqué's supposed inability to successfully appropriate a 'male' (and middle-class) genre like the historical novel; indirectly, however, the question of cultural transfer is also addressed here. Yet the verdict of the German critic is clear: Due to the limitations of her sex, Fouqué fails to live up to the standard provided by Scott. However, the novel was translated into English as *The Outcasts* in 1824. It is the paratexts that are of interest here, as they illustrate or rather cast a process of cultural translation: In his preface, the translator, George Soane states that the novel 'is decidedly a copy of Scotch Romances'.³⁵ This is not necessarily a bad thing, on the contrary, 'it would be well for the Northern literature if the imitation of these excellent models were to become more general, they might infuse into it a portion of health which it certainly wants at present'.³⁶ In Fouqué, Soane finds some of the weaknesses and 'unpleasant characteristics of German writers', but considers the novel still 'far above the generality of German Romances, and, upon the whole, ... a singular appearance in Northern literature'.³⁷

Germanness is obviously an issue here, his main criticism, however, concerns Fouqué's choice of topic. But in contrast to the German reviewers, Soane is not blaming gender (or class), but cultural difference. According to him, the weaknesses of the novel are not caused by the limitations of the author's sex, nor by her aristocratic lifestyle, but are a result of the border crossing the novel undertakes: Why, he wonders, has Fouqué 'adventured on English grounds' when her unfamiliarity with English customs leads her to factual errors and 'brings her more immediate into comparison with an author [Scott], whose genius goes far beyond this century'?³⁸ It would have been better, he suggests, if she had 'adapted the style and manners of Kenilworth to [her] own national subjects' [i.e. German history].³⁹ Here, Soane explicitly refers to the connection between the historical novel and the question of national identity. This connection, it seems, makes the cultural transfer Fouqué attempts with her version of English history a risky business and, eventually, has to fail. It is interesting to see how the translator

deals with the problem of 're-translating' Fouqué's all too German text into the English context. In order to 'render [a work like this] generally acceptable' to the English reader, Soane opts for a free translation, as he explains.⁴⁰ Also, he adds a number 'notes and illustrations'. Fouqué was, Soane makes clear, not only unfamiliar with the English language, she also wrongly transferred German customs to England. In his notes, Soane provides explanations and corrections to these errors, he also goes to great lengths to guarantee the historical authenticity of the tale, delivering additional information on characters and events as evidence for the historical facts behind the narrative.

Not only the argument in the translator's preface or the information in the notes are of significance here, the fact, that Soane felt the need to make these additions in the first place is also revealing: In the historical novel à la Scott, prefaces, footnotes, and annotations are integral parts of the novel's structure and their characteristic balance between fact and fiction.⁴¹ In the German original, Fouqué had omitted any such additional information, not supplying her readers with explanations, and evidence of historical authenticity – in contrast to some of her earlier historical novels, namely the *Heldenmädchen aus der Vendee* (published 1816, thus one year before *Waverly* is translated into German), where Fouqué not only laid open her sources, but in the preface reflects on the relation between (historical) fact and fiction and between present and the past. But in *Die Vertriebenen*, Fouqué apparently sees no need for either authentication or the bridging of cultural differences between her English story and her German audience. Fouqué's translator, however, considers his added endnotes 'very necessary to the book' in an effort, one might assume, to bring Fouqué's novel closer to the model supplied by Scott, thereby in his translation 'Scottizing' the text and emphasizing the process of cultural transfer at work here.⁴²

Judging from the rather damning verdict of the reviewer in the *Westminster Review*, Soane's efforts to render the novel more acceptable to his reading audience were, it seems, not very successful: the critic writing for the *Westminster Review* advises against reading this 'dullest work of its kind' and considers Fouqué's 'half-true, half-fictitious narrative, [of] certain passages of English history'⁴³ an utter failure taking issue with an – in his opinion – unconvincing balance between fact and fiction. Both the reviewer and the translator seem to base their judgement on a mimetic understanding of the historical novel, an understanding that has for a long time dominated the definition of the genre. In this view, the exactness of the historical reconstruction and a high density of facts are important criteria.⁴⁴ Read against this model, Fouqué's text had to be misunderstood as a failed translation of both an English genre and an English plot – *Die Vertriebenen* seems to be lost in translation. Fouqué's adaptation of the Scottean model for her purposes obviously caused irritation. This can be read, as Baumgartner suggests, in the context of her being increasingly interested in showing examples of female political agency which 'violated gender sensibilities greatly' and rendered the Scottean model of the historical novel more and more unworkable for her.⁴⁵ But from the intercultural perspective, Fouqué's take on the historical novel can

also be read in relation to the question of a (national) identity based on openness and exchange with regard to the aspects of interculturality and gender, and the connection between them. In the following my reading of the novel will focus on these two aspects.

The Function of Intercultural Memory: 'Herstory' and 'Entangled' History

If *Die Vertriebenen* does not work and is not intended to work as a transfer of a genre model from one national literature to another, the question remains: How does the novel (or in fact does it all) reflect cultural transfer and processes of cultural exchange? Or more precisely, how does the text deal with a concept of national identity balancing between openness and separation?

As Baumgartner correctly points out, 'England was not a randomly chosen fictitious location'.⁴⁶ The foreign setting could on the one hand serve to offer protection against the censors. Also, Baumgartner notes, England 'stood for a politically desirable society that successfully balanced tradition and modernity'.⁴⁷ I agree that the novel should also be read in the context of the German anglophilia of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. England also had a tradition as a country of women's emancipation. As such it was also of particular interest to women writers since the first German so-called *Frauenroman* Sophie von La Roche's *Geschichte des Fräulein von Sternheim* (1771). German Women writers before and after Fouqué were also fascinated by the fact that England provided examples of female rulers.

'[D]reier Frauen Recht liegt in der Wage' [The rights of three women are in the scales],⁴⁸ one of the novel's characters says, summing up the power struggle that provides the context for the story. In fact, male figures only play marginal roles: With three queens (four, if you include Mary Stuart) competing for the English crown, Fouqué finds plenty material to illustrate women's political agency. This does not necessarily mean that these women are presented as ideal rulers, on the contrary: Jane is a positive figure, but as a young and innocent woman she is only a pawn in the big power play, and finally falls victim to her family's ambitions. Mary Tudor is bitter and revengeful and knows no limits in her religious fundamentalism, whereas Elizabeth may be the 'Abgott des beruhigten Englands' ['idol of England'],⁴⁹ but as a private person she is temperamental, vain and insincere, 'sie hat kein Herz' ['she has no heart'].⁵⁰ It is Catherine who is the positive role model: brave, kind, and intelligent she manages to protect her family and keep them safe, carefully acting on the political stage. Compared to her, Sir Bertie (and even Peregrin who represents the new generation) seem surprisingly weak and pale – a fact critically noted by the novel's contemporary reviewers. In a reversal of conventional gender roles, it is women who are in charge⁵¹ and who are strong, as illustrated in a letter from Catherine to her husband, in which she urges him to flee the country, while she stays behind to protect him: 'Ich möchte dich auf

meinen Armen in den Nachen tragen ... [‘I would fain carry you in my arms to the boat ...’]⁵²

The cliché of women’s weakness is repeatedly shown to be a myth. This is even spelled out in the text: When one of Peregrin’s friends, the young Lord Essex, makes a stereotypical misogynistic comment on Elizabeth:

Wahrhaftig, sie ist eine Frau wie alle Andere, wenn sie auch zehnmal das Zepter statt den Fächer in Händen hält. ... Frauen reiten, wie sie Geschäfte führen, hitzig und nach dem Ziele drängend, ohne zu beachten, was zwischen diesem und dem Augenblick auf ihrem Weg liegt’.

[She is a woman like all other women, though she carried ten sceptres in her hand instead of a fan. ... Women ride as they conduct business, wildly, and pressing on to their object without considering what lies in the way betwixt them and the moment.]⁵³

Peregrin, Catherine’s son, knows better:

‘Du hast ja ... den Catechismus der Weiberschwäche auswendig gelernt, als solltest Du darüber Rechenschaft geben. Nimm dich gleichwohl in acht. Du könntest trotz solchen Wegweiseres dennoch fehl gehen’.

[You ... learnt by heart the catechism of female follies, as if you were to account for them. But look to yourself; you may blunder notwithstanding such a guide.]⁵⁴

With Mary Tudor, Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I, English history offered Fouqué rich, attractive material for her narration of female political agency. However neither are these women role models, nor is England described as a model nation. Quite on the contrary: Torn apart by dynastic and religious conflict, England is a divided nation, a ‘krankes Vaterland’ [sick country].⁵⁵ When Catherine has to cross the channel to escape Mary’s persecution, she, too, knows that in spite of storms ‘das grundlose Meer bietet ... mehr Sicherheit als die festeste Burg Englands’ [the bottomless ocean offers ... more safety just now than the strongest castle in all England].⁵⁶

The novel’s title is programmatic: this is a story about exile, flight and disorientation rather than about the fatherland or even *Heimat*. The theme of exile, displacement and *Heimatlosigkeit* is often repeated throughout the novel, alienation and loneliness are leitmotifs in the narration. There is a sense of instability and restlessness in the novel, the characters are often on the move, travelling or fleeing. The castle of the Suffolks may be a refuge the family longs for, but much of the novel’s action seems to happen *on the road* with inns as frequent settings.

This atmosphere is most obvious in the second volume, which recounts the family’s flight through Europe. Fleeing from England, Sir Bertie feels like ‘eine Pflanze ihrem heimatlichen Boden entrissen’ [a plant, that, torn from its native soil, droops under a foreign sky] and struggles to combat ‘die Schmerzen

heimathloser Verlassenheit' [the pains of exile].⁵⁷ This feeling of homelessness culminates in the scene when Catherine has to give birth under the open sky, on the steps of the church in Wesel as the family finds no shelter. They call their son Peregrin 'denn er ist ein Fremdling' [for he is a stranger].⁵⁸ But even after their return to England, the family struggles to settle in. This affects most of all Peregrin, whose melancholy is explained by 'Hin- und Herziehen und das unstäte Leben seiner Familie' [the continual driving to and fro and the unsettled life of [his] family], and who remains 'ein Fremdling in der Heimath' [a stranger in [his] native land] and 'fand nirgends Platz' [has found a place nowhere].⁵⁹ Furthermore, Peregrin states: 'Ich passe überall nicht' [I am not calculated at all for the relations of life], 'Ich bin ein Fremdling in dieser unverständlichen Welt' [I am a stranger ... in this unintelligible world] – at several instances, expressing a sense of displacement symptomatic of his times.⁶⁰

In these dynastic wars even blood relations or lineage do not necessarily offer stability: The power struggle between the four queens is based on the question of who is the legitimate heir. This struggle is fought (quite literally) over the women's bodies and bears enormous risks as legitimacy is always doubtful: Jane Grey is executed because her family wants to use her lineage to gain power, Mary Tudor attempts to rehabilitate her mother (by annulling the divorce from Henry VIII) and to hurl Elizabeth back 'in die Nacht dunklen, unkeuschen Ursprunges' [into the night of bastardy].⁶¹ Elizabeth herself can only secure her power by avoiding marriage. In this state of affairs, even blood bounds become irrelevant: 'Ich bin in diesem Land der Treulosigkeit und des Wankelmutes ... mit niemanden verwandt' [I am akin to no one ... in this land of faithlessness and inconstancy], states one of the novel's characters. Catherine and her immediate family are a close, loving community, but this family, too, is constantly under threat and more often separated than together.⁶²

As it has been pointed out, in the nineteenth century, the historical novel as a *memory genre* has played a significant role in shaping cultural memory and so 'helped to form concepts of national identity'.⁶³ So if the function of the historical novel should engage in the project 'to construct a German national past' and to offer models of national unity, *Die Vertriebenen* fails – or perhaps it refuses to do so.⁶⁴ This might also explain why the novel's love plot remains underdeveloped and is rather unconvincing. In the historical novel, the story of the loving couple is usually used to symbolize – on the private level – the harmonious solution of the conflict and the resolution of political contrasts.⁶⁵ The story of Peregrin and Rosa, however, is only marginal to the narration: it is mentioned, but it does not happen and remains really vague (we do not even get a glimpse of the grown-up Rosa, in fact, it is only a rumour that the woman Peregrin marries is in fact Rosa).

What the novel does offer, however, is a sense of a shared European history: This is illustrated in the conflict between the old and the new faith: The religious differences do not run along national lines, on the contrary, religious and national identity seem mixed, entangled: The conflict between the two confessions creates borders within the English nation, dividing couples, families, and friends,

and making compatriots turn against each other. On the other hand, religion creates connections and loyalties across national borders, which is why Catherine and her family can find refuge in Europe. With her mother being of Spanish origin, Catherine herself embodies such entanglement.

Her son Peregrin seems to realize this more than the other characters in the novel. He is depicted as the representative of a new generation, 'ein Kind der Zeit' ['a child of the time'].⁶⁶ Peregrin may be melancholic and struggling to fit in, but he embodies a chance for reconciliation between the conflicting parties. Although being a Protestant, he is interested in learning about the 'old faith' and is finding common ground between the two confessions. In spite of the risk of being considered a traitor, Peregrin insists on the necessity of religious tolerance: '[i]ch bin Protestant, und werde es bleiben, doch ruhig kann ich den Katholik an meiner Seite dulden' [I am Protestant and will remain one, but I can quietly endure the Catholic by my side].⁶⁷ In this respect he resembles Jane Grey, who, as Catherine thinks, could have been the 'Vermittlerin beider Lehren' [mediator between the two faiths].⁶⁸ What Peregrin claims in religious matters, i.e. tolerance and openness, can be applied to the question of national identity that the text discusses. Catherine's maid Sarah, who represents the 'voice of the common people', realizes this. She tells her mistress that Peregrin is not unpatriotic, but 'er hat viel von Euren Spanischen Anverwandten, und ist doch ein so guter Engländer als irgend Einer' [he has much in him of your Spanish relations, and yet is as good an Englishman as any one].⁶⁹ With Sarah's reply the novel's plea for tolerance is repeated. It also sums up what the novel suggests as a concept of national identity: not 'chinesische Abgeschlossenheit' [Chinese seclusion], but exchange and openness offer a solution. Whether a realization of this concept will succeed remains open in the novel, even though in Peregrin's and Rosa's son the grandmother Catherine is said to have 'bloomed again'.⁷⁰ Judging from Fouqué's later work, one can assume that the author remains rather sceptical.

Conclusion

Hugo Aust distinguishes between two types of historical novel: the reconstructive type, that aims for an authentic reconstruction of the past and the parabolic type that uses history as a mirror to the present.⁷¹ *Die Vertriebenen* can be counted to latter type: the trauma of the English Reformation is used as a reflection of the traumatic present in the post-Napoleonic era. The text even says so: after all, not only England, Germany, too, is divided. Fouqué's readers would have been able to relate this not only to the Reformation period, but also to their own times.

There are several passages in which the novel's narrator (who for most of the time steps back behind the characters) explicitly comments on the function of the past: In times of trouble such as Catherine and her family (and we can assume, Fouqué's readers, too) experience them, the narrator says, people tend to look to the past as it offers distraction from present worries:

Die Gegenwart dient nur als Brücke verschollener Zeiten, und nicht selten verliert man sich von diesen aus in das Gebiet des Räthselhaften und Abentheuerlichen. Englands Gegenwart war zu dem so düster und schwühl, daß sich der Blick gewissermaßen vor ihr flüchtend gern vergaß, wie schnell und unbequem sie in Anspruch nehmen konnte.

[The present serves only as a bridge to the past, and even from this the imagination not unfrequently wanders into the realm of the mysterious and superstitious. The present too with England was, at this time, so full of awe and gloom, that all were glad to close their eyes upon it, and willingly forgot how soon, and fearfully, it might call upon them.]⁷²

This escapist function of history is understandable, but it is also obvious that with such an understanding of the past, any claim of authenticity must be treated with caution. Instead, the narrator suggests a concept of history, which stresses the element of construction: 'Man hat zudem von der Vergangenheit mehr oder weniger dennoch nur schwankende Bilder, die leicht durch das stehende Colorit der Gegenwart verdrängt, wenn nicht verwischt werden ...'. [The images too of the past, always more or less faint, are easily dimmed, if not put out, by the stronger colours of the present.]⁷³ Such instances point to the *poietical* character of the historical novel as a genre.⁷⁴ The focus then is less on the question whether or not the novel delivers an authentic image of the past, but rather how models of the past are constructed and interpreted.

Die Vertriebenen can be seen as part of a project by Fouqué to develop a literary program for a national identity that does – as we have seen – include women and the possibility of female agency. A couple of years later, in 1829/1830, Fouqué undertakes a similar task, but this time not choosing the genre of the historical novel, but the history of fashion. In her *Geschichte der Moden* [History of fashion], Fouqué 'projects an alternative path, a multiperspective everyday history which highlights communicative and cultural memory'.⁷⁵ The cultural transfer Fouqué undertakes in *Die Vertriebenen* functions in a similar way, as it allows her to develop an alternative model of the past: There is no isolated 'German' national past, but history in *Die Vertriebenen* is European history, where borders are constantly crossed.

Notes

- 1 Karin Baumgartner, *Public Voices: Political Discourse in the Writings of Caroline de La Motte Fouqué* (Oxford; New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 11.
- 2 Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, 'Ruf an die deutschen Frauen. Die Einnahmen zum patriotischen Zwecke', in *Schriften II: Literatur und Gesellschaft*, ed. Thomas Neumann (1813; repr. Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2008), 31–2. In the following, all translations are by the author unless otherwise stated.
- 3 Silke Arnold-de Simine, 'Napoleon, the Museum, and Memory Politics in Caroline de La Motte Fouqué's *Geschichte der Moden* (1829–30)', in *Women Against Napoleon: Historical and Fictional Responses to His Rise and Legacy*, ed. Waltraud Maierhofer, Gertrud M. Roesch, and Caroline Bland (Frankfurt: Campus, 2007), 205.
- 4 See Karin Baumgartner, 'Defining National Identity: Caroline de La Motte Fouqué Responds to Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne*', *Colloquia Germanica: Internationale Zeitschrift für Germanistik* 35, no. 1 (2002): 62.
- 5 Geppert describes the interplay of fiction and history as a multidimensional spiral, 'in deren Dynamik der fiktionale Diskurs den historischen bedingt, [...], ein virtuell unendliches Sichumkreisen von narrativen Bedeutungsprozessen'. [in which the dynamics of the fictional discourse and the historical discourse are mutually dependent [...] a virtually infinite circling around of processes of meaning] Hans Wilmar Geppert, *Der Historische Roman: Geschichte umerzählt von Walter Scott bis zur Gegenwart* (Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag, 2009), 157.
- 6 See Ansgar Nünning, *Von historischer Fiktion zu historiographischer Metafiktion: Theorie, Typologie und Poetik des historischen Romans* (Trier: WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 1995), 56.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 57.
- 8 On women authors' role in the development and success of the genre, see, for example, Kurt Habitzel and Günter Mühlberger, 'Gewinner und Verlierer. Der historische Roman und sein Beitrag zum Literatursystem der Restaurationszeit (1815–1848/49)', *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur*, 21 (1996) 1: 91–123.
- 9 See Astrid Erll and Klaudia Seibel. 'Gattungen, Formtraditionen und kulturelles Gedächtnis', *Erzähltextanalyse und Gender Studies*, ed. Vera Nünning and Ansgar Nünning (Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler 2004), 184–85.
- 10 On concepts of gender, genre and memory cf. Erll and Seibel.
- 11 On German historical novels by women see, for example, Marianne Henn, Irmela von der Lühe and Anita Runge, eds., *Geschichte(n) – Erzählen. Konstruktionen von Vergangenheit in literarischen Werken deutschsprachiger Autorinnen seit dem 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen Wallstein, 2005) and Ansgar Nünning, 'Herstory als History: Bausteine für eine (noch zu schreibende) Geschichte des historischen Frauenromans', *Gender – Culture – Poetics. Zur Geschlechterforschung in der Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft. Festschrift für Natascha Würzbach* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 1999), 278.
- 12 On the historical novel in an Anglo-German context see, for example, Frauke Reitemeier, *Deutsch-englische Literaturbeziehungen: Der historische Roman Sir Walter Scotts und seine deutschen Vorläufer* (Schöningh: Paderborn et al., 2001). On the term *traveling genre* cf. Margaret Cohen: 'Traveling Genres', *New Literary History* 34, no. 3 (2003): 481–99. Cohen notes that while the novel is generally 'a constitutively international genre' (p. 481), genres that successfully travel 'must be

- able to address social and /or literary questions that are transportable, that can speak to divergent publics or a public defined in its diversity, dispersion, and heterogeneity' (p. 482). Cf. also Geppert, *Der Historische Roman*, 4.
- 13 On the term *intercultural literature*, see Norbert Mecklenburg, *Das Mädchen aus der Fremde: Germanistik als interkulturelle Literaturwissenschaft* (München: Iudicium, 2009).
- 14 Fouqué published 20 novels, several collections of stories, a series of essays and books on (female) education and women's role in society, a study on the history of fashion, she was involved as editor in her husband's publishing projects and wrote reviews and other journalistic texts for magazines. Biographical dates here and in the following, according to Wilde.
- 15 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 11.
- 16 On research about Fouqué, see for example, Julia Bertschik, *Mode und Moderne:1* (Köln: Böhlau Köln, 2005); Silke Arnold de-Simine, *Leichen im Keller: Zu Fragen des Gender in Angstinszenierungen der Schauer- und Kriminalliteratur* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2000); Todd Curtis Kontje, *Women, the Novel, and the German Nation 1771-1871: Domestic Fiction in the Fatherland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Elisa Müller-Adams, "... bedenke, daß die Frau zur Frau redete": *Das Werk der Caroline de la Motte Fouqué als Beispiel für weibliche Literaturproduktion der frühen Restaurationszeit* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2003); Mechthilde Vahsen, *Die Politisierung des weiblichen Subjekts: Deutsche Romanautorinnen und die Französische Revolution 1790-1820* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2000); Jean T. Wilde, *The Romantic Realist: Caroline de La Motte Fouqué* (New York, NY, 1955); Birgit Wägenbaur, *Die Pathologie der Liebe: Literarische Weiblichkeitsentwürfe um 1800* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag GmbH & Co, 1996).
- 17 Karin Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 172.
- 18 As in the title in one of her educational books: *Die Frauen in der großen Welt. Bildungsbuch bei'm Eintritt in das gesellige Leben* [Women in the world of high society. An educational book for the entry into social life].
- 19 Karin Baumgartner, 'Defining National Identity', 61.
- 20 Fouqué, Caroline de la Motte. *Die Frauen in der großen Welt. Bildungsbuch bei'm Eintritt in das gesellige Leben* (Wien: B. Ph. Bauer, 1827), 130.
- 21 Karl August Varnhagen, for example, refers to this when writing in his portrait of Fouqué that she could have become a 'deutsche Staël' [German Staël]. See Karl August Varnhagen *Biographische Porträts* (Leipzig: Brockhaus 1871), 126.
- 22 Caroline de la Motte Fouqué *Ueber deutsche Geselligkeit in Antwort auf das Urtheil der Frau von Staël* (Berlin: Wittich, 1814), 25.
- 23 *Ibid.* 33, 30.
- 24 *Ibid.* 26.
- 25 *Ibid.* Also, cf. Baumgartner: 'Defining National Identity', 62.
- 26 The *Letters on Berlin* were written at a time when significant changes had taken place leading Fouqué to re-formulate her concept of sociability: 'By the 1820s, public mention of German nationalism was subject to severe censorship, and sociability had to be uncoupled from earlier nationalistic goals. In addition, men began to leave mixed circles like the salon for male-only spheres such as pubs and coffeehouses, and women were left behind in the domestic sphere of all-female interaction'. Baumgartner: 'Defining National Identity', 70.
- 27 Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, *Briefe über Berlin* (Berlin: Schlesingsche Buch- und Musikhandlung, 1821), 15.

- 28 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 172.
- 29 Arnold-de Simine, Napoleon, the Museum, and Memory Politics, 210.
- 30 Ibid., 208.
- 31 For the term *translation* cf. Doris Bachmann-Medick, *Cultural Turns: Neuorientierungen in den Kulturwissenschaften* (Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006), 238–283.
- 32 For the German reception of *Die Vertriebenen*, cf. Wilde, Jean T. *The Romantic Realist: Caroline de La Motte Fouqué* (New York, NY: Bookman Associates, 1955), 324–343.
- 33 Baumgartner: *Public Voices*, 192.
- 34 Ibid., 191.
- 35 George Soane, preface to *The Outcasts. A Romance in Two Novels*, by Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, trans. George Soane (London 1824: Whittaker), 1:v.
- 36 Ibid., 1:v.
- 37 Ibid., 1:x–xi; *ibid.*, 1:xi–xii.
- 38 Ibid., 1:x.; *Ibid.*, 1:x.
- 39 Ibid., 1:x.
- 40 Ibid., xii.
- 41 Cf. Hugo Aust, *Der historische Roman* (Stuttgart/Weimar: Metzler 1994), 29–31.
- 42 Ibid., 1:xii. In his rather lengthy explanation, Soane mentions several arguments to justify the added annotations. Among other things, they would ‘give [the] volume a comely appearance, which, without them would be lean as a mummy’ (Soane, Preface, 1:xiii). Furthermore, he refers to the necessity to balance out the novel’s fictionality, as most modern books are like kites in their nature ... that paper machine, which Johnson learnedly defines to be “A fictitious bird made of paper”; ... so the said modern volumes must have a tail of notes to keep them *in equilibrio* ...’ (*ibid.*).
- 43 ‘The Outcasts; a Romance, from the German’, *Westminster Review*, Jan. 1824–Jan. 1836, no. 2 (1824): 556.
- 44 Cf. Ansgar Nünning, *Literarische Geschichtsdarstellung*, 49–59.
- 45 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 170–201; *Ibid.*, 192; *ibid.*, 196.
- 46 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 193.
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen. Eine Novelle aus der Zeit der Königin Elisabeth von England*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Hartmann, 1823), 1:11. In the following, quotations from *Die Vertriebenen*, in Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, *The Outcasts. A Romance. Translated from the German by George Soane*, 2 vols., (London: Whittaker, 1824), 1:10.
- 49 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:131; Fouqué: *The Outcasts*, 2:199.
- 50 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:114; Fouqué: *The Outcasts*, 2:182.
- 51 Cf. also Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 194.
- 52 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:12; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:158.
- 53 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:17–18; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:94.
- 54 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:18; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:95.
- 55 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 1: 119; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:112.
- 56 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:100; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:235.
- 57 Respectively, Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:123 (Fouqué, , *The Outcasts*, 2:17); and Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:64 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1: 204).

- 58 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:140; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:32.
- 59 Respectively, Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:6 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:83–4); Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:5 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts* 2:82); and Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:3 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts* 2:81).
- 60 Respectively, Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen* (3:43; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:118); and Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:114 (Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:183).
- 61 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 2:23; Fouqué: *The Outcasts*, 1:168.
- 62 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 1: 146–147; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:137.
- 63 Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, 'Where Literature and Memory Meet. Towards A Systematic Approach to the Concepts Used in Literary Studies', *Literature, Literary History, and Cultural Memory*, ed. Herbert Grabes, *REAL. Yearbook of Research in American and English Literature*, 21 (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 2005), 276.
- 64 Baumgartner, *Public Voices*, 163.
- 65 See Barbara Potthast: *Die Ganzheit der Geschichte: historische Romane im 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen:Wallstein Verlag, 2007), 53.
- 66 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:121; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:189.
- 67 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:119; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 2:187.
- 68 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 1:54; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:50.
- 69 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 3:147; Fouqué, *The Outcasts* 2:213.
- 70 Fouqué: *The Outcasts*, 2:267.
- 71 Cf. Aust , 33.
- 72 Fouqué, *Die Vertriebenen*, 1:118–119; Fouqué, *The Outcasts*, 1:111–112.
- 73 Fouqué: *Die Vertriebenen*, 1:73; Fouqué. *The Outcasts*, 1:68–9.
- 74 Ansgar Nünning, 'Literarische Geschichtsdarstellung: Theoretische Grundlagen, Fiktionale Privilegien, Gattungstypologie und Funktionen', *Erinnern und Erzählen. Der Spanische Bürgerkrieg in der deutschen und spanischen Literatur und in den Bildmedien*, ed. Bettina Bannasch and Christiane Holm (Tübingen: Narr, 2005), 44–5.
- 75 Arnold-de Simine, 'Napoleon, the Museum, and Memory Politics', 217.

Hospitality and the Nation

HOSPITALITY AND THE NATION IN MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT'S *A SHORT RESIDENCE IN SWEDEN, NORWAY, AND DENMARK*

JENNIFER WAWRZINEK

[ABSTRACT]

In the summer of 1795, when Mary Wollstonecraft journeyed to Scandinavia, she was disillusioned with human society and the possibility of meaningful relation with others. She had recently been in Paris, where she had seen many of her moderate revolutionary friends executed under Robespierre's Reign of Terror, and by the time of her arrival in Scandinavia her unsatisfactory relationship with Gilbert Imlay was coming to an end. The book that resulted from this journey, *A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark*, is remarkable for its critique of sovereignty and the reification of difference inherent to the construction of national borders and the drives of commercial exchange. The article argues that Wollstonecraft insists upon openness to the people and cultures she encounters through configuring epistemology as a twin process of experiential contact and sceptical inquiry. This a process that remains inherently and necessarily ethical because it resists the structures of tyranny, domination, and control, which Wollstonecraft perceives to be afflicting late-eighteenth-century Europe, whilst simultaneously allowing for a re-conception of politics and justice according to the demands both of the present and the not-yet-formalised future.

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KEYWORDS *Travel Writing, Hospitality, Nation, Commerce, Epistemology, Politics, Justice.*

In late June 1795, Mary Wollstonecraft travelled to Scandinavia with her maid and her infant daughter. Most of Europe was then at war with France, and travel at this time was generally thought to be a precarious affair. During the three and a half months in which she travelled from Gothenburg in Sweden, across the Norwegian border to Halden, Skagerak, Larvik, and Risør, then via Oslo into Denmark, Schleswig and finally to Hamburg, Wollstonecraft wrote a series of letters to her lover Gilbert Imlay, on whose business she was travelling as envoy and legal representative. Although their relationship was at an end by the time of Wollstonecraft's departure from England, she made the journey as Imlay's officially appointed legal representative in an attempt to recover a stolen ship containing a large amount of silver and plate.¹ Upon her return to England, Wollstonecraft rewrote these private letters into the epistolary travel narrative entitled *A Short*

Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, removing any direct reference to Imlay as addressee of the letters and similarly any reference to the commercial aims of the journey.

The published text resulting from her journey and the rewriting of the private letters to Imlay takes up the concerns of Wollstonecraft's earlier political treatise, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. In the Scandinavian letters, the call in the earlier text for British men to prove their strength and compassion by creating a democracy based on friendship and a respect for difference becomes transposed into a concern with the roles of difference and the foreign in the creation of communities, cultures, and nations. In *Short Residence*, as I will argue, Wollstonecraft insists upon openness to the foreign as a site of difference and the non-determined, and as a potential means of regeneration and improvement. This necessarily requires the relinquishing of control over self and others via a certain degree of self-expropriation. Indeed the construction of *A Short Residence* as a series of letters in the epistolary mode specifically foregrounds this space of difference, whereby the open address becomes the means by which a non-determined otherness (the foreign) can be heard as a response.

Some scholars have noted the use of the epistolary mode in *A Short Residence* as a deliberate strategy by Wollstonecraft that aims to bring the personal into the realm of the public and the political. Mary Favret argues, for example, that the erasure of Imlay as specific addressee in the published letters specifically denotes a movement towards a public world of correspondence in which Wollstonecraft uses the forms of both sentimental memoir and philosophical essay with the aim of seducing a larger reading audience. Favret notes that this shift, from the personal to the public, is in fact 'a common strategy of "open letters"', whereby political critiques masked in the form of a letter to a king or ruler were published most often as pamphlets, or in journals and newspapers. As such, Favret writes, 'these open letters invite a wide audience to participate in the letter-writer's outcry'.² In this configuration, the letters become a form of self-performance that is dependent upon the recognition by the wider audience of the writer's '*dramatis personae*', such that the identity figured by the letters comes to be a performance that is, as Favret argues, 'communal and cultural'.³ Yet, as Gregory Dart astutely notes, *A Short Residence* only provides 'one half of the dialogue', so that despite Dart's claim that the openness of the address dramatises the 'culpable non-responsiveness of her correspondent', I suggest that the shift to public response, noted by Favret, as well as the provision of only one side of the address, as noted by Dart, together highlight the importance of Wollstonecraft's open address as a non-determined ethical gesture that both invites and demands a response.⁴ In other words, the openness of her address invites the other to respond both as a reception *from* as well as a direction *to* the foreign.

This dual process of invitation and response is similar to that enacted in *Rights of Woman* through Wollstonecraft's critical analysis of gender in key British and French texts, in which she creates spaces for the insertion of difference into eighteenth-century British notions of democracy. Her preoccupation with the open-

ness of self and society to non-determined change, and to the future as difference and context, necessitates in *A Short Residence*, just as it did in *Rights of Woman*, the question of how to negotiate self/selves-in-society without foreclosing on alterity and the possibility for change (the political) and the respect for difference (the ethical). In *Rights of Woman*, Wollstonecraft had argued specifically that gendered identity was very much a social construct by suggesting that both girls and boys ‘would play harmlessly together, if the distinction of sex was not inculcated long before nature makes any difference’.⁵ In *A Short Residence*, this concern with the construction of gendered identity is shifted largely to one that focuses on the construction of national identities via state and juridical systems, and specifically the ways in which the different cultures and societies she encounters along the way can provide possible examples for a British society that Wollstonecraft sees as desperately in need of improvement.

In this sense, the later text foregrounds the notion of hospitality, not only I suggest as an openness to different cultures and peoples, but similarly as a means of placing the self in question, either the individual self or the communal or national self. In this sense, my interest in the way that Wollstonecraft holds open a space for radical otherness in *A Short Residence*, specifically as an ethical gesture that emphasises knowledge as embedded and contextual, diverges from much scholarship on this text which, for the most part, tends to emphasise the roles of sentiment and feeling in the construction of the Wollstonecraftian narrative. To a certain extent, Wollstonecraft’s use of the sentimental mode in her political tracts and certainly in the Scandinavian letters allows a form of contact and exposure in a way that generates, as I will show, the sorts of openings towards difference necessary for the ethical encounter. The contact generated from direct engagement through feeling and the openness generated from sceptical inquiry both operate in a twin process that effectively refuses the reduction of alterity to the same.

My argument therefore contradicts earlier feminist readings of *A Short Residence* which emphasise the letters as either a journey towards self-discovery or as the expression of feminine desire, and which therefore read the letters in terms of self-expression and self-arrival. Eleanor Ty, for example, sees in Wollstonecraft’s text a search for ‘something more’ whereby the inscription of ‘the female self and her passions’ transgresses physical and emotional boundaries as a means of articulating a freedom that is distinctly personal.⁶ Jeanne Moskal similarly wants to affirm an empowered but somewhat essentialised femininity in the letters with her insistence on their figuration of nature-as-nurture as a means of transforming a sterile and masculine sublime into a fertile and material sublime. For Moskal, *A Short Residence* is all about mothers and daughters. She argues that Wollstonecraft, in contrast to Burke’s ‘contempt for the maternal breast as part-object ... constructs an ideal of the whole object, the good Mother Nature’, and that this identification with nature as nurture generates Wollstonecraft’s speaking voice and allows it to be heard.⁷ In these readings the focus on self-expression and self-empowerment would disable the openness required for hospitality to the foreign

simply through the circumscription and return of all that is strange and different to the parameters of the self (either the personal self or the national self).

Even more recent readings that aim to move away from Moskal and Ty's psychoanalytic re-figurations of feminine desire as power, nevertheless focus on the way in which Wollstonecraft's use of the sentimental narrative transforms, in *A Short Residence*, personal suffering into a force for social progress. Deborah Weiss's astute reading of the Scandinavian letters as an illustration of the ways in which 'the feelings occasioned by oppression are a source of strength, deep reasoning, and socially productive intellectual work', whilst highlighting an important aspect of the text in the way it draws attention to the use of women's suffering in the construction of the eighteenth-century British 'Man of Feeling', configures the aims of Wollstonecraft's travel narrative as perhaps more determined than its insistence on openness towards the foreign would allow.⁸

Nevertheless, Weiss's reading of the Scandinavian letters draws attention to the difficult co-situating of the political (which requires determined aims) and the ethical (which requires their relinquishing), even though she is not specifically concerned with the latter. By focussing on the ethical relation in Wollstonecraft's *A Short Residence*, specifically via her insistence on openness to difference and hospitality to the foreign, I will further argue that Wollstonecraft resists the colonising imperatives of which she has been accused by various critics. Cynthia Richards suggests that the undertaking of the journey to Scandinavia as a commercial venture and as a means to win back the heart of Wollstonecraft's disaffected lover configures *A Short Residence* as a conquest narrative with calculated ends, not the least of which was, as William Godwin has famously remarked in his memoirs of Wollstonecraft, the writing of a text that was 'calculated to make a man in love with its author'.⁹ Ty similarly argues that Wollstonecraft effectively colonises the landscape of her journey by describing it in phrases that turn it into 'something akin to an English countryside', whereby Wollstonecraft, as the viewer, can 'control her relation and responses to the landscape in a way that she cannot control her heart'.¹⁰

Yet, the criticism by scholars such as Richards, Ty, and Raoul Grandqvist that Wollstonecraft depicts in the Scandinavian letters an inherently imperialist project of commercial recovery, colonial exploration, and the acquisition of knowledge through what is seen as a colonising gaze would seem to be destabilised by the letters' consistent emphasis on the narrator's marginal position as a foreigner dependent upon the hospitality of strangers, as well as its simultaneous insistence on openness *to* the foreign.¹¹ It is for this reason therefore that I want to examine Wollstonecraft's use of the epistolary mode not as an invitation to identify with the author through the sentimental narrative, nor as a means of transforming private suffering into social analysis. Whilst sentiment is certainly an important aspect of Wollstonecraft's mode of engagement with the world, in this essay I am specifically concerned with the way in which it engenders ethical response, not through self-exploration and self-expression, as others have

argued, but rather through placing the self in question and inviting the (non-determined) response of the other.

Jacques Derrida's work on hospitality and the stranger is useful here, I suggest, as a means of providing a way of thinking about Wollstonecraft's persistent questioning and self-expropriation as a disruption of the acquisitive drives of commerce through opening out to the non-determined response of otherness, and in particular to the otherness of the reader. Derrida notes in his work on hospitality and the stranger that in many of Plato's Socratic dialogues it is often the foreigner who questions, who 'shakes up the threatening dogmatism of the paternal *logos*'.¹² Derrida is concerned primarily with the self's confrontation with the foreigner as a source of alterity, that is, as 'the one who, putting the first question, puts me in question'.¹³

This becomes a persistent theme throughout *A Short Residence*, where hospitality to the foreigner is depicted both on the everyday level of kindness to strangers, as a conditional form of hospitality, as well as on the more radical level of self-disruption and self-questioning, as hospitality in its unconditional form. As Derrida argues, without the structures of the everyday, as those that govern the state and the law, 'concrete politics and ethics, including a history, evolutions, actual revolutions, advances – in short, a perfectibility' would not be possible.¹⁴ By thus reading the Scandinavian letters with attention to the co-situating of the unconditional and the absolute within the structures of the everyday, I will illustrate the way in which Wollstonecraft gestures, in *A Short Residence*, towards a means of reconfiguring the socio-political systems of her era in order to insist upon a notion of knowledge as intrinsically contextual and embedded, thus giving rise to a system of justice that is intrinsically subject to the demands of the ethical relation.

Borders

A Short Residence places, from the very outset, the position of its narrator as marginal both to the lands she is visiting (in that she begins by losing her way) and to her homeland (in that she is a British woman travelling alone). This effectively destabilises the authority of the speaking voice and begins to place the narratorial self in question. Moreover, given that the final text is published in England and therefore primarily addressed to an English-speaking audience, *A Short Residence* enacts a double expropriation as a twin movement, whereby the narrator is not only aware of her own foreignness as she travels throughout Scandinavia, but similarly allows the foreignness of the other peoples and cultures she encounters to place her own suppositions in question. The open address similarly invites a response from a (conditionally) non-determined other, in the form of the reader, thereby opening the observations in the letters to further contestation. In this sense it is curious that Mitzi Meyers should argue that 'Wollstonecraft's autobiographical account of her journey in some ways resembles Wordsworth's later pilgrimage in search of a reintegration of self, nature and society', thus figur-

ing the Scandinavian letters as a 'revelatory psychological document'.¹⁵ I suggest that right from the outset Wollstonecraft specifically resists the overcoming of fragmentation and 'the power of the self to create unity', that Myers argues as necessary to the assertion of a Wollstonecraftian identity, through her critique of the egoistic boundaries of identity that would assert a self at the expense of the world and its others.¹⁶ As such the self in *A Short Residence* can be seen in distinct opposition to William Wordsworth's transcendental ego. Even as she approaches Sweden, Wollstonecraft emphasises an acute awareness of her own foreignness and marginality – something that she was already confronted with as a woman and public intellectual in British society.

The first letter, describing the passage from England and arrival on the coast of Sweden opens with a scene of dislocation and displacement as Wollstonecraft notes the unsuitability of the sailing vessel for the transportation of passengers. 'Eleven days', she writes, 'of weariness on board a vessel not intended for the accommodation of passengers have so exhausted my spirits ... that it is with some difficulty I adhere to my determination of giving you my observations, as I travel through new scenes'.¹⁷ Although she notes that her purpose is merely to observe, the sense of unease and exhaustion with which she begins her journey through Scandinavia suggests an unsettledness associated with her entry into another culture and another land, thus emphasising her marginality and effectively placing herself in question.

Although Favret argues to the contrary that Wollstonecraft arrives in Norway with 'courage and self-reliance' because she forces her 'will upon a weak captain and a reluctant crew' in order to commandeer a boat to shore, I suggest that the 'strength of character and easy relaxation' that Favret reads as setting the tone for the ensuing letters is destabilised significantly by the depiction of unease and exhaustion caused by the passage from England.¹⁸ Although Wollstonecraft manages to convince the captain of the ship to let her go ashore despite missing their intended destination of Arendal, this does not give her a renewed sense of security or set her back on course because she arrives onshore at an unnamed destination marked only by 'the light-house'.¹⁹

The unease and disorientation that marks the opening of the letters foregrounds the notion of hospitality towards the foreign, both as a conditional form of everyday welcome and as a radical openness that places the self in question. Conditional hospitality is also introduced early in the letters when, after the threatening unfamiliarity of being lost somewhere off, and then on, the coast of Sweden, somewhere north of Elsinore, Wollstonecraft is understandably relieved to be welcomed into a little cottage whose master, as she later discovers, is a naval officer responsible for taking care of the bay. Her description of, albeit unfamiliar, homeliness nevertheless attests to the importance of being temporarily offered respite from the unease that pervades the early pages of the letters:

On entering [the cottage], I was still better pleased to find a clean house, with some degree of rural elegance. The beds were muslin, coarse it is true, but dazzlingly white; and the

floor was strewn over with little sprigs of juniper (the custom, as I afterwards found, of the country), which formed a contrast with the curtains and produced an agreeable sensation of freshness, to soften the ardour of noon. Still nothing was so pleasing as the alacrity of hospitality.²⁰

It is significant that this passage is framed with the action of moving towards others. In other words, the description of the first encounter with the Swedish inhabitants of the cottage near the lighthouse foregrounds her action of entering the private spaces of the naval officer's cottage with the reciprocity and quickness of response, the 'alacrity of hospitality'. Wollstonecraft's foreignness here is therefore not absolute, as it would be if it placed the self in question, because the contract of hospitality is marked by the open welcome afforded by the inhabitants. Nevertheless, the dual insistence on disorientation followed by a welcome emphasises these twin aspects of hospitality to the foreign as a primary theme in *A Short Residence*.

As Derrida explains, hospitality is not offered to the absolute stranger, to someone with no name and no social or familial status.²¹ The letters of introduction Wollstonecraft carries with her as Imlay's legal representative undoubtedly serve to legitimise her arrival in Scandinavia and her circulation within its various societies. They serve as the means by which a contract of hospitality allows Wollstonecraft to enter Scandinavia whilst protecting her against any possible risk of defilement, should she have entered Sweden as an absolute stranger. This of course is very similar to her concern in *Rights of Woman* that change brought about by a confrontation with difference be based upon the respect and equality inherent to the friendship relation.

Nonetheless, although there is clearly a contract of hospitality in place, one that allows Wollstonecraft to enter Scandinavia and to circulate, her openness to the new and the unknown nevertheless allows the absolute other to unsettle the self and to place it in question. At the same time, the contract places limitations on these modes of unsettling in order to safeguard against complete subjective annihilation and destruction. It is this twin movement of conditional hospitality, subject to the laws of the state, and the unsettling and destabilisation of unconditional hospitality (generated through openness and questioning) that pervades Wollstonecraft's particular epistemology in the Scandinavian letters.

Derrida, in his work on cosmopolitanism and forgiveness, argues that both the conditional and unconditional laws of hospitality must work together because without the former in place, the latter would become a 'pious and irresponsible desire, without form and without potency, to the extent of even being perverted at any moment'.²² The contradictory tensions evident in Wollstonecraft's *Short Residence* between the insistence of ethical openness and reciprocal contact on the one hand (the unconditional), and the commercial aims driving her journey on the other (the conditional), can thus be understood in Derridean terms as a form of the pure unconditional intervening in the conditional and delimited form of hospitality enabled by the contractual obligation. Whilst it is

undoubtedly the case that Wollstonecraft's commercial venture delivers a determinate aim to her journey because its trajectory is configured according to the fulfilment of these aims, the letters disrupt these aims through their insistence on ethical openness as an opening to the mystery of the world and the possibility of change. It is curious then that Ty should read the various reflections on freedom in *A Short Residence* as a desire for self-care and self-protection. This would configure Wollstonecraft's engagements throughout her journey as primarily self-interested.²³ As Nancy Yousef cogently argues, on the contrary, Wollstonecraft offers herself to otherness as an offering of the self in its vulnerability and despite her own disappointments over the failure of the French Revolution and the violence unleashed by Robespierre, as well as her personal disappointment over her failed relationship with Gilbert Imlay.²⁴

The vulnerability that Yousef detects in the Scandinavian letters is foregrounded not only in the initial instance via the epistolary address, but similarly via Wollstonecraft's persistent questioning throughout her journey, as an open and non-directed inquisitiveness. This effectively resists the dictates of the singular 'I' and any colonising imperatives associated with a self, and by implication with a nation, in pursuit of sovereignty. In the 'Advertisement', the preface to the book, Wollstonecraft apologises for the necessity of using the first person in her narrative, or what she calls, 'the little hero of each tale'.²⁵ Indeed she refers to the presence of the self as a fault, but notes that her attempts to correct this fault affected the writing in such a way as to make her letters too contrived. Several scholars have seen this apology as a deliberate strategy on the part of Wollstonecraft to draw attention to a personal intimacy that directs the reader to the private side of the letters. Favret argues that despite her explanation of the use of the 'I' as a device to gain the reader's interest, Wollstonecraft 'nevertheless draws attention to the personal sufferings and sorrows which the text of the *Letters* will not explain'.²⁶

According to Favret the intimacy of the letters, generated by the use of the highly personal 'I', engenders audience identification with the narrator so that both can move 'from a nearly overwhelming sensibility toward a position of strength'.²⁷ This mode of identification therefore draws the reader into the text, thereby breaking open any Rousseauvian self-enclosure in order to generate a space for personal exchange and relationship. Weiss similarly reads the use of the subjective viewpoint in the letters as an invitation to identification, whereby Wollstonecraft, in her suffering, 'invites the observing reader's sympathy and the masculine observer who pities suffering women'.²⁸

Whilst these readings very poignantly point towards Wollstonecraft's careful inhabitation of feeling and reason as twin modes of social analysis, they nevertheless elide the simultaneous emphasis in the letters on the figuration of social and political improvement as dependent upon a resistance to the self-interested accumulation of power and property. Indeed Favret's reading of the 'little hero' apology as a 'de-personalizing device' nevertheless leaves a self intact as one axis of exchange.²⁹ Even though Favret is right to point towards the way in which the

apology creates a mode of reciprocity, I suggest that Wollstonecraft's resistance to self is more radical than these readings allow. In *A Short Residence*, Letter Eleven even goes so far as to imagine the disastrous effects of the egoistic drive in the form of ecological disaster:

I anticipated the future improvement of the world, and observed how much man still had to do, to obtain of the earth all it could yield. I even carried my speculations so far as to advance a million or two years to the moment when the earth would perhaps be so perfectly cultivated, and so completely peopled, as to render it necessary to inhabit every spot; yes, these bleak shores. Imagination went still further, and pictured the state of man when the earth could no longer support him. Where was he to fly from universal famine? ... I really became distressed for these fellow creatures, yet unborn. The images fastened on me and the world became a vast prison.³⁰

This passage is remarkable for its Malthusian dystopic vision of massive overpopulation. Yet it is significant that the vision relies on an image of cultivation and appropriation of the earth's resources in such a way as to become massively unsustainable. Over-cultivation and lack of consideration for and attention to the ground of cultivation effectively turns back on man with the creation of 'universal famine'. Here Wollstonecraft shows that she is acutely aware of the social and ecological dangers of selfish accumulation. In this sense, it is curious that Angela Keane should read this description of eco-disaster as evidence of a pathological imagination, with powers of generation 'beyond the control of reason'.³¹ If there is an imagination that is pathologised here, it is one that works in concert with a selfish accumulative desire that would colonise and cultivate the earth to such an extent that its resources could no longer support human life. The world as a 'vast prison' is not engendered by the imagination, but rather by Wollstonecraft's use of reason as a means of predicting the logical outcome of selfish accumulation.

Throughout *A Short Residence*, Wollstonecraft is consistently critical of modes of delineating the self, either the individual self or the national self, in ways that close off open discussion, contact with others, and the productive transformations brought about by difference. Letter Five counterposes the process of inquiry and discussion against what Wollstonecraft describes as the 'dogmatical assertions' of authoritarian tyranny that aim only to 'gird the human mind' by constricting thought with suppositions that are little more than constructed, and thus arbitrary, fictions, or, as Wollstonecraft puts it, 'imaginary circles'.³² By contrast then, the spirit of inquiry as the asking of questions, rather than the assertion of answers, leans towards the future as a means of disrupting both the illusion of racial and national stereotypes as well as the ignorance of difference. Imagination and the potential to be otherwise, to change society and avoid the horrors that Wollstonecraft witnessed during the French Revolution, are thus located within the very space of the unknown that questioning teases open. This is a space that is, moreover, closed off by the insistence on selves and nations as sovereign and self-enclosed.

Undoubtedly, we may question whether her legitimated position as Imlay's legal representative and her mission in the service of capitalist enterprise allows Wollstonecraft to feel, as Richards suggests, more secure in her vulnerability and her openness to others. Yet at the same time, Wollstonecraft's persistent vitriol against self-enclosed sovereignty and the acquisition of property de-legitimizes, or at least destabilises, this authorised position. In Letter Nineteen she refers to an 'adoration of property' as the 'root of all evil',³³ and in Letter Twenty-Two suggests that even charity is inscribed within the system of property relations through its offering not as pure gift, as Derrida would have it, but rather as a contractual obligation of return. As Wollstonecraft writes:

You know I have always been an enemy to what is termed charity, because timid bigots endeavouring thus to cover their *sins*, do violence to justice, till, acting the demi-god, they forget they are men. And there are others who do not even think of laying up a treasure in heaven, whose benevolence is merely tyranny in disguise: they assist the most worthless, because the most servile, and term them helpless only in proportion to their fawning.³⁴

The egocentric delivery of charity as a contract dependent upon the servility of those less fortunate is here aligned with a tyrannical drive for power. This is quite a different form of contract from the reciprocal coming together that Wollstonecraft describes on entering the naval officer's cottage when she first arrives in Sweden. The giving of alms as a contractual obligation is denoted by Wollstonecraft as doing 'violence to justice' and as 'tyranny in disguise' because the charitable act is configured as little more than a form of self-justification and the false appropriation of power over others. Charity is in this case, according to Wollstonecraft, given only in the interests of the sovereign self in the same way that selfish accumulation and over cultivation of the earth's resources lead to the possibility of ecological disaster in the form of famine. Both forms of relation with others (the earth and the poor) are unjust, in other words, because those others are not considered within the terms of an equal relation of reciprocity and freedom – something that Wollstonecraft believes is the natural right of human being.

Throughout *A Short Residence*, the critique of sovereignty and contractual obligation as modes of tyranny and domination finds its apotheosis in Wollstonecraft's criticisms of the merchants and businessmen she encounters during her journey, most notably in Copenhagen and Hamburg. According to Wollstonecraft the problems attending charity as an obligation of (moral) debt and the self-interested acquisition of property that results in her vision of dystopian ecological disaster both result in the kind of paranoia she sees as intrinsic to a society founded on property-relations and circulated by the mechanisms of commercial enterprise. The merchants in Hamburg are described as constantly on guard against others, suspicious of their Danish neighbours, and, as she writes, 'anxiously apprehensive of their sharing the golden harvest of commerce ... they

are ever on the watch till their eyes lose all expression, excepting the prying glance of suspicion'.³⁵

The focus here on anxious watching, suspicious glances and expressionless eyes implicates vision as the means of perception most antithetical to Wollstonecraft's notion of justice as an opening towards the other. As Anthony Pollock astutely notes, the two primary bases of Wollstonecraftian ethical action are familiarity and hospitality.³⁶ The Hamburg merchants ensure they can never get to know their Danish neighbours because the latter are constantly subjected to a paranoid surveillance that reifies the distance between the two groups as an insurmountable border.

Favret suggests that Wollstonecraft opposes the work of the imagination, which is figured as distinctly feminine, to this masculine and de-humanising world of commerce in order to prove 'the productive power' of the former.³⁷ According to Favret the criticism of commerce in *A Short Residence* is somewhat ironic, given that Wollstonecraft subsequently profits, with the publication of her letters, from this same system. The elevation of the 'power of the female imagination' would effectively destroy the open reciprocity of hospitality due to its infinite desire to appropriate experience for the sake of productivity. And yet openness to the foreign, and to difference, is intrinsic to the Wollstonecraftian notion of ethical engagement pervading both the Scandinavian letters as well as her earlier political treatises. As Derrida argues, absolute hospitality requires not only opening one's home, and by implication one's self, to the foreigner with a name and with papers, but also to 'the absolute, unknown, anonymous other'. It requires that 'I *give place* to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names. The law of absolute hospitality commands a break with hospitality by right, with law or justice as rights'.³⁸

The selfish greed of commercial enterprise, together with its objectification of others, is depicted throughout the Scandinavian letters as an effacement of the sympathetic engagement with and ethical openness to others necessary for Wollstonecraft's vision of social improvement. In this sense, I think that critics of *A Short Residence* who read the letters as an expression of female desire miss the point primarily because Wollstonecraft takes such care to insist upon the unfeeling distance created by the economies of desire and pleasure intrinsic to the perpetuation of commerce and trade. In the Scandinavian letters, the blind ignorance to others, in their difference and in their suffering, finds its apotheosis in the perverted pleasures of witnessing an execution as a spectacle for enjoyment. The critique of the Copenhagen businessmen in Letter Eighteen is soon followed by a scene, at the beginning of Letter Nineteen, in which Wollstonecraft travels to the outskirts of Copenhagen and is shocked to observe the vicarious pleasures of a crowd enjoying the brutal execution of a criminal. Her distress at the scene of events rests primarily in the way that the crowd treats the execution and subsequent burning of the corpse as a theatrical event, divested of humanity and any sympathy for the condemned man. Wollstonecraft declaims the event as

‘a spectacle for humanity’, and then goes on to write that ‘executions ought to have every appearance of horror given them; instead of being, as they are now, a scene of amusement for the gaping crowd, where sympathy is quickly effaced by curiosity. ... people go to executions to see the poor wretch play his part, rather than to commiserate his fate, much less to think of the breach of morality which has brought him to such a deplorable end’.³⁹

Although Wollstonecraft does not suggest that the crowd’s insensitive and unreflective witnessing of the execution is a direct consequence of the egoistic accumulation of commerce and its blindness towards the condition of others, she describes both the scene of execution and the behaviour of the Copenhagen businessmen in similar terms. The indifference towards others generated by the desire for pure pleasure in the moment, either in the witnessing of violence as spectacle or in the pursuit of desirable objects, is depicted by Wollstonecraft as a perversion of justice through its destruction of sympathy and understanding for the suffering of others. In this sense, feeling is shown to be, in its absence from the crowd of spectators, a means of contact that would effectively place the self in question by opening it out towards otherness.

Contact

Throughout *A Short Residence*, sensuous or sympathetic engagement with others, in concert with rational reflection, disables the spectacularity underwriting mercantilism and the institution of artificial national and sovereign borders – that is, everything that keeps us at a distance from the world and its others, and everything that reifies otherness into a commodity for subsequent circulation within a system of exchange. As I discussed earlier, the opening of *A Short Residence* is marked by a description of unease (the unsuitability of the sailing vessel for personal transport) and losing one’s way (in the storm), as well as an apology for using the narratorial ‘I’. This immediately foregrounds Wollstonecraft’s resistance to the dictates of the colonising imperative, even if at times there are traces of an imperialist superiority in the letters, for example in her comment on indiscriminate hospitality as a ruse for drunkenness in Dublin. Yet, any claims of superiority in the service of a sovereign self or sovereign (British) nation are unravelled by Wollstonecraft’s anti-heroic insistence on self-expropriation.

Letter Two immediately marks the importance of deference to the relational encounter with a request for admission: ‘let me, my kind strangers, escape sometimes into your fir groves, wander on the margin of your beautiful lakes, or climb your rocks to view still others in endless perspective’.⁴⁰ This request for permission to enter the land of strangers (in this case, Sweden) is foregrounded with images of self-disappearance and marginality. Wollstonecraft writes of her wish to escape *into* the depths of fir groves, to circle the *margins* of the lakes, and to climb rocky outcrops, where she does not expect to survey the lands but rather to become lost in the ‘endless perspective’ of similar rocks.

Not only is Wollstonecraft intensely aware of her own marginality and for-

eignness as she enters Sweden, she insists nevertheless upon remaining open to the environment. The scene that closes Letter Two, and that follows the request for permission to enter the land, describes an extraordinary encounter with the world around her:

The cow's bell has ceased to tinkle the herd to rest; they have all paced across the heath. Is not this the witching time of night? The waters murmur, and fall with more than mortal music, and spirits of peace walk abroad to calm the agitated breast. Eternity is in these moments: worldly cares melt into the airy stuff that dreams are made of; and reveries, mild and enchanting as the first hopes of love, or the recollection of lost enjoyments, carry the hapless weight into futurity, who, in bustling life, has vainly strove to throw off the grief which lies heavy at the heart. Good night! A crescent hangs out in the vault before, which woos me to stray abroad: – it is not a silvery reflection of the sun, but glows with all its golden splendour. Who fears the falling dew? It only makes the mown grass smell more fragrant.⁴¹

Although this passage describes a pleasing escape into eternity, where ‘worldly cares melt into the airy stuff that dreams are made of’, the observation is framed by the materiality of existence, figured as magical, or bewitching, due to Wollstonecraft’s ability to sustain connection with and openness to it. In other words, the importance of going outside and feeling the ‘falling dew’, or the rain on our faces, is that it keeps us alive to the existence of the world in its material transformations. As Sara Mills argues, Wollstonecraft figures the landscape as a ‘relational zone’ in which she poses herself ‘as an experiencing subject, but not one who is intent on focusing, controlling, and limiting her emotions’. According to Mills this configures the perceiving self of the narrator as ‘an element within the spatial dynamics’ of the scene.⁴²

This immersive self cannot possess or control others because it has been in the first instance deferred in the request for permission in the same way that the letters defer control over outcomes in the epistolary form of their address to an unnamed reader, even if we presume to know who this reader might be. Secondly, this self is shown to be generated from the interweaving of critical reflection and sensuous experience. It is the quiescence of the cow’s bell and the murmuring of the waters that gives rise to Wollstonecraft’s reflections on eternity as being held in the small moments of the here and now. Moreover, it is only *after* the return to the silvery night of the crescent moon hanging in the ‘vault’ of the sky that the subject emerges to be drawn forward, ‘to stray abroad’ and to enter the world in its strangeness and difference, without fear, but with acute attention to the transformative experiences enabled by contact with that world. Rather than fear the falling dew, Wollstonecraft suggests we should be open to the way it can make the ‘mown grass smell more fragrant’.

Christine Chaney suggests that the mode of narration in *A Short Residence* is intensely confessional, because Wollstonecraft offers her experience as ‘the ultimate proof of her theories about the importance of education, genius, and

independence for women'.⁴³ Elizabeth Bohls similarly argues that the Scandinavian letters, in contrast to the impersonality of much eighteenth-century travel writing, exhibit a highly subjective persona through Wollstonecraft's episodic descriptions of highly subjective states of being.⁴⁴ Whilst it is certainly the case that following the Reign of Terror, as Dart notes, many leading figures in France wrote confessions as justifications of their political conduct, Wollstonecraft was not under the same threat of imprisonment and death as French intellectuals such as Brissot, Roland, and Louvet, even though she had resided in France during the summer of 1793 when the Jacobins called for the arrest of many of her Girondin friends.⁴⁵

Although I agree that *A Short Residence* offers its observations on the land, life, and customs of Scandinavia through descriptions that seem at times to be intensely personal, I suggest that Wollstonecraft offers a self that is contextual and singular, rather than a self that is revealed through acts of disclosure associated with a confessional mode. The latter would assume a contained and self-enclosed subject that is revealed through the narrating of self-in-confession, whereas the contextual self is formed within the interstices of world and thought, and of sensuous experience and critical reflection. This is precisely what gives rise to the subject at the end of Letter Two. The narratorial voice appears in the midst both of a landscape intensely alive with sound and movement, and within a moment of history that reaches simultaneously back into the past and forwards into futurity. This does not, nevertheless, disable what Chaney refers to as the production of a 'dialogic interaction that invites the answering and competing discourse of its reader'.⁴⁶ Rather it insists upon dialogic interaction as the result of sketching what Anne Dufourmantelle, in her response to Derrida, describes as 'the contours of an impossible, illicit geography of proximity'.⁴⁷

This geography of proximity is impossible because in delineating the self as contextual, and as generated from the contours of direct experience in the world, it must necessarily be open to the unknown, the excessive and the radically alterior, that is, without fear of the 'falling dew' and the transformations it engenders. As Wollstonecraft writes towards the end of *A Short Residence*, 'The world cannot be seen by an unmoved spectator; we must mix in the throng and feel as men feel, before we can judge of their feelings'.⁴⁸

In contrast to the violent non-encounters Wollstonecraft describes as generated through surveillance and spectacularity, her mode of engagement with the world is distinctly non-proprietary. In her letter from Tønsberg, she describes a rowboat excursion in which she encounters a shoal of young starfish floating just below the surface of the water:

I had never observed them before; for they have not a hard shell, like those which I had seen on the sea-shore. They look like thickened water, with a white edge; and four purple circles, of different forms, were in the middle, over an incredible number of fibres, or white lines. Touching them, the cloudy substance would turn or close, first on one side, then on

the other, very gracefully; but when I took one of them up in the ladle with which I heaved the water out of the boat, it appeared only a colourless jelly.⁴⁹

The sense of wonder and surprise at encountering these creatures is held in concert with the sense of inquiry directing the encounter. Rather than being driven by a desire for possession, the scene is one of engagement as mutual. Wollstonecraft notes that she touches the creatures so that they ‘turn or close’ and that this response to her touch is one of incredible grace. Although the process is directed by vision, it is supplemented and extended via touch as direct engagement rather than pure observation. Both are shown to be important in the process of Wollstonecraftian inquiry. Furthermore the care that is suggested by the action of scooping up one of the starfish in her ladle, as if cupping them in open hands, gestures towards a reciprocal action of mutual engagement underwriting the entire process of observational inquiry.

Although the narratorial self in the starfish passage does not emerge from the crossing between sense and experience as it did at the end of Letter Two, the self is here very clearly immersed in the world she is observing, as a part of that world, engaged with and in dialogue with that world. Bohls reads this passage in particular as a parable of localism in that the beauty and grace that Wollstonecraft attributes to the ‘humble organism, the “star fish” or “jelly-fish”’ is a beauty that depends on its local environment, because when removed from the water, the fish becomes an unappealing mass of flesh.⁵⁰ The starfish passage from Tønsberg is, according to Bohls, one example of many incidents throughout *A Short Residence* that all variously place an emphasis on immersion *within* and direct experience of the local environment as intrinsic to Wollstonecraft’s distinct form of epistemology.⁵¹ It is for this reason that Wollstonecraft suggests in Letter Nineteen that travelling should form an essential component within any liberal education and that ‘the northern states’ should be visited before what were generally thought of as ‘the more polished parts of Europe, to serve as the elements even of the knowledge of manners, only to be acquired by tracing the various shades in different countries’.⁵²

It is undoubtedly the case that Wollstonecraft understands social progress through a distinctly Enlightenment framework, upholding ‘personal cleanliness and elegance of manners which only refinement of taste produces’ as markers of social progress, and thereby inadvertently upholding British values in the process.⁵³ Yet the insistence on appreciating and being open to variations in manners and customs in different countries, and in ‘tracing’ these differences beyond the countries normally visited on the standard itinerary of the Grand Tour, necessarily complicates the meaning of ‘elegance of manners’ and ‘refinement of taste’ because these would be subject to the various shades they acquire, when contextualised within their local environments and particular histories – both of which I have already argued are important to Wollstonecraft’s conception of knowledge as embedded.

As Wollstonecraft writes in Letter Five: ‘Travellers who require that every nation should resemble their native country, had better stay at home’.⁵⁴ It is not enough, in other words, to be drawn to foreign lands in order to make observational judgements on their people and cultures because this kind of knowledge needs to be gained through contact and direct experience, and moreover, with an awareness of and openness to the differences that are encountered in foreign environments.

Conduit

The making of a space for difference in *A Short Residence* through the tracing of ‘various shades in different countries’ allows the alterity of otherness to be preserved because, as Pollock argues, the scene/seen is allowed to present itself via the subject who acts as a conduit for a ‘just description’. It is a process, according to Pollock, that ‘does justice to the object of observation through the scrupulous and self-implicating act of merely describing it’.⁵⁵ This kind of ‘just observer’, or what Pollock refers to as the ‘ideal spectator’, is one that I suggest not only preserves the alterity of otherness through a resistance to knowledge as possession, it simultaneously insists that an ethical spectatorship must occur in conjunction with other forms of sensuous experience, such as tactile response for instance. In this sense, what Scott Juengel refers to as Wollstonecraft’s ‘sympathetic ecology’ demands an emphasis on mutual engagement, whilst recognising the epistemological limits to knowledge.⁵⁶ This is important because the self that is then offered to the other through the process of engagement, in the act of inquiry, is a self that is offered to an otherness that cannot be known. As Nancy Yousef has cogently remarked, this is a self that is offered in its vulnerability, despite an acute awareness of the human capacity for doubt and betrayal.⁵⁷

In this sense, it is curious that Yousef should configure Wollstonecraft’s need to be heard and to be loved as a demand for recognition and thus a dependency on the other (the addressee of her letters or the readers of her book). In fact I would argue that her very insistence on the gift of self as a form of ethical justice disables the structures of recognition inherent to the antagonistic relation between parent and child evident in the kind of charity that Wollstonecraft derides as self-interested egotism, and which Catherine Belsey describes as particular to the colonial project.⁵⁸

The notion of justice as ethical relation, and in distinct contrast to justice as dogma, is one that pervades Wollstonecraft’s entire *oeuvre*, both in the Scandinavian letters as well as, and perhaps more so, in her political treatises. Her insistence on the importance of cultivation, most notably in the attention she gives to family and education as the basis of a just society, configures an idea of justice that is impossible without the simultaneous notion of relation, or of self *in* relation. Daniel Engster refers to this idea of justice as belonging to the framework of care theory, that is, as a shift from justice intended to mediate human relationships by applying abstract moral principles to particular cases, to a jus-

tice focused on the needs of individuals and the attempt to address these needs in context.⁵⁹ Indeed Wollstonecraft depicts the self-in-relation, as a self that is not only contextual but also respects the otherness of radical difference, as the basis of a justice she sees as inherently ethical.

For Wollstonecraft, justice takes place between the demands of contextual emplacement and cultivation on the one hand, and the demands of critical reflection on the other. The ability to make judgments and to resist being overtaken by submission to the passions nevertheless remains important, because, as was acutely evident in *Rights of Woman*, the strength of a delicate intellect, so important to a society of equals based in friendship, relies on the fine balance of sympathetic engagement and critical reflection. Wollstonecraft's sometimes harsh judgements against those she encounters during her Scandinavian travels are generally made on the same grounds as her criticisms of British society. Her disgust with the artificial manners of the Swedish aristocracy in Stockholm repeats her gender and class-based critique of British society in *Rights of Woman*. Accordingly, when she argues in *A Short Residence* for 'joining the advantages of cultivation with the interesting sincerity of innocence' as a means of countering the artificiality of aristocratic life, she is directing her critique against the social and political systems she sees as responsible for the inequalities of society, rather than against an essentialised natural or ethnic difference.⁶⁰ In this respect Dart is right to note that for Wollstonecraft an ideal society is 'a realm of free inquiry, a site of open debate and discussion, a highly 'civilized' place'.⁶¹

However, his simultaneous claim that Wollstonecraft exploits her emotional isolation in order to 'indulge a fantasy of herself as a Rousseauvian *législateur* ... a disinterested lawgiver' cannot be supported by a text in which the demands of Wollstonecraft's own version of ethical justice as hospitality to otherness and to difference must themselves be open to the potential destabilisations of contextualisation and interrogation.⁶² In other words, the insistence on open discussion as a means of allowing difference to enter ensures that any critique must be able to withstand the forces of subsequent critique and possible transformation, as it is reapplied to differing temporal and geographic circumstances, and thus opened to the destabilisations of the new and the different.

For Wollstonecraft, the importance of receptiveness to the mystery of radical otherness is that it has the power to afford a glimpse of bare existence, beyond the strictures of state and juridical power, and therefore to engender communities of engagement beyond identity. It is ironic therefore that Wollstonecraft should close her critical assessment of Swedish gender and class differences in Letter Four with a description of the face-to-face encounter as affording such a glimpse. As she writes, 'I love sometimes to view the human face divine, and trace the soul, as well as the heart in its varying lineaments'.⁶³ This remarkable line locates the divine and the transcendent within the encounter of the face-to-face, where, as Levinas writes in another context, 'face to face, I can no longer deny the other: it is only the noumenal glory of the other that makes the face to face situation possible. The face to face situation is thus an impossibility of denying,

a negation of negation'.⁶⁴ As Levinas argues, and as Wollstonecraft illustrates, the face to face encounter allows us to resist a hierarchical world where justice is the dogmatic institution of universal principles. For Wollstonecraft, the face allows one to glimpse something beyond the dictates governing the everyday construction of identities (individual, communal, and national) such that its impact in the moment of perception, as an encounter between two beings suddenly taken out of the everyday world of society and politics, becomes a means of generating her particular vision of ethical justice.

The insistence on knowledge as singular and contextual, glimpsed in the moment of the direct encounter, such as that governing the face-to-face, permeates Wollstonecraft's political project across her entire *oeuvre*. Moreover, I suggest that her insistence on the anti-heroic and the unexceptional similarly informs the deliberate invocation by Wollstonecraft of a mode of perception in *A Short Residence* that Bohls refers to as the 'anti-aesthetic', and which effectively situates the aesthetic within the practical as a 'corporeally and politically situated mode of perception'.⁶⁵ According to Bohls, this mode of perception emphasises the continuities between the practical conditions of everyday life and the quality of the life that is achieved within those conditions. Rather than seeing local residents, such as rural Scandinavians, with the distancing effect of the conventional aesthetic framework, Bohls suggests that in *A Short Residence* Wollstonecraft creates the materially grounded quality of their lives in such a way as to open a space for the dignity of the poor to be reaffirmed, and their 'corporeally grounded needs' to be validated.⁶⁶ In other words, by placing the labouring body of the Swedish peasant within the context of his or her local environment, Wollstonecraft creates the material conditions for us as readers to empathise with the plight of those labouring bodies. She draws us, as readers, into the networks of responsiveness engendered by the dynamics of ethical justice as hospitality and openness.

The glimpse of humanity as bare existence, beyond the confines of identity categories and the laws of the state, functions for Wollstonecraft not only as a gesture towards the divine (in the face-to-face encounter). It similarly functions as a stark reminder that death returns material and worldly existence, upon which claims of property and sovereignty are based, to the grave. This realisation in fact forms the basis of her encounter in Letter Seven with the embalmed bodies housed in the small Norwegian church. Wollstonecraft is horrified at the attempt to preserve the body after death, when it is, as she writes, 'deprived of life, and thus dried into stone'.⁶⁷ The corpses, reified into stone, disallow any encounter with the wonder and mystery of life beyond identity. Instead they graphically illustrate what seems to her the pointlessness of struggles over excessive power and wealth in the material world of the here and now, that is, beyond the necessities needed to sustain life. As Wollstonecraft declaims: 'Is this all the distinction of the rich in the grave? – They had better quietly allow the scythe of equality to mow them down with the common mass, than struggle to become a monument of the instability of human greatness'.⁶⁸ The grotesquerie of the embalmed bodies is depicted here as an inversion of power and wealth because the bodies, petrified

in a half-decayed ugliness, only prove the ‘instability of human greatness’ rather than its continuance in the after-life.

The glimpse of humanity as bare existence, occluded in the practice of embalming bodies after death, but glimpsed through an open responsiveness to otherness in life, is one that, according to the framework of Wollstonecraftian ethical justice, provides the momentum for change because it instils a responsibility, as response-ability, that both precedes and exceeds the self. This means that the response can be offered, just as Wollstonecraft offers her observations, only as examples. As Alex Thomson argues in his work on democracy and deconstruction, ‘if they were prescriptions our responses would be irresponsible, and would conform to a rule’.⁶⁹ Social change through violent revolution is what Wollstonecraft wants to avoid. The murderous excesses of the French Revolution and Robespierre’s subsequent Reign of Terror proved to be horrifying examples of justice enacted on abstract principles and unsympathetic grounds. For this reason Wollstonecraft insists in the appendix to her letters that change should be ‘a gradual fruit of the ripening understanding of the nation, matured by time, not forced by an unnatural fermentation’.⁷⁰

A Short Residence is indeed permeated with a faith that human prejudice can eventually be destroyed with the cultivation of an ethical respect for the various nuances and shades of difference that exist between individuals, as well as a receptiveness and responsiveness to the glimpse of bare existence afforded through direct contact with others and with the mystery of radical otherness. Politics, when subjected to the demands of ethical justice, thus becomes not simply a mode of response-ability, figured as always necessarily subject to the contingencies of the contextual. It also becomes, in the words of Thomson, ‘a challenge made to the limits of the state, in the name of what lies beyond the state, and perhaps beyond the field of politics and law as we usually define them’.⁷¹

A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and, Denmark is arguably the most accomplished of Wollstonecraft’s books for its complex interplay between critical reflection and sympathetic engagement. It depicts a notion of understanding not as something that is achieved, but as something that cannot be separated from the contingencies of space and time, nor from the demands of a responsive and non-appropriative engagement with alterity. As such, Wollstonecraftian ethical justice comes to be figured as a process of constant reappraisal through which gendered or national identities can be contested and remade. This engenders an openness not only to the conditions of the present, but also to the unknown of the future, to the demands of a response-ability *to* the unknown other. Indeed for Wollstonecraft, ‘the future improvement of the world’ depends upon this very response-ability as responsibility, that is, as the gift of self to the unknown future, and specifically, the gift of self to what she describes as ‘these fellow creatures yet unborn’.⁷²

Notes

- 1 Richard Holmes notes in his introduction to *A Short Residence* that Imlay had been involved with his contacts in Scandinavia and Hamburg in a practice known as ‘blockade-running’, whereby a lighter weight sailing vessel is used to evade a navy blockade. Mary Favret adds to this observation that Imlay had expected a ‘doubly treacherous exchange’ and therefore sent Wollstonecraft to act as his legal representative in a suit taken against the ship’s captain. See Richard Holmes, ‘Introduction’, *A Short Residence*, by Mary Wollstonecraft (London: Penguin Classics, 1985), 22; and Mary Favret, *Romantic Correspondence: Women, Politics, and the Fiction of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 98.
- 2 Favret, *Romantic Correspondence*, 113–4.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 115.
- 4 Gregory Dart, *Rousseau, Robespierre and English Romanticism*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 134.
- 5 Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792; repr., London: Penguin Classics, 1985), 130–1.
- 6 Eleanor Ty, ‘“The History of My Own Heart”: Inscribing Self, Inscribing Desire in Wollstonecraft’s *Letters from Norway*’, in *Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley: Writing Lives*, ed. Helen M. Buss, D. L. MacDonald, and Anne McWhir (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001), 70, 73.
- 7 Jeanne Moskal, ‘The Picturesque and the Affectionate in Wollstonecraft’s *Letters from Norway*’, *Modern Language Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (September 1991): 276, 285.
- 8 Deborah Weiss, ‘Suffering, Sentiment, and Civilization: Pain and Politics in Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Short Residence*’, *Studies in Romanticism* 45 (Summer 2006): 220.
- 9 William Godwin, *Memoirs of the Author of ‘The Rights of Woman’* (1798; repr., London: Penguin, 1987), 249.
- 10 Ty, ‘The History of My Own Heart’, 76.
- 11 See Cynthia Richards, ‘Fair Trade: The Language of Love and Commerce in Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark*’, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 30 (2001): 71–89; and Raoul Grandqvist, ‘Her Imperial Eyes: A Reading of Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*’, *Moderna Språk* 91 (1997): 16–24.
- 12 Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality: Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 5 (italics in the original).
- 13 *Ibid.*, 3.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 147–9.
- 15 Mitzi Meyers, ‘Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Letters Written ... in Sweden*: Toward Romantic Autobiography’, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 8 (1979): 166.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 173.
- 17 Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark*. (1796; repr., London: Penguin Classics, 1987), 63.
- 18 Favret, *Romantic Correspondence*, 103.
- 19 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 64.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 66.

- 21 Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, 21–5.
- 22 Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 23.
- 23 Ty argues that Wollstonecraft is moved by the kindness of strangers because she desires someone who can sympathise with and care for her. See Ty, ‘The History of My Own Heart’, 78.
- 24 Nancy Yousef, ‘Wollstonecraft, Rousseau and the Revision of Romantic Subjectivity’, *Studies in Romanticism* 38, no. 4 (Winter 1999): 537–57.
- 25 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 62.
- 26 Favret, *Romantic Correspondence*, 127–8.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 108.
- 28 According to Weiss, this use of sentiment as a means of identification is a deliberate strategy whereby ‘women’s pain becomes a source of intellectual accomplishment’ such that feeling and thinking together enable women to be transformed into ‘agents of progress’. See Weiss, ‘Suffering, Sentiment, and Civilization’, 103.
- 29 Favret, *Romantic Correspondence*, 115.
- 30 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 130.
- 31 Angela Keane, *Women Writers and the English Nation in the 1790s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 126.
- 32 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 93.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 170.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 187.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 190.
- 36 Anthony Pollock, ‘Aesthetic Economies of Immaculation: Capitalism and Gender in Wollstonecraft’s *Letters from Sweden*’, *The Eighteenth Century* 52, no. 2 (2011): 198.
- 37 Favret, *Romantic Correspondence*, 120.
- 38 Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, 25 (italics in the original).
- 39 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 168–9.
- 40 *Ibid.*, 74.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 75.
- 42 Sara Mills, ‘Written on the Landscape: Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*’, *Romantic Geographies: Discourses of Travel 1775–1844*, ed. Gilroy Amanda (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 29, 30.
- 43 Christine Chaney, ‘The Rhetorical Strategies of “Tumultuous Emotions”: Wollstonecraft’s *Letters Written in Sweden*’, *Journal of Narrative Theory* 34, no. 3 (2004): 288.
- 44 Elizabeth Bohls, *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics 1716–1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 159.
- 45 My problem with Dart’s reading of the confessional mode in Wollstonecraft’s *A Short Residence* as a manipulation of the personal in the service of the political is that a good deal of his justification for the influence on her writing of other (primarily French) writers is based on speculation. In fact we do not know whether Wollstonecraft was as struck by the use of first person narration by Roland and Louvet as Dart speculates. Neither does Dart give any evidence to suggest that Wollstonecraft was so impressed with the techniques of Rousseau’s confessional mode that she chose to emulate him. See *Rousseau, Robespierre and English Romanticism*, 123, 131.
- 46 Chaney, ‘The Rhetorical Strategies of “Tumultuous Emotions”’, 295.

- 47 In Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, 2.
- 48 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 219.
- 49 Ibid., 112.
- 50 Bohls, *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics*, 166.
- 51 Bohls similarly reads this emphasis on localism in the way that Wollstonecraft places peasants within their local environments, and in her insistence that aesthetic pleasures must similarly be contextualised amongst other sensual pleasures, rather than treated as divorced from and therefore superior to them.
- 52 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 173.
- 53 Ibid., 93.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Pollock, 'Aesthetic Economies of Immaculation', 200.
- 56 Scott Juengel, 'Countenancing History: Mary Wollstonecraft, Samuel Stanhope, and Enlightenment Racial Science', *ELH* 68, no. 4 (Winter 2001): 912.
- 57 Yousef, 'Wollstonecraft, Rousseau and the Revision of Romantic Subjectivity', 540.
- 58 See Catherine Belsey, *Desire: Love Stories in Western Culture* (Chichester: Blackwell, 1994).
- 59 Daniel Engster, 'Mary Wollstonecraft's Nurturing Liberalism: Between an Ethic of Care and Justice', *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 3 (2001): 577.
- 60 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 84.
- 61 Dart, *Rousseau, Robespierre and English Romanticism*, 132.
- 62 In fact Dart gives very schematic evidence to support his claim that Wollstonecraft instantiates the Rousseauvian *législateur* in the Scandinavian letters. He makes this claim by mapping Rousseau's presentation of a state of nature, in which the solitary legislator feels truly at home through its depiction as a realm in harmony with his or her own internal nature, onto Wollstonecraft's own engagements with the Scandinavian landscape. However as many scholars have already noted, Wollstonecraft, in a manner quite different from Rousseau's solitary wanderer, always turns back to the social and to the human. See *Rousseau, Robespierre and English Romanticism*, 132–3.
- 63 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 84.
- 64 Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous: Thinking-of-the-Other*, trans. Michael Bradley Smith and Barbara Harshav (London: Continuum, 2006), 30.
- 65 Bohls, *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics*, 142.
- 66 Ibid., 158.
- 67 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 109.
- 68 Ibid.
- 69 Alex Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy* (London: Continuum, 2005), 100.
- 70 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 198.
- 71 Thomson, *Deconstruction and Democracy*, 95.
- 72 Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence*, 130.

Romantic, the Gothic and the Visual

THE ROMANTIC, THE GOTHIC, AND THE VISUAL

Three Narratives about Amalia von Krüdener and the Russian Poet Fedor Tiutchev

[ABSTRACT]

One poem by the nineteenth-century Russian poet Fedor Tiutchev begins with the line ‘Я помню время золотое’ (or ‘la pomniu vremia zolotoe’) [I remember a golden time]. It is about the poet’s early youth, a meeting with a young woman, a spring outing to castle ruins on the Danube. The poem has led to many attempts to determine the exact time and place of this moment and the identity of the young woman. The aim of the article is to show the complex relationship that exists between fiction, reality, and the scholars’ or critics’ meta-level narrative about fiction and reality. I will attempt to demonstrate how three distinct narratives (a romantic, a Gothic, and a visual) can originate in this poem, thereby illuminating and perhaps changing our aesthetic appreciation of the poem. The first two narratives have been established by literary historians. The third and last narrative emerges from a compilation of the paintings and photographs preserved by the woman presumed to be the subject of the poem.

PER-ARNE BODIN

KEYWORDS *Russian Literature, Biography, Aesthetics, Love, Nineteenth Century.*

Я помню время золотое

Я помню время золотое,
Я помню сердцу милый край.
День вечерел; мы были двое;
Внизу, в тени, шумел Дунай.

И на холму, там, где, белея,
Руина замка в дол глядит,
Стояла ты, младая фея,
На мшистый опершись гранит,

Ногой младенческой касаясь
Обломков груди вековой;
И солнце медлило, прощаясь
С холмом, и замком, и тобой.

И ветер тихий мимолетом
Твоей одеждою играл
И с диких яблонь цвет за цветом
На плечи юные свевал.

Ты беззаботно вдаль глядела...
Край неба дымно гас в лучах;
День догорал; звучнее пела
Река в померкших берегах

И ты с веселостью беспечной
Счастливый провожала день:
И сладко жизни быстротечной
Над нами пролетала тень.

[I remember a golden time. / I remember a country my heart loved well. / Day became dusk. We were together. / Below us in shadow the Danube sang. // Where, white upon a hill, / a ruined castle stared into the distance, / you stood, young elfin creature, / leaning on the mossy granite. / Your young leg touched / the age-old keep's remains / while the sun dallied in its farewells / to the castle, the hill and to you. // A quiet, passing breeze / playing with your dress, / and from wild apples, flower after flower / strewn lightly around your shoulders ... // Without a care, you stared into the distance, / the skyline dimmed in hazy beams. / The day burned out; the song called louder / from the river in its darkening banks. // In carefree joy you spent the happy day. / Sweetly the shade of swiftly-flowing life / passed over us and flew away].¹

One of the best-known and loved poems by the nineteenth-century Russian poet Fedor Tiutchev begins with the line 'Я помню время золотое' (or 'Ja pomniu vremia zolotoe') [I remember a golden time]. It was composed in 1836 and is about the poet's early youth in the past, a meeting with a young woman, a spring outing to castle ruins on the Danube. The text itself tells us this much, and it almost seems to be a translation of a German romantic poem.² The Russian Formalist Iurii Tynianov has pointed out that it also contains a grammatical error: 'My byli dvoe' [we were two] sounds like a direct translation from German: 'Wir waren zwei'. It should read 'Nas bylo dvoe' [of us it was a couple].³ The very language in the first line suggests German poetry, romanticism, and German romantic scenery.

This first line, however, can also be viewed as a variant on the beginning of one of the Russian national poet Aleksandr Pushkin's best known poems: 'Ja pomniu chudnoe mgnoven'e' [I remember a wonderful moment]. Tiutchev's work continues in the fourth stanza with a poetic detailing that transforms it into a unique momentary impression. Every word comes from the stock of romantic poetry, but together they create a clear visual impression and at the same time a strong feeling of momentariness:

И ветер тихий мимолетом
Твоей одеждою играл
И с диких яблонь цвет за цветом
На плечи юные свевал.

[A quiet, passing breeze / playing with your dress, / and from wild apples, flower after flower / strewn lightly around your shoulders.]

This special momentariness and detailing enhance the originality of the poem and elevates it from a cliché to a remarkable work of art that expresses an intense awareness of a fleeting moment of happiness, love, and nature. The experience becomes a past memory that belongs to 'a golden time'. The poem continues:

И ты с веселостью беспечной
Счастливый провожала день:
И сладко жизни быстротечной
Над нами пролетала тень.

[In carefree joy you spent the happy day. / Sweetly the shade of swiftly-flowing life / passed over us and flew away.]

The close, even intimate relationship with the landscape is a feature that connects the poem with romanticism, as is the notion of the fleeting moment.⁴ The Tiutchev scholar (and the poet's great grandson) Kirill Pigarev aptly notes that despite the element of romantic cliché in the poems, they also reflect actual personal experiences.⁵

Written in 1836, the poem has led many students of Tiutchev to attempt to determine the exact time and place of this moment of bliss and the identity of the young woman to whom it is addressed. Thus the interesting question is not when the poem was written, but what inspired it – an event and a moment that according to the poem happened long ago in another time, a golden time in the past. Only a few scholars have concluded that this moment and the young woman existed only in the poem.

The purpose of the present article is to show the complex relationship that exists or can exist between fiction, reality, and the scholar's meta-level narrative about fiction and reality. I will attempt to demonstrate how three distinct stories can originate in this poem, thereby illuminating and perhaps changing our aesthetic appreciation of the work. The first two narratives have been established by literary historians and others who have written about the persons concerned. The third and last narrative emerges from a compilation of the paintings and photographs preserved by the woman presumed to be the subject of the poem. The background facts, which in this case come from letters and concrete information about meetings and trips, are used in different ways in the three stories. Perhaps more than any other poet, Tiutchev has inspired Russian literary schol-

ars to try to discover connections between his life and his poetry. Several of his biographers are also his blood relatives. I want to show that these three stories influence a reading of the poem regardless of whether or not they are factually true, and I will also demonstrate how scholars and interpreters have themselves transformed and altered the aesthetic content of the work.

Tiutchev's Biography

Four years Pushkin's junior, Tiutchev was born in 1803. Like Pushkin, he was from an aristocratic family of landowners.⁶ He left Russia at the age of 19 to serve in the diplomatic corps, first in Munich 1822–1837 and then several years in Turin. In Munich he became acquainted with both Heine and Schelling. Thus already as a young man he found himself in the very centre of German romanticism, which would leave a profound mark on his poetry and outlook. It is uncertain whether he had any extensive knowledge of the romantic thinkers, however, for he was too interested in the life around him to dedicate himself to the academic study of philosophy.

Tiutchev was dismissed from his position in Turin in 1839 for having abandoned his post as *chargé d'affaires*, which was considered a serious offense for a diplomat. After 22 years in the West he returned to Russia in 1844, where he was appointed Chairman of the Foreign Censorship Committee. He was never happy in his native country, nor did he long to go back to his birthplace, which is otherwise a common sentiment and motif in the works of romantic poets. He did, on the other hand, look back fondly on his youth in southern Germany, which for him would always be a golden time. He died eight years before Dostoevskii in 1873, not quite seventy years old – a considerable age for a Russian poet. Pushkin died at the age of 37, Lermontov at 26.

In 1826 in Munich Tiutchev married a young widow, Emilia Eleonora Peterson. She already had three children of her own, and they would have three more together. Soon he fell in love with another woman, Ernestine Dörnberg, who became his wife after Eleonora died of tuberculosis. That marriage also produced three children. Tiutchev also had several extramarital liaisons, the most enduring of which with Elena Deniseva began when he finally returned to Russia and lasted 15 years. She also bore him three children. During these years he lived a double life, and love, especially forbidden love, with its pleasures and suffering, is among the most important themes in both his life and his poetry.

The Romantic Narrative

Let us return to our poem. Tiutchev's first biographer, Ivan Sergeevich Aksakov, a relative of his, writes that the poem is about a meeting between the poet and a sixteen-year-old woman whom he does not name, but who was later identified as Amalia (or Amalie, Amelie) von Lerchenfeld (1808–1888), of high noble German birth.⁷ She married Alexander von Krüdener, a colleague of Tiutchev's who



III. 1 [The castle ruins in Donaustauf. Photo: Christoph Neumüller]

worked as a secretary at the Russian legation in Munich. It is clear that Tiutchev knew and met with Amalia in Munich. She was a celebrated beauty whom Heinrich Heine, for example, mentions in his letters. Her portrait was also displayed in Ludwig I's Gallery of Beauties at his castle in the city, which featured 36 of the most beautiful women in Munich at the time.⁸

Attempts have thus been made to determine the exact place and time one spring day where the meeting with the young woman described in the poem happened. The place is presumed to be the ruins of Stauff Castle outside of Regensburg, the time May 1824 (ill. 1). A recent examination of the Lerchenfeld family archive has failed to provide any definite proof, however, and questions about the real background of the poem remain unanswered.⁹ Apparently no letters or other documents written by Amalia herself have been preserved. The ruins do seem to be a perfect backdrop for a romantic poem.

Tiutchev sent his poems with Amalia to Pushkin for publication in his journal *Sovremennik*, and 'I remember a golden time' was among them. This special courier mission between two of Russia's best known nineteenth-century poets is an important component of the narrative about her, for she is cast not only as the muse of Tiutchev's poetry, but also as its intermediary. As is clear from his correspondence, the von Krüdeners met him on several occasions later in life. He asked Amalia to use her influence with Count Benckendorff, the head of the Third Section, to reinstate him in the position from which he had been dismissed. In one letter to a friend he wonders whether she is happy, and he speaks of her as follows in another from 1840:

Vous connaissez l'attachement que je porte à Mad. de Krüdener et vous pouvez facilement vous représenter le plaisir que j'ai eu à la revoir. Après la Russie c'est ma plus ancienne affection. Elle avait 14 ans quand je l'ai vue pour la première fois, et aujourd'hui, le 2/14 juillet, son fils aîné vient d'accomplir sa quatorzième année. Elle est toujours bien belle, et notre amitié heureusement n'a pas plus changé que sa personne.

[You know my devotion to Madame Krüdener, and you can easily imagine how pleasant it was to see her again. After Russia she is my oldest love. She was fourteen when I first saw her. And today, July 2/14, [1840], her oldest son turned fourteen. She is still very attractive, and fortunately our friendship has not changed any more than has her appearance.]¹⁰

This letter is probably the strongest evidence that 'Ja pomniu vremena zolotoe' really is about her. Tiutchev also mentions her in one of his last letters, written to his daughter Dariia in April 1873, the year that he died. Amalia had visited him to give him a farewell kiss. Both of them are now old. Amalia has remarried count Nikolai Adlerberg in 1855 but had already born him an illegitimate son in 1848:

Вчера я испытал минуту жгучего волнения вследствие
моего свидания с графиней Адлерберг, моей доброй
Амалией Крюденер, которая пожелала в последний раз
повидать меня на этом свете и приезжала проститься со
мною. В ее лице прошлое лучших моих лет явилось дать
мне прощальный поцелуй

[Yesterday I experienced a moment of intense emotion due to my meeting with Countess Adlerberg, my dear Amalia Krüdener, who wished to see me one last time on this earth and came to bid me goodbye. In her person the best of my years from the past appeared to give me a farewell kiss.]¹¹

In this passage we seem to see the same idea as in 'Ja pomniu vremena zolotoe': 'прошлое лучших моих лет' [my best years from the past] – or, if you will, 'a golden time'. Besides this poem, scholars have attributed two others to Tiutchev and Amalia's relationship. The first, early poem from 1824 has been interpreted as a depiction of Tiutchev's marriage proposal, which Amalia declined under pressure from her family, who did not approve of him.¹² Thus 'KN', as the poem is enigmatically entitled, is said to reflect Amalia's feelings at not being able to marry her poet.

Твой милый взор, невинной страсти полный,
Златой рассвет небесных чувств твоих
Не мог — увы! — умиловить их —
Он служит им укорю безмолвной.

Сии сердца, в которых правды нет,
Они, о друг, бегут, как приговора,
Твоей любви младенческого взора,
Он страшен им, как память детских лет.

Но для меня сей взор благодаянье;
Как жизни ключ, в душевной глубине
Твой взор живет и будет жить во мне:
Он нужен ей, как небо и дыханье.

Таков горе духов блаженных свет,
Лишь в небесах сияет он, небесный;
В ночи греха, на дне ужасной бездны,
Сей чистый огонь, как пламень адский, жжет.

[Your dear gaze, with innocent passion filled, / the golden dawn of your heavenly feelings / serve as a silent reproach to them, / at propitiation it is unskilled. // These hearts in which there is no truth / flee, my friend, as they would flee a judgement, / fearing as they fear childhood memories / the loving gaze of your youth. // What is good for me are your eyes, / like the water of life, in the depths of my being, / your living gaze which lives in me - / deep down I need it, like breath, like the sky. // Heavenly, shining only in the skies, / such is the light of souls in bliss, / During nights of sin, this pure flame / burns in a fearsome abyss.]¹³

Literary historian G. I. Chulkov has attributed this poem to the story about Tiutchev and Amalia. There is in the end of the poem a tinge of the awesome, of the strength of a passion beyond every measure, pointing to another and more ominous interpretation and another narrative, which we will return to later in this article.¹⁴

The second work that has been associated with their relationship is the retrospective poem 'Ja vstretil vas' [I met you], written in Karlsbad in 1870. It is as though the mere expression 'remembering a golden time' has encouraged both literary scholars and relatives to try to find a clear biographical background to these poems. Several researchers have pointed out, however, that this work cannot be related to Amalia, since she and Tiutchev never met at that point in time. Rightly or wrongly, scholars weave the poems and the author's biography into a story about Amalia and the poet:

К. Б.

Я встретил вас — и все былое
В отжившем сердце ожило;
Я вспомнил время золотое —
И сердцу стало так тепло...

Как поздней осени порою
Бывают дни, бывает час,
Когда повеет вдруг весною
И что-то встрепенется в нас, –

Так, весь обвеян дуновеньем
Тех лет душевной полноты,
С давно забытым упоеньем
Смотрю на милые черты...

Как после вековой разлуки,
Гляжу на вас, как бы во сне, –
И вот – слышнее стали звуки,
Не умолкавшие во мне...

Тут не одно воспоминанье,
Тут жизнь заговорила вновь, –
И то же в вас очарованье,
И та ж в душе моей любовь!

[К.В.

*I met you and the past / came back to life in my dead heart. / Remembering a golden time,
/ my heart became so warm. // Just as in late autumn / there are days, the transient hour,
/ when suddenly spring wafts again / and something stirs within us, // so, winnowed
within by the breath / of fullness my soul knew in those years, / with a rapture I thought
I'd forgotten, / I stare into your dear face. // As if we'd been apart for ages / I stare at you
and think I'm dreaming, / and suddenly sounds unsilenced in me / could be heard within
me, but louder! // That was more than reminiscence: / my life began to talk once more, /
as did in you that very same charm, / as did in my soul that very same love!]*¹⁵

Although the initials 'K.B.' in this tale of unfulfilled love have been interpreted as standing for Krüdener, Baronessa, the use of a surname and title seems an odd way to dedicate a poem.¹⁶ Amalia, moreover, had remarried long ago and now had a different surname. Another and more plausible explanation offered by Tiutchev's biographers is that the initials refer to Clothilde von Bothmer, the sister of Tiutchev's first wife, whom he met around the time the poem was written.

The narrative about Amalia and the poet has to a great extent been constructed outside the poems and on the basis of sketchy biographical facts.¹⁷ The romantic narrative about unfulfilled love is nothing more than a collective creation of the literary scholars. If we follow Tiutchev's biographers and read this poem together with 'Ja pomniu vremia zolotoe', the associations I mentioned earlier with Pushkin's poem 'I remember a wonderful moment' become even stronger. All three poems tell of a meeting with a former sweetheart that rekindles extin-

guished feelings. Pushkin's poem has also been interpreted biographically in the same spirit as 'Ia pomniu vremia zolotoe'.

The connection between the poem and Amalia is based on several sources. One is a subsequently lost letter from Tiutchev's servant N. A. Khlopov to Tiutchev's mother describing a love affair that commentators have interpreted as referring to Amalia. Family traditions also appeal to her in the context of the poem, and she is mentioned in a letter from Ernestine, Tiutchev's second wife, to her stepdaughter Daria, on learning that Amalia had recently died.¹⁸ Thus facts, conjectures, hypotheses, and fabrications have been transformed into a romantic tale of eternal love that does not lead to marriage, but lasts throughout the lovers' lifetime.

The positive romantic aura of the ruins is similar to what can be found in Heine's poetry, and he as well uses the image of apple blossoms.¹⁹ Thus Tiutchev's poem blends personal experiences with many of the poetic conventions of the period.

The Gothic Narrative

Thus far we have followed a romantic tale of lifelong love that never leads to marriage and perhaps not even to a relationship between the man and woman. The focus of this narrative is on the man – the poet – while the woman is the object of love, worship, and memory. An excerpt from the memoirs of Tsar Nicholas I's daughter Ol'ga Nikolaevna, however, provides a different portrait of Amalia. Here it is the woman who is at the centre. She is strong, cunning, and calculating, and she takes advantage of Benckendorff's love for her to help Tiutchev in his career. She also exploits the Russian royal family, from whom she receives expensive gifts. The Tsar as well may have taken a fancy to her:

Деловые качества Бенкендорфа страдали от влияния, которое оказывала на него /она/. Она пользовалась им холодно, расчетливо: распорядилась его особой, его деньгами, его связями где и как только ей это казалось выгодным, – а он и не замечал этого. Странная женщина! Под добродушной внешностью, прелестной, часто забавной натурой скрывалась хитрость высшей степени.

[Benckendorff's professional qualities suffered from the influence that [she] exerted on him ... She exploited him coldly, calculatedly: took charge of him, his money, his connections wherever and whenever she pleased – and he didn't even notice. A strange woman! Her outward geniality and a charming, often amusing nature concealed a high degree of cunning.]²⁰

The fairy in 'Ia pomniu vremia zolotoe' (Стояла ты, младая фея [you stood there, young elfin creature]) is perhaps in fact the evil fairy. This motif of a

young fairy who bewitches the young man was familiar at the time from Jean Schneitzhoeffter's popular ballet *La Sylphide*, which had its premiere in 1832, four years before the poem was written, and in the Russian context from Vladimir Odoevskii's story 'Sil'fida' from 1837.

There is something slightly alarming in Ol'ga Nikolaevna's depiction of Amalia. This note is even stronger in a description of the Krüdeners from the time they lived in Stockholm, where her husband was the Russian envoy 1843–1852. The account is in a gossip column dealing with the inhabitants of several buildings on Blasieholmen in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The von Krüdeners lived first in the Bååtska Palace and then in the Fersen Palace located there:

The Krüdener home was to some extent the centre of elegant social life in Stockholm in the 1840s. Contemporaries describe Baroness Krüdener as the incarnation of beauty, wit, and taste, and note that she was moreover enveloped in a poetic aura arising from all the stories about her mysterious lineage, her love for a man who unbeknownst to her was her own brother, and the homage paid to her by a very important person in one of our neighbouring countries.

In addition, we are told that the Baron had lost an arm in a duel fought for the sake of the Baroness. All this would have sufficed to make her a heroine in our salons, but, as I mentioned earlier, her qualities, her manner, and above all her appearance were such that she was immediately bound to take one of the foremost places in the society in which she appeared.²¹

The Russian envoy, Baron Krüdener was said to be a harsh man, taciturn, and reserved, and he was not well liked. He is said to have governed his household as befits the representative of an autocrat. One event associated with his death can be cited here.

In one of the halls in Fersen's Palace *chapelle ardente* had been arranged, in which the Baron's body was to be displayed to the public. Hundreds of candles had been lit, and the corpse in an elegant coffin was set upon a catafalque. The legation officials and the many servants were busy making the final arrangements, when suddenly the foundations of the old building were shaken by a boom as though from a thousand thunderbolts. The doors of the room with the coffin burst open, the windows were shattered, and all the candles were blown out. The superstitious Russian servants, believing that the final judgment was at hand and that the devil himself had come to fetch their strict master, rushed headlong in to the courtyard.

The explanation, however, was quite simple. When the initial fright had passed it was learned that the powder tower in the Kaknäs forest had exploded. It was in fact the explosion familiar to older Stockholm residents that on January 24, 1852 caused so much destruction in Stockholm, affecting almost all of Norrmalm and to some extent even the Royal Palace and the city between the bridges.²²

In this case we get a glimpse of another narrative based on other facts and assumptions, and the tale becomes a different form of romanticism – namely the Gothic, containing a horror story about a woman of illegitimate origin ('mysterious lineage'), over whom her husband has fought a duel, perhaps with none other than Tiutchev. Thus there is a hint of an incestuous relationship, and the story also contains the illicit connection with the head of the Russian secret police. In addition, Amalia's Catholicism is presented as a special danger. Ol'ga Nikolaevna notes in her memoirs that she 'wove Catholic intrigues'. She becomes a *femme fatale*, a heroine out of one of Dumas' novels. Her husband is perceived as a monster fit for any Gothic novel – 'one-armed', 'harsh', and ruling his household 'as befits the representative of an autocrat'.

The depiction of von Krüdener on *lit de parade* with allusions to the supernatural that are later repudiated also links the story with nineteenth-century Gothic literature. These two narratives actually problematize different tendencies in romanticism or, if you will, the interrelationship of romanticism and the Gothic.

The Gothic narrative, however, was created not by any single writer but by various participants jointly. The most important source here consists of intimate gossip related in letters, in the work of the Stockholm commentator and the literary scholars, but as in the case of the first narrative in which the poet's love was never fulfilled, but lasted fifty years, these rumours are based on a number of verifiable facts. Literary historians, biographers, and readers all want to tell stories even where stories are hard to find, as for example in a poetry collection.

Returning now to 'Ia p'komiu vremia zolotoe', we discover that the poem as well hints at a Gothic milieu that could serve as the starting point for a Gothic tale. It tells of 'love among ruins' familiar to us, for example, from the romantic writer Regina Maria Roche's Gothic novel *The Children of the Abbey* from 1796.²³

As in the poem, the young lovers meet near a ruin, where the moss-covered stones, the setting sun, approaching shadows, and the passage of time are all details associated with the Gothic. The ruin and the sinking sun could serve as motifs in one of Caspar David Friedrich's paintings. The Gothic element is not realized in the poem, however, for these details are negated and the moment of fragile love endures. The couple never enters the ruin itself. Nor does Tiutchev – or the poet – ever become part of the Gothic tale. It is instead Amalia, who is cast in that role. If we compare the finished poem with an earlier variant it is apparent that more emphasis is given to the castle and ruins in the final text, thus reinforcing the Gothic component and suggesting a possible development that remained unrealized.

The second narrative moves farther away from Tiutchev and closer to Amalia. Tiutchev visited Stockholm, while the von Krüdeners were living in the city, but he was there only one day, and the family was away at the time.²⁴ Otherwise, Blasieholmen might have witnessed an interesting meeting suitable for both the love story and the Gothic.



III. 2 [Joseph Karl Stieler, *Porträtgemälde, Amalie Freiin von Kruedener (aus der Schönheitsgalerie Ludwigs I.)*, 1828 © Nymphenburg, Hauptschloß.]

The Visual Narrative

I also want to explore a third narrative, but now I will expand my materials from the text to the visual. This narrative is based on the passage of time, apple blossoms, and the pictures of Amalia that have been preserved. It is a tale that she and those around her may have influenced, for she perhaps determined the circumstances in which the pictures were made and the clothes in which she wanted

III.3 [Maria Röhl,
*The Countess von
Krüdener*, 1846. Royal
Library, Stockholm.]



to be represented. The first in chronological order is the painting in the Gallery of Beauties in Nymphenburg Castle in Munich (ill. 2). Other paintings followed that show both her beauty and the passage of time (ills. 3-4). In several of these her dress is embellished not with an apple blossom but with a rose. A drawing made while she was living in Sweden by the well-known portraitist Maria Röhl shows a woman who is still beautiful but whose face is tense. Time is passing, but she seems to want to continue to be a young girl.

Amalia may have modelled her later style on the poem. The full, white, semi-transparent dresses seem to suggest this as much, as does the flower in two of the paintings depicting her. The ballet-dancer Fanny Ellster is also depicted in contemporary pictures with a flower in her bosom dancing her most famous role in *La Sylphide* (ill. 5). Amalia herself may have wanted to identify with a fairy, or a sylph, and perhaps that is what Tiutchev had in mind in his poem, or was it the other way round? Perhaps Amalia came to identify herself with the poem and dressed like a fairy for her portraits. The sylph in the ballet represents both delight and danger, and both these elements are present in our different narratives.



III. 4 [A. Zebens, *The Countess Amalia Adlerberg*, 1865. © Svartå Gård, Finland, photo: Mikael Kaplar/studio PoiNT.]



III. 5 [Fanny Ellster dancing La Sylphide. © Dansmuseet, Stockholm.]



III. 6 [C. Graf, Photo of The Countess Amalia Adlerberg, 1867–1868. The Museum in Muranovo.]



III. 7 [Photo of Amalia Adlerberg from the last year of her life 1888.]

The last two pictures are photographs of Amalia late in life. In one she sits reading a book, while the other depicts a bundled-up old woman. The rose that was such an important detail in the earlier pictures is now absent. In contrast to the springtime setting in the poem and the inner and outer warmth emanating from the paintings and drawing, the last picture appears to have been taken in winter. The cape in the first photo seems to have more to do with fashion than with the temperature. We can similarly trace Amalia's floral accessories. The evidently real flower in the first portrait later becomes an artificial corsage and then a cloth rosette, and finally a cloth brooch in the last photograph of her (ill. 6–7). This series of pictures is a narrative depicting the passage of time, as is also apparent in the contrast between the paintings and the photographs. Returning to the poem with this in mind, the same motif there becomes even stronger. In the final picture we are far from its early summer day, falling apple blossoms, and amorous moment. The flower in the final picture might perhaps be seen as Amalia's nostalgic yearning back to the first portrait and the time of the poem, or perhaps it is our juxtaposition of the pictures that produces this impression. The pictures of Amalia with the flower on her bosom lend more depth and seriousness to especially the concluding lines of the poem:

Sweetly the shade of swiftly-flowing life
passed over us and flew away.

Conclusion

As poetry readers and literary scholars, then, should we care at all about these three narratives? After all, it is the scholars, who have created perhaps all three. Actually, there are two reasons why we should. First, viewing the poem against this background lends it an additional aesthetic dimension. Second, we have shown, how literary scholars participate in creating narratives that ultimately become more or less a part of the work of art. Although they do not solve the issue of the relationship between literature and reality, the three stories do problematize it. The naïve question of whether it ‘really happened’ in this case gives the poem a special emotional quality that is reinforced by the different narratives. Together they create what the aesthetic theoretician Nelson Goodman calls *a multiple and complex reference* that enhances what he terms the *symptoms of the aesthetic*, or artistic value, of the poem.²⁵

With the exception of the third narrative, where there may be a trace of her own voice and will, Amalia’s perspective is largely absent from these narratives. But perhaps the poem is not at all about her in any respect save in the tale as told by literary history. That brings us back to the first of the three narratives called into question here – that is, the story about a young girl and her unhappy love affair with one of Russia’s outstanding poets. In my view these three tales change and augment the aesthetic content of the poem in spite of or perhaps because of the fact that we still have not answered the question of who the young woman standing by the ruin and the wild apple tree actually was.

Notes

- 1 Fedor Ivanovich Tiutchev, *The Complete Poems of Tyutchev*, trans. Jude Durham (Durham, 2000), accessed May 2, 2014, <http://www.tyutchev.ru/Works/poems/Jude.html>, Fedor Ivanovich Tiutchev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem: v 6 tomakh. T. 1, Stikhotvoreniia: 1813–1849* [Complete Works and Letters: in 6 volumes. Vol. 1, Poems: 1813–1849], (Moskva: Klassika) 2002, 12.
- 2 Richard A. Gregg notes this flavour of translation in some of the poems in Richard A. Gregg, *Fedor Tiutchev: The Evolution of a Poet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965).
- 3 Iurii N. Tynianov, 'Tiutchev i Geine', accessed December 31, 2013, Philology.ru, <http://www.philology.ru/literature2/tynyanov-77c.htm>.
- 4 Bruno Hillebrand, *Ästhetik des Augenblicks: der Dichter als Überwinder der Zeit – von Goethe bis heute* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1999). On the relationship between romanticism and nature in Tiutchev see, for example, B. Ia. Bukhstab, 'Tiutchev', *Tiutcheviana*. Sait rabochei gruppy po izucheniiu tvorchestva F. I. Tiutcheva, accessed March 5, 2014, <http://www.ruthenia.ru/tiutcheviana/publications/bukhshtab.html>.
- 5 Kirill V Pigarev, 'Poëticheskoe nasledie Tiutcheva', in *F.I. Tiutchev. Lirika* (Moskva: Nauka, 1928), 273–84.
- 6 For the most comprehensive biography of Tiutchev see: John Dewey, *Mirror of the Soul: A Life of the Poet Fyodor Tyutchev* (Shaftesbury: Brimstone Press, 2010).
- 7 Ivan S. Aksakov, *Fedor Ivanovich Tiutchev, Biograficheskii ocherk*, accessed May 2, 2014, Lib.ru/Klassika, http://az.lib.ru/a/aksakow_i_s/text_0050.shtml.
- 8 *Schönheitengalerie im Festsaalbau der Münchner Residenz (um 1937)*, Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte, accessed December 31, 2013, http://www.hdbg.eu/koenigreich/web/index.php/objekte/index/herrscher_id/2/id/860.
- 9 John Dewey, 'Tiutchev and Amalie von Lerchenfeld: Some Unpublished Documents', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 79, no. 1 (2001): 15–30.
- 10 Fedor Ivanovich Tiutchev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem: v 6 tomakh. T. 4, Pis'ma: 1820–1849* [Complete Works and Letters: in 6 volumes. Vol. 4, Letters: 1820–1949] (Moscow: Klassika, 2004), 141–5.
- 11 Fedor Ivanovich Tiutchev, 'Pis'mo Tiutchevoi D. F., 1 apreliia', in Tiutchev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii. T. 6*, 416.
- 12 Svetlana A. Dolgoplova, 'Ia pomniu vremia zolotoe', accessed May 2, 2014, tyutchev.ru/t16.html. Compilers of Tiutchev's collected works maintain that we do not know to whom the poem is addressed.
- 13 Tiutchev, *The Complete Poems*; Tiutchev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii. T. 1*, 46.
- 14 Georgii Ivanovich Chulkov, *Posledniaia liubov' Tiutcheva: (Elena Aleksandrovna Denis'eva)* [Last love of Tiutchev] (Moscow: M. i S. Sabashnikovy, 1928), 14.
- 15 Tiutchev, *The Complete Poems*; Tiutchev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, T. 2*, 219.
- 16 Chulkov, *Posledniaia liubov' Tiutcheva*, 14; For a discussion of this see Dewey, *Mirror of the Soul*, 517, note 216.
- 17 Dewey shows awareness of this in his book. He retells the story but uses words like 'perhaps', 'may well' or 'apparently' to mark the lack of any hard-core evidence, *Mirror of the Soul*, 63–9.
- 18 Tat'iana Georgievna Dinesman, ed., *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva F. I. Tiutcheva. Kn. 1, 1803–1884* [Annals of life and work of Tiutchev] (Moskva: Litograf, 1999), 1822.

- 19 Im Anfang war die Nachtigall
Und sang das Wort: Züküht! Züküht!
Und wie sie sang, sproß überall
Grüngras, Violen, Apfelblüt.
Heinrich Heine, 'Neuer Frühling. IX', in *Neue Gedichte* (Hamburg, Paris: 1844).
- 20 In 'Vospominaniia velikoi kniazhny Ol'gi Nikolaevny 1825–1846, Son junosti' [Recollections of great duchess Ol'ga Nikolaevna 1825–1846, Dream of youth], accessed December 31, 2013, http://www.dugward.ru/library/olga_nick.html.
- 21 Fredrik Ulrik Wrangel, *Blasieholmen och dess inbyggare*, 2nd ed., (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1914), 21.
- 22 Ibid., 77.
- 23 For a discussion of the gothic see, for example, Mattias Fyhr, *De mörka labyrinterna: gotiken i litteratur, film, musik och rollspel*, Ellerström, diss. (Lund: Lund University, 2003).
- 24 I. N. and E. L. Tiutchev, 1/13 oktiabria 1843. Munich. 'Ce 1/13 octobre 1843. Enfin, chers papa et maman, me voilà à Munich, où je suis arrivé, sain et sauf, dimanche dernier, c'était le 26 septembre (vieux style). Vous savez par ma lettre de Réval que j'ai dû m'embarquer le 4 sept<embre> pour Helsingfors, de là je me suis rendu par Abo, à Stockholm, où je n'ai pu m'arrêter qu'un jour. [1/13 October 1843. Finally dear Papa and Mama, here I am in Munich, where I arrived safe and sound last Sunday, September 26 (Old Style) You know from my Letter from Réval that I had to leave on Sept. 4 for Helsinki, from there I traveled via Turku to Stockholm, where I was able to stop only one day']. Fedor Tiutchev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij i pisem: v 6 tomakh. T. 6, Pis'ma: 1860–1873* (Moscow: Klassika, 2004), 272.
- 25 'Goodman's Aesthetics', in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed December 31, 2013, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/goodman-aesthetics/>.

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