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"No Poetry, No Reality"

Schlegel, Wittgenstein, Fiction, and Reality

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> [Criticism] exhibit[s] the relations of literature—not to "life," as something contrasted to literature, but to all other activities, which together with literature, are the components of life.
>
> —T. S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood*

9.1. Introduction

Friedrich Schlegel's remarks about poetry and reality are notoriously baffling:

> No poetry, no reality. . . . There is, despite all the senses, no external world without imagination . . . all things disclose themselves to the magic wand of feeling alone.[1]
>
> Whoever conceives of poetry or philosophy as individuals has a feeling for them.[2]
>
> In [Romantic poetry] there is no regard for the difference between appearance [*Schein*] and truth [*Warheit*].[3]
>
> Everything that rests on the opposition between appearance and reality . . . is not purely poetic.[4]

What should one say about these observations? Perhaps that they are outlandish and eccentric? "Who in his right mind would argue publicly that *reality* rests on poetry, on a mere fiction? The speaker must be a madman, one who has lost all sense for the difference between what is *real* and what is *merely* a figment of the imagination." Or one might say that, rather than philosophical observations, Schlegel's remarks are merely "poetically exaggerated" reflections.[5]

Yet another person might claim that these observations manifest a lack of mastery of our language. "The concept "poetry" and the concept "reality," this respondent may say, "have precise semantics, and very clear criteria of application. Schlegel has clearly not mastered those concepts."

I take all these responses to be mistaken. Schlegel's remarks about poetry and reality are not merely outlandish or eccentric, but deeply revealing about a prevalent confusion in theoretical approaches to the distinction between fiction and reality.[6] Rather than mere poetic exaggerations, I believe that Schlegel's pronouncements are philosophical observations that respond to a genuine confusion, a confusion that led him to express, time and again, what initially looks like eccentric views about poetry and reality.[7] The confusion at stake is expressed by the last envisioned response to his remarks. The response of the so-called semanticist presupposes mistakenly that the distinction between "fiction" and "reality" is fixed "once and for all" by a criterion, which is determined prior to any application of those concepts. Our imagined semanticist, and, I think, some contemporary philosophers of art, assume that the distinction between fiction and reality *is* and *must be* fixed independently of the ordinary practices of using the terms "fiction" and "reality" to mean something in specific situations.

I argue that we should understand Schlegel's knotty remarks about poetry and reality as addressing this assumption. I propose that we think of them as forming a kind of "transcendental criticism," to borrow Kant's label for his *diagnosis* of, and *challenge* to, what he takes to be a "natural and inevitable illusion" of the human mind.[8] Since the assumption I just mentioned shapes a line of thought in contemporary aesthetics, Schlegel's concern with this illusion is as relevant today as it was in his day.

We can begin to see the depth of Schlegel's concern by first tracing some affinities between his thought and Ludwig Wittgenstein's later philosophy. This should not be too surprising. The surface similarities between Wittgenstein's remarks in *Philosophical Investigations* and in the aphorisms collected in *Culture and Value*, and the pronouncements in Schlegel's writings are nothing short of remarkable. Here is a very limited sample:

1. One should really do philosophy only as poetry.[9]

Poetry and philosophy should be united.[10]

2. Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything.—Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain.[11]

The main thing [in philosophy] is to know something and to say it. The attempt to prove or even to explain it is quite superfluous in most cases. . . . There is doubtless more difficulty in stating something than in explaining it.[12]

3. The work of the philosopher consists in assembling reminders.///[13] The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. . . . We fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful.[14]

Whoever knows this cannot be reminded often enough that he knows it. All of the highest truths of every kind are altogether trivial; and for this very reason nothing is more necessary than to express them ever anew . . . so that it will not be forgotten that they are still there.[15]

4. One might also give the name "philosophy" to what is possible *before* all new discoveries and inventions. /// If one tried to advance *theses* in philosophy, it would never be possible to debate them, because everyone would agree to them.[16]

> To those who knew it already, philosophy of course brings nothing new; but only through it does it become knowledge and thereby assume a new form.[17]

I quote Stanley Cavell's description of his pairings of quotes as a commentary on my own pairings: "In each case the first member of the pair is from Wittgenstein, the second is . . . either from Friedrich or from August Wilhelm Schlegel. . . . That these figures take the preoccupations of Wittgenstein's sensibility deep into . . . German Romanticism fits my sense of his continuing the Romantic's response to the psychic threat of skepticism."[18] Although a handful of scholars pointed to certain parallels between the German Romantics and Wittgenstein's late philosophy,[19] Cavell is probably the only one[20] to have acknowledged the *depth* of the legacy of the early German Romantics in Wittgenstein, or the Wittgensteinian spirit of the early German Romantics.[21]

The task of this paper is to advance what Cavell has only started on this front, with the aim of shedding light on Schlegel's response to skepticism and to traditional philosophy, on his concept "wit," and, above all, on the way we should, following him, approach a family of concepts—"poetry" or "fiction," "reality," and "feeling." For that purpose, section 2 explores the affinities between the Schlegelian spirit and the Wittgensteinian spirit, and section 3 explains how these commonalities, when applied to a confusion about poetry and reality, shed light on the remarks that open the paper.

9.2. The Schlegelean and the Wittgensteinian Spirit

In addition to affinities between the content and the form of Schlegel's mature project and Wittgenstein's later philosophy, their respective philosophical methods reveal a related "spirit."

Wittgenstein described the methods of his late philosophical writings as closely related to methods in aesthetics.[22] That Schlegel's methods are analogous to methods in aesthetics is not

news. I am convinced that those methods also resemble Wittgenstein's methods in some important respects, and that they are so similar because both Wittgenstein and Schlegel understand traditional philosophy and skepticism in a closely related manner.[23]

Why should philosophy proceed, as it were, "aesthetically"? Here is how G. E. Moore remembers Wittgenstein's reflection on that matter:

> *Reasons*, he said, in Aesthetics, are "of the nature of further descriptions": e.g., you can make a person see what Brahms was driving at by showing him lots of different pieces by Brahms, or by comparing him with a contemporary author; and all that Aesthetics does is "to draw your attention to a thing," to "place things side by side." . . . And he said that the same sort of "reasons" were given not only in Ethics, but also in Philosophy.[24]

Schlegel and Wittgenstein belong to a tradition, which suspects that the identification of aesthetic reasons and general rules is unfaithful to the practice of aesthetic appreciation.[25] For aesthetic communication does not aim to achieve agreement in *opinions* or *beliefs* about the work at stake,[26] but at allowing another to share the critic's love for (or dissatisfaction with) the work for being beautiful (or ugly) in this or that particular way. But to permit another to share the critic's vision, appreciation, and love for *this* particular work, the critic must allow her interlocutor to see the particular aspects that make it powerful *in the way* that they do. The critic must enable her interlocutor to stand to the work in a relation that allows her to see in it what the critic sees in it, and to feel for it what the critic feels for it.

Wittgenstein suggests that this aim requires that we align the work we love with other works that are similar to it, and dissimilar from it in revealing ways: works by the same artist, works belonging to the same genre, or to the same historical period.[27] Schlegel seems to agree.

We should not expect philosophy, he argues, to give us an absolute, a priori definition of art, but we can, and perhaps should expect it to help us "order the given artistic experiences and the existing artistic principles . . . and raise the appreciation of art, extend it with the help of a thoroughly learned history of art."[28] Nor can we answer "the simplest and most immediate questions . . . without the deepest consideration and the most erudite history of art."[29] You understand "Sapphic poems" only when you compare them with Petrarch's and with Horatian poems.[30] And the comparison of different works, particularly a historical comparison, is, for Schlegel, the essence of criticism.[31]

Wittgenstein takes a similar method of comparison to be necessary in philosophy too. "It is not our aim to refine or complete the system of rules for the use of our words."[32] Instead, the ordinary uses of words ("language games") that he invites us to observe and imagine are "set up as *objects of comparison* which are meant to throw light on the facts of our language by way not only of similarities, but also of dissimilarities."[33]

It is all too tempting to misinterpret Wittgenstein on this point. One might think that he pursues philosophy by comparing different ways we use words because he believes that "meaning is use," a slogan often associated with *PI* §43. This may well be true, *depending* on how we read §43. I read this passage as suggesting neither that understanding the meaning of a word or a sentence requires a pragmatic analysis over and above a semantics and syntax,[34] nor that the meaning of a word is determined simply by a certain context.[35] Rather, according to Wittgenstein, we cannot understand the meaning of a word or a sentence in isolation from the particular way(s) the word or the sentence can be used *to mean* something specific on a *particular* occasion. In order to grasp the meaning of a word we need to remind ourselves, to imagine or observe, how it can be used by *someone* to mean *something specific*.

What motivates Wittgenstein to align meaning and use in this way is not a wish to guide our understanding, but a concern about a prevalent confusion about meaning, which Cavell calls "an illusion of meaning." A person is under this illusion when he "imagines himself to be saying something when he is not, to have discovered something, when he has not."[36] What happens when a person "hallucinates what he or she means;"[37] What happens when, as Wittgenstein puts it, she uses her words "outside of a language-game?"

Usually, when a person is under this illusion she fails to use the words in a way that grants them their necessary connections to some other words and human practices. I might speak outside of a language game if, for instance, I say, "*Only I* know my feelings" in a way that is detached from any specific situation in which it can make sense (independently, for example, of any anger I might feel toward someone, perhaps my therapist, or my mother, for ascribing to me certain feelings that I either don't believe I have, or am not willing or capable of ascribing to myself). I use this sentence outside of a language game if, detached from any such practice in which it naturally makes sense, I use it to mean (I imagine that it means) that the feelings of another are accessible to *no one* other than the feeling person.

We might also speak outside of a language game if we try to use words to mean both what they ordinarily mean, and something "special," "unordinary." This double use is characteristic of the skeptic's talk—both the skeptic who doubts the existence of the external world, and the skeptic who doubts our knowledge of other minds.[38] The plight of the skeptic is this: her *inability* to mean what she says is *internal* to her way of using the words she is using.[39] The success of the skeptic[40] *depends* on her using words *both* in the ordinary way and in a technical way. On the one hand, the skeptic *must* use her words in a "special" way if her words are to gain the kind of generality she needs. Only if the expression, "Only I know what I feel" is

severed from any specific ordinary context of uttering it to express anger about some infringement of privacy, about an imposition of feelings that we are unwilling to accept, and so on, can the skeptic claim that it has a "general reach," or that it implies a theory about the metaphysical nature of all feelings ("private"), and about the epistemic impossibility (of *any* person) to know other minds. On the other hand, the skeptic must also insist that she uses her words in the way in which they are ordinarily used, if she is to be justified in claiming that what she has "discovered" (the nature of feelings and of knowledge) "conflicts" with our everyday understanding of feelings and knowledge. Otherwise, the skeptic cannot achieve her aim of pulling the rug out from under what we usually say and believe. Properly responding to the skeptic requires that we enable her to see that putting the question the way she does—as both ordinary and special—puts her own question into question.

So Wittgenstein uses "an aesthetic method" in philosophy—he reminds us of what we ordinarily say and do, by way of aligning different uses as "objects of comparison"—because he believes that, especially as philosophers, we are prone to be subject to an illusion about the way we use our words, and about the meaning of our words.[41] The illusions and misunderstandings that Wittgenstein is concerned with cannot be refuted by a counterargument, or by a proof or a rule that shows the necessary, systematic, and fixed nature of language and meaning. "The confusions which occupy us arise when language is like an engine idling, not when it is doing work."[42] This kind of confusion can be resolved only by reminding the speakers who use language indolently how language actually works, how it must work if it is to do any work.[43]

Such a work of reminders has to be of a special kind because of the great "urge to misunderstand," because of the tendency to be bewitched by the workings of our language, and because "the aspects of things that are most important for us," particularly, those that allow

words to mean, "are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity. . . . The real foundations of his enquiry do not strike man at all. Unless *that* fact has at some time struck him.—And this means: we fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and most powerful."[44]

One way of allowing the most familiar to be striking is to compare a certain use of words with other imagined and real uses until it attains "complete clarity."[45] But once this complete clarity is achieved, "philosophical problems should *completely* disappear. The real discovery is the one . . . that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring *itself* into question."[46] The only resolution of skepticism is its dissolution by means of disillusionment.[47]

You may think that Schlegel can in no way be viewed as *responding* to the skeptic, either in a "Wittgensteinian" or in any other way. And you might think so because you believe that Schlegel himself is a skeptic. Schlegel undoubtedly doubts the possibility of absolute foundations[48]—in a spirit similar to Wittgenstein's doubt about the existence of an absolute, fixed system of rules as the foundation of language. And he questions the possibility of an absolute comprehension of the world—just as Wittgenstein believes that explanations "come to an end."[49]

But in spite of these "doubts," neither Wittgenstein nor Schlegel is a (traditional) *skeptic*, surely not a skeptic about the traditional objects of skepticism. Both of them take skepticism very seriously, but take it seriously because they view it as confused in ways that represent some of the prevalent confusions of traditional philosophy itself. Schlegel's understanding of skepticism resembles Wittgenstein's: he also recognizes the power of a certain philosophical use of words to lead us astray,[50] and holds that a "corrupt manner in which language is used" can easily lead to

mistaken systematizing enterprises.[51] And Schlegel seems also to share Wittgenstein's understanding of our great urge to misunderstand the workings of language:

> I wanted to point out that *words often understand themselves better than do those who use them*, wanted to draw attention to the fact that *there must be secret societies among philosophical words, words that, like a host of spirits sprung forth too early, confuse everything, and exert invisible force of the world spirit even on those who do not wish to acknowledge them*. . . . I had to think in terms of a popular medium, in order to bond chemically this holy, delicate, fleeting, airy, fragrant, and as it were imponderable thought. Otherwise, *how severely might this thought have been misunderstood, since it is only through its well-understood use an end could be put to all the understandable misunderstanding*?[52]

That Schlegel is not a skeptic, but a subtle critic of skepticism who challenges who challenges it by employing some of Wittgenstein's later terms of criticism is supported by his following observations: "Eclecticism and Skepticism lead to Mysticism, the *abyss* into which everything sinks."[53] But abyssal as skepticism may be, no counterargument can silence it. Properly responding to the skeptic requires that we allow her to see the incoherence internal to her own position:

> The three positions [eclecticism, skepticism, and mysticism] not only mutually reciprocally annihilate each other, but each also destroys itself. It is a foregone conclusion that the consistent skeptic must end in remaining silent and ceasing to think, and thus finally equals zero. He would also have to cease refuting because he refutes himself, or else he would have to realize that he can only refute what is refutable.[54]

This self-contradiction is not externally imposed on the skeptical position, but generated by the position's internal instability: "The mystic is freer than the skeptic and the empiricist; he begets his contradiction. The others allow their contradictions to be *dictated* to them."[55] And the source of this instability lies in the skeptic's use of words—her use of a "special language," which she tries to (indeed, must) deny if skepticism is to get off the ground: "All three—the skeptics, the empiricists, and the mystics—have their own languages and yet all three protest against jargon."[56]

You might think that even if this is a plausible reconstruction of Schlegel's approach to skepticism, this is only another indication that he *is* nonetheless a kind of skeptic—the kind of skeptic who doubts the representational power of philosophical language. Azade Seyhan writes: "For Friedrich Schlegel . . . irony points to the failure of philosophy to represent the infinite adequately."[57] This is undoubtedly true. But the literature that emphasizes the Romantic ironic recognition of the limitations of philosophical language tends to undermine important nuances. Schlegel repudiates neither reason nor philosophical language *as such*. Nor does he merely remind philosophers of the limitations of this language *as philosophical language.* Alert as he is to different uses of language, Schlegel calls on us to be cautious about a *certain* use of philosophical language, governed by an illusory picture of language, philosophy, and rationality (i.e., the picture of these three as grounded in absolute foundations, or as unlimited manners of cognizing and articulating the Absolute).[58] Though suspicious and critical of *this* use (or misuse) of philosophical language, he also reminds us that we can do philosophy in a different spirit, positively, not only negatively by pointing to philosophy's limitations: "Wouldn't it be worthwhile trying now to introduce the concept of the positive into philosophy as well?"[59]

As tempting as the picture of philosophy that often drives us to transcend the limitation of language and reason may be, we can avoid its pitfalls, while still using philosophical language. For, though limited, philosophical language also has an inherent potential, a potential embodied in its necessary reliance on the ordinary use of language. Since language as we ordinarily use it is teeming with (positive) possibilities that philosophy can legitimately and correctly use for achieving its (philosophy's) own aims, the first task we must undertake, if we are to direct philosophy back from its illusory path to a meaningful pursuit, is to remind ourselves of our ordinary use of words.

Schlegel's antidote to the illusory use of language is reflected by his style of writing. Not unlike Wittgenstein, Schlegel chooses a dialogical and conversational style (he writes fragments that communicate with fragments written by others, fragments that embody the voice of an opposing interlocutor, and a dialogue).[60] Like Wittgenstein's dialogical voice, Schlegel's approach allows him to respond to a host of confused interlocutors. He claims that when philosophy is done properly it is done as "symphilosophy" between two interlocutory voices, and that symphilosophy is, fundamentally, intrapersonal—a recasting of two voices internal to the self:

> If in communicating a thought, one fluctuates between absolute comprehension and absolute incomprehension, then this process might already be termed a philosophical friendship. For it's no different with ourselves. Is the life of a thinking human being anything else than a continuous inner symphilosophy?[61]

Both Schlegel and Wittgenstein suggest that the "urge to misunderstand," and misuse words is neither rare, nor exclusive to the skeptic. A skeptical voice, "the skeptic in oneself,"[62]

inheres in all of us. We are all prone to certain confusions and illusions that affect our use of words. The "voice of temptation" is as much a part of each self as the "voice of correction."[63]

Wittgenstein aims to "correct" the part of us that gave in to temptation by inviting us to observe and imagine how we ordinarily use words. Schlegel uses a related philosophical approach. He also invites us, I think, to observe and imagine how we use certain words, and make certain distinctions, and how those distinctions express what we can and cannot do with those words. For example, he calls on us to resist the attempt to define art *überhaupt*, but instead to reconstruct it before our eyes through a detailed analysis and comparison of works.[64] Instead of talking about writing as such, or about *the* writer, we should distinguish between different kinds of writers, for example, between the analytic writer and the synthetic writer.[65] To understand suicide, we need to remind ourselves in what circumstances we call it an action, and in what circumstances we call it an accident, and what we must mean when we say that it is wrong.[66] Reminding ourselves of the distinction between folly and madness has both philosophical and political consequences.[67] And to understand the novel, the best we can do is to compare Shakespeare with Boccaccio, the two of them with Cervantes, and all of them with a detailed reading of Goethe. Above all, in a Wittgensteinian spirit, Schlegel claims that philosophy can teach us nothing new. And yet only through philosophy do we come to know, to be reminded of and become familiar with, what it teaches us—what we have always already "known."[68]

Schlegel takes up this "work of reminders" also, I believe, by reviving the power of wit, a power that he regards as profoundly philosophical: "Even philosophy has blossoms. That is, its thoughts; but one can never decide if one should call them witty or beautiful."[69] Wit does not have the special power of reminding us of what we are already familiar with but for the most part

fail to notice simply because, as a matter of fact, it is a figure of speech that is used in ordinary conversation. Wit's special force lies in its characteristic way of behaving. For it is wit that, through humor and surprise, often startles us, challenges what we take for granted, and, by so doing, allows us to look at our life and words from a fresh perspective, and thus to see, as if for the first time, what we are already familiar with.[70] The meaning of "a witty idea which is enigmatic to the point of needing to be solved should be immediately and completely clear as soon as it's been hit upon."[71] Once achieving complete clarity, Schlegelian wit dissolves (rather than directly solves) the problem it was meant to address. For like philosophy, wit "brings us nothing new"—it only puts us in touch with what we are already familiar with by showing it in a new light. Through the surprising power of wit, the ordinary becomes for the first time an object of awareness and knowledge.[72] And so, "imagination and wit are everything to you!"[73]

Schlegel's witty remarks function similarly to Wittgenstein's grammatical remarks. And their success is gauged in similar ways. A grammatical investigation is successful if an interlocutor can use the philosopher's reminding summons to test herself, if the interlocutor can accept the invitation to share words and world.[74] For Schlegel too, the mark of a good, successful philosophical approach, "the criterion of authentic philosophy," is not its "applicability," but "*communicability*."[75] One of the "universally valid and fundamental laws of written communication" is that "one should really be able to communicate it and share it with somebody, not simply express oneself. Otherwise it would be wiser to keep silent."[76] Wittgenstein's and Schlegel's ways of comparing different circumstances in which we ordinarily use the words that the philosopher also aims to use is not a way to defend common sense in an antiskeptical way, or to refute traditional philosophy. Their appeal to the ordinary is a solicitation of agreement, an invitation to share their world.

9.3. Poetry and Reality

The remarks at the opening of this chapter should also be read as what I call "witty" or "grammatical" remarks.[77] They are meant to remind us of the ways in which we ordinarily approach the distinction between reality and fiction, and what we say when we ordinarily speak about our feelings for fictional works and for "real" situations and people.[78] I suspect that Schlegel uses those reflections on poetry, reality, and feeling as reminders of that sort because he recognizes a few related tendencies in theoretical considerations of (1) the distinction between poetry and reality, and (2) the distinction between our feelings for poetic works (and the fictional characters in them), and our feelings for our fellow human beings, and "real life" circumstances.

Different as these two distinctions are, Schlegel's remarks suggest that the prevalent theoretical approaches to both of these distinctions are based on a shared confused picture: Schlegel points to a tendency, manifest primarily in philosophy and literary criticism, to think that poetry and reality, as well as our feelings for the former and our feelings for the latter, are distinguished once and for all by a fixed criterion, which is determined independently of our life with these terms.

I take this prevalent approach to the distinction between the real and the fictional to be *structurally analogous* (but by no means identical) to the skeptic's approach that I described above. And for that reason, I regard both of them as calling for a similar response. This is what I mean: The skeptical doubt about the existence of the external world, on the one hand, and the confusion about reality and fiction, on the other, are *not* similar in content. I do *not* claim that the latter raises a question about our epistemic capacity to tell reality from fiction, or that it challenges our capacity to ever know that what we experience is real rather than fictional. Nor do I claim that the philosophers whose views are shaped by this confusion are searching, like the

external world skeptic, for some *experiential* "marks and features"[79] to distinguish reality from fiction. But the assumption that governs their confusion is analogous to the one that governs the skeptical confusion, and the source of the two is a misunderstanding about meaning.

The confusion at stake in this paper is guided by the mistaken belief that every judgment in which we apply certain concepts is essentially underdetermined *if* the judgment is not grounded in a stable determination of these concepts prior to their applications. In short, this picture is based on a misunderstanding of the way language works. One might be prone to this confusion because of an inclination to think that language is based on an absolute foundation. But Schlegel suggests that viewing language in this manner expresses "a fad for the absolute [*Die Liebhaberei fürs Absolute*]," from which we must find "a way out,"[80] just as we must overcome the urge to ground philosophy in absolute foundations.[81] Because this approach to fiction and reality is grounded in a misunderstanding of the meanings of words, and their necessary relation to ordinary language, the proper response to it is not a refutation, but the response that I take Schlegel to offer—a response that allows his interlocutor to recognize for herself how words acquire their meanings when we use them ordinarily.

It seems that Schlegel found a variant of this attitude towards poetry and reality to be the picture that *he himself*, the early Schlegel, had been captive to a few years before he wrote the statements that open this chapter. The remarks about poetry and reality, from his so-called mid to late period, starting approximately in 1797,[82] may be designed to challenge the picture that had shaped the early Schlegel's faith in the absolute distinction between reality and poetry. They challenge, particularly, his early belief that, in its perfected mode (exhibited in the works of antiquity), poetry is "an utterly peculiar activity of the human mind; it is distinguished from every other activity by *eternal boundaries* [because it is the expression of] an eternal human

objective . . . that is only indirectly connected to man."[83] Schlegel uses the remarks quoted at the opening of this chapter in part to take issue with the faith in the possibility of an objective science that could irrevocably distinguish the "real"—the everyday life of ordinary men and women who live in actual, empirical surroundings—from the absolutely objective, pure, and self-sufficient realm of poetry and art, the embodiment of the "ideal." Proclaiming that without poetry there is no reality, that the distinction between reality and appearance is not poetical, and that "life and society should become poetic"[84] may be a way of raising a question about the assumption that "there [is] more than one world"[85]—the real world and the world presented by the art of fiction—a self-sufficient, "isolated," ideal world, which is only "indirectly [*Mittelbar*] related to man."

Perhaps surprisingly, the picture of poetry and reality that I take Schlegel's remarks to address does not shape only his early view, but also a contemporary debate in aesthetics: the debate about whether the emotions we feel for fictions are real and rational. Before I introduce this debate, two qualifications are in order. First, I do not claim that Schlegel had in mind this contemporary debate in aesthetics. And yet, I suspect, both that he was responding to a related illusory picture, the one that shaped his early thought, and that his reflections on poetry and reality include resources for clearing away the confusion in the contemporary literature about fiction. Due to limitations of space, in this paper I merely *gesture* towards the way in which these resources can address the contemporary discussion. Second, I do not argue that the parties to this debate presuppose, like the early Schlegel, that "poetry" and "reality" (in their terms, "fiction" and "reality") are two distinct "domains" or "worlds." But I do think that a central line in this debate presupposes that our emotional responses to fiction and our emotional responses to "real" situations and individuals *are* distinguished by means of a single criterion, which is determined

in isolation from the ways in which we ordinarily engage with fictions and with "real life," and from the criteria that these engagements give rise to. Although this confusion and the confusion of the early Schlegel are distinct, I think that they share an understanding (well, a misunderstanding) of the meaning of words as determined a priori, all by itself, independently of what we do and mean when we use language.

How does this confusion enter into the contemporary literature? In taking for granted that an emotion can be "real" only if it involves a belief in the existence of its object,[86] some parties to this debate assume that what is "real" and what is "fictional" (what is merely part of a game of make-believe, to use the terms that Kendall Walton contributed to this debate) is already determined, independently of what we actually do and say when we are engaged with "real" people, and with fictions, and the criteria we use when engaged in such ways.[87] For example, Walton holds that we do not "really" feel, say, pity and pain for Anna Karenina, but feel them only as part of a "make-believe" game because "real" emotions always require a belief in the existence of the objects of those emotions.[88] Walton thus assumes that the distinction between "real" and "fictional" emotions *is* set independently of any language game.[89]

In contrast to this line of thought, Schlegel's reflections on poetry and reality in his mid to late period suggest that the distinction between poetry and reality should not be regarded as obvious. There are reasons not to take it for granted, but to explore its nature, just as there are reasons to explore and question the "Greek separation of all things into the divine and the human . . . the Roman dualism of At Home and At War. And the modern [distinction between] the world of the present and the world of the hereafter, as if there were more than one world."[90]

Why is it not to be taken for granted? For one, poetry and reality do not seem to be distinguished in the same way that ordinary objects, like tables, trees, or birds, are distinguished.

If someone says, "This is a goldfinch," it is reasonable in certain circumstances to ask him how he knows that it is a goldfinch and not a goldcrest. If such a doubt arises, the speaker, if he knows what he is talking about, can easily pacify the doubt. "I know that it is a goldfinch because, though goldfinches and goldcrests both have a red head, there are no goldcrests in those areas," or "Goldcrests have pinkish-red head, but goldfinches have wine-red heads." No matter how "alike" goldfinches and goldcrests are, there are clear "marks and features" that distinguish the one from the other, marks and features that we can come to know if we receive the right kind of training, and if we are situated properly. It is questionable whether there are similar marks and features to distinguish the fictional from the real, if any doubt arises. What can I possibly answer Betsy, my neighbor, if she asks me how I know that the neighborhood we live in is real, rather than the setting of a novel? For her to ask that question would bespeak a misunderstanding of the nature of the distinction.

As much as it differs from the distinction between goldfinches and goldcrests, the distinction between fiction and reality also importantly differs from the distinction between *mere* appearance and reality, between what is *not real* and what is *real*, or between a real goldfinch and a decoy[91] (as well as between dreaming and waking life, the distinction that interests the external world skeptic). For what is fictional, poetry, is (or should be) at least as real as our "real life": "Works whose ideal doesn't have as much living reality and, as it were, personality for the artist as does his mistress or his friend are best left unwritten. At any rate, they do not become works of art."[92] Schlegel also reminds us that our "real," everyday life often presents itself to us as a work of fiction: "Even in life . . . the common often makes a very romantic and pleasant appearance."[93] And poetry itself, he claims, functions more often then not *in* nothing other than

our everyday reality: "It is a permanent feature of the highest poetry to appear in holy wrath and express its full power even in the strangest material, that is, everyday reality."[94]

By making these and other remarks, Schlegel suggests that whether what we do, undergo, or encounter is real or fictional can be determined only in light of our language games with fiction—only in light of what we ordinarily do or don't do when we are engaged with fictions, for those language games alone embody the criteria of what can and cannot count as either fiction or reality. Schlegel proposes that any effort to use the terms "real" and "fictional"[95] as if their meaning is determined in isolation from the particular practices in which specific speakers use them could only result in our failing to mean what we say. Just as the activity of modern poetry lacks "a firm basis,"[96] but depends instead on the activity of each individual poet, so too what counts as "poetry" and what counts as "reality" lacks a "firm basis," but depends instead on particular uses of the terms.

But this does not imply that the meaning of our concepts is arbitrary, subjectivist or even merely conventional. Schlegel claims that even though modern poetry has no "firm basis" other than the creative talent of individual poets, it is not merely arbitrary, or "idealist"—it is not the expression only of the ideals, or the mind, of the particular poets who create it, as contrasted with reality. Rather, modern poetry does not only facilitate genuine realism, a true expression of the reality in which modern poets live, but it also constitutes "the harmony of the ideal and the real."[97] Similarly, even though meaning is not determined once and for all, independently of what we mean when we use words in particular situations, it is *not* arbitrary, subjectivist, or conventional. Cavell writes, "I am trying to bring out . . . that any form of life and every concept integral to it has an indefinite number of instances and directions of projection; and that this variation is not arbitrary. *Both* the 'outer' variance and the 'inner' constancy are necessary if a

concept is to accomplish its tasks."[98] Even if our concepts and words are infinitely open to revision, even if they are so plastic as to allow infinite yet unidentified instances to fall under them, what would fall under any concept is not arbitrary or subjective. Unless a certain object or context *invites* the application of an existing concept, which has not yet been applied to this object or context, the application would not be legitimate. Properly using our words requires that we be attuned to those contexts that allow them to be projected onto and those that do not. Being ungrounded in any list of necessary and sufficient rules or conditions, and being, *essentially*, an intersubjective activity of particular speakers does not prevent language, *our* language, from being normatively grounded rather than arbitrary.

Notice that Schlegel's remarks about poetry and reality are not to be read as a refutation of the philosopher who is subject to the confused picture about fiction and reality that I am attempting to flesh out in this section. Instead, he invites his interlocutor to share his own world, a world that is made perspicuous, is animated and maintained by the fictional works we are engaged with as much as it is animated and maintained by the "real" people we interact with.[99] And he invites the interlocutor (and us, his readers) to do so by reminding us that seeing how the words "poetry," "reality," and "feeling" acquire their meaning, and recognize the criteria for applying them in different situations only requires that we observe the ordinary practices of reading and appreciating, of meeting friends to engage in a "lively discussion about a new play"[100] and so on.

Instead of offering a counterargument, Schlegel wishes to remind anyone who is prone to the confusion about poetry and reality how people use, in ordinary circumstances, the terms, which the philosopher also attempts to use. This is what I take Schlegel to be doing when he asks, "Is there an art worthy of the name if it does not have the power to bind the spirit of love

with its magic word, to make the spirit of love follow and obey it?"[101] The question whether the emotions we feel for fictional characters and narrative are "real" seems to lose its hold on us when we remind ourselves that we hardly ever call a work an *art*work, let alone a great work of art, if we do not take it to inspire "the spirit of love," if we do not take it both to be capable of moving its audience, and to merit the audience's love and admiration. What sense does it make to insist that whatever we feel for fictional characters cannot be "real" but a "quasi-emotion" because we believe that those characters do not "really" exist, if one of the primary ways we have for determining what counts as fictional works is to gauge whether they merit feelings of sympathy, love or admiration?

Schlegel writes, "The first principle in love is to have a sense for one another, and the highest principle, faith in each other."[102] Rather than a belief in the existence of the beloved—the requirement of *real* feelings for anything according to the contemporary aestheticians I mentioned above—the requirement for *real* love is a sense for, and faith in the other. *That is* what we seem to demand of *real* love, and perhaps other emotions, at least in many circumstances. The sorrow I feel for Anna, then, might not be real *if*, for example, I think that she deserves her dismal end, or if I think that she brought it on herself. My sorrow is not real, in other words, if I have no faith in her decisions and actions. This means that there *are* criteria for distinguishing "real" emotions from "unreal" ones (where the latter refers to faked or insincere emotions). But these criteria are part of the ordinary grammar of the concepts of these emotions, part of the life surrounding our emotional lives. They are not determined independently of the ways in which we usually respond to, behave around, and talk about our emotional lives, and they suggest that our emotions for fictions often count as real. Assuming that whether our emotions for fictions are "real" depends solely on whether they involve a belief in the existence

of their objects ignores the variety of criteria that we ordinarily use to determine whether an emotion is real. Indeed, *sometimes* we must conclude that an appearance of emotion is not real, but only a *mere* appearance, *because* it does not involve such a belief. But Walton's assumption ignores the fact that, *for the most part*, whether or not a seeming emotion is real, apparent, or only a part of a make-believe game does not depend on the existence of such a belief, but on a host of other criteria.[103]

When the declaration "no poetry, nor reality" opens a remark about the necessity of feeling for properly responding to actual individual human beings and to the world as such, it cannot mean that there is no difference between poetry and reality.[104] Instead of reading this passage as obliterating the distinction, or as suggesting that there is no way out of poetic and linguistic constructions, it would be more natural to read it as proposing that we learn how to properly respond to our fellow human beings (and to the "external world" of which we are a part), when we become attuned to poetry, and, at the same time, we learn how to properly respond to poetry, when we learn how to be responsive to our fellow human beings, and to the world as such. "Whoever conceives of poetry or philosophy as individuals has a feeling for them."[105]

Writing about poetry or fiction philosophically, which drives us to draw absolute boundaries between art, as belonging to an "ideal" world, and life as belonging to the "real" world, or to ask whether the sorrow and pity we feel for, say, Anna Karenina is real, often leads us astray from, and renders us oblivious to, the way we ordinarily use these words. The way we use these words philosophically is often entangled with a fantasy that they are independent of what *we* say and mean when we utter them. This is why leading these "words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use [*auf ihre alltägliche Verwendung*]" is not an easy task.[106]

Acknowledging the "highest truths," the most basic and ordinary structures of care and concern, which allow our words to have the meanings they have, not independently of us, but insofar as we mean them in the ways that we do, is particularly exacting when we do philosophy. But as exacting as it may be, the grammatical or witty investigation of words is worth the effort. For it not only brings out the emptiness of so much of our philosophical use of words, but also our investments in the practices to which our words belong, and the different concerns, cares, and commitments embodied in our ordinary use of them. As J. L. Austin puts it, "Our common stock of words embodies all the distinctions men have found worth drawing, and the connections they have found worth making."[107] Rather than wishing to obliterate the distinction between poetry and reality, or to suggest that "art . . . does not need to point beyond itself,"[108] when making the remarks that open the paper, and many others that relate to them, Schlegel meant to remind us of how intimate we are with the fictions we read (and hear, and behold, and experience) on an everyday basis, and to invite us to feel this intimacy for ourselves.

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[1] *Athenaeum Fragments* in KA 2, 227, no. 350.

[2] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 24, no. 414.

[3] *Dialogue on Poetry*, KA 2, 334.

[4] *Fragments on Literature and Poetry*, KA 16, 97, no. 146.

[5] This is a paraphrase of the epithet that Rudolph Haym ascribed to Novalis, when he called him a "poetically exaggerated Fichte." See, *Die romantische Schule* (Berlin: Gaertner, 1882), 332.

[6] Schlegel, of course, speaks about "poetry" and "reality," never about "fiction" and "reality." However, I think that in those specific remarks about poetry and *reality*, he uses "poetry" to refer to what we today call "fictional"—that which is constructed by the creative

imagination; that which belongs to, occurs in, or is a feature of a work of fiction. Therefore, I take it to be legitimate to regard those remarks as concerning a confusion in the way we think about the distinction between what we today would call, not "reality" and "poetry," but "reality" and "fiction." Accordingly, when I speak of this confusion in sections 1 and 3, I will interchangeably speak about it as a confusion about "reality," and "poetry" and as a confusion about "reality" and "fiction."

[7] In an earlier paper, I argued that Schlegel's Romantic imperative, the demand to treat ordinary life and philosophy as if they were art, is *not* the result of any alleged form of poetic enthusiasm. Schlegel urges us to live and pursue philosophy aesthetically, in a manner that is isomorphic to the way we appreciate and pursue the arts, because he believes that this is the only way we could properly respond to another form of confusion that troubled him: the form of skepticism he found in Jacobi's nihilism. See Keren Gorodeisky, "(Re)encountering Individuality: Schlegel's Romantic Imperative as a Response to Nihilism," *Inquiry* 54, no. 6 (2011): 567–90.

[8] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A297/B353.

[9] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, ed. G. H. von Wright in collaboration with Heikki Nyman, trans. Peter Winch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980). Hereafter *CV*.

[10] *Critical Fragments*, KA 2, 161, no. 115. Hereafter, *CF*.

[11] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 2nd ed., trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), §126. Hereafter *PI*.

[12] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 177, no. 82.

[13] This symbol stands for Wittgenstein's differently numbered remarks.

[14] *PI*, §127 and §129 respectively.

[15] *On Incomprehensibility*, KA 2, 366.

[16] *PI*, §§126–28.

[17] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 207–8, no. 252. Compare also Wittgenstein, *PI* §132 with *Athenaeum Fragments* KA 2, 177, no. 82, and the introduction to *Dialogue on Poetry*; *CV*, 36 and *Athenaeum Fragments,* KA 2, 208–9, no. 255.

[18] Stanley Cavell, "The *Investigations*' Everyday Aesthetics of Itself," in *The Literary Wittgenstein*, ed. John Gibson and Wolfgang Huemer (London: Routledge, 2004), 31.

[19] Fredrick Beiser, for instance, points to the commitments to antifoundationalism, historicity, and hermeneutics, as shared by the German Romantics and Wittgenstein. See *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 3.

[20] Richard Eldridge's work is a valuable exception to this rule. In his different writings, Eldridge pursues and develops the Romantic legacy in Wittgenstein's thought. However, Eldridge focuses on Hölderlin and Wordsworth. See mainly, *Leading a Human Life: Wittgenstein, Intentionality, and Romanticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), and *The Persistence of Romanticism: Essays in Philosophy and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). See also his contribution to this volume, chapter 7.

[21] By no means do I want to claim that Schlegel was motivated by the *same* kind of considerations that motivated the late Wittgenstein, or that they understood traditional philosophy in exactly the same way. Nor do I claim that Schlegel anticipated Wittgenstein. I argue only that reading Schlegel with Wittgenstein in mind, as approaching certain philosophical tendencies in a similar spirit, can help to explain much that is obscure in Schlegel's writings.

[22] Stanley Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[23] Again, by no means do I argue that Schlegel's and Wittgenstein's approaches are similar in every respect. There are obviously important differences between their projects. However, due to a lack of space, I will not discuss either the differences or their implications in this paper.

[24] G. E. Moore, *Philosophical Papers* (London: Allen and Unwin; New York: Macmillan, 1959), 315.

[25] E.g., "The critics are always talking about *rules*, but where are the rules that are really poetic and applicable for all works of art and not merely grammatical, metrical, logical?" (Schlegel, *Fragments on Literature and Poetry*, KA 16, 108, no. 286).

[26] Cf. The aim of interpreting a rule and of understanding the meaning of a word is, according to Wittgenstein, "not an agreement in opinions but in form of life" (*PI*, §241).

[27] Cf. Stanley Cavell, "Austin at Criticism," in *Must We Mean What We Say*, 104.

[28] *CF*, KA 2, 163, no. 123.

[29] *CF*, KA 2, 149, no. 21.

[30] *CF*, KA 2, 162, no. 119.

[31] Schlegel speaks here about a comparison of works that could "reconstruct [a work's] course and its structure [as well as] its inner history" ("The Essence of Criticism," in *Lessing Thoughts and Opinions*, KA 3, 60).

[32] *PI*, §133.

[33] *PI*, §130.

[34] On that, see James Conant, "Stanley Cavell's Wittgenstein," *Harvard Review of Philosophy* 13, no. 1 (2005), 51-65.

[35] Often, the context of an utterance can be determined only by understanding the meaning of the words uttered. See Timothy Gould, *Hearing Things: Voice and Method in the Writing of Stanley Cavell* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[36] Cavell, *Claim of Reason*: *Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 221.

[37] Ibid. See mainly in the *Claim of Reason*, Part I, chap. 8, 191–243.

[38] Here I follow Cavell's revealing diagnosis in "The Availability of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy," in *Must We Mean What We Say?* 60–61.

[39] It is part, you may also say, of her confusion about the way language works.

[40] This is equally true of the success of her traditional opponent, the antiskeptic, or as Cavell calls him following Kant, the dogmatist. See, Cavell, *Claim of Reason*, 46, and Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* A viii.

[41] "Our investigation is therefore a grammatical one. Such an investigation sheds light on our problem by clearing misunderstanding away. Misunderstandings concerning the use of words" (*PI*, §90); "A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not command *a clear view* of the use of our words" (*PI*, §122).

[42] *PI*, §132.

[43] "[Philosophical problems] are solved, rather, by looking into the workings of our language . . . in such a way as to make us recognize those workings; *despite of* an urge to misunderstand them. . . . Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of our language" (*PI*, §109).

[44] *PI*, §129.

[45] Another way (or perhaps the same way, or at least a way that is structurally akin to the first) is to read literature, fiction, to engage with the practice that has long been associated with the capacity to defamiliarize the familiar.

[46] *PI*, §133

[47] What I am trying to suggest here, following Cavell, is that Wittgenstein's later philosophy is animated by the threat of skepticism (and related confusions). Nevertheless, his late work cannot be taken as a direct response to the skeptic—a response that elicits the kind of criteria that are supposed to establish the existence of objects, or the knowledge of other minds with certainty. Rather, Wittgenstein's appeal to the ordinary is meant as an invitation, a summon, addressed to the interlocutor, to share with him the ordinary world we all inhabit.

[48] See mainly, *Concerning the Theory of Scientific Knowledge*, KA 16, 3–14, nos. 1–125; *The Spirit of the Science of Knowledge* (1797–98), KA 13, 31–39, nos. 126–227; and Beilage I and Beilage II, KA 18, 505–16, 517–21. For detailed discussions of Schlegel's criticism of absolute foundations, see Manfred Frank, *Unendliche Annäherung. Die Anfänge der philosophischen Frühromantik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative*, and Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism, 1781–1801* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

[49] *PI* §1. In addition to questioning the role of general rules and principles in art criticism, Schlegel writes, "Principles are to life what instructions written by the cabinet are for the general in battle" (*Athenaeum Fragments,* KA 178, no. 85). And he famously claims, in a fragment that echoes one of Wittgenstein later remarks, "it is equally fatal for the mind to

have a system and not to have one. It must therefore have to decide to unite the two" (*Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 173, no. 53). Cf. "Above all, someone attempting the description lacks any system. The systems that occur to him are inadequate, and he seems suddenly to himself in a wilderness instead of the well laid out garden that he knew so well" (Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright [Oxford: Blackwell, 1980], vol. 1, §557).

[50] *On Incomprehensibility*, KA 2, 364.

[51] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 175, no. 74.

[52] *On Incomprehensibility*, KA 2, 364 [my italics].

[53] *Philosophical Fragments,* KA 18, 3, no. 4.

[54] *Philosophical Fragments,* KA 18, 4, no. 6. Cf. "The self-destruction of the three logical maladies must be seen in relation to their self-creation" (KA 18, 4, no. 7).

[55] *Philosophical Fragments,* KA 18, 5, no. 13.

[56] *Philosophical Fragments,* KA 18, 5, no. 15. Notice too that Schlegel, like Cavell, does not regard skepticism as opposed to dogmatism. Skepticism and dogmatism are two sides of the same coin—two philosophical moods that are grounded in the same confused picture: "As opposed to criticism, the three positions may be called *dogmatism*" (KA 18, 5, no. 10; cf. no. 83. Cf. Cavell, *Claim of Reason*, 46).

[57] Azade Seyhan, "What Is Romanticism, and Where Did It Come From?" in *Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism* ed. Nicholas Saul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 17.

[58] E.g., *Blüthenstaub,* KA 2, 164, no. 3, *Concerning the Theory of Scientific Knowledge*, KA*,* 18, 3–14 nos. 1–125; *The Spirit of the Science of Knowledge* (1797–98), KA 13, 31–39, nos.

126–227; and Beilage I and Beilage II, KA 18, 505–16, 517–21. Schlegel argues that experience in general must be constrained by some "limit" in *Concerning the Theory of Scientific Knowledge*.

[59] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 166, no. 3.

[60] "The present dialogue . . . is intended to set against one another quite divergent opinions, each of them capable of shedding new light upon the infinite spirit of poetry from an individual standpoint, each of them striving to penetrate from a different angle into the real heart of the matter. It was my interest in this many-sidedness that made me resolve to communicate publicly things that I had observed in a circle of friends" (*Dialogue on Poetry,* KA 2, 286).

[61] *Blüthenstaub*, KA 2, 164, no. 2.

[62] Cavell, *Claim of Reason*, 47.

[63] Cavell, "Availability of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy," in *Must We Mean What We Say*, 71.

[64] Eg., *CF*, KA 2, 162, no. 121, and 163, no. 123.

[65] *CF*, KA 2, 161, no. 112.

[66] *Athenaeum Fragments*, 15, KA 2, 167.

[67] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 176, no. 79.

[68] *Athenaeum Fragments*, 252, KA 2, 207.

[69] *Blüthenstaub,* KA 2, 164, no. 1.

[70] *CF*, KA 2, 150, no. 34, and *A* KA 2, 171, no. 37.

[71] *Athenaeum Fragments,* no. 96.

[72] Cf. "It was wit, not logic, that was the 'highest principle of knowledge,' and the 'principle scientific inventiveness', since Schlegel took it to be a mode through which flashes of

insight are communicated" (Hans Eichner, *Friedrich Schlegel* [New York: Twayne Publishers, 1970]), p. 47.

[73] *Ideas*, KA 2, 9, no. 9.

[74] What I mean to stress is that Wittgenstein's grammatical method and Schlegel's "witty" approach are *not* gauged by means of what we *actually* say and do. When the so-called ordinary language philosopher says, "We say XXX," he does not invite his skeptical interlocutor to test this claim in light of what we *actually*, *empirically* say, so that if one of us says something different, the claim is invalid, or lacking in force. Neither the methods of the late Wittgenstein, nor Schlegel's methods are *empiricist*, as Cavell emphasizes, above all at the end of "Aesthetic Problems," and as Schlegel stresses in his criticism of empiricism in *Philosophical Fragments*. They are tested instead by their capacity to bring about agreement.

[75] *Philosophical Fragments,* KA 18, 9, no. 54.

[76] *CF*, KA 2, 158, no. 98.

[77] Even though I read those remarks in a Wittgensteinian spirit, I will not introduce Wittgenstein's own treatment of the distinction between fiction and reality, nor compare it with Schlegel's. For an instructive treatment of Wittgenstein on this topic, see David Schalkwyk, "Fiction as 'Grammatical' Investigation: A Wittgensteinian Account," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 53, no. 3 (1995): 287–98; and his *Literature and the Touch of the Real* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004).

[78] See note 6 for the justification for my use of "poetry" and "fiction" interchangeably in this section.

[79] I borrow this expression from Thompson Clarke's magisterial treatment of skepticism in his "The Legacy of Skepticism," *Journal of Philosophy* 69, no. 20 (1972): 754–69, esp. 768.

[80] *Blüthenstaub*, KA 2, 164, no. 2.

[81] This picture of the relation between fiction and reality might also be motivated by some kind of fear—we might worry that everything we know to be real will turn out to be "unreal" in some way, if reality is not absolutely distinguished from what is "merely fictional," an invented "figment of the imagination." We seem to worry that if the real and the fictional are not irrevocably distinguished and separated as two independent and self-sufficient realms, we might not be real to ourselves, we might not *be*.

[82] For this distinction of Schlegel's career into different periods, see, for example, Arthur Lovejoy, "Schiller and the Genesis of German Romanticism," in *Essays in the History of Ideas* (New York: Putnam, 1963): 207–27; Eichner, *Friedrich Schlegel*; Dieter Henrich, *Konstellationen: Probleme und Debatten am Ursprung der idealistischen Philosophie (1789–1795)* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1991); Frank, *Unendliche Annäherung*; and Beiser, "Friedrich Schlegel: The Mysterious Romantic," in *The Romantic Imperative*.

[83] *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, KA 1, 266–67.

[84] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 182, no. 116.

[85] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 173, no. 55.

[86] E.g., "Pity, worry about, hate, and envy are such that one cannot have them without believing that their objects exist, just as one cannot fear something without believing that it threatens them" (Kendall Walton, "Fearing Fictions," *Journal of Philosophy* 75 [1978]: 21 n. 15).

[87] Walton's other two relevant texts on the topic are *Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundations of the Representational Arts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), and "Spelunking, Simulation, and Slime: On Being Moved by Fiction," in *Emotion and the Arts*, ed. Mette Hjort and Sue Laver (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 37–49. For other philosophers, who, like Walton, adopt what is known in the literature as the "Pretense Theory" (the theory that holds that we have "quasi-emotional" responses to fiction), see, for example, Susan Feagin, "Imagining Emotions and Appreciating Fiction," in *Emotion and the Arts*, ed. Mette Hjort and Save Laver (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 50–62, and Gregory Currie, *The Nature of Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Richard Moran has articulated one of the best criticisms of this line of thought to date in his "The Expression of Feeling in Imagination," *Philosophical Review* 103, no. 1 (1994): 75–106.

[88] Walton does not deny that we *do* feel something for fictional characters. But he denies that what we feel is of the same kind as "real" emotions—what we feel for real people (for example, *Mimesis as Make-Believe*, 247, and "Spelunking, Simulation, and Slime," 38).

[89] The plight of this line of thought is analogous to the plight of the skeptic as I discussed it above. In order for their argument to get off the ground, the philosophers I just described must use the terms "fictional" and "real" both in the way we ordinarily use them, and in a special, "unordinary" way. For example, if Walton's argument is to work, if it is to conflict with what we ordinarily think and say about whatever we feel when we read a novel, or watch a film—as Walton suggests that it does—Walton must use the term "real" as we ordinarily use it. Otherwise, there would not be any conflict between what Walton claims to discover about our emotions, and the way most of us think and speak

about our emotions. However, in order to establish the claim that *no one ever* feels "real" feelings for fictions, as Walton holds, he must also use the term "real" in a special, nonordinary way. For Walton holds that what is "real" is determined once and for all, as if "by language itself," independently of what *we* mean by the term when we use language, and that what he has discovered holds for *every* and *any* feeling we might have for fiction. *None* of those feelings, on Walton's view, *can* be real. This use of the terms departs from our ordinary use of it. And so, in order for the argument to work, Walton has to use those terms in two conflicting ways.

[90] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 173, no. 55.

[91] For Cavell's instructive discussion of this distinction, and his claim that there are no criteria for distinguishing the real from the unreal, see *The Claim of Reason*, 49–64.

[92] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 183, no. 117.

[93] *Dialogue on Poetry*, KA 2, 288–89.

[94] *Dialogue on Poetry*, KA 2, 291.

[95] Again, by "fictional" I do not mean "fictitious," or "unreal," but that which belongs to, occurs in, or is a feature of a work of fiction.

[96] *Dialogue on Poetry*, KA 2, 312.

[97] Ibid., 315. In the same work, Schlegel also suggests that confessions—the expression of a subject—can be more "realistic" than the novels, for example, of Richardson, which are standardly considered to be quintessentially realistic because of their attention to, and description of details of everyday experience (KA 2, 337–38).

[98] Cavell, *Claim of Reason*, 185.

[99] This animation might rest on the work of the imagination, as a (cognitive) capacity that reveals reality, not simply fantasy. More would have to say about this capacity in an elaboration on this paper.

[100] Schlegel, *Dialogue on Poetry*, KA 2, 287.

[101] *Dialogue on Poetry*, KA 2, 312.

[102] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 178, no. 87.

[103] Compare with the different though related idea that Moran uses to challenge Walton's view: "It is unlikely that the various responses we classify with the emotions form anything like a natural-kind. ... For this reason it is unlikely that there could even in principle be a *general* problem of fictional emotions" ("Expression of Feeling in Imagination," 81).

[104] This is the full fragment: "No poetry, no reality. Just as there is, despite all the senses, no external world without imagination, so too there is no spiritual world without feeling, no matter how much sense there is. Whoever only has sense can perceive no human being, but only what is human: all things disclose themselves to the magic wand of feeling alone. It fixes people and seizes them; like the eye, it looks on without being conscious of its own mathematical operation."

[105] *Athenaeum Fragments*, KA 2, 24, no. 414.

[106] *PI*, §116. On that, compare also Schlegel, *On Incomprehensibility*, KA 2, 366; compare with *PI*, §89.

[107] J. L. Austin, "A Plea for Excuses," in *Philosophical Papers*, ed. J. O. Urmson and G. J. Warnock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 182–83.

[108] Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity from Kant to Hegel* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 53.