POETRY and PHILOSOPHICAL *ASCESIS*

Schlegel

Novalis

Hölderlin
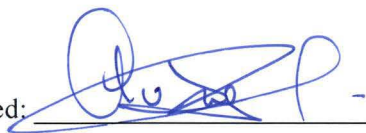
BY ANITA VAN RIET

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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that the turn to poetry undertaken by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin during the period of early German Romanticism is largely a turn that seeks to culminate in a particular and comprehensive philosophical *ascesis*. While contemporary discourse (Frank, Beiser, Henrich, Bowie, Millán-Zaibert et al) has done much to uncover the philosophical underpinnings of early German Romanticism, and has secured the place of thinkers such as Hölderlin within the history of German philosophy, the theme of poetry and philosophical *ascesis* has not been sufficiently explored. This thesis focuses on the determination with which Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin seek to expand philosophical understanding by integrating traditional philosophical reasoning with comprehensive poetic processes. This thesis argues that this integration exploits a symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy that enables a refined response to philosophical issues such as Fichte's theory of subjectivity, the discrepancy and reconciliation between idealism and realism, and the moral education of humankind.

The strategy of this thesis is first to elicit the technicalities of the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy, followed by an exploration of Hölderlin's calculative approach to Fichte's theory of subjectivity that seeks also to achieve a metaphorical representation of an 'intellectual intuition.' In conjunction, Hölderlin's theory of tones, plus the preparation and function of the poet, are explored. The thesis then turns to Schlegel's 'formula' that seeks to articulate the nature of God in relation to the poetic ideal. This is followed by an investigation into the moral education of humankind and finally an in investigation into Novalis' Magical Idealism.

This thesis concludes that although there are differences between the kinds of methods and responses on which each thinker draws, all share a preoccupation with the unity of subject and object, and its role as an analogue for the unity that underpins all binary oppositions. The identification of the turn to poetry undertaken by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin is seen to be based in an assertion of a symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy that itself constitutes an *ascesis* in which the subjective self integrates with the determination of the very 'thing' that it contemplates.

There are two qualifications that apply to the research undertaken here. First, the focus is philosophical rather than poetic in that the concern is with philosophical *theory* rather than poetic *success*. Second, while the aim of the thesis is to identify a level of philosophical asceticism at work in the thinking of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, the full elaboration of such asceticism and its implications is not attempted.

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The Romantic Adaptation of *Bildung*

INTRODUCTION

The poem of the understanding is philosophy.

It is the greatest impetus that the understanding gives itself about itself

- union of the understanding and the imagination.[1]

This thesis argues that the turn to poetry undertaken by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin during the period of early German Romanticism is largely a turn that seeks to culminate in a particular and comprehensive philosophical ascesis. The thesis particularly focuses on the means by which Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin seek to advance this ascesis through integrating comprehensive poetic processes in the service of philosophical objectives. The method of this particular integration exploits a symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy to enable a refined response to various philosophical issues ranging from the problem of subjectivity and the discrepancy between idealism and realism to the challenge of the moral education of humankind. This refined response, the thesis

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[1]   Novalis (1997) *Logological Fragments*, p. 5

further argues, is given motility from the very dynamic in the symbiosis between poetry and philosophy, and is conducive, above all, to an ascesis in which the subjective self integrates with the very 'thing' that it contemplates. Indeed, the unification of poetry and philosophy that grounds the ascesis is purposed ultimately to reconcile subject and object and in so doing also facilitates the moral development of humankind towards its highest determination, 'the ideal of being' (Novalis 2003, p. 165).

In effect, Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin pioneer an early modern attempt to integrate the self and reality into a totality, primarily, in and through this particular symbiotic relation. Their method is to embrace what they hold to be a crucial symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy; an embrace, which they persistently present as a fundamental means for profoundly furthering epistemological, ontological and moral understanding[2]. The impetus for this embrace reflects Novalis' sentiment that '[t]he poem of the understanding is philosophy'. Moreover, Novalis argues that '[w]ithout philosophy a person remains divided in his most essential powers. He is two people – one who has understanding - and one who is a poet. Without philosophy, a poet is incomplete [...] '(1997, p. 54). This approach contrasts with most philosophical treatments of the relationship between poetry and philosophy, which, at least in the history of

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[2]   I have listed here three modes of philosophical inquiry; however, ultimately, the ascesis transcends inquiry. Therefore, while it is useful to categorise the aspirations of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin according to conventional philosophical categories, such as epistemological, ontological and ethical, the ultimate aim is for an integration of internal and external processes that will eventually take the place of the yearning for knowledge.

western philosophy, either prioritise the cognitive significance of conventional philosophising over poeticising (as in the Platonic view), or (as in the Heideggerian view) prioritise the revelatory significance of poeticising over conventional philosophising.

A key objective of the thesis is to articulate the turn to poetry undertaken by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin beyond its current voicing within contemporary philosophical discourse. Dieter Henrich, Frederick Beiser, Andrew Bowie, Manfred Frank and most recently, Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert, have done much to uncover the philosophical underpinnings of early German Romanticism and of Hölderlin.[3] Indeed, they have succeeded in securing them a place between Kant

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[3]   Although Hölderlin is more often than not included under the rubric early German Romanticism, this thesis works with the understanding that Hölderlin is not, as such, an early German Romantic. The rationale behind this is that Hölderlin was not a member of the Jena circle and despite the fact that his turn to poetry and his philosophical concerns are similar to those belonging to the Jena circles, he did not collaborate with other members of this group. Albeit that he had become acquainted with some key members of the early Romantic School, including Schlegel and Novalis, there is little evidence to suggest that a closer, working relation between them had ensued. Hölderlin's time in Jena was short lived. He was there in late 1794 and again in 1795 and apart from being at one gathering of what must have been an early meeting of the new Romantic School, taking place at the home of Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer, Hölderlin clearly had left before the most productive years of the early German Romantics had begun. Instead, Hölderlin lived somewhat unhappily in Frankfurt from 1796-1798 and then lived in Homburg from 1798-1800. One could speculate however, that if Hölderlin had not left Jena so abruptly when he did, that is, if things were working out for him, employment and other wise, he may well have become more involved in the Jena circle. Like the other members of the circle, Hölderlin too had attended lectures given by Fichte and he too had developed a relationship with Schiller who was at this time an influential lecturer at Jena University. Niethammer was also a friend or acquaintance to all those present at that early gathering including Schiller, Fichte and Novalis (Behler, 1993 p. 14). But the fact is that Hölderlin did not remain in Jena and did not remain in friendly or professional contact with immediate members of the Romantic School except to have a number of his poems critiqued by August Schlegel, who incidentally spoke quite favourably of them (Constantine, 1988). Accordingly, we may be surprised to learn that Hölderlin's work did not appear at all in *Das Athenaeum*, which may have something to do with Henrich's argument, that Hölderlin's poetry did not meet the criteria of romantic theory and that his poetics is 'entirely Fichtean' (See Chapter 2). Alternatively, it could be simply speculated

and Hegel in the history of German philosophy. However, the theme of poetry and philosophical ascesis implicit in the intentions of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, is unexplored. This is because contemporary discourse has for the most part focused on the initial task of validating early German Romanticism and Hölderlin's work as legitimately philosophical[4]. Millán-Zaibert, for example, in her recent publication *Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Romantic Philosophy*, 2007, seeks firstly to justify dealing with Schlegel as a philosopher and to rescue him together with early German Romanticism from persisting notions that are less sympathetic. In previous engagements, early German Romanticism was more often severely criticised. For example, in his *In the Spirit of Hegel* (1983), Robert C. Solomon makes these scathing remarks: 'Romanticism

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that the Jena circle was a somewhat elite circle, into which Hölderlin simply could not (or would not) fit.

[4]   Further, there are scholars who have not engaged philosophically with early German Romanticism as a philosophy, but who have nonetheless contributed in this direction by recognising a very real relationship between philosophy and poetry. Ernst Behler, for example, although a professor of comparative literature and with a biased view to see early German Romanticism as predominantly a 'Romantic theory of Literature' in the history of criticism, nonetheless gives some clear insight into its underpinning philosophy. The collaborated effort made in presenting the *Kritishe Friedrich Schlegel-Ausgabe*, with Hans Eichner is also an invaluable resource. Hans Eichner himself, in his 1968 publication of *Friedrich Schlegel*, besides giving a comprehensive historical overview of Schlegel's life and his place in the history of criticism, provides access and insight to some of the more intricate examples of the philosophical fragments that came out of Schlegel's notebooks. The formula for Romantic poetry for instance, which will be discussed in Chapter 5 is a philosophical gem insofar that it gives insight into the genuine attempt made by Schlegel in his aspiration to unify philosophy with poetry. This attempt Schlegel makes in response to philosophical issues, such as the epistemological and metaphysical implications arising out of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, and as far as this thesis is concerned, this attempt is a clear demonstration of assigning to the realm poetry, a philosophical function.

Jochen Schulte-Sasse is another scholar while specialising in 18th – 20th Century German Literature and literary theory has nonetheless made an excellent contribution to exposing the philosophical underpinnings of early German Romanticism in his *Theory as Practice. A Critical Anthology of Early German Romantic Writings*, 1996/1997

is an extremely limited movement whose main consequence in Germany was to render a once informative word completely useless (1983, p. 97).' He adds that '[...] Romanticism was a world view without a back bone, an inarticulate philosophy that needed structure and a spokesman' (p. 97). In a particular response to the Romantic's emphasis on genius, Solomon argues that 'unfortunately, the group contained few, if any geniuses and their own theories rendered their cosmic consciousness as obscure pretentiousness' (p. 97). Although, these remarks are not entirely surprising since Solomon makes them in the context of presenting an exegesis of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. It was Hegel after all, who himself in his *Lectures on Fine Art*, announced that 'A.W. and Friedrich von Schlegel, greedy for novelty in the distinctive and extraordinary, appropriated from the philosophical Idea as much as their completely non-philosophical, but essentially critical natures were capable of accepting' and that 'neither of them can claim a reputation for speculative thought.' And while they had enough 'critical talent [to] put themselves near the standpoint of the Idea' and 'directed a spirited polemic against the views of their predecessors' by launching a new critical theory to deal with 'modern poetry', they nonetheless were lacking in 'a thoroughly philosophical understanding of their standard' (1975, p. 63).

It is this type of rhetoric that scholars like Millán-Zaibert seek to negate. Indeed a key objective of Millán-Zaibert's most recent publication is precisely to demonstrate the depth of Schlegel's philosophy in order to advance further its

philosophical significance and herewith Schlegel's status, in the history of German philosophy between Kant and Hegel.[5]

We can be thankful however, that in the process of evaluating the philosophical significance of early German Romanticism and of Hölderlin's poetics, and particularly in the effort to extend the view of its significance from beyond literary and aesthetic discourses, that a more mature assessment of their philosophical achievements has been given thoughtful consideration. Of particular value is Millán-Zaibert's identification, for example, of a clear distinction between early German Romanticism and the idealism of their contemporaries, in particular, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. Of value also is the manner in which contemporary discourse in general gives an extensive overview of how early German Romanticism and the philosophy of Hölderlin stands primarily as a critique of Fichte and more importantly how it stands uniquely, in contrast, as Millán-Zaibert demonstrates, to Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*. Millán-Zaibert's argument falls in line with Manfred Frank (2004) who in his publication *Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism* argues that early German Romanticism, (including Hölderlin this time), has up until recently, been misrepresented as a development of Fichte's idealism an effect of which is a generalised subsuming of early German Romanticism under the rubric of

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[5]   Richard Eldridge in his publication, *The Persistence of Romanticism: Essays in philosophy and Literature*, (2001), also fulfils this function partly, but as a defence of Romanticism in general, extending his concerns to British poets such as Wordsworth.

idealism[6]. It is quite possible that Dieter Henrich's interpretation of early German Romanticism will have contributed to this, with the theory that the 'transcendental' nature of romantic poetry affirms the independence of the mind 'from all finite states' (Henrich 2003, p. 226). In contrast, this thesis argues that the transcendental in early German Romanticism and in the philosophy of Hölderlin is not a term that seeks, necessarily, to describe a mind free from all finite states. It is not, as such, a 'getting beyond', but rather a 'getting in-between' the cyclic unification and separation of opposites, such as the real and ideal (Schlegel, 1968, p. 134). Indeed, it is in the sustaining of the balance between these two processes, unification and separation, that the transcendental presents. The call for the unification of philosophy and poetry is in the recognition of this totality in which subject and object nominally exist. For this purpose, both Schlegel and Novalis refer to romantic poetry as 'transcendental poetry' in that it is a balanced mixture of poetry and philosophy (Novalis 1997, p. 56, Schlegel 1968, p. 145).

In terms of philosophically validating early German Romanticism and the thinking of Hölderlin, it is safe to say that contemporary discourse has fulfilled its task. On the other hand, in terms of an adequate representation of what this philosophy is, contemporary discourse can do more. For this reason, this thesis

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[6]   Taken from the following excerpt: '[y]ou will now object that I am here parting from the predominant view of early German Romanticism as it is represented in academic research. When early German Romanticism, which included thinkers such as Friedrich Hölderlin, Novalis, and Friedrich Schlegel, has been considered at all as an independent epoch in the development of modern thought, then it has only been in relation to thinkers such as J.G. Fichte, F.W. J. Schelling and G.W.E. Hegel' (Frank 2004, p. 24).

seeks to 'thematise' the philosophical determinations of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, in particular the sheer profundity of their aspirations, in terms of a complete epistemological, ontological and moral ascesis and in so doing shift the attention away from the need to philosophically qualify their combined projects.

To speak of the turn to poetry by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin during the period of early German Romanticism in terms of a philosophical ascesis is to emphasise in particular the method that dares to seek a harmonious balance between the normally antagonistically viewed relationship between poetry and philosophy. What is also taken into particular consideration is Novalis' argument that '[t]he art of becoming a philosopher lies in method' and that the 'art of becoming a moral person - in ascetics' (1997, p. 73). This juxtaposition highlights the connection between philosophy and morality, which is such that one is unable to be realised, without the other: 'Without philosophy' argues Novalis, 'there is no true morality' and 'without morality, no philosophy' (1997, p. 53). In other words, they are mutually determined. This being the case, asceticism must then be as appropriate a method for the development of philosophy as it is for morality. The connection between morality and philosophy and poetry is that poetry is integral to philosophy as the medium through which the full potential of philosophy is realised. It is thus equally true to say that, poetry is integral to morality for the same reason that poetry is integral to philosophy and that morality, like philosophy is incomplete without poetry. The task of poetry is to enhance the philosophical, and thereby the moral education of humankind. While philosophy as an analytic system may not strictly depend on poetry, it is nonetheless

incomplete, as a cognitive system, without it. The same is true for morality – if it is interlinked with philosophy, then it is enhanced directly through the symbiotic integration of poetry and philosophy. Indeed morality, according to Novalis, has degrees of maturity – and that 'premature morality' is in fact 'detrimental to the human race' (2007, p. 62).

In the early German Romantic view of the role of the poet, the moral education of humankind relies on the premise that the poet is already a 'truly moral person' (Novalis 1997, p. 57). In relation to the transcendental, the poet is 'the transcendental physician' and poetry is 'the great art of the construction of transcendental health' and 'mixes everything together for the sake of its great purpose of all purposes – the *elevation of the human being above himself*' (Novalis 1997, p. 56).

The theme of 'elevation' features particularly in the thinking of Novalis and Schlegel. Schlegel too argues for instance, that the point that 'raises us above all that is individual' where 'we go beyond ourselves, if we raise ourselves to this point' is precisely the 'transcendental midpoint' mentioned earlier, that exists between consciousness on one hand and the infinite on the other (Schlegel, cited in Schulte-Sasse 1997, p. 261).

With this in mind, to hold the relationship between poetry and philosophy as symbiotic, is to acknowledge the heuristic value of the relationship, each to the

other, particularly in the common aim of advancing the extent of cognitive understanding, and thereby broadening the cognitive foundations upon which the moral development of humankind may emerge from this 'transcendental midpoint'.

In practical terms, the symbiosis refines cognition through the mutually challenging dialectic that exists between the poetic and philosophical processes when enjoined in the manner envisioned by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin. The enjoining of these processes characterises at the same time the enjoining of all other nominal binary oppositions, including the connection between idealism and realism, the determined and undetermined, the finite and infinite and, importantly, the self as individual and totality. Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin regard all of these nominally opposing binaries as correlating polarities, rather than as discrete absolutes. Reminiscent of the Ouroboros in which the joining of the head and tail of the serpent symbolises cyclic and eternal renewing, so too poetry and philosophy join in an eternal yet progressive renewing or, taking into consideration Schlegel's famous *fragment 116*, they join in an eternal 'becoming'. Indeed the conception of the transcendental in Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin concerns the process of renewal. Novalis gives us the example of a flame in which consumption and renewal occur in a reciprocally determined way and compares it to the 'act of transcending oneself' an act in which the self is perpetually renewed (1997, p. 64). Novalis uses the flame analogy also to describe a philosophy that too renews itself through its own consumption. He tells us that '[...] all philosophy begins where philosophising philosophises itself – that is, where it at

once consumes (determines, compels) and renews again (does not determine, releases)' (1997, p. 64). That philosophy is equipped to persist in this manner is dependent on the enjoining of philosophical and poetic processes in the way envisioned by the early German Romantics. To this end, Novalis argues that true philosophy is the 'complete concurrence of idealism and realism, with the most complete independence', which in the end 'furnishes the complete proof of the correct methodology [...] transformation of one into the other' (2007, p. 114). For Novalis, idealism and realism are the head and tail of the same phenomenon, a phenomenon upon which the revolutionised enjoining of poetry and philosophy is based.

Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin agree that the tension binding opposing forces is manifest in each particular part of the 'whole'. In humankind the two archetypal oppositions are, on the one hand, a longing for the infinite or as Schlegel puts it, a 'striving for the ideal' (Schlegel, cited in Schulte-Sasse 1997, pp. 22-23), which is at the expense of the particular and on the other, a tendency towards individuation and thus, finitude, which is at the expense of the universal. The reconciliation and the preservation of both, is the philosophical business of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin. Indeed Hölderlin identifies a third tendency that exist within us, and that is a tendency to seek a harmonious balance between the first two tendencies (1988, p. 74). However, whether or not this third tendency forms an inherent part of the human condition, which Hölderlin understands it does, it nonetheless becomes the third possibility that all three thinkers explore, either implicitly or

explicitly, within the structures of poetry and, indeed, it is a tendency upon which they focus especially so that the moral development of humankind, can proceed.

The utility of the term 'ascesis'

The utility of the term ascesis in this thesis has something in common with the original Greek *Askesis*, in that it is facilitated through the disciplining of mind and body. However, while these disciplinary practices are usually held to involve the denial of the self, in the context of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin's philosophical intention, the disciplinary means through which to achieve their ascesis is not at the expense of the personal self. Instead, it is through the integration of that personal self with the 'wholeness' of reality that the ascesis is achieved. While this requires a form of personal self-denial, it is not a denial of the physical self as such (albeit that it requires a mastery of the senses, as in Novalis' Magical Idealism) but rather a denial or overcoming of *subjectivity*. This is the crucial point that lies at the heart of the philosophical ascesis, which Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin seek. Indeed the overcoming of subjectivity is both the means and the end of this particular kind of philosophical ascesis and finds its best expression in and through the actual structures of poetry. To this end poetry and the poetic process, include the poet who through a combination of intuitiveness and diligence has reached, already, the highest ideal of objectivity. Having reached the highest ideal, the poet answers his vocational calling and facilitates an overcoming of subjectivity in humankind that will allow morality to emerge unimpeded in accordance with a more holistic will, namely, the will of God.

Putting the 'will of God' aside for the moment, on a practical level the challenge for Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin is to resolve the problem of consciousness they inherited from their engagement with Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*. The implication in Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* is that the whole is dependent on a first and founding principle that cannot, itself be part of the world that it 'generates'; this principle is the Absolute Self. In effect, Fichte wants the Absolute Self to be the founding principle upon which consciousness and nature depend but not so that a commitment to the traditional understanding of causality is required. Fichte thus advances the idea of 'positing', a means by which the subject (consciousness) and object (nature) are established without losing the sense of a first and founding principle through which this occurs. The adverse effect of Fichte's argument is that it leaves a disjunction between the Absolute and the conventional world as established through the posited subject/object relation. Theoretically, the Absolute is not part of this 'world', yet, this 'world' cannot exist apart from the Absolute, since it is wholly dependent on the positing that occurs in and through the Absolute Self.

While Fichte's theory of the Absolute is problematic in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin view, they nonetheless want to retain a sense of it even if it is un-representable, as is claimed by all three thinkers. In light of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, what is at issue for them is the bridging of the Fichtean gap between the Absolute and subject/object relation or at least to subscribe to a theory that there is no ontological difference between subject, object and Absolute. In order to do this Schlegel, Novalis, and Hölderlin seek to disregard

the founding principle and work with the subject/object relation inherent in 'world' – or the world that arises out of the subject/object relation which as far as Schlegel, Novalis, and Hölderlin are concerned, is a relation in which the components are reciprocally determined. As such, this relation becomes for them a ground from which to proceed. Our three thinkers no longer need to contend themselves with an Absolute that exists independently as a founding principle outside this relation. On the contrary, the Absolute is now construed *as* this relation and neither do they need to contend with prioritising subject over object, or vice versa, for as far as they are concerned, these perspectival aspects exist together, equally, symmetrically and concurrently.

However, this reinterpretation or reframing of the relationship between the Absolute and the subject/object relation does not eliminate the problem of the limits of philosophy in terms of grasping the relationship in its entirety, for consciousness remains obstinately in the way of this achievement. So long as there is consciousness, there is consciousness of something, and while ever this is so, the grasping of wholeness, in theory, is not possible. The challenge now, while it no longer lies with the reconciliation of the Absolute with its posited world, is nonetheless, to achieve unity, which is now dependent on the conciliation of subject and object. This is where the overcoming of subjectivity becomes a crucial initiative. However, what Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin want to avoid is a complete annihilation of the subject. On the contrary, their aim is to make the conciliation a cognitive experience. What this cognition in the end consists of is difficult to pin point, since the aim is also, as is already suggested, to attain a

mode of objectivity, which is possible only in and through the overcoming of conventional subjectivity. For this reason Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin are resigned to the fact that whatever knowledge is attained can only approximate the actuality of unity. Nonetheless, if it were not for the refined method achieved in the combining of poetry and philosophy, this approximation, would be less.

Strategy

In order to fulfil the objective of this thesis, namely to 'thematise' the project of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin in terms of 'poetry and philosophical ascesis', the strategy is to discuss firstly the comprehensive nature of the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy, and to reveal, in particular, how this integration works towards a common objective. Addressed in particular, is the motivation behind the early German Romantic call for the unification of poetry and philosophy with a view to demystify the actual process. Further discussed is the relationship between poetry and philosophy in terms of its symbiotic and heuristic significance. The strategy is then to focus on a key philosophical issue, namely the contradiction that, in theory, consciousness represents, in the face of the Absolute. The objective of Chapter 2 is thus to reveal Hölderlin's project as one that deals with Fichte's structure of consciousness as advanced in his *Wissenschaftslehre*. Indeed Hölderlin is determined to achieve in poetry what Fichte cannot achieve in theory and works meticulously towards a metaphorical representation, first of all, of a reinterpretation of the inherent contradiction that underpins the relationship between consciousness and the Absolute, and secondly to create an illusion of a pure awareness in which there is no differentiation

between subject and object. This pure awareness is a condition that Hölderlin holds to be an 'intellectual intuition'. However, union of subject an object does not equate with an 'intellectual intuition' since, theoretically, 'intellectual intuition' precedes the consciousness in which subject and object originate. As such, it is inaccessible to the conscious mind, but through the careful manipulation of poetic structures (discussed in Chapter 3) together with an initial preparation of the poet (discussed in Chapter 4), Hölderlin aims to reveal at least a simile of an 'intellectual intuition', and herewith make it accessible. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 address further the intricacies of Hölderlin's method including his carefully calculated tonal theory, which functions as a mechanism by which to achieve the above objective.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to Schlegel's formulaic approach. In particular, it is Schlegel's 'formula', identified by Hans Eichner as one that encapsulates the entirety of Schlegel's poetics that is discussed. This chapter takes into account Eichner's argument but elaborates on the philosophical underpinnings that support Schlegel's formula. The significance of this chapter is that it holds Schlegel's formula up as a prime example of an attempt made at integrating philosophical and poetic processes to achieve equilibrium of ideal and real states.

Chapter 6 explores the moral education of humankind, which is a concern for all three thinkers, but particularly for Schlegel and Novalis, who decisively work

towards its facilitation and indeed have a particular view of what authentic moral being is.

Finally, in chapter 7 Novalis' 'Magical Idealism', a term that describes a method that seeks not only the integration of binary oppositions but seeks to explore the integration at its ultimate conclusion as a state of pure freedom, is investigated. In this state of pure freedom, Novalis suggests that by the power to the will, the Magical Idealist is able to contravene the conventional sequencing of causality and achieve a mastery over the senses. In this state, all cognitive processes are refined to such and extent that the Magical Idealist is capable of anything, by simply willing it. Magical Idealism exemplifies the relationship between poetry and philosophical ascesis in that the refinement of the inner and outer senses is achieved through a relinquishment of the subjective self in order to facilitate the emergence of a harmonious balance of body and soul.

While the endeavour has been to give equal representation to each thinker, the actual number of chapters dedicated to each is not equal. The exploration of Hölderlin's theories for example, covers an ample three chapters, while Novalis and Schlegel's are given one chapter each, and another in which their joint aspirations for the moral education of humankind are considered. However, Schlegel and Novalis are given a voice throughout the thesis as representatives of early German Romanticism, and are particularly present in the first chapter where the renowned call for the unification of poetry and philosophy is discussed. But

because Hölderlin's project, while it certainly fits in with the overall theme of poetry and philosophical ascesis, has unique aspects to it that are not obviously aspects of the early German Romantic project, the task has been to give his thinking adequate space to show its relationship to the thinking of Schlegel and Novalis. In particular, Hölderlin's tonal theory and his thinking on the poet's vocation feature as key aspects of his poetics and the philosophy that underpins it. Also, Hölderlin's dealing with the concept of 'intellectual intuition' and the goal to metaphorically represent it in poetry is a goal not necessarily shared with Schlegel and Novalis, but nonetheless is critical to the overall development of the thesis that there is a shared kind of ascesis which each of these thinkers are working towards. It therefore has been necessary to extend the analysis pertaining to Hölderlin's project over three consecutive chapters.

This thesis concludes that although there are differences between the kinds of methods and responses on which each thinker draws, there is a shared preoccupation with the unity of subject and object and how this unity works as analogue, for the unity that underpins all binary oppositions. Accordingly, the turn to poetry undertaken by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin is seen to be based on an assertion of a symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy that itself constitutes an ascesis in which the subjective self integrates with the determination of the very 'thing' that it contemplates.

Finally, there are two qualifications that apply to the research undertaken here. First, the focus is philosophical rather than poetic in that the concern is with

philosophical *theory* rather than poetic *success*. Second, while the aim of the thesis is to identify a level of philosophical asceticism at work in the thinking of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, the full elaboration of such asceticism and its implications is not attempted. While meeting the thesis's objective through a substantial and penetrative examination of their philosophical and poëtic aspirations, along with an examination of their particular methodologies, there is nonetheless, scope for an even more comprehensive critical engagement with each thinker's personal philosophy.

Chapter 1

THE SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POETRY and PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy and poetry, the two most sublime powers in man, which even in Athens in the period of their highest fruition were effective only in isolation, now intermingle in perpetual interaction in order to stimulate and develop each other (Schlegel 1968, p. 74)

'To ground is to philosophise; to think up [erdenken] is to poeticise [7]

(Novalis 2003, p.169)

One of the arguments of this thesis is that Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin by integrating poetic processes with conventional philosophical processes, seek to extend an understanding of epistemological and ethical concerns beyond the limits of theory, by combining two modes of inquiry, namely poetry and philosophy. The strategy of bringing the two modes of inquiry together arises primarily out of

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[7] The translation of this particular phrase is taken form Jane Kneller's (editor) 2003, *Novalis Fichte Studies*. While 'to think up' may appear to be an awkward translation of the German *Erdenken*, because it is a literal one, it nonetheless works in the context of this particular chapter, since it alludes to the 'conjuring up' nature of poetry as opposed to the grounding nature of philosophy. This particular distinction between poetry and philosophy will be elaborated, on later in the chapter. Kneller has inserted the word 'something' in the translation as in 'to think [something] up' in an effort to make the translation more meaningful in English.

the concern that, as Novalis puts it '[w]ithout philosophy a person remains divided in his most essential powers' that '[h]e is two people – one who has understanding' and 'one who is a poet' (1997, p. 54). In conjunction with this basic view of the human intellectual condition, is the concern for the moral development and education of humankind; that, if it is to progress, the gap between poetry and philosophy must be bridged. This is because poetry and philosophy represent, as Novalis claims, a division between two 'most essential powers' and therefore to engage in one without the other, or to engage with them separately, is to disregard not only their intimate association, but also their common goal – their mutual contribution to a deeper more unified cognitive understanding. The thesis argues that the relationship between poetry and philosophy, as Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin harness it, produces a clearer and complete cognitive unity (expanding the human epistemic, ontological and ethical sensibility) and shows this relationship to be profound in its effect and essentially symbiotic in its nature. This is especially true in recognition of their mutual capacity to overcome, each for the other, their respective epistemic limits (discussed later) and that their union works to their mutual advantage.

This chapter seeks to clarify the nature of the symbiosis, which the thesis argues best characterises the relationship between poetry and philosophy as Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin construe it. This chapter focuses specifically on the interconnection between technical aspects of poetry and philosophy as understood by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin and seeks to show how poetry and philosophy

can combine to form a heuristic relationship that culminates, ultimately, in the kind of philosophical ascesis, to which Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin aspire.

The focus is particularly inspired by two claims that Schlegel makes, that ostensibly appear to be at odds but then, after scrutiny, can be seen as revealing two modes of expression of a single process. The first claim asserts that 'poetry must commence where philosophy ends' (1968, p. 154) while the second claim demands that 'every art should become science and every science should become art; poetry and philosophy should be unified' (1968, p.132). These claims appear to be at odds since they give the impression of a confused intention concerning the relationship between philosophy and poetry insofar as establishing what it actually is or ought to be. The first claim is suggestive of a clear discrepancy between philosophy and poetry – that indeed, poetry must commence where philosophy ends because philosophy has, like a boat designed to get a person across a river, done what it was designed to do once it has reached the banks on the other side of the river. At this point poetry is to take the journey further into realms where philosophy is no longer able to proceed, or at least not in its traditional theoretical capacity. The claim thus gives the impression of a process that is sequential but in a way that suspends, or in fact discards the mode that is, for the time, not in use. It thus employs at one point the services of philosophy and at another point, the services of poetry, but not at the same time.

The second claim, on the other hand, calls for poetry and philosophy to be unified which gives the immediate impression of a fusion or merging of philosophy and poetry as processes to form a hybrid method. This perception sharply contrasts with the first one in that it implies a different relationship between philosophy and poetry. This time there is no sequential ordering as such but rather, the relationship between poetry and philosophy as particular modes of thinking occurs in a synchronistic and intertwined fashion. These claims are thus open to varied interpretations, insofar as the relationship between poetry and philosophy is concerned. One is simply that poetry and philosophy are united in a cooperative sense to achieve a common goal with each retaining their respective distinctiveness while another interpretation has philosophy and poetry forming a hybrid method in which component functions are recognisably both philosophical and poetic in nature. As the chapter unfolds, we will see that both positions, with some qualification, are equally valid.

The strategy of this chapter is to demystify the claimed union between poetry and philosophy. The strategy includes considering what might be follow-up questions to Schlegel's claims, such as - where *does* philosophy end and where does poetry commence? Secondly, the strategy is to focus on the integration and interrelationship of key technical components of philosophy and poetry, as processes. As will be revealed, in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin view, there are some cognitive functions that are common to both poetry and philosophy, such as *reflection* and *imagination*. These two functions, ultimately serve the common objective of epistemological, ontological and ethical expansion of

humankind in that they steer the philosophical and poetic processes in that direction. On the other hand, there are aspects intrinsic to the peculiar method that poetry and philosophy embody, respectively, but these peculiarities only exist in the sense that the tail and head of the Ouroboros, for example, or 'two sides of the same coin', exist as peculiar, but no less, related aspects of the same entity or process. The ultimate position about any pairing of binary oppositions, whether they are processes, products of processes or modes of being, that Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin take, is to hold the oscillation between them in a harmonious balance. This is the key to the ascesis - to which Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin aspire. 'Concept' and 'intuition', for example, are products of philosophical and poetic processes and exhibit a similar inter-functional relationship, when viewed as operating as aspects of the same totality. The exploration of 'concept' and 'intuition' reveals an intimacy that reflects the very nature of the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy. Finally, the concept of 'intellectual intuition' will be discussed as an idea that is derived at from philosophical processes, and as an idea that characterises the ultimate connection between intuitive and intellectual (rational) awareness. This is important because poetry and philosophy in themselves, exemplify the intuitive and the intellectual, respectively.

Demystifying the Romantic call to unify poetry and philosophy

Millán-Zaibert points out in her recent publication *Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Romantic Philosophy* – that the 'early German Romantics were seeking to redefine the categories of poetry and philosophy and hence they

employed unconventional expression of their ideas' (2007, p. 5). The unconventional expression Millán-Zaibert refers to is the manner in which Schlegel and Novalis convey ideas in fragments of text that are devoid of philosophical argument, in which case it is the medium that is appropriated. However, the intention behind the unification of philosophy and poetry runs deeper than the fragmentary nature of 'fragments' conveys. Indeed, the philosophical issues at stake are themselves incorporated into the structures of poetry in hardly a haphazard and fragmented way but according to a calculable process. The intention is to appropriate the method so that it holds the key, simultaneously, to both the problem and to the solution. As we will see in the discussion that follows, the underlying motivation for the union between poetry and philosophy is to strengthen rather than weaken the respective methods of poetry and philosophy and is obviously for the strategic purpose of achieving improved epistemological and, consequentially, ethical outcomes. Importantly what this means for poetry is that its epistemic purpose is now merged with the epistemic purpose of philosophy, whereas previously its purpose may have been predominantly confined to literary and aesthetic appreciation. Traditional philosophy too, is put to trial, as it is required to admit of its limits and negotiate with poetry a path for the advancement of its own epistemic inquiry.

The interpretation of the call for unification of poetry and philosophy has two complimentary aspects: Firstly, there is an explanation of how the relationship between poetry and philosophy presents sequentially, albeit in a dialectic manner. Secondly, the relationship presents as a fusion, where philosophy and poetry, in

their integration augment each other to an extent that neither is limited by their traditional independence.

If we take the broadest appreciation of the unification of philosophy and poetry, reflecting the first aspect of the interpretation, we can see that it consists in a move towards holism or what Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin identify as the formation of a new religion or 'mythology'.[8] Indeed, it is argued that philosophy and poetry as unified are 'nothing but religion' (Schlegel 1968, p. 154). In contrast, poetry and philosophy independently represent 'different forms, or factors of religion' says Schlegel (1968, p. 154).

Indeed, these comments support the notion of a unification in which philosophy and poetry retain their respective and distinct functions. This point is strengthened in Novalis's *Das Allgemeine Brouillon* (*Notes for a Romantic Encyclopaedia 2007*),[9] or the 'scientific Bible,' as Novalis himself calls it (2007, p. 99). Here

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[8]   Schlegel's *Dialogue on Poetry* speaks enthusiastically about the poetry of the future as essentially mythological: '[w]e have no mythology' he argues 'but we are close to obtaining one or, rather, it is time that we earnestly work together to create one' (1968, p. 81.

See also the 'Earliest Program for a System of German idealism': '[...] we must have a new mythology but this mythology must serve ideas, it must become a mythology of reason' (Cited in Schulte-Sasse 1997, p. 73).

[9]   *Das Allgemeine Brouillon* is the title given to a collection of notebook style fragments reflecting Novalis's research activities between 1798 and 1799. The collection of ideas reflects Novalis' diverse interests which include various aspects of the arts and the sciences plus thoughts on ethics, politics, society and religion. The edition used as a reference in this thesis is the English translation by David. W. Wood, published in 2007. These notes were never published in Novalis's own lifetime but Wood reveals that

entries are made under various headings including 'Philosophy', 'Cosmology', 'Pedagogy', 'Ethics' and 'Poetics' just to name a few. The idea behind Novalis's 'scientific Bible' is to represent the 'real, and ideal' (2007, p. 99) in bringing together all aspects of human culture with a view to demonstrate their interrelatedness and to amalgamate them into a common curriculum that serves ultimately the moral development of humankind. Insofar as their individual capacity to contribute towards a common goal, namely to achieve a balanced development of human acculturation, is concerned, each activity is equally conducive to this cause. However when they function in isolation, these otherwise rational activities become, in a sense, dysfunctional. If we accept that Novalis's notes present as a prime example of 'romantic thinking' then it follows that the 'unification' of poetry and philosophy, means something other than one mode of thinking losing its identity in the other, for throughout this collection of notes, poetry and philosophy are regularly referred to as distinct operations.

However, poetry and philosophy were, at one point in time, more intimately associated; indeed philosophy, as Schlegel argues, is:

Novalis's intention was to have these notes eventually published as a *Romantic Encyclopaedia*.

In a recent review of this publication Jane Kneller (university of Colorado) argues that 'Taken as a whole, the notes represent the beginnings of a philosophical experiment that, if successful, would support the hypothesis that a unified methodology is possible for the arts and sciences' (2008) Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews cited on http //ndpr nd edu/review cfm?id=14068 accessed 12/12/08.

'[...] the result of two contesting powers, poesy and praxis. Whenever these two powers completely penetrate one another and fuse, philosophy emerges; when philosophy breaks down again, then it becomes mythology or throws itself back into life (Schlegel cited in Schulte-Sasse 1997, p. 325).

Following the argument of Schlegel's 'transcendental philosophy' (*KAXII*), what this suggests is that philosophy is the middle point between poetry and praxis, or, in other words, the synthesis of poetry on one side and praxis on the other. Schlegel makes another point that helps clarify what he might mean by these two opposites in particular, namely that 'it was out of poetry and laws that Greek wisdom arose' (Schlegel, in Schulte-Sasse 1997, p. 325).). We can thus assume that praxis in this instance is related to the more practical determination of law, which seems to match also Novalis's idea that there 'exists no genuine distinction between theory and praxis' (2007, p. 135). It is therefore the case that the synthesis between poetry and philosophy is more clearly represented as philosophy arising out of a fusion between law and poetry.

In order that the dialectic continue, what needs to follow is the unification of philosophy and poetry, which in retrospect can be viewed as the unification of philosophy with a major progenitor to its own arising, namely, poetry. However, the fusion this time produces a sublimation of both – a transcendental poetry.

Novalis presents us with a similar scenario, (although for a different reason) regarding the mixing and separating of specific faculties – this time of 'knowledge' and 'action.' In *Das Allgemeine Brouillon*, under the heading 'PHILOSOPHY', Novalis argues that '[o]riginally knowledge and action are mixed - then they separate, and at their goal they should again be united, and cooperative, harmonious, but not mixed' (2007, p. 7). In this particular context, 'united' exemplifies the relationship in which particular components co-exist harmoniously, and cooperatively, with each other, by virtue of their common goal. This excerpt highlights the emphasis on a common 'goal' which, for the purpose of this thesis, supports the vision of a uni-focused relationship, in which two distinct processes are working together to achieve a common objective. Novalis goes on to clarify his position by adding that '[o]ne will at once know and act in a reciprocal manner – know, how and what one does, do, how and what one knows' (2007, p. 7). What this amounts to is Novalis' 'living theory of life' (Novalis 1997, p. 52) in which action and knowledge coincide and reflect each other. It is worthwhile, to give in full, the excerpt to which this last quote belongs, for it is in this passage where Novalis' expression regarding his aspiration for a unified process, are clearly raised. He begins with the 'first reflection' which is a poetic reflection (as opposed to a critical reflection); it is the 'wonder'[10], as it were, that gives rise to the philosophical method:

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[10] For a notion of 'wonder' that is in accord with what is said here, see 'J. Malpas (2006) 'Beginning in Wonder, Placing the origin of thinking' in *Philosophical Romanticism*, Nikolas Kompridis (ed.) 2006, pp. 282-298. An interesting point that speaks (somewhat) to the above, although beyond the scope of this chapter to address in the main text, is as follows: 'Talk of wonder as the beginning of philosophy should [...] be taken to indicate something about the character of philosophy as such, and so about its nature and limit, about that to which it is a response and so that to which it must be adequate' (Malpas 2006, p. 283).

The greatest problems occupy humanity earliest. On first reflection the human being feels extremely forcibly the need to unite the highest ends. As civilisation advances his attempts begin to lose the quality of genius – but they gain utility – whereby he is led into error - of generalising entirely from premises, and of pursuing the ambition merely to unite closer conditional terms. But it is inevitable that he soon notices the necessary deficiency of this method and looks for a possible way of combining the advantages of the first method with the advantages of the second, thereby completing both (1997, p. 52).

The first method, is poetic – and indeed, it is 'the poet' argues Novalis, 'who ends

the move as he begins it (1997, p. 54).

Poetry and Philosophy as united and equal

However in this chapter it is argued that poetry and philosophy are equally

important and that the call for their unification reflects this. Novalis makes this

quite clear, also, in the following passage:

Just as philosophy *strengthens* the powers of the individual with the powers of humanity and the universe through system and state, making the whole of the individual and the individual the instrument of the whole – in the same way poetry functions in respect of *life*. The individual lives in the whole and the whole in the individual. Through poetry there arises the highest sympathy and common activity, the most intimate communion of the finite and the infinite' (1997, p. 54).

With this in mind, it would be counterproductive to evaluate the distinction

between poetry and philosophy in terms of a hierarchical relation. Indeed it is

highly misleading to argue that in the early German Romantic context, art in

general, is 'superior' to philosophy, as Frederick Beiser does in his *The Romantic*

Imperative, for example, where he argues that philosophy 'becomes the mere handmaiden of art' (2003, p. 73)[11]. This is in fact a misrepresentation of the romantic imperative. While it is correct to point to a distinction between the respective capacities of each, it is incorrect to suppose that this difference points at the same time to a difference in value to the extent that it can be said one is superior to the other. It must be kept in mind that in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin context, both poetry and philosophy are manipulated to fulfil certain expectations, and the objective (epistemological and moral) that serves as the reason for this manipulation is in fact provided by philosophy. It follows that without the objective, the experience of the infinite that poetry can ultimately provide is incomplete. It is incomplete because without philosophy the poetic experience is ungrounded and thus can only be an experience for its own sake, for the sake of literature or for the sake of aesthetics. Philosophy thus retains its peculiar strength within the harmonious symbiotic relationship that this merger now clearly represents. Indeed as Schlegel points out, the function of philosophy is critical in that it must justify analytically and thereby prove that the Absolute is 'indemonstrable' (Cited in Frank 2004, p. 187). It is precisely this 'indemonstrability of the Absolute' that provides the precept and the impetus for poetry to commence where philosophy ends. In other words, poetry is utilised to push the perceptive process beyond the ongoing cognitive hiatus that presents, when analytic methods are at a point where only a synthetic intuition will enable the inquiry to proceed further.

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[11]   Although Beiser does acknowledge that for Novalis in particular, philosophy retains its significance: 'For Novalis insisted that, even though it cannot provide knowledge of the Absolute, and even though it cannot establish an infallible first principle of all knowledge, philosophy is still the source of regulative ideas that are crucial for guiding human action' (2002, p. 409).

Moreover, it is counterproductive to interpret the limits of philosophy in terms of

a deficiency (even though, Novalis himself is quoted above, as using such a term).

The limits of philosophy relate only to knowledge of the Absolute for which even

poetry does not qualify. This is because in the early Romantic context, any effort

made towards knowledge results always in an approximation. The argument that

is developed in this chapter is that philosophy is not lacking anything in and of

itself – it is what it is – which in terms of the Western philosophical tradition

amounts to a systematic intellectual processing directed towards epistemological,

ethical and metaphysical outcomes, a processing that incorporates the use of

analysis and argument.[12] It is theoretical in nature and dependent on formal

structures of language for its operation. It is thus limited only insofar as language

itself is limited, in that language cannot become what it represents. To transcend

language is to enter into another realm, a realm that is not suited to philosophy.

Poetry on the other hand, albeit dependent also on language and therefore

arguably limited in the same way, can nonetheless create an opportunity in which

current forms of language may be transcended, but not at the expense of

meaningful cognition. In the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin context, it is argued

that poetry has the 'power' to develop the articulation of an hitherto unarticulated

and therefore unconceived *experience* of knowledge. But that this is the case does

not reflect necessarily a deficiency in philosophy, only its contingent limits at any

given time, and to acknowledge that philosophy is contingently limited, affirms

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[12]   This is a claim that is not made without reservations however since the definition
of philosophy in a broader context need not be determined at all by its method but rather
by its outcomes. In the context of this thesis however, philosophy is defined in terms of it
being a discipline. The romantics too maintain this distinction for they do not refer to
poetry as philosophy despite the fact that poetry is now operating for the sake of
philosophical outcomes.

no deficiencies, but reveals only something about the contingent capacity of analytically driven and logically constructed thought to 'represent', (limits which poetry, analogously and in its turn, encounters.)

This is not to deny however, that Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin preoccupy themselves with a philosophical method, for which limits *are* an issue. Novalis, in his *Logological Fragments I* gives an account of the history of philosophy, for instance, in which he claims that philosophy is 'nothing but a history of attempts to discover how to do philosophy' (1997, p. 47). He alludes to what is further at issue by drawing a distinction between what he identifies as the 'essential' in philosophy and what is 'contingent'. Novalis argues that particularly in later times philosophy has become more contingent, an aspect of which 'includes the polemical side' (1997, p. 48). By this he means that an aspect of philosophy (which persists even more strongly today) consists of a 'refutation and repudiation of earlier opinions' (1997, p. 48). This manner of philosophising is also a contributing factor to what can be described as a 'density' of concepts that stands in the end to obscure the very thing it seeks to contemplate. What we are left with is a fragmented perspective that while it gives the impression of an expanded and progressive understanding, is nonetheless an expansion that creates distance rather than proximity to the kind of knowledge that is crucial to the early German Romantics. What presents further as an impediment is the systematic manner in which philosophers have endeavoured to prove certain propositions even though there is no ultimate proof for propositional truth. In this respect, logic represents the epitome of mechanical thinking, as the 'pure physiology of concepts' as

Novalis puts it (1997, p.51) and cannot do more than continue to associate concepts. Novalis draws a further conclusion about limits in that 'the logician proceeds from the predicate – the mathematician from the subject' and the 'philosopher proceeds from the copula'. On the other hand, the poet, argues Novalis, proceeds from both the predicate and subject', but it is the *philosophical poet'* he says, who proceeds 'from all three simultaneously' (2007, p. 140). 'All three simultaneously' refers to a synchronised engagement of predicate, subject and the copula. If we think of the predicate as a conclusion, we can see how a logician needs to work systematically towards validating that conclusion. The mathematician on the other hand proceeding from the subject, starts with the premise, that which is given. The philosopher has a more encompassing task and works with associating the two while the poet proceeds from a place where premise and conclusion are already one. The point that Novalis makes concerning the philosophical poet provides us with a key with which to unlock the intricacies of the relationship between poetry and philosophy. To proceed from all three, namely from the predicate, the subject and the copula, as the philosophical poet is expected to do, is to proceed from an all encompassing totality to which the poet can neither add nor subtract but only work to sustain and clarify. In other words, the philosophical poet is what Novalis describes as the *'en etat de Createur absolu'* (2007, p. 140).

These sorts of claims (above) work to demonstrate that both poetry and philosophy as methods are limited. Admittedly, these limitations only become problematic in a context where there is an aspiration to achieve certain cognitive

outcomes that fall outside the 'normal' scope of each discipline. For example, for pure aesthetic and literary purposes, poetry does not need to conjoin with philosophy for it is adequate in and of itself in meeting its own literary or aesthetic criteria. Similarly, pure academic philosophy is adequate in and of it self to function as a means to facilitate and review speculative theory. However, if there is to be any meaningful epistemological and ethical progress insofar as it may be realised through a social and political wholeness then the argument that we are dealing with is that this *is* dependent on the unification of poetry and philosophy.

A final point before discussing particular technical details that ground the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy as processes, is that despite the argument that poetry and philosophy function optimally when conjoined to perform a uni-focused function, poetry presents nonetheless as the heuristic 'hero', so to speak, of the relationship. This is because poetry is asked to function in a catalytic (not superior) way to philosophy and ultimately it is within the structures of a holistic poetry that profoundly philosophical outcomes are achieved. Having said that, however, philosophy is regarded by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin as useful also to poetry - but on another level - in that it first of all provides poetry with a new direction by giving it an express purpose, which it so desperately needs in the late eighteenth century. Secondly, as Novalis argues, philosophy, indeed, makes poetry its hero (1997, p. 79). By this, he means that 'philosophy raises poetry to the status of a principle. It teaches us to recognise the worth of poetry'. Novalis even goes on to say that 'philosophy is *the theory of*

poetry', that it 'shows us what poetry is, that it is one and all' (1997, p. 79). What we see here is a deliberate turn to philosophy, this time for the sake of giving poetry a status and indeed much philosophising is needed in order to make this status credible and sustainable. For this reason, philosophy does not fall off the romantic agenda. Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin want to promote the use of a revolutionised poetry, which will be, according to Novalis' personal account, 'the transcendental poetry of the future' (1997, p. 56). What is essential to this poetry is that it is consciously executed to be 'organic' according to 'organic' means. The term 'organic' here represents a critical aspect of romantic poetry in that it describes its very essence – that it is 'eternally becoming' (See Schlegel *Fragment 116*). More is said about this concept in Chapter 5 when it is explained in relation to Schlegel's formula. However, whatever the essence of romantic poetry is or ought to be, the relevant point here is to make a connection with the future manifestation of this kind of poetry (which is seen by the romantics as revolutionary) and philosophy. While there may have been moments in the history of poetic achievement of which it could be said that the essence of romantic poetry is achieved, these nonetheless are unconscious episodes and therefore inconsistent. Novalis argues that it is *Logology* (which is another name for an open ended philosophical discourse) that will (referring to the poetry of the future) 'necessarily bring about this revolution' (1997, p. 56).

An important task of philosophy then is to articulate the function of the new romantic poetry, in reference to itself and by doing so expand the function of poetry beyond literature and aesthetics and importantly, to enable the poetic to

push epistemic and ethical understanding beyond what are its current limits. The task is thus also for philosophy to articulate its own status and function within the symbiosis. And, also separately as a facilitating mechanism that will usher in the revolutionised poetry.

Balancing poetry and philosophy as complimentary 'powers'

Thus far, we have seen that a useful way to interpret the philosophic/poetic relationship as a unity is to think of it as a conjoining of two distinct but nonetheless complimentary 'powers'. To speak of poetry and philosophy as 'powers' opens up the possibility of seeing them as two modes of activity that are equal, or at least mutually complimentary, in terms of strength. This characterisation allows a casting of the relationship more as a reciprocal engagement in which each component gives to and receives from the other, equitably. Importantly, the combining of two powers gives rise to an increase in potency, which is precisely what Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin want to achieve. However, it is not the raw juxtaposition of the two powers that resources an increase in strength, but their harmonious balance. Indeed Novalis claims that 'strength can be replaced by balance' (2003, p.191). This is then the task at hand - to replace what are powers in their own right by balance of power that rests in a unified poetry and philosophy, in which neither power dominates but each contributes, equitably, to the representation of the totality.

The casting of poetry and philosophy as 'powers' comes form Novalis when he makes the claim that the 'power to think the universal is philosophical power' and the 'power to think the particular is poetic power' (2003, p. 91). Novalis concludes that the 'universal is the pure and simply already posited' while the 'particular is the relative posited' and that 'the former is the sphere in which something is posited' while the latter is the 'sphere that is posited *in* the former' (2003, p. 91). While Novalis makes these claims in his *Fichte Studies* it is not entirely clear how these relate to Fichte's version of the underlying nature of reality, based on a first principle arrangement in which the Absolute Self posits itself in opposition to itself. Nonetheless, these claims serve as a useful model by which to demonstrate what the relationship between poetry and philosophy looks like. Indeed, what Novalis's survey suggests is that poetry and philosophy are already innately allied. Considering their relationship in terms of interconnected cognitive modes in which one provides the space for the other and the other fills the space of the other, gives insight into what Novalis seeks to convey as their mutual interaction. The mutual interaction links to the idea of a totality in which there exists a mutually determined relation between the whole and its parts. In the model provided by Novalis, it appears that the parts are contained within the whole, which can serve as a model for integration and at the same time provide an analogy for the 'inner' and 'outer', which are spheres like the 'ideal' and 'real', Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin seek to integrate. The 'inner' and 'outer', in particular for Novalis, represents the distinction and relationship between the soul and the body.[13] A further analysis reveals that the 'inner' relates to *time* while the

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[13]   While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to elaborate on the particular relationship between body and soul, it is worthwhile to foot note that Novalis in particular

'outer' relates to *space* and it is the 'body', argues Novalis, that 'is an individual that fills out space' while it is the 'soul' that 'is an individual who fills out time' (2007, p. 172). Further, it is in the filling out of space that space is created, and it is in the filling out of time that time is created. Novalis concludes that 'time is the inner space while space is outer time' (2007, p. 172). In other words, what Novalis wants to finish up with is a situation in which 'space and time arise simultaneously' (2007, p. 172).

It is this final point that reveals the conceptual pairing of opposites as belonging to the same continuum. Poetry and philosophy too, belong to a continuum and indeed, are bound by it. An understanding of the nature of totality including how it functions becomes a crucial factor in the understanding of how poetry and philosophy operate in combination with each other and as distinct aspects of the same process. With regard to totality, the view that is maintained by Novalis and equally by Schlegel and Hölderlin is that 'every totality consists of two parts [...] of the positive and the negative – of the determined and the undetermined – of the real and ideal' and of the 'like and unlike' (2003, p. 91). We know that the aim of the romantic enterprise is to represent this totality albeit within the limits of an infinite approximation. It follows however that in order to represent this totality, the two aspects, namely the undetermined and the determined aspects, are equally represented. This feat is not possible if left solely for philosophy to accomplish,

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works with these concepts and the relationship between them, elaborately in his *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopaedia*. In relation to this thesis, body and soul characterise once again a particular dichotomy that while made up of two opposing parts, nonetheless are to be reconciled, in their harmonious balance.

since philosophy leads us only to one aspect of the totality. The same is true for poetry. It is thus required that the task of representation is shared between poetry and philosophy so that the possibility to represent the totality is optimised.

In the following section, the distinction between poetry and philosophy is further clarified to reveal the cognitive benefit and purpose of their symbiotic and uni-focused relationship. The specific technical details of their respective methods and the product of their methods will indicate also the limits of poetry and philosophy as processes and as ends (in themselves), apart from their special symbiotic relationship. Identifying the limits in turn will serve as groundwork that will give meaning and qualification especially to the heuristic nature of the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy. What the poetic process is and how it compares with a philosophical process, are questions addressed in dealing with what the related technicalities are, in terms of the actual processes.

'Grounding' and 'inventing' – philosophy and Poetry as processing a totality

In terms of processing the totality, Novalis explains that there are 'two ways to look at things - from above downward or from below upward' and that 'through this switch what was at first negative becomes positive, and vice versa' (2003, p. 172). Importantly, he argues that '[b]oth ways must be used at once' (2003, p. 172). In respect to the poetic and philosophical processes, the looking up from below represents poetic thinking while looking downward from above that

represents philosophical thinking. This claim is made in keeping with the quote at the beginning of this chapter, namely, 'to ground is to philosophise' while 'to think up is to poetise.' If we accept this, then we can surmise further that 'looking from above downward' represents, the 'power to think the universal' (mentioned earlier) while 'looking from below up on the other hand represents the 'power to think the particular'(also mentioned earlier). Admittedly, this association is not intuitively obvious but it is an association that is worthwhile with which to persist for it provides a means by which to discern the complimentary nature of poetry and philosophy in the midst of the distinctiveness between poetry and philosophy.

Philosophy is, in Novalis' view a 'grounding' activity, while poetry is presented as a 'creative' activity, since to think up [*erdenken*] means to conceive of something in the sense of 'conjuring up' or more precisely, *inventing*. Indeed, Novalis is explicit about this particular connection when he argues that the power of poetry is equal to the 'power of invention' (2003, p. 88).

Further clues as to what 'ground' means for Novalis are found in the following claims - that 'the ground is the property of the world and the world is the property of ground' and that 'God is ground and world together' (2003, p. 135). Novalis further claims that 'ground and world run parallel to each other and divide completely equally' and that they are 'one – consequently also in the smallest part, in everything' (2003, p. 135). Again, what presents quite clearly is persistence towards an understanding of holism, which in this instance is referred

to as God. Despite the fact that there is variance within the whole, this time in terms of world and ground, that which is varied exists nonetheless in an intimate intertwining with other variants but within the expanse of a totality. However, the idea of God (and therefore the idea of a totality), in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin context is also considered to be the ultimate striving of humankind. Indeed, it is perceived as an eternal striving to become God.[14] As far as human existence is concerned, the focus is on achieving a balance between the interplay of otherwise opposing binaries, such as ground and world.

The concepts of 'grounding' and 'inventing' are thus two further processes by which to regard the distinction and relationship between philosophy and poetry. However, it is crucial to understand that these processes (as poetry and philosophy, distinctively) are not disconnected but belong ultimately to a unified process. Indeed the structure that characterises the bond between grounding and building, serves well as a model by which to represent the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy.

Firstly, we will take note of Novalis's instruction that, both modes of operation 'must be used at once' (2003, p. 172) and his advice that '[t]otality and partiality oppose each other' (2003, p. 172). Then, returning to the idea that to philosophise is to ground while to poetise is to think up, we return also to a place where the

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[14]   See Chapter 5, Schlegel's Formula and Chapter 6, 'The moral education of humankind' for an interpretation of God and humankind's striving to become God.

relational aspects between poetry and philosophy are revealed. With respect to philosophy, Novalis gives us a further clue when he asks the question 'What do I do when I philosophise?' to which he directly answers, 'I reflect upon ground' (2003, pp. 167-168). Novalis then makes the remark that 'the ground of philosophising is thus a striving after the thought of ground' after which he argues that 'ground is not however a cause in the literal sense – but rather a constitution – connection with the whole' (2003, pp. 167-168). We are now faced with the idea that philosophy not only 'grounds' but 'reflects upon ground' and indeed the 'thought of ground' for which philosophy strives is the same 'ground' that initiates this striving. Novalis however does not want to make 'ground' a first principle. Rather, the aspiration is to make 'ground' something like a constitution connected to the whole, yet not in a causal sense. For the purpose of clarification, the following model may be useful: if we think of the relationship between foundation and edifice, while the edifice connects to the foundation, the foundation is not its cause. The relation in fact is reciprocally determined. That a foundation is functional as foundational is dependent on the edifice and vice versa, the edifice is dependent for its being upon what is foundational to it. In this case, 'ground' is relative. 'Everything, like every ground' argues Novalis 'is relative. It is a thing in so far as its opposite is a thing' (2003, p. 140). He then goes on to explain that 'ground' itself, because of it is contingent in the manner outlined above, is also a thing and that 'every thing is contained in a higher thing, or a further – more extensive and intensive thing' (2003, p. 140). In which case, no matter what serves as foundational, or at least, what is perceived to serve as foundational, is in fact an integral part of the whole. To point to the beginning or end of what is foundational, or to strive to define what is foundational, as though

it is a phenomenon unto itself, is a counter-productive exercise since all parts of a structure are foundational in some relational respect to all other parts.

In the next section the theme of integral relations continues, this time with the focus on two key components that are common to both poetry and philosophy.

Imagination and reflection - common to both poetry and philosophy

To develop further the theory that poetry and philosophy are variations of ultimately the same process, it is important to establish what the cohesive elements are. By the phrase 'cohesive elements' is meant, those binding or common elements that support the relationship as a continuum. These are the imagination and reflection. While the effect of the imagination depends on whether it operates in combination with the *memory* or the *intellect* to determine whether the process, at either end is operating poetically or philosophically, the effect of reflection depends on whether it operates with the *intellect* or the *imagination*. The ultimate aim however is for these to concur. Viewing Novalis' claim, that the 'poem of the understanding is philosophy' as comparable to a 'union of understanding and the imagination' (1997, p. 54), we can see just how reflection is asked to function as a reconciliatory aide in the combining of the intellect and the imagination. Consequently, the union between poetry and philosophy is also clarified.

In what follows, is an attempt at elucidating these concepts in their respective combinations and effects, but since these concepts and relations are highly complex, especially in the early German Romantic context, it would require a more in depth inquiry well beyond the scope (and purpose) of this thesis to do justice to them. The main objective here is, again, to present these concepts and relations in a manner that will support the theory that there is an inherent interconnection between poetry and philosophy; a connection that can become more obvious, with a certain focus. In addition, the discussion concerning the function of reflection, in particular, touches on an aspect that relates directly to the overall thesis topic of poetry and philosophical *ascesis*, in that reflection facilitates the raising of the self to a 'better self' (Novalis 1997, p. 60). Moreover, reflection is inherent in the process that culminates in a 'philosophy of philosophy' and 'poetry of poetry'. The latter in particular, is a goal for romantic criticism, which, while it is beyond the scope and purpose of this chapter, is nonetheless dealt with in the attached footnote (see below). [15]

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[15]   While a discussion concerning the concept of reflection as 'romantic criticism' is beyond the scope and purpose of this chapter it is nonetheless worthwhile to include in a footnote, the fundamental aspects of this function.

Romantic Poetry conceived in literary terms and, keeping in mind Schlegel's mirror-model image, functions as criticism. The innovative measures that Schlegel and Novalis take however, is that the work itself is inherently self-reflective, or in Schlegel's terms 'self-mirroring' meaning also that it is self-conscious, thereby enabling criticism as a matter of course. Criticism in literature predominantly concerns analysis with a view to gaining knowledge of the object in question, namely a literary work, so it is indeed an innovative move to make it possible for the literary work to function simultaneously as the subject and object of criticism. On a broader scale each individual work, while unique unto itself, nonetheless reflects also its connection and interdependence with other works. Schlegel gives an account of what this might look like in his *Dialogue on Poetry*. Here he uses ancient Greek poetry as a model, which he sees ultimately as a 'single, indivisible and perfect poem' (1968, p. 82). 'All poems of antiquity' says Schlegel, 'all join one to the other till from ever increasing masses and members, the whole is formed' and 'everything interpenetrates everything else' he continues, 'everywhere there is one and

the same spirit only expressed differently' (1968, p. 82). This model then captures, in a sense, the 'progressive' characteristic of romantic poetry in that there is a gain made with each and every additional mass and member incrementing towards the formation of the whole. The only concern I have with this model is that the 'whole' is here presented as progressively formed; as if it is pieced together member by member. This idea does not fit in with the reflective function of romantic poetry where, rather than being progressively developed, the whole, is progressively revealed.

There is the idea however that poetry evolves to become romantic. This we can gather for instance from the following fragment:

> There is a poetry whose One and All is the relationship of the ideal and the real: it should thus be called transcendental poetry according to the analogy of the technical language of philosophy. It begins in the form of satire with the absolute disparity of ideality and reality, it hovers in their midst in the form of an elegy, and ends in the form of an idyll with the absolute identity of both. But we should not care for a transcendental philosophy unless it were critical, unless it portrayed the producer along with the product, unless it embraced in its system of transcendental thoughts a characterisation of transcendental thinking: in the same way, that poetry which is not infrequently encountered in modern poets should combine those transcendental materials and preliminary exercises for a poetic theory of the creative power with the artistic reflection and beautiful self-mirroring, which is present in Pindar, the lyric fragments of the Greeks, the ancient elegy: and amongst those moderns, in Goethe: thus this poetry should portray itself with each of its portrayals: everywhere and at the same time, it should be poetry and poetry of poetry. (Schlegel 1968, *Fragment 238*, p. 145)

Out of the context provided by Schlegel (above) an implication emerges concerning the evolutionary aspect of poetry that it has had to undergo certain processes in order to enter into the romantic stage. As we have already seen in the previous chapter, poetry as ancient or modern are preliminary steps to the romantic phase, which technically speaking is not a phase at all, since it is where poetry comes into its own, so to speak. Secondly, Schlegel gives the prescription for what he understands to be the transcendental nature of romantic poetry that it needs to be critical and thus have the inherent capacity to be self-reflective. Schlegel gives some clues as to how he understands this is to occur - only if the author of the poem is portrayed along with the poem is self-reflection possible. This requires the fusing together of the ideal and real or the object and subject. The difficulty is however to see this as apparent in the actual poetic product. However, in this fragment Schlegel names Pindar and Goethe as exemplary poets who have achieved the transcendental in their work. While Schlegel does not elaborate this time on what this amounts to, we can get a glimpse of what he means in his notes on Sophocles whom he considers to be equal to Pindar. (*On The Study of Greek Poetry*, some of which has been touched on in the previous chapter).

Briefly, works such as those produced by Pindar, (although Schlegel is referring here specifically to Sophocles), are 'self-mirroring' because they exhibit the following qualities: Firstly the work is meticulously organised into a unified whole – 'Everything evolves necessarily out of a unity and even the smallest part belongs unconditionally to the *great law of the whole'* says Schlegel (Schlegel 2001, p. 61). Secondly the work is

The imagination as the 'effective principle'[16] supporting both philosophical and poetic processes

Novalis argues that the 'imagination' being the 'effective principle' is 'called fantasy while working on the memory' and 'the 'power of thought' when 'working on the intellect' (2007, p. 48). The difference between memory and the intellect insofar as Novalis describes it is that the 'memory is a direct (positive) sense' while the intellect is an 'indirect (negative) sense' (p. 48). Memory is thus an aptitude with which to build, or to collect and preserve images, impressions and events, with some immediacy (direct and positive). When memory works with the imagination, fantasy ensues, meaning that it provides the raw material with which to build further images, impressions and events, that are no longer grounded in reality, but are 'built' upon the fragments of memory that persist. The intellect on the other hand is an aptitude with which to conceptualise, rationalise, process or to 'make sense of' data arising out of this process, plus raw intuitions. In conjunction with the imagination, the intellect actively works with this data, but this time with a rational, rather than a fantastical determination.

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balanced and therefore harmonious – referring to Schlegel's formula of the poetic ideal discussed in Chapter 5, a work of art is well proportioned with regard to the fantastic and the representation of the real. A work is thus not overly and overtly sentimental, nor detached from reality to such an extent that it is not accessible, nor in contrast, does it starkly resemble the real world; the work of art as such must be a poetic reflection of reality, raising it to a higher level, revealing more than what formally meets the eye. Thirdly, the work is self-determined in that it is not mechanically forced' but 'emerge[s] organically' (2001, p. 61): Again falling in line with romantic expectations this is to allow the work to emerge unimpeded which means that it falls in line, not with the will of the individual creator but with the will of God. The author thus gives him/herself over, like a conduit, to universality and is certainly not persuaded by a whim. Fourthly, we must assume that the author is present in the work in that the work and the creator of the work are one.

[16]   Novalis 2007, p. 48

Imagination (as does reflection) therefore features as a crucial component of both poetry and philosophy as processes. A clue to why this is so can be found in the following excerpt by Novalis in which he focuses on the intimacy of the relationships formed by the imagination in its varying functionality:

> The imagination will simultaneously become an (outward) direct sense, and an (inward) indirect sense. The indirect sense will become a direct sense and the self-effective – living, and the direct sense both an indirect sense and self-effective. These three transformations will and must all take place simultaneously – at the same time (2007, p. 48).

In which case, while there is an effort made to maintain a distinction insofar as effects of the imagination are concerned, namely fantasy and thought, what is here implied is that the effects concur in an enmeshed reciprocity.

This is hardly surprising in light of the following claim, also by Novalis:

> Unity – totality – in order to have totality we must start from a unity and this is the imagination. Totality is the product of the imagination. Unity is the product of totality – the unending determinant' (2003, p. 82).

The function of reflection in poetry and philosophy

Just as the variation in the manner imagination functions is dependent on the context in which it is operational, so too the variation in the manner reflection operates within philosophy and poetry is dependent on other variables that work in conjunction with it. The variables this time are the intellect and the imagination. Because it has been asserted that the imagination already has a dual

function one with the intellect and one with memory, we need to be aware that variables cluster in more ways than one.

With respect to philosophy and poetry as methods, reflection like the imagination enables both to emerge. Indeed, in the context of early Romanticism, reflection supports the intellectual as well as the intuitive spheres. These spheres together give rise to, and reflect a world. Considering that romantic poetry is the synthesis of poetry and philosophy, we can get some insight into the significance of the concept of reflection from Schlegel's *Fragment 116,* in which this concept is discussed as fundamental to romantic poetry.

Schlegel declares that 'Romantic poetry can, like the epic, become a mirror of the entire surrounding world, a picture of its age' and that it can 'soar, free from all real and ideal interests, on the wings of poetic reflection [...] it can even exponentiate this reflection and multiply it as in an endless series of mirrors' (1968, p. 141). The nature of reflection here reveals it self as 'signifying a continuous progression of ever greater intensity and power' as Stoljar so neatly puts it (1997, p. 6). Certainly Schlegel's descriptive phrases such as 'wings of poetic reflection' and the idea of 'an endless series of mirrors' present as a powerful evocation of an awe inspiring kaleidoscopic consciousness, not dissimilar to *Indra's Jewelled Net*[17]. This analogy is made keeping in mind

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[17]   The image of 'Indra's Net' comes from the Buddhist Avatamsaka Sutra. The myth is told as follows: *Far away in the Heavenly abode lived the god Indra Indra, the*

particularly the romantic notion that each individual being, while an interconnected and interdependent member of the whole, is at the same time a microcosm of the entire universe. In the first instance we have a reflection that 'mirrors an entire age' on the second level we have reflection that 'exponentiates' this. 'Exponentiate' provides a key to the meaning of poetic reflection, which in this romantic context means precisely to 'raise' to a higher power. 'To make Romantic' says Novalis 'is nothing but a qualitative raising to a higher power' and '[W]e ourselves' he continues, are a 'qualitative exponential series' in which the 'lower self will become one with a better self' (1997, p. 60).

In relation to philosophy, we can say that philosophy originates in reflection. In particular relation to Fichte's model of consciousness and his Science of Knowledge, which Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin all take into consideration, reflection retains some of the complexity pertaining particularly to this model. However, for these thinkers reflection starts with the subject/object relation, and not prior to this, as Fichte determines it is. As to how the reflective process begins, Novalis argues first of all that 'there has to be a non-I, in order that I can

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god of natural forces that protect and nurture life, had a problem and thought deeply for a solution. Indra yearned to protect and nurture life of the entire universe, as all life is all the same. He saw that the whole cosmos was contained in a single grain of dust. Thus, Indra, by some cunning, hung a net around the universe so that it stretched out in all directions. The net was infinite, it had no beginning and no end At each place where the net came together Indra placed a knot. In a gesture of extravagance that only a god can manage, on each knot Indra hung a beautiful jewel which contains and reflects every other jewel in the net. When Indra touched any jewel in the net, all other jewels in the web resonated. This reference was found at this site:

http://www.indrasnet.net/philosophy.htm

posit the I as I' (2003, p. 7). It would seem that Novalis is following in Spinoza's footsteps here since in the case of Fichte, who can see that the 'non-I' is a necessary component in the determination of the 'I', insists that the 'non-I' finds its origin at the inception of the initial positing. The discrepancy represents two schools of thought — realism and idealism, which respectively advance two possible theories of the origin of consciousness — one theory that consciousness finds its origin in nature (realism, Spinoza) and the second theory that nature finds its origin in mind (Fichte). The thing that interests Novalis (and the others) however, is the fact that either way, the ensuing development of the 'I' depends on the reciprocally determined relationship that it has with the 'non-I'. Indeed, this last factor Novalis and the others take to be more significant then either of the positions just outlined and serves as the basis for their theory of unity and their proposal to bring realism and idealism together as reciprocally determined factors in the Absolute. 'It is *all* one' argues Novalis, 'whether I posit the universe in myself or myself in the universe' (1997, p. 131). More will be said about the fusion of idealism and realism when in Chapter 5, we look at Schlegel's formula, which presents as a clear attempt at reconciling the two.

Finally, in its reconciliatory function, from the poetic to the philosophical, reflection returns to conceptual thinking an unarticulated sense of the un-representable which the conscious mind then attempts to process. This last point may be contested since it is argued that poetry in its highest achievement goes beyond conceptual thinking, meaning that it goes beyond reflection; how then can it reflect back to consciousness anything at all from this realm? The best we can

do here is to refer to what Schlegel tells us and that is: 'If poetry is to become art, and if the artist is to have a thorough knowledge of his means and goals, their hindrances and subjects, he has to philosophise about his art' (1968, p. 146). Admittedly this perspective points to a reflection about art rather than art itself as being reflective, however, it is fair to say that even this implies that there must be a reciprocal effect in this relationship.

In the next section, the relationship between concept and intuition is discussed. The aim is to show how these, as relational aspects of philosophy and poetry respectively, also occur in the same cognitive continuum. Indeed, when examined closely, concept and intuition, like poetry and philosophy are already integrated.

The relationship between concept and intuition

In *Das Allgemeine Brouillon* and earlier in his *Fichte Studies* Novalis goes some way towards exploring the relationship between concept and intuition. The relationship is important because it reflects a relationship between two distinct products of activities, which are also distinct. To put it simply, a concept is a thought form – a representation while an intuition is an impression that is 'felt and sensed' (2003, p. 120). Philosophy, as was suggested earlier, initially works with concepts while poetry on the other hand initially works, for the most part, with intuitions. Novalis advances the theory that intuition and concept together form a totality (2003, p. 107) and that one without the other, is only 'half the reality of a thing' (2003, p. 78). Moreover, Novalis argues that 'a concept to which no

intuition corresponds' is an 'empty concept' (2003, p. 77) and is thus an illusion. This is not to say that illusion is absolute nonsense. It simply means that it characterises that which is not in and of itself a totality.

Novalis gives us a simple model by which to understand further the difference between concept and intuition and how they relate as co-operative components of this totality. He makes the claim that 'concept and intuition relate to one another like object and subject – atom and motion' (2007, p. 116). The immediate impression we are given is again, one of reciprocal determination, where one is what it is in virtue of the other. Novalis builds on this model by adding that 'subject belongs to intuition' while the predicate is a concept' (2007, p. 139). He then suggests that the 'path from the intuition to the concept is synthetic' while 'the converse path – is analytic' (2007, p.139), thereby describing also an integration of processes that allow a unity between them to persist.

Considering the proposition 'subject belongs to intuition' while the 'predicate is a concept' the following analogy may be useful: - subject and object as we know are, in grammar, related to each other so that in the one, namely the predicate, an indication is given as to what the other, namely the subject is about. When we refer this back to concept and intuition then we can see that what Novalis wants to say is that for an intuition to be meaningful in terms of attribution it needs to be conceptualised. In other words the concept reflects the intuition – just as the predicate reflects the subject. However this model reveals something about the

eternal approximation of poetry and philosophy since no matter how closely related concept and intuition are just as a predicate can only reflect something *about* the subject, so too, a concept can only reflect something *about* the intuition and not the intuition itself.

Intellectual Intuition – complete integration (or disintegration), of subject and object

It is time to bring into the discussion the concept of 'intellectual intuition' and reflect upon its structure, as it presents as the ultimate integration of subject and object, or rather, as the heading suggests, a complete disintegration of subject and object. In respect to the relationship between poetry and philosophy and their uni-focused function, it is through their integration that a *demonstration* of an 'intellectual intuition' is made possible. Certainly, in respect to Hölderlin's project, this is what he attempts to achieve within the structures of poetry. In light of what has so far been discussed, this thesis suggests that it is philosophy that correlates with the 'intellectual' aspect of 'intellectual intuition' while poetry correlates with the intuition itself, and that the aim is, just as it is for poetry and philosophy, their integration. Although, from the outset, it must be acknowledged that there are variations, albeit subtle variations, amongst Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, in regard to not only what they mean by 'intellectual intuition', but as to what the intention is in regard to role of 'intellectual intuition'. Moreover, contemporary discourse exhibits also, subtle variations in the interpretation of 'intellectual intuition,' which needs also to be discussed.

Jochen Schulte-Sasse argues that Fichte uses the term 'intellectual intuition' to describe a 'special mode of consciousness in which subject and object are sublated, in which the subject no longer reflects upon objects or contents'. He further argues that this intuition is intellectual because it is 'without sensory content' (1997, p. 14). Schulte-Sasse's reflection is a useful place to start a discussion concerning the meaning of 'intellectual intuition' in the early German Romantic context, for the 'intellectual intuition' Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin discuss in their theoretical texts, are variations of this very theme.

However, while all three thinkers discuss 'intellectual intuition' in their theoretical texts, in some commentarial literary and philosophical discourses it is not adequately represented (excepting, perhaps Schulte-Sasse et al, 1997). For example Ernst Behler in his *German Romantic Literary Theory*, identifies it as something that 'implies' the 'imagination', (1993, p. 86), where it acts as a direct form of intellectual understanding that comes about not through a process of reasoning but through an intuitive apprehension. The problem with this definition is that it is limited to the connection that Behler makes between 'intellectual intuition' and the imagination. We have seen that the imagination features as an integral aspect of cognitive functioning that enables both intellectual and creative activity, but nowhere do Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin make the imagination a condition of 'intellectual intuition'. Novalis for instance puts 'intellectual intuition' on equal terms with 'ecstasy,' the 'inner phenomenon of light' as he calls it (2007, p. 160). We can be sure that in Hölderlin's case, as will be explored further in the next chapter, 'intellectual intuition' characterises a pre-reflective,

that is to say, a pre-separation of subject and object, kind of awareness (Hölderlin,

1988, p. 37) which is, to be sure, a variation on Schulte-Sasse's interpretation of

Fichte's idea of an 'intellectual intuition'. Schlegel on the other hand casts,

'intellectual intuition' as the 'consciousness of the consciousness of the infinite'

(Schlegel, Cited in Schulte-Sasse, 1997, p. 261).

Beiser in *The Romantic Imperative* (2003) for the most part, presents 'intellectual

intuition' in a similar way to Behler. His understanding is that in early German

Romanticism 'intellectual intuition' is firstly an aesthetic experience but one that

is valued for its intellectual significance. Beiser argues that intuition for the

romantics is as much a power of reason as is the intellect, the difference being

however, that one is immediate while the other is discursive. Beiser claims that

'intellectual intuition' represents a reasoned understanding that is independent of

the power of inference. With this kind of reasoning, namely intellectually intuitive

reasoning, Beiser argues that the infinite can be perceived within the finite (2003,

pp. 60-61). Thus 'intellectual intuition' functions in much the same way as does

the aesthetic experience.

However, the concept of 'intellectual intuition', in the early German Romantic

context, is much more complicated than this, rendering the above views quite

misleading. The problem is also that the variation between Schlegel's, Novalis'

and Hölderlin's perceptions of 'intellectual intuition' are subtle and yet profound

which makes it difficult to pin point exactly what is meant by it.

In the previous section the relationship between concept and intuition was considered as two aspects that together constitute a totality. Based on this model, this thesis suggests that 'intellectual intuition' represents the ultimate balance of this totality, in which a perfect and integrated relation between the intellect and intuition exists. But while 'intellectual intuition' can be conceived of a priori, the actuality of it falls beyond the scope of knowledge. In basic terms, as has been suggested and will further be demonstrated in the following chapter, 'intellectual intuition' characterises absolute oneness. The temptation is to use the word unity but to do this is to imply that what we are describing is united in the sense that it is a coming together of individual aspects. This is not necessarily the case as Hölderlin makes quite clear in his essay 'Judgment and Being' (1988, p. 37). On the other hand, when we look at Schlegel's version of 'intellectual intuition', we have a synthesis of understanding and intuition, which Schlegel argues, 'are contained in intellectual intuition' (Schlegel, Cited in Schulte-Sasse 1997, p. 261). Complicating the matter further, Schlegel claims that 'intellectual intuition' is not the same as what he refers to as the 'transcendental standpoint' the point of indifference (1997, p. 261), which, in the introduction to the thesis was given as the balance between consciousness and the infinite. Indeed, 'intellectual intuition', as far as Schlegel's transcendental philosophy is concerned, stands at one end opposed to what Schlegel identifies as 'objective arbitrariness' while the transcendental standpoint finds its place in between as the 'point that raises us above all that is individual' (1997, p. 261). 'Intellectual intuition' is thus an extreme; it is a concept derived through philosophical processing – it represents the ungraspable infinite or as Schlegel describes it, it is the 'sum of the whole, original consciousness, when it comes into consciousness – that is when it *intuits*

and *understands* original consciousness' (Schlegel, Cited in Schulte-Sasse 1997 p. 260).

In light of the previous section, one may argue that this concept is thus an 'empty concept' so long as it does not correspond with an intuition. It therefore makes sense that in order for this concept to be meaningful, it is necessary to integrate it with a corresponding intuition, so a totality may be achieved. Consequently, the 'intellectual intuition' is no longer illusory but a reality. If we recall from Schlegel's ideas on transcendental philosophy, reality always points to the middle of two extremes, or is the synthesis, at least, of thesis and antithesis. In Schlegel's view, 'intellectual intuition' would be the antithesis. It is the synthesis that is always the reality.

Novalis makes some comparable claims when discussing 'intellectual intuition' in his *Kant Studies*. Here he attempts to understand how 'the consciousness of my existence in time is thus *bound up identically* with the consciousness of a relation to something outside of me' (2001 p. 333).[18] In the passage from which this is taken Novalis is thinking about a manner in which the 'I' may be able to be conscious of itself without the need to refer to another realm, such as the realm of the Absolute. He makes the following argument in which he uses the concept of 'intellectual intuition' to represent this pre-reflective state but at the same time

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[18]   D. Wood (translator) Novalis: 'Kant Studies (1797)' cited in *The Philosophical Forum* Volume XXXII, No 4. Winter 2001 p. 333

offers an idea as to how to integrate 'intellectual intuition' with 'intellectual consciousness' which is the finite representational aspect of being:

> If I could combine a determination of my existence through *intellectual intuition* simultaneously with intellectual consciousness of my existence, in the representation – *I am* – which accompanies all my judgments and functions of understanding, then the consciousness of a relation to something outside of me would not be required (2001, p. 333).

Novalis further deals with this concept of 'intellectual intuition' in his *Fichte Studies*. Admittedly, the excerpts in which the concept is dealt with reveal also a struggle to understand it. This is because Novalis' analyses the concept in direct relation to Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, where Novalis identifies it as 'something' that is prior to 'the first act'. He further explains that 'intellectual intuition' grounds the first act (2003, p. 18). The 'original act' says Novalis 'is the unity of feeling and reflection, in reflection' whereas 'intellectual intuition' is the unity of feeling and reflection outside of reflection' (2003, p. 18). In other words, while it is identified for what it is, it cannot itself be cognised.

In Hölderlin, 'intellectual intuition' represents pure Being in which 'subject and object are united altogether and not only in part' but 'united in such a manner that no separation can be performed without violating the essence of what is to be separated' (1988, p. 37), and therefore, here too, it cannot be cognised, as such. However, while Hölderlin aims nonetheless to reveal an 'intellectual intuition' in and through the structures of poetry, Novalis, like Schlegel, moves towards

integration of the concept that cannot be intuited, with the intuition that cannot be conceptualised. This is the task, ultimately, for which poetry and philosophy are synthesised to form a symbiotic and heuristic function.

Conclusion

The key argument in this chapter holds the unification of poetry and philosophy as a process that seeks to retain a distinction between poetry and philosophy, which illustrates that the unification of poetry and philosophy does not consist in making poetry philosophical, where theory is written as verse, for example. Nor does it consist in making philosophy 'poetic' in the aesthetic sense of the word. It is clear that in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin context the philosophy/poetry relation is a deliberate conjoining that enables a companionable and heuristic relation one with the other, because one without the other results in a diminished capacity to further illumine the epistemological, ontological and ethical concerns sought in both. Philosophy and poetry thus operate each at their optimum level when combined as distinct features of a common enterprise.

The key strategy of this chapter has been to explore the technical aspects and nature of the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy. A decision was made about the limits of philosophy and the limits of poetry, but in order to avoid viewing these limits in terms of deficiencies, the focus on limits was to highlight how poetry and philosophy are conceivably inter-functional. Where philosophy ends and poetry begins is at a point where philosophy, because of its

very nature, is limited in experiencing the very essence of the thing that it represents. In relation to the thesis theme of 'poetry and philosophical *ascesis*', poetry and philosophy are thus symbiotic functions giving momentum to a dialectic, the achievement of an equilibrium within which rests the ascesis. We have seen that at all levels of the process, conceptually opposing elements that belong to this dialectic such as 'ground' and 'edifice, 'concept' and 'intuition' are also held in this balance. The imagination and reflection on the other hand, because of their ever changing and contingent functioning in philosophy and poetry, provide the sense of a profound continuum. For Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, philosophy stands firm as the ground that gives value to the poetic experience, just as poetry stands firm as the edifice that validates philosophy as ground, yet the two together are mutually dependent like the head and tail of the Orouboros, providing fuel one for the other to ensure their progressive prosperity. Interdependent in their uni-focused relationship, poetry and philosophy thus serve as a model that reflects the tension existing also between consciousness and infinity. Getting the balance right between poetry and philosophy is thus a gesture that emulates the effect of the balance that gives rise to a world. That poetry and philosophy conjoin in a co-focused relationship gives philosophy the ongoing 'breakthroughs' it needs, so to speak, to reach into the realm beyond the contingent limits of conceptual thinking at any given point, and to allow the possibility of a more sublime representation, or at least an alternative representation, of what it wants to represent.

POETRY and the STRUCTURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

... To be one with all that lives, to return in blessed self-forgetfulness into the All of Nature − this is the pinnacle of thoughts and joys, this the sacred mountain peak, the place of eternal rest ... the mind of man lays its sceptre down and all thoughts vanish before the image of the world in its eternal oneness ...[19]

In the previous chapter the focus was on the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy. It was demonstrated how poetry and philosophy in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin view, can work together in an integrated and uni-focused relationship. The integration, as we saw, reflects two methodologies − (a) philosophy and poetry each retain their distinctiveness while co-operating to achieve a common goal and (b) poetry and philosophy as processes are balanced

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[19]   Hölderlin (1990) *Hyperion and Selected Poems*, Santner (ed.), p. 4

in a harmonious continuum that in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin view reflects the underlying nature of the universe, the very object of contemplation. Both approaches are integral to the ascetic unification of poetry and philosophy, and combine to secure the best means for the epistemic, ontological and ethical expansion of humankind.

In this chapter, the aim is to narrow the focus and discuss how the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy works in relation to a specific philosophical problem.

The specific issue to be addressed is Hölderlin's concern with the underlying nature of consciousness which presents as a conflict of interest, between a consciousness that yearns, simultaneously for identity with the totality in which it originates and with its own individuation. The issue originates with Hölderlin's study of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* in which Fichte argues that the Absolute 'I' posits itself and through this act creates, or reflects itself as a subject in opposition to an object, or the 'non-I'. As a result, we have a contradiction between the subject/object relation and the Absolute, which Fichte insists is and remains pure, containing no diversity (1988, p. 149)[20]. While more will be said about this later, for the moment it is sufficient to say that it is this problem, which is a specific

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[20] This very general introduction to Fichte's theory of subjectivity is extrapolated from the text 'Some Lectures concerning the Scholar's vocation, cited in *Fichte Early philosophical Writings*, translated by D. Breazeale, 1988, Cornell University Press.

ontological and epistemological issue, that opens up for Hölderlin the opportunity to explore poetry as an alternative method for dealing with it.

In addition Hölderlin's concern that the problem is worked out in poetry stems from his initial understanding that Fichte 'wants to move in theory beyond the fact of consciousness' (1988, p. 125)[21]. What he means by this is that Fichte has set up a structure in which consciousness and the principle that gives rise to it, through the act of positing itself in opposition to itself, are in fact irreconcilably disconnected. That Hölderlin accuses Fichte of wanting to go beyond the fact of consciousness is to point to this very disconnection, for although Fichte wants to, he cannot, in theory conceive of reconciliation between the founding principle, namely the Absolute and its derivative, consciousness. Hölderlin however, instead of dismissing the Absolute all together, takes up the challenge to dissolve

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[21] However, it is by no means certain that this is Hölderlin's ultimate understanding of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* and neither is it in fact Fichte's own ultimate conclusion. As Frank points out in his *Philosophical Foundations*, once Fichte was made aware of the problem, he 'no longer wanted to get beyond the "fact of consciousness" within the framework of theory itself' (2004, p. 120). In a letter to Hegel dated January 26, 1795, Hölderlin reveals that:

> 'In the beginning I suspected him very much of dogmatism; he appears, if I may speculate, to have stood very much on the cross roads, or still to stand there – he wants to move in theory beyond the fact of consciousness [...]' (1988, p. 125).

After he explains to Hegel just what is at stake with regards to Fichte's first principle, Hölderlin wants to speak further about a reassurance given to him by Fichte; only this part of the letter is missing. Therefore we cannot be sure what Hölderlin ultimately discerns about Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*. However this does not prove to be problematic in the context of this thesis. Whatever Hölderlin's conclusions are about Fichte, his initial observation of Fichte's intentions are what is at issue and remain an issue for Hölderlin in his poetics.

the disconnection, at least on an 'aesthetic level'[22] in poetry. Indeed, Hölderlin

seeks to make the complexity of the problem an integral aspect of the poetic

process, and in this way, resolve it.

While the following chapter will deal more specifically with the process, the aim

of this chapter is to clarify, primarily, the issue at stake, which concerns

particularly what Hölderlin identifies as the 'necessary conflict' that exists

between opposing tendencies that he observes underpin the relationship between

consciousness and the Absolute. In Hölderlin's words this 'necessary conflict'

consists of three antagonistic tendencies, namely '(1) the striving for pure self-

hood and identity, (2) [...] the striving for significance [*Bedeutenheit*][23] and

differentiation' and finally the '(3) [...] striving for harmony [...]' (1988, p. 74).

To investigate the issue, Hölderlin's own theory of poetry and Dieter Henrich's[24]

interpretation of this theory, which identifies Hölderlin's poetics, based on the

above concern as entirely Fichtean, are considered.

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[22]   In a letter to his friend Immanuel Niethammer, Hölderlin writes 'I want to
discover the principle which explains to me the division in which is also capable of
dispelling the conflict between subject and object, between ourselves and the world, yes,
also between reason and revelation − theoretically, in intellectual intuition, without our
practical reason having to come to our aid. For this we need the aesthetic sense
[...]'(cited Pfau, 1988, pp. 131-132

[23]   Pfau's translation (1988), p. 74.

[24]   For a more comprehensive analysis of Hölderlin's encounter with Fichte's
Wissenschaftslehre and other influences that shaped Hölderlin's philosophical thinking
see also Henrich's *Der Grund im Bewußtsein. Untersuchungen zu Holderlin's Denken
(1794-1795),* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992). Of particular value also is Henrich's

This chapter seeks to develop Henrich's argument that Hölderlin conceptualises the 'necessary conflict' between antagonistic tendencies basically in terms of the internal structure supporting Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*. Henrich's close study of Hölderlin's poetics amply argues the connection between Fichte's response to the problem of consciousness and Hölderlin's use of the 'threefold antagonism'[25] as a response to that same problem. However, while Henrich's study forms part of a strategic move to unequivocally establish a place for Hölderlin in the history of German philosophy, between Kant and Hegel, by contrast, the aim of this chapter is to relate Hölderlin's response more specifically to the concerns at stake in this thesis, namely the relationship between poetry and philosophical ascesis. This chapter will look at how Hölderlin, in a technical and remedial sense, seeks to appropriate the structures of poetry for the express purpose of dealing with the issue at stake. However, Henrich's argument, namely that Hölderlin's poetics is 'entirely Fichtean' provides a basis from which to proceed.

The initial objective is then to see how Fichte's 'internal structure' of consciousness relates specifically to Hölderlin's own model of the three opposing tendencies inherent in the structure of consciousness, which form, as Henrich argues, the basis for Hölderlin's poetics. We shall see that the ultimate effect Hölderlin is after is reconciliation through balancing all three tendencies that

discussion concerning the significance of Hölderlin's text Judgment and Being in *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Holderlin* as an example of a critique of Fichte's founding principle.

[25] This phrase is used by Henrich to characterise Hölderlin's three antagonistic tendencies (*Between Kant and Hegel*, 2003, p. 228)

constitute the 'threefold antagonism'. It is this balance that ultimately reveals what Henrich identifies as a 'transcendental instant,' (2003 p. 229), which, this thesis argues, functions as a metaphor for an 'intellectual intuition'. While the concept of an 'intellectual intuition' was discussed in the previous chapter, it will be elaborated on in this chapter since it is a concept that plays a decisive role in Hölderlin's poetics.

Hölderlin's critique of Fichte – a catalyst for a theory of poetry

While it is not the place here to give an elaborate exegesis of Fichte's thesis, it is nonetheless important to give an overview adequate enough to describe at least the fundamental components of his *Wissenschaftslehre,* since it are these components that constitute the 'internal structure' that Henrich argues underpins Hölderlin's poetics.

Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* commonly known as the *Science of Knowledge* in English, explores the possibility of providing a first principle upon which an entire system of knowledge may be built. The system itself aims to be inherently coherent and progressive, where all propositions are systematically drawn from preceding propositions. For Fichte, the interrelatedness, or more particularly, the inter-locking of propositions is a crucial aspect of the science of knowledge, with each proposition contributing systematically to the whole. However, while all propositions interlock and thereby give mutual support to each other and to the whole, each proposition's primary relation must be to one irreducible,

fundamental and founding principle. This principle, because it is a founding principle, cannot be contained within the science of knowledge but must necessarily exist 'in advance of the system' (Fichte 1868, p. 16). Its only condition is that it is true since having propositions inter-lock with each other does not provide for certainty unless these propositions can be traced back to a founding principle that is true in and of itself.

When Henrich refers to Fichte's 'internal structure' he is referring to the structure of consciousness that gives rise to this system of knowledge. It consists of the fundamental principle plus its immediate effects, namely subject and object. Henrich's term 'internal structure' appears to be closely related to Fichte's own term of 'inner content' except that Fichte's 'inner content' refers only to one aspect of the 'internal structure' namely – the fundamental principle. On the other hand it is difficult to separate the fundamental principle from its effects. In the *Wissenschaftslehre* 'inner content' is used to specify the connection between the *content* and the *form* of the science of knowledge (Fichte 1868, p. 17). Since both content and form constitute 'inner content', it follows that the 'inner content' is at once the source and object of the *Wissenschaftslehre*. It follows also that the 'inner content' is the source for consciousness since the dialectic with which the science of knowledge as a system, proceeds, is precipitated by the onset of consciousness. Fichte argues that the founding principle plus every proposition within the manifold of propositions that constitute the science of knowledge consist of both content and form - 'something is known and there is something whereof is known' (1868, p.49). Fichte argues further that 'the science of

knowledge is itself the science of something and not this something itself' (1868, p.49). In other words, the 'something' that this science is *of*, must be the 'inner content' that gives rise to the form which is the science. If this is the case then it follows that it is the content itself that is the founding principle. In Fichte's words, 'this would seem to prove that the science of knowledge, with all its propositions, is form of a content which existed in advance of it' (1868, p.49). In this roundabout way Fichte is providing a theoretical account of how a first principle can be legitimate.

The significance of what has just been outlined is that the 'inner content' as the first and founding principle of which Fichte speaks belongs to the internal structure of which Henrich speaks in the following way.

In the introduction to the *Wissenschaftslehre*, where Fichte introduces the idea of a foundational first principle in which the whole content of a 'possible science of knowledge' lies 'but not that science itself' (1868 p. 50), he further identifies this principle as the 'basis for all consciousness' (p. 63) but cannot itself become a fact of consciousness (p. 63). Indeed it is the 'power to become conscious' (p. 51). As such it is a 'free act of reflection' (p. 51). This free act of reflection act and its immediate effects is represented by the equation 'I am I'. The 'I' of this equation represents the Absolute Ego or Self which, because of the act of positing itself, is now the Absolute subject while the 'am I' on the right hand side of the equation represents the newly posited 'I', which is now the object. The equation itself

represents the event, or the 'act' of self-consciousness, in which the Ego becomes aware of itself through its own reflection. It is important to note at this point Fichte's use of the word 'act' which, as will be pointed out later in the chapter, carries with it significant implications in terms of appropriating a suitable method that is to deal with this. For the moment it is sufficient to point to Fichte's thesis that the *act* of consciousness is 'an *activity* [my italics] which presupposes no object, but itself produces it' (Cited in Breazeale 1988, p. xiv: SWI: 468)[26].

Fichte further claims that the 'I' that is posited is a *reflection* of the Absolute Ego, or a reflection of itself which he names the 'deed-act' (1868, p. 63). Considering the representative nature of reflection, the leap of faith that Fichte requires us to make is to consider the possibility that the first reflection, which he considers also to be an 'act of freedom' (p. 45) is not a representation of a reflection but of the actual Absolute Ego, since as first principle, the act of consciousness must be absolute. The act of consciousness thus precipitates a fracturing from which the emergence of a subject and object are key aspects. The Absolute Ego has posited itself in a simple but divisive act of consciousness resulting in an Absolute subject that holds itself as an object in opposition to itself.

At this point Fichte introduces the concept of the 'non-ego', which in effect is the object created through the primary act of consciousness. In other words the 'I' on

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[26]   For a comprehensive account of Fichte's career in Jena plus translations of key texts see Daniel Breazeale's *Fichte Early Philosophical Writings* published in 1988.

the right hand side of the equation 'I am I', is now identified as both the object

and the non-ego by virtue of it being in opposition to the subject. It is the interplay

that exists in this relationship, between the Absolute and the posited subject/object

relation at the onset of consciousness that forms the 'inner structure' of which

Henrich speaks.

Hölderlin's concern with Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*

The problem Hölderlin identifies is that since the positions described above are

simultaneously established, it follows that they are mutually determined. From

this we can deduce that they are also mutually limited as well as being mutually

limiting. Fichte also understands this to be the case since in his own words he

argues that, 'they must hold each other in balance' (1868, p. 290). However, this

model becomes troublesome for Hölderlin in that Fichte persists with the idea that

the self is independent and not mutually determined by the non-self because the

self is posited originally and absolutely through itself (p. 260). In other words, the

proposition 'I am I' is not simply a consequence of an awareness of the external

world. Indeed the external world exists only in virtue of the self. Hereby Fichte

wants to maintain that consciousness originates in the subject, not the object.

On the other hand Fichte concedes that in theory 'the ego cannot posit itself,

cannot be subject, without positing itself as determined through the Non-Ego

[non-self]' and he adds (in brackets) 'no subject; no object' (1868, p.182).

However, what manifests is a peculiar contradiction - the self that is posited is

simultaneously determined and undetermined; determined in its relation to the

non-self and undetermined in its relation to itself. In Fichte's own words: 'The

Ego [the Absolute Self] posits itself as infinite insofar as its activity is directed

upon itself, or returns to itself' and 'The Ego posits itself as finite insofar as its

activity is directed upon a Non-Ego which it opposes to itself' (1868, p. 266).

With this in mind, in one of Hölderlin's earliest critiques of Fichte it is obvious

that he is grappling with the problematic aspects of Fichte's thesis. In a letter to

Hegel he makes the following revealing remarks:

> Fichte's speculative writings – *Foundations of the Entire Science*
> *of Knowledge* – also his published lectures about the *Destination*
> *of the Scholar* will interest you very much. In the beginning I
> suspected him, very much of dogmatism; he appears, if I may
> speculate, to have stood very much on the crossroads, or still to
> stand there – he wants to move in theory beyond consciousness;
> many of his statements show that, and that is just as certain and
> even more strikingly transcendent that if the metaphysicians so
> far would move beyond the existence of the world – his absolute
> "I" (= Spinoza's substance) contains all reality; it is everything,
> and outside of it there is nothing; hence there is no object for this
> "I", for otherwise not all reality would be contained within it;
> however a consciousness without object cannot be thought, and
> if I myself am this object, then I am as such necessarily
> restricted, even if it were only within time, hence not absolute;
> therefore, within the absolute "I" I have no consciousness, and in
> so far as I have no consciousness I am (for myself) nothing,
> hence is the absolute "I" (for me) nothing (1988, p. 125)[27]

Hölderlin argues against Fichte in that in theory it is impossible to get a complete

understanding of the Absolute since the Absolute 'contains all reality', and does

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[27]   Extract from a letter to Hegel, Hölderlin wrote during his stay in Jena ,*1795*,
documented also in Hölderlin *STA* 1959, Vol.6, pp. 168-169

not allow for any 'opposition' as would be required for a subject in terms of an object. Further, since an opposition of subject and object is constitutive of consciousness, the Absolute is necessarily unconscious. According to Frank, this reading of Fichte's Absolute is marked by Hölderlin's encounter with Reinhold's[28] *Theory of Representation* (1789), where 'consciousness must always be regarded as characterising the representation of something different from itself' (2004, p. 115). However, in expressing his concern at this point Hölderlin is not rejecting the *idea* of the Absolute; he is merely pointing out that theory is limited, or more accurately, the fact of self-consciousness proves to seriously impede accessibility to the Absolute since theory itself is a product of reflection, that is to say, of consciousness. What this means in terms of knowledge of the Absolute is that it is and remains inaccessible in its entirety (at least in theory), to the conscious mind. The reality is that a conscious perspective presupposes object and therefore is a subjective and as such, partial perspective. With this clearly staked out, Hölderlin cannot do anything else but admit that in this context, the Absolute is inaccessible and therefore is 'nothing' to the conscious mind.

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[28] Karl Leonhard Reinhold (1757-1823) was chair of philosophy at Jena University until 1795; the year Hölderlin first came to Jena. However by the time Hölderlin got there, Fichte had already taken over as chair of philosophy. Still, Reinhold proved to be an important influence on Hölderlin and we can see that Reinhold's *Theory of Representation* published in 1789, is what held sway in so far as Hölderlin's own philosophical development is concerned. For a detailed discussion of Reinhold including his relationship with Kant and his subsequent influence in Jena in general, see Karl Ameriks' *Kant and the Fate of Autonomy: Problems in the Appropriation of the Critical* published in 2000. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Hölderlin is not convinced however that an experience of the Absolute is not, in some way, possible.

Considering that the problem is specifically to do with the limits of theory[29], then the most obvious strategy is to either employ an alternative theory or, if it is decided that there cannot be an alternative theory, then the step would be to move beyond the fact of consciousness via a means other than through the conceptual or theoretical.

The following excerpt reveals Hölderlin's unique strategy:

> I want to develop the idea of an infinite progress of philosophy and I am attempting to prove that what must be continually demanded of any system, the union of subject and object of the Absolute I (or whatever name one wishes to give it) is undoubtedly possible on the aesthetic level in intellectual intuition, but not on the theoretical level except by means of an infinite approximation like that of the square of the circle [...]'
> (StA 1959, Vol. 6, pp. 196-197).[30]

In the previous chapter the concept of 'intellectual intuition' was discussed, however this concept is revisited here; this time with a particular focus on the

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[29]   While it might be tempting to at the same time suggest that because the problem lies with theory, it must also lie at the same time with rationality, evidence suggests that rationality (or reason) is not specifically at issue when it comes to deciding upon an alternate strategy to Fichte's scientific approach. If we were to be convinced that Hölderlin has anything to do with the 'Oldest Programme for a System of German Idealism' (1796) then we must also be convinced that reason is not limited to theory. Indeed the highest act of reason, according to this text is an aesthetic act.

[30]   Extracted from a letter to Schiller, dated 4th September 1995.

significance Hölderlin gives it. Interestingly, what will come to light is an inconsistency in terms of the essence and function of 'intellectual intuition' within Hölderlin's poetics; however this will not be discussed until later in the chapter.

'Intellectual intuition', as discussed in the previous chapter, is, principally a concept that reflects the notion of a pre-subject/object state, a condition the awareness of which is inaccessible to the self-conscious mind. Manfred Frank suggests that intellectual intuition is 'that consciousness that immediately understands seamless and unified original Being' (2004, p. 78). Immediacy, 'seamless' and 'unified original Being,' are according to this evaluation, key characteristics of an 'intellectual intuition'. This resounds perfectly with Hölderlin's particular assumption, outlined above, that subject and object can be unified 'on an aesthetic level, in intellectual intuition'. However this perception of 'intellectual intuition' is problematic unless Hölderlin expects that the aesthetic level is an unconscious level, which, we will discover later, it is not. What will become apparent is that Hölderlin wants the experience of the kind of unity that an 'intellectual intuition' represents, to be a conscious one. However there is a question mark hanging over what this conscious experience actually is. Despite the fact that the attempt to make 'getting beyond the fact of consciousness' a conscious experience, it can ultimately only be a metaphorical representation and therefore only an approximation of an 'intellectual intuition'.

Gosetti-Ferencei on the other hand argues that Hölderlin's view is 'that intellectual intuition is possible' but 'only analeptically and contingently' in poetic language (2004, p. 134). Gosetti-Ferencei is saying that an 'intellectual intuition' is, like the moral law, available only indirectly through the experience of something that is not an 'intellectual intuition'. The moral law, as we will see in Chapter 6, can be 'known' only contingently since it becomes evident only in the event of it being violated, the result of which is punishment or suffering (pp. 133-134). In the same way, Gosetti-Ferencei suggests that intellectual intuition is only possible contingently namely that it will present itself but only negatively. However, to talk about intellectual intuition as being 'possible' is in a sense misleading. For the most part 'intellectual intuition' is presented by Hölderlin as a pre-reflective and therefore unconscious experience of unity. This negates the possibility of it being realised in even the way Gosetti-Ferencei suggests.

Certainly, in the light of a subject/object relation, we can speculate about what and how an 'intellectual intuition' is. Schlegel too, in his transcendental philosophy posits 'intellectual intuition' as arising out of the moment in philosophy that he identifies as 'objective arbitrariness' (Schlegel cited in Schulte-Sasse 1997, p. 260). Further Schlegel argues that the 'I is the synthesis of intellectual intuition' (1997, p. 259). Clearly, what is at issue here is that the idea of an 'intellectual intuition' is an idea that comes to us in hindsight, not foresight. However, this does not support the argument that it is 'possible' as awareness, because, the question is, for what or whom, would 'intellectual intuition' be possible?

Frank is convinced, for example that Hölderlin 'opposes in the sharpest terms, "intellectual intuition" [...] to the act of judging and thus to the determinate consciousness of something' (2004, p. 125). Frank's observation is based on Hölderlin's particular understanding of pure Being. 'Being proper' as Hölderlin refers to it, represents 'the connection between subject and object' but in such a way that 'no separation can be performed without violating the essence of what is to be separated [...]' (1988, p. 37).[31] Judgment on the other hand precipitates the subject and object opposition, an opposition that does not exist in pure being: 'being proper'. Judgment thus represents the onset of consciousness and ensures its continuity. It follows that, at some level, intellectual intuition is after all an 'awareness' of the 'original' unity. Frederick Beiser agrees with this by identifying that for Hölderlin 'intellectual intuition' is indeed a 'direct awareness.' Beiser further argues that 'intellectual intuition' for Hölderlin is in fact 'a form of knowledge' (2002, p. 394). However, whether we call it 'knowledge' or not, one criterion that must be taken into account is that the original unity of Being must not become an object *of* knowledge for then we are once more in the realm of the subject/object relation.

Hölderlin claims that subject and object are 'deeply united in intellectual intuition' (1988, p. 37). 'Intellectual intuition' however 'intuits' this union not *as* a union but as the pre-separation mode of Being, meaning that there is no

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[31]   See Violetta Waibel et al, in *Holderlin Texturen 2 Das 'Jenaische Project' Wintersemester 1794/95* (Schriften der Hölderlin Geschellschaft Bd. 20, 1995) for articles related to Hölderlin's philosophy including his study of Fichte while he was in Jena plus Waibel's Dissertation of 1997 entitled 'Hölderlin und Fichte 1794-1800', published in 2000.

conventional awareness of a separation and while there is no awareness of separation there can neither be an awareness of union, since the concept 'union' implies a joining of two or more elements. We must be constantly mindful of Hölderlin's special understanding of Being so as to avoid the mistake of thinking that awareness of union as a joining is enough to mark the occasion of an 'intellectual intuition'. 'Intellectual intuition' is a pre-judgmental mode of grasping Being and as such it cannot belong to the subject. Again, subject and object do not exist as entities prior to judgment in which separation occurs – they are one in Being and therefore we must suppose that subject and object do not exist in a pre-reflective awareness. Further, it cannot be said that after subject and object have emerged as a consequence of the onset of self-conscious awareness, that they are identical with each other. Nor can it be said that subject and object together are identical with Being. The fundamental essence of what is prior to judgment is, as Hölderlin explains in 'Judgment and Being', altered in judgment.

It is for this reason that 'intellectual intuition' is not something that the conscious mind can experience since consciousness is in fact the 'cause' or the structure of the differentiation. It is also the barrier that prevents accessibility to 'being proper'. Hölderlin claims that *judgment* is 'the original separation' that separates the original 'unity' that Being is, and it is only in this act that subject and object 'become possible' (1988, p. 37). 'Intellectual intuition' however *is* 'knowledge' or 'experience' of the original unity.

The question is how shall we understand a knowledge that has no object? What does it consist of and how is it conceived of, given that it cannot be conceived of by consciousness, as we know it?

Henrich agrees that Hölderlin's 'being proper' is 'the being that is inconceivable for us is intellectual intuition' (1997, p. 86). Henrich further argues that if we looked closely at Hölderlin's text we would detect some Kantian precepts. For example, because Hölderlin excludes the possibility of knowledge of 'being proper', Henrich tells us that 'absolute being is only a presupposition' (1997, p. 86). In response to this one can argue that, yes, while Hölderlin does not (and cannot) assume otherwise, he nonetheless seeks to at least give an impression of an 'intellectual intuition' in poetry, which implies that for Hölderlin absolute being is more than a presupposition. It is Hölderlin's mission regardless of whether or not 'absolute being is a presupposition' to seek access to at least an experience of it. It may well be that Hölderlin's study of Kant equips him to start his mission already with an understanding that absolute being is unknowable but the conviction that the absolute is unknowable does not 'free him from Fichte' as Henrich might argue (1997 p. 87). On the contrary, the un-know-ability of the absolute becomes the philosophical challenge that Hölderlin seeks to resolve in poetry. Not that he wants to prove that the absolute is knowable but that we can have an experience of 'un-know-ability' which then in a roundabout way informs us, or reveals to us something more about the 'presupposition' of being. In other words, Hölderlin wants to get beyond the 'presupposition' aspect and establish, in

and through a tangible experience of 'un-know-ability', made possible in and through poetry, a transparency that reveals 'being proper'.

Hölderlin is thus confident that 'intellectual intuition' is a condition of which an experience is possible on an 'aesthetic level' (1959, pp. 196-197).The big question now is - how does Hölderlin imagine this experience to occur? The aesthetic level to which Hölderlin refers is a level that in a conventional sense deals with representation, allegory and metaphor. Despite Hölderlin's mission to appropriate poetry for philosophical outcomes he nonetheless works within the confines of traditional poetic structures and with the use of conventional poetic devices. In which case, whatever is represented through the use of language, metaphor and rhythm, is not identical with the thing that it represents. What Hölderlin thus really means is that in poetry and particularly in tragedy (which Hölderlin evaluates as ideally suitable[32]), an 'intellectual intuition' can be metaphorically represented or better still, an 'intellectual intuition' can be *simulated* in poetry. However, this is as close as we can get to experience the type of unity that intellectual intuition represents. The simulation of an 'intellectual intuition' features as an intentional outcome of Hölderlin's poetry. It is represented by a transcendental moment that Hölderlin factors into the structures of poetry and is precipitated by a carefully crafted dialectic that is modelled after Fichte's 'internal structure' that supports consciousness and hence, for Fichte, represents a complete science of knowledge. It is important to elaborate on what Fichte's 'internal

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[32]   Hölderlin (1988): 'The tragic, in appearance heroic poem, is idealistic in its significance. It is the metaphor of an intellectual intuition' (p. 83)

structure' looks like, since it is this structure that provides Hölderlin with the model to develop a theory that not only hopes to deal with the very enigma that this structure represents but a theory that he imagines will realise Fichte's earliest aspiration to get beyond the fact of consciousness within the realm of theory. A preliminary point to make is that in relation to Fichte's thesis we can see that the equation 'I am I' represents the subject/object opposition and *does not* exist prior to the separation; it *is* the separation. 'The question has been asked' says Fichte, 'what *was* I before I became self-conscious?' to which he answers '*I* was not at all, for I was not I' (1868, p. 70). From what was discussed earlier, it is safe to say that for Hölderlin it is judgment that represents the active positing of the 'I' in which self-conscious awareness simultaneously occurs. The objective is thus to arrive at an experience of a pure 'I'.

Examining the 'Internal Structure' that supports Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*

For Hölderlin this problem represents the struggle between conscious and unconscious states. Below is a diagram that demonstrates more precisely what is at stake.
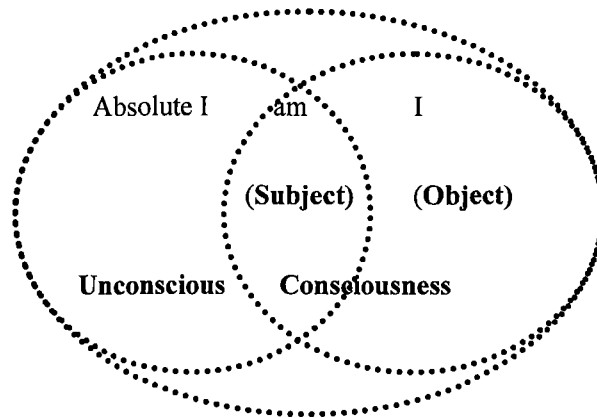
Fig. 1. The Struggle between conscious and unconscious states

This diagrammatical interpretation of the internal structure portrays the conscious self, which is the subject, as aware of an external and determined world (object/non-self), of which it is part. At the same time the subject has an awareness on some level (or perhaps a sub-conscious memory) of itself as its own 'creator.' To survive as a self (subject) it must maintain a relational perspective of itself as not only opposed to the non-self (object) but also to the Absolute, in which it originates; yet it nonetheless longs to reunite with its origin, which theoretically speaking, is it-self. Represented here then is the paradoxical nature of human existence as it plays itself out in the face of the Absolute and a finite

world of which it is part. But the paradox is exacerbated when we take into account Fichte's thesis that the Absolute Self is 'absolutely identical with itself [...] the self is everything and nothing, since it is nothing *for itself*, and can distinguish no positing or posited within itself' (1982, p. 233). The implication here is that whatever plays out in the 'posited' world is thus nothing for the Absolute.

Hölderlin is also aware of this paradox, hence his articulation in 'Judgment and Being' that the Absolute is not identical with subject and object in their separateness (1988, p. 38). The claim alluded to in an earlier excerpt, namely that 'within the absolute 'I' I have no consciousness, and in so far as I have no consciousness I am (for myself) nothing, hence is the absolute 'I' (for me) nothing' (1988, p. 125) also contributes to this understanding. For this reason Hölderlin pays particular attention to the tendency inherent in human beings that strives for individuality and even 'prefers to keep the chains' rather than give into the tendency that in the end forfeits consciousness. As Hölderlin points out 'to know nothing and to cease to be are, for us the same' (Hölderlin, cited in Frank 2004, p. 117). Resistance to merging with the Absolute is thus a necessary tendency lest the 'divine within us' reunite with itself with the consequence that 'we would feel neither ourselves nor others' (p. 117).

By the same token, the conscious 'I', that is, the subject, cannot be anything for the absolute 'I'. Yet, paradoxically, the absolute 'I' is entirely dependent on the

subject's ability and willingness to revoke the posited world if it were to reunite again with itself. This suggests that the posited world, for which it is responsible, is in some sense a threat to the Absolute even if it is 'nothing', for reunion with itself cannot be realised so long as the subject is conscious and committed to the posited world which indeed it must be at all times, if it is to sustain itself.

The paradox described above encapsulates what are two scenarios that stand in conflict with each other which represent what appears to be a necessary struggle that exists between the particular and the whole. Indeed, just as the posited self, the subject, strives to maintain itself, so too does the Absolute Self strive to maintain *itself* (Fichte 1982, p. 233). The latter striving amounts to what Fichte identifies to be a 'self-reverting infinite activity,' (1982, p. 233), which is an activity that is inherently characteristic of the Self. Because the Self posits itself absolutely, striving to revert back to itself must then also be infinitely active within the 'I' that is now the subject. What is also inherent in the subject is what Frank identifies as the 'drive' that acts as a 'restraint of the infinitely striving activity;' that which is the 'condition of becoming conscious' (2004, p. 119). Fichte identifies this drive to be an 'objective finite activity' (1982, p. 235). The implication is that both the 'self-reverting infinite activity' (striving) that is inherent in the subject plus the 'objective finite activity' (drive), which is inherent now in the object, find their origin in the Absolute. Ultimately this could mean that the Absolute is itself the struggle that these activities represent. Even Fichte argues that '[...] the very concept of striving already involves finitude, for that to which there is no *counterstriving* is not a striving at all' (1982, p. 238). To this

end, Fichte himself argues that the Absolute is dependent on its very striving for it to exist at all. The ultimate conclusion to be drawn here is (and this is precisely the conclusion drawn by Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin) that the Absolute cannot be what it is without opposition, just as the finite self and non-self cannot be what they are without opposition, one to the other.

Putting this aside for the moment, it is important to pay some attention to the fact that 'striving' and 'drive' in the above paragraph are identified as activities. Indeed now is the time to clarify further the concept 'activity' for as mentioned earlier, there is a peculiarity inherent in this concept that has significant implications for the methodology employed by Fichte, namely his very scientific and logical approach to knowledge.

To identify the Absolute as active activity carries with it some significant implications for philosophy. Indeed, with this, the limits of philosophy may become clearer in so far as knowledge of the Absolute is concerned. If we recall in the discussion in Chapter 1, (p.29) where Novalis is quoted as saying that 'originally knowledge and action are mixed', action is identified as the mode of engagement for poetry, while knowledge (or theory) on the other hand, is identified as the mode of engagement for philosophy. In terms of what poetry can do for philosophy, the significance of this point is this: if we accept the Absolute, which we understand to be Fichte's first and fundamental principle and which is at the same time the *content* of the entire science of knowledge, then the barrier

that stands between the Absolute and philosophy is the mode of engagement that philosophy is. If we accept that the Absolute is fundamentally activity, then it follows that the mode of engagement that will get closest to the Absolute must itself be an activity.

With this in mind, Hölderlin's mission to move beyond the fact of consciousness on an aesthetic level begins to make more sense. When one associates the beginning of philosophy with the onset of consciousness, the limits of philosophy become obvious; they begin and end with the onset of consciousness; the positing of the subject in its opposition to the object. The reflective process that philosophy is, finds its origin in consciousness, from where it subsequently develops a world of concepts. On the other hand, if we accept that the mode of engagement for poetry is an activity of the kind that is akin with the founding principle, then it may well be argued that poetry has its origin in the Absolute, by virtue of which, poetry must have 'access' to the Absolute.

However, it is not clear that the argument just outlined is consistent with Hölderlin's own understanding of what is possible for poetry. While there is no doubt that Hölderlin aims at unity, he also aims to make it, on some level a conscious experience. For this reason, the unity that is hoped for in poetry remains allegorical because the fact of consciousness, albeit transformed or transferred or even deferred, has not been fully transcended.

The use of, and departure from, Fichte's 'internal structure' in Hölderlin's poetics

Having sketched out the internal structure of Fichte's system we are now ready to see to what extent Hölderlin retains this structure as a basis for his poetics. It was pointed out in the introduction that it is what Henrich identifies as a 'threefold antagonism' inherent in Hölderlin's poetics that serves as evidence for the proposition that Hölderlin's poetics is 'entirely Fichtean'. The 'threefold antagonism' consists of the interplay of three tendencies that correlate significantly with the model of consciousness discussed earlier. Henrich describes the tendencies as forming an incompatible relationship, where one tendency urges towards independence, another towards 'the surrender to the finite in love' and the third towards awareness of an 'ideal that reaches out to the origin of the world' (2003, p. 229). While it is true that the tendencies may be incongruous, in so far as they orient towards different outcomes, they nonetheless exist within a constellation that in itself strives for a harmonious balance.

When one reads Hölderlin's theoretical texts in which he develops his poetics one becomes aware of a philosophical position that is strongly reminiscent of Fichte's theory of consciousness as detailed in his *Wissenschaftslehre*. It needs to be kept in mind however that Hölderlin's preoccupation with this problem is to prove that it is possible to go beyond the fact of consciousness on an aesthetic level. Hölderlin thus uses his Fichtean model of the structure of consciousness to not only structure poetry but to guide the poetic process towards a resolution of the paradox that this very structure of consciousness represents. To put it another

way, Hölderlin wants to build into the poetic process a determination that gives rise to an experience of the indeterminable, 'intellectual intuition'. Once again it needs to be emphasised that the 'experience' is not an 'intellectual intuition' as such, which in its ultimate sense is an immediate awareness of a pre-reflective 'being proper', but is rather a metaphorical representation of this.

The experience is transmitted in what Henrich identifies as a 'transcendental instant' (2003 p. 230); it is the 'getting beyond consciousness' experience. Henrich argues that Hölderlin's doctrine of the 'transcendental instant' is based on a particular passage in Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* in which the positing moment that gives rise to subject and object contains also an 'in-between' instant – or a space - that makes the separation possible and prevents one dissolving into the other. The 'in-between' space represents for Hölderlin an 'intellectual intuition'[33] since it is the element that is essentially the unifying force that simultaneously unites and separates subject and object. It is the moment in which Hölderlin sees the possibility of an experience of absolute being - the 'all in all that always is' (See Chapter 3 for an elaboration on this point). For the moment it is sufficient to identify that the 'transcendental instant', although not identified by Fichte as such in these terms, is nonetheless very much an aspect of Fichte's 'internal structure'.

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[33] Which contrasts Schlegel's perception of 'intellectual intuition', as was pointed out in the introduction, Schlegel's 'transcendental midpoint' is in between 'intellectual intuition' on one hand and objective arbitrariness on the other – between the two extremes of subjectivity and objectivity (See Schlegel, in Schulte-Sasse 19979, p. 259).

Thus in adopting the 'internal structure' that supports Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* Hölderlin inherits the problem of the nature of the determined self in its structural relation to the Absolute. All components of this structure correlate with Hölderlin's understanding of the structures that give rise to and sustain the human condition. For example what Fichte identifies as the 'self-reverting infinite activity' of the Absolute (discussed earlier) correlates neatly with Hölderlin's understanding that part of the dynamic of being human is an inherent 'striving for pure self-hood and identity' (1988, p. 74). Esoterically speaking this describes the inherent longing of the self (subject) to be reunited with the Absolute in which it originates. Striving against this first tendency is the compelling nature of the posited self (subject) that is to be conditioned by the non-self (object) in an effort to seek and sustain 'significance and differentiation' (1988, p. 74). This tendency in contrast to the first reveals the infinite underlying nature of the self that strives against the self-reverting activity of the 'Absolute I' and urges instead towards differentiation in which independence and individuality is established. The alternative is a merging into the Absolute, which involves dissolution of independence and individuality. The third tendency however, urges towards harmony, or better said a reconciled state in which the former two tendencies come to rest. The fact that Hölderlin identifies this third tendency implies that there is at least a potential for the restlessness of the human condition to be appeased albeit only for a moment. However Hölderlin is clear that each tendency is very transient in so far as its manifestation is concerned. Indeed, the interplay between tendencies ensures the cancellation of each tendency as it arises and therefore none are in fact 'realisable' (1988, p. 74).

This is the tragedy of being human in the world where everywhere the finite

reminds us of our condition, that we too are finite. Yet the stuff that supports us is

infinite and so we strive for infinity. This is something that Fichte also determines

to be the case:

> [T]he idea of an infinity to be thus completed floats as a vision
> before us, and is rooted in our innermost nature. We are obliged,
> as it enjoins us, to resolve the contradiction, though we cannot
> even think it possible of a solution, and foresee that in no
> moment of an existence prolonged to all eternity will we ever be
> able to consider it possible. But this is just the mark in us that we
> are destined for eternity (1982, p. 238)

In this passage Fichte argues that as human beings, existing in a world, we can

only go so far in being aware of the Absolute, for the struggle between the finite

and the infinite remains real and is, indeed, irresolvable. On the positive side, and

despite the perpetual nature of this struggle, the idea that eternity is our destiny

nonetheless remains however unattainable it is for the temporal being. Hölderlin

similarly acknowledges that the antagonism between tendencies is indeed a reality

and while he factors into the equation the possibility of the third tendency being

realised in poetry (through which an experience of eternity is conceivable), he too

understands, all too well, that this realisation cannot amount to anything more

than a momentary experience of the original unity.

Accommodating Fichte's 'internal structure' in poetry

The focus in this section will be on the technical aspects of how poetry is appropriated by Hölderlin to accommodate the interpretation and the resolution of the philosophical problem discussed above. In Chapter 1, we saw how poetry and philosophy are united, on one level, to form an augmented method, a method, in fact that ultimately serves to simultaneously provide a means to, and an end in itself, of a philosophical ascesis. Hölderlin's appropriation of poetry for this task is to make it a space in which the philosophical problem is simultaneously interpreted or re-interpreted rather, and resolved, seamlessly.

Henrich argues, that the 'dynamism of life', which Hölderlin's adaptation of Fichte's 'internal structure' represents, is most adequately grasped in poetry because 'poetry is at once successive and symbolic' (2003, p. 228)[34].

To begin with, the term 'successive' refers to the sequential unfolding of the poem or more precisely to what Hölderlin refers to as the 'rhythmic sequence of the representations' (1988, p. 102). To support a rhythmic sequencing of

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[34] The idea of symbolism and succession in poetry is something that Henrich explores in greater detail in *The Course of Remembrance* (1986) in relation to Hölderlin's hymn *Andenken*. This is an excellent contribution to Hölderlin scholarship since it explores Hölderlin's poetry in close relation to Hölderlin's theoretical work: Especially as far as the notion of 'Remembrance' has been given philosophical consideration, Henrich acknowledges that Hölderlin's work is at once poetic and philosophical (1986, p. 212). In the next chapter we will investigate further the significance of this concept in its relation to consciousness and the nature of becoming in dissolution. Remembrance or recollection is an important aspect of this process and indeed functions as the component that ensures continuity of consciousness.

representations, the succession must be both logical and teleological, for the poem, as has been established, is not without purpose. However, this does not limit the poem to being successive only in a linear way. On the contrary, for an adequate representation of the antagonistic conflict between opposing tendencies, the succession within the poetic structure is required to be circular, so that the beginning meets the end and a sense of unity is achieved. Indeed based on Hölderlin's observations that the conflict between opposing forces itself reflects circularity in which individuation, for example, reaches its extreme at one point and then returns back to a centre or finds itself in neutrality, closer in proximity to the whole. This kind of shuffling to and fro, from one extreme to another Hölderlin conveys in the following excerpt:

> [...] parts of the united must not always remain in the same closer and remoter relation, so that everything may encounter everything else and that all receive its full right and share of life, and that every part during its course equal the whole in completeness; conversely, that the whole during its course become equal to the parts in determinacy, that the former gain in content [and] the latter in inwardness [...]' (1988, p. 85).

The above excerpt is taken out of 'On the Difference of Poetic Modes' and refers to the internal structure that supports tragedy. Hölderlin's objective is to articulate the significance of relating every aspect of a poetic work to itself and to the whole through making it clear that the sequencing is derived from the alternation between unity and separation, which in this case are presented as processes.

That poetry is characteristically 'symbolic' assists Hölderlin in representing this very succession, which in the end is representative of the 'threefold antagonism'.

If 'successive' stands for an unfolding of determinants, then 'symbolism' is meant to capture another dimension; the whole of the dynamic process is symbolically represented, or the successive process itself symbolically stands for that which it represents, but is not that which it represents.

In a first approximation however, the meaning of symbolism can be translated as allegory or representation, in a literary sense. As such it is achieved through the use of poetic devices including metaphor, rhythm and meter, just to name a few, plus other tactical appropriations of the phonetic, semantic and syntactic aspects of language. Certainly Hölderlin does not shy away from using an extensive range of devices in his poetic constructions. Indeed a skilful use of poetic devices will, according to Hölderlin's calculations, give rise to a dimension of meaning that is not immediately represented by the actual words in the poem. While more will be said in the following chapter about the significance of such poetic devices in Hölderlin's poetry, a preliminary remark to be made here is that Hölderlin uses these devices, ultimately, to structure 'tonal' qualities into the poem, in order to achieve the philosophical aspiration underpinning the poetry. To this end, Hölderlin's 'tones' make a significant contribution to the representation of Hölderlin's adaptation of Fichte's internal structure detailed above. Hölderlin's theory of tones will be discussed in the next chapter.

A closer look at the 'transcendental instant' as metaphorically representing 'intellectual intuition'

Earlier in the chapter the concept 'intellectual intuition' was identified, in the Hölderlin view, as a pre-reflective state in which a differentiation between subject and object does not exist. Indeed, it is a state in which the concepts of subject and object are meaningless. For this reason it became clear that an 'awareness' of an intellectual intuition, that is to say, an intellectual intuition as such, is not accessible to the conscious mind even though the conscious mind is (in theory) a determination of this 'awareness'. It was argued that in Hölderlin's view, pure Being or 'being proper' cannot be objectified since objectification would destroy the very essence of what pure Being is. Hölderlin in fact makes a momentous move when he claims that subject and object are not identical with pure being and herewith severely reducing the scope of human understanding as far as knowledge of Being is concerned.

With the idea that 'intellectual intuition' is beyond the normal scope of human experience, Hölderlin's expectation is that 'intellectual intuition' is possible on an aesthetic level, meaning that it could possibly be represented metaphorically. Nevertheless, as will become clear, 'intellectual intuition' under these conditions is not entirely what we might expect it to be, considering the above preliminary understanding of its function and scope. Indeed, in his practical application of his thesis, Hölderlin reveals another dimension to what 'intellectual intuition' is, in terms of unity. This application is revealed in Hölderlin's notes on the poetic genre of tragedy

The function of Tragedy in its conveyance of an 'intellectual intuition'

In poetry, Hölderlin turns to the poetic genre of tragedy and claims that 'all works of this kind must be founded on an 'intellectual intuition' which cannot be any other one than that unity with everything living' (1988, p. 84). What this implies is that, just like the Absolute functions as a founding principle for the structures of consciousness, so too, an 'intellectual intuition' must function as the founding principle for tragedy. As such Hölderlin claims that 'tragedy is the metaphor of an intellectual intuition' (1988, p. 83). To make 'tragedy' the metaphor of 'intellectual intuition' is to indicate that 'intellectual intuition' might be something that is process like, where before we were under the impression that it must represent something like immediacy. Literary processes that give rise to a tragedy are complex and underpinned by a strategy that follows, in Hölderlin's case, a 'calculable law'. In other words, structures and processes support a tragedy. It is not simply a thing or moment or event that occurs in a vacuum. There are certain actions and successions that have to be set into a work for it to be recognisable as a tragedy. These actions and successions in turn are set into the work by further supporting mechanisms including language, rhythm, and tones. Tragedy is then a gathering of components that make it what it is. If we can thus learn anything at all from a tragedy about the Absolute, it would have to be that the Absolute (and this has already been recognised) is like the tragedy, an orchestrated symphony of opposing forces. However there is still a tension between this analogy and Hölderlin's conviction that the Absolute is not identical with the subject and object that it generates. He makes this point in 'Judgment and Being,' where he argues that 'Being must not be confused with identity. If I say; I am I, the subject

("I") and the object ("I") are not united in such a way that no separation could be performed without violating the essence of what is to be separated [...]' (1988, p. 37).

However, there is another point to take into consideration, which serves to moderate the tension just explored. While we speculate that absolute unity is inconceivable as far as conventional awareness is concerned, it is equally valid to speculate, as Hölderlin does that absolute separation and individuation is impossible (1988, p. 84). By this Hölderlin is acknowledging the interconnected and interdependent nature of all reality. In other words, there is nothing in the entire universe that exists in and of itself, in total isolation and unrelated to anything else. That this is the case manifests itself in either the form of a subconscious, yet nonetheless incessant longing, or as a conscious understanding of one's own vulnerability in the face of an infinite and eternal process. It is precisely this vulnerability - one's temporality in the face of a moving, dynamic infinite and eternal whole, the determined falling prey to indeterminacy, the 'becoming in dissolution' that makes tragedy what it is. The particular cannot remain what it is, but surrenders constantly to a perpetual state of becoming.

With regard to the claim that tragedy is the metaphor for 'intellectual intuition' Hölderlin points out that 'intellectual intuition', itself, is vulnerable to an inherent striving for individuation and separation. Unity cannot endure and the intellectual intuition is as prone to flux, as are the parts that it seeks to unite. This argument

will be taken further in the next chapter where Hölderlin's study of 'becoming in dissolution' together with the study of the reciprocal relationship between the *aorgic* and organic modes of being mentioned earlier are discussed. Related to this section however it is sufficient to refer back to the point made earlier regarding the 'in-between' space that exists – the link between subject and object – the space in which the 'all in all that always is' presents. Then it makes sense to claim that 'intellectual intuition' too is vulnerable, just like the parts it seeks to unite.

However, what needs to be considered at this point is the possibility of experiencing a metaphorical representation of 'intellectual intuition' insofar as it is a pre-reflective awareness of pure Being. What needs also to be considered, however, is that this experience, while in actuality unconscious, through poetic trickery, becomes accessible at a conscious level.

Structured into the poem is what Henrich identifies as a 'transcendental instant,' which this thesis argues functions metaphorically to represent 'intellectual intuition'. The 'transcendental instant' is described by Henrich as an 'interruption' (2003 p. 229). Henrich clarifies the nature of this interruption in the following excerpt, this time taken from *The Course of Remembrance*:

> The modulation of tendencies and their tones leads only to what is momentarily new. Thus to reveal the totality itself an interruption must occur in the modulation. In this interruption the entire sequence is brought together, surveyed, and at once compared with what is new, what can already be sensed and which announces

itself as the other of what has come to completion. This is the divine moment, the transcendental instant. The poet must know how to calculate it and produce it. (1997, p. 136)

While what is at issue in this particular excerpt will become more apparent in the next chapter, for the moment it is sufficient to work with the idea that the transcendental instant is the point at which a perfect balance is struck between antagonistic tendencies; it is but a fleeting instance but consists in the ultimate reconciliation of the underlying unity, in that no particular tendency dominates, but each is poised in such a manner that the propensity towards dominance is suspended. Included here ought to be the tendency that seeks to harmonise. However, evidence suggests that Hölderlin seeks to make this moment a conscious experience and therefore it seems more likely that the tendency that seeks to harmonise has momentarily succeeded.

For Hölderlin this moment is the 'transcendental instant' as Henrich identifies it, because it is the moment where the perfect balance exists in and of itself (Hölderlin 1988, p. 77). Consciousness at this point is balanced in such a manner that neither awareness of the self nor awareness of the non-self is present but an awareness of their unity is felt. This is the very same moment that Hölderlin laments in his *Hyperion* is the 'pinnacle of all thoughts and joys, the sacred mountain peak; the place of eternal rest' where 'all thoughts vanish before the image of the world in its eternal oneness' – the moment that Hölderlin acknowledges in this very same passage, that vanishes upon reflection (Hölderlin in Santner 1990, p. 4).

For Hölderlin the 'transcendental instant' is thus strictly speaking only possible in the moment in which the antagonism between all three tendencies is at rest; as soon as consciousness is active in reflection, this moment is over — it cannot endure, in and of itself. Imagination too, since it is an effective process, must be suspended in order for the 'transcendental instant' to occur. However, the imagination contributes to the process of cohesion and must in some manner also contribute to the grasping of the 'transcendental instant' so that an awareness of it is possible. If this was not the case, then Hölderlin's efforts have been in vain. In any case, what is crucial to this event is the poem itself — its structure — the 'transcendental instant' is dependent on structure.

But, what the 'transcendental instant' stands for can be easily misconstrued, as in the case where an understanding comes very close and yet tells us nothing about the transcendental. For example, Adorno (1992), in an article entitled 'Parataxis, On Hölderlin's Late Poetry', begins with what presents as an insightful understanding of how Hölderlin structures his poetry and then speaks about the truth of a poem and how it exists. Adorno's understanding is that truth is 'something that transcends [...] structure [...] not from the outside through a stated philosophical content, but by virtue of the configuration of moments that taken together signify more than the structure intends' (1992, pp. 112-113). Thus far, it looks as though Adorno is on the same track as we have just progressed, but he then makes an attempt to point to an instance in one of Hölderlin's poems, namely 'Celebration of Peace', where the configuration of language allows a truth to emerge that has not been directly spoken. But Adorno's perspective on

Hölderlin's revealing of 'truth', albeit Adorno understands the manner in which 'truth' emerges in terms of arising out of a deliberate configuration of poetic language, none-the-less is limited to a semantic appraisal and therefore is propositional, falling short of a revelatory experience of an ontological kind. From what has so far been discussed in terms of Hölderlin's relationship with Fichte, it would be a mistake to think that Hölderlin's poetry is limited to semantics.

While Adorno identifies a caesura in Hölderlin's poem, it is not one that can be construed as the 'transcendental instant' that Hölderlin so meticulously calculates into the poetic structure. But then again, Adorno is not reading Hölderlin's poetry as dealing with a specific philosophical conundrum – Adorno reads it predominantly as a literary work in which he identifies literary techniques and devices such as the caesura Hölderlin employs to make meaning or reveal 'truth', but 'truth' that is related to the reality of the subject matter rather than a mystical revelation such as a transcendental instant in which utter unity is experienced. Indeed Adorno's reading of Hölderlin's poetry is that 'the category of unity, like that of the fatherland, is not central' [to it] (1992, p. 119). On the contrary, Adorno claims that '[u]nity and selfhood are no more critical for Hölderlin's hymnic work, which is itself processual and historical, than is "what remains and endures"' (1992, p. 119).[35] In the light of our discussion so far with regard to Hölderlin's poetics based on Fichte's thesis and his own very specific philosophical aspirations as a result of it, Adorno's claims appear to be founded

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[35]   Adorno is here referring to Heidegger's thesis regarding Hölderlin's hymn *Andenken* (Remembrance) in which the last line 'what endures poet's provide' has formed the basis of Heidegger's thesis that the essence of poetry is the founding of Being.

on an incomplete understanding of the task that Hölderlin sets for himself. Adorno's reading of Hölderlin's critique of Fichte's 'I' as 'something without object and therefore trivial' (1992, p. 122) is further proof of an incomplete study of Hölderlin's poetics for nowhere does Hölderlin make this claim himself. While it is true that Hölderlin expressed perplexity and concern for an 'Absolute I' in that it contains all reality and therefore is inconceivable as has been demonstrated, Hölderlin nonetheless worked with Fichte's 'I' as a challenge and incorporated it structurally into his poetry as a means to deal with it. The purpose for considering Adorno's example is to offer a different perspective on the purpose of Hölderlin's poetry. For Adorno it remains in the literary aesthetic realm and he rejects, particularly Heidegger's claim that it has an ontological function.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to demonstrate through an exploration of Hölderlin's poetics based on his theoretical writings just how a specific philosophical issue is dealt with in poetry and how poetry is appropriated accordingly, to facilitate a special philosophical ascesis. The chapter has sought to provide a clear explanation of how poetry is appropriated to work within the boundaries and context of a symbiotic and uni-focused relation with philosophy. It is clear that Hölderlin's poetry is underpinned by an extensive understanding of a specific ontological issue arising, in this case, out of his study of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*. It is also clear that, after claiming that the issue of self-consciousness in the face of the Absolute cannot be dealt with in theory, Hölderlin makes it his specific mission to deal with it on an aesthetic level, namely in

poetry. Hölderlin's very uniquely contrived poetics has proved to be a strong example of how the exploration of a philosophical problem may be pursued beyond the usual philosophical context in which it is conceived.

An overview of Fichte's 'internal structure' that represents the necessary and reciprocal determined relationship between the Absolute, subject and object which Henrich insists forms the basis of Hölderlin's poetics has served as a model against which to measure Hölderlin's concerns and how he deals with them in theory and then in poetry. Henrich's argument that Hölderlin retains Fichte's internal structure has been substantiated by a demonstration of how Hölderlin's articulation of a 'threefold antagonism' does indeed accord with the model given as Fichte's 'internal structure'. It has been argued also that Fichte's form of this model in itself does not give rise to a moment where unity is experienced, but that the Fichtean model nonetheless provides Hölderlin with a structure through which he goes on to further explore the possibility of such an experience in poetry.

We have seen, in this chapter, that Hölderlin envisages poetry be composed in such a manner as to optimise its significance in relation to philosophical outcomes. Here the difference between poetry and philosophy with respect to methodology became obvious. Poetry, while it shares with philosophy an obligation to articulate, for instance, the 'intellectual intuition' about which it speculates, is not bound by the same strictures. Hölderlin's theory, for instance, allows an articulation of the 'threefold antagonism', as symbolically represented

in poetry, as opposed to the theoretical representation by which philosophy is normally bound. In terms of resolving the antagonism, Hölderlin's use of poetical devices such as the caesura, allows him to explore the possibility of revealing an 'intellectual intuition' but in an un-theoretical manner, indeed, without words. However, what is unspoken is the effect of the appropriated language within the poem and we have seen for Hölderlin to do this well requires skill and direction.

Hölderlin thus represents and reinterprets, innovatively, the problem of self-consciousness, vis-a-vis the Absolute, so that it is now intuitively processed and indeed, moves beyond a simply individual intuitive processing to an ascesis within which a profound integration of the self with reality is experienced. While Hölderlin's work can do no more than provide for an ephemeral experience of the integration it nonetheless expands, at least within the realm of conscious experience, the cognitive scope of an understanding of a 'self' in relation to and as an integrated aspect, of the 'whole'. By working closely with philosophy Hölderlin gives transparency to a problem that in its conventional philosophical setting remains otherwise opaque.

Chapter 3

BECOMING, DISSOLUTION and REMEMBRANCE – HÖLDERLIN'S TONAL THEORY

Yet, fellow poets, us it behoves to stand

Bare-headed beneath God's thunderstorms

To grasp the Father's rays no less, with our own two hands

And, wrapping in song the heavenly gift[36]

Speaking in reference to his beloved Diotima, Hölderlin's *Hyperion* exclaims the

communing power of music, 'Speech abashes. Music alone would serve; to

become all music and united with each other in one celestial melody!' (1990, p.

42). Although these sentiments are spoken through *Hyperion's* voice, they

nonetheless reflect Hölderlin's own poetics which embraces the use of tones and

musicality for the specific effect of unity. In the previous chapter, the key focus

was to clarify Hölderlin's concern with the antagonistic relationship that exists

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[36] Hölderlin 1990, p. 195, translated by M. Hamburger

between subject, object and the Absolute, inherent not only in Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* but also inherent in Hölderlin's view of the structures that underpin the human condition. Henrich, as previously mentioned, identifies this relationship as being central to Hölderlin's poetics and names it the 'threefold-antagonism', a structure that Hölderlin seeks to make integral to the poetic process and product, and thereby to resolve that very antagonism. The focus of this chapter is to inquire into the chief mechanism, namely Hölderlin's tonal theory that works towards a poetic interpretation of this 'threefold antagonism.' Hölderlin's tonal theory explores the complexities of tones – their variations and modulations - how to create them, how they interrelate and importantly, how to control their effects to achieve the overarching goal of unity within the structures of poetry.

Because of Hölderlin's fascination with tones and in particular the tonal quality of a work of art, some scholars will argue that Hölderlin's philosophical aspirations are secondary to his musical aspirations. Cyrus Hamlin for example argues that Hölderlin is essentially a composer and that Hölderlin's concern rests primarily with 'the question of tonality' in the same way as it does with rhythm and harmony (Cited in Fioretos pp. 300-301). While it is true, as the introductory quote reveals, Hölderlin does concern himself with the question of tonality in this manner, and indeed, his understanding is that the task of poetry is to 'wrap the heavenly gift up in song', we must not dismiss Hölderlin's philosophical mission that underpins his concern with the musicality of poetry. Hölderlin's key objective remains, to get beyond the fact of consciousness as outlined in the previous

chapter. However, what Hölderlin's tonal theory reflects is a particular view of the universe as inherently musical.

It is therefore quite correct to identify Hölderlin's tonal theory as supporting a musicality that extends to his poetry. James H. Donelan (2002), for example in his article 'Hölderlin's Poetic Self-Conscious'[37] makes a convincing argument that there is a connection between Hölderlin's tonal theory and music theory in general[38]. Donelan makes a particular reference to a theoretical essay written by Christian Gottlieb Körner. In 1795, Körner wrote an essay entitled 'On the Representation of Character in Music'[39] (*Uber Charakterdarstellung in der Musik*). Donelan argues that this article inspires Hölderlin to explore the theme of tones in his own brief theoretical text entitled *Wechsel Der Töne*[40]. Donelan demonstrates how this text presents as an attempt to 'emulate in poetry the structural characteristics of musical *Tonartwechsel*, that is, how tonal music defines its key center through the assertion of an opposing key' (2002, p. 137). Donelan explains this further in technical terms as a resolution of a 'dissonance into a consonance characteristic of a cadence' (2002, p. 137). Indeed Hölderlin

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[37]   *Philosophy and Literature* Volume 26, Number 1, April 2002, pp.125-142. See Also Donelan's recent publication entitled, *Poetry and the Romantic Musical Aesthetic*, published in 2008. The chapter entitled 'Hölderlin's Deutscher Gesang and the Music of Poetic Self-Consciousness' is of particular interest and relevant to this thesis.

[38]   For a more recent interpretation of Hölderlin's tonal theory and how it relates particularly to music, see, M. Spitzer's *Music as Philosophy*, Indiana University Press, 2006

[39]   A translation of this essay and commentary by Robert Riggs of Körner's article, can be found in *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 81 (Winter 1997) pp. 599-631.

[40]   This text is published in Hölderlin's collected works (1962) *StA* Vol. 4, pp. 248 - 250

does explore how discord between opposing tones resolve towards the effect of a harmonious unity in this particular text, which is discussed in more detail later.

In relation to Körner's essay, while the focus here is predominantly about the character of music, his discussion concerning tonal quality, movement of tones, the relationship between the individual notes and the tonic, are indeed relevant to Hölderlin's preoccupation with poetry as musical composition but also are useful to the overarching goal of unity. Körner also explores an aspect of composition he characterises as an underlying striving for a goal of unity when he argues that:

> 'In the relationship between the individual tones and the tonic, on which the unity of the melody is based, there appears to be striving for a goal, sometimes approaching, sometimes moving away, and finally at rest when it has been reached' (Körner, cited in Riggs, 1997, p. 27)

The argument Körner makes concerning the goal of coming to rest is particularly relevant to Hölderlin's poetics. Indeed it is precisely the goal that Hölderlin seeks to accomplish within the structures of poetry, the goal to which the sequencing of alternating tones is directed.

The significance of Hölderlin's tonal theory in terms of the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy discussed in Chapter 1, and indeed in terms of a philosophical ascesis, is that it makes functional the relationship between

Hölderlin's philosophical views of change and becoming, and so addresses the 'threefold antagonism' within the poetic process, into which they are integrated. Hölderlin's tonal theory describes a method that integrates the intricacies of the very problem it seeks to resolve. The method itself supports a refinement of philosophical and poetic processes that ultimately give rise to a 'transcendental instant' in which subjectivity is overcome, or suspended, in its integration with the whole.

The strategy of this chapter is to provide a context for Hölderlin's tonal theory. Core influences that inform Hölderlin's theory of how the interrelation between tones works are addressed. For example, Empedocles' account of change (with which Hölderlin was familiar) serves here as useful comparative model by which to frame Hölderlin's own theory. In particular, the metamorphosing of tones that is to occur within the structures of a poem is a feature of Hölderlin's tonal theory that reflects aspects of Empedocles' account of change. In effect, the situation that emerges in Hölderlin's essay 'Becoming in Dissolution,' is comparable to the situation emerging in Empedocles' *On Nature*, insofar as the inexhaustible interrelations that give rise to a world are concerned. In Empedocles' case, there are four immutable elements that give rise to such a world, whereas for Hölderlin, it is the 'all in all that always is', that gives rise to a world. While Hölderlin does not explain *how* the world gives rise to a world, 'the all in all always is' nonetheless provides for a continuous 'worlding' that is supported by an undercurrent of a becoming and dissolving of relations. However, a further and more relevant comparison at this point is between Empedocles account of

becoming and the world that is a poem including the undercurrent of the interrelating tonal variations that support it. The undercurrent of relations that become and dissolve is simulated in the artwork by a series of alternating tones which, like Empedocles' elements, are immutable in and of themselves, but in relation to other tones, also create further tonal effects. Hölderlin works specifically with three minor tones, namely passion, sentimentality and fantasy the sequencing of which give rise to further tones, namely heroic, idealistic or naive which give further rise to either the tragic, epic or lyrical mode (See Hölderlin's 'On the Difference of Poetic Modes' in Pfau 1988, pp83-87).

Secondly, what Hölderlin identifies as the aorgic/organic relation, is discussed as it serves as an alternate model that deals, nonetheless with essentially the same problem of becoming. Fundamentally this relationship characterises the reciprocal relationship that in Hölderlin's view exists between the unconditioned and the conditioned, but also and more specifically, it encapsulates the relationship between nature and 'man'. 'Man' or more specifically, the poet, is 'organic' in the sense that he has the capacity to reflect, 'organise' and transform nature, so that it too becomes 'organic'. At the same time, 'man' through this 'cultivating' process becomes in turn *aorgic* that is, infinite and universal (1988 p. 53). In this respect, Hölderlin's task closely resembles that of early German Romanticism. As we see in Chapter 6 in which the moral education of humankind is discussed, Novalis in particular is concerned with the transformation of nature – making nature a moral entity.

Thirdly, the unifying principle of remembrance is discussed. While it is true to argue that Hölderlin's tones in themselves are unifying, as Donelan does[41] it is remembrance that in the end provides the tonal constellation with its cohesiveness. Without remembrance at its core a composition cannot sustain cohesion, which would be detrimental to unity. Following this there will be a further discussion regarding the technical aspects of the alternating of tones as they work within the form of a poetic structure.

Foundational aspects of Hölderlin's Tonal Theory –

Hölderlin's tonal theory deals with the tension inherent in the 'threefold antagonism', a tension that characterises the relationship between the subjective 'I', namely consciousness, world and totality (See Figure 1, Chapter 2, p. 81) Hölderlin's tones are symbolic of each of the components that contribute to the dynamism that underpins the structure of consciousness that this tension represents. Hölderlin's tones represent the three tendencies inherent in the human condition. These are (1) the tendency to strive 'for pure self-hood and identity'; (2) the tendency to strive 'for significance and differentiation and (3) the tendency to strive 'for harmony' (1988, p. 74). As discussed previously, Hölderlin works with these three components with the understanding that the dominance of any one tendency is always at the expense of the other two, but that none of the tendencies can dominate indefinitely over the other two. There is thus a constant movement between tendencies; a movement Hölderlin seeks to emulate in poetry

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[41]   Donelan (2002),p. 136

through tonal modulation. Hölderlin's poetics further deal with the intricacies of how these tones are created, how to refine them and how their modulation and interrelating works to affect the ultimate goal of unity.

Hamlin[42] observes that Hölderlin's tonal theory 'seeks to define and control a dynamic process of thought and experience,' which is embodied in the 'language of the poem [...] through a sequence of tones which move through stages of development, reversal, retrospective and self reflection' (2000, Cited in Fioretos p. 293).

Hamlin's interpretation correctly identifies the core elements that belong to Hölderlin's theory of tones and also recognises that Hölderlin's tonal theory seeks to control a dynamic process of thought and experience. Importantly however, the dynamism that these elements create, as they constantly mutate, serves to emulate the dynamism of life itself and, in particular, the human condition. This is Hölderlin's ultimate concern.

With this concern, Hölderlin is careful to devise a mechanism that supports the representation of the 'threefold antagonism' within the structures of poetry. His mechanism embodies a matrix of tones that gives the poem its structure and

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[42]   Cyrus Hamlin explores Hölderlin's tonal theory in an essay entitled 'The Philosophy of Poetic Form, Hölderlin's theory of Poetry and the Classical German Elegy' (2000).

purpose. The technicalities associated with creating and refining tones provide the

moving force underpinning Hölderlin's theory of becoming, and it is through this

theoretical foundation that Hölderlin develops the technical structures that support

the possibility of transformation through engagement with the poetic product.

Hölderlin's philosophical position concerning the intricacies of the underlying

nature of reality instruct his tonal understanding, in particular the mechanism that

supports the matrix of tonal variations within an artwork, the final aim of which is

unity. The mechanism that supports the transformation from one tone to another,

and indeed the effects of these transformations, includes the unifying principle of

remembrance, a principle designed to maintain coherence and symmetry and to

facilitate a seamless progressive unfolding of a poem's content.

In what follows, three key philosophical underpinnings to Hölderlin's tonal theory

are discussed, namely the theory of becoming in dissolution, the theory of the

aorgic/organic relation and the concept of remembrance. The first two are

variations of the same theme while the third serves importantly as a unifying

principle.

(a) Becoming in Dissolution

Hölderlin develops his tonal theory in two key theoretical texts, namely 'On the

Operation of the Poetic Spirit' and more explicitly in 'On the Difference of Poetic

Modes'. The other source is the already mentioned brief text *'Wechsel der

Töne'*.[43] However, Hölderlin's text 'Becoming in Dissolution' provides also a

vital key to understanding how the interrelation of tones work, in particular tonal

alteration and the effect of movement between tones.

In respect to the theory outlined in 'Becoming in Dissolution,' Pfau argues that

the 'concepts of the title echo Fichte's terminology when he discusses the formal

character of the 'reciprocal determination between "I" and "non-I"' (1988, p.

172). Pfau then gives a comparable excerpt in Fichte's thesis in which this is

indicated:

> '[t]he form of reciprocity is no more than the mutual intrusion, as
> such, of the components upon each other. The matter is that in the
> components, which ensures that they can, and must, so intrude. –
> The characteristic form of reciprocity in the relation of efficacy is a
> coming-to-be through a passing away' (*Science of Knowledge*
> Fichte 1794-95 p. 165 cited in Pfau 1988, p. 172).

Considering terms like 'reciprocity' and the phrase 'coming-to-be through passing

away' it is clear that this passage does echo Hölderlin's theory of becoming for

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[43]   For an alternate analysis of Hölderlin's tonal theory see also, John Daverio's
article, *'The "Wechsel der Töne"* in Brahms's *"Schicksalslied"'* in the *Journal of the
American Musicological Society*, Vol. 46, No. 1, (Spring, 1993), pp. 84- 113. Daverio
discusses the possibility of a link between Hölderlin's tonal theory and Brahms'
composition *Schicksalslied* in which the composer has paid particular attention to achieve
a 'tonal unity' according to a progressive 'tonal plan'. For the purposes of this chapter
however, Daverio provides a useful exegesis of Hölderlin's tonal theory.

these ideas are also present in Hölderlin's 'Becoming in Dissolution' and are ideas that we have seen support Hölderlin's interpretation of Fichte's internal structure in terms of his own 'threefold antagonism'. However, Hölderlin's theory of tones also bears significant resemblance to aspects of Empedocles' account of change. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter, and indeed this thesis, to elaborate extensively on this connection, it is nonetheless pertinent to the overarching quest of elucidating Hölderlin's tonal theory.

In *On Nature,* for example, Empedocles, too, gives an account of the nature and process of becoming as it occurs in the physical world in terms of entities coming into being and then passing away, or dissolving back into their origin. A brief overview of Empedocles' account is as follows[44]: there are two aspects of the whole of nature that Empedocles considers, namely the one and the many and that the relationship between the two is reciprocal in that the many give rise to the one and the one gives rise to the many. The whole and the many exist in virtue of the continual intermixing of four fixed elements. These are water, air, earth and fire. These four elements are the basic stuff of the universe and of things. Each thing that comes into being does so according to a particular configuration of these four elements just as each being dissolves because of the reconfiguration of these elements. However, these elements do not come together nor do they dissolve of

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[44] The interpretation of Empedocles' account of change is extrapolated from the translations of by Arthur Fairbanks, (ed. & trans). *The First Philosophers of Greece* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1898), pp.157-234 and by W.K.C. Guthrie, who also gives an excellent exegesis of Empedocles' fragment in *A History of Greek Philosophy,* Chapter 3, Cambridge University Press, 1965, pp. 122-265.

their own accord; they are simultaneously unified by love and dissolved through strife. Love and strife are thus significant forces that underpin the interplay and exchange of the four elements. As far as becoming and dissolution is concerned, this is only possible by virtue of the constant alternation that occurs between love and strife. Neither love nor strife remains dominant indefinitely but each will give way to the other in a constant striving for dominance. When one is or becomes dominant, the other is or becomes recessive. In Hölderlin, this interplay is echoed in the following claim that '[r]econciliation is there, even in the midst of strife, and all things that are parted find one another again' (1990, p. 133), a theme that underpins also the aorgic/organic relation discussed later.

Empedocles also factors variance into the process - variance in the degree to which one is dominant over the other and variance in the degree to which one is recessive. That the process of becoming is cyclic in nature is due to boundaries inherent in the process itself. There is a point at which for example, dominance and recessiveness reach their respective peaks and then are necessarily attracted to strive towards their respective counterpoints. This idea is explored also in Hölderlin's theory of the aorgic/organic relation.

While the evidence is not substantial enough to argue that Hölderlin shares with Empedocles precisely the idea that the universe is made up of four immutable elements that mix and separate to give rise to the becoming or to the dissolution of a world, there is no doubt that the two accounts of becoming (or change) bear

some resemblance. Hölderlin's exploration of the movement that coming in and out of being represents, which in Hölderlin's theoretical texts is the movement that occurs reciprocally between potentiality and reality, describes a similar movement that supports the reciprocal relationship between the one and the many. The 'one' for Hölderlin is the eternal and infinite 'world of all worlds, the all in all which always is' (1990, p. 96). The many are the manifold of worlds (including entities) that arise each moment out of the decline and dissolution of worlds. A world is simply a configuration of relations and the transition from one form of world to another or from one moment to another is given motility through a re-configuration of relations.

An example of a world that Hölderlin explores from the outset in the theoretical text 'Becoming in Dissolution' is the reciprocal relationship between 'fatherland, nature and man' (1988, p. 96):

> The declining fatherland, nature and man, insofar as they bear a particular relation of reciprocity, insofar as they constitute a special world [...] and a union of things and insofar as they dissolve, so that from the world and from the remaining ancestry and forces of nature, which are the other real principle, there emerge a new yet also particular reciprocal relation just as that decline emerged from a pure yet particular world (1988, p. 96)

What stands revealed in this excerpt is the perpetual nature of the exchange between relational components that precipitate transition. The particular constellation in question - man, fatherland and nature - Hölderlin explores for the relational aspects that constitute change in which a world either recedes or

emerges. For example, the 'decline or transition of the fatherland' (1988, p. 96), describes a transitional effect that occurs through continual relational exchanges that take place from moment to moment, but always in the present. Hölderlin makes the point also, later in the same text, that 'from nothing there follows nothing' (1988, p. 96) which intimates that, because there is something, namely reality, there has always been something. However, reality itself is subject to perpetual transformation, so while there is always reality, it is a reality that is constantly changing.

While Hölderlin does not speak explicitly about the mixing and separating of immutable elements such as air, water, earth and fire as does Empedocles, although these concepts do come up in his poetry, he works with this reality which he refers to as a 'living existence' or an 'all in all that always is' mentioned above (1988, p. 96). For Hölderlin this 'all in all that always is', is the reference point – the 'origin' (in a Heideggerian sense) of the world[45]. Hölderlin does not go as far as naming what origin consists of except to say that it is infinite and eternal. Referring back to the structure of consciousness discussed in the previous chapter, the Absolute represents the infinite and eternal and is the 'source' or origin of the subject/object relation. We know from previous discussions that what is eternal and infinite is not, according to Hölderlin, identical with the subject/object relation – in which case neither is it identical with 'world' in the context just described.

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[45]   Like Heidegger, Hölderlin's understanding of origin is that it is other than a first principle. It is a-historical because it is always present albeit obscured by world.

The 'all in all that always is,' relates to the structures that support and constitute the transition from receding to emerging in the following way: the source, or the 'all in all that always is,' is posited to exist, argues Hölderlin in 'all time – or in the decline, the instant, or more genetically, in the becoming of the instant and in the beginning of time and world' (1988, p. 96). In other words, the 'all in all that always is' rests fundamentally in the 'in-between' that links one moment to the next, the instant in which the receding moment and the ensuing moment meet in the cross-over in which the change occurs. This transitional moment is but an instant in which actuality dissolves into potentiality and potentiality in turn dissolves into actuality, but for Hölderlin in this instant, which is at once a becoming and a decline, the 'all in all which always is' [the Absolute] presents itself (1988, p. 96). This is because the 'all in all which always is' is itself undetermined and while sourcing the particularity of the emerging world – it is not identical with that world. This is arguably the same view that Hölderlin holds concerning the difference between the Absolute and the subject/object relation at issue in Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*.

Related to this is Hölderlin's proposition that the 'possibility of all relations is predominant in the transition' (1988, p. 96). What this means in theory is that anything is possible and that the principle of causation is not necessarily the determining factor that makes it possible for a world to arise. This theme will be revisited in Chapter 7, when discussing Novalis's 'Magical Idealism'. Novalis too, takes thinking to a point where causality loses its exclusive power over the emerging reality.

The significance of Hölderlin's concern with a theory of becoming is, however, its relation to his tonal theory. The special use of tones, as previously argued, is critical to Hölderlin in the formation of a work of art that is ultimately a totality and within which transformation occurs.

(b) The aorgic/organic relation as a conceptual framework underpinning the tonal theory

In Hölderlin's theoretical texts, the aorgic/organic factor presents as a reciprocally determined cyclic movement between humankind and nature and serves in this context as a model for the cycle of becoming that also informs Hölderlin's tonal theory. However Hölderlin's discussion around this particular model of becoming is complex[46] and not fully developed but it is nonetheless important that an attempt at an interpretation of this model is made so that a more complete understanding of Hölderlin's theory of becoming and hence his tonal theory is achieved.

From Hölderlin's texts at least this much is clear, namely that the terms 'aorgic' and 'organic' describe two distinct modes of being. When Hölderlin describes something as aorgic he is referring to nature that is characteristically identified as being un-organised insofar as it is unlimited and indeterminate. As such, nature is

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[46]   Indeed, some will argue, as Arnaud Villani does in an essay entitled 'Figures of Duality', that Hölderlin's texts in which the aorgic/organic factor is discussed, 'are radically unintelligible in an asymbolic logic in which neither Greek logic, nor an Empedocles as the living emblem of contradiction experienced at its most intense, are conceivable' (Villani cited in *The Solid Letter*, 1999, p. 195).

cast as aorgic as opposed to 'organic'. 'Man' on the other hand is 'organic'. The term 'organic' represents for Hölderlin almost the opposite of what we understand by this concept today. Rather than it meaning untreated or unprocessed, it represents that which has been treated with the organising and reflecting principle of the spirit and of art (as explained by Pfau 1988, p. 168). 'Man' as poet is in a position to apply this principle (of which more is said in the following chapter) to nature and in so doing, transforms it, or more simply put, 'organises' it to become 'organic'.

This idea is developed in the essay 'The Ground for Empedocles' where Hölderlin makes an important distinction between nature and art. He argues that 'Art is the blossom, the perfection of nature' and that 'nature only becomes divine in conjunction with the diverse and harmonious art; when everything is entirely what it can be' (1988, p. 53). Art is thus the medium through which perfection is possible. Without art, nature is incomplete or falls short rather of its own perfection.

Hölderlin also tells us that 'the more organic, artistic man is the blossom of nature' while the 'aorgic nature, when it is sensed purely, by the purely organised, purely and uniquely formed man, affords him the feeling of perfection' (1988, p. 53). From this we can extrapolate that 'man' is the artist and in virtue of this, 'man' is 'the blossom of nature', meaning that nature is perfected in 'man' but through the medium of art of which he himself is part (see Chapter 4 for a detailed

discussion on the function of the poet). However, just like a blossom belongs to a tree and is indeed dependent on that tree for its existence, so too 'man' belongs to and is dependent (for 'his' perfection) on nature. But just like the blossom that eventually gives over to become a tree, so too 'man' must surrender himself and return to nature. For this reason, Hölderlin goes on to argue that while perfection is indeed the goal or destiny of nature, and therefore 'man', it is not something that is as such 'for knowledge' (1988, p. 53). 'If it is to be known' argues Hölderlin,

> 'then it must present itself by separating itself in the excess of inwardness where the opposed principles interchange so that the organic, which surrendered itself too much to nature, and which forgot its essence and consciousness, transcends into the extreme of autonomous activity and art and reflection, whereas nature, at least in its effects on reflective man, transcends into the extreme of the aorgic, the incomprehensible, the non-sensuous, unlimited, until the progression of the opposed reciprocal effects the two originally united meet again as in the beginning, only that nature has become more organic through the forming cultivating man, through form giving drives and forces as such, whereas man has become more aorgic, universal infinite' (1988, p 53)).

With this, Hölderlin gives an impression of a cyclic movement that constitutes the attraction and resistance between the two opposing forces, the aorgic and organic. The cyclic nature of this movement is controlled by the extreme limits of these opposing forces so that a point at which the two are at extreme ends is the same point at which they are united 'as in the beginning.' The movement however does not allow for any particular point to hold sway and therefore 'knowledge' of perfection is not possible as such since it occurs only at the point at which the

aorgic and organic are unified in a total eclipse, so to speak. The perfection is captured in this eclipse which belongs to the 'in-between' instant, discussed earlier, in which the 'all in all that always is' presences. Hölderlin describes this moment characteristically as the 'birth of the highest hostility,' which is at the same time the place where the 'highest reconciliation' is possible (1988, p. 54).

That this is so can only be in virtue of the fact that we are dealing with a cyclic movement, where the beginning and end are ultimately indistinguishable. If we were to demonstrate this by way of a diagram then we would imagine a circle where at one point two arrows join at their base but point in opposite directions. If we firstly imagine that the arrow on the left side, is the aorgic and the arrow on the right is the organic then if we also imagine a movement in which the arrows move away from the point at which they start, in opposing directions, away from each other but around the circumference of a circle, it would be the case then that the two arrows would meet to cross over at the 180-degree mark and again at the 360-degree mark. This last cross over point will be the point at which they are united 'as in the beginning'. At the 360 degree mark, the aorgic and the organic have come full circle, so to speak and it is at this point where the aorgic has gained the highest individuality while the organic has gained the highest level of universality which Hölderlin explains is the 'product of the highest struggle' (1988, p. 54). However, also at this point the aorgic has become the organic while the organic has become the aorgic and the cycle must start again, each having gained what the other has lost – each having 'become' through dissolution.

Admittedly, this exegesis is only a rudimentary interpretation of Hölderlin's thesis but it nonetheless serves the purpose of highlighting the cyclic nature of the relationship and in particular, the interplay between the aorgic and organic modes of being. In relation to Hölderlin's tonal theory, a similar cyclical interplay between tonal variations, and the whole, is at issue. The tonal variations strive towards a peak, at which point they must surrender towards transformation into becoming what is their opposite. In *Wechsel Der Töne*, Hölderlin makes this quite clear as follows:

> Does the ideal catastrophe not resolve itself into the heroic in that the natural tonic key becomes an opposite? Does the natural catastrophe not resolve itself into the ideal in that the heroic tonic key becomes an opposite? Does the heroic catastrophe not resolve itself into the natural in that the ideal tonic key becomes an opposite?[47]

Ultimately Hölderlin's aim is to capture a symbolic, yet cognitive experience of 'intellectual intuition', as discussed in the previous chapter. Now – with the aorgic/organic factor in mind we can expand on this by saying that the 'intellectual intuition' is similar if not identical with the 'in-between', the transitional point (however undetectable to the conscious mind) that links one moment to the next, which is the same place in which the aorgic and the organic eclipse. This instant cannot be objectified and therefore suffers the same fate as 'intellectual intuition', in that it cannot be 'known' – hence the aim is for a

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[47] Translated from the German by Donelan (2002). 'Löst sich nicht die idealische Katastrophe, dadurch, daß der natürliche Anfangston zum Gegensatze wird, ins heroische auf? Löst sich nicht die natürliche Katastrophe, dadurch, daß der heroische Anfangston zum Gegensatze wird, ins idealische auf? Löst sich nicht die heroische Katastrophe, dadurch, daß der idealische Anfangston zum Gegensatze wird, ins natürliche auf?' (*StA* IV, 1, 238) Cited in Donelan (2002), p. 135

metaphorical rendition of an 'intellectual intuition', which at least provides the conscious mind with an experience of the unity for which it longs.

(c) The unifying principle - Remembrance

While to some extent, love has been identified as a unifying principle, particularly in Empedocles' theory of change, and as we will see later, also in Schlegel's formula, in Hölderlin there is an additional principle, which shares in this function. This is 'remembrance', which features as an integral aspect of the process of becoming in dissolution, and by virtue of this, informs Hölderlin's tonal theory.

In providing an initial interpretation of remembrance, a turn to Heidegger, who claims a particular affinity with Hölderlin on this point, would seem appropriate.

In *Elucidations of Holderlin's Poetry*, Heidegger makes the following claim: that 'poetry is remembrance' and that 'remembrance is founding' (2000, p. 172). These claims offer some genuine insight into the function of remembrance relevant to the current context. However Heidegger also makes claims such as: '*Remembrance* is a poetic abiding in the essence of what is fitting to poetic activity, which, in the secure destiny of Germany's future history, festively shows the ground of its origin' (2000, p. 171). This type of claim focuses on historical or teleological outcomes for a particular nation, and therefore ignores Hölderlin's

poetic intentions, which, as has been demonstrated, are clearly entwined with his philosophical aspirations. However, because Heidegger has given the concept of remembrance considerable attention, it is useful to acknowledge his particular understanding, vis-à-vis Hölderlin's use of this idea and to extract from Heidegger's interpretation some of the nuances that do help clarify what Hölderlin's intentions are for the use of this concept.

Heidegger's interpretation of remembrance is influenced by his interpretation of Hölderlin's hymn by the same name (*Andenken*). In particular the last line of the hymn which reads, 'what remains is founded by poets', has come to serve, at least in the Heideggerian interpretation, as the guiding principle underpinning the nature and function of remembrance. What is also significant about this line is that it provides us at once with a closure to the hymn and with a philosophical and vocational statement in respect to the function of the poet. Heidegger's interpretation of this line informs his thesis that the essence and function of poetry is the 'founding of truth' a claim he makes earlier in an essay 'On the Origin of Art' (1992, p. 199). Heidegger's concept of truth and his concept of Being are (or become over the course of his thinking) indistinguishable. Indeed poetry in the Heideggerian context is clearly a founding activity, the object of which is Being. Founding and remembrance belong together to perform the same function. Indeed, the two functions are practically identical and in relation to his quest for Being, remembrance, or better said 'original remembrance' (2000, p. 265) is a decisive recollecting that brings forth, or reveals truth of Being, or Being, itself. That this is the case relates back to Heidegger's initial interpretation of Being to mean truth,

or more correctly, *Alethea*, a concept Heidegger adopts from the ancient Greek, translated roughly to mean disclosure or un-concealment. Being however is undisclosed since it is veiled in obscurity by the historical development of philosophy since Plato, in particular metaphysical inquiry. It is thus the task of poetry, the essence of which is remembrance, to recollect or more esoterically to summons Being and thereby 'found' it. This interpretation fits quite well with Hölderlin's own understanding regarding the task of poetry. For example in 'Becoming in Dissolution' Hölderlin points to a moment where at a certain point in the sequential unfolding of the cycle of change, there 'emerges by way of recollection [...] a complete sentiment of existence [*Lebensgefühl*]'[48] (1988, p. 98). What Hölderlin could be referring to, is the 'transcendental instant' discussed in the previous chapter, in which an experience of pure being becomes accessible to the conscious mind. Recollection, in this example, thus functions in a similar way as remembrance does in Heidegger's quest for Being.[49]

Apart from Heidegger's inquiry into Being, founding is a means by which to establish or ground something while remembrance is about recollecting. In relation to Heidegger's quest for Being, it is Being that is, through the act of remembrance, simultaneously recollected and founded. Remembrance is thus a

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[48]   Pfau, in his translation of Hölderlin's text, has translated *Lebensgefühl* as 'sentiment of existence'. His argument is that Hölderlin's attempt to develop the concept of *Lebensgefühl* for his own purposes resembles Rousseau's argument in 'Fifth Rèverie' (1988, p. 173).

[49]   This concept is also discussed in the next chapter in relation to the poet's task, which is to facilitate remembrance so that consistency and coherence in a poem is ensured.

combination of two particular processes not unlike the augmented method that results from the unification of poetry and philosophy as discussed in Chapter 1. Here it was established that the objective was to unite philosophy as grounding activity with poetry to not only form a totality but to perform in combination, as a totality.

Hölderlin develops the concept of remembrance in his study of the process of becoming in dissolution. Here it is endowed with a technical function that Heidegger overlooks. The key objective in 'Becoming in Dissolution' is to gain insight into the transitional movement that supports the structures of change, which in turn supports the unity of existence. Hölderlin highlights the exactitude of the moment in which the decline of one moment and the incline of the next are at their most intimate in their reciprocally determined relationship. Hölderlin works with this study on a larger scale in poetry where the intention is to capture an overall transition from one moment to the next in the form of a progressive unfolding of events, thoughts and impressions occurring over a period. Poetic devices that Hölderlin works with are designed to make the overall transition occur seamlessly, yet, noticeably, and in such a way that an overall impression of unity is made available to experience. On an even larger scale Hölderlin explores the cycle of becoming in relation to the emergence of a particular world, for example, including the special determinations that make and dissolve such a world. As discussed earlier, Hölderlin provides the example of the reciprocal relationship between fatherland, nature and man in his essay 'Becoming in Dissolution'. This is a rather important example Hölderlin uses to demonstrate the

mechanics of the underpinning structures that support change that, at the same time, enable continuity and coherence through recollection. Fatherland in this relationship represents a particular 'ancestry' and features as an underlying principle, in conjunction with the 'forces of nature' and the existing (and therefore dissolving) world, which is the totality of the reciprocal determination of fatherland, nature and man. Ancestry presents as residual, even in the decline or transition, and is that which prevails in the dissolution of world.

It is out of these structures that the function of remembrance arises and, when compared to Heidegger's interpretation outlined above, this function is relatively pragmatic. Although, while it is easy to miss, the text reveals a subtle hint that remembrance also has a higher function. Where the concept is discussed is in the following excerpts: '[...] the *possible* which enters into *reality* as that *reality itself dissolves*, is operative and effects the sense of dissolution as well as the remembrance of that which has been dissolved' (1988, p. 97). A little further, Hölderlin argues that, '[i]n the perspective of ideal recollection, then, dissolution as a necessity becomes as such the ideal object of the newly developed life, a glance back on the path that had to be taken' and that 'from the beginning of the dissolved and thus, as explanation and union of the gap and the contrast occurring between present and past, there can occur the recollection of dissolution' (1988, p. 97). If we take recollection and remembrance to mean the same thing, we can see that firstly a connection is made between that which has been dissolved and the remembrance or recollection of that which is dissolved which occurs in the newly developed life. This indicates that remembrance is about retaining in some form,

that which must dissolve to allow the new reality to emerge. Without remembrance for example, one moment will simply pass into another and nothing of that previous moment remains to sustain the next. Remembrance thus provides continuity and coherence, which Hölderlin insists is as important in the artwork as it is in life and is especially needed to fulfil the function (in poetry) that gathers the segments together into a coherent whole. Secondly Hölderlin makes a distinction between the remembrance of the 'dissolved' and of 'dissolution' itself. It is in the making of this distinction that remembrance is given a higher function. If indeed remembrance functions to re-collect dissolution itself, and not merely that which is dissolved, then we have a provision that allows for a glimpse into the interstice of two consecutive moments.

It is appropriate at this point to look at Henrich's interpretation of the concept of remembrance.

In *The Course of Remembrance*, Henrich deals with the concept of remembrance extensively, also like Heidegger, in particular relation to Hölderlin's poem entitled 'Remembrance' (*Andenken*). Although, unlike Heidegger, Henrich interprets remembrance to be a structured course in which disclosure and recollection are reciprocally determined in the unfolding course of the artwork. In this manner, that which is recalled is brought into the present and not kept at a distance. The course of remembrance is however not just about recollecting that which is past but is equally about 'recollecting' the future. The point at which the reciprocally

determined unfolding of disclosure and remembrance occurs can be described as an event in which a mutual attraction occurs between the future and the past so that they are gathered into the present (Henrich 1986 p. 216). We can see that Henrich's interpretation pertains to the artwork and does not incorporate an ontological function as such, or, not at least in the manner in which Heidegger has appropriated remembrance to function ontologically in the recovery of Being.

It appears however that Hölderlin has a twofold function in mind validating, to a degree, both Heidegger's and Henrich's theories. Keeping in mind Hölderlin's mission, namely to deal with the underlying structures that support consciousness, we can see how Heidegger's interpretation is thus valid.

The intricacies of the tonal undercurrent supporting the goal for unity

In this section, the aim is to expose the intricacies of the tonal undercurrent supporting the goal of unity within poetic structures. Using the term 'undercurrent' to describe the tonal activity is to emphasise the almost illusory nature of tonal effects. Each tone that becomes manifest within a poem is supported by tonal variations other than the tone that resounds.

Hölderlin's theoretical text 'On the Difference of Poetic Modes' is essentially about the distinction, but also the relationship between the various tones that permeate a poem. Hölderlin's key objective in this text is to clarify the intricacies

of his tonal theory, which includes an articulation of how tones work in relation to other tones and importantly how they work within the structure of the poem. Tones are set into an artwork through the semantic quality of the text, and through a particular appropriation of language which involves careful structuring of particular words and phrases. Hölderlin argues that this must be done according to a 'lawful calculation' (1988, p. 101) or 'poetic logic' (1988, p. 109).[50] The structuring incorporates phonetic, syntactical and semantic variations so that not only do the meanings of words contribute to the setting of the tone, but the 'sound' and the rhythm, created phonetically and syntactically respectively, also contribute significantly to the setting tones. In addition, symbolism too, is an important structural feature in Hölderlin's work that adds a hidden layer of meaning to the overall significance of the work.

Through the careful combining of all these components, which would require, we will assume, a particular understanding of their value in relation to each other, both minor and basic tones become manifest within the artwork. While from Hölderlin's writings, the precise nature of how this works is not helpfully clear, the intention appears to be this: A poem is (or ought to be, rather) a unified whole, one within which the struggle of the 'threefold antagonism' is inherent. The individual minor tones arise and dissolve in and out of each other, but within a framework designed to uphold their basic unity. From Hölderlin's notes, we can

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[50] For an interesting argument concerning that calculative dimension in Hölderlin's poetry see Jean-Luc Nancy's 'The Calculation of the Poet', an essay published in *The Solid Letter*. Nancy deals with the nature of the calculable law, which allows for no approximation. Hölderlin calculates into the poem that which is incalculable – ironically, for this to occur, the process must be exact.

see for example that passion, as a minor tone dissolves into fantasy, also a minor

tone. Fantasy in turn dissolves into sentiment, which is a minor tone and

sentiment dissolves once more into passion. However, this sequencing operates

also at another level. For instance, if the language itself is sentimental, the effect

is passion. If the language is predominantly passionate, then the effect is

fantastical. Therefore, the appropriation of language is such that each phase of a

poem, namely the sentimental dissolving into the passionate, the passionate

dissolving into the fantastical, and the fantastical dissolving into the sentimental

once more, are structured in such a way as to give rise to a corresponding effect.

Cyrus Hamlin in an essay entitled 'The Philosophy of Poetic Form...' explains it

thus:

> In a musical composition the interrelationship of tones
> constitutes a dynamic system of sound which is essentially self-
> referential and autonomous. In the case of a poem by Hölderlin,
> by contrast, the dynamics of modulating tones serve the
> cognitive and reflective purposes of the language as figurative,
> or metaphoric, form, so that the essential referent of the poem,
> regardless of its particular content or subject matter, is always
> the movement of thought which constitutes it and which it
> symbolises or represents. In this way the poem, conceived by
> Hölderlin to be a modulation of tones through a dialectical
> structure of metaphor (*die durchgehende Metapher*, to use the
> phrase from Hölderlin's marginal note about the structure of Der
> Rhein (SA 2; 2: 730), constitutes a system of verbal signs, which
> signifies through a complex sequence of tension and conflict, as
> progress and regress (again borrowing Hölderlin's own terms),

the movement of poetic thought itself. (Cited in *The Solid Letter*, Fioretos (ed) p. 301)[51]

From a previous account of Hamlin's thinking, we know that he understands Hölderlin's work in terms of musical composition and that he considers Hölderlin himself to be, in a musical sense, a composer. However, in this instance Hamlin wants to emphasise that there is nonetheless a distinction between a musical composition and a poem when it comes to the function of tones. In the above excerpt, Hamlin argues that the distinction revolves primarily around the communicability of language and how tones are set into the work to support or facilitate this communicability. To this end, Hamlin argues that tones in a musical composition function as an interrelated unity only to serve the structure in which they are contained and in doing so give rise to a 'dynamic system of sound'. As such a musical composition is 'self-referential and autonomous', meaning that the organised tones are the structure that constitute the musical composition. Each tone in fact is self-referential in terms of the sound or key that it is, in virtue of itself. Tones structured into the poem, on the other hand, are not self-referential but serve the process, or movement of reflective thinking. A tone is achieved through 'verbal signs', namely language. The interrelationship of tones in a poem is thus conveyed through a dialectical sequencing supporting the struggle, the becoming and dissolution between tones that this interrelationship represents.

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[51]   Cyrus Hamlin's key objective in this essay is to demonstrate how Hölderlin's tonal theory is set into the elegy entitled 'Meno's Lamentation for Diotma'.

The distinction that Hamlin makes is plausible to a degree; however even in a musical composition, tones may be set into the work to function in a similar manner to the tones Hölderlin seeks to incorporate into the poem. In the Hölderlin context, tones are complex in their make-up of metaphor and other poetic devices and work to convey a mood, of which there can be a variety within the structure of one poem. A musical composition, in the same way, lends itself to this kind of setting of tones. This is particularly the case in classical compositions where a piece follows a sequencing of tonal qualities and variations that move through episodes from passion and excitement to melancholic meandering. In this case, tones are not merely self-referential but serve to support a movement, also, one could argue, of poetic thought.

This aside, Hölderlin's poetic calculations that support the implementation of tones are based on his understanding of how poetry is categorised into three kinds of poetic modes. These are the lyric, epic and the tragic. Each of these categories is identified as such according to the 'basic tone' (or mood) each represents. For the lyric, the basic tone is naïve; for the epic poem, the basic tone is heroic and for the tragic, the basic tone is idealistic. Naïve, heroic and idealistic are in turn created through the strategic interplay of the *minor* tones - passion, sentiment and fantasy. Curiously, Hölderlin limits the minor tones to these three values which, in themselves, like Empedocles' elements, give rise to an effect when configured and re-configured in relation to each other and in relation to the basic mode.

Technically speaking the tonal movement is contained within the structure of the poem, although this does not limit its effects. The effect extends beyond the poem and is enduring. The poetic structure itself however represents a unity and complete unto itself. For Hölderlin unity is only possible by virtue of there being components that can be united. Similarly, dissolution is only possible in virtue of unity – for 'how could dissolution be felt without union [?]' asks Hölderlin in his essay 'Becoming in Dissolution' (1988, p. 96). The tones that Hölderlin seeks to weave into the poetic structure are thus subject to both unity and to dissolution. Unity however holds sway, for whatever comes into being is newly united.

In respect to the tonal movement, Hölderlin aims for a poem to express a basic tone; this is the tone that sets the mood for the poem, which can be, as mentioned, naïve, heroic or ideal. The intricacies of the movement that belong to Empedocles' cycle of becoming come into play in the manner in which these tones are set into the artwork. The basic tone, for example, arises from the underlying movement of minor tones that support it. The movement of the minor tones consists in their becoming and dissolving which, according to Hölderlin's calculations, creates an impression of a major (or basic) overtone. It is precisely in the nature of the becoming and dissolution of these tones where a clear correlation can be made between Hölderlin and Empedocles.

Included in 'On the Difference of Poetic Modes' (1988) is an example of how tones are arranged to give rise to a certain effect. Indeed Hölderlin attempts to

devise templates, so to speak, to guide the formation of poetic structures. He puts together a sequential arrangement that is to function as a mode by which a particular tone is set into an artwork. Focusing on tragedy, for example, Hölderlin has in mind the following sequence. Firstly, he establishes that the basic tone is to be idealistic. The idealistic tone itself is brought about 'by means of passion' (1988, p. 87). Hölderlin then lists under the heading of 'language' from left to right, a series of minor tones as follows:

'language

Fantasy Sentiment Passion Fantasy

Sentiment Passion Fantasy

pref. by means of passion.

Effect

Sentiment Passion Fantasy Sentiment

Passion Fantasy Sentiment'

There are further sequences represented in Hölderlin's text but it is unclear from Hölderlin's notes just how they follow on from the above. However, what the sequencing of the above minor tones reveals about Hölderlin's theory of poetry is that the movement represented, in its dialectical unfolding, is cyclic.

Hölderlin offers an explanation in the theoretical component in the same text, where he explains how this cyclic nature of the sequential movement in a poem works in terms of the relationship that exists between the whole and its parts. If the poem is the whole then the minor tones are its parts, united, nonetheless, but moving harmoniously within the whole – each particular aspect of the poem follows a path in which every other aspect of the whole is encountered. Hölderlin speaks in terms of tangibility and fusion when it comes to the interrelationship between the parts and the whole (1988, p. 85). There are specific points at which the tangibility of the whole is most profound, points at which the fusion of the parts is strongest. The strength of this tangibility is however immediately challenged by the ensuing separation of the parts. The highest unity is then also the most vulnerable in that it must give over once again to separation to the point where, as Hölderlin describes it, 'the parts are in their most extreme tension, where they resist each other most strongly' (1988, p. 86). From this point, there is a return to the centre – a sequential folding into itself, where, argues Hölderlin, '[...] these parts at this place in the whole – cancel one another and a new unity originates' (1988, p. 86).

The theory advanced by Hölderlin is clearly suggestive of limits and boundaries insofar as the value of a tone reaches its peak and then recedes into dissolution, the act that gives way to the emerging new tonal value. For example, the movement of fantasy in the sequence outlined previously finds its transformation in sentiment; sentiment, in turn, finds its transformation in passion, while passion finds its transformation in fantasy.

Relating this to Empedocles' account of change, there are clear parallels to be drawn between the account of the interrelationship of tones within a poem, (as just outlined) and Empedocles' cycle of change. Empedocles' *Fragment 17* for example, demonstrates the relationship that exists between the one and many and is comparable to Hölderlin's theory of the relationship between the whole and its parts as described above. Empedocles discusses the movement that exists between the many coming together in love to be one and then growing apart again through strife. This aspect too, Hölderlin explores in his theory when he discusses the growing apart in terms of 'extreme tension', conflict and resistance (1988, p. 86). A second parallel that can be drawn is that Empedocles' cycle of change and Hölderlin's tonal theory concern the limits and boundaries of the manifold. As far as nature is concerned, inherent boundaries impose a peak limit on a particular, after which it must surrender to a decline. In a similar way, the poem imposes peak limits on the individual tones. The sequencing of the three minor tones (as set out in the example above) provides the poem with such structural limitation. However, just as existence is eternal and infinite in terms of Empedocles' understanding of the inexhaustibility of combinations of relations that are possible between the four immutable elements, so too, in poetry, the relations between the respective minor tones is inexhaustible. In which case, the possibilities of creating a world within the structures of poetry are endless (1988, p. 96).

Conclusion

The significance of this chapter in terms of the overall thesis, namely the relationship between poetry and philosophical ascesis is Hölderlin's attempt to

integrate philosophical inquiry into a poetic structure whereby the means, namely the tonal configuring and the end, namely the configured unity, are the same. In other words, the method that is Hölderlin's theory of tones constitutes already a totality that in the end supports and sustains that very same totality. This is a crucial point that sits at the heart of the kind of philosophical ascesis this thesis seeks to define, that in the end, the method and the outcome are united in an integrated and reciprocal relation. Moreover, not only is Hölderlin's poetics informed by philosophical considerations, such as the cycle of becoming and the structures of consciousness, but they are incorporated into a method that reflects at the same time the symbiotic and uni-focused integration of poetry and philosophy, the effect of which is a philosophical ascesis. While it has not been possible to provide an extended analysis of Hölderlin's formula, simply because Hölderlin's notes are incomplete and difficult to decipher, it has been possible to demonstrate, to an extent, what Hölderlin has in mind and for the purpose of this thesis, this is adequate. Having said that however, there is scope for further study of Hölderlin's method, and in particular, Hölderlin's efforts to articulate the 'in-between' of the transitional phase from one instant to the next, deserves greater exploration, even for its own sake. Further, this thesis is limited to the analysis of theory and falls short of extending the inquiry to include a scrutinizing of Hölderlin's tonal theory in a comparative manner against his poetry. Indeed it falls short of being able to advance conclusively, a thesis that denies or confirms the success of Hölderlin's key objective, namely to get beyond the fact of consciousness with a metaphorical representation of intellectual intuition. While Hölderlin himself argues that this is possible on an aesthetic level, it cannot be proven in the context of this thesis. Moreover, even if one were to attempt such a

task it would be problematic, in that Hölderlin's work is meticulously calculated. The phonetic, semantic and syntactical, as well as the rhythm and form of a poetic piece, are all contributing factors that give rise to the tonal undercurrent which in turn supports unity, and importantly gives rise to the very important transcendental instant in which three antagonistic tendencies come to rest. At best, and in hindsight of Hölderlin's project, a reader can give a sympathetic interpretation of Hölderlin's poetry, but cannot prove that Hölderlin has attained his goal.

In the next chapter, the task is to discuss the preparation and function of the poet. The focus will be again on Hölderlin, but with the aim of bringing out what is relevant also to the thinking of Schlegel and Novalis, and that is the attainment of an objective state of mind that will allow the flow of an autonomous emergence of totality.

Chapter 4

The PREPARATION and FUNCTION
OF THE POET

This chapter is a sequel to the previous two chapters which dealt specifically with

Hölderlin's response to Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* In that response, Hölderlin

develops a theory of poetry in relation to the problem of consciousness, and also

the method designed to deal with that problem. We have seen that Hölderlin

develops a theoretical means by which to appropriate the structures of poetry to

create a mirroring of the 'threefold antagonism' that consciousness represents, in

his view, in the face of the Absolute. We have also seen that Hölderlin further

seeks to incorporate into poetry a 'transcendental instant' within which is

achieved a complete balance between opposing tendencies. It was argued that in

effect, this 'transcendental instant' is the *caesura*, or the interstice, through which

an 'intellectual intuition' may be glimpsed.

What has not yet been adequately considered, however, is that the method

employed by Hölderlin to allow the 'transcendental instant' to emerge from

within the poetic process (and this is true also of Schlegel and Novalis)[52], requires

that the poet be integral to the poetic process in a special way. What this further

requires is that the poet sacrifice his subjective self and become a channel, so to

speak, enabling the poetic process to proceed unimpeded in order that the goal of

unity in and through the integration of the self with reality, may be accomplished.

The poetic process is complex, and involves not only a comprehensive

understanding of poetic structuring in and through the application of a tonal

theory (see previous chapter), but it must also facilitate the release of what

Hölderlin determines to be the 'poetic spirit'[53]. Indeed, the poetic process is

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[52]   Although this chapter deals predominantly with Hölderlin, Novalis, is equally determined, as is Hölderlin to make the poet an integral part of the poetic process. Indeed, Novalis's conviction is that poetry is like mysticism in the sense that it 'represents that which cannot be represented' and that poetry (and hereby, the poet) 'sees what cannot be seen' and 'feels what cannot be felt.' These are ideas that clearly parallel Hölderlin's view. In addition, Novalis further acknowledges that the poet, in order to fulfil the task of poetry in this way, must be 'truly bereft of his senses' and that everything 'takes place within him (1997, p. 162).' Elsewhere Novalis insists that 'the poet may absolutely not appear an egoist' (p. 165). This, we can see, is clearly reminiscent of Hölderlin's direction that the poet overcomes his subjectivity, a process discussed in this chapter. Further to this end, Novalis makes the point that the poet must in the 'truest sense' present *'subject object – mind* and *world'* (p. 162). This fits in with the romantic quest for holism and again, Hölderlin similarly understands that this is what is required. Yet, there is a noticeable difference in how each poet presents their theory of the technical aspects that underpin the poetic process. Hölderlin, for example provides a more comprehensive overview on what is required of the poet to achieve his goal. To this end Hölderlin, unlike Novalis processes the technical aspects of the poet's task more precisely to fit in with his metaphysical understanding of the universe.

See also Schlegel's Literary Aphorism 238 , in which he seeks to explain the nature of transcendental poetry which is conditionally analogous to transcendental philosophy, if ' it portrayed the producer [...]' (1968, p. 145)

[53]   Discussed in Hölderlin's essay entitled 'Operation of the Poetic Spirit' in Pfau (trans.) 1988, pp. 62 – 82

wholly dependent on this release, which can only happen if the poet, as subject, integrates with the subject matter, and thereby becomes part of the object of contemplation.

In direct relation to the problem of the 'threefold antagonism', the release of the poetic spirit appears to enable a thread of communication and resolution between the opposing tendencies that this 'threefold antagonism' represents. In Chapter 2, a diagram was introduced that served to demonstrate just how the dynamism of the interplay between the opposing tendencies worked, by placing the three aspects of the tension, or the 'threefold antagonism', in a special relational proximity with each other. This chapter introduces an augmented version of this diagram (See Fig 2, p. 159) one that now includes a 'transcendental' perspective that allows a possible reconnection between the three opposing tendencies. The key objective then of this chapter is to clarify the relationship between the poet and facilitation of the poetic process. A significant factor underpinning the incorporation of the poet into the poetic process is Hölderlin's belief that poets are destined to deal with the struggle that the separation of subject and object at the onset of consciousness represents. The idea is that poets share together in a loyal determination to ensure that on one hand the power of differentiation does not obscure the Absolute to such an extent that it is no longer present within the scope of human awareness and on the other, that it does not annihilate the individual. The discussion addressing this point includes an engagement with David

Constantine's[54] article entitled 'Translation and Exegesis in Hölderlin' (1986), in which Constantine challenges Hölderlin's vocational aspirations to represent the gods. Following this, the function of the poet in relation to the sanctification of nature in and through poetry is addressed after which the discussion turns briefly to Martin Heidegger, within whose theory of poetry Hölderlin's vocational aspiration to be the poet destined to stand between mortals and gods, is taken more seriously. Finally, the discussion will address the more technical aspects of the poetic process that ensures the conditioning of the poet to enable the 'poetic spirit' to emerge unimpeded. In terms of this thesis, this chapter provides valuable argument on how poetry, and particularly the processes that underpin it, including the preparation and function of the poet, is conducive to facilitating a philosophical ascesis.

Shaping the 'holy image' – a brief overview of the poet's vocation

Hölderlin operates with the sincere conviction that the poet stands apart from other mortals to perform a function that requires diligence and proficiency for its proper execution. The poet's task is to mediate between gods and mortals. In his poem entitled 'The Poet's Vocation' Hölderlin affirms what is at stake when it comes to defining the poet's task. Here he draws a clear distinction between what the proper concern is of the poet in comparison to that of other human beings:

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[54]   David Constantine is not entering into the Hölderlin discourse as a philosopher but from the perspective of literature and criticism. Constantine is a poet and a translator and has become familiar with Hölderlin's work through the avenues of translating Hölderlin's poems into English, literary criticism and through researching his biography. Nonetheless, his argument presents as a challenge and particular in this chapter is one that needs to be addressed.

Not that which else human kind's care and skill

Both in the house and under the open sky

When Nobler that wild beasts, men work to

Fend, to provide for themselves – poets

A different task and calling have been assigned.

The Highest, he it is whom alone we serve,

So that more closely, ever newly

Sung, he will meet with a friendly echo.

The perspective conveyed in this poem is that it is the poet's task to serve 'he' that is the 'Highest'. The entity that 'he' refers to is identifiable throughout Hölderlin's poetry as God. In Hölderlin's theoretical writings God is not mentioned as such but is referred to indirectly as either the 'all in all' or the Absolute and infinite and is comparable, in part, also to the concept of 'intellectual intuition' which Hölderlin seeks to gain in and through poetry (See Chapter 3). Other concepts such as 'divine', 'sacred' 'holy' and 'heavenly' (not found in the above example), are also used throughout Hölderlin's poetry to signify, again in part, the essence that God is. This essence, when conceptualised in this way as 'divine' or 'holy', requires poetic articulation for its revelation; however, the poetic articulation is limited, in that it can do no more than offer 'signs,' so to speak, that point to, or disclose God. These 'signs', and herewith the disclosure of the divine, become manifest in and through the careful manipulation of the language and structure of the poem (see previous chapter). Importantly, as Hölderlin understands it, revelation is only possible if the subject matter is given over to what Hölderlin refers to as 'ideal treatment' (See Hölderlin's 'On the

Operations of the Poetic Spirit', 1988, pp. 62-82). By 'ideal treatment' Hölderlin

means the poetic process that integrates the subjective self of the poet with the

very thing that is contemplated. Indeed the 'ideal treatment' of a subject ensures

that the poet's personal bias does not interfere with the process of revelation.

Instead the poet mediates through a process of neutrality. This is not only the task

of the poet but it is something a poet, in a vocational sense is compelled to do. To

this end, Hölderlin clearly devotes himself to revelation of the divine, or as he put

it in a letter to a friend, 'to the holy image which we are shaping' (Cited in

Hamburger 1966, p. 14).

This last quote however may serve unwittingly to support an argument advanced

by David Constantine concerning the illusory dimension to Hölderlin's God, his

'gods', or the divine and holy. The argument put forward by Constantine puts into

question the very vocation of the poet as mediator when he argues that the

'conditions in which a poet might credibly claim to be acting as God's mediator or

interpreter did not exist in Hölderlin's life and times' (1986, p. 389). Indeed

Constantine argues that Hölderlin 'labours to create a God of whom he might be

the interpreter' (1986, p. 389). Moreover, Constantine argues that Hölderlin's

creation extends to the community that he addresses as well since the 'condition

of Hölderlin's poetry is, precisely, the absence of God and community' (1986, p.

389). It is true that Hölderlin's poetry, indeed, explores the theme of the absence

or flight of the gods. Heidegger's theory of Hölderlin's poetry and vocation

explicates this theme, although he gives Hölderlin more authority as a poet and

does not accuse Hölderlin of *creating* a God for the sake of fulfilling his task as

mediator, which, if we are to accept Constantine's argument is also imagined alongside the creation of his God. However, while the inference in Constantine's argument is clearly one that has Hölderlin inventing a God in a fantastical way, much like, say, a unicorn, Heidegger's interpretation is more fittingly about the evocation and invocation of a God, or gods (or Being, rather) that exist(s), albeit in obscurity, in virtue of humankind's oblivion to it. The poet's task is to point the way to Being through the recovery and invocation of the gods.

Heidegger's interpretation of the poet's task is not without issues and these will be discussed a little later, but focusing on Constantine for the moment, what is clearly lacking in his argument is an understanding of the philosophical aspirations that underpin Hölderlin's poetical aspirations, including what he perceives to be the poet's vocation. Constantine argues that Hölderlin's poetological essays for example, in which he attempts to describe the poetic process, are 'strange and difficult' (1986, p. 390). This much we can agree with, however, when Constantine argues that these essays do not contribute to an elucidation of the poetic process, we can see that he has overlooked the link between these essays as poetological and Hölderlin's philosophy, in particular his theory of consciousness and the nature of the subject/object relation in the face of the Absolute. Constantine's interpretation of Hölderlin's work is thus limited to the actual poetry from which he extrapolates Hölderlin's perspective on the nature and function of the poet.

On the other hand, when Constantine describes a poem as entirely metaphorical (p. 393) he is touching on a point that Hölderlin himself concedes to. Indeed, it is the case that Hölderlin works with the poem, completely as metaphor. Even the effect – the representation of an 'intellectual intuition' in and through the 'transcendental instant' – is metaphorical. However, this does not mean, necessarily, that what is represented in and through metaphorical expression is fictitious, which Constantine implies it is. Despite this, Constantine gives an indication at least, as to what could be at stake, philosophically. He tells the reader that 'poems are not the mere vehicles by which truths are served up for us to take away' and that it is probably better to 'think of the poem as a means by which a realisation may take place than as a means by which some possessable thing is communicated' (1986, p. 394). The problem with Constantine's argument is, however, that he does not identify a correlation between 'the realisation that may take place' in the poem and the 'thing' that this realisation is of. In other words for Constantine, poetry is only about illusions and can tell us nothing about the underlying nature of reality. Hölderlin on the other hand is driven by an ontological persuasion that an 'intellectual intuition' may be possible on an aesthetic level and is doing his utmost to make the illusion work towards this experience. In other words, for Hölderlin a correlation does exist between the metaphor and that which it represents, even though that what is represented conventionally is unknowable.

The Sanctification of Nature in and through Poetry

In addition to the attention Fichte's internal structure and the 'getting beyond the fact of consciousness' (as outlined in previous chapters) receives in Hölderlin's poetics, the poet's vocation extends to include the task of 'perfecting', or sanctifying nature in and through poetry. The task of sanctifying nature and Hölderlin's attempt to achieve a metaphorical representation of an 'intellectual intuition' are related insofar as they are effects of the same poetical process and require the same preparation of the poet. However, in Hölderlin's poetics, the task of sanctifying nature presents as an additional task and as such appears unrelated to the mission of getting beyond the fact of consciousness. On the other hand, getting beyond the fact of consciousness is a prerequisite if the poet is to sanctify nature within the structures of poetry and, indeed, the union of subject and object that is the same union that constitutes holiness and makes nature divine. However, because the connection is not immediately obvious, it is worthwhile addressing this particular aspect of the poet's vocation separately, although with a view to reconciling it with Hölderlin's philosophical inquiry into consciousness and the Absolute. In many respects, on a philosophical level, what Hölderlin is attempting to do with nature is much the same as what Schlegel and Novalis attempt to achieve in and through the reconciliation of ideal and real states within the structures of romantic poetry. On an abstract cognitive (some might say, mystical) level Hölderlin's attempt is to reconcile the self with nature – to be one with 'her' and thereby cease the yearning for unity, which he perceives is the plight underpinning the human condition. It is through this reconciliation with nature, or

indeed in terms of an ascesis, through the integration of the self with reality, that nature and mortal being become, or are revealed as 'holy'.

Reminiscent of Empedocles, Hölderlin's character *Hyperion* surmises that 'Nature – suffers no loss as she suffers no addition' (1990, p.46). Nevertheless, while nature will change in appearance from day today, she cannot, Hölderlin's *Hyperion* argues, 'dispense with what is best in us' (1990, p. 46). Indeed Hölderlin's *Hyperion* continues, 'She [nature] will be a mere patchwork [...] neither divine nor complete if ever you are lacking to her' (1990, p. 46). *Hyperion's* view is based on Hölderlin's theory of nature that sees it as incomplete without it having been perfected in art. Hölderlin argues that:

> [...] nature only becomes divine in conjunction with the diverse yet harmonious art; when everything is entirely what it can be, and one combines with the other, compensates for the shortcomings of the other, which that one must necessarily have in order to be entirely that which it can be as a particular, then there exists perfection and the divine rests in between the two (1988, p. 53)

'The divine rests in between the two' says Hölderlin – the question is, however, where exactly is Hölderlin pointing? What are 'the two' in-between which the divine rests?

A little further in the same text Hölderlin argues that the 'more organic, artistic man is the blossom of nature' (1988, p. 53). This is said after Hölderlin has already indicated that 'art is the blossom of nature'. Art and artistic man are thus, we can assume, each a part of the same process. Art, of which 'artistic man' is an integral part, is both the blossom and the perfection of nature – however if art is 'the perfection of nature' then this 'perfection' cannot be identical with the 'divine' because Hölderlin argues that nature *becomes* divine in *conjunction* with art, the perfection of nature. The divine thus rests in the juncture that is the coming together of nature and art. Indeed, both art and nature as separate entities each have their respective ontological shortcomings, which the combining of the two, alleviates. Like the ideal and the real, which come together in a continuum in Schlegel's formula (See Chapter 5), art and nature too, belong to a continuum and just like ideal and real states are reciprocally determined, so too are art and nature.

The 'in-between' that Hölderlin is pointing to is in the balance between art and nature – where, as Hölderlin suggests, 'there lies the struggle of the individual', the moment in which the 'organic' [artistic man] discards its subjectivity' and the 'aorgic discards its universality' (1988, pp. 53-54). This much was discussed in the previous chapter, when the aorgic/organic relationship was explored. The relationship between art and nature, too, is based on the aorgic and organic relationship and therefore is cyclic. For this reason, Hölderlin intimates that the 'organic artistic man' is a product of his time. In regard to Empedocles for example, Hölderlin describes him as a 'son of his heaven and his time' and of 'his fatherland [...]' (1988, p. 54). What this suggests is that the poet is,

phenomenologically speaking, quite rare. The relationship between nature and art, based on Hölderlin's theory of the aorgic/organic relation, suggests that the sanctification of nature, while it is ongoing, is nonetheless subject to a decline and incline in intensity. The time when the intensity is at its greatest is precisely that time when nature and art are at the extremity of polarisation, because (as was argued in the previous chapter) it is at this point that they are each impelled by the tension pulling them back towards each other.

Hölderlin is convinced that Empedocles is a product of such a tension. Indeed Hölderlin views Empedocles as 'a son of tremendous oppositions of nature and art' (1988, p. 54), which means that Empedocles is, at the same time, 'a man within whom these oppositions are united so intimately that they become one within him' (1988, pp. 54-55). This thus makes Empedocles a perfect vehicle for the reflection of the divine.

The holy occurs, as discussed so far, midway between nature and the 'blossom of nature' – art. It has been suggested that this structure presents as a continuum. Within a continuum, the two aspects are more than connected – they are degrees of the same thing.[55]

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[55]   For an interpretation of 'nature' based on Heidegger's treatment of Hölderlin's Hymn 'Wie wenn am Feiertage', A. Schuwer in an article entitled, 'NATURE AND THE HOLY: On Heidegger's Interpretation of Hölderlin's Hymn "Wie wenn am Feiertage"' cited in *Research in Phenomenology*, Volume 7, Number 1, 1977, offers a useful perspective that elucidates this connection. Schuwer clarifies Heidegger's interpretation of 'nature' by presenting it in a particular mutually dependent relationship with the poet. That nature attracts the poet so that the poet can 'name' it. Nature is the educator of the

Heidegger's perspective on the function of the poet

While it is beyond the scope and purpose of this chapter to give a comprehensive account of Heidegger's perspective on the function of poet, it is nonetheless of value, to give at least an appraisal of Heidegger's particular concern with Hölderlin[56].

In his *Elucidations of Holderlin's Poetry*, Heidegger identifies Hölderlin as '*the* poet who is *responsible* for *founding* the essence of poetry and that 'this essence of poetry belongs to a definite time.' Further, Heidegger insists that this essence is

poet, in the sense that it draws out of the poet the need to 'name' nature. It is the 'naming' through which nature is made holy. 'Nature' here is analogous to Being. Heidegger argues it is the task of the poet to disclose Being in and through the language of poetry.

[56]   While it is not the place here to critically engage with Heidegger, insofar as discussing, for example, the validity of his elucidations of Hölderlin's work, it is nonetheless worthwhile to mention, at least in this footnote, that what is missing in Heidegger's interpretation of Hölderlin, is an understanding of the intensity with which Hölderlin deliberates over the poetic process. What is also noticeably absent is a regard for Hölderlin's more specific philosophical agenda. Instead, Heidegger has chosen to limit himself to Hölderlin's poetry and letters to family and friends, in which an account of philosophical achievement is less evident. In contrast to his theoretical writings that support his poetics, Hölderlin's poetry is substantially more esoteric, incorporating quite definite allusions to an exclusive relationship between the poet (not necessarily Hölderlin) and the 'divine', God, the holy, or the gods. Heidegger tends to deal with Hölderlin's poetry semantically and extracts from a select few poems, evidence that supports his view that Hölderlin is destined to deal with what Heidegger describes as the 'founding of Being'. For a more thorough critical analysis of Heidegger's interpretation of Hölderlin's poetry and Hölderlin as a poet see Jennifer Anna Gosetti Ferencei's publication *Heidegger, Hölderlin and the Subject of Poetic Language: Towards a new Poetics of Dasein*, published in 2004. Amongst her views is also, that Heidegger neglected some significant philosophical aspirations that are essential to Hölderlin's poetics. Gosetti-Ferencei's study is an attempt to clear some of the misconceptions of Hölderlin's poetics that we find in later Heidegger that are related to poetic subjectivity. Her aim is to bring Hölderlin's poetics into line with Heidegger's earlier study of *Dasein* and the 'facticity of human existence' which Gosetti-Ferencei argues *are* consistent with Hölderlin's poetics (2004, p. xii).

as such 'historical in the highest degree, because it anticipates a historical time; as a historical essence; however it is the only true essence' (2000, pp. 64-65). The 'historical time' that Heidegger is referring to is the epoch characterised by a double deficiency of 'gods' — gods who have fled, and gods that are yet to come (2000, pp. 64-65). In an essay entitled 'What are Poets For?' Heidegger explores a similar theme, this time with trepidation, as he makes claims about the function of the poet in 'destitute times', where 'not only is the holy lost as the track toward the godhead' but 'even the traces leading to that lost track are well-nigh obliterated' (2001, p. 92). Heidegger thus claims that to be 'a poet in destitute times' means: 'to attend, singing, to the trace of the fugitive gods' (2001, p. 92).

However, parallels between Heidegger's and Hölderlin's thinking on what the task of the poet is, are better drawn from Heidegger's more theoretical accounts of what poetry is and what its function is in terms of strengthening our ontological grasp of Being. For example, Heidegger discusses the concept 'fourfold'[57], which is the gathering unity of four contrasting archetypal elements signifying the reciprocal relation between the temporal and eternal modes of existence. Heidegger identifies these modes as mortals, gods, heaven and earth which together act as the contingency in which and against which beings 'are'. This fourfold structure is comparable to Hölderlin's 'threefold antagonism', at least in some significant respects. In much the same way as it is the poet's task to achieve a 'transcendental instant' or a metaphorical impression of an 'intellectual

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[57] See, in particular, Heidegger's 'The Thing' published in *Poetry, Language Thought,* 2001, where this concept is explored.

intuition'; it is the poet's task in the Heideggarian context to reveal the point of the gathering, which is the event of Being. Arguably, this too can be construed as a transcendental moment for it rests not in one particular place but in the midst of the harmonious balance between the gathering of opposing forces.

But while there are similarities, Heidegger tends to present the scenario in much more esoteric terms whereas Hölderlin is, in his approach, more genuinely convinced that this is in fact the task (in the world) that he is required to fulfil, a task that requires, technical processes which include the conditioning of the poet. Hölderlin's approach is technical because he is dealing with philosophical issues that he believes can be dealt with in and through poetic structures. Heidegger too deals with the philosophical issue of Being but wants to move away from a scientific or technical means of dealing with it whereas Hölderlin, (as do Schlegel and Novalis), wants to incorporate a high degree of the calculable as an integral desideratum within their method.

The poet's orientation - releasing the 'Poetic Spirit' through the overcoming of subjectivity without losing consciousness

In the introduction to this thesis it was argued that a significant factor underpinning the integration of the poet into the poetic process is Hölderlin's conviction that poets are destined to deal with the struggle that the separation of subject and object, at the onset of consciousness, represents. Moreover, from the inquiry into Hölderlin's project, we can discern that it is particularly Hölderlin's

concern that poets share together in a loyal determination to ensure that, on the one hand, the power of differentiation does not obscure the Absolute to such an extent that it is no longer present within the scope of human awareness, and, on the other, that the awareness of the Absolute does not annihilate the individual. This perspective requires that the poetic act needs to be very specifically oriented. In terms of the structure of consciousness based on Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, Hölderlin, as we know, has developed a theory that deals with and incorporates the threefold antagonism, named as such to emphasise the three opposing tendencies that underpin this structure. If we can think of the poet first of all as the subject, that is to say, the conscious being that stands in an opposing relation to the non-self and to the Absolute then we have gained a platform from which to develop the poetic orientation.

Hölderlin argues that within its normal cognitive range, the subject (or, more specifically, the poet as a consciously aware being) is unable to conceive of itself as poetic. Alternatively, and more precisely, the 'subjective I' cannot operate in accord with what Hölderlin determines is the 'poetic spirit'. What Hölderlin means by 'poetic spirit' is, on this occasion, the inherent 'drive' that compels the poet to poetise. As such, it emerges also as the restless creative drive that ensures the possibility of unity and the sanctification of nature. Indeed the poetic spirit reveals itself through the incessant *longing* that Hölderlin (as do Schlegel and Novalis) identifies so strongly as being characteristic of the human condition, but perhaps even more characteristic of the person destined to be a poet. Within the 'threefold antagonism', we can think of the poetic spirit as representing the

tendency that seeks pure self-hood and identity with the one. The tendency operates in opposition to the tendency that seeks differentiation and in opposition to the tendency that seeks to harmonise these two tendencies.

But while Hölderlin may describe the poetic spirit as 'an unchecked power' struggling 'impatiently against its fetters' longing 'to return to the unclouded aether' (Hölderlin Cited in Frank 2004, p. 116), he nonetheless insists that the pure form of the spirit is 'conscious neither of itself nor of nothing' and that for it 'there is no world' (2004, p. 116). For this reason, the poet must arrive at an objective position that allows the poetic spirit on one had to be unleashed, and on the other hand, the position extends to allow the poet to provide decisive direction for the spirit. In other words, the poet's objectivity includes a conscious engaging of the spirit in such a way that the spirit in fact gains consciousness in and through the poet's empathy with the spirit, and its unconscious orientation which is to unite with itself.

To facilitate this process, the first step is to relocate the poet's own conscious awareness, since it is this aspect of the subject that stands as an impediment to the release of the poetic spirit. Hölderlin offers instructions as to how to do this in the following excerpt:

> Posit yourself by free choice into a harmonious opposition/ with
> an outer sphere just as by nature you are in harmonious

opposition with your self, yet unrecognisably so, as long as you
remain within yourself (1988, p. 74)[58]

Hölderlin is asking the poet to project conscious awareness into a space that is

outside the normal range of cognitive experience. What Hölderlin is here

envisaging is a deliberate and virtual 'beyond the known' experience, so to speak,

whereby subject (self-conscious awareness) posits itself in opposition within 'an

outer sphere.' It may be argued that this manoeuvre, as far as manoeuvres are

concerned, resembles somewhat, Fichte's first principle for a science of

knowledge – the positing of 'I am I'. However, this time the starting point is at the

location of the subject (that is the posited 'I', or the 'am I', if we refer to Fichte's

first principle). It is this 'am I' that now posits itself into another sphere in

opposition to itself. The difference is however that this is a secondary manoeuvre

and will have a different result, vis-à-vis perception of the oppositional, in terms

of what is consciously perceivable at this new location. Rather than seeing itself

as subject in relation to the non-I, it is now aware of itself in opposition to itself

and as such can observe itself as a reciprocal component of the antagonistic

relationship between Absolute, Subject and Object. This newly posited relation

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[58]   The above quote is extracted out of Hölderlin's essay 'On the Operations of the
Poetic Spirit' written around about 1800. This essay in conjunction with a series of
aphorisms consolidated in Pfau 1988, under the heading of 'Reflection' offers the reader
a guide to what is involved in the transformation from ordinary being in the world to
poetic being in the world, a transformation that is absolutely necessary if one is to
succeed and be distinguished as a poet. It is within the context of these texts that the
above 'instruction' is postulated.

then becomes the object of contemplation for the self that has created it. In other words, Hölderlin's challenge is for the poet to act conversely to the 'I am I' principle posited by the Absolute 'I' by stepping out of the relation that this manoeuvre creates but without dissolving back into its source, the 'Absolute I'. From this new location, conscious awareness is no longer an impediment that stands between subject and object; instead, there is a *shift* of consciousness, which looks something like this:
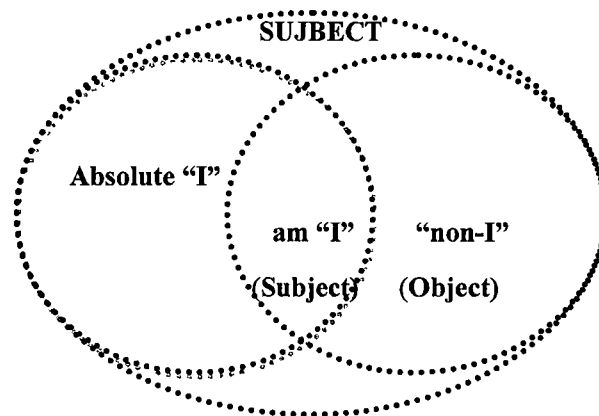
Fig 2. 'SUBJECT' - Newly posited – 'outer sphere'

Admittedly, this interpretation of Hölderlin's intentions is not without its problems. For example, it must be kept in mind that the Absolute for Hölderlin is the 'one and all' and therefore, arguably, this 'newly posited outer sphere' in fact achieves nothing, since the new location cannot itself be part of this unity, and so all we have done is caused further fracturing. Indeed, if we were to follow this model to its logical conclusion we would find that this fracturing could prove to be endless.

On the other hand, an important consideration is that while the Absolute remains the essential or utter unity, it is at the same time (according to Fichte's model), the ground that gives rise to the separation in which subject and object exist. This means that the Absolute is itself responsible for the fractioning – the very fractioning that it seeks to dissolve. A further implication is that not only is the particular drawn into a struggle between itself and its source; the source itself *is* this struggle. To add to the problem, Hölderlin, as discussed in Chapter 2, does not see the Absolute as identical with subject and object in their opposition, which means that so long as we have subject and object, we do not have unity in the essential sense that belongs to the Absolute. Hölderlin believes that the Absolute is pre-conditioned unity, the essence of which is *necessarily* altered at the point where separation occurs. However, while it ('absolute Being' as Hölderlin calls it, 1988, p. 38) is not identical with subject and object, it nonetheless must belong to this relationship in an essential way. As far as being human is concerned, this is evident by the incessant yearning for unity, which is observed to be characteristic of human existence. At the same time, yearning for unity presents as an eternal yearning with the implication that unity is eternally unachievable.

However, the poet's task from this new position (see figure 2 above) is to facilitate a conscious experience of unity, not an unconscious one, for this would entail the dissolution of the subject. The aim, in other words, is not to dissolve the subject, but to transcend it so that consciousness encompasses the subject in its antagonistic relationship with itself, world (self and non-self) and the Absolute. The poet's task is thus to facilitate the third tendency (discussed in Chapter 3)

whereby a harmonious balance between striving for unity and striving for individual selfhood is attained. Hereby, the particular retains its dignity, while at the same time affinity with the whole is experienced.[59]

Returning to the release of the poetic spirit, it is the poet's task, from this newly posited objective location to take 'control of the spirit' (Hölderlin 1988 p. 62 and p. 63 footnote). Essentially, this means that the poet must provide proper direction for it; to channel it by means of a new objective consciousness towards a balanced and conscious reunion with itself as present in the Absolute, subject and object, inclusively.

This new objective consciousness functions further to allow the poetic spirit to merge with itself but with a recollection of its own path. To make sense of what this means we need to understand the important aspect of Hölderlin's poetics that deals with the coherency of a poem. Hölderlin's aim is always to manipulate the artwork so that it holds together, harmoniously. In the Hölderlin context, coherency is just as much about symmetry as it is about proper sequencing and is applicable to all levels of an artwork, from its physical written appearance right down to the syntactic, semantic and rhythmic qualities of the work. Achieving this type of stringent coherency is determined by the very conditioning of the poetic spirit of which the poet has taken charge. The poet ensures that the poetic spirit

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[59] Cf. Schlegel's and Novalis' aspiration to bring both the ideal and the real into the same space.

becomes much more than a creative impulse but bestows it with the power of recollection, or remembrance. Recollection then acts as the 'thread' that holds the whole together in the manner just described.

If the poetic spirit is released unconditionally, then the likely consequence is that the artwork is incoherent and as such cannot serve the purpose Hölderlin has assigned to it. In the following excerpt, Hölderlin is very explicit about the effect the conditioning of the poetic spirit will have on the artwork.

> If the unified (to the extent that it can be considered by itself) shall not cancel itself as something undifferentiable and become an empty infinity, or if it shall not lose its identity in an alternation of opposites, however harmonious they may be, thus be no longer integral and unified, but shall disintegrate into an infinity of isolated moments (a sequence of atoms as it were) – I say: then it is necessary that the poetic spirit in its unity and harmonious progress also provide for itself an infinite perspective for its transaction, a unity where in the harmonious progress and alternation everything move forward and backward through its sustained characteristic relation to that unity, not only gain, objective coherence for the observer [but] also gain [a] [[translator's insertions]] felt and tangible coherence and identity in the alternation of opposition; and it is its last task, to have a thread, to have a recollection so that the spirit remain present to itself never in the individual moment and again in an individual moment, but continuous in one moment as in another and in the different moods, just as it is entirely present to itself in the infinite unity which is once the point of separation for the unified as such, but then again also the point of union for the unified as the opposed, finally is also both at once, so that what is harmoniously opposed within it is neither opposed as something unified nor unified as something opposed but as both in One, is felt as opposed in unified manner as inseparable and is invented as something felt. (1988, p. 71)

The crucial assignment with regard to contributing to the 'thread' that holds the whole in unity is for the spirit to 'provide for itself an infinite perspective' which means that the poetic spirit retains its own self presence in all its strength during the course of the sequential gathering of opposing moments. In one sense, we know that spirit is already unified and in virtue of this unification we may assume that spirit is already coherent; but because it presents as something that is at least driven, to reunite with something that appears to be apart from itself, the implication is that spirit too is divided as a consequence of the differentiating episode that separates subject from object and from its source. The difference however lies precisely with spirit being 'conscious neither of itself nor of nothing' because, unlike the subject, spirit is unaware of itself as an individuated entity. It is thus the crucial task of recollection, or remembrance referred to above, to allow spirit to emerge consciously connected with itself.

To elaborate further, recollection plays a key role in providing the bearings by which one can make sense of the world, in this case the artwork, but is equally the provider of identity so we don't feel ourselves to be incoherent. As such, recollection or remembrance, as discussed in the previous chapter, is the 'thread builder', so to speak, that promotes and sustains coherence and consistency, and thereby gives the impression of an *overall* all, or perhaps better said, an *underlying* unity. Without recollection one moment will simply pass into another and nothing of that previous moment remains to sustain the next, in which case a loss of bearings and orientation will ensue for the observer of the art work, and the art work itself in this case, but similarly for the individual conscious being in the

world at large. Interestingly, this concept appears to be based on Fichte's understanding of the same process outlined as follows:

> The positing self, through the most wondrous of its powers [...] holds fast the perishing accident long enough to compare it with that which supplants it. This power it is almost always misunderstood – which from inveterate opposites knit together a unity; which intervenes between elements that would mutually abolish each other, and thereby preserve them; it is that which alone makes possible life and consciousness. (Cited in Henrich p. 230, Fichte GgW, pp. 350-)

We have thus established the significance of relocating conscious awareness so that from its newly elevated position its work with the poetic spirit is achieved and the capacity for poetry to represent a harmonious whole is optimised.

To recapitulate the poet's orientation: the poet, by virtue of engaging in the poetic process, becomes aware of the poetic spirit as a mode of being inherently inclined against the mode of differentiation, which is characteristic of the individual human condition. The poet accordingly needs to have mastered a high degree of understanding about how the spirit 'reproduces' itself, so to speak, in the manifold of particulars, and how it manifests itself in an intricate web of relations, without destroying or reducing itself as 'spirit'. This understanding is derived from the structure sketched out earlier in which the subject stands in the middle so to speak (although contained in both), between world and the Absolute, feeling the pull from both ends, but striving for a harmonious allegiance to both. Spirit, despite the separation of subject and object, exists as a continuum in all three conditions.

But as mentioned earlier, it struggles against 'fetters.' The implication here is that, it too is split and that these fetters must represent the nature of the division that occurs at the onset of consciousness where subject and object are created in a world that is experienced as external to the Absolute. Spirit is, so to speak, caught up in the differentiating process and is thus divided along with subject and object and so long as a distinction between subject and object remains, there will be a restless spirit. Even though spirit in and of itself is unconscious and therefore knows no boundaries, it nonetheless has boundaries imposed on it. Take away the boundaries and spirit will join with itself, seamlessly. However, as mentioned early, the aim of poetry is to provide a conscious experience of unity and this can only be achieved if the poet lifts the subjective barrier, but without forfeiting conscious awareness. In doing so the poetic provides for consciousness the manner by which it can merge without losing itself through recollection, the possibility of which is provided by the new objective consciousness.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the function and vocation of the poet. The requirement of a profound preparation and proficiency on behalf of the poet has added strength to the overall argument that poetry and philosophy are integral to an ascesis through which the self is given over to the totality that it contemplates. Indeed, the preparation and the function of the poet in the Hölderlin method, reveals a more traditional understanding of ascesis, where it describes a method that involves training, and a degree of 'self-denial', insofar as overcoming the limits of subjectivity is concerned. This concept of the 'transcendental perspective' is a

result of a calculated shift of consciousness, or a deliberate positing out of the subjective sphere into an objective realm. The shift of consciousness belongs initially to the poet but, as we have seen, is transferred to the poetic spirit. Indeed, an important dimension to the poet's task is to provide the poetic spirit with consciousness and therewith, guidance. However, the poet is unable to do this from the original subjective location since here consciousness acts as a hindrance to not only the poetic spirit's emergence but also to its own ultimate unity. Hölderlin thus instructs the poet to first take a conscious leap and step outside this relation in order that the spirit is 'unleashed', so to speak. Metaphorically speaking, consciousness is, in this case, like a dam that blocks the flow of water. Once, the 'dam' of consciousness lifts, the spirit naturally merges with itself but because the spirit is itself unconscious, the poet, from the new and elevated perspective, must take control of it. This means that the elevated consciousness is now also acting on behalf of the spirit, giving it articulation in a world, so to speak.

The sacrifice of the subjective self, that this integration represents, functions first and foremost as a mechanism by which to prevent any personal bias or self-interest from entering into the poetic arena. To this end Hölderlin will argue that the poet, if inclined to be partial, emotional or creative for the sake of creativity, is in danger of producing poetry that is nothing but 'empty affectation' or worse still, produce poetry that is predominantly a reflection of the poet's vanity (Hölderlin 1988, p. 66). This type of poetry, if we can still call it that, will not achieve the goal of unity. To avoid this, the poet is expected to be consciously

attentive to the intricacies of the poetic process and in particular, how they relate to the specific philosophical goal of unity.

For this reason, while there is a dimension to the poetic process that requires mediation, that is, to facilitate the poetic spirit, at the same time it is not at the expense of consciousness. Indeed, not to be biased by the limits of conventional subjectivity requires a conscious and continuous effort on the part of the poet. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the poet's execution of the poem is a premeditated event and follows a carefully calculated theory. In order to maximize the effects of the various poetic devices employed to deal with the specific issues at stake, particularly in the application of tonal theory, the poet must be in command of the various poetic devices. Poetry does not happen of its own accord and indeed, the poet is mindful of every utterance, and with the sound knowledge of every effect. Indeed there is nothing in the poem that is unintentional; nor is the effect of the poem incidental. It may well be the case that ultimately, the un-representable, qua un-representable, is beyond the jurisdiction of the poet, nonetheless the poet commands the sphere in which this un-representability is, paradoxically, enabled to 'magically' appear.[60]

The chapter has sought to show how Hölderlin's poetic process based on his metaphysical view of the universe, is, in turn, also based on his observation of the

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[60] See Jean-Luc Nancy's essay 'The Calculation of the Poet' in *The Solid Letter, Readings of Friedrich Holderlin* 2000, for a comprehensive analysis of this particular point.

structures of consciousness augmented by a disciplined perspective on what needs to happen if we are to get beyond consciousness - for it is here where the experience of unity is possible. While this view indeed serves as the base, another more abstractly cognitive (mystical) level is uncovered where we have seen how Hölderlin interprets the task at hand as incorporating an undertaking to make nature divine and to reunite the gods with humankind.

While the two aspects are, as argued here, variations of the same task, it initially appears as though they are quite different. When we read Hölderlin's poetry, for example, the technical aspects of the process and the philosophical underpinning, namely the structure that represents conscious being in the world in the face of the Absolute, have fallen away and what we are left with are the mystical elements of poetry.

While some philosophical discourse has gone some way in exploring these mystical elements (i.e. Heidegger), it is at the expense of the more technical and philosophical aspects of Hölderlin's poetics that are considered in this thesis. Hölderlin's techniques strive to enable a 'transcendental instant,' in which a metaphorical representation of an 'intellectual intuition' is accomplished, yet not at the expense of consciousness. The transcendental moment is thus the 'heavenly gift, wrapt up in song' that the poet presents to mortals so that they too can experience the infinite. This is indeed the task of the poet.

Chapter 5

SCHLEGEL'S FORMULA[61]

A philosophical ascesis in an equation

Hans Eichner[62] in his 1956 article entitled 'Friedrich Schlegel's Theory of

Romantic Poetry'[63] and again in the 1970 publication entitled *Friedrich Schlegel*,

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[61]   'Schlegel's Formula' in the singular does not indicate that Schlegel works only with one formula. Throughout his notebooks, there are various formulae and symbols, some of which function quite clearly as shorthand while others stand out as more significant.

[62]   In his research and study of Schlegel, Eichner worked extensively with Schlegel's original notebooks, which on this occasion prove to be extremely valuable in terms of bringing to our attention the particular formula, which is the subject of this chapter. In his discussion of this formula, Eichner includes a short analysis of the underlying philosophical presuppositions that support the structure this formula represents, but he has done it in such a way as to make it palatable for an audience that is predominantly preoccupied with the history of literature. Even so, Eichner deserves recognition for this attempt and reference to his work is justified and not out of context. Indeed he is noted in *Friedrich Schlegel's Philosophische Lehrjarhre 1796-1806*, 1963 p. xxxv, as having discovered the significance of the particular formula at stake in this chapter.

[63]   Published in *PMLA*, Volume 71, No. 5, December 1956, pp. 1018-1041 Hans Eichner's work I consider to be still very relevant and a very valuable resource to the

introduces the reader to a 'strange and bewildering' formula, the interpretation of which he claims 'would virtually amount to an exposition of Schlegel's poetics' (1956, p. 1026). Eichner's concern with Schlegel's formula is to do with how it concisely reflects both the definition of romantic poetry and the theory that supports it. Eichner, insightfully, alludes to the formula's complexity in that it reflects the early German Romantic aspiration for a 'universal' poetry that is 'the synthesis of all simple forms and modes of poetry' (1970, p. 65). Eichner's reflections further include a brief explication of the philosophical speculations and influences that inform Schlegel's formulaic approach. Eichner's concern is to explore Schlegel's assertion that romantic poetry is, (even more so than classical poetry), the 'ideal' poetry; an assertion that is borne out of metaphysical concerns rather than literary concerns.[64]

While Eichner provides a discerningly philosophical account of the various components of Schlegel's formula, it is by no means an exhaustive account. It is the aim of this chapter to extend upon Eichner's analysis by focusing on the various components of the formula, and by highlighting their inter-functional relation. Moreover, the aim is to deal specifically with how the formula reflects and supports a philosophical ascesis. In this respect, Schlegel's formula represents a complete synthesis of poetic and philosophical processes, built on the integration of ideal and real states. These states combined and interrelated give

English speaking student of early German Romanticism and has made accessible, information that otherwise may have been overlooked.

[64]   Please refer to Hans Eichner's 'Friedrich Schlegel's Theory of Romantic Poetry' *PMLA*, Vol 71, No.5 (Dec. 1956 pp. 1018-1041).

rise to the 'transcendental poetry' of which Schlegel speaks in his *Literary Aphorism* 238 (1968, p. 145), the ultimate purpose of which is to facilitate a universal progression towards ideal moral being. Schlegel's formula is therefore entirely prescriptive which in the romantic context demonstrates a deliberate turning away from defining poetry through descriptive means. Schlegel argues that a 'definition of poetry can only determine what poetry should be and not what poetry actually is' or else, 'the most concise formula would be: Poetry is that which at some time and some place was thus named' (1968, p.140). Thus Schlegel is making the point that defining poetry can only be a prescriptive act, if it is to avoid being merely an act of cultural cataloguing which, of itself, would give no impetus to the moral development of humankind (which is crucial to the Romantic philosophical project). Schlegel constructs his formula to function as a prescriptive means that supports the attainment of the 'poetic ideal' within the structures of poetry.

This chapter will proceed, then, by first giving an overview of the intellectual conditions and context from which Schlegel's formula arises, which includes a discussion of how Schlegel integrates both philosophical and literary ideas in the construction of his formula.

In establishing this context, there is a brief reference to a recent interpretation of Schlegel's work by Michel Chaouli, who argues that Schlegel's method 'emulates a process and a logic found in eighteenth century chemistry' (2002, p. 108). The

significance of this reference is to highlight a particular methodological aspect of early Romantic theory that works towards the fulfilment of the more general aspiration to unify science and art, to which unification of poetry and philosophy belongs.

Following this is a discussion concerning the formula as a representation of the integration or a synthesis of ideal and real states. The synthesis transforms into what Schlegel perceives to be the 'transcendental', a term that Schlegel reserves for the express purpose of describing this particular connection between the ideal and the real. The transcendental points to the balance of these states which Schlegel, (as do Hölderlin and Novalis), argues is not beyond the realm of experience, but contained within it. Indeed, in Schlegel's view, the transcendental is a space in which subject and object join into a self-reflective totality. Included here is an exploration of the strategy Schlegel uses to deal with the discrepancy between Fichte's theory of consciousness and Spinoza's infinite monism that this formula seeks to dissolve.

Finally, there is the explication of each component of the formula, starting with the 'poetic ideal' and the philosophical aspirations that underpin it. In this section, a discussion concerning Schlegel's concept of irony is included since irony is a complex term that Schlegel adapts to fit his ontological position and therewith imbue the formula also with the functionality of reflecting the underlying nature of reality, which Schlegel perceives to be characteristically ironic.

Schlegel's Formula – Conditions and context

In the intellectual background to Schlegel's formulaic approach are to be found key influences and conditions that provide some insight into the argument that Schlegel employs, other than those that are philosophical, that validate his approach to dealing with the integration of ideal and real states. Indeed, Schlegel's literary interest and study of poetry informs his formulaic approach as much as his philosophical speculations and aspirations do.

Within literature, Schlegel identifies characteristics pertaining to particular periods, which helps him to identify a variety of genres in literature. Historically, these genres are categorised according to a particular dominant trait as fantastic, sentimental or mimetic. Schlegel's formula is constructed to integrate these genres, each one contributing to the overarching function and structure of a transcendental poetry that is designed to hold the ideal and real, and all other binary oppositions underpinning reality, in balance.

If we recall that Schlegel's 'mission' as stated in *fragment 116*, it is to combine not only the 'separate genres of poetry' but to 'put poetry in touch with philosophy and rhetoric' (1968, p. 140) then it makes sense that these genres are of particular interest to Schlegel. This is precisely how Schlegel wants his formula to work, namely to fuse together these three genres - the fantastic, the sentimental and the mimetic - in combination with philosophy and rhetoric. The rhetorical aspect is incorporated, as Chaouli correctly argues, to 'take the place of the

argument', and enable the form to become the content (2002, p. 30). Indeed the quest is, as Schlegel himself suggests, for a work to become self-reflective or self-critical which means that instead of the work being the object of criticism, it is its own object. This is possible through the process that enables the portrayal of the producer along with the product (Schlegel 1968, p. 145) a process reminiscent of Hölderlin's theory of how the poet is an integral part of the poetic process. The objective is that the work is a representation of a totality and by virtue of this, 'speak,' as it were, for itself. The three genres compact to represent the two perspectives which Schlegel is seeking to reconcile concerning the underlying nature of reality - idealism representing the realm of consciousness and realism representing the realm of nature. Mimesis works as the imitation of nature while fantasy works to represent consciousness. Sentimentality represents the conjoining function and compacts with both the fantastic and the mimetic to reconcile nature and consciousness.

In a broader context, the development of romantic theory includes a rebellious opposing of scientific means, yet Schlegel, like Novalis, appears strongly to embrace scientific processes. Reading like a mathematical equation, for example, Schlegel's formula is clearly suggestive of this. Indeed Schlegel tells us that transcendental philosophy must have a strong affinity with mathematics (1963 *KA XVIII*, s81: 907, p. 105). We can therefore assume that transcendental poetry too, must have such an affinity. Indeed the influence of science in the development of romantic theory is a topic currently discussed in contemporary philosophical discourse. Chaouli's *The Laboratory of Poetry: Chemistry and Poetics in the*

Work of Friedrich Schlegel (2002)' serves as a prime example of such discourse. The focus in this work is on Schlegel's use of concepts and language that Chaouli argues are explicitly based on a particular scientific lexicon, namely chemistry, and how Schlegel makes deliberate use of them to represent the organic, eternally becoming nature of romantic poetry (2002, p. 2). Chaouli looks further at how chemistry is at play in Schlegel's fragmentary writing and how fragments are open-ended to allow for a chemical interaction between them with the aim of facilitating an evolutionary process of knowledge. Chaouli's image of a 'Laboratory of Poetry' based on his reading of Schlegel's work, lends itself quite well to capturing the experimental nature of the romantic enterprise, and pointing to its relationship with science. It is in this way that Schlegel's formulaic approach stands revealed. Chaouli's thesis presents as a prime example of contemporary thinking that understands the 'science' behind romantic poetry, albeit pseudo-science, but nonetheless as an integral component of a method that is to 'romanticise the world'. What Chaouli uncovers is the consistency with which Schlegel's poetics incorporates concepts and imagery overwhelmingly reminiscent of the idiom particular to chemistry.[65] This is of course true also of Novalis, who also consistently and explicitly employs a scientific idiom. One need only look through his *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopaedia* to see that this is

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[65]   While Chaouli concentrates on Schlegel's poetics, which is largely extrapolated from the *Athenäum 1798–1800,* Fragments, Schlegel's lectures on transcendental philosophy (1800-1801) are, surprisingly, quite systematically organised betraying a conscientious effort to present ideas in a logical and scientific manner.   The ideas themselves are further based on calculative methods such as the manner in which Schlegel systematically works through the various epochs of philosophy for instance and, for example how he arrives at the idea of *reflection* after a thoughtful consideration of the process. E.g. 'If we carry abstraction over to analysis, the result is the concept of *discursive* [*raissonement*]. On the other hand if we carry analysis over to abstraction the result is the concept of *intuitive [etc.]*' (F. Schlegel, cited in Schulte-Sasse 1997, p. 256)

the case. Although his main aim is to bring the many and varied branches of learning together, he does at times think of romantic poetry as scientific and in turn identifies the sciences, in particular algebra, as poetic (Novalis 2007, p. 57). However, the significance of highlighting the embrace of the scientific view is to emphasise once more the nature of their project as philosophical ascesis. Science provides rigor and the regulation required to galvanise the integration of poetry and philosophy.

Returning to Schlegel, Chaouli argues that 'the images and concepts of chemistry are borrowed and alluded to so frequently as not only to leave no doubt as to the importance of this theme in his writings' but he continues, 'also to put into question the notion of borrowing, of allusion itself'. Further, Chaouli argues that, 'Chemistry does not only provide the metaphors [...] but in some ways it takes the place of poetry itself' (2002. p. 37). What Chaouli most likely means is that the language of chemistry provides a conceptual framework through which, in Schlegel's hands, poetry itself can be seen as like a chemical process, or, perhaps better-said, poetry is a transformative process in which, in this case, an integration of the self and reality occurs which is uniquely compounded. In any case, romantic poetry is itself an outcome of the *fusion*, *mixing* and *saturation* of which Schlegel speaks in *Fragment 116*. In conjunction with this, the aim is for romantic poetry to be, 'eternally becoming', which requires the poetic process to continue, ad infinitum.

Having identified that at least the metaphor of 'chemistry' is hard at work in the theoretical underpinnings romantic poetry, Chaouli asks a very pertinent question, namely, 'what is the specific conceptual problem that chemistry is supposed to help solve?' (2002, p. 39).

The suggestion in this chapter is, that regardless of whether one accepts that Schlegel's theory of poetry is based particularly on an understanding of chemical processes, there is nonetheless a 'combinatorial method' that features as an aspect of Schlegel's poetics. Schlegel employs this combinatorial method for the express purpose of achieving an organic totality in which the balance between ideal and real states holds in a continuum. We can say that this is the conceptual problem 'chemistry is supposed to help solve'. The emphasis however is on 'conceptual' and Schlegel's use of the chemistry lexicon is strategic and analogous. That is, there is clearly an aim to indicate with the use of this language the possibility of a poetry that is in some sense a product analogous to a 'chemical reaction'.

On the other hand, while Chaouli is quite right to alert the reader to the many instances in Schlegel's writing where he seems deliberately to use a word from the chemistry lexicon to articulate his own project of constructing an organic totality, there is evidence also to suggest that Schlegel understands the chemical process as a destructive process. In one particular fragment (*Im Winter* 1800-1801), for example, Schlegel suggests that the chemical process induces

formlessness through a false combustion.[66] Further, Schlegel tends to separate the chemical process from other more binding processes such as galvanism and magnetism which he understand as positive principles in nature comparable to genius amongst humankind.[67]Indeed, the analogous use of the processing concepts of chemistry are viewed only as destructive in the sense that they are used to dissolve an antagonism that exists between two particular experiences of the world; a dissolution that ironically expands on both experiences through the particular manner of combining them. *Fragment 116*, for example, contains concepts that are reminiscent of the type of chemical lexicon Chaouli suggests underpins Schlegel's poetics of which 'to mingle and amalgamate', to 'fill and saturate' are prime examples (Schlegel 1968, p. 140). However, it is also correct to think that in using these concepts, Schlegel has in mind the binding processes of magnetism and galvanism, which he presents in a comparative way to chemical processes. In this respect, it is apparent that, through the use of variously chosen scientific concepts, Schlegel's aspiration is to 'fuse together' poetic and philosophical processes for the sake of creating a continuum in which consciousness and infinity co-exist.

The strategy now is to analyse Schlegel's formula component by component with a view to revealing the richness of philosophical content and intent that underpins

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[66]   From my reading of the following the German: 'Der chemische PROCESS ist das böse Princip, Rückkehr zur Formlosigkeit, FALSCHES Verbrennen, vorgeiliges. - (*KA XVIII* 1963: s60:634, p. 179).

[67]   From my reading of the following· *Elektrizitat, Galvanismus, Magnetismus* in der Natur was Genie im Menschen zusammen das gute Princip, wie der *chemische Proceß* das böse. - (*KA XVIII* 1963, s58:619, p. 177)

the formula. Before proceeding with the analysis, however, it is important to briefly summarise how the formula, taken as a whole, represents an attempt to dissolve an antagonism that exists between two rival theories concerning the underlying nature of reality, namely idealism and realism. In the analysis of the formula, what will become apparent is the extent to which Schlegel has purposely entwined philosophy and poetry into a uni-focused and inter-functional relationship for the express purpose of dealing with epistemic, metaphysical, and ethical issues. To this end, the formula underpins an *ascesis* that culminates in a harmonious and symmetrical representation of the poetic ideal, representing an 'infinite approximation' of God (the 'Absolute').

A formula with which to dissolve a discrepancy between idealism and realism

In general terms, Schlegel's formula presents as a summary of his understanding of how the 'transcendental' is operative in both poetry and philosophy and how the fusion of both transpires to an even greater possibility of a genuine transcendentalism. The 'transcendentalism' Schlegel aspires to constitutes the bringing together into a harmonious balance, the two polar positions from within the history of German philosophy, namely Fichte's idealism and Spinoza's realism. Schlegel's conviction that there is reciprocity at play between ideal and real states stems from Schlegel's critique of Fichte's idealism and Spinoza's realism in which each, idealism and realism respectively, inadequately represents the underlying nature of reality. The ultimate effect of Fichte's thesis is that consciousness gives rise to the external world, while the effect of Spinoza's thesis is that the external world gives rise to consciousness. Schlegel's response to this

discrepancy is to argue that the external world and consciousness of the external world are in fact mutually determined and therefore are both real, or at least both belong to reality. Schlegel therefore does not argue *against* the possibility of either state but argues against the possibility of only one exclusive state. Schlegel's critique thus reflects a commitment to a fusion between these two opposing states, which is essentially, what Schlegel's formula represents.

Beiser identifies the following statement made by Schlegel in his lectures on transcendental philosophy that 'the minimum of the ego is equal to the maximum of nature, and the minimum of nature is equal to the maximum of the ego' (Schlegel, cited in Beiser 2002, p. 458) as essential to Schlegel's formula underpinning his philosophy. Clearly, from this statement we can discern that Schlegel is abstaining from committing to one state or another. Beiser uses this statement to argue that if this is the case, then neither state is qualitatively absolute and that the polarities – nature and ego - operate as a continuum (2002, p. 458). This much has already been determined, that Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin work with the idea of totality as a continuum. Indeed the analysis is reminiscent of Hölderlin's theory of how the aorgic/organic factor operates within a continuum, where two opposing forces draw together just as they separate since the opposing directions in which they travel are circular and thus there will be a point at which they meet (See Chapter 3). Similarly, 'the more we proceed in one direction' argues Beiser 'the further removed we are from the other' until we reach the middle where the two opposites are 'perfectly balanced with one another' (2002, p. 458). This midway point is the point in-between consciousness

and infinity, at which point Schlegel posits that 'reality', persists. Reality as such is the balance between nature and consciousness where they come together to form a world (Schlegel *KAXII* 1964, p. 25). Further, Schlegel argues that insofar as Fichte's philosophy characterises consciousness as reflection, and Spinoza characterises nature as the infinite, that such characterisation relates more particularly to speculation (1964, pp. 25-26). In between the concepts of reflection and speculation, lies what Schlegel identifies as 'divination' (1964, p. 26). Clearly, the project Schlegel is undertaking is to establish a midway point, or a common ground, between two positions. To make 'divination' the midway point between reflection and speculation, in particular reveals something about what Schlegel is attempting to achieve since this midway point, too, holds the ideal and the real in perfect balance. In terms of how to understand divination, however, this would be the fusion between the intellectual and the intuitive, which is not the same as an intellectual intuition but rather is the 'transcendental standpoint'. We know from Schlegel's lectures on transcendental philosophy that 'intellectual intuition', like 'the infinite', is a concept that arises out of 'objective arbitrariness' (1964, p. 23), the first phase in philosophy. The aim, now that there are two identified positions, is to find the middle ground.

In exploring the breakdown down of the formula, we will see what this middle-ground, or balance, represents in terms of the poetic ideal, and in terms of God, and how the ideal and real come to be represented in the poetic form through the integration of fantasy and representation.

Breakdown of Formula

Schlegel's formula reads as follows:

$$\text{The Poetic Ideal} = {}^{1/o} \sqrt{\underline{\text{FSM}}} \; {}^{(1/o} = \text{God} \; {}^{68} \;\text{(see footnote)}$$

$$0$$

The aim in this section is to give a clear analysis of each of the formula's components – the poetic ideal, the middle component of the equation, (which represents a fusion of fantasy, sentimentality and mimeses) and finally 'God'. The strategy is to discuss these variables within the philosophical context from which they have originated and also to consider how they provide a methodological insight into the kind of ascesis identified in this thesis.

As foreshadowed in the introduction, this process will uncover a rich philosophical depth that serves as an immediate statement of the method by which Schlegel hopes to achieve a unification of philosophy and poetry. What will also become apparent is precisely how this formula sustains the thesis that the conjoining of poetry and philosophy is integral to a philosophical ascesis in which knowledge of the Absolute can be more fully approached. Even from the initial

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[68] German: *Das poetishe Ideal* = ${}^{1/o} \sqrt{\underline{\text{FSM}}}$ ${}^{(1/o}$ = **Gott** (F = Fantastischen, S = Sentimentalen and M = Mimischen) (*KA* XVIII, p. xxxv)

presentation of the formula, we can see that Schlegel's placement of the 'poetic ideal' at the beginning of the equation, followed by his engagement with a special conjunction of variables in its mid-section, and then concluding with God, indicates the ascetic nature of engaging with this formula.

The Poetic Ideal

To talk in a meaningful way about the poetic ideal is to discuss it teleologically, in terms of an indicative model or direction. The idea of a poetic ideal arises, in some respects, out of necessity, or at least because of a perceived need to give poetry, in the context of late eighteenth century German literature, a new, more meaningful direction. Schlegel gives preliminary consideration to the poetic ideal in his publication *On the Study of Greek Poetry.*[69] The task Schlegel sets himself in this essay is to convince the reader that if 'modern poetry', is to avoid the pitfalls of bending to an ever-demanding aesthetic appetite, it requires a new directional approach. Already here we can see how Schlegel seeks to appropriate poetry with a view to expand the scope of aesthetics or to push beyond its bounds or indeed, to impose restrictions on it by 'grounding' the poetic process (as was argued in Chapter 1) to the task of extending the epistemic, ontological and ethical understanding of humankind. Schlegel justifies this by arguing that if artists continue to satisfy the need for pleasure that this will eventually lead to poetry plunging into the depths of the bizarre and shocking. To support this argument, Schlegel claims that 'with every pleasure the desires become only more violent;

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[69]   The translation used in this thesis is the 2001 version, by S. Barrett, based on the original 1797 edition.

with every allowance the demands rise ever higher [...] (2001, p. 21). In terms of direction then, Schlegel offers a means by which poetry can, if underpinned by a certain philosophical foundation, determine its way to what he decides must be 'objectivity' (2001, p. 47).

Schlegel later announces that 'there is a poetry whose One and All is the relationship between the ideal and the real: it should thus be called transcendental poetry [...] (1968, p. 145).

In a preliminary way in the introduction, it was pointed out that the term transcendental refers to, as Schlegel indicates in this quote, the relationship between the ideal and real. What Schlegel wants to achieve is a totality in which both the ideal and the real exist, but joined in a continuum. What the transcendental stands for in this context is a type of objectivity that arises out of an acceptance of both ideal and real states as valid, but where neither is favoured. Indeed, this is the 'point of indifference' Schlegel argues exists between consciousness and the infinite, (which will be further elaborated on later in relation to Schlegel's concept of irony). In order that this is possible, Schlegel, as mentioned earlier, requires that the ideal and real are understood as elements constitutive of a continuum rather than as independent absolutes. Only in this way can there be a movement from one to the other and back again. Schlegel insists that these states exist in a reciprocally determined relationship, which means that to strive for one without the other is a striving away from totality. These

conditions underpin Schlegel's understanding of the transcendental in philosophy and poetry. The infinite is infinite but is, at the same time, infinitely finite. Consciousness which consists of the relationship between (using Fichte's language) the 'I' and the 'non-I', originates in the infinite. In turn the infinite originates in consciousness, specifically through the fusion of the 'I' and the 'non-I'.[70]

The transcendental midpoint arises as the poetic ideal manifests itself in poetry as objective beauty. The concept of beauty, and the romantic concept of self-determination in which something emerges according to its own laws, are intimately connected. Objective beauty can only be a product of its own self-determination for much the same reason that (as Schlegel points out) 'life only comes from life, vitality generates vitality' (1968, p. 47). Objective beauty in poetry is only possible if the poet mediates the poetic process through relinquishing personal interest in the subject matter and indeed integrates with the object of contemplation. Objective beauty thus cannot be determined through a subjective experience that involves personal taste nor found simply in 'the eyes of the beholder'. Beauty exists independently, yet not abstractly, because beauty can only become apparent in an object.

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[70]   Extrapolated from my own reading of Schlegel's fragment – *'Aus dem Unendliche entsteht das Bewußtseyn, wenn das Unendliche unendlich endlich wird, Und wenn im Bewußtseyn des Ich und Nichtich, und die Vereinigung der Beyden erreicht ist, entsteht das Unendliche' (KA XII*, p. 25)

The extent to which beauty is the poetic ideal is further evident in the following passage by Schlegel:

> What theory promised, what one sought in Nature, what one hoped to find in each individual idol; what is it other than a *highest form of aesthetic*? The more often the innately human longing for complete satisfaction was deceived by the particular and the changeable (towards whose representation art has thus far been exclusively directed), the more intense and restless it became. Only the universally valid, the abidingly, the necessary – the *objective* – can fill this immense gap; only the beautiful can still this ardent yearning. The beautiful.... is the universally valid object of a disinterested pleasure, which is equally independent of needs and laws, free and yet necessary, wholly purposeless and yet unconditionally purposive (Cited in Chai 2006, p. 42 *KA I* p. 253).

Leon Chai (2006) uses the above excerpt, taken from Schlegel's *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, to illustrate Schlegel's characterisation of modern poetry as 'interesting'. While 'interesting' may seem an unsophisticated term to use, to characterise modern poetry, Schlegel's use of the term highlights the 'aesthetic vitality' that supposedly underpins poetic creativity, particularly in modern poetry, as being basically steeped in subjectivity or more precisely, 'self-*interest*' (2001, pp. 96-97). In his *Literary Fragment 37*, Schlegel argues that so long as a writer remains 'interested' in a subject he cannot fail to produce a partial and therefore limited perspective. If a thought is 'to be soberly expressed' argues Schlegel, the writer must be in some sense detached from it. To be detached requires a withdrawal of self-interest (1968, pp.124-125). Self-interest may be in the form of personal emotions, affectation, or fantastical aspiration simply for the

sake of fantasy. This type of self-interest must not be what is guiding the artist to productivity. Like Hölderlin, Schlegel's goal is to arrive at specific outcomes and as with Hölderlin, Schlegel understands that these outcomes are dependent on an initial conditioning of the poet, which includes overcoming subjectivity so that a work of art can emerge, naturally, so to speak, and be self-determined. Again reminiscent of Hölderlin's poetics, Schlegel too argues that the highest goal for the poet must be to practice a certain degree of self-restraint, 'for wherever we do not restrain ourselves, the world will restrain us; and thus we become its slave' (1968, pp.124-125).

Self-restraint however, is not the same as self-denial. The subject is to remain an important, albeit integrated aspect of the poetic process. Moreover, for the sake of an ascesis, the subject is essential to the integration. As discussed in the previous chapter, objectivity constitutes the integration of self and object. For this reason, like Hölderlin, Schlegel advises against an emotional outpour whereby the artist is only interested in expressing him or her self. This kind of directive, which Novalis might say is 'blatant egotism' (2007, p. 127), is destructive in that it blocks objectivity. While the result may be *interesting*, in terms of the artwork attracting an emotional response, it is certainly not poetically ideal, for it misses the point of unity. In practical terms, the durability of such works of art is negligible for they do not satisfy the principle of universality nor do they meet the task of quietening the incessant yearning for the infinite.

However, in *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, Schlegel argues that while objectivity, or objective beauty, as far as the poetic ideal is concerned, is not explicitly on the agenda of modern poetry, it is nonetheless, subliminally already there. Modern poetry as any other aspect of human activity in the world is subject to and part of a historical unfolding towards revelation of the Absolute or 'the all in all that always is'. Schlegel thus identifies modern poetry to be somewhere in the interim stage between classical poetry and the ideal of romantic poetry in which knowledge of the Absolute reaches its highest peak. The task is thus to 'bridge the gap', so to speak, between these two ideal positions. However, the way Schlegel understands it is that modern poetry, albeit that it has this potential, is not actually striving towards any ideal. It is essentially aimless in its direction. On the other hand, Schlegel acknowledges that modern poetry has an important pedagogical role to play in the transition from the classical to the romantic. While Schlegel suggests that modern poetry is passing through a 'crisis in taste,' he nonetheless argues that 'from what the moderns want, we must learn what poetry should become' and 'from that which the ancients did, what poetry must be' (1968, p. 129). Schlegel goes on to argue that beauty, although a problematic concept, in so far as its 'validity and applicability is for now undecided' is nonetheless an outcome that the individual will eventually achieve. Indeed 'the predominance of the individual leads of its own accord to the objective' argues Schlegel (2001, p. 35). In addition Schlegel understands that 'the interesting is the propaedeutic for the beautiful' and, he says that 'the ultimate goal of modern poetry can be nothing else than the *ne plus ultra of beauty;* a maximum of objective aesthetic perfection' (2001, p. 35).

Schlegel looks to antiquity for examples where the ideal of beauty has been attained. Sophocles for example is hailed as one who has 'thoroughly perfected' the ideal of beauty. Schlegel gives a clue to his understanding of beauty when he describes Sophocles' work as having its components 'thoroughly law-governed' and that the 'individual components of beauty [...] are organised symmetrically' (2001, pp. 62-62).

In Schlegel's view, 'law-governed' thus concerns the internal symmetrical configuration of the artwork, which must be unaffected by the artists personal taste or imposition of regulations that prescribe a structure and form for the artwork (apart from the structure that Schlegel's formula provides of course). The individual components of beauty can be identified as consciousness, and the infinite, and the symmetry of both which is a unified whole. Schlegel gives an added dimension to these by speaking in terms of multiplicity, unity and totality (2001, p. 57) and it is these, symmetrically organised, that gives rise to objectivity. The symmetrical arrangement of these occurs in accord with each component having the 'same unconditioned value' (2001, p. 57) within the whole.

Schlegel admires and respects the ancient Greek poets for their ability to coordinate these components successfully and in doing so attain the ideal of beauty. However, while Schlegel may look to antiquity with respect and admiration he does not have the inclination to emulate the achievements of the ancient poets, nor is he inclined to pick up where they left off. As far as Schlegel

is concerned, ancient poetry is complete unto itself. Indeed the poetic ideal that Schlegel argues is the destiny of the modern era differs from that of the ancients in that it must incorporate a degree of historical realism: 'Any play you see' says Schlegel, 'if it has a witty plot you can be almost sure has a true story as its source' (1968, p. 100). Schlegel advances thus the theory that romantic poetry differs from ancient poetry in that it originates partly in true historical knowledge, whereas ancient poetry remains firmly entrenched in mythology (1968, p. 100). In addition, 'romantic' is not a term to describe a particular genre – it is an element which, says Schlegel, 'maybe more or less dominant or recessive, but can never be 'entirely absent' (1968, p. 101). Therefore he concludes that all poetry should be romantic, be it tragedy, elegy, lyrical prose or verse, and it should be able to strike a romantic chord, so to speak, and to elevate the subject matter beyond the realm of relativity so that it is objectively revealing and thus universally valid.

A seemingly contradictory situation arises, however, when one takes into account Schlegel's claim that '[a] perfect project should simultaneously be entirely subjective and entirely objective' (1968, p. 134). The immediate question that comes to mind is how is it that something can be 'entirely' subjective and at the same time be 'entirely' objective; is it not the case that one 'entirety' cancels out another? That objectivity encompasses an entire realm of subjectivity is difficult to grasp, even in terms of an integrated reality of subject and object. How should one contemplate this seeming contradiction?

This question is best answered by introducing Schlegel's concept of irony, a term that belongs decisively to the conceptual framework supporting the poetic ideal of objectivity.

'Irony' as informing the poetic ideal

Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert argues that 'irony is a sort of play that reveals limitations of a view of reality that presumed to have the last word. With the use of romantic irony, Schlegel showed that there was no last word' (2007, p. 168). This perspective certainly helps to clarify the above seemingly contradictory integration of that which is simultaneously 'entirely' subjective and 'entirely' objective, in that it highlights the open-endedness of reality. The term open-endedness is used to suggest that both the subjective and the objective are valid perspectives. It reiterates the dialectical and reciprocal interplay between the totality of the eternal and the finite; the Absolute and the limits of consciousness. However, what is still ultimately the goal is that these two perspectives are held in a harmonious balance, and so we need to think of an overarching objectivity that encompasses this dialectic. In his lectures on transcendental philosophy, Schlegel refers to a point of indifference [*Indifferenz-Punkt*],[71] which exists in the balance of these two perspectives. Schlegel uses the point of indifference to emphasise precisely the reciprocal nature of this relationship. Consciousness and infinity

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[71]   Extrapolated from my own reading of the German text: '*Realität ist der Indifferenz-Punkt zwischen beyden. Nur für das Bewußtseyn hat das Bewußtseyn Realität außer dem Bewußtseyn Das Bewußtseyn ist nothwending, weil ich durch ein mögliches Bewußtseyn zugleich ein wirkliches setze, und das ist nothwendig, was durch seine Möglichkeit wirklich ist (Schlegel, KAXII, p. 6).*

exist in virtue of each other and in virtue of this relation, they validate each other. Millán-Zaibert's comments serve as a useful preliminary understanding of irony, for it is indeed the case that Schlegel's irony serves to function as a poetic device that reveals the best approximation of the underlying nature of reality, which as disclosed through the representation of the reciprocal interaction discussed above, is ironic.

Using the concept of irony in this way we can see that Schlegel makes a clear and decisive move away from a traditional understanding of irony that functions purely as a literary device. In keeping with his own metaphysical perspective, Schlegel gives irony a new philosophical meaning. This is not to say that irony is no longer a literary device; on the contrary, irony becomes for Schlegel a necessary ingredient in the formulation of what today is regarded as characteristically romantic literature. In fact, it has been suggested that the concept ironic and 'romantic' (as in the context of early German Romanticism) are 'identical' (Behler 1993, p.141) or, so very close in meaning that a work which is devoid of irony is simply not a romantic work. In which case, a work that is devoid of irony, does not meet the poetic ideal.

Metaphysically speaking, Schlegel argues that 'irony is a clear consciousness of an eternal agility, of the infinitely abundant chaos' (1968, p. 155). By this, Schlegel means that irony reflects and makes apparent something very fundamental about the universe, namely, that the universe is itself ironic. It is

ironic because of the 'eternal agility of the infinitely abundant chaos' the unconditioned or 'that confusion out of which a world can arise' argues Schlegel (1968, p. 155). That the unconditioned should be characterised as eternally agile refers to the fact that the Absolute is dynamic and perpetually giving rise to conditioned particularity existing temporally within an eternal network of becoming. Irony arises from the fact that the particular does not share in the same eternal agility from which it originates, since it has a finite existence, yet it is dependent on that 'eternal agility' for its very existence. A further infusion of irony arises from the fact that the infinite, by the same token, is dependent, on the limited particularity of the finite for the contrastive basis from which an awareness of the infinite (contra the finite) can even arise. Indeed the infinite becomes the object of consciousness while consciousness becomes the subject of infinity and the two combined, form a closed sphere.[72]

This is the irony of which Schlegel speaks and which he wants to emulate in poetry, in which case poetry must deal with this reciprocity, this eternal agility within the sphere of being a representational event. In relation to the contradiction referred to earlier between the all-encompassing objectivity and the all-encompassing subjectivity, it is beauty that is the manifestation of the balance between objectivity and subjectivity. This is because perfect symmetry, the point of indifference, finds its expression in beauty. On one hand, it conveys the eternal

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[72]   Extraploated from my own reading of the German text *'Das einzige Objekt des Bewußtseyns ist das Unendliche, und das einzige Pradikat des Unendlichen ist Bewußtseyn. Die Beyden Elemente machen eine geschlossene Sphare ...'* *(Schlegel, KAXII, p. 6)*.

and universal and on the other, it conveys finitude. The two come together, as does everything else, in a symmetrical alliance but not at the expense of what each is. Beauty like the infinite is dependent on the particular; indeed it cannot be revealed without it.

But to explore the concept of irony a little further, particularly in relation to how it serves to reveal the Absolute, or the abundant chaos as it was characterised in the previous paragraph, it is useful to refer to an article by Georgia Albert entitled 'Understanding Irony: Three essais on Friedrich Schlegel' (1993). In this very comprehensive analysis of Schlegel's theory of irony Albert points out that Schlegel alludes to irony as the '*epideixis* of the infinite, of universality, of the sense of the universe' (*KFSA XVIII:128* cited in Albert 1993, p. 827). In deciding on the significance of this reference, Albert alerts the reader to an excerpt from the introduction to Schlegel's translation of the *Epitaph of Lysias*, in which Schlegel relates the concept of *epideixis* to a kind of speech that 'lets the ability of the orator shine before an assembly of listeners or readers' (*KFSA 1:141*, Cited in Albert p. 828). Albert acknowledges that the link is not immediately obvious but ultimately by drawing a parallel between the function of irony and the function of *epeidixis* in Greek literature, he demonstrates that irony is in some sense proof of the Absolute. That is in Greek literature, the content of the speech is unimportant in comparison to what it demonstrates; likewise is the content of irony. That is to say, the particulars that determine the ironic are irrelevant to the demonstration of the Absolute, just like the content of the speech is irrelevant to the demonstration of the speaker's oratory skills. Albert makes an even more direct link by arguing

that 'irony *means* infinity by representing it [...] by reproducing its structure' which he goes on to identify as the structure that is 'the paradox of constitutive and irreducible self-contradiction, of a simultaneous co-presence of mutually exclusive elements' (1993, p.828).

In a second attempt at presenting irony as expressing the fundamental nature of the Absolute, Albert cites Schlegel's claim that irony takes on the form of a 'permanent *parabasis*' (*Fragment 668, KFSA XVIII: 25* cited in Albert 1993, p. 840). The original meaning of this concept again derives from ancient Greece where it is used to characterise a disruption in a play. The chorus disrupts the flow of the narrative by turning to the audience, and, according to Schlegel supposedly 'in the name of the poet' (1993, p. 840) steps up close to the edge of the stage and speaks in a rude and unexpected manner to the audience (1993, p. 840). The allusion to irony as *permanent parabasis* is thus an illustration of irony as a continuous interruption, but as Albert quite rightly identifies, it is equally a demonstration of the conflict between the real and the ideal. In a play, the interruption achieves the purpose of reminding the audience that what they are viewing is in fact fiction. That the chorus moves close to the audience and speaks to them about things that are totally unrelated to the plot, but reveal in the process something about the author of the play. If we relate this to ontological revelation, for example, we can for a moment suppose that the author of the play is the Absolute and the characters are all particulars engaged in the plot of existence itself. As the particulars engage and interact in cultural, religious, political and social activities, irony interrupts 'the plot' so to speak, and reveals something over

and above the normal everyday engagement with the world. On one level, just as

the function *parabasis* in the play reveals the author of the play, so irony reveals

something about the underlying principle of existence. On a more immediately

perceptible level, irony demonstrates time and again that certainty is relative and

subject to contradiction while absolute knowledge is inaccessible. This is because

as Schlegel argues, 'it contains and incites a feeling of the insoluble conflict of the

absolute and relative, of the impossibility and the necessity of complete

communication' (1968, p. 113).

Indeed this is the function of irony, and in relation to where we started, namely,

the poetic ideal, we can see how it, through its expression, serves to help shape

this ideal.

The middle component...　　　1/0 $\sqrt{\dfrac{\text{FSM (0}}{0}}$

The **FSM**, divided by the **0**, is a combinatorial formulation representing the fusion

of absolute fantasy, absolute sentimentality[73] and absolute mimesis which in their

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[73]　'Sentimentality' is the English translation of the German 'Sentimentalität', yet as we will see later when it is discussed more fully, the English translation does not adequately represent the meaning in the Schlegel context. Indeed, even the German word Sentimentalität has proved to be problematic for Schlegel. In his 'Letter about the Novel', Schlegel seeks to clarify dissociate the meaning of the word, with its more common usage. He argues – 'Forget for a moment the usual notorious meaning of the sentimental, by which one understands almost everything which, in a shallow way, is maudlin and lachrymose and full of those familiar noble feelings whose awareness makes people

respective and individual representations are what Schlegel identifies as *poetischen ideen* (*KAXVI*, p.148) but in their compounded structure, which is constitutive of interdependent relations, represent in unity the poetic ideal. The $^1/_0$ stands for infinity (*Unendlichkeit, eg. Schlegel, KAXVII 1963, p. 156*)) and the symbol $_0$ on its own, as it is placed below FSM, stands for 'absolute', (according to Eichner, 1957, p. 12) or 'pure' [*reines*] (eg. *Schlegel, KAVIII*, 1963, p. 237). The word *absolute* is itself often enough placed in front of fantasy, sentimentality and mimesis throughout Schlegel's notebooks and used in this way to indicate the individual element in its purest form. From this we can draw the inference that the FSM with the symbol representing 'absolute', must then indicate that the composite, while structured according to inherently reciprocal relations, retains, as a composite, the characteristic of absoluteness.

When thinking of what 'absolute' means however, in the context of early Romanticism, it must be kept in mind, that while it signifies the 'highest and the ultimate' (as Novalis notes, 2007, p. 195), it remains relative, at least when instanced as a particular. Even though romanticism is about making 'absolute' (Novalis 1997, p. 124) and poetry, (again, according to Novalis) is the 'truly absolute real' (1997, p. 117), none-the-less, an absolute of anything, in and of itself, is unattainable.

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without character feel so unspeakably happy and great' (1968, p. 99). More will be revealed about Schlegel's use of the word as the chapter unfolds).

We can speculate that for this reason Schlegel places the mathematical 'root' symbol strategically against the FSM combination in order to emphasise the infinite process of creativity and the infinite and eternal Absolute. Indeed, the 'root' symbol is given the index of infinity (1/0), so as to express the sum as infinitely squaring the root of FSM/0. The equation may thus be read as the infinite square root of the combination of absolute fantasy, sentimentality and mimesis is equal to the poetic ideal and to God.

The effect of the equation, including the mathematical symbolism[74], is an impression of 'infinite approximation' or the 'eternally becoming' essence of romantic poetry as prescribed by Schlegel in *Fragment 116*. Thus, the 'poetic ideal' that marks the beginning of this equation is for Schlegel equal to (=) the infinite root of FSM - fantasy, sentimentality and mimesis and at the same time is equal to God. While it is plausible to infer from this that the poetic ideal must have the characteristic of eternally becoming, how this theory sits in the face of what is also perceived as the *indivisibility* of the Absolute presents as problematic. In Hölderlin, for instance it is clear that the Absolute is indivisible and that judgment – the source of subject and object – is an activity that destroys in

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[74]   Eichner prefers to read the equation stripped of its 'pseudo-mathematical symbolism' (1970, p. 65 and suggests further that the 'root' symbol may be left to speculation. However, I have chosen to include the mathematical symbolism as a significant aspect of the equation, for it emphasizes the nature, in particular, of the 'infinite approximation' characteristic of romantic poetry. Further evidence to suggest that Schlegel's use of mathematical symbolism is purposeful can be found in his literary aphorisms, for example, when there is one in which he argues that a 'good preface must be the root and the square of the book at the same time' (1968, p. 121). Admittedly, the interpretation of this may also be left to speculation, it is nonetheless fitting to think that the root sign, particularly when indexed with the symbol for infinity, represents, what I have expressed it does, infinite approximation' or the 'eternally becoming' essence of romantic poetry.

essence what the Absolute is. For this reason Hölderlin concludes that subject and object are not identical to the Absolute. It is the same for Schlegel and Novalis – divisibility is characteristic of 'world' and indeed is the source of 'world' but not of the Absolute. For this reason it would be problematic to accept the equal signs in this equation as suggesting identity with God. Indeed, the 'poetic ideal' is not identical with God. What is at work in the realm of the poetic ideal is the representation of God but not the becoming of God or God itself, albeit that God is the ultimate destiny of humankind.[75] God as the conclusion to this equation will be discussed a little later.

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[75] While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to venture into the exploration of identity theory in regards to this problem it is worth while however to point to Frank's mention of the 'identity theory of predication', in relation to Hölderlin's and Schelling's thinking. The idea is that in 'predicative propositions that which is signalled by the subject-term, does not mean the same thing as (hence is not identical to) that for which the predicate stands' (Frank 2004, p. 90). If we assume that Schlegel's equation is a predicative proposition, then we could perhaps apply these rules. This would mean that God is predicated to the poetic ideal but not identical with it. If we call the poetic ideal A and God B then to say (according to the rules Frank has identified) A = B or rather A is B then what we are really saying is that A is in part B and in part not B. Frank explains that this is the case because of the synthetic quality of what A is. What needs to be taken into account in this instance is also whether or not the predication is formal or contingent – can we have a poetic ideal without God? Or vice versa, can we have God without the poetic ideal? To be sure, we cannot have either without the centre of this equation and that is the actual dynamism that gives rise to the poetic ideal that represents God.

Fantasy[76], Sentimentality and Mimesis

From the way the equation is presented we can deduce that fantasy, sentimentality and mimesis are compounded in a reciprocal regulatory relationship. Fantasy and mimesis are representational in their function and as such originate with the imagination: fantasy is functional as productive, and mimesis is functional as reproductive. Sentimentality (which Schlegel also identifies as love) is the unifying force that binds these two together. Fantasy represents the ideal and mimesis represents the real.

In *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, Schlegel at one point identifies fantasy as the 'organ' of poetry. In other words it is the form in which poetry finds its expression. Independently, that is, apart from Schlegel's equation, fantasy describes a particular genre of poetry where the imagination is used without constraint in an effort to conjure imagery that is as far as possible, unrelated to reality. But left unconditioned, that is, apart from the FSM mix, it can lead just as

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[76]   Fantasy (*Fantasie*) and imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) while ostensibly different words are used fairly consistently as synonymous in English translations of German texts. Yet there is evidence, although by no means clear, suggestive of a discrepancy between the two concepts. In Novalis for instance, the imagination presents as fantasy only when it deals with memory, but when it deals with the intellect, it presents as 'the power of thought' (Novalis 2007, p. 48). What is clear however is that the imagination is 'the ability to represent' and as far as Novalis is concerned, the 'power to represent is the ability to imagine' (Novalis 2003, p. 121), and as such, representation can either be of the real, in which case it is reproductive imagination or the ideal in which case it is productive imagination. Recalling Novalis' move to align fantasy with his magical idealism, we can now discern that is thus a manner in which the imagination is engaged. As far as Schlegel's formula is concerned, the F stands quite clearly for *Fantasie*, so for the sake of understanding Schlegel's equation it must be taken as the imagination engaging in a productive way with the ideal.

This is the understanding that I use to guide me in the analysis of Schlegel's equation.

easily to the grotesque as it can to the beautiful and thus miss entirely the orientation towards the poetic ideal. For this reason Schlegel has placed fantasy in a reciprocal functional relation with sentimentality and with mimesis. We have seen in Chapter 1, how the imagination and, for that matter, reflection, are common to both philosophy and poetry and indeed provide the means by which these two modes are linked. We can see how Schlegel's formula captures this relation. Here too, the FSM is a continuum made up of the variation between two modes, but because they are linked, each serves to ground the other.

Mimesis (*absolut Mimik*) means the same as imitation or representation, yet the way in which Schlegel envisages its operation within the poetic ideal where it is in its reciprocal relation with fantasy, is surprisingly different from what we would expect of a mimetic function in say, the representational arts, where the aesthetic value in particular of what is represented is at issue. While it is true that on one level it is the component in the mix that makes an artwork accessible by anchoring it to the history of a people, as well as nature, on a second level, mimesis in its intimate relation with fantasy opens up access to the divine. Indeed, now it represents the divine (Eichner 1956, p. 1025). Apart from this primary purpose, mimesis functions also to simultaneously curb and stimulate fantasy, disabling pure fantasy, yet enabling originality in the form of genius (discussed below). It is not in the mix to stifle fantasy but only to regulate it. As such, mimesis is for Schlegel the element in the mix that actually allows a work to become autonomously objective. The significance of this is expressed in the following passage from *On the Study of Greek Poetry* in which Schlegel argues that:

Even the term 'imitation' is insulting and is denounced by all those who imagine themselves to be born geniuses. Understood by this term is, in fact, the violence that a strong and great nature exerts on the powerless. But I know of no other word than *imitation* to describe the action of those – be they artist or expert – who appropriate themselves the legitimacy of that prototype, without allowing themselves to be restricted by the peculiarity that the outward form, the husk of the universal spirit, may still carry with it. It is self-evident that this imitation is utterly impossible to achieve without the greatest autonomy. I speak here of the *disclosure of the beautiful* by means the expert comes into contact with the artist, and by means the artist comes into contact with the divine. This is much like the magnet that does not just attract iron but, rather, imparts magnetic force through contact. (2001, pp. 47-48)

In the first instance the implication is that mimesis is not in any way derogatory in terms of it being a blemish in the face of genius. It does not impede genius. Indeed if we take into account Novalis' theory that 'when we speak of the external world, when we depict real objects, then we are acting as genius does' (1997, p. 26), it is immediately obvious that it in fact helps to define genius. In which case, mimesis is especially linked to perspicuity, which means one is not only making an accurate observation of the appearance of something but also representing that which is not immediately obvious. This, as was suggested earlier, is the function also of irony. Genius is, quoting Novalis again, 'the acute use of acuity' which ultimately includes also 'treating imaginary objects like real ones' (1997, p. 26). In other words the genius has a penetrative gaze; its insights are not limited to the external world but penetrate 'the husk of the universal spirit' (1997, p. 26) in order to reveal the truly beautiful, which is that which persists in all incarnations –

the divine spirit. Having said that however, mimesis apart from fantasy and sentimentality, cannot fulfil this ontological function.

Turning now to the unifying principle - sentimentality.

In his *Dialogue on Poetry*, Schlegel provides the reader with a clear definition of sentimentality. The definition reads as follows:

> What then is this sentimental? It is that which appeals to us, where feeling prevails, and to be sure not in a sensual but a spiritual feeling. The source and soul of all these emotions is love, and the spirit of love must hover everywhere invisibly visibly in romantic poetry. This is what is meant by this definition. As Diderot so comically explains in *The Fatalist,* the gallant passions which one cannot escape in the works of the moderns from the epigram to tragedy are the least essential, or more, they are not even the external letter of that spirit; on occasion they are simply nothing or something very unlovely and loveless. No, it is the sacred breath which, in the tones of music, moves us. It cannot be grasped forcibly and comprehended mechanically, but it can be amiably lured by mortal beauty and veiled in it. The magic words of poetry can be infused with and inspired by its power. But in the poem in which it is not everywhere present nor could be everywhere, it certainly does not exist at all. It is an infinite being and by no means does it cling and attach its interest only to person, events situations, and individual inclinations; for the true poet all this – no matter how intensely it embraces his soul – is only a hint at something higher, the infinite, a hieroglyph of the one eternal love and the sacred fullness of life of a creative nature. (1968, p. 100)

Sentimentality is thus a unifying principle sourced by love and not anything that is linked with self-interest in terms of personal attachment and heightened emotions. Being sourced by love, it is the element in poetry that raises the work to a higher level. In terms of the equation it is the ingredient that enables a work to pass the test of eternal validity. It either exists in an artwork or it does not. It cannot exist by degree. Schlegel also argues that the function of sentimentality in romantic poetry provides it with a key difference to ancient poetry, and in this respect, modern poetry. Sentimentality does not discern between play and seriousness, for example or appearance and truth and enables a work of art to represent reality in conjunction with a fresh interpretation of reality, unlike in ancient times when even a tragedy is, for all its seriousness, still only a play that is grounded in mythology. Romantic poetry in contrast, is built on historical foundations, meaning that it is based on an existing or past event (Schlegel 1968, p. 100). Historical themes are then treated romantically with an infusion of love sourced sentimentality so that the audience is moved, but not through the invocation of pity for example. Rather through the recognition of the divine, the audience is lifted to a higher level of appreciation and understanding of wholeness and are able to identify themselves with the artist and artwork in a universal manner, for they are themselves drawn into it. If sentimentality is not sourced by love, the audience may respond emotionally, for example, with pity or with joy, but are not moved beyond this personal affectation.

As unifier, love sourced sentimentality brings together the other elements in the equation, namely fantasy and mimesis. The intricacies of this event represent in

effect a microcosmic likeness to the universe, where the whole universe is, as Schlegel describes it, a 'poem of the godhead.'[77] Poetry, whether we speak of it in terms of the poem of the godhead, or an artwork, is according to Schlegel's formula, an ordered structure. The ordering is initiated and held together by sentimentality sourced by love. As such it resembles quite closely Hölderlin's 'poetic spirit,' (Chapter 4) which we have seen, is also a unifying principle, as is the concept of remembrance, (Chapter 3). For Schlegel sentimentality as love imbues fantasy to ideally connect with mimesis and arrive at an elevated position – the newly and ideally created. In the 'poem of the godhead' this is an eternal and infinite occurrence; in poetry, it must also be eternal and infinite.

Schlegel makes the following claim in *Talk on Mythology*: '[…] the highest beauty, indeed the highest order is yet only that of chaos, namely of such a one that waits only for the touch of love to unfold as a harmonious world' (1968, p. 82). Implicit in this claim is that sentimentality, if we accept that it is sourced by love, is then the component in the synthesis that brings it to order. Nonetheless, order and chaos belong to each other and one does not make sense without the other – therefore the interplay between fantasy, mimesis and sentimentality remains reciprocally regulatory. This is so because 'order' does not cancel out chaos in the sense that chaos no longer exists, rather it transforms it, but in the instant of transformation there is again, chaos. Chaos is infinite and therefore is infinitely ordered; love too, is infinite and therefore infinitely ordering.

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[77]   Schlegel, cited in Lacoue-Labarthe & Nancy (1988) p. 93, '[…] that one poem of the Godhead of which we too are part and flower – the earth.'

In the following section, the difficult concept of God is considered. In relation the thesis topic, it is in God that finally the philosophical ascesis rests.

God

Schlegel places 'God' on the conclusive, right hand side of the equation, and we will assume that this is a strategic move, since God, in the romantic context is the final destiny of humankind. Indeed, Schlegel suggests that it is through a world that God comes into being.[78] This suggests that God must be the result, in part, of the efforts of humankind, although this does not mean that humankind creates God. Only through absolute freedom does humankind become God and thereby also become immortal[79], however, striving to become God is eternally progressive implying that God as the destiny of humankind is unachievable. On the other hand, Schlegel presents us with the idea that God is both infinite and finite[80] leaving us with the impression that knowledge of God is possible in and through the temporal world. Schlegel argues however that God does not exist exclusively in either the 'I' or the 'not-I.' In this case Novalis' conception this time, that God presents as something like a 'sphere' that encompasses both the self as the 'act which posits the I' and the other, in so far as it is the antithesis, namely the

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[78]   Extrapolated from my own reading of the following fragment: *'Gott ist die Liebe, das ist weining gesagt; aber Gott ist eine Universum von Liebe und ein Roman von Welten, das ist sehr bedteutend. Gott wird durch die Welt geschaffen.'* (*KA XVIII* 1963, ,Zur Religion. 1798'. fr. 23, p. 327)

[79]   Ibid, p. 330, *,Frey ist man, wenn man Gott macht und dardurch wird man unsterblich'* but at the same time Schlegel claims that *,Gott kann nur geschaffen werden'*

[80]   Ibid, p. 329 – *'Gott is nicht bloß undendlich, er ist auch unendlich'*

'independent [according to Novalis] Not-I' (Novalis 2003, p. 7), gives us a comprehensible impression of God in the current context.

But while God is posited as an all 'encompassing sphere', it nonetheless is in itself, unconditional and therefore independent of either of these two connected components that are supposedly encompassed by this sphere. Evidence for this claim is found in the following passage for instance, where Novalis boldly asserts that: 'Henceforth one must separate God and nature – God has nothing to do with nature – He is the goal of nature' (2007, p. 9). Already in this assertion we have an enormous step away from Spinoza's pantheism. God as the goal of nature, which includes the goal and destiny for human beings is, in other words, the ultimate reality for all. Both Schlegel and Novalis have a strong belief that it is the destiny of both nature and human beings to become God. Indeed Schlegel makes the observation that 'every good man progressively becomes God' (1968, p. 146). This is an innate tendency that must come from God itself. This means that God is an underlying principle, ultimate reality. On the other hand, as we will see in Chapter 6, in relation to *Bildung* and the moral education of humankind, in this context, God as such can do little to influence the will of the individual. While it may be the case that every human strives progressively to become God, ultimately this is dependent on human will, not God's will.

God also translates according to Novalis as 'love.' In turn, 'love is the highest reality – the primal foundation' (2007, p. 12). The paradox remains however, and

as previously mentioned while humans strive to become God, they can never become God. This paradox is also addressed in Chapter 6 as part of the discussion on *Bildung* and the moral education of humankind, but a preliminary remark to be made here is simply to say that according to Novalis 'God is neither free nor moral' (2003, p. 52). If we accept this proposition, then the ultimate goal envisaged for humanity by Schlegel and Novalis must fall short of either becoming God, since the highest achievement for human being is to become the ideal moral being – to be authentically free, or, that finally to become God is simultaneously an overcoming of being human in the world. A final but very revealing point to be made here is provided by Novalis when he contrasts the philosophical aspirations of Fichte and Spinoza respectively, while himself positing an alternative goal. That is, Novalis makes the claim that 'Spinoza ascended as far as nature – Fichte to the I, or the person' and 'I [Novalis], to the thesis God' (2003, p. 55). In other words what Novalis is pointing to is something that neither Spinoza's monistic view of nature nor Fichte's Absolute I, in themselves, represent. In so far as Fichte's principle of the Absolute is concerned it falls short of Novalis's God as does Spinoza's pantheism, albeit that, at least in Schlegel's equation, God equates with nature. Since these oppositions represent respectively a form of idealism and realism, it follows that for Novalis and Schlegel, it is God, the 'middle way' that must represent the fusion, or the transcendence of the particularity, of the two. Ultimately this amounts to what has already been mentioned in the introductory chapter that God is a 'complete concurrence of idealism and realism [...] transformation of the one into the other' (Novalis 2007, p. 114); indeed, we could say that God is the 'Poetic Ideal'.

Conclusion

The key objective in this chapter was to demonstrate how Schlegel's formula, which Eichner argues provides us with a summary of his entire poetics, serves as a prime example of how the structures of poetry, when appropriated, can support a philosophical ascesis in which the self and reality are an integrated totality. This totality is a continuum in which opposing forces are harmoniously interrelated, a continuum that displaces what would otherwise be an antagonism, or an irresolvable rift between two opposing positions; idealism and realism. Schlegel in his formula wants to prove that these positions are reconcilable, at least (quasi) mathematically, and aims at the in-between point – the poetic ideal, the 'point of indifference' – indeed, that which is equal to God. As such, the equilibrium established through the integration of ideal and real states in to a continuum exemplifies or represents God.

In unravelling Schlegel's formula the interrelatedness and interdependence also of the philosophical and the poetic processes discussed in Chapter 1, are revealed. Indeed, to this end, this formula represents an embodiment of the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy, also described in Chapter 1.

Therefore, not only is poetry and philosophy unified in the initial preparatory sense, that is to say, that philosophy provides for poetry a direction while poetry provides for philosophy an extension to its investigative and expressive power, but Schlegel has gone further by seeking to incorporate into the very form of

poetry, a philosophical structure. In this way the reciprocal relationship is kept alive within the poetic product. In other words, the philosophical aspect is built into the poetic formula to provide, for instance, a safeguard for fantasy, or at least to keep it in check. What Schlegel seeks also to achieve with this formula, in so far as the poetic work is concerned, is symmetry, consistency and coherence. The ingredient that enables this is sentimentality (as love), which much like Hölderlin's 'third tendency' is the unifier, the element that seeks harmony.

With respect to 'God' we can see that within the context of Schlegel's formula some issues arise since whatever happens on the other side of the equation cannot be equal to God, at least not in an 'identical' way, since God in the romantic context is and remains a goal, and an unattainable one at that.

As to the effectiveness of Schlegel's formula we might say that, much in the same way as Hölderlin's efforts can do no more than present a context in which an arrival at a metaphorical representation is possible, so too, Schlegel's formula can do no more than provide for poetry (and for philosophy for that matter), a prescription of how to arrive at the best structural reflection of God. The difference is, however, that Schlegel, in accord with his attempt at empirical calculation of the God, strives for an infinite approximation, whereas Hölderlin strives for an accurate representation, which includes a conscious experience, of unity. In each case however, it is clear that Schlegel with his formula and indeed his and Novalis' theory of romantic poetry as does Hölderlin with his tonal theory,

expand the scope of the philosophical by lending philosophy an added dimension in which to experience the problematic nature of the Absolute. This is the ultimate aim that Schlegel's formulaic approach attempts to represent, while at the same time it demonstrating what Schlegel has already determined theoretically, that the very essence of the Absolute is that it is eternally becoming and therefore unfathomable. For this reason we see that Schlegel is not preoccupied, as is Hölderlin, with incorporating into poetry structures that support a metaphorical representation of an 'intellectual intuition'. Schlegel's concern lies more directly with formulating 'eternal becoming' which in order for poetry to qualify as accurately representing the Absolute, it must itself be, 'eternally becoming'.

As far as poetry and philosophical ascesis is concerned, Schlegel's formula as was suggested from the outset represents a philosophical ascesis in an equation.

POETRY and the MORAL EDUCATION of HUMANKIND[81]

The Romantic Adaptation of *Bildung*

Morality must be the core of our existence if it is to be for us what it wants to be. Its end, its origin must be the ideal of being.

(Novalis 2003, p. 165)

The key argument in this chapter is as follows: The romantic adaptation and appropriation of *Bildung* encapsulates the aspiration for the cultivation of a uniquely 'free' and 'moral' society in which, individuals flourish, both independently and interdependently, but in harmonious unity. Ultimately, this state of being finds its expression and facilitation in and through (romantic)

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[81]   I have used the term 'humankind' as a term that encompasses all human beings, collectively and individually. While Schlegel, Novalis, and Hölderlin seek the education of humankind or *Menschheit* ('Mankind', humanity), it does not preclude the moral education of individual beings e.g. Schlegel: 'every good being is progressively becoming God'. The final aspiration is for the 'ideal of being', which in this thesis is interpreted as the final goal of humankind as a collective. It would be false to assume that an individual alone can attain this goal, since, the romantic perception is that an individual is the microcosm of the entire universe, which means that if the attainment of ideal being is possible for the individual apart from the whole, this would contradict the nature of the universe as a reflective totality. However, this tension is not resolved in this chapter.

poetry. We have already seen in previous chapters how poetry functions to deal with philosophical issues such as the structure of consciousness and the philosophical expansion concerning the Absolute. The application of Schlegel's formula and Hölderlin's tonal theory are two ways in which this philosophical expansion is envisaged to occur. Indeed the moral education of humankind is integral to the philosophical expansion that occurs in and through poetry. For this reason, Novalis argues that 'morality must be the core of our existence, if it is to be for us what it wants to be. Its end, its origin, must be the *ideal of being'* (2003, p. 165). In conjunction with this, Novalis further claims that 'all knowledge should produce morality' and 'the moral drive, the drive toward freedom occasions knowledge' (2003, p. 164)[82], and indeed that '[t]he highest philosophy is ethics' (2003, p. 165).

The ultimate vision is that poetry unified with philosophy transcends the literal realm and becomes, as it were, the 'living theory of life'[83], a state in which human being is finally free, thriving in wholeness in the epitome of its own ideal. Schlegel and Novalis optimistically refer to this as the 'Golden Age'[84]. It is the

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[82]   What does not fit quite into the discussion at this stage is that Novalis makes this comment as part of a discussion concerning the inherent capacity of 'all being, being in general' to be free which correlates with the activity of oscillation between extremes 'that necessarily are to be united and necessarily are to be separated'. The purpose of footnoting this is to keep in mind the connection between freedom, which is essentially about not resisting the inherent oscillation between extremes and morality (Novalis 2003, p. 164)

[83]   Novalis (1997): '[...] just as his life is real philosophy, so his philosophy is ideal life — the living theory of life [...]', p. 52

[84]   Although there is evidence of an inconsistency in regard to pinpointing a precise interpretation of the Golden Age, which will be explained towards the end of this chapter.

age in which 'the revolutionary desire to realise God's Kingdom here on earth' finally comes to pass (Schlegel 1968, p. 144). It is the age in which Novalis argues, 'man will be a perfect and total instrument of *self*' (2007, p. 47). Schlegel's vision for a society in which a 'genuinely free and educated man should be able to tune himself, as one tunes a musical instrument absolutely arbitrarily at his convenience [...]' (1968, p. 127) argues for the very same ideal. These claims and aspirations support the determination to unite poetry and philosophy in a symbiotic relationship for the sake of a profound philosophical ascesis, for indeed it is in and through such integration that ideal moral being, will emerge. Schlegel argues for example that *Bildung*, as poesy[85] [*poesie*], combines the art of morals and the science of philosophy.[86] Ultimately, however, the moral education of humankind follows a self determined path that is fully reliant on an internal persuasion the direction of which is decisively soteriological. Even so,

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[85]   It is worthwhile to quote here an extract from Novalis' *Das Allgemeine Brouillon*, in which he gives a definition of poesy. As will become apparent, this definition serves well to support the meaning of poesy in the current context, particularly the last sentence:

> Poesy is directly related to language. Contrary to what those gentlemen would have us believe, "aesthetics" is not such a bad expression – however, "the theory of beauty" seems the best expression to me.
>
> [...]
>
> In general, one can include all the stages of linguistic technology under the expression "poesy". Correctness, clarity, purity, completeness, and order are predicates or characteristics of the lower genera of poesy. Beauty is above all the ideal, the goal – the possibility – the purpose of poesy' (Novalis 2007, p. 127).

[86]   Extrapolated from my own reading of the German text '*Die Moral soll am meisten als Kunst behandelt werden, Philosophy als wissenschaft, Poesie als Bildung als Beider*' (Schlegel *KAXVIII*, p. 199).

Schlegel and Novalis make it their task to contribute to the facilitation of *Bildung*[87].

The strategy of this chapter is to firstly turn to Hölderlin to view his standing within the scheme of this particular aspect of the romantic project. While the moral education of humankind is more explicit in early German Romanticism, Hölderlin nonetheless, shares in a similar aspiration, which we cannot ignore in the context of this thesis. After this the early German Romantic concept of *Bildung*, its meaning and utility is discussed. Following this is an exploration of the concept morality in terms of its adaptation by Schlegel and Novalis to fit their romantic agenda. The overall discussion involves clarifying conceptual aspects of the romantic philosophy underpinning their particular aspiration for moral education, especially the relationship between the concepts of human freedom, and self-determination. This will include an analysis of the paradoxical pedagogy which confronts the self-determined moral society of free individuals.

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[87] Indeed in the context of facilitating a new religion, Schlegel and Novalis pay particular attention to their personal role in the facilitation and initiation of this new religion. Referring again to the pedagogical component, it has been argued that Schlegel and Novalis even 'had at the time a powerful messianic thrust' (Riasanovsky 1992, p.59). This argument is derived from Schlegel's aspiration as he expressed it in a letter to Novalis that he wanted to 'found a new religion' or at least 'help to proclaim it' and that the aim of his literary project 'is to write a new Bible and to follow the footsteps of Mohammed and Luther' (Cited, 1992, p. 60).

Hölderlin's standpoint on moral education

Evidence suggests that, just like Schlegel and Novalis, Hölderlin recognised the significance of moral education. In a letter to his friend Immanuel Niethammer, for example, Hölderlin writes of his aspiration to produce an article entitled 'New Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man' with the aim in particular to focus on the 'aesthetic sense' (Hölderlin 1988, p. 132).[88] Evidently, thus, Hölderlin as do Schlegel and Novalis, considers the significance and function of education in its particular relation to poetry and the arts. Indeed some of Hölderlin's theoretical texts are explicitly pedagogical, in that they offer instruction to the poet. Further Hölderlin wanted to contribute to the overall education of humankind by putting together his own journal. In 1799, when the Jena circle are at the height of their productivity and their publication *Das Athenaeum* is successfully transmitting romantic ideals, Hölderlin finds himself independently inspired to set up a journal of his own. In July of that year he wrote to Schelling requesting assistance from him by way of contributions, or at least by associating himself with Hölderlin's proposed 'humanistic journal'. The aim of the journal was to 'educate', claims Hölderlin, it would be 'practically poetic [...] historically and philosophically instructive about poetry' and 'historically and philosophically instructive from the viewpoint of humanity' (Pfau 1988 p. 146). Hölderlin had contemplated the

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[88] Pfau (1988) mentions in a footnote tat Schiller's 'Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man had already appeared in Niethammer's journal, *Die Horen*, in 1795. We can suppose that Hölderlin's intention to produce an article with a similar title is a response to this.

project through to the extent that he would be editor and the main contributor to the journal.[89]

More technically, Cyrus Hamlin (1999) argues that implicit in Hölderlin's tonal theory is a theory of education designed for the benefit of the individual, and to serve simultaneously as a 'model of history for humankind as a whole' (cited in Fioretos 1999, p. 299). Hamlin has in mind the threefold of minor tones, discussed in Chapter 3, which are the naive, heroic and ideal, each symbolising an aspect of the undercurrent supporting acculturation. The naïve, argues Hamlin, is a projecting back unto childhood, symbolising 'innocence and simplicity'. The ideal is a projection forward; it represents the 'goal of education and culture; the heroic denotes the actuality of the human condition - 'defining the inevitable condition of opposition and conflict' (1999, p. 299). There is no doubt that Hölderlin's tonal work, as well as his actual poetry and his novel Hyperion, can be viewed as contributions to understanding morality. In *Hyperion,* especially, we see a critique of the German way of life within a moral context and with the implicit intention of giving moral guidance.

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[89]   Evidence suggests however, that Hölderlin was strangely ignorant of what was really going on in Jena. Unfortunately, for Hölderlin, it seems that this time Schelling opted to shun Hölderlin, because despite the fact that the two were close friends particularly during the years that they and Georg Hegel spent at the Tübingen institute Schelling was not forthcoming with a response to Hölderlin's request. This neglect for Hölderlin may be related to Schelling's own intimate involvement with the Jena circle where he was one of the most regular attendees at their meetings (Eichner, 1970, p. 91). Hölderlin had also written to Goethe, requesting him for a contribution to this forthcoming journal but like Schelling, did not respond. Schiller, too, was approached and although he responded, was dismissive of the project. (Constantine 1988, p. 106)

A further parallel between Hölderlin's project and the romantic project is evident in the way in which nature, in Hölderlin's view, becomes dependent on the poet for its completion. Hölderlin is convinced that 'nature only becomes divine in conjunction with the diverse and harmonious art' (1988, p. 53). Novalis similarly argues that '[n]ature is to become moral. 'We are its teachers – its moral tangents – its moral stimuli' (1997, p. 123). The extent to which the moralisation of nature is dependent on art (and therefore poetry) Novalis makes clear in the following passage:

> 'Nature will become moral - *when out of a genuine love for art* – it devotes itself to art – does what art wishes – and when art, through genuine love of Nature – lives for Nature, works in accordance with Nature' (2007, p. 12).

Clearly, while a reciprocal relationship between art and nature is evident, there is a shared common conviction that moral education is highly dependent on art.

Del Caro also observes that Hölderlin's vocational calling is to cultivate 'man's place on earth' (1991, p. 27). He argues that by appealing to the gods Hölderlin does not want to establish a place for humankind amongst them, but for the gods to make their presence felt amongst the people, on earth (1991, p. 27). This falls in line with Novalis' and Schlegel's aspiration for the kingdom of god to be realised on earth. However, while, this aspiration aligns itself with the moral development of humankind for Schlegel and Novalis, for Hölderlin it is predominantly an ontological development.

Nonetheless, if we are to link Hölderlin with the authorship of 'The Oldest System

Programme of German Idealism'[90], or even associate him with the development of

this text, then it is clear that he does share in the romantic vision of a perfect

moral society. This short and incomplete text gives, a thoughtful declaration of

hopes and aspirations for a future in which human beings exist in '[a]bsolute

freedom' as moral beings, unimpeded by 'state, constitution, government or

legislation', where 'all spirits who carry the intellectual world within themselves'

must 'search neither for God nor immortality outside of themselves' (Pfau 1988,

pp. 154-155). These sentiments surely resound in *Hyperion's* cry – 'By heaven!

He knows not what his sin is who makes the state a school of morals' (Hölderlin

1990, p. 23).

Finally, Hölderlin as do Schlegel and Novalis subscribes to the idea of a 'moral

law'. Hölderlin like Schlegel and Novalis links this law with the 'law of freedom'

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[90]   As is usually accepted, the exact authorship of this fragment is unknown. Pfau
(1988) argues as follows: '[t]his fragment, preserved in Hegel's writing [...] was
considered a copy and originally attributed to Schelling'. However, Pfau continues,
'Hölderlin's first major editor Wilhem Böhm argued for Hölderlin as the author, and for a
long time the consensus on this issue was that Schelling had been the author and yet that
the theory of beauty was mainly Hölderlin's work' (Pfau 1988, p. 182). It makes sense to
think however, that it was Schelling in fact who may have composed it since the
fragment's proposal is towards a 'new mythology of reason' which is an idea that
Schelling was working out in the context of a poem that was to launch this new
mythology of reason (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 1988, p. 28). In the case of the
authorship being attributed to Schelling it is fair to conclude that the early German
romantics were in some way conscious of at least the ideas in this fragment, since
Schelling did have a close connection with the romantics. In any case, Hölderlin too,
proposed the need for a new mythology as did Schlegel and Novalis.

(1988, p. 33) but allows for an added dimension by attaching it to punishment. Indeed, he argues that it is in punishing that the law of freedom is first revealed (1988, p. 34). There is certainly an element of natural justice in Hölderlin's essay 'On the Concept of punishment' where he makes the claim that punishment is designed to reveal that a person has acted immorally and that one ought to accept 'what happens, happens rightly so because it happens' (1988, p. 35). However, on Hölderlin's account, the punishment, if it is imposed, must be just and fitting but cannot be arbitrarily imposed. It must in fact fall in line with the moral law, which reveals itself originally in moral consciousness, where, says Hölderlin, 'it announces itself negatively' through 'its resistance as a result of the fact that we willed something which is opposed to the law of morality' (1988, pp. 35-36). This conflict between the human will and the moral law manifests itself as suffering. Hölderlin thus draws the conclusion that 'all suffering is punishment' (1988, p. 36) and giving it a harsher touch, Hölderlin's *Hyperion* adds that 'only gods and children are not smitten by Nemesis' (1990, p. 115). Further, Hölderlin works with the idea that morality is what it is in virtue of non-morality. For example he states that 'the origin of all virtue occurs in evil' (1990, p.115) which is consistent with his theory of opposing antagonistic forces working together to form a cyclic totality.

Evidently then, Hölderlin has given the moral education of humankind some thought, however, for the purpose of this chapter, the focus, for the most part, is on Schlegel and Novalis, since their preoccupation with human moral development is substantially more pronounced, particularly in their theoretical

writings. As such, it stands out as a clearly defined objective on their romantic agenda, and poetry is expressly appropriated to enable the fullest facilitation of the moral development of humankind. It is clear for example that romantic poetry, as prescribed by Schlegel and Novalis, incorporates a distinct teleology (despite the fact that poetry is eternally becoming and forever allegorical) that holds in view perfect moral being. Hölderlin on the other hand tends to use poetry as a platform to lament the moral condition of humankind and to emphasise the distinction between the poet and mere mortals. Of course, Hölderlin will use lamentation and the emphasis on distinction, as a tool to put mortals in touch with the 'gods' and to sanctify nature, and there is no doubt that Hölderlin has the moral education of humankind in mind, when he does this. Indeed to connect humans with the 'divine' is an act towards facilitating the moral law since the moral law and the divine are intimately connected.

The concept of *Bildung* – its meaning and utility

The everyday contemporary use of the word *Bildung* in the German language fails to do justice to its etymological and historical development, which over the past several centuries has seen its use and appropriation in philosophical, political and social discourse. Today the translation of *Bildung* into English is simply 'education', or 'culture.' However, as Beiser suggests, the 'word signifies two processes – learning and personal growth' and are 'not understood apart from one another as if education were only a means to growth' (1998, p. 286)[91]. The

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[91]   Beiser, F. (1998), 'A Romantic Education. The Concept of Bildung in Early German Romanticism' *Philosophy of* Education: *Historical Perspectives*, Routledge, New York pp. 284-299

modern use of *Bildung,* however, reveals little about its origin in medieval mysticism where in accord with the Christian doctrine of salvation, its function was largely soteriological. *Bildung* in this context means transformation. In accordance with Christian doctrine, it describes the transition from an individual's 'fallen state of grace' to an elevated state of redemption. In this instance, *Bildung* is the work of 'God'. The individual remains passive and takes no responsibility for his/her redemption (Kontje 1993, p. 2).

An alternative perspective is that a person *is* responsible for the transformation in him/herself. Gadamar argues for example that the concept *Bildung,* 'evokes the ancient mythical tradition according to which man carries in his soul the image of God, after whom he is fashioned, and which man must cultivate within himself' (Gadamar, 2004, p. 10). In this case it is the task of the individual to cultivate this aspect in him or herself through effort and self-discipline.

In German philosophy from about the middle of the eighteenth century the concept of *Bildung* is adapted by various thinkers for various political, social, religious and philosophical reasons, in relation to, and as a consequence of the *Auflklärung* and later, the French Revolution. Two thinkers in particular stand out as influential precursors to the romantic adaptation of *Bildung.* One is Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) and the other Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835). Herder's adaptation of *Bildung* emphasises the genetic, cultural and environmental factors as having a profound influence on an individual's transformative capacity (Kontje 1993, p. 2). In other words, the inherent potential

in each individual is only one of the conditions necessary for growth and development. The environment (which for Herder includes such factors as climate) also contributes to the formation of the individual, as does the pre-existent culture with all its norms and expectations. Humboldt, on the other hand, preoccupied himself with developing a theory of the moral cultivation of the individual self which advocated strongly that moral development ought to, and can occur, independently of cultural, political and social determination. To this end, Humboldt sought actively to alter the political and educational institutions by proposing a reduction in state power, which he saw as a necessary step to allow individuals to flourish naturally and freely and become ideal moral beings in the form of good citizens (Sorkin 1983, pp. 5-73). Humboldt began theorising about *Bildung* from as early as 1788 when in his essay 'On Religion' he was already making a distinction between the inner and outer development of human kind. But it is his essay 'Limits of State Action' that may have made an impression on the romantics, for it is here that the idea of human freedom at the expense of an over-authoritative State is discussed (1983, pp. 5-73).

The Romantic Adaptation of *Bildung*

The romantic adaptation of *Bildung* somewhat reflects a combination of the above theories. Schlegel and Novalis, incorporate in particular, into their view on *Bildung*, the traditional Christian soteriological perspective which argues that the prospect of the transformation of the individual through the individual's own effort. Schlegel's claim that 'every good human being is always progressively becoming God' and 'to become God, to be human, to cultivate oneself are all

expressions that mean the same thing' (, 1968, p. 146) demonstrates this. Especially the latter, 'to cultivate oneself' is important to the romantic understanding of moral education.

Gadamar, although not speaking specifically about the early Romantic adaptation of *Bildung*, nonetheless provides us with another useful account that appropriately relates to this particular aspect of Schlegel's and Novalis' vision of *Bildung*, namely, Bildung as self-cultivation Gadamar's account is as follows:

> [...]Bildung is not achieved in the manner of a technical construction, but grows out of an inner process of formation and cultivation, and therefore constantly remains in a state continual Bildung. It is not accidental that in this respect the word Bildung resembles the Greek, physis. Like nature, Bildung has no goals outside itself. [...] In having no goals outside itself the concept of Bildung transcends that of the mere cultivation of given talents. [...] In Bildung [...] that by which and through which one is formed becomes completely one's own (2004, p. 10)

All the elements of *Bildung* discussed above are relevant to the early German Romantic understanding and utility of *Bildung*, particularly and more obviously, the notion of *Bildung* as a continual process of becoming. Nonetheless, it must be pointed out, that Schlegel and Novalis do have a teleological perspective invested in the process of *Bildung* – ideal moral being – God, which appears to contradict the idea that *Bildung*, according to Gadamar's account, 'has no goals outside itself.' Indeed, the vision that sees humankind progressively becoming God is not a vision that sees the goal of God as a final end. It is rather the case that this goal describes a way of being in the world, which is eternally progressive – 'every

good human being is progressively becoming God.' In this way, 'ideal being' is as much the means as it is the end, in much the same way as in Gadamar's account above, the inner process of transformation is in a continual state of *Bildung*.

'Every Good human being is progressively becoming God'

Novalis echoes Schlegel's argument, discussed previously regarding the relationship between cultivating one-self and the notion of 'progressively becoming God', with the following statement:

> The theory of the future of humanity contains all that was foretold by God. Every machine, which now lives by the great *perpetuum mobile* is itself to become the *perpetuum mobile* – every person who lives now by God will himself become God (1997, p. 127)'.

These claims generally correlate with the late eighteenth century development of the notion of *Bildung* (Mendelssohn, Herder, Humboldt et al.), that human beings are innately good and that goodness will eventually assert itself through the persistent impact of the individual's efforts at self-determination. However, both Schlegel and Novalis, appear, at least with these claims, to distinguish the Romantic perspective. Schlegel when he says 'every *good* human being is always progressively becoming God' and Novalis when he says that 'every person who lives by God will himself become God.' Implicit in these statements is a challenge to the premise that *all* human beings are inherently 'good', with the implication that only those who are 'good' are unequivocally on their way to progressively becoming 'God' and only those who live by God, will become God. Fortunately, this point is less contentious, when one considers what 'good' and 'God' signify,

in the Schlegel and Novalis view. Schlegel argues for example, that [b]*eauty in the broadest sense* [...] is the *pleasurable manifestation of* the *good* (2001, p. 56). Here Schlegel makes an important connection between beauty and good. In Chapter 5, it was argues that the 'concept of beauty and the romantic concept of self-determination in which something emerges according to its own laws, are intimately connected'. In which case, if 'good' is a manifestation of beauty, then it is at the same time a manifestation of the kind of objectivity that facilitates self-determination.

Previously, in a footnote, an excerpt by Novalis from *Das Allgemeine Brouillon* was given, which provided a definition for poesy. In this excerpt Novalis argues that '[b]eauty is above all, the ideal, the goal – the possibility – the purpose of poesy' (2007, p. 127). The earlier reference to Schlegel's view that poesy as *Bildung* is a synthesis of the art of morals and the science of philosophy, finds a new relevance here in that we can now see how beauty is also the highest ideal of *Bildung*. It thus follows that for *Bildung* to emerge as moral education, it must be given over to the same conditions that give rise to the poetic ideal, namely beauty.

What is more difficult to dismiss however is the discrepancy between Novalis' and Schlegel's view on what are the actual limits of moral education and also their variance, albeit subtle, on the question of where God stands in relation to morality, given moral being and God are not identical. Indeed while Schlegel and Novalis both claim that God is a goal for humankind and that nature, of which humans are part, must become moral, Novalis wants to maintain a clear

distinction between God and nature. Novalis argues for example that 'God has nothing to do with nature' (1997, p. 123). Indeed when Novalis argues that God is the 'goal of nature', he does not actually mean that nature should 'become God.' Novalis argues that God is that 'with which [nature] must one day be in harmony' (1997, p. 123). This is quite a different target in contrast with Schlegel's argument that 'every *good* being is progressively becoming god'. What Novalis admits to nonetheless, is a close link between moral education and God. To be in harmony with God is to be moral. Morality and to be in harmony with God are thus reciprocally refined - 'the more moral' argues Novalis, 'the more in harmony with God' (2007, p. 9) and while the moral education of human beings does not culminate in their being identical with God, there is certainly hope that humans, individually and collectively, will at least grow in equity with God: 'If our intelligence and our world harmonise', argues Novalis, then we are *'on par* with God' (2007p. 12).

That this is able to occur is dependent ultimately on God, and also on the will of human beings falling in line with 'the law and the will of God' (Novalis 2007, p. 10). The nature of the relationship between humans and God is revealed in the following series of claims made by Novalis. He argues firstly that God is love' and that 'love is the highest reality – the primary cause', followed by the suggestion that '[w]e ourselves are a seed of love [...]' (1997, p. 123). The implication is thus that human beings are the fruit of God, so to speak, and as such are potentially able to grow in to at least, the image of God.

To thus act in accord with '[t]he law and the will of God' requires 'free action'. Indeed '[f]ree action and moral action are one' argues Novalis, and so 'the morality of an action cannot be determined from principles at all' he argues further (2003, p. 45). In other words, true morality is only possible through the alignment with the will of God. The difficulty remains then, how to determine with sufficient certainty which actions are in line with the will of God. On the other hand, is it important that we are certain about this? Schlegel, for instance, says 'Just let *Bildung* do its work [...]' as the following excerpt from *On the Study of Greek Poetry* argues:

> Nothing as such can be determined about the future course of *Bildung*: much no doubt, can be conjectured about it. Conjectures to which one is compelled by the requirements of humanity, and which the laws of reason and history justify and establish. As if they had sat in counsel with the gods, they appear to know the secret intentions and drives according to which nature clandestinely operates. Science and history do not know as much as this. Yet they do know that the rarity of genius is not the fault of human nature but rather of an imperfect human art, *political bundling*. The freedom of humanity is fettered by its own perspicacity, which constrains the fellowship of *Bildung*. If, despite all this, the stifled fire comes back to life, then it will be beheld as a miracle. Just let *Bildung* do its work [...] (2001, p. 91)

What Schlegel identifies in this passage is firstly something about the very nature of *Bildung* - that human beings themselves, as has already been identified, cannot determine its course. Any conjecture as to what the moral course of humanity should be is thus false and leads to a serious compromise of human freedom and its effect, true moral being. For this reason, Schlegel argues that the political and

social attitudes (which are essentially conjecture based) are thus stifling the process of *Bildung* and thereby stifling the moral development of humankind. Schlegel argues that human freedom is in fact constrained by the very power of reason that is expected to deliver us from moral uncertainty.

Bildung, Genius and the securing of objectivity

In the above excerpt, Schlegel makes a reference to the 'rarity of genius', which he argues, is not the fault of humankind, but is rather the consequence of their imperfect art, which he observes expresses itself in - 'political bundling'. The concept of genius plays a vital part in *Bildung*. Indeed, for *Bildung* to proceed, it needs ingenuity. The problem is that geniuses can be suppressed' or their emergence simply blocked, which is precisely what Schlegel understands is at stake by making the connection between the rarity of genius and 'political bundling'. Genius will flourish best in the absence of imposing laws and institutional regulations - political aspirations are thus not conducive to the cultivation of genius. Genius must be able to emerge freely and thus any expectation that human beings conform to rules and regulations will hamper the emergence of genius. The suppression of genius will in turn suppress the progress of *Bildung*.

How genius functions to aid *Bildung* is that its creative capacity ensures forward thinking. Leaps are made because the act of contemplation together with that which is contemplated are brought together in unison. Novalis argues for example, that 'the talent of representing, of making an exact observation', even of

'describing the observation purposively [...] is different from genius' (1997, p. 26). The talent of bringing the act of contemplation together with the object of contemplation is to make use of both analytic and synthetic processes and functions in a way that bridges the gap between the real and the imagined and allows for true creativity to proceed. Recalling some of the argument in Chapter 1, we can see how genius works, insofar as it is a composite of poetic and philosophic processes.

Schlegel claims that the flourishing of genius and hence the moral education of humankind is contingent on the reciprocal interplay between four conditions. These are aesthetic vitality, law-governedness, freedom and communality, and must be developed simultaneously according to their 'thoroughly *reciprocal relation* with one another' (Schlegel 2001, p. 91). 'Only when the law-governedness of aesthetic vitality is secured' argues Schlegel, 'by an objective basis and style, can *Bildung* - by means of freedom of art and the communality of taste - become thoroughly far-reaching and public' (2001, p. 91).

That the relationship between the conditions is reciprocal indicates that each is indebted to the other for what it is and must be so, also, in the circumstances where they assist the facilitation of *Bildung*. Starting with aesthetic vitality for example, we can see that all of the other three conditions feed into it. In insisting that *Bildung* is contingent upon the securing of an aesthetic vitality by an objectivity that is in turn determined by freedom of art and a communality of taste, Schlegel gives a directive that has left no room for subjectivity. All factors

contribute to an assurance of an aesthetic vitality that is determined according to a law not arbitrated by a personal taste or affectation. To clarify how law-governedness, freedom of art and communality of taste feed into aesthetic vitality, it is useful to link aesthetic vitality with the concept of beauty, a concept which in turn is directly linked to, as we have seen also in Chapter 5, morality and the poetic ideal. Indeed an aesthetic inclination is a moral inclination - it is an ability to recognise what is good and harmonious in all of nature. Hölderlin too understands the significance of beauty in its direct relation to morality. To refer to earlier comments about genius, it is through the honouring of the 'genius' in humanity that beauty can be 'cultivated' (Hölderlin *Hyperion* 1990, p. 130).[92]

The securing of objective beauty is, according to Schlegel, a preparatory measure for *Bildung* to proceed. This preparation paves the way for 'modern poetry' to 'attain the next *imminent* stage of its evolution' (2001, p. 91), however Schlegel argues also that 'genuine beauty must first have set secure roots in many different places before it can spread itself over the entire expanse [...]' (2001, p. 91, see

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[92] 'Oh Bellarmin, where a people loves Beauty, where it honors the Genius in its own artists, there a common spirit is astir like the breath of life, there the shy mind opens, self conceit melts away, and all hearts are reverent and great and enthusiasm brings forth heroes' (Hölderlin 1990, *Hyperion*, p. 130).

Through the voice of *Hyperion*, Hölderlin makes a further connection between the 'one and all' and humankind's quest for higher knowledge as follows:

Oh you who seek the highest and the best, whether in the depths of knowledge in the turmoil of actions, in the darkness of the past, in the labyrinth of the future, in graves or above the stars! Do you know its name? The name of which is one and all? Its name is beauty. (1990, p. 41)

also Novalis 2003, p.194 for a similar idea). Schlegel further claims that aesthetic development 'has a divided nature'. He also argues that on one level it ensures 'the progressive evolution of a skill', in which the 'original disposition,' namely morality, is refined and strengthened. On another level it acts as an organising force where it 'promotes the agreement of all according to the needs of the whole', dictating 'strict correctness, elegant proportions and completeness' and forbidding 'the confusion of original aesthetic boundaries' while 'banish[ing] the mannered as well as every aesthetic heteronomy. In a word' says Schlegel, 'it achieves *objectivity*' (2001, p. 45).

Objectivity stands here also as one of the conditions, namely as freedom. Freedom in turn stands in a reciprocally allied relationship with law-governed-ness and aesthetic vitality. All four 'conditions' as Schlegel points out are cultivating factors that contribute to the moral development of humankind. In which case, both freedom and law-governed-ness determine aesthetic vitality just as aesthetic vitality must be a determining factor in freedom.

As is evident, the facilitation of *Bildung* is dependent on a variety of factors. In turn, these factors are also dependent on further facilitation. This is where human beings, or more accurately, the authentic poets, who are more advanced in their moral education, need to step in.

Exploring the concept of Morality further

From the outset it was suggested that morality is intimately linked with knowledge and with freedom and that, indeed, knowledge, freedom and morality are virtually identical, or at least they coincide in such a way that they reflect each other. Morality is also identical, with what Novalis identifies as 'goodness' (2007, p. 127), which in turn is linked to the poetic ideal of beauty. Novalis makes the claim that 'beauty is objective goodness' and that '[t]ruth' is 'subjective goodness'. Truth is at the same time 'analogous to right', whereas goodness is analogous to beauty (2007, p. 127). However, beauty and goodness are not identical. Beauty relates to 'mediated sensible phenomena' while goodness relates to 'immediate rational phenomena' (2007 p. 127). Truth and right are, in a similar way, differentiated. Novalis argues that 'right' is to do with 'rational noumena' while 'truth' relates to the 'noumena of the senses' (2007 p. 127). Novalis also makes the point that the four attributes, goodness, beauty, truth and right, are not absolute but exist in degrees. In respect of goodness, for example, Novalis claims that it may exist as natural, polar, educated or philosophical (2007 p. 127) and so it must be the case that morality too can be similarly sub-categorised. This makes sense if we are to accept that morality is something that can be cultivated particularly keeping in mind the current context in which the moral development of humankind is the key objective. To this end, there is seemingly a causal connection between the moral education of humankind and poetry because 'poetry', argues Novalis, is 'the voice accompanying our developing self' and as such facilitates our 'entry into the land of beauty' (2003, p. 136).

Morality, objectivity, beauty, freedom and goodness like Schlegel's becoming God, being human and educating one self, (Schlegel 1968, p. 146), belong to the same constellation. In contrast, 'truth' and 'right', considered subjective, do not belong to this constellation. Novalis for example asserts that there is a distinction between truth and beauty, just as a distinction prevails between 'right' and 'morality' (1968, p. 138). Indeed, Novalis identifies 'truth' and 'right' as private regulators of morality (1968, p. 138). This is because they are arbitrarily conceived notions, which are precisely the kind of elements that block moral development. Ultimate morality must emerge according to its own determination, from within. This is the conviction that underpins the moral development of human kind in the early German Romantic context.

The Pedagogical Aspect of *Bildung*

Foreshadowed in the introduction to this chapter, was the paradoxical nature of the pedagogical aspect of *Bildung*. The challenge for Schlegel and Novalis is to facilitate the moral education of humankind without recourse to external influences, laws and regulations. To limit the risk of these sorts of impositions, the facilitation of *Bildung* needs to occur through a mediative process. However, even if Schlegel and Novalis subscribe to a pedagogical mediation there is little evidence in their writings, as Beiser (2003) quite rightly identifies, about how this mediation is to occur. Indeed, in the light of the discussion so far, the whole concept of 'education' presents as a paradox in early German romanticism. Yet the *moral* education and development of humankind is dependent on it. The nature of this paradox is summarised by Beiser as 'the utter commitment and

devotion to the education of humanity' versus the 'recognition that it cannot and ought not to do anything to achieve it', which Beiser further identifies as a 'striking gap between theory and practice' (2003, p. 105). To add to the paradox, Novalis and Schlegel want nothing more than to make theory and practice one and the same. However, even they recognise the difficulty here. Schlegel himself notes that 'the gap between theory and practice, between the law and a particular deed is infinitely great' (2001, p. 42). Yet he is convinced that 'the law must become *inclination*' (2001, p. 42). What this means is that ideally human being will act lawfully in accord with the will of God and not abide by a set of contrived laws and regulations.

The inclination to be moral is cultivated from within. The external world cannot teach morality, however an active engagement with the world could precipitate the cultivation of moral being as is suggested in Schlegel's claim that 'man cannot be active without developing himself' (2001, p. 24). On the other hand, what this 'being active' entails is not immediately obvious since on the face of it, a tension between activity and Schlegel's commitment to passivity is evident. In his discussion of Schlegel's *Lucinde*, Firchow argues that the 'principle of passivity' is symbolised in this novel through the characterisation of a plant. Firchow draws a parallel between passivity and unconsciousness, which quite clearly demonstrates the kind of passivity that is also required of humankind to enable *Bildung*. Firchow describes it like this:

> The plant represents passivity and unconsciousness par
> excellence, since it instinctually obeys the mandates of nature

and does not need to discover rules by which to develop itself ...
.The plant grows, blossoms and withers in harmony with the
seasons and the course of nature; it does not rebel against dying
because it cannot be conscious of rebellion. It exists for nothing
but itself; it is its own achievement and purpose. (Firchow 1971,
pp. 25-26, cited in Riasanovsky 1992, p. 61)

Firchow expands on this by comparing the plant with humankind. The difference

between plant and 'man' he argues is that 'man attempts to live according to

ideals and purposes outside himself and outside nature' and that 'he seeks to

impose his own consciousness upon nature' (1971, pp. 25-26). Despite the fact

that Novalis argues that, 'nature is to become moral' and that 'we are its teachers'

it is not through imposing 'ideals and purposes' or 'man's' own consciousness, on

nature that this is to occur. The ultimate goal is for a free and moral society and

this can only happen through the passivity of giving into the laws of nature.

When it comes to pedagogy, it is clear that what is required is the facilitation of

passivity. However, to be passive and to allow nature to take its course is not

something to which humankind is accustomed. The teaching of passivity, as

method, must then be a pedagogical goal of which a primary objective is to

persuade humankind that this is what is required.

In terms of pedagogy, the key to understanding romantic *Bildung* is to deviate

from imagining it in terms of an education that employs a 'teaching' method as

such. Romantic *Bildung*, although teleological in nature, meaning that there are

expected outcomes, does not conform to an imposed curriculum, or at least not a

curriculum set by humans. If it were to contrive a conditioned and prescribed learning, it would prevent the ideal moral being from emerging and thus defeat its purpose. To impose a curriculum presupposes that what is 'taught' already exists in the form of knowledge. Certainly, this kind of teaching works when imparting scientific and historical data but cannot work in the cultivation of an ideal moral being. Learning concepts and storing information by itself is not enough to effect authentic moral being.[93]

Clarification of how poetry assists *Bildung*.

In the footsteps of Schiller, the romantics are convinced that the best facilitation of *Bildung* occurs through art. Art is dependent on aesthetic sensibility – feeling, expression, imagination, a sense for beauty, love and spirituality - these are all aspects of aesthetic sensibility. The challenge Schlegel and Novalis face is to justify to a world that largely agreed with Plato's perspective that 'art and poetry appeal to, and represent, the lower less rational parts of our nature' (Plato 2003, p.

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[93] It is appropriate to argue that if the romantics had developed an educational model based on their romantic perception of *Bildung* it may have resembled something like Rudolf Steiner's Waldorf education. Although this is not the place to elaborate on such a comparison, one cannot help but see in Steiner's work a similar impetus. Steiner too felt the need to bring together the various strands of human development, namely science, religion, art and morality that still in his day were cultivated independently rather than in their reciprocal relation to each other. Steiner built his model too on a concept of freedom that would nurture the emergence of the human spirit. He focused particularly on nurturing the creative aspect of human being, allowing it to emerge unimpeded (See Steiner *A Modern art of Education*, 2004 passim). Similarly, Romantic *Bildung* encompasses the cultivation of the individual human being, which occurs through the cultivation of his/her aesthetic sensibility. In a 'formal' education, even today, it is often the case that this aspect of human being is neglected for the sake of excellence in other areas.

345), that aesthetic sensibility is not trivial, but crucial in the overall education and cultivation of moral being.

Aesthetic sensibility is the ability to perceive the beautiful which, as has been discussed, is at the same time linked decisively to morality. In turn, morality has a direct link to the will of God and so whenever, a poet achieves the objective of the beautiful, he has at the same time achieved a sense of God. It is thus important to link these together – aesthetic sensibility is the aspect of being human that facilitates an experience of God and thereby facilitates also, morality.

When aesthetic sensibility is abandoned, the consequences are dire. Schlegel and Novalis hold the French Revolution up as a prime example of where an education lacking in the cultivation of aesthetic sensibility has ultimately come to lead to a human catastrophe. The importance of aesthetic sensibility is explicitly clear in the following quote form Novalis:

> Let the genuine observer contemplate the new revolutionary times calmly and without prejudice. Does not the revolutionary seem to him like Sisyphus? Now he has reached the zenith of his equilibrium and already the mighty burden is rolling down again on the other side. It will never stay up unless a force directing it to heaven keeps it balanced at the highest point. All your props are too weak if your state still tends toward the earth, but bind it by a higher longing to the heavenly heights and give it a connection to the universe, [...] (1997, p. 146)

Where humankind labours for the betterment of its own human condition while ignorant of itself as part of a universal whole, and in particular, while ignorant that individual beings are microcosmic instances of this whole, then all human striving will be in vain. In relation to the eighteenth century, in the view of the early German Romantics, apparent advances in political and philosophical reasoning were being made while the emotional (which includes the spiritual) aspect of human nature was being neglected (Beiser 2003, pp. 88-91). The result of such a bias saw the revolution become, as Schlegel put it

> 'the grotesque of the age in the most awesome dimensions, where the most profound prejudices and the strongest presentiments of the age are mingled in a horrible chaos, and are interwoven to a tremendous tragicomedy of mankind to the most bizarre degree' (1968, p. 148).[94]

In keeping with the romantic notion of epoch and the evolutionary aspect of the Absolute itself, the progress of which is reflected in poetry, Schlegel makes the following announcement: 'the time is ripe for an important revolution in aesthetic development' (2001, p. 89). Schlegel's study of poetry leads him to conclude that modern poetry (and this includes the poetry dating from the time of Dante through

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[94] This statement requires immediate clarification however, in relation to the use of the word 'chaos'. 'Chaos' itself is not an issue for Schlegel. In his *Talk on Mythology* Schlegel aspires to the following: [...] to cancel the progression and laws of rationally thinking reason' and to 'transplant us once again into the beautiful confusion of imagination, into the original chaos of human nature [...]' (1968, p. 86) So while on one hand there is negative talk of a 'horrible chaos' in relation to a particular state of affairs, namely the French Revolution, there is on the other hand a wish for the 'original chaos' which in a positive way will facilitate the liberal education of humankind. In this respect Schlegel's study of the arts and in particular, poetry fashioned in him optimism for the future.

to the poetry of Schlegel's contemporary, Goethe) is itself still in the process of development. This development, says Schlegel 'presents nothing less than the constant struggle between the subjective disposition and the objective tendency of the aesthetic faculty' (2001, p. 88). As such, Schlegel perceives modern poetry to be in its third and final stage of development in which the 'objective tendency' will come to predominate. Not that this final stage signifies the conclusion of poetry, for that would go against the grain of the romantic idea that poetry is progressive and 'eternally becoming'. Rather, this final stage represents the period in which poetry reaches its evolutionary peak; where its capacity to facilitate the eternal approximation of truth reaches its most advantageous position.

The order of development of modern poetry according to Schlegel is as follows: In the first stage (pre-classicism) a propensity for a 'one-sided national character' predominates. In the second stage (classicism), nationalistic tendencies persist but are augmented by a turning to antiquity. In the third stage (romanticism), Schlegel anticipates that poetry breaks away from these predominantly subjective tendencies, into a realm where objectivity predominates. The transition from the second to the third stage, however, Schlegel observes to be problematic. Except for glimpses of it in sporadic but disconnected pockets of what Schlegel calls 'genius', *Bildung* has, at this point, reached an uncomfortable plateau.

Yet Schlegel is convinced that romantic poetry is 'capable of the highest and most universal education' (1968, p. 141), however at this stage of the proceedings, poetry is in need of a preceptive adjunct. As Schlegel claims, 'nothing great occurs

of its own accord without strength and resolve' (2001, p. 45). And so the cluster of individuals gathered in Jena in the last decade of the eighteenth century, whose concern was precisely the direction of poetry in relation to the transition from the second to the third stage of development, turned their attention to developing the ultimate theory, namely romantic poetry, in which all other genres (and other disciplines, including the sciences as we have seen, but also the social and the political spheres of human activity) come together to function as a whole. This is precisely the concern reflected in Novalis' *Das Allgemeine Brouillon* and it is through this concerted effort that *Bildung* can gain momentum to proceed.

Finally, the free and moral society, God's Kingdom on Earth

A key argument in this chapter is that the romantic adaptation of *Bildung* incorporates the idea of the cultivation of a uniquely 'free' and 'moral' society in which individuals flourish both independently and interdependently, but always in harmonious unity. This goal represents the ultimate scope of *Bildung* and is reminiscent of the proposal in the 'Oldest System-Program of German Idealism', which presents as a clear testament to the romantic vision for the future of humankind. The connection with the idea conveyed in this fragment with respect to the cultivation of an 'absolute free being', is a being that exists in a stateless condition, one without 'constitution, government' or 'legislation' (Pfau 1988, p.154). This ideal being will be the only truly authentic *moral* being, existing simultaneously in an ideal (authentic) *moral* world (community). In this ,truly authentic moral world the individual is no longer in need of discipline, not socially, not politically and certainly not religiously (or at least not in a

conventional way); ultimately the individual exists in a free society constituted by free individuals. This idea transpires to a degree from Humboldt's initial theory of *Bildung*, where the vision was for a reduction in the power of the State to allow the individual ample freedom for an effective and expedited self-cultivation toward becoming a good and moral citizen.

The 'golden age,' which characterises the realisation of 'God's Kingdom on Earth', further describes the society of free and moral individuals. The ideal society that this characterisation reflects is in fact the 'reality' that holds the perfect balance between the ideal and real states; in which, finally, the self no longer experiences itself as removed from totality but as perfectly integrated with it. Consciousness and nature, the finite and infinite, are here reconciled.

Curiously however, Novalis presents us with a contradiction:

> For the living being the world becomes more and more
> unending – therefore there can never come an end to the
> connecting of the manifold, a state of inactivity of the thinking
> I – Golden ages might appear – but they do not bring the end of
> things – the goal of the human being is not the golden age - the
> human being should exist eternally and be a beautifully ordered
> individual and endure – this is the tendency of human nature
> (2003, p. 167).

Clearly, in this passage Novalis is particularly careful to convey a distinction between a Golden Age and the enduring goal of human beings; to be a 'beautifully ordered individual'. However, in other texts, Novalis discusses the golden age as a state that is realised through just the kind of discipline required to

sustain order, symmetry or balance. Novalis mentions the Golden Age in the following passage: 'All representation rests on making present – what is absent and so forth [...] Like the assumption, perpetual peace already exists – God is among us [...] the Golden Age has arrived – [...]' (2003, p. 144). Indeed in another excerpt, Novalis refers to the Golden Age as that to which all ages will be elevated (2003, p. 160). Again in the following excerpt Novalis' optimism invokes a Golden Age: 'That will be a Golden Age, when all words become – figurative words – myths [...] when we learn to speak and write with figures - and learn to perfectly sculpt and make music with words' (2003, p. 206). Perhaps we can take the final word on this from Novalis' novel, Henry von Ofterdingen in which a young lute player comes onto a scene to sing a song about the:

> '[...] origin of the world, the stars, plants, animals, and men, the all-powerful sympathy of nature; the remote age of gold, and its rulers love and Poesy; the appearance of hatred and barbarism, and their battles with these beneficent goddesses; and finally, the future triumph of the latter, the end of affliction, the renovation of nature, and the return of an eternal golden age (Novalis 1842, p. 65

Conclusion

It has been argued that the romantic adaptation of *Bildung* represents an integration of a soteriology with the romantic notion of a god's kingdom on earth, where human beings flourish as a society of free moral beings. Various aspects of *Bildung* as moral education of humankind have been discussed revealing once more in the respective projects of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, a turn to poetry for the sake of a philosophical ascesis. Indeed the significance of this chapter in relation to the overall thesis is that it has shown how the moral education of humankind is an immanent concern for Schlegel, Novalis and

Hölderlin, in the very midst of the extensive technical work they undertake in detailing the philosophical significance of the relationship between poetry and philosophy; a relationship regarded as profoundly symbiotic; a relationship regarded as giving issue to an equally profound ascesis, an ascesis from which, in human terms, the moral maturing of humankind could be wrought.

Chapter 7

NOVALIS' 'MAGICAL IDEALISM'

'In the world of the future everything is just as it is in the former world –

and yet everything is utterly different' (Novalis 2007, p. 34)

Novalis' Magical Idealism is a concept that appears, at first glance, to contradict

the effort made thus far to present early German Romanticism as the harmonious

integration of idealism and realism. That Novalis uses the term 'idealism', could

be construed as problematic since the very use of the word suggests a favouring of

idealism over realism. Some navigation of the concept of Magical Idealism is

required if it is to be understood as in accord with the early German Romantic

commitment to an eternal and infinite totality in which realism and idealism are

perceived as unified. Indeed the first task of this chapter is to address the

conceptual relationship between Magical Idealism and its 'sister' concept,

Magical Realism, a concept that Novalis does not develop to anywhere near the same extent as Magical Idealism, but nonetheless makes reference to in his writings. It is important to draw attention to the fact that Novalis' Magical Idealism is not an independent concept but that it is conceived of in relation to its particular counterpart, Magical Realism. However, the relationship conforms to the 'romantic' principle established previously in this thesis, that binary oppositions are aspects of a continuum, or a totality, rather than discrete entities. As with poetry and philosophy, Magical Idealism and Magical Realism, are in effect, two aspects of the same process, a point that will be clarified further as the chapter unfolds.

The significance of this chapter to the thesis as a whole, is that, following on from the kind of moral education investigated in Chapter 6, it looks to Novalis' Magical Idealism as an idea that belongs wholly to the age in which humanity is to flourish in the epitome of its own ideal moral being. At the core of Novalis' Magical Idealism, is the notion of perfect freedom, or what Novalis also refers to as the 'perfect present', which founds the kind of morality that, in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin view, is attained and sustained through an ascetical self-determination, conceivable only in and through perfect freedom. The notion of the 'perfect present' is particularly important to Magical Idealism since in its wake, a 'perfectly *free* future – and a perfectly *free* past' exist as reciprocally determined (Novalis 2007, p. 198). The significance of the 'perfect present' for Magical Idealism is that it provides an interstice or an interruption to what is perceived as normal causal sequencing. At this interstice arises an opportunity to invoke,

create, or make manifest, an out of conventional causal sequence, event. Novalis conceives of the 'perfect present' as a moment in which both past and future 'are simultaneously affected – and where both simultaneously effect' (2007, p. 198). If, in theory, the nature of the relationship between past and present is reciprocal, and likewise the future and the present, then it follows that neither the past nor the future exclusively determines the present. If we conceive of a 'perfect present', quarantined from the impact of past causes or expected future effects, it is conceivable that an out of sequence event, that is, an event not determined by or causally connected to either the past or the future, *could* occur. However, the emphasis is on 'could', since such an out of sequence event requires the intervention of a powerful intention, which, we will see, is a latent, function of the 'will'.

Further to its foundation in a 'perfect present', Magical Idealism is the overarching exemplification of the connection between poetry and philosophical ascesis. That is, what is essential to Magical Idealism, founded in a 'perfect present' is also a harmonious integration of the 'self and reality' or of 'spirit and nature.'[95] This harmonious integration of self and reality finds its fullest expression in and through poetry because the poet, whom Novalis also names the 'magician' (1997, p. 79), has cultivated a highly refined responsiveness that challenges the customary causal connection between events and the function of the senses. The refined responsiveness constitutes a renewed sense of possibility

[95]   Supporting quotes from Novalis: 'Higher *philosophy* is concerned with the *marriage* of *Nature and Spirit*' (2007, p. 8) and 'The whole of Nature must be interwoven in a wondrous manner with the entire spirit world' (2007, p. 34).

at every instant, a fresh seeing, as it were, through a disciplined and disciplining, focused will.

The strategic contribution of this chapter, then, is to explore how Novalis conceives of Magical Idealism, theoretically as that which subscribes to the possibility of interrupting the normally expected causal sequence of events. The discussion explores what is essential to Magical Idealism, namely freedom, by which normal causal sequencing may be superseded and a mastery of the senses, by way of the will, may be attained. The discussion will also include an exploration of the function of the senses, and a consideration of the significance (to Novalis) of the concept 'pure', which represents the 'extra-mechanical' or un-relational component in freedom, that makes magic (theoretically) possible. Finally, the discussion focuses on the relationship between Magical Idealism, poetry, philosophy and morality, highlighting in particular, the significance of the poet as the magician; as the master poet-philosopher.

Magical Idealism and Magical Realism

Any adequate examination of Novalis idea of Magical Idealism, of course, invites a contrast with the idea of Magical Realism (which Novalis, albeit in a very limited way, also uses). Novalis begins to develop the idea of Magical Realism alongside the idea of Magical idealism in *Das Allgemeine Brouillon*, but does not elaborate on the difference except to say that the 'Magical Idealist [...] seeks a wondrous movement — a wondrous subject' while 'Magical Realists' seek a

'wondrous object – a wondrous figure' (2007, p. 116). Novalis explores this a little further and decides that '[b]oth are *logical afflictions* – types of delusions – within which nonetheless, the ideal manifests or reflects itself in a twofold manner – holy – isolated beings – who wonderfully refract the higher light – Genuine prophets' (2007, p. 116).[96]

While the above excerpt highlights an obvious distinction between the Magical Idealist and the Magical Realist, Novalis' also implies that Magical Idealism, nonetheless, already contains the idea of Magical Realism. The basis for this argument is the following passage:

> If you are unable to make thoughts indirectly (and fortuitously) perceptible, then try the converse, and make external things directly perceptible (and at will) – which amounts to saying, if you are unable to transform thoughts into external things, then transform external things into thoughts. If you are unable to make a thought into something independent, something separate from yourself – and *therefore* also something *extraneous* – that is, into an externally occurring soul, then proceed in the opposite manner with external things – and transform them into thoughts. Both operations are idealistic. Whosoever has both completely in his power is a *Magical Idealist*.

In the above passage, Novalis describes the domain of the Magical Idealist. It includes both the external world (object) and the internal world (subject). The

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[96]   For an engaging investigatory report concerning the possibility of a connection between Novalis' Magical Idealism and the post-modern literary/art movement of 'magical Realism' (1920s), that also takes into account this particular excerpt, see Christopher Warne's article, 'Magical Realism and the Legacy of German Idealism' in the *Modern Language Review*, 101 (2006), pp. 488-498.

reason for referring to this passage is, as already stated, to justify the argument that the concept of Magical Realism is already contained within the concept of Magical Idealism. Indeed, the argument here is that Magical Idealism exemplifies the integration of idealism and realism. Indeed, Novalis' Magical Idealism can be viewed, in a similar way to Schlegel's formula discussed in Chapter 5, as a concept that describes a balanced integration between ideal and real states. Moreover, the intention behind the integration is to acknowledge the validity of both, but as reciprocally conditioned. There can be no idealism without realism and vice versa.

On this basis, it is reasonable to argue that Magical Idealism seeks, or rather embodies, the integration of the 'wondrous subject' *and* the 'wondrous object', which previously had been suggested, are distinct goals of Magical Idealism and Magical Realism, respectively. That Novalis alludes to a distinction between Magical Idealism and Magical Realism thus does not contradict any previous attempt to present the philosophy of Novalis as seeking the integration of idealism and realism because, like the relationship between idealism and realism, or poetry and philosophy, Magical Idealism and Magical Realism are ultimately a totality. For this reason, Novalis argues that the 'idealist, in order to work directly for idealism, must try to prove realism – and conversely' (1997, p. 131). Or, in other words the '*proof* of realism is idealism – and conversely' (1997, p. 131). These claims work to amplify not only the reciprocal nature of the particular relationship between idealism and realism, but all binary relationships. Also, because Novalis does not develop the idea of Magical Realism as a separate doctrine, from here

forth, the inquiry is focused only on Magical Idealism. However, the conviction that the idea of Magical Realism is implicit within the idea of Magical Idealism persists.

Effecting causality and achieving mastery of the senses, by way of the will

Stoljar (1997) in her introduction to Novalis' *Philosophical Writings* identifies Magical Idealism as 'the philosophy of the future that is also art, magical in that it transcends causation and the senses, ideal since it belongs in the realm of pure spirit to which we aspire' (1997, p. 20). In agreement, David W. Wood (2007) in his introduction to Novalis' *Das Allgemeine Brouillon* writes that Magical Idealism is Novalis' 'own personal philosophy,' that it is a 'combination of the idea of romanticising and an extension of transcendental idealism' (2007, p. xxiii). There are two points made in the above claims that need qualification before we can proceed with the investigation. Firstly, Magical Idealism is identified above, as a philosophy or more precisely as Novalis' 'personal philosophy' – although this is a common interpretation[97] (and not as such incorrect), it is nonetheless misleading. In *Das Allgemeine Brouillon*, for example, Novalis states unequivocally that 'magic is utterly different from philosophy [...] and constitutes a *world* – a *science* – and *art* in itself' (2007, p. 23). Moreover, in consideration of

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[97] Beiser similarly identifies Novalis' Magical Idealism as a 'personal philosophy' (2002, p. 422).

the thesis topic and the effort to consistently point to the early German Romantic project as one in which totality is sought in and through a harmonious union of philosophy and poetry, it is more apt to think of Magical Idealism, as a 'living theory of life' that fully embraces this union.

Secondly, a key feature of Novalis' Magical Idealism identified in the above claims by Stoljar and Wood, is the idea of the 'transcendental' which, as has been pointed out throughout the thesis, functions not only to define romantic poetry, but inspires also Hölderlin's attempt at a metaphorical representation of 'intellectual intuition'. The 'transcendental' however, as this thesis also argues, lies in the balance of binary oppositions, not in the 'beyond,' as such, as at least the Stoljar representation of Magical Idealism implies (See Introduction, p.7). For this reason it would again be misleading to interpret Magical Idealism as specifically about transcending causation and the senses, particularly if the meaning of 'transcending' is construed specifically as, to 'go beyond'. While it is true that the 'transcendental' in the early German Romantic context, is certainly about overcoming limits, including the limits of causality as well as the limits of the senses, it is more appropriate, at least in this context, to think of Magical Idealism in terms of *effecting* causality and the senses. In this way, an understanding, more consistent with Novalis' extended thinking arises, namely, that the conventional laws of causality are breached, or interrupted, rather than transcended. This interpretation of what is at issue is significant because it takes into consideration a key and necessary component of Magical Idealism, namely

the function of the will, which arguably presents as a causal, or 'effecting' principle, of a certain kind.

'Effecting' too is a more apt characterisation of Magical Idealism when we align the meaning and function of 'romanticising' with Magical Idealism. We can learn quite quickly from Novalis' texts, what he has in mind when we consider the analogy, for example, which Novalis uses in the following excerpt:

> The world must be made Romantic. In this way one can find the original meaning again. To make Romantic is nothing but a qualitative raising to a higher power. In this operation the lower self will become one with a better self [...]. By endowing the commonplace with a higher meaning, the ordinary with mysterious respect, the known with the dignity of the unknown, the finite with the appearance of the infinite, I am making it Romantic. The operation for the higher, unknown, mystical infinite is the converse – this undergoes a logarithmic change through this connection – it takes on an ordinary form of expression. Romantic philosophy [...]. Raising and lowering by turns. (1997, p. 60)

In this excerpt, Novalis juxtaposes the process that is to romanticise with the business of 'romantic philosophy' very much in a manner that exemplifies the symbiotic relationship between poetry and philosophy outlined in Chapter 1. It is conceivable that Magical Idealism similarly embodies the key elements that characterise early German Romanticism. As Donehower writes in the introduction to *The Birth of Novalis*: 'Magical Idealism is [...] Hardenberg's attempt to articulate an organising concept for early-romantic theory' (2007, p. 9).

Donehower further describes the concern of the Magical Idealist to be a 'creative, playful sublimation of the ordinary-everyday into the poetic-mythic' (2007, p. 9). This interpretation conceives of Magical Idealism as a project that is oriented towards elevating the ordinarily perceived status of world, to one that is extra-ordinary, an elevation that appears to be possible through the process of sublimation – a 'raising to a higher power'. Beiser's interpretation is similar when he argues that the 'romantics wanted to break outside the confines of our ordinary and mundane perception of the world' with the intention to 'develop our power of *contemplation* so that we can see things anew, as they are in themselves and for their own sakes, apart from utility and common meaning' (2003, p. 101). Both interpretations of romanticising are suggestive of a technique that promotes an elevated perspective of world, without actually altering the physicality of that world; however, there is another dimension to Magical Idealism that seeks to challenge the actual physicality of the world.

Wood, for example, observes that what Novalis understands by 'magical' concerns the 'art of using the sense world at will' (2007, p. xxiv, p. 61). The mastery of the senses by way of the will is thus a significant feature of Novalis' Magical Idealism. Novalis' argues that the senses, whether we are aware of it or not, are the cause of our body. In terms of mastery of the senses, and consequently also the mastery of the body, the following excerpt reveals the premise upon which Novalis bases the theory that mastery of the senses is possible:

> Is not our body in itself nothing but a common central effect of
> our senses – if we have mastery of our senses – if we are able to

transform them into activity at will – to centre them at a common point, then it only depends on us – to give ourselves the body we want. Indeed, if our senses are nothing other than modifications of the mental organ – of the absolute element – then with mastery over this element we shall also be able to modify and direct our senses as we please (1997, p. 76).

The logic that Novalis uses can be summarised as follows. Senses give rise to body (matter); senses are modifications of the mental organ, therefore the mind (mental organ) gives rise to matter. From this logic the following conclusions may be drawn: If the mind can be controlled, then the effect of the mind, which in the above quote is 'body', can also be controlled. Further, there is no reason why the effect of the modification of the senses cannot be extended to the physical world, as such. As will be further revealed when discussing the function of the will referred to in the above excerpt, Magical Idealism and its functioning is clearly based on this hypothesis. But before discussing the significance and function of the will it is important to be clear about what the senses, in the Novalis view, actually are.

Novalis advances a theory regarding the senses in the following important and revealing excerpt:

We have two sense systems which, however different they appear are yet entwined extremely closely with one another. One system is called the body, one the soul. The former is dependent on external stimuli, whose essence we call nature or the external world. The latter originally is dependent on the essence of inner stimuli which we call spirit, or the world of spirits. Usually this last system stands in a nexus of association with the other system

– and is affected by it. Nevertheless frequent traces of a converse relation are to be found, and one soon notices that both systems ought actually to stand in a perfect reciprocal relation to one another, in which, while each of them is affected by its world, they should create harmony, not a monotone. In short, both worlds, like both systems, are to create free harmony not or monotony. The transition from monotony to harmony certainly will pass through disharmony – and only in the end will harmony ensue. In the age of magic the body serves the soul, or the world of spirits (1997, p. 61).

Novalis' view of the senses thus includes, but is not limited to, the sense organs; sight, taste, hearing, speech and touch. In association with the body serving the soul, we know for example, that Novalis views the poet as 'truly bereft of his senses' and that 'instead everything takes place within him' (1997, p. 162). We saw in Chapter 4, how this was a necessary condition for the poet if a truly objective poem, and therewith an accurate, that is to say, a balanced or harmonious representation of reality, is to emerge. The implication in the above suggestion seems to be that the senses are not conducive to achieving objectivity and that mastery over them involves, in this case at least, a neutralising, or sublimation, of their subjective or personal effect. The poet still sees, hears and feels, but is directed now by the 'inner senses', or, taking into consideration the excerpt above, the poet is directed by the 'soul' system, to which the sensory system of the body, becomes dependent. Effects of the external senses, such as sight, smell, touch and sound, are thus sublimated and subjective conclusions about the world are avoided. Novalis notes that the 'poet orders, combines, chooses, invents' but 'even to himself it is incomprehensible why it is just so and not otherwise' (1997, p. 163). In other words, the poet, as discussed in Chapter 4, puts his (or her) personal sensory apparatus aside, and gives himself (or herself)

over to the poetic process, guided by his (or her) inner senses, which we now know are constitutive of, in Novalis' view, the soul, analogous also to 'the world of spirits'.

Throughout *Das Allgemeine Brouillon*, Novalis identifies a number of senses, apart from the basic five, that are identifiable as belonging to or effects of the 'soul' or 'world of spirits'. Some of these have been cited previously in reference to the imagination (Chapter 1), and include the memory, noted as a direct and positive sense, the intellect as an indirect and therefore negative sense and the imagination itself, described as 'simultaneously an (outward) direct sense, and an (inward) indirect sense' (2007, p. 48). We can add to this list the 'sense for poetry' (1997, p. 162), the 'sense for mysticism' (1997, p. 162) and the 'moral sense', which Novalis views also as the,

> [...] sense for *existence* [...] the sense for *unity* – the sense for the highest – the sense for the freely chosen, and innovative, and yet *communal* life – and Being – the sense for the thing in itself – the *sense of divination*. Divining, to perceive something without cause or contact (2007, p. 10).

With the above expanded understanding of what the senses are in the Novalis view, it becomes clearer why Novalis would contemplate their mastery, particularly when considering also the ambition for the moral education of humankind, which is dependent on the moral sense, just outlined. Novalis thus argues that the 'increase and training of the senses [...] belongs among the central problems for the improvement of the human race, for raising mankind to a higher

level' (2007, p. 64). A significant aspect of the improvement involves making the senses, like the imagination, simultaneously direct and indirect. Mastery of the senses ultimately means making our senses more than tendencies in the manner just described, but resolutions or realisations of what the respective tendencies represent. In other words, the mastery of the senses, both inner and outer, body and soul, culminate in an ascesis within which, for example, the 'moral sense' will be replaced by morality, or moral being, itself, or where the sense for harmony or the sense for unity, is realised as actual harmony and unity. Harmony, unity and morality thus become 'performance indicators', as it were, and if they are inconsistently present within the expression of 'being', we can be sure that mastery of the senses has not yet been attained. Physiologically, mastery of the sense organs, we may assume, is achieved simultaneously. One would expect, for example, that a highly refined moral sense is reflected in the external senses and vice versa.

The 'will' as pivotal to Magical Idealism

Wood introduces the concept of the will and the significance it bears for Magical Idealism when he makes a correlation between 'magical' and the 'art of using the sense world at will'. To support Wood's claim, several passages in Novalis' texts, including the one just discussed, may be cited. For example, Novalis will argue '[i]f one only wills, then one can' (2003, p. 134). Further, in an effort to set a goal for Magical Idealism, Novalis argues that, '[m]an must control his nature and secure right mastery for the individual in himself — mastery of the will is proper to

him – and the submission of the senses' (2003, p. 158).[98] The following passage even more explicitly, illustrates Novalis' understanding of what the will is capable, once mastered:

> [...] everyone will be his own doctor – and will be able to feel his body in a complete, sure and exact way. Then for the first time the human being will be truly independent of nature, perhaps even in a position to restore lost limbs, to kill himself merely by will, and thereby achieve for the first time true insight into the body – mind – world, life – death and the world of spirits. Perhaps then it will only rest with him to quicken inert matter. He will compel his senses *to produce* for him the shape he demands – and he will be able to live in *his* world in the truest sense. Then he will be capable of separating himself from his body – if he finds it good to do so. He will see, hear – and feel, how and in whichever combination he will' (1997, p. 75).

In this case, mastery of the senses by way of the will involves intending the mind to exert power over matter and particularly, the sense organs. Herewith one is able to create, or 'produce' a 'world' at will.[99] However, even though the above

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[98] Novalis makes this point in a move that at the same time seeks to distinguish male from female and present them each as binary oppositions by characterising each according to their particular strengths. In this context then, the use of the word 'man' refers to the masculine and does not necessarily represent humankind. Novalis' view is that 'woman must obey nature' and that her 'sensation must determine her will' (2003, p. 158). For man it is of course the other way around, in that he must make will the master of the sensation. This idea appears to contradict the idea that the mastery of the will is a possibility for all of humankind. However, Novalis also declares that man and woman have a 'singular root' (2003, p.158), and so in light of the thesis so far, man and woman belong to the same thing – humankind. It is therefore quite reasonable to argue that the mastery of the will ultimately belongs to humankind, period.

[99] Novalis prefers the use of the expression 'world' over the expression 'matter' Novalis argues that '[i]nstead of matter as such I would use the expression 'world' (2007, p. 218).

excerpt alludes to the materialisation of objects (such as limbs), if we scrutinise more carefully Novalis' view of what is at stake, we will see that the command of the senses and the creation of the world at will, is not limited to the manifestation of material objects. Indeed the world is an all encompassing sphere, to which the mind itself belongs, and, to which it contributes. While Novalis will argue that '[t]he world is to be as I will it' (1997, p. 63) and that 'the will is nothing but the magical, *powerful* capacity for thought' (1997, p. 136), the world cannot be an object of the mind. Just as the poet is integral to the poem, so too is the mind integral to the world. Indeed, there is no meaningful separation between mind and world in terms of discrete objects, when we consider them fully as an integrated unity. This point is substantiated by Novalis when he argues that '[w]e shall understand the world when we understand ourselves because we and it are integral halves' (1997, p. 61).

Novalis observes further that we 'seek the design of the world' but that 'we are this design ourselves. What are we? Personified *all-powerful* points' (1997, p. 58).

There is no doubt then that Novalis understands that we have a capacity for manipulating the world and that this is the domain of Magical Idealism. However, that this is done at will requires an understanding that the self and world are integrated. Indeed the awareness of our capacity for magic can only come from understanding ourselves as truly integrated, which includes an understanding of how 'we are related to all parts of the universe,' says Novalis (1997, p. 40).

Importantly, Novalis argues, 'the universe is a complete analogue of the human being in body, mind and spirit' and that through 'the modification of my body, I modify my world for my self' (1997, p. 118). Effectively this means that what ever we do, including thinking, impacts on the totality, by virtue of the fact that we are integral to it. In other words, anything we do, say or think contributes to the shaping of this totality. Indeed, in this quote, the suggestion is that we need not attempt to modify the world as such, for the world is modified in accord with the modification of our personal body. Novalis argues that 'I neither ought nor want to act on the world – for that I have the body' (1997, p. 118). However, for the most part, we are not aware of how our activities, let alone our thoughts, affect the totality, for it is not always immediately obvious. Yet if we follow Novalis' thinking then we are in some manner not only causally connected to the world of which we are part, but causally co-responsible for it, whether we are consciously aware of it, or not.

Novalis develops this view into an argument that supports the possibility of affecting the world with a conscious intentionality. To this end, Novalis insists that 'the foundation of creation lies in the will' and that 'the power of faith is the will' and out of the application of faith a world 'gradually arises' (2007, p. 92). This is because the will, Novalis argues further is 'without doubt the polarising power' (2007, p. 31).

This last claim suggests that the will might function in a similar way to Fichte's Absolute, whereby the Absolute posits itself in opposition to itself - an act that precipitates the emergence of a world. However, for the will to be able to operate in this way, it must operate from an independent space, that is to say, a space of pure freedom. The will itself, is not necessarily free, for it is prone to being conditioned by external influences or internal inclinations (Novalis 2007, p. 5). What Novalis seeks, is for the will to be independent, for only as independent, can it emerge and function fully as the kind of will that is capable of creating and being in control of the senses, in the manner Novalis envisages.

In the bigger scheme of things, however, one must question how Novalis deals with the idea of competing and conflicting wills. For example, if there are strong intentions from various individual 'mind' localities, but the intentions are incongruous, which intentions predominate? Is it possible that one person's will impedes the will of another, even though equal intentional strength is applied? If it can, then Novalis' theory appears flawed.

However if we persist with Novalis' argument a little further, we can see that he has attempted to deal with just this type of objection. For example, Novalis makes the claim that '[e]very individual will is a function of every other will' (2007, p. 109). If we follow this line of thinking then the idea of competing or conflicting wills is not an issue, since each individual will functionally relates to every other will. While we cannot at this stage draw definite conclusions about what Novalis

means precisely, we can at least say this, that Novalis' thinking reveals the significance of an interconnectedness of minds, akin to Schlegel's mirror model of reflection which was in Chapter 2 likened to 'Indra's Net'. We can therefore understand at least the aspect of the claim that suggests that there is no exercise of will which is exclusive to an individual.

Following Novalis' argument further, much depends on whether we are at 'one with our self' which Novalis argues is the 'highest end – or to Be, or to be free' (2003, p. 164). Further, Novalis argues that '[w]here a person places his reality, what he *fixes upon*, that is his god, his world, his everything' (2003 p. 132) and that '[h]uman beings can become anything that they reflect upon, or that they resolve [...]' (2003, p. 132).

Novalis' Magical Idealism thus taps into an aspect of the will of which for the most part, human beings are ignorant, or at least, inattentive. Moreover, while Novalis speculates that such ignorance might be a 'prerequisite for our morality', he suggests that '[w]e are only ignorant, because we want to be so' (2003, p. 54). Thus in the Novalis view if we want to change ignorance to knowledge, we have the capacity to do so. Whatever the state of the world, it is how it is because we have (at least in a collective sense) willed it, whether we are aware of it or not.

Purity and freedom – essential to Magical Idealism

The concept 'pure' is similar to the early German Romantic concept of 'freedom' insofar as it too describes an unconditioned state, a state that is unindebted to either the past or the future, or any other effects or influences including the effects of the senses. However, Novalis in his 'Fichte Studies', argues that the 'concept *pure* is [...] an empty concept, to which no intuition corresponds – a concept that is neither possible nor actual, nor necessary [...] (2003, p. 77). This is because 'pure', Novalis argues further, is 'neither related nor relatable' (2003, p. 77). Yet, as we will see, the concept pure belongs in a significant way, to the sphere of Magical Idealism, for only in and through this 'state', if we can call it that, can we possibly conceive of Magical Idealism as disrupting or affecting causality. Indeed, the talent to 'raise to a higher level', which is analogous to seeing 'the thing in itself' (Novalis, 1997, p. 10) relies on the talent to recognise it purely, which in turn requires that the 'thing' is seen as profoundly particular - but 'neither related nor relatable'. Of course, this sits uncomfortably with the romantic notion of integration and interconnectedness, where all is related and relatable within the context of a totality; the whole thing, life, is, as has been consistently argued, a continuum. On the other hand, we know also that the early German Romantics work with the idea that all aspects of a totality are in themselves, in a microcosmic way, a totality, and indeed the macrocosmic whole is reflected in the microcosmic particular, just as the particular is reflected in the whole. In any case, Novalis' Magical Idealism, points to the 'in between', the 'transcendental or the 'interstice' as this thesis has identified it previously, of the integrated harmony of a unified whole. However, to be able to conceive of an 'in-between' or a transcendental

space, depends on the concept of a unified and integrated whole. Indeed, there can be no separation where there is no unification, just as there cannot be unification where there is no separation.

Novalis thus argues that '[a] pure thought – a pure image, - a pure sensation, are thoughts, images and sensations that have not been *aroused* by a corresponding object etc. but have *originated* outside so-called mechanical laws – outside the sphere of mechanics' (2007, p. 152). We can suppose that the 'sphere of mechanics' is the sphere of causality, the sphere within which a world unfolds. To challenge the limits of this causal sphere is to contradict the power of mechanical laws through pure thinking, pure acting and pure sensing that are free of this causal sphere, or at least preclude this causal sphere from being the exclusive determinant of what is, or may be, actualised in the universe.

Concerning the 'extramechanical,' Novalis nominates 'fantasy' to be 'an extramechanical force of this kind' (2007, p. 152). As was illustrated in Chapter 5, fantasy is a key element in Schlegel's formula, but what we saw was that it functioned optimally in its reciprocal relation with mimesis and sentimentality. Novalis adds that the imagination works as an effecting principle and that in working with memory, the imagination gives rise to fantasy, a key element in poetry that works to 'represent that which cannot be represented' (1997, p. 162). Novalis further argues that the 'imagination is the marvellous sense that can replace all senses for us' and that if 'the senses seem to be entirely governed by

mechanical laws – then the imagination is obviously not bound to the present and to contact with external stimuli' (1997, p. 118). This being the case, it is the imagination which, as Novalis suggests is controlled by the will (1997, p. 118), that works within the extra-mechanical sphere, itself unaffected by causality, past or future, or the senses, but can, nonetheless, create or instigate a deviation from the normal and mechanical sequencing of events. The capacity to create in this way is however dependent on freedom. Indeed Novalis argues that the 'capacity to be free' is in fact 'the productive imagination' (2003, p. 164).

We can see then why the idea of 'purity' or 'freedom' is essential to Magical Idealism, for without it, we are bound by an endless series of causal connections. The possibility to interrupt such a series depends on being free to do so.

Exploring the significance of the connection between Magical Idealism, poetry, philosophy and morality.

Novalis tells us that 'in order to become truly moral, we must endeavour to become magicians' (2007, p. 9). We know from the previous chapter that in the Schlegel and Novalis view, ideal being is the ultimate goal for humankind. Indeed, as Novalis argues, 'morality must be the core of our existence' and that its 'end, its origin, must be the *ideal of being*' (2003, p. 165). It follows then that Magical Idealism must also hold morality at its core.

Novalis proceeds also to argue that:

> All knowledge should produce morality – the moral drive, the
> drive toward freedom occasion knowledge. To be free is the
> tendency of the I – the capacity to be free is the productive
> imagination. – Harmony is the condition of its activity – of
> oscillating between opposites. Being one with yourself is thus
> the fundamental condition of the highest end – to Be, or to be
> free (2003, p. 164).

The conditions listed here relate, in some form or another, to Magical Idealism. In particular, the capacity to be free, which Novalis argues is the productive imagination, is, as discussed above, essential to Magical Idealism. The Magical Idealism Novalis espouses, embraces freedom, as in the 'pure' freedom discussed in the previous section, in order to allow immediacy between the apprehended and the mind that apprehends; in other words, freedom allows immediacy between subject and object. Thus, to be one with oneself, is to be cradled in the harmonious balance between oneself as subject and oneself as object. What this condition of harmony exemplifies is ideal being, that is to say, true moral being.

How does this condition relate to poetry?

In the introduction to this thesis it was mentioned that the early German Romantic view regarding the moral education of humankind relies on the premise that the poet is already a 'truly moral person' (Novalis 1997, p. 57). It was further suggested that the poet is 'the transcendental physician' and poetry is 'the great art of the construction of transcendental health' and 'mixes everything together

for the sake of its great purpose of all purposes – the *elevation of the human being above himself* (Novalis 1997, p. 56). For this reason, the poet, in the Novalis view is in essence, a magician, and as we have seen in Chapter 4, this requires a willingness to overcome the barrier of personal subjectivity for the sake of objectivity. Objectivity operates like freedom in that it allows 'the thing in itself', if we can put it that way, to emerge.

Novalis envisages that Magical Idealism belongs to the sphere of ideal moral being; the significance of the poet and hence poetry, is thus to facilitate the development of ideal moral being in and through the processes integral to Magical Idealism. Already poetry, in its literal form, provides a space in which Magical Idealism may be realised in and through the 'magic' of poetic language. As has been argued throughout the thesis, the problem of the separation of subject and object can be worked out, in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin view, within the structures of poetry. It is in this way that poetry can be the teacher of humanity, insofar as learning how to exist in harmony as ideal moral beings, is concerned. Poetry can give us an experience of unity, in which the self and reality are integrated, and from within the profound philosophical ascesis, toward ideal moral being, the *life* of Magical Idealism, as in Novalis' 'living theory of life' (1997, p. 52), is enabled to arise. To this end, Novalis suggests that there exists 'no genuine distinction between theory and practice' (2007, p. 135). Indeed, Novalis' idea of the 'living theory of life' is an idea that represents the embodiment of theory in the living form. Indeed, the evolved philosopher-poet for Novalis is one who 'sees suddenly that the problem is already solved by his existence – and that

consciousness of the laws of his existence is knowledge *kat exochen* [...]' (1997, p. 52). *Kat exochen* is ancient Greek for 'pre-eminence' suggesting that finally, knowledge is superior, in that romantic elevated sense, exemplified in the actual being of human life itself.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to look at Novalis' attempt to imagine what underpins the mature nature of the individual who is the product of the kind of moral education investigated in Chapter 6. Such an individual is the 'magician'; the one from within whom 'ideal being' has emerged and the one from whom the view of the 'Magical Idealist' can be seen. For Novalis the poet *is* the 'magician' and exemplifies 'magical idealism' and thereby the mature relationship between poetry and philosophy which yields a profound philosophical ascesis. Novalis' Magical Idealism embodies the possibility of making things happen, so to speak, by interrupting the normally perceived causational mechanism that supports a world. Novalis' Magical Idealism is imbued with the idea that a will, which works with pure freedom is able to make manifest determinations of its own choosing, without conventional causal connections. But, while intervening with the conventional causal mechanism, Magical Idealism is nonetheless itself a principle of causation and it has therefore been necessary to rethink, to a degree, what other Scholars (Stoljar for example) have argued, that Magical Idealism is about transcending causation. This chapter, on the contrary, argues that Magical Idealism is better viewed as a theory that supports the possibility of producing a

causal event other than by that event being an effect of a conventionally established previous causal event.

This chapter has sought, then, to present the theory of Magical Idealism in a manner consistent with the fragments of thought through which Novalis sought to directly express its meaning and also through a correlation of those direct thoughts with the many complimenting thoughts which recur throughout his (and other of the early German Romantics) broader romantic project. Magical Idealism is especially significant to a deeper understanding of the relationship between poetry and philosophical ascesis, especially when one considers how the arising of 'pure' freedom is essential to being ideally moral, and also that the 'magician' of Magical Idealism, is the culmination of the poet-philosopher, through whose mode of engagement with the world, liberation from the limits of conventional thinking and acting is able to arise.

CONCLUSION

The main contention of this thesis has been that in the theoretical work of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, there is a common and broadly developed spectrum of perspectives that argues the significance of poetry and philosophy to each other, and also the philosophical significance of their union. Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin hold that this significance is profound and broad ranging and is founded on the recognition of what (this thesis argues) is a symbiotic relationship between the modes of thinking usually regarded as philosophic and those usually regarded as poetic. Furthermore, the philosophic work of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin which extensively scrutinises this relationship between the poetic and the philosophic, implicitly reveals that this symbiosis between poetry and philosophy culminates in a cognitive unfolding which this thesis argues is a

special kind of philosophical ascesis. The essence of the ascesis in question is such that it reaches its zenith when subject and object merge into an integrated cognitive totality. Although there are subtle differences between the kinds of methods and responses each thinker articulates, this thesis has argued that the common objective of all three thinkers is to deal with the problem of subjectivity, that is to say, the unity of subject and object, which is, at the same time, an analogue for the unity of all binary oppositions, within the structures of poetry. In virtue of this, it is quite fitting, then, to view the common project of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, particularly during the early German romantic period, in terms of 'poetry and philosophical *ascesis*'.

The significance of this thesis is that it brings into focus an aspect of the philosophical and poetic intent of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin that has not previously been argued in such specific terms in contemporary philosophical discourse. Moreover, this thesis also argues that this specific focus shared by all three thinkers, constitutes an important pioneering attempt at an integration of cognitive processes that have been traditionally viewed as incompatible, in terms of collaboration towards a common objective. The integration of these processes in the Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin view, exemplifies a synthesis deemed necessary to ensure that the differentiating function in consciousness (i.e. the subject/object relation), from which awareness of a world arises, could be resolved into a meaningful cognitive unity. Importantly, Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin view the synthesis as a way forward also from a philosophical impasse between two dominant perspectives – idealism and realism.

The synthesis of poetic and philosophical processes offers a means by which to elevate epistemic, ontological and by extension, ethical awareness. It is the profound expediency of this means as we have seen, that reveals the relationship between poetry and philosophy to be symbiotic. Moreover, Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin argue that this synthesis is most importantly for the moral education of humankind which is envisioned by them, to culminate in the ideal of being.

The evaluation of the respective theories and methods of Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, has identified a consistent and common commitment to embrace a symbiosis of poetry and philosophy. Particularly as represented in Chapter 1, this symbiosis is advanced as a genuine heuristic response to the limits inherent in both philosophy and poetry, when pursued separately. The thesis has further identified that a high level of discipline and rigour is required in order to achieve the kinds of elucidations of and solutions to, philosophical problems that Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin seek to attain. In particular, the problem of self-consciousness (subjectivity) and the unknowability of that which sustains it, plus the moral education of humankind towards 'ideal being,' are paramount concerns common to all three thinkers; the most penetrative engagement with which can only be progressed in and through a concentrated effort of the combined 'powers'. The methodology, which is precisely the harmonious and balanced combining of powers, thus belongs in an essential way to the philosophical ascesis that this thesis argues is at issue. Indeed as we have seen, the ascesis ultimately consists in the integration of both means and end because the means to arrive at an integrated

totality is given momentum only through an actual achievement of integrating totality.

In Chapter 6, Schlegel is quoted as saying 'just let *Bildung* do its work'. This, one could argue, exemplifies the ultimate poetic gesture, from the depth of Being itself. Of course, this gesture, would then have to be grounded by philosophy, but in such a way that the gesture and the grounding are aspects of the same totality, in much the same way as the relationship between 'grounding' and 'inventing' was structured in Chapter 1. Philosophical articulation and poetic creation – understanding and intuition – these together make a whole.

The theme of this thesis 'poetry and philosophical *ascesis*' is of course one that deserves further exploration, not only in philosophical discourse but in other disciplines such as literature and art, as well. It is however already the case, that any engagement with Schlegel, Novalis and Hölderlin, whether it be from the perspective of aesthetics, literature or philosophy, cannot avoid but engage also with the philosophical aspirations of these three thinkers. Similarly, to do justice to the philosophical aspirations underpinning the project, philosophical discourse needs to extend its investigation of the means by which philosophically significant cognition can be developed beyond the product achievable through conventional analytic methodologies.

Finally, the limits of this thesis exemplify the limits of conventional philosophic investigation in general, in that it deals only with the theoretical elements of the project and is limited to an analytic exploration of how this theory is actually at work within poetry itself. However, even before such a venture is achievable, further work needs to be done in articulating even more comprehensively what the philosophical issues are, and in particular, in developing an understanding of their significance for contemporary philosophical discourses.

Further philosophical exploration of some of the core issues discussed in this thesis, including the theme 'poetry and philosophical *ascesis*' itself, would be valuable, since by no means is the investigation complete. What comes to mind in particular is Novalis' Magical Idealism, an idea that he did not himself have the opportunity to fully develop, but one that portrays already an advanced perspicuity into challenging cognitive limits when maintaining tension between notions of the 'ideal' and the 'real'. Indeed each topic including Hölderlin's tonal theory and Schlegel's formula, because they are inherently complex theories, would benefit from additional investigation and presentation.

It is hoped that the work of this thesis contributes to the recent work countering the earlier philosophical treatment of the early German Romantics which clearly undervalued their philosophical significance. It is also to be hoped that the thesis goes some way to acknowledging, in philosophically credible terms, the innovative and ambitious nature of the project undertaken by Schlegel, Novalis

and Hölderlin during early German Romantic period of German philosophy. The thesis at least makes a contribution to contemporary scholarship in this area and it could quietly claim to have modestly illumined some of the key methods and modes of thinking that made the revolutionary turn to poetry in the late eighteenth century, a significant turn, not just in the history of German philosophy between Kant and Hegel, but for its own sake and for what it may offer philosophic and poetic scholarship of the future.

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