

Further reading

Although most of Novalis' literary works are available in English translation, his philosophical writings have gone largely untranslated. The most significant English-language translation to date is Margaret Mahony Stoljar's translated edition, *Novalis: Philosophical Writings* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997). Stoljar's volume does not contain selections from the *Fichte Studies*, but is fairly extensive in its translations of other important theoretical essays and fragments, and is therefore a useful companion to the *Fichte Studies*. Although prior to this volume there has been no translation of the entire *Fichte Studies*, portions have been translated in *Theory as Practice: A Critical Anthology of Early German Romantic Writings*, under the general editorship of Jochen Schulte-Sasse (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997). The translation of selections from the *Fichte Studies* in that volume is by Elizabeth Mittman and Mary R. Strand, and focuses on sections dealing with identity, consciousness, and signification. Their introductory essay ("Self and Other in Early German Romanticism") contains a useful section of commentary on these aspects of the *Fichte Studies*, relating them to his politics in the later work "Faith and Love." In addition to some of the readings translated in Stoljar's book, Kathleen Wheeler's *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: The Romantic Ironists and Goethe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) contains Joyce Crick's translations of "Dialogues" and "Studies in the Visual Arts." A small selection of Novalis' fragments is also contained in translation in *German Romantic Criticism*, edited by A. Leslie Willson (New York: Continuum 1982).

In *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics*, edited and translated by Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University

Press, 1999), the reader can find translations of “Faith and Love” as well as other essays and fragments dealing directly with political issues, including a few paragraphs from the last sections of the *Fichte Studies*. This volume also contains a translation of *The Oldest Systemic Programme of German Idealism*, a very brief but influential document attributed variously to Hölderlin, Schelling, and/or Hegel, which, although independently conceived, strikingly resembles a short précis-version of Novalis’ carefully worked-out program in the *Fichte Studies*. Readers interested in Novalis’ political theory might also consult Beiser’s *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Romanticism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), Chapter 11.

To date, there are relatively few English-language studies of Novalis’ philosophical writings. The only one of these devoted exclusively to the *Fichte Studies* is Géza von Molnár’s *Novalis’ “Fichte Studies”: The Foundations of his Aesthetics* (The Hague: Mouton, 1970). William Arctander O’Brien’s more recent book, *Novalis: Signs of Revolution* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 1995), contains a long chapter on “Language and Semiotics in the *Fichte Studies*” that is also a good source of commentary and interpretation, with an interesting discussion of paragraph 11, the so-called “semiotic fragment.” Manfred Frank’s *Introduction to Early Romantic Aesthetics*, soon to be available in translation, contains a ground-breaking essay on the *Fichte Studies* as well (*Einführung in die Frühromantische Ästhetik* [Frankfurt-on-Main: Suhrkamp, 1989]). Frank’s Chapter 15 of this book, on Novalis’ theory of temporality, represents a thorough-going integration of the *Fichte Studies* into Novalis’ philosophy. A very brief but helpful discussion of the studies is also contained in John Neubauer’s biography, *Novalis* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980).

Ernst Behler’s *German Romantic Literary Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) also contains a chapter on Novalis that deals in part with the relationship of his philosophy to that of Fichte, with a general discussion of the role of the *Fichte Studies* in his poetic development and in comparison to Friedrich Schlegel’s views on Fichte. Although little attention is given to the *Fichte Studies* in Kristen Pfefferkorn’s *Novalis: A Romantic’s Theory of Language and Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), her overall approach views Novalis as a philosopher as well as a poet, and the book contains interesting discussions of themes first raised in the *Studies*, as well as appendices on

Fichte's and Herder's theories of language that readers might find useful for purposes of comparison.

Using Novalis' 1798 "Monologue" as catalyst, Andrew Bowie discusses the early Romantics' views on language and truth in the context of Fichtean and Kantian philosophy, and also relates the issues raised to Critical Theory and to contemporary analytic philosophical concerns (*From Romanticism to Critical Theory* [London: Routledge, 1997]). Readers interested in further developments in Novalis' theoretical program after the *Fichte Studies*, especially its elements of mysticism, may find useful Chapter 5 of Paola Mayer's *Jena Romanticism and its Appropriation of Jakob Böhme* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1999). Relatively recent English-language monographs dealing with Fichte's influence on Novalis' aesthetics include von Molnár's *Romantic Vision, Ethical Context* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987) and Richard W. Hannah's *The Fichtean Dynamic of Novalis' Poetics* (Bern: Lang, 1981). Martha B. Helfer's Chapter 3 of *The Retreat of Representation: The Concept of "Darstellung" in German Critical Discourse* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996) discusses the *Fichte Studies* as part of Novalis' development of a theory of artistic presentation. In *Representation and its Discontents: The Critical Legacy of German Romanticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), Azade Seyhan examines the role of Fichte's philosophy of self-activity in Novalis' theory of poetic creativity.

Readers interested in a biography of Novalis should consult John Neubauer's *Novalis*, and O'Brien's *Signs of Revolution* also contains significant amounts of biographical information. The recent fictionalized biography *The Blue Flower* by Penelope Fitzgerald (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996) should not, of course, be taken in its details as historical fact, but is entertaining and plausible while remaining close to the actual circumstances of Novalis' life.