

Chapter 8

Dreams and Fairy Tales

Heinrich von Ofterdingen was to acquaint its readers with the full extent of the developmental path that must be traversed by a young man destined to be a poet. As it happened, Novalis did not advance much beyond completing the initial nine chapters that comprise the first of the novel's two parts, which bear the respective titles of "Expectation" ("Die Erwartung") and "Fulfillment" ("Die Erfüllung"). Unambiguous as those captions may seem by themselves, their relationship to the text is more difficult to determine. One might even be tempted to reverse their order. At least, it is quite possible to view the cycle of the first nine chapters under the heading of "Fulfillment" because it contains the successful completion of three highly important phases in the protagonist's life: his first exposure to the world outside the provincial seclusion of his native Eisenach, his encounter with the love of his life, and his admission to the poet's craft under the tutelage of one of its most renowned masters. Curiously enough, none of these events are even definitely envisaged goals and their occurrence to Heinrich appears to be far more unexpected than consciously anticipated. There simply is no ordinary sense of "expectation" in "Die Erwartung"; instead, there is a sense of preparation, a sense of development that entails a gradual opening of "the doors of perception,"⁴ and only as a synonym for this sort of growth in receptivity does "Erwartung" or "expectancy" apply to the process Novalis describes. The ultimate stage of receptivity would be the one at which the last restriction, the limiting momentum of death's finality, is overcome. Novalis had reached that stage after Sophie's death and Heinrich, too, is not spared the fate of suffering the same loss before he is allowed to start on his way to "fulfillment."

The entire progression leading through the various phases of “expectancy,” and beyond, is initiated by a sudden break in the accustomed normalcy of Heinrich’s life. Of course, all constellations produced by the infinite flow of circumstances affect a person, and some do so more drastically than others, but this state of dependence is precisely the normalcy that has been unsettled. Essentially, Heinrich’s situation at the beginning of the novel is as paradoxical as Novalis’s had been after the encounter with Sophie. In Heinrich’s case, it is not yet the full self-encounter of love — that will occur later — but it is the first tremor in the foundation on which the “it”-“I” relationship between world and self is based.

The novel opens with a brief descriptive statement, deceptively simple in its wording and imagery. The mere mention of sleeping parents and a ticking clock suffice to stake out a realm of placidity to which a sense of protective security is added by the wind’s rattling at the windows and by the moonlight’s only occasionally more successful penetration of the same barrier. The setting seems unproblematic enough in its common appeal, but actually the author employs it to intimate subtly that the poet’s origins also furnish the background against which his development takes place. The vague outline of a dwelling, an enclosure circumscribed by human need, stands as a frail island amid the antagonistic forces of nature and night. Only the fantastic light of lunar illumination is testimony to the mysterious expanse outside, and the threat of invasion from that beyond goes unheeded in the unawareness of sleep marked by the monotonous rhythm of a clock ticking off seconds. With its dichotomous interplay between inner and outer spheres, the imagery obviously conveys the pattern of the “basic schema”; more specifically, it conveys the pragmatist variant to which Novalis had referred in the “Logologische Fragmente” (II, 527, l. 32–528, l. 4; 528, ll. 8–15, cited previously). The “ultimate ends” remain unresolved: outside, the threat of night prevails and inside, the lack of awareness; only the limited ends of need and use proscribe the uniform sphere within which the dichotomy of the self’s inner and outer reality lies suspended, until — so one is led to conjecture — the clock completes its pointless round and the ultimate night sets in.

There is nothing inherently “wrong” with a pragmatic attitude toward life; later on in the chapter, Heinrich’s father reveals his basically pragmatic inclinations but he cannot be summarily censured on that account. On the contrary, he is a craftsman whose work is evidently valued by his society. Pragmatic concerns are fundamental and necessary to human existence; however, they are insufficient as a validation of that existence since they only support it. The pragmatic circle is one within which the self defines itself solely on terms of those of its needs and desires that arise from its state of dependence on the world around it. In other words, the “I” defines itself as “it,” and the enactment of this self-definition takes the form of self-expansion powered by the possessive rather than moral imperative. Accordingly, the limited sphere of the pragmatic world has no center,

no “I,” except as a potential core or offspring that emerges as the walls of the little home in the night are breached and the protective, yet also restrictive, confines of pragmatism open up toward the absolute sphere that completes the “basic schema.”

Novalis has the self emerge in exactly this manner. The first descriptive passage is written in the third person; the second, still in the third person, introduces a youth, as yet unnamed but quite obviously the previously mentioned parents’ offspring, who is unable to sleep because he is preoccupied with thoughts of a stranger’s recent visit. Thereafter, the narrative shifts to the first person and assumes the form of a monologue in which the speaker registers a new self-awareness, actually tracing the unfolding of a consciousness of self that occurs as a reciprocal movement initiated by the stranger’s tale of a blue flower. It is a vision from afar, from the beyond the mysterious stranger has introduced into the cottage. In response to this mediated vision, “I” is first pronounced, and with it the missing center moves into focus as a point of self-contemplative identity, which is what “I” really means. The newly gained theoretical ground of self-identity also has its practical counterpart in a longing for the blue flower that is devoid of any possessive interests. The monologue does, in fact, begin with the observation that an imperative other than the one to possess has become the singular motivation complementary to the stranger’s conveyed message concerning the blue flower:

“Nicht die Schätze sind es, die ein so unaussprechliches Verlangen in mir geweckt haben”, sagte er zu sich selbst; “fern ab liegt mir alle Habsucht: aber die blaue Blume sehn’ ich mich zu erblicken. Sie liegt mir unaufhörlich im Sinn, und ich kann nichts anders dichten und denken”.

“It is not the treasures that have awakened such an inexpressible longing in me,” he said to himself; “nothing is further from me than greed [actually, ‘the consuming passion to have, or possess’]: but I do long to behold the blue flower. It is perpetually in my mind, and nothing else occupies my thought and imagination.”

(I, 195, II. 9–13)

As he continues, it becomes evident that no one else witness to the same event had been affected in a like manner. Their world remained undisturbed, whereas he, no longer confined by its walls, has left that very world in which flowers do not matter for an other one, and yet it is the same world, only more familiar, more of a “thou” than an “it.”

The world has not changed, but his relationship to it has, and in the process the divisive limit between inside and outside, between ego and nonego, has become transparent. No matter how much nature is tamed in the service of human need, it always retains its forbidding otherness that ultimately claims the existence

it temporarily supports. Once the self gains an inkling of its freedom, even that final barrier erected in testimony to the self's dependence loses its threatening power and nature assumes the features of another self. Accordingly, it now seems to the youth as though rocks, trees, and animals were about to speak to him, a state of mind that would have to be judged insane by previous standards were it not for the reassurance he derives from a greater clarity of vision and a heightened sense of understanding. At this point, he is still confused about this sudden change of perspective and far from conscious of what it entails. To grow into full self-consciousness as he receives an ever more comprehensive vision of the world from the perspective of his freedom, from the center for which the inner and outer realms merge, that will be his task.

The fullness of this consciousness will have been reached when he is able to communicate it, which is definitely not the case in his present state ("Daß ich auch nicht einmal von meinem wunderlichen Zustande reden kann!") ["And to think I cannot even talk about my singular condition!"], I, 195, ll. 21–22; Hilty, 15⁵). Since the degree of freedom realized by the self is attended by a proportionate range of receptivity to the world as a medium rather than a limit that constitutes a pragmatic challenge, communication of the self's true, that is to say free, condition can only be rendered in the manner of a poetic statement, as outlined by the "*höhere Wissenschaftslehre*." In other words, Heinrich will be able to "talk about his singular condition" when he has become a poet. That this is, indeed, to be the case becomes apparent in the ninth and last chapter of part I where Klingsohr's fairy tale not only exemplifies the poet's craft but also tells how a household, allegorically representative of the self's faculties, arrives at its deliverance from bondage into freedom. The "singular condition" is also the singular poetic topic, which can, of course, be told in innumerable ways but only by a free self addressing other selves as free in a language that reveals its own heritage of freedom from limitation to a pragmatically determined referential context.

Equally free of pragmatically determined referential contexts are dreams, and the youth's soliloquy that still refers its concepts to the "old world" ("[die] Welt, in der ich sonst lebte") (I, 195, l. 15), if only by contrast, soon gives way to the more profound symbolism of a dream vision. In order to appreciate Novalis's special regard for the type of consciousness that occurs in dreaming states, it is necessary to recall that he considers all acts of cognition constitutive of our waking, or daytime, reality to be variables of self-consciousness and not the direct "knowledge" of objects as we believe. Those objects are products of the imagination with which it accounts for the varying conditions of the self's limited estate. The objects thus presented to consciousness have really no validity of their own, except as elements of a symbolic circumscription representative of the self. Objects constitute a language that does not speak exclusively in terms of an infinite range of limitation experienced as sentience. That restricted a

medium conveys nothing but dictates to which a self, addressed as an entirely dependent entity, can offer no more than a pragmatic response. Far more important, the language of objects also speaks in terms of the self's formative power, which is best understood when that power is allowed to demonstrate its freedom by functioning without reference to the immediate impact of sense data indicative of the self's limited, or dependent, state. The freer the imagination is in forming its images, the more clearly do they display their function of serving to reveal the self's true nature.

Objects may assume such symbolic transparency in dreams, when the self lies suspended in sleep and for this very reason achieves a keener state of awareness than the distortions of waking reality would permit; actually, the dreaming self is awake and the waking self asleep to the truth of its reality, just as the parents are asleep to it and the youth awake in his dreamlike state⁶ that effortlessly merges into a real dream. Dreams are, however, a purely subjective, or internal, experience that must be communicable if it is to have validity. Poetic statements are such dreams shared in common and fairy tales, as least referential to a pragmatic context, come closest to being objective, or external, counterparts to dreams. Consequently, part I of *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* begins with a dream and ends with a fairy tale, which completes the complementary arch of mutual validation that extends from internal to external vision. Also, this arrangement makes it evident that the structural pattern of the "basic schema" does not only underlie individual passages or some segments of the novel but informs the entire cycle of its completed chapters.

The dream that follows Heinrich's solitary musings is told in the third person and has three separate phases, which the narrator interrupts after the first one in order to relate the concluding section to the time of night at which it occurs. This brief interjection accomplishes a shift in narrative perspective by means of which the author succeeds in uniting the "it" and "I" dichotomies that have characterized the narration up to this point. The nondream reality and the dream reality have simultaneous validity from a viewpoint that transcends them both, which — for the moment — only the narrator and his audience hold. However, there is no doubt that the dreaming "I" is to attain the same perspective within its own domain; as a sign indicative of the direction where this attainment lies, the dreamer emerges upon waking as "Heinrich," so named for the first time, and enters the familial world where he is addressed as "thou" (*Du*).

The time of night to which Novalis refers his readers is also highly significant in its own right since it is the transitional period of dawn, the point where night meets day and their separate spheres of reality merge. As in the *Hymns to the Night*, daytime stands for the realm of life and its attendant pragmatic concerns, whereas night has a twofold meaning. It implies either the cessation of day, in a temporary as well as permanent sense, or a heightened awareness that comprehends both realms. Evidently, the latter instance applies in the case of dreamers

who come to understand the language of their dreams as the language of reality. Furthermore, the confluence of night and day is also an important reference point for Novalis's concept of colors. He attaches definite symbolic value to their employment throughout the text, particularly in the two parts of the dream sequence that occur at the specified time of dawn. Briefly stated, Novalis's use of colors reflects the theoretical premises Goethe had outlined in his *Contributions to Optics* (*Beiträge zur Optik*, 1791–92).⁷ In that publication, which Novalis held in high esteem, Goethe contends that colors originate at the points of tangency between the polar opposites of light and dark. As his experiments show, the edge of a light surface juxtaposed against a dark one will radiate the colors red in the direction of the dark area and yellow in its own direction, whereas the dark surface takes on a violet tint near the edge and projects a clear blue into its light counterpart. Most important for Novalis's scheme is the fact that light modified by darkness is yellow or golden in its own realm of light, and darkness projected into that same realm of light is manifest as blue.

Yellow and blue, the only true colors according to Goethe,⁸ take their place within a framework of polar opposition Novalis would have had to regard as an obvious confirmation of the interactive complex typified by his "basic schema." Light and dark occupy the same positions with respect to one another as do ego and nonego, and both sets of opposites can maintain their relationship only within a sphere of mutual interaction. The circumference of the sphere is not apparent because there are no opposites from its vantage point; just as that sphere could be called "God" or "I" (II, 108, ll. 1–2), it could also be called "Dark" or "Light" since either nomenclature would be equally appropriate or inappropriate. Even though the periphery may be indeterminable, its center is very definitely determined by the point of tangency that allows for the interaction of opposites. As long as the self advances no further than the recognition of its determined state, it remains locked in opposition since it can only identify with the limited sphere of its selfhood and must grant full sufficiency to the limiting sphere beyond. Once the self comes to recognize ego and nonego as relative moments of interaction that originate with its selfhood and are potentially comprehended by it, the frozen state of deadly opposition begins to melt. In its stead, a field of living interaction appears that is nourished from the center, or rather from the tangential point, by the self's freedom of agency. As a restricted entity, the self is ego, identifiable with light or the daytime world, which is opposed by the otherness of nonego, the dark of night and death. As a free agent, the self is capable of integrating the nonego within its own sphere in two ways, just as light is capable of integrating darkness. With regard to the restrictive aspect of tangency, the self reflects the nonego's limiting effect on the ego and fashions it into images for consciousness to comprehend as the ego's world; this action would be the equivalent of light reflecting against darkness at the point of tangency and thus suspending the dualism of light and dark in the color yellow. With

regard to the mediating aspect of tangency, the self attains the capacity to encounter the nonego freely without reference to its limiting agency; this “active passivity” would be the equivalent of light receiving darkness across the point of tangency and thus suspending even the last vestiges of dualism in the color blue.

The first of Henrich’s dream sequences, which precedes the narrator’s interjection, is remarkably eventful yet equally remarkable for its lack of descriptive detail and color. Uninhibited by the confines of time and space, the self appearing in the dream takes full measure of every experience the world has to offer and is carried along by the stream of being as it weaves its way back and forth between opposites that fall into a pattern of infinite repeatability. This dance of life moves according to the measures of war and peace, joy and suffering, life and death, only to end on a note of love and “eternal separation” (“auf ewig . . . getrennt”) (I, 196, ll. 10–11).

Separation persists because the self is conceived solely as the entire range of experiences to which it may be exposed and not as the summary condition for the possibility of any and all experience. The self is not only the indirect object of consciousness viewed in the context of external circumstances that affect its feelings, thoughts, and actions, but also the direct object that is always self regardless of circumstantial affect. Self-consciousness is an act of consciousness that establishes self-identity as the necessary prior condition for all other conditions to which the self may be subject and to which its feelings, thoughts, and actions respond. If self-consciousness were not free of all other conditions but merely a secondary phenomenon that is dependent on them, there could be no consciousness of self since the self’s identity could not be determined from the constant flow of changing conditions to which it is exposed. The ability to say “I,” or rather “I am” feeling, thinking, doing, and so on, derives from the unqualified certainty of self-consciousness and not from a composite of experiences that span the interim between birth and death, even if that cycle were to be repeated indefinitely as the dream intimates. In other words, “I” does not mean an ego dependent on the primacy of the nonego, not world through which there is a self, but rather self-identity; and self-identity, in turn, means freedom of agency through which there is a self that entails the summary possibility of its determinability and therefore also the summary possibility of its determinant, the world outside. As long as “I” is not understood in its freedom as the potential sum and closure of its determinability and of its determinant, the self is not truly conscious of itself and persists in misunderstanding its relationship to the world. This misunderstanding occurs because the self is subject to limitation felt as sensory impact, which causes it to attribute the primacy of independent reality to the realm of the nonego and to the objects projected therein. Yet the self also insists on its own independence insofar as it recognizes itself as quite different from everything else. Consequently, ego and nonego, self and world, stand opposed, with the ego intent on claiming its independence on the nonego’s

ground, where it cannot be won because it has already been forfeit. This forfeiture makes separation permanent. It does not alter the range of possibilities for interaction, which takes place even on a reciprocal basis, but the nonego prevails and any union or sense of identity the ego attains with its opposite is always under the dictate of limitation and subject to dissolution.

The only mention of color in this segment of the dream is “colorful” (*bunt*), used to describe the manifold of life’s adventures and to imply a sense of bewildering inconstancy as well. Soon thereafter, the author announces the impending dawn and introduces the next phase as one characterized not only by more calm but also by greater clarity and constancy of image. That is, indeed, the case and the contrast is all the more striking because the preceding survey of life, which was conducted from a “realistic” perspective, contains not one single image but only abstract generalizations. The concrete “reality” of the outside world to which the self supposedly owes its experiences is actually depicted in thoroughly unsubstantial terms that belie any such assumption. In effect, Novalis has his dreamer reexecute Kant’s “Copernican Revolution” by showing that there are no concrete objects as “things in themselves” to which experiential reality may refer. Things are not “in themselves”; rather, they are “phenomena,” which means that the immediacy of their images refers to the self’s creativity in forming them and not to the external origin of their givenness. After the dreaming self has dreamed the dream of pre-Kantian dogmatism to its unsatisfactory conclusion, it progresses toward an appreciation of the phenomenal quality that attaches to the objects of consciousness. This readjustment in perspective is indicated by the precision and detail of the imagery that now begins to appear, not with reference to the independent reality of a world determining the self’s fate but expressive of the self’s free agency in shaping that world.

First, Heinrich is shown to be moving away from tumultuous engagement, climbing through the isolating darkness of a forest to higher, brighter, and more distant spheres. After the upward movement of withdrawal, the journey proceeds inward, where it ends in a cave from which a bright light beckons. It is a sphere of light bathed in golden radiance by a fountainlike emanation, which rebounds off the ceiling’s enclosing wall in countless sparklets that are gathered into a great pool at the base. The symbolism of the entire display, accented and reinforced by the Goethean color scheme, shows a spontaneous force reflecting against limiting confines in order to have those reflections comprehended into a whole, which is exactly the pattern of operation Novalis would ascribe to the imagination. But the pool is not yet world; to be that, it has to surround a self, an ego, with whom it can interact.

Confronted with colors to be seen and activity whose “holy silence” (*heilige Stille*) is registered by ear, the self Heinrich projects as the constant object of his dream approaches the basin, tastes its contents, and immerses himself in them. The flood, appearing as a manifold of colors, (“[das Becken wogte] mit unend-

lichen Farben'') (I, 196, 1. 29) surrounds him and becomes his environment as sensation perceives it to be. All of the senses, except one, are carefully mentioned in order to establish them as areas of tangency, for which reason, it would seem, touch is the one most emphasized. In other words, the imagination transforms the otherness of pure limit into an inner reality for the self and that action is itself depicted within and for the self as a relationship of kinship between the self and the limiting realm. This kinship is experienced as sensibility and the various modes enumerated so far represent inner qualifications of the world outside.

Sight, hearing, taste, and touch modify the outer reality that is perceived and are therefore best suited to characterize the interaction between ego and nonego as one comprising the dual moments of external limit and inner creativity. The sense of smell requires a different sort of interaction, one that is based on reciprocity across the limit, just as the inhaling and exhaling of air in the life-giving act of breathing demonstrates. Consequently, olfaction only occurs in the third phase of the dream, which deals with the self's capability to enter into a free relationship with the nonego that allows for mediation instead of limitation.

In the second phase, there is no mediation; there is only limit. The dream's stage is restricted to a cave and the reality of an outer world can be recognized only as the limiting effect of the cave's confines on the fountain's activity. This relationship exhibits the same structural pattern as does light modified by darkness or self immersed in a continuum of sensual affect. In each case, the mutual ground for relationship can only be gained at the cost of the fountain's, the light's, and the self's respective identities. The fountain disperses into sparklets that are regathered in a common pool, light appears as the entire cave's golden illumination that is refracted in the pool's seething mixture of colors, and the self is lost in the erotic bliss of sensual communality.

All impressions to which the self is subject would remain as indistinct by themselves as the multicolored liquid that surrounds the bather in the dream. They do take on distinct shapes, however, with reference to the self's capability to think and order the universe of its environment. That very process is visualized by the dreamer as he sees the thoughts and feelings stimulated by the immersion actually materialize around him in the pool. With this last installment, the vision is complete and the conscious perception of a world containing the self has been shown to originate with a process that entails spontaneous action from within reflected against a limit imposed from without. The dreamer has seen himself, not just as the primary and only constant object of consciousness but as the creative force constructing the world within which that objectified self takes its place as one object among others. Expressed in the symbolic imagery of dreams — symbolic because it functions outside the framework of mimetic equivalence — Heinrich has just beheld the self as it is defined in the theoretical part of the *Wissenschaftslehre*.

The cave contains the fountain and its products, as consciousness comprehends the products of the imagination we refer to as objects. Objects, however, hide their origin because they seem to be conveyed to consciousness by the senses from an external reality or, to employ the language of the dream, the sparklets in the pool seem to emanate from the wall. The cave image traces the whole cycle, of which consciousness remains unaware while it is engaged in acts of common cognition. This lack of awareness results in the major tenets of pre-Kantian dogmatism that subscribe to the primacy of external reality, which would leave the self wholly determined in its cognitive and practical functions. The dream vision has the advantage of showing that the walls of limitation most certainly are a necessary and determinative requisite for the pool of perceptions from which we construct our world, but not its only requisite and definitely not its source.

Cognition, so the dream demonstrates, requires that the self be determined; however, it also demonstrates that the self be determined as a self whose identity is not the equivalent of any of its determined states. If action is not determined, then it is free, which means that the nondetermined state of self-identity is a condition of free activity that precedes its modification, just as the fountain's spontaneity precedes the wall's limiting effect on it. Objects of consciousness are modifications of the self's spontaneity and the golden aura of the cave's interior would be the proper lighting in which that truth could find recognition.

Light modified by darkness is yellow, with the accent on the power of light and not on the force of the modifier. This accentuation is amplified by the substitution of "gold" for "yellow," and it is gold whose radiance dominates the entire scene, allowing it to come into view. To the extent that the cavern is brightened by the jet's golden rays, the focus remains on the fountain's spontaneity, even though it may suffer the wall's impact, and on the self's identity, even though it may merge with the contents of the pool. Yellow is the visible manifestation of light's primacy in contact with darkness. This primacy is preserved in a state that necessarily entails its modification, just as the self's own freedom is preserved in its state of dependence on the givenness of sense perceptions that make the conscious apprehension of world and self in the world possible. Whatever the effect of darkness may be, gold prevails because it represents an absolute color in the Goethean scheme Novalis has adopted, the absolute color native to the sphere of light. It may be hidden from view in the multicolored mix of life but it is never lost. The task is to search it out behind the petrified walls of limitation that enclose it, be that task pursued as a dreamer who gains access to the self's innermost reaches or as a miner of the type to whom the fifth chapter, the central chapter of the nine, is dedicated, or as a poet who knows, as Klingsohr does, that Fable, the spirit of poesy, works her wonders with gold and spins her golden thread into eternity. Of the miner and Fable more will be said later on; they are mentioned now in order to furnish some indication

how central the symbol of gold is to the entire novel and how consistent it is with the significance it acquires in the dream's context.

The fountain's light illuminates the cave but its golden yellow is not the only color mentioned. There is also a faint bluish tint along the walls. Blue comes into being as darkness crosses over into the sphere of light, and in this case, darkness is the impenetrable otherness of an opaque mass of rocks that may only gain entry to the fountain's domain as its limitation. The blue tint along the walls indicates that their limiting effect on the golden beam characterizes the relationship between the outer sphere of darkness and the inner sphere of light. It is a relationship where limit, or rather otherness, remains the prevalent feature, not because blue appears in the sphere of light — that underscores the sameness without which relationship would not be possible at all — but because blue must be identified with walls.

This reminder that there is an extraneous opposing force shifts the accent from the primacy of spontaneous action to the modifying influence it must undergo. Yellow is now hidden among the infinite variation of colors in the glittering pool, which reunites the fountain's dispersed energy just as consciousness gathers the variables of limitation the self's freedom of agency encounters and registers as sense impressions. All colors are derived from yellow and blue, according to Goethe's theory, and the colorful manifold at the base of the cave has no other ingredients. Here, too, the color symbolism parallels an aspect of consciousness, in particular the composition of its contents, which are products of freedom and limitation or, in terms of the dream's imagery, products of the golden fountain and its encounter with the bluish wall. The sense impressions, which result from this process and from which the self constructs the world of objects, are contained within the confines of consciousness insofar as they are the self's creation, but insofar as they are representative of the self's limitation, they also assume an external reality.

The dual reality of objects of consciousness is made obvious in the bathing scene where the inner and outer aspects of sensibility are treated as though they were indistinguishable in their uniform rapport. As a sign that the self's freedom of creativity is not left out from this image, the author employs color once again. When Heinrich is about to enter the pool after having established initial sensual contact, it seems to him as though he were enveloped in a reddish glow similar to that of the setting sun (I, 196, l. 36). This image not only conveys a transition from day to night but also, by way of parallel emphasis, a transition from light to dark that produces a red hue, which is the color the sphere of light projects into its dark counterpart. In the exact same manner, the objects of consciousness are projected outward as the formed reality that surrounds the self. Indeed, the entire inner world of the cavern stays behind as the dreamer leaves it and floats into the rocks, still immersed and carried by the pool's tide but overcome by sleep at the moment of transition.

He falls asleep to the world of his consciousness because its externalized version does not include the vision of the fountain as its origin and effectively denies the spontaneity of its source within the self's freedom. In the waking state, to which he would be released after the world has been constructed as shown in the dream, only the final product and not its genesis is apparent to consciousness. The world simply is there and is the environment on which the self depends. Viewed from its outcome, the process that brings world and self before consciousness appears in reverse order. Limitation is now the most immediate, and therefore primary, factor, whereas the self is once removed and its actions merely serve to provide for accommodation within the imposed limits. This is the daytime world of wakeful, pragmatic concerns, a world as unyielding in its otherness as the rock outside the cave, only the self has now become part of it and the magic cavern is lost from view. The gold is well hidden but it remains at the core, guarded by walls of stone and some, like the miner in the central chapter, prove capable of braving the barrier.

Heinrich is not yet ready to reenter this daytime world. He has glimpsed the secret of its beginnings, has observed it take shape, has caught sight of its golden essence, but that vision is incomplete and does not overcome the power of the walls. The self's inner spontaneity in constructing the world must be matched by an outer spontaneity, unless the walls are to retain authority over the self in the external realm from which they have blocked the golden fountain. Its rediscovery can only be effected by those who have the secret to penetrate the world of stone, who have the power to make it yield and cause it to be transformed from frozen rigidity into living organicity. That fluidity of interactive response between self and world has already been demonstrated in the cavern's pool. The relationship is one of sensual intercourse and occurs most definitely under Eros's spell. Externalized, the fluidity of that relationship does freeze, however, into determinative rigor where the limiting impact of physical dependence rules supreme, unless the self can prove itself to be as free of it here, in the practical realm, as it did in the theoretical realm.

In the third phase of the dream, Heinrich sees himself in surroundings quite different from the ones he had just left behind. Inanimate rock formations have been replaced by organic plant life and the oppressive closeness of walls has been supplanted by the dark blue expanse of the sky. The change is so dramatic that it is difficult, at first, to recognize any resemblance between this setting and the last. However, fountain, light, and self do make their reappearance and are as central to the present scene as they had been to the previous one. Here, as there, the complex of this triad stands for the differing functional contexts of triune selfhood: the fountain's spontaneity for the self's freedom of agency, the light's various hues for the self's interaction with the nonego, and Heinrich's own presence in the dream for the self's appearance before consciousness as its constant object that is endowed with sentience. These functional contexts remain

the same but there is a marked difference in the circumstances under which they are envisioned. There are no more walls to obstruct the jet stream, which now extends upward without limits, in heaven's direction but not reaching it; gleaming gold has given way to a field of light, unusually bright and somehow superior to daylight, in which "light blue" (*lichtblau*) (I, 197, l. 17) appears as the dominant color; and Heinrich has emerged from the pool, which has been replaced by flowers in whose midst there is a light blue one of such charm, it captivates all his attention, so that it comes to represent the central focus and sum total of his environment.

In contrast to the cave, a marked absence of limitation is the most pronounced feature in this phase of the dream. Nothing could better embody the elusive concept of self-enactment than the image of a fountain shaping itself by the unmitigated power of its own spontaneous energy. This fountain gives itself its own rule and it progresses unimpeded by any limitation that would curtail the domain of its authority. The rocks are there but they are at some distance and in no position to offer resistance to the fountain's activity, which freely extends outward, enacting its own being just as the self would in its capacity of moral agent.

The fountain ascends skyward, complemented by the absolute, inclusive sphere that its own efforts approximate. The heavens are "midnight blue," actually "black-blue" (*schwarzblau*) (I, 197, l. 16), which signifies that they are infinitely removed yet turned toward the world since "black" is pure darkness and "blue" is the color darkness radiates into the sphere of light; moreover, they are also "clear" (*völlig rein*) (I, 197, ll. 16–17) so there is nothing to interrupt the continuity between the fountain and the absolute sphere, as there is nothing to obstruct the same relationship in reverse.

The moral idea, in accordance with which the self acts as a free agent, admits of no limit that might separate the self from it. It is as clear and as absolute in its inclusiveness as the sky at which the fountain is aimed; it is also as unattainable because it constitutes an imperative that may be realized in any one or any number of acts, but it is not a goal to be realized by them. The fountain striving ever upward in free self-assertion under the absolute sky's all-inclusive yet infinitely remote arch is the central image and it would have been sufficient if the self Heinrich has revealed to him in his dream were to be the one Fichte envisioned as a free practical agent. Novalis has, however, expanded Fichte's vision into a "*höhere Wissenschaftslehre*," and the imagery of the dream accommodates its added dimension of mediation and receptivity.

The fountain is central but right beside it are both Heinrich and the blue flower. Next to the fountain's pure activity, Heinrich's utter inactivity is all the more striking. He is completely passive, purely receptive and "sees nothing but the blue flower" ("Er sah nichts als die blaue Blume") (I, 197, l. 21). It is the sort of receptivity that is only possible from the perspective of freedom, and that

perspective is certainly the one under which this world appears, a world that holds no obstacles for the fountain's freedom of agency. Pure activity and pure passivity are here conjoined into the active passivity that is at the heart of the "*höhere Wissenschaftslehre*." Also at its heart is Novalis's theory of mediation, which finds its most compelling expression in the symbol of the blue flower.

A great many flowers surround Heinrich and this, his immediate environment, is as alive with colors as had been the one in the cave. Nonetheless, there is a slight but telling difference to which Novalis alerts the reader by a subtle variation in the terminology. He employs attributes indicative of colorful profusion to amplify the variability of circumstances comprising the world, or environment, within which we conduct our lives. In the first phase of the dream he uses the phrase "ein unendlich buntes Leben" (I, 196, l. 9), where "bunt" implies a collective of variegation without any detectable coherence or order. As the principles governing the interaction between self and world become more apparent and colors begin to assume their definite place within that framework, the panorama of life is still depicted as a colorful mix but one with more distinctive features. The phrase is now no longer "unendlich bunt" but rather "unendliche Farben" ("colors in infinite array") (I, 196, l. 29), and finally, in the third phase, the open-ended "unendlich" is dropped altogether in order to be replaced by the inclusive concept of "alle" ("all") (I, 197, l. 20), which converts the indistinct multiplicity of colors into a coherent totality.

Light and dark are not considered opposing spheres in this last context but rather the extreme ends of an expanded point of tangency that spans the entire range of color. Here the polarity of opposition reveals its true nature and proves to be a field of living interaction where the movement from light to dark is complemented by a movement from dark to light. As is the case with magnetism, the polar extremes of light and dark form an energy field. The two phenomena of color and magnetism are definitely associated in Novalis's mind, only magnetism stands for the principle of polarity in general — for which reason "Iron" plays such an important role in Klingsohr's tale — whereas color is less abstract and more specific in its immediate appeal to the eye. Organicity entails the same principle of polar resolution and identifies it as the principle of life for which the mechanistic dualism of cause and effect constitutes a sphere of reciprocal interaction where cause is as much effect as effect is cause. The organic complex is from the very beginning what it is going to be, and the causal chain of its development does not stretch aimlessly into infinity but is met at every moment by the comprehensive unity of its final form.

Heinrich finds himself in a world that is carefully depicted as one in which polar opposition has no place, except within the context of its resolution. It is a world of flowers where each particular object is an organic whole, an entity free in its own identity yet also representative of all others. There, the law of the individual is the law of all, just as it is for the morally free agent, and

otherness does not constitute an exclusive or limiting moment but rather an inclusive continuum that extends from one to all because it also extends from all to one. The wall of separation between polar extremes has been transformed into a field of mediation that is an avenue from one to the other in either direction; or, more specifically, just as the self strives toward the full realization of the moral law under whose unifying authority the antagonism between self and world is suspended, the world may reveal its kinship and manifest that same law by presenting a human face to the self.

As Heinrich lies next to the fountain of freedom, the heavenly sphere and all the flowers under it converge on him in the one flower whose light blue color — the only color he sees — identifies it as a messenger to the field of light from the dark expanse the fountain approaches. Where the fountain of freedom emanates, there is the center where the dualism of the self's subjective and objective moments is suspended; there also is the center of the universe where the blue flower grows through which the infinitely removed sphere that comprehends the world may descend upon Heinrich and confirm this suspension in a reciprocal movement.⁹ "World is to be self," longs the free agent, and "I am you," comes the response as the flower bends down toward Heinrich and opens its blue corolla to his view in order to display a human face at the center.

Spherical imagery is quite pronounced in this last phase of the dream. There are three distinctive variants and each represents a different aspect of the "basic schema" in its completed form as an absolute sphere that is the synthesis of two spheres tending in opposite directions. The absolute sphere is unlimited or infinite, that is to say, it is an expansive momentum, away from any potential center, and the sky in its black remoteness certainly depicts this relationship. No matter how expansive the momentum, the absolute sphere is also always identical with itself and forms a totality, an inclusive sphere that points back toward its center. The flowers of all colors are such a totality and the absolute sphere reflects back upon itself through them, which is indicated by their being grouped around one particular flower whose color is blue. The center itself must be a point of emanation into infinity and a point of return from there, a point of free agency and a point of passivity that stands ready to receive the countermovement from the outside as its own. As a free agent, the self moves into the center, which is where the fountain is and where Heinrich finds himself when he awakes next to it. However, the point of emanation is just the potential center of an absolute sphere, unless it is established in this position from the all-inclusive periphery whose center it is supposed to be. As a periphery, the infinite expanse of the absolute sphere assumes an identity only with reference to its center, and this relationship is symbolized by the final image, with which the dream concludes. The flower's petals form a sphere comprising a complex of radii, blue in color, that radiate inward merging into a "delicate face" ("zartes Gesicht") (I, 197, l. 26), the face Heinrich will later recognize as his love.

Fountain and remote *black-blue* sky, sky again — *black-blue* — bounding a field of vision filled with flowers centered around a blue one, and the round blue corolla from whose middle the world proclaims its identity with Heinrich, these are the three variants of the spherul image that dominate the dream's last phase. Collectively, they represent the "basic schema's" extensive and intensive spheres in perfect congruence not only with reference to a common point of tangency but also with reference to a common sphere, an absolute sphere that is called neither "I" nor "God" (II, 108, ll. 1–2) because it is both and its proper name would be "Thou" ("Statt N[icht] I[ch] — Du") (III, 430, l. 5).

Once again, Novalis has Eros forge the bond that links self to world and world to self. To be sure, that union has not yet been consummated and is still only a promise, but the power capable of bringing this event about has been identified. The story of the dream's fulfillment, which is also the story of Eros, is told in Klingsohr's tale. It is really more of an allegorical myth than a fairy tale, a product of his youth, as Klingsohr claims, a product of our culture's youth, as the variation on a Platonic theme makes evident. However, it is a variation quite new and youthful in its own right because, aside from the figure of Eros, it creates its own mythology against an entirely different philosophical background.

The dreamer in the first chapter dreams about himself and discovers the world; the narrator in the last chapter conveys that discovery in a dream of his own, in that peculiar kind of dream all can share. It is a spoken dream, spoken by someone who would actually have to experience the world as it had appeared to Heinrich. Unless that shift in perspective has occurred, dreams must retain the status of private illusions because they simply are not "true" if told in a language limited in its applicability to the waking state. Heinrich learns very quickly that dream reality is not easily translated into waking reality when his efforts to do so meet with his father's good-natured skepticism regarding the value of dreams in general (I, 198, ll. 11ff). The father knows himself only as a determined being, an individual whose link to others must be the determinant he has in common with them. Images, be they dreamed, thought, or expressed in words, can have validity for him only because they reflect this common ground of reference, which is the concrete givenness of the objective world as a causal nexus of necessity. He, too, had had a dream as a young man, quite similar to Heinrich's; he, too, had seen a flower, but he had also been quick to associate this vision with the world from where he had come, a world to which he returned after his dream with thoughts of marriage and eager to establish himself in his craft.

In his language a flower is a flower and a human face a human face. He is right, of course, because in the order of causal relationships, according to which our rational faculty understands the information received by sense perception, flowers cannot have a human face. He never dreamed his dream to an end since the

waking world intruded too soon, and when he thinks or says “flower,” it means something else than it does for Heinrich. The reason for this discrepancy is not that their words refer to different objects but that those words refer the same object to different levels of self-consciousness; Heinrich’s refer to a self that is free in determining its activity but not awake, the father’s to a self that is awake but not free. If both are to understand one another, it can only be with reference to a self that is conscious of its freedom in a waking state, and the self attains this sort of consciousness as a moral being.

The law according to which the self forms its images while dreaming is its own, and if that law is to have more than purely subjective applicability, it must be one all selves hold in common. The moral law is such a law, and how the world appears from its vantage point is a dream whose many versions all individuals may share. The act of dreaming is itself equivalent to the activity depicted in the cave-phase of Heinrich’s dream; before he shares it, he will have to realize its last phase, which he does in the chapters that follow. Klingsohr’s tale concludes this process with a demonstration of the poet’s craft that enables those who have mastered it to speak the language of waking dreams and reclaim the imagination’s sovereignty over the world. The poet speaks with moral authority, not as a moralizing pedant but as a free individual who invites everyone else to share his perspective of the world. His statements are those of a free agent and they proclaim the sovereignty of the imagination because they address an audience of peers capable of following his invitation and of acknowledging that sovereignty in themselves. Klingsohr’s tale is a commentary on the liberating power of the spirit of poesy, a commentary vouched for by his own practice as he tells the story to a receptive circle of listeners. They, however, remain out of sight because those listeners are we ourselves, and it is actually we who are asked to realize the truth of Novalis’s poetics as he has Klingsohr present them to us.

The loving union between self and world anticipated in the dream is the very theme with which the tale begins. Although they are separated initially, the two realms confront one another in mutual attraction, and, as the narrative unfolds, Eros bridges the gap, aided by Fable, the spirit of poesy. Their task will be to dispel the ice age that has settled over a world where everything seems entirely foreign, except for the familiar images of fountain and flowers. There is no sky that arches over this setting; instead, heaven with its stars now appears in the form of a palace whose king is lord over a city of ice and a garden of crystalline flowers that harbor the fountain’s frozen jet in their midst. There are indications, though, that the great thaw is about to set in and that the palace grounds will come alive once the “beautiful stranger” (*der schöne Fremde*) (I, 292, l. 13) arrives and has completed his mission. When that time comes, as it does in the concluding scene, the ice will melt and the fountain will flow, the sparkling crystals will turn into living blossoms that burst forth everywhere, the king’s daughter will be Eros’s, the “beautiful stranger’s” bride, and Fable will initiate

the new era of their royal union with a final song in which she proclaims their rule to have been established forever. As Fable sings, she spins forth a golden thread emanating from within her, and this last image completes the cycle from dream to fairy tale because, in symbol as in deed, in Klingsohr's story as in his telling it, the golden stream of the imagination is obviously no longer confined to the cavern of internal freedom.

King Arctur's frozen world is the realm of nature viewed as the external counterpart of the dream's cave. It, too, is bounded by a "wall of rock formations" (*Berggürtel*) (I, 291, l. 6), and its law of dynamic flux remains hidden within those confines. Only after Iron hurls his sword against the wall of stone where it breaks up into pieces creating a shower of sparklets do the iron fragments and their magnetic properties point the way to nature's secret, which awaits its discovery by the self in an act of self-recognition; "ego = nonego — ultimate sentence of all *science* and *art*" ("Ich = N[icht] I[ch] — höchster Satz aller *Wissenschaft* und *Kunst*") (II, 542, l. 25), Novalis had already said more than a year earlier, and that formula applies here as well. Its fundamental truth is known to Fable because she is able to practice it, for which reason she is also the only one who moves effortlessly between Arctur's realm and the self's household. Her task is to remove the "non," represented by a third realm of total darkness where the Fates reside, and thus reveal the nonego's hidden identity with the ego.

Heinrich's dream is an entirely personal experience, and yet it is potentially everyone's. Klingsohr realizes this potential, and in order to do so his tale contains no persons at all but only a group of allegorical figures that represent the self's various faculties and features. This group forms a household with all the familial ties, economic implications, and isolating aspects the term suggests. The prevailing relationships and their allegorical significance are not difficult to discern. There are a father who goes in and out of the house and may be identified with the senses, a mother busy with housework who represents the heart as seat of the self's caring and nurturing inclinations, a nursemaid named Ginnistan, recognizable as the imagination, and the two infants Eros and Fable, the mother's and Ginnistan's offspring from the same father. Collectively, the first three circumscribe the self's theoretical (Ginnistan) and practical (mother) functions in its sense-determined state; the children are a generation removed, therefore freer of the senses and purer embodiments of their respective mothers' characteristics. Two further members complete the household. One is a scribe who composes a written record of information he receives from the father, the other a priestess, Sophie by name, who tests the scribe's pages and determines whether his words are to endure. The context in which they are presented identifies the scribe as "discursive reason" (*Verstand*) and the priestess as a form of reason superior to it. Such rational supremacy may be thought of in Jacob Böhme's sense as eternal wisdom descended to the human realm (I, 638, note to p. 291), but

Sophie's critical authority has a more appropriate parallel in the regulatory function Kantians assign to the "ideas" of "intuitive reason" (*Vernunft*).

Since it is externally determined, the scribe's activity is in itself an acknowledgment of a state of dependence that reduces the world to a bleak temple in which there can be no gospel other than the arbitrary decree of fate and no commandment other than pragmatic purpose. Sophie introduces an entirely different perspective. She is Arctur's wife, which means that the law of nature and the one she represents in the intellectual realm potentially coincide. The nether world of blackness and negation where the three sisters spin, measure, and cut the thread of life (I, 301, l. 16–302, l. 2) has no power over her because it is not her world. Her color is not black; it is blue¹⁰ because she inspires not a sense of opposition but a spirit of continuity between the self's household and the whole of nature. Continuity means suspension of opposition, and this freedom has its priestess in Sophie, who is not only Fable's godmother (I, 310, ll. 8–9) but also a source of sustenance for Eros as he sets out on his journey into the world (I, 295, ll. 14–15). Both children can thus practice their inherited powers in freedom, which enables Eros to aim beyond the restrictions of sensual confinement and endows Fable with the capacity to reclaim the territory discursive reason usurped in the name of mechanistic causality and materialistic fatalism.

The spirit of poesy is not restricted to the literary arts, nor even to art itself. It pertains to all areas of human endeavor since it redefines the relationship between self and world from the perspective of freedom. Accordingly, Fable pursues her mission by redefining the self as free from the decrees of fate, which entails the corollary act of redefining nature as free from the petrifying decree that reduces it to a lifeless mechanism. "The great enigma," Novalis had said, "is basically solved" once the self discovers the outer world to be as much its own as the inner world because it is the "absolute center" for both (II, 528, ll. 8–15). That enigmatic aspect is depicted in Klingsohr's tale by the nether world of death and fate guarded by a sphinx who, true to her mythological function, poses a barrier of questions and riddles. In answering her, Fable shows that the poetic perspective leads to the very discovery Novalis had mentioned, that is, to the new philosophy by means of which the "great enigma" may be declared unreal. To the question, "What do you want?" ("was suchst du?") she answers "what belongs to me" ("mein Eigentum") (I, 301, l. 27), and during her second interview, when asked "who knows the world?" ("wer kennt die Welt?") she presses the point by replying "he who knows himself" ("wer sich selbst kennt") (I, 308, ll. 9–10). She concludes each session with a reference to Sophie, which adds final authority to her statements and succeeds in confounding the inquisitive guardian. Once the Sphinx is defeated, the realm she protects no longer holds any threat and all of it is banished to the nihilistic void that the Fates had reserved for those who did not have the answer to the "great enigma"

of existence. As the power of fate declines, so does the estrangement from nature and the rigidity of a materialistic universe gives way to an all-pervasive organicity. Again, it is Fable, this time as the spirit of poesy applied to the natural sciences, who possesses the clarity of vision to assemble the ingredients for a galvanic chain¹¹ and fashion them into a key with which she can release nature from the prison walls of matter (I, 310, l. 9–313, l. 30). The walls in question imprison nature as much as they do the self and the release of one means the release of the other. For this reason, Fable's key is also instrumental in effecting Ginnistan's permanent union with the father, which signifies the merger of outer and inner reality in perfect mirrorlike (I, 311, ll. 30–36) correspondence. Finally, the magic chain must work its wonder for Eros as well and help him in waking Arctur's daughter, Freya, to the new reality that is to be the era of their joint rule.

Fable's key could not have been put to such good use, unless Eros had been prepared to employ it. The story of his travels since he had left home in search of his beloved is one that follows a traditional pattern.¹² The peace that ends all longing, which is the "peace" Freya's name implies (I, 293; l. 24; 638, note to p. 291), is Eros's goal, but it cannot be found in a dreamworld that is mistaken for reality. Ginnistan, whom Sophie had assigned as his guide, leads Eros to her father's kingdom, which is the moon's kingdom of dreams, where she stages an elaborate performance for her companion's benefit. In it she shows him the final union with his beloved and, still under the impression of this dream display (I, 300, ll. 31–33), he believes Ginnistan to be the object of his love. She seduces him and the result is that, from then on, he continues to pursue his goal in the same disoriented manner, mistaking fictive substitutes for the true reality he actually seeks. As had been the case with Heinrich, dream reality is to become waking reality. Only this time the entire process of living is to become an uninterrupted waking dream told in a world where wakefulness does not mean the endorsement of an external criterion of objectivity, nor its replacement by an internal one, but rather the full and permanent realization that both are the same. That realization would also be the final realization of Heinrich's dream and the event leading to one would be of equal importance to the other.

Eros regains his original sense of mission only after his mother, the heart, suffers total devastation at the hands of discursive reason. However, her death also means the end of that usurper's rule, and thereafter the new era may be ushered in. It is an era in which she comes to be identified with all, as Sophie's last words proclaim: "The mother is among us, her presence will bless us in eternity" ("Die Mutter ist unter uns, ihre Gegenwart wird uns ewig beglücken") (I, 315, ll. 15–16). She describes a permanent state of self-identification with the other, one that is not bound to any one object because it applies to all. The heart, bound as it is to particular objects, will have to be "orphaned," as Novalis says ("verwaisen") (I, 319, l. 86), will have to lose the one object it treasures

most before Eros can reach his goal. Giving up that object means giving up that one blue flower so that all may be blue. Renewal through bereavement had been Novalis's own experience. Dreamlike in its personal nature, his experience is the dream he has us share in Klingsohr's Tale. In Heinrich's tale, he tells us first of the preparatory path that must be traveled before the freedom of vision may be attained from which Klingsohr speaks.