

A Tale of Two Novalises: The Legacy of Romantic Literature in German Alternative Pop Music

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the reception of literary romanticism in two genres of German alternative pop music, Krautrock and Goth. It discusses two bands named after romantic writer Friedrich von Hardenberg that reference romanticism for opposite purposes: Novalis, a 1970s band, champions utopian visions typical of left-wing counterculture, while their present day counterpart, neofolk band Novalis Deux, formulates an implicitly right-wing criticism of Western liberalism. Both bands also highlight different aspects of the artistic movement: while Novalis invokes the utopian leanings of early romanticism, Novalis Deux focuses on the dark side of human nature, a vital undercurrent throughout the entire romantic period.

The legacy of romanticism looms large in German culture; ever since its demise, this cultural period has been adopted for numerous and diverse political and cultural agendas. However, little attention has been paid to its echoes in popular culture, particularly in pop music, and the wildly dissimilar purposes these appropriations serve. The present article is a case study of two rock bands called Novalis and their adaptations of German literary romanticism. The earlier Novalis was part of 1970s Krautrock, while present day Novalis Deux is part of Germany's Goth subculture. This article argues that both bands allude to literary romanticism to position themselves in opposition to what they perceive as Germany's cultural mainstream during their respective time of activity.

Both groups draw on what they see as a neglected "alternative" side of German literature to critique what they see as society's mainstream, at least implicitly, and to counter it with utopian and/or nostalgic projections of a better society. The earlier



Novalis, founded in the wake of West Germany's 1960s counterculture, was part of a broader movement that sought to link historical romanticism to its own left-wing goals, promoting a more equal society that would be in tune with nature and leave the Nazi past behind. On the other hand, Novalis Deux treats romanticism as part of a canon of cultural traditions akin to Goth that is opposed to what they perceive as a liberal, commoditized mainstream culture. Instead of a brighter future, they paint an idealized image of the past that has come under threat by contemporary Western culture. Here, they exhibit at least indirect links to right-wing interpretations of Hardenberg's writings from the "Conservative Revolution" (Armin Mohler)¹ of the interwar period and its postwar followers, such as Ernst Jünger and Italian fascist Julius Evola.

To be sure, it is *literary* romanticism that is at stake here, not nineteenth-century classical music or its aesthetics. While the manifestation of romantic ideology in classical music is a highly interesting topic,² both bands—and their specific subcultures at large—reference authors, not composers. Moreover, the band Novalis's ties to classical music are tenuous and indirect at best, whereas Novalis Deux does not engage with classical music at all.

Krautrock is an umbrella term for a (West) German musical tradition that emerged in 1968/69, and ended in the late 1970s as both the hippie movement and their music came under attack from punk and new wave.³ In a 2009 special issue of *Popular Music and Society*, John T. Littlejohn maintains that "an understanding of Krautrock is vital for anyone studying the popular music of the last fifty years," and that "Krautrock is arguably the single most important strand of modern popular music to originate outside the United States or England."⁴ This is especially true for bands in electronic pop music or free-form improvisation. Acts that name Krautrock as a vital influence include David Bowie, Wilco, OMD, Radiohead, Stereolab, Joy Division,⁵ as well as Sonic Youth, Franz Ferdinand,⁶ and former Red Hot Chili Peppers guitarist John Frusciante.⁷ However, many other Krautrock bands never experienced a significant reception outside West Germany. German lyrics further barred bands from gathering an international following; beginning with *Radioaktivität/Radioactivity* (1975), even Kraftwerk released albums in two versions to appeal to both domestic and international audiences. Moreover, most West German listeners at the time preferred British or North American rock music. Krautrock's international reception is usually limited to a narrow selection of bands, namely those included in Julian Cope's influential monograph *Krautrock sampler* (1995), chiefly Can, Neu!, Faust, and Amon Düül II.

What made Krautrock so intriguing was the common goal of most bands: to find specifically "German" ways of musical expression that would take American and British pop music as a point of departure but sought to create something new. Retrospectively, David Stubbs describes these experiments as "the potential sound of a new Germany—modern, open, at ease with itself, thrumming with assurance

and optimism for what lies beyond the horizon.”⁸ In turn, the foreign reception of Krautrock often focused on its perceived “teutonic” qualities, a tendency playfully explored by Amon Düül II on their album *Made in Germany* (1975)⁹ and especially by Kraftwerk, who used interviews with British and American journalists to play up to such stereotypes.

At the same time, Krautrock bands kept their distance from traditional forms of German music, namely *Schlager*, but also from the classical composers like Wagner and Beethoven, which they regarded as tainted by Nazism.¹⁰ In this respect, Krautrock can be called a form of “musical *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.”¹¹ While dealing with the Nazi past was an issue for Krautrock musicians, their ties to the political radicalism of the day were tenuous at best. Some musicians did come straight out of the student movement, namely Amon Düül I and II, which grew out of a Munich commune, but other than that there was little direct interaction with the political radicalism of the day. Most bands had much closer relations to traditional art institutions. Can founding members Holger Czukay and Irmin Schmidt were former students of electronic composer Karlheinz Stockhausen,¹² and both Kraftwerk and Neu! emerged from the environs of Düsseldorf Arts Academy.¹³ There was also hardly any connection to literary movements such as New Subjectivity; while pop music played a prominent role for Peter Handke and Rolf Dieter Brinkmann, they almost exclusively referenced English-speaking bands and artists. On the other hand, some key bands collaborated with leading directors of New German Cinema. Amon Düül II contributed the soundtrack to Hans-Jürgen Syberberg’s *San Domingo* (1970), and Can’s sophomore album *Soundtracks* (1970) consisted entirely of their contributions to various films.

Literary references in pop music are not unique to German acts. However, literary references seem to be especially pronounced in Krautrock.¹⁴ Quite a few bands were either named after authors (Hoelderlin [deliberately shedding the Umlaut], Novalis), literary characters (Faust, Wallenstein, Drosselbart), or set canonical texts to music, such as Anyone’s Daughter, who in 1981 created a cult favorite in their eponymously named adaptation of Hermann Hesse’s fairy tale, *Piktors Verwandlungen* (Pictor’s metamorphoses). In many ways, Krautrock was a close relative to its contemporary, British progressive rock, or prog.¹⁵ Both styles explored new ways of musical expression by abandoning the traditional song format in favor of expanded forms. While some Krautrock bands rejected traditional musical structures in favor of free-form experimentation, others were heavily influenced by prog, notably by the experimental approaches of King Crimson and early Pink Floyd, and in some cases their attempts to create “serious” art clearly followed in the footsteps of their idols. Arguably, many bands were less musically innovative than those championed by Cope, and many never gained a sizable following outside of West Germany.

As Edward Macan notes, British prog was mostly a middle-class phenomenon. Most bands were formed by university or public school students. Their bourgeois

background explains a familiarity with the avant-garde jazz and classical music that contributed significantly to their musical idiom.¹⁶ A similar case can be made for Krautrock. For Bernward Halbscheffel, the typical West German prog listener is a *Bildungsbürger*: “As a rule, this type of listener treats rock music just like classical music, if he has any access to the latter, which he considers an outdated, but nevertheless integral part of culture”¹⁷—an attitude likely shaped in educated middle-class households. However, as Sascha Seiler has pointed out, this amounted to musical forms that did not so much challenge *Hochkultur* as to transfer established forms of culture into the realm of pop music.¹⁸ But rather than stimulating an audience of rock music listeners to engage with classical music, prog tended to eclipse its musical role models in the mind of the audience.

Not surprisingly, the bourgeois background of many Krautrock musicians and listeners also included familiarity with canonical German authors. It is no surprise that romantic writer Friedrich von Hardenberg (1772–1801) was a key focus of the appropriation of “high” culture in Krautrock. His pseudonym “Novalis” was based on an old byname of his family, “de novali,” meaning “those who till new ground.”¹⁹ While Hardenberg was never as widely received as his contemporaries Goethe and Schiller, he is still hailed as *the* quintessential romantic author. This is due to two factors: On one hand, he was the author of powerful literary writings. In his novel *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (1800/02), Hardenberg created the “Blue Flower,” which came to symbolize both romanticism’s desire for transcendence and romanticism itself. On the other hand, the suggestive power of Hardenberg’s writings was complemented by his friend and fellow writer Ludwig Tieck’s hagiographical biography, painting the picture of a delicate genius who, having lost the love of his life, his fiancée Sophie von Kühn, succumbed to an early death.²⁰ This narrative dominated the reception of Hardenberg’s writings well into the twentieth century. As a consequence, Hardenberg became the “epitome of romanticism, but also the embodiment of a concept of art that is both bookish and vague.”²¹

The perceived antagonism between romanticism and Weimar classicism may have further contributed to the former’s attractiveness. Traditionally, Goethe and Schiller have been viewed as Germany’s national writers par excellence, and they (partly) defined themselves against romanticism, notably in Goethe’s *dictum*: “I call the classic healthy, the romantic sickly. . . . Most modern productions are romantic, not because they are new, but because they are weak, morbid, and sickly; and the antique is classic, not because it is old, but because it is strong, fresh, joyous, and healthy.”²²

While this quote only sheds light on part of Goethe’s complex relationship with romanticism, it nevertheless became common coinage in the course of the nineteenth century. In this light, pledging allegiance to “decadent” authors such as Hardenberg entailed a certain opposition against the bourgeois mainstream in postwar Germany that praised Goethe and Schiller for their “universal” humanist values—the very same

authors that had earlier been claimed as predecessors by National Socialism. This perceived antagonism contributed substantially to making Hardenberg attractive for subcultural audiences.

The band Novalis was founded by vocalist Jürgen Wenzel and bass player Heino Schünzel in 1971. Their first album *Banished Bridge* (1973), modeled on Pink Floyd and Emerson, Lake & Palmer, was still dominated by English lyrics, acoustic guitar, and flute sounds.²³ After several lineup changes, the band released their third album *Sommerabend* (Summer evening, 1976). Within a few months, the LP sold approximately 100,000 copies.²⁴ Nevertheless, critics ridiculed the naïveté of their self-penned lyrics.²⁵ With new singer Fred Mühlböck, Novalis managed to continue their success run into the eighties, but with the advent of Neue Deutsche Welle, their datedness became apparent. They disbanded in 1985.²⁶ Unlike Kraftwerk, Novalis did not explicitly aim for a uniquely German kind of music; rather, Novalis imitated the extended, elaborate song structures of some of the more conventional bands in British prog, such as (early) Genesis, Gentle Giant, or Yes, and combined them with German lyrics. Their albums therefore amounted to what Sascha Seiler has termed the “translation” of a musical idiom into a different culture,²⁷ rather than a new creation of something from scratch, like bands such as Neu! or Kraftwerk did. Just as British prog bands used literary references—like Genesis did extensively on albums such as *Foxtrot* (1972) and *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway* (1974)—Novalis demonstrated that German bands could do just the same.

When they chose their name, the Novalis band members were not yet familiar with Hardenberg’s writings. It was producer Achim Reichel who suggested that they adapt German lyrics, and engage with their national cultural heritage.²⁸ Their sophomore album *Novalis* (1975) contained a musical version of Hardenberg’s poem “Es färbte sich die Wiese grün” (The meadow turned green), and *Brandung* (1977) boasted two adaptations, the classic poem “Wenn nicht mehr Zahlen und Figuren” (When no longer numbers and figures), from posthumously published notes for *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, and “Astralis,” adapted from the opening poem of the same name from the novel’s second book.²⁹ For a more detailed analysis, I will now turn to “Wer einsam sitzt” (He who sits alone),³⁰ the third poem from Hardenberg’s *Geistliche Lieder* (*Spiritual Songs*), a series of poems his friend Friedrich Schlegel called “the most divine things he ever made.”³¹ The band recorded it under the name “Wunderschätze” (wondrous treasures) and released it on *Sommerabend*, translated as follows:

He, who sits in his lonely chamber
and cries heavy, bitter tears,
who only sees his surroundings
tinted by pain and misery;

who looks at an image of the past
as if looking into an abyss
into which, from all sides,
a sweet aching beckons him;—

it is as if wondrous treasures
were piled up down there for him,
and breathlessly, hounded, he
reaches for the lock.

The future stretches before him
like a terrible, barren wasteland—
he rambles, alone and mad,
and impetuously searches for himself.

Crying, I fall into his arms:
I used to feel just like you,
but I recovered from my grief,
and now I know where to rest eternally.

Just like me, you have to be consoled
by a being that deeply loved, suffered, and died;
who joyfully died even for those
who had hurt him the most.

He died, but nevertheless you feel
him and his love every day,
and in every situation you can confidently
pull him into your arms.

With him, new blood and life
flow into your withered bones—
and when you have given him your heart,
his will be yours forever, too.

What you have lost, he has found,
in him you find what you have loved:
and you will stay joined forever
with what his hand returns to you.



“Wunderschätze” is the second of three songs on *Sommerabend*, wedged between the instrumental “Aufbruch” (Departure, 9:37 min.), and the suite “Sommerabend” (18:17 min.).³² “Wunderschätze” clocks in at 10:37 min., and consists of five parts: a) an instrumental prelude (0:01 to 1:11); b) the first vocal section (1:12 to 3:42), which comprises stanzas 1 to 5 of the Hardenberg’s poem; c) an instrumental middle section (3:43 to 6:31); d) the second vocal section, consisting of stanzas 6, 7, and 9 (6:32 to 8:00); and e) an extended musical coda (8:01 to 10:37). Both vocal sections follow the same pattern. Instead of alternating between verse and chorus, the same chord progression is repeated in every stanza. In both vocal sections, the stanzas are first sung by alternating singers, presumably Heino Schünzel and guitarist Detlef Job, while the final stanza of each section is sung by both singers. Both sections are preceded by the chord pattern played on two acoustic guitars, which are gradually joined by other instruments, until the full band plus the two voices are heard in the final stanza. This structure gives these sections a climatic feel, which is then expanded upon in the coda, which builds upon the chord progression in the verses, but accelerates and intensifies it over the remaining two and a half minutes. The slow tempo and solemn mood of the stanzas gradually build up. At the climax of the vocal sections (stanzas 5 and 9 of the original poem, respectively), the music is characterized by a hymnal atmosphere, expressing the reconciliation of the lyrical ego with and the dissolution of its individuality in Christ.

The poem “Wer einsam sitzt,” which Hardenberg presumably wrote in March 1799, mirrors his biographical crisis after the death of his fiancée, Sophie von Kühn, who had died in 1797 at the young age of 15,³³ but also its eventual resolution by turning to religion. There is no doubt the poet was deeply affected by the death of his beloved, and Hardenberg certainly found comfort in religion. Margot Seidel, the author of a monograph on Hardenberg’s *Geistliche Lieder*, supports this interpretation, counting “Wer einsam sitzt” among the five “biographical” poems out of a total number of fifteen (along with poem numbers 1, 4, 10, and 13). Seidel goes on to point out parallels in the wording between this poem and his letters from the time immediately following Sophie’s death. The loss of the beloved leads to a perceived loss of selfhood.³⁴ Moreover, Seidel sees an intertextual relationship with an autobiographical poem Hardenberg composed right after his engagement with Julie von Charpentier, a few weeks before “Wer einsam sitzt”: “The tired stranger has disappeared, / and has made room for the friend, / who, from so many dreary hours, / has saved a faithful heart. / . . . No longer watched over by misery / He has found himself.”³⁵ In the original, the verses even prefigure the iambic tetrameter of “Wer einsam sitzt.” However, as Johannes Mahr points out, “Wer einsam sitzt” is not to be read as an exclusively biographical text: “In poetic images, this poem wants to convince those who suffer from isolation of potential redemption and solacement.”³⁶ This reading is

underlined by the fact that the causes of the “pain and misery,” and the loss of self dominating the first half of the poem are never given in detail, thus making it much easier for readers to identify with the text.

Combining Seidel’s and Mahr’s interpretations, Hardenberg’s poem can be read as an attempt to lift an autobiographical experience to a more general, intersubjective level. The poem embodies the author’s intention to propagate a renewed Christian faith as “the basis for the projecting power of a new universe [*Weltgebäude*] and humanity.” The poem contains in a nutshell the steps Hardenberg regards as necessary to attain that goal: “Annihilation of the present—apotheosis of the future—of that true and better world.”³⁷ To this end, Hardenberg splits up his personal experience. In stanzas 1–4, the text is dominated by an anonymous character steeped in misery and nostalgia, whose future seems to hold no promise. This perspective culminates in the metaphor of “Wunderschätze” in stanza 3, beautiful treasures that nonetheless remain out of reach. The suffering character remains anonymous, as the text speaks of him in the general form of “wer” (whoever).

In this light, the shift in stanza 5, “Crying, I fall into his arms,” is surprising. Not only does Hardenberg suddenly introduce a lyrical ego, this speaker also transforms the nebulous “whoever” into a concrete person. Immediately, the poem switches perspectives again. The lyrical ego now addresses his counterpart directly, offering comfort, which can only be found in Jesus. When Hardenberg writes in stanza 7, “but nevertheless you feel / him and his love every day, / and in every situation you can confidently / pull him into your arms,” this hints at God’s presence in mundane life, whereas the final stanza maintains an ambiguity between continuing life and finding true salvation in death: “and you will stay joined forever / with what his hand returns to you,” a point that plays an even larger role in Hardenberg’s *Hymns to the Night*. It is no coincidence that the poem’s turning point occurs in the fifth of nine stanzas, the exact center, which provides the text with its overall symmetry. Moreover, the introduction of an “I” that addresses its counterpart with “you” marks a dialogical turn, both postulating and performing the overcoming of isolation by the acceptance of true faith.

On the album, Novalis guitarist Detlef Job is credited with both the composition and the textual adaptation of the poem. In reality, Job made only two small, albeit significant changes to the text—he changed the title, and decided to omit the eighth stanza. By naming the song “Wunderschätze,” Job highlights the poem’s central metaphor. In the context of Hardenberg’s poem, these “wondrous treasures” are mere illusions, distracting the passive and lonely observer from his true aim. Hardenberg uses the subjunctive to point out the illusory nature of the observer’s vision, and his attempts must ultimately prove futile, since they are a mere substitute for what he *should* aim for. In the listing on the album cover, wedged between “Aufbruch” and “Sommerabend,” the title suggests a much more positive meaning.

If one listens to the band's adaptations of the Hardenberg's songs, they appear unusual at first glance. This is especially valid in the light of the traditionally sharp distinctions between "serious" and "popular" culture in Germany. On the surface, appropriating canonical writers for countercultural purposes appears to be paradoxical, as parts of this counterculture aggressively attacked a bourgeois heritage that had also been championed by the Nazis. This goes especially for Hardenberg and Friedrich Hölderlin, whose poems German soldiers in both World Wars had supposedly carried in their knapsacks to boost their nationalist fervor. Like most of German romanticism, they had traditionally been claimed by the political right.³⁸ Many critics from the political left regarded their writings with suspicion or even hostility. Romanticism was seen as a mere "counterstrike against Enlightenment,"³⁹ whereas Novalis's theoretical writings were seen as riddled with "the dangerous ecstasy (*Trunkenheit*) of his intellectual revelations"⁴⁰—tendencies which ultimately resulted in an apology of reactionary, antirevolutionary thinking, paving the way for bourgeois, and ultimately, fascist historiography.

But the image of some romantic writers underwent a radical reinterpretation around 1970. In essence, this way was already paved by some intellectuals who exerted a great degree of influence on counterculture, namely Ernst Bloch. In his seminal *The Principle of Hope* (1959), Bloch praises the inherent power of poetry to project a better future, especially in the works of Novalis and Hölderlin. While he contends that Novalis lacks a clear political consciousness, Bloch regards the author's texts (as well as romantic fairy tales in general) as an important step towards shaping utopian visions of a better world:

The highest good is like a well of lasting contentment, but where the well springs up is hidden in the inconspicuous, at best in the emblematic. . . . Even the Blue Flower, Novalis's version of the highest value, blossoms in his work in a kind of oriental haze[,] . . . but apart from the fact that it is at the same time a fairytale it is itself still in the blue.⁴¹

These impulses eventually found their way into literary studies. The 1968 National Convention of Germanists, held in Berlin, witnessed the slogan: "Macht die blaue Blume rot" (Make the Blue Flower red),⁴² and in 1970 Richard Faber published his monograph *Novalis: Die Phantasie an die Macht* (Novalis: All power to fantasy). Following the footsteps of Bloch, Benjamin, and Thomas Mann,⁴³ Faber seeks to reclaim Hardenberg from the political right, and even (implausibly) links his writings to the so-called "revolutionary romanticism" of Che Guevara. In the context of the writer's triadic concept of history, spelled out in all of his major works, Faber highlights the progressive element of the new golden age that Hardenberg envisions: "What was great and beautiful in a past age . . . is only an anticipation of what will

be in the future and what has now materialized.”⁴⁴ For Faber, Novalis is a herald of the “utopian anarchism”⁴⁵ that seems to have reached fruition with the triumph of counterculture. At the same time, Faber stresses that Novalis is not a political thinker as such, but aims for “salvation through *poetry*: the path elucidates the goal, which is the all-encompassing synthesis of everything.”⁴⁶ Reinhold Grimm argues:

None of those who man the barricades, literally or figuratively, would call themselves romantics; they definitely insist on being recognized as revolutionaries. Therefore, it might be more realistic to speak of rapidly spreading romantic symptoms than of a new romanticism. . . . It is no heresy to assert that [Karl Marx’s] theory of alienation contains a good deal of romanticism. The same goes for Bakunin and his brothers-in-spirit.⁴⁷

In a chapter programmatically called “Revolutionäres Erbe” (Revolutionary heritage), Faber emphatically describes the aforementioned “salvation by poetry” as an equivalent of political revolution. Moreover, Faber discusses “Die Christenheit oder Europa” (“Christendom or Europe,” 1799), Hardenberg’s essay on the Middle Ages which had traditionally been read as a symptom of conservative nostalgia, as quite the opposite: i.e., an apology of the French Revolution as a necessary crisis Europe has to pass through in order to bring on a second golden age⁴⁸ that may be defined in socialist terms. Indeed, Hardenberg’s essay contains several passages “on the political drama of our time” that appear to confirm Faber’s reading.⁴⁹ Of course, Faber argues, Hardenberg was not a socialist in the modern (i.e., Marxist) sense, since he wrote before the advent of industrial capitalism, and therefore could not develop a “truly scientific” point of view: “At this point, he cannot help but being a ‘utopist’ in the same way that Marx and Engels later criticized [in the *Communist Manifesto*, S.H.]” According to Faber, Hardenberg aims for “a fundamental, that is, a revolutionary transformation. . . . His politics are not determined by his own, well-understood interests, but by those of humanity.”⁵⁰

Admittedly, this is a one-sided interpretation of Hardenberg’s text—it is in fact a *Christian*, not a democratic or socialist reawakening of Europe that his essay aims for. However, Faber’s arguments clearly show why such views of Hardenberg would appeal to a counterculture audience at the time—the Bohemian milieu in which Krautrock developed. Moreover, bands like Novalis—Jens Reislöb calls their style “romantic rock music”⁵¹—did combine their music with a (vague) utopian outlook on society,⁵² albeit in a much less pronounced form than most political activists. In sum, both Faber’s interpretation and Novalis’s appropriation of Hardenberg’s writings amount to no less than a rewriting of literary romanticism. While the bands’ utopian visions of society never come into focus as clearly as in the actual writings of Hardenberg

and Friedrich Hölderlin, the affinity is still apparent, and when these views fell out of fashion in the 1980s, the bands faltered as well.

While Krautrock was largely a (West) German phenomenon, Goth subculture has been a transcultural movement since its inception in the late 1970s.⁵³ While Krautrock-influenced David Bowie and Joy Division were important predecessors,⁵⁴ Goth came into being with the images and sounds of two British bands, Siouxsie and the Banshees, and Bauhaus. While Siouxsie Sioux evolved into a role model for female Goths, Bauhaus singer Peter Murphy served as a template for males. Britain was the center of early Goth subculture, but the interest of British mainstream media waned in the mid-1990s.⁵⁵ In contrast, Germany emerged as the new hub for European Goth. Its Goth subculture there is larger and more diverse than in any other Western country; the annual “Wave Gotik Treffen” in Leipzig is the largest Goth convention in the world.⁵⁶ Unlike Krautrock, Goth evolved in both East and West Germany; in fact, there was a vibrant Goth subculture in the GDR before 1989, providing an opportunity for voicing dissent and disapproval of the regime.⁵⁷

While German Goth is similar to its British counterpart, it features some musical styles that have a more pronounced presence in Germany, such as medieval Goth, electronic body music (EBM)/industrial, and neofolk.⁵⁸ Music is a central factor in Goth subculture, even more so than in 1960s counterculture. While psychedelia and prog were vital for the latter cultural formation, Goth as a lifestyle evolved from the emulation of specific musicians.⁵⁹ Today, Goth subculture draws on an enormous variety of media and other cultural artifacts. One of its key moments is its “sense of collective distinction from those whose appearance or lifestyles were deemed antithetical to those of subculture. This usually involves a generalized conception of ‘normal’ culture, ‘the mainstream,’”⁶⁰ Transgressions against this perceived mainstream play a key role for constructions of identity, for instance with regard to gender and sexuality issues; in particular, male Goths are free to subvert gender stereotypes by adopting elements of androgyny, even femininity, such as wearing makeup and clothes associated with the opposite gender; there is also widespread acceptance of homosexual and bisexual relations.⁶¹ In contrast to 1960s subculture, Goth is not a political movement as such, but embraces different antiestablishment world views. While a small minority of fans of substyles such as industrial, neofolk, and EBM, espouses a right-wing world view, this by no means applies to Goth as a whole (contrary to public perception), and attempts by right-wingers to influence German Goth in its entirety (e.g., by the weekly *Junge Freiheit* in the mid-1990s)⁶² remain largely fruitless.

In general, Goth culture is a “creative, highly literate, and literary subculture,”⁶³ including both the reception and production of texts. Canonical authors such as Lord Byron, Percy and Mary Shelley, Poe, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Stoker, Wilde, Lovecraft,

and Victorian poetry have experienced a broad reception in Goth subculture—even outside the English-speaking world, as British Goth culture partly continues to serve as a role model for other countries. As Ken Gelder notes, “Goth subcultural literariness is largely referential, returning over and over to a set of generically prescribed . . . literary quotations.”⁶⁴ Almost all of these authors are used as elements of a construction of individual and collective identities that underline Goth’s antagonistic stance towards the “mainstream.” Many Goths reject an explicit political stance, but rather “share nostalgia for the past and dramatize it as an escape from what is perceived as a dangerous development of human society threatening the individual.”⁶⁵ As Isabella van Elferen points out, their “nostalgic drive does not so much signify the desire to literally *go back* to the past, but rather reflects the will to yearn for something irrevocable.”⁶⁶ Just like the future society imagined by Hardenberg’s interpreters in the early 1970s, Goth nostalgia often amounts to vague projections of a utopian past, but as it does not aim for the actual restitution of past epochs, but merely conjures them in an act of rebellion, this vagueness seems largely irrelevant.

There seem to be three preferred periods for Goth nostalgia, at least in a German context—the Middle Ages, the early 1900s (namely in the form of expressionist film and literature), and the romantic era. Just like romanticism emerged as a “reaction to social and cultural rationalization during the age of Enlightenment,” Gabriele Eckart argues, Goth regards itself as an “escape from the functionally differentiated modern society with its rationalizing effects on modern life.”⁶⁷ Moreover, she regards dialogues about art within Goth subculture as highly reflective, reminiscent of similar dialogues in early romanticism,⁶⁸ such as the journal *Athenäum* (1798–1800) to which Hardenberg contributed along with Friedrich and August Wilhelm Schlegel.

Moreover, Goth is powered by transgressions of societal norms (even in the symbolic form of vampires, monsters, etc.) and their deep ambivalence; as Fred Botting argues, gothic fictions do not only provide titillating terrors and horrors, but its protagonists may also enjoy freedoms from the constraints of society that remain unattainable for their readers—and this transgressive freedom marks a strong utopian moment in Goth subculture in general.⁶⁹

Arguably, Goth is even more prevalent in Germany’s eastern states than in the West, a fact Isabella van Elferen attributes to a sense of loss after the disappearance of the GDR, paired with a strong aversion against capitalist consumer society, as well as the precarious situation this society often creates for the individual; thus, “the Goth look enables a cultural performance of young East German’s feelings of disillusionment and dissatisfaction in the shape of historically delineated Gothic themes—*Sehnsucht*, isolation, distrust in the future, the undead, transgression.”⁷⁰ Moreover, while the slightest deviation from the norm was deemed subversive in the GDR, those subtleties remain largely unnoticed in a liberal Western society. In this light, the transgressive nature of Goth provides a greater degree of visibility in a post-1989 society, especially

when combined with the (often ironical or ambivalent) use of allusions to totalitarian ideologies—Rammstein as a Goth-influenced band that crossed into the mainstream would be a good case in point.⁷¹

As in Krautrock, quite a few German Goth bands reference literary texts, including those from their national tradition. Goethes Erben, one of the most successful bands of the 1990s, initially aimed to fuse the recital of German poetry with music,⁷² L'Âme Immortelle recorded an entire album based on Georg Trakl's poetry,⁷³ and dark wave band Das Ich released an album with lyrics from Gottfried Benn's *Morgue* (1912).⁷⁴ The common ground of these adaptations seems to be twofold: First, the writers deal with topics such as death, perversion, and mortality, and can thus be easily recast in a Goth mold. And second, they represent past eras such as expressionism and romanticism, removed from the conflicts of contemporary society, and thus appeal to a sense of nostalgia. Like romanticism, Goth represents a reaction to social and cultural rationalization.⁷⁵

It is little surprise that Hardenberg fits this picture, even if his image in Goth subculture is based on a narrow, selective reception of his works. As a sample from the online forum *German Gothic Board* shows, many Goths do share an interest in the author's writings, especially when exposed to his writings as high school or university students. Their reception is mostly focused on *Hymns to the Night* (1798/1800) and the novel *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. While some users comment on Hardenberg's writings as being "difficult," they also emphasize the beauty of his writings and the overall "poetic" atmosphere, well in tune with the perception of Goth as a "poetic" lifestyle. As far as this sample goes, Hardenberg is held in high esteem, rivaled among the German romantics only by E.T.A. Hoffmann and his "Schwarze Romantik" (black romanticism), the term coined by Mario Praz.⁷⁶ Moreover, some Goths see a high degree of general affinity between romanticism and their own subculture, even if it seems difficult to describe what exactly these parallels are, except that both movements express the "dark side" of the human psyche⁷⁷—and a certain flirtation with death that, in the case of Hardenberg, is then sublated in a Christian context.

While Novalis Deux is an obvious example of Hardenberg reception among Goth musicians, they are not the only Goth band referencing the author: Das Ich recorded an instrumental named "Novalis,"⁷⁸ and neofolk band Seelenlicht adapted Hardenberg's 1794 poem "Vergiss mein nicht" (Forget me not) on its 2009 album *Love and Murder*.⁷⁹ This early Hardenberg poem is especially suitable for a Goth adaptation, as it links the themes of death, haunting, and love without placing them in an explicitly Christian context: "Forget me not when loose, cool soil / shall once cover this heart that tenderly beat for you . . . then my spirit shall often hover around you, blessing you."⁸⁰

Neofolk band Novalis Deux was founded in Schönheide, Saxony, in 1995, although



they did not become “serious” about their music until 2000.⁸¹ Like their Krautrock predecessors, they were attracted by the name without having read Hardenberg, and founder Stev Schumann espouses no particularly romantic views apart from a general predilection for “meadows, wood, mountains and valleys, horses and old stories”⁸²—a sentiment in line with the nostalgic element so prominent in Goth culture. By naming their band after Hardenberg, however, Novalis Deux emphasizes an affinity, however remote with Hardenberg—or rather, to the specific image of Hardenberg in Goth subculture. Band founder Stev Schumann gives two additional reasons for his choice: on the one hand, the name “conforms” to the music, on the other hand, it highlights the band’s regional identity,⁸³ since Hardenberg spent most of his life in what is now the border region between Thuringia and Saxony, where the band is based. This is interesting since this allegiance defies the binary logic of refuting or embracing national identity; in fact, in the wake of both Neue Deutsche Welle and reunification, language choice has become much less of a “political” issue for most bands.⁸⁴ At the same time, the band’s reference to its home region seems to bypass the larger issue of “Ostalgie,” a defining moment for many other bands from Germany’s eastern states, although other elements of nostalgia as a typical motif in Goth music are clearly present. As the title of their most recent album *Ghosts Over Europe* (2008) suggests, the band’s lyrics address themes that appear to extend beyond a narrow national or regional scope. This affinity, as I will demonstrate later, is one of the defining features of the band’s genre, neofolk. For an analysis, I have chosen the album’s title song “Ghost Over Europe”:

There is a ghost over Europe, over your land
 No words misunderstood
 There is a ghost over Europe, over your land
 No words misunderstood

Run away alone, run away from home
 Broken glasses, reflect the sunset
 Run away alone, run away from home
 A heap of rumble [*sic*], smoke blackens the moon
 You and me

You dream of home, you dream alone
 Burning ruins, flames from hell
 You dream of home, you dream alone
 A flower garden, this is your home
 You and me⁸⁵

These lyrics, written in simple English, and sung with a prominent German accent, are fairly representative of the band's oeuvre. On the surface, they paint a simple picture: the lyrical ego and its companion find themselves among the ruins of a European civilization destroyed for unknown reasons; "Europe" is merely present as a specter that continues to "haunt" the ruins, at least metaphorically. The past provides a home, but is only accessible as a memory, something one can dream of, but only in isolation. Only the elliptic chorus "you and me" hints at a possibility of overcoming isolation and destruction through the power of love.

For a scholar of Hardenberg's writings, it might be tempting to read "Ghost Over Europe" as an engagement with the essay "Die Christenheit oder Europa," in which the writer develops the utopian vision of a reunited Europe under the umbrella of a revamped Christianity:

Christendom will rise again from the sacred womb of an honorable European council, and a new religious awakening [*Religionserweckung*] will be carried out according to a universal, divine plan. No one will protest against religious or worldly coercion any longer, as the church will be characterized by genuine freedom, and all necessary reforms will be carried out under its supervision as peaceful and lawful government acts. . . . Just be patient, the holy time of eternal peace, when the new Jerusalem will be capital of the world, must come about; until then, remain serene and courageous throughout the perils of our time, companions of my gospel, . . . and remain true to the veracious, infinite faith until death.⁸⁶

"Ghost over Europe" almost reads like an intertextual reference to and a pessimistic refutation of this passage. However, a closer examination shows that the intertextual engagement appears to be more indirect. In fact, images of a devastated Europe are a staple of neofolk, the popular Goth subgenre that Novalis Deux belongs to. Neofolk regards itself as a revitalization of forgotten and suppressed elements of national cultures, drawing not so much on the largely left-wing folk revivals of the 1960s and 70s as on earlier attempts to reinvigorate national identity by returning to "authentic" folksongs. In Germany, this includes the Wandervogel movement of the early 1900s,⁸⁷ which, in turn alludes to collections such as Johann Gottfried Herder's *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* (Voices of the people in their songs, 1773) and Achim von Arnim's and Clemens Brentano's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn: Alte deutsche Lieder* (The Boy's magic horn: Old German songs, 1805–1808). In this respect, neofolk is indeed indebted to romanticism itself. Especially Herder believed that folksongs lend expression to an "authentic" and anonymous voice of the people, expressing the genuine "spirit" of a collective that expresses itself "in its *naked* simplicity, . . . and the full nature of the raw powers of its soul" (*der ganzen Natur roher Seelenkräfte*)⁸⁸—and just like neofolk, the intent behind Herder's endeavor was decidedly pan-European.

While neofolk is originally the product of individual musicians with a background in the industrial genre, its protagonists nonetheless aim to revive an authentic, “spiritual” music critical of the “desacralized” (and commodified) character of modern Western music.⁸⁹ It is hardly surprising, then, that neofolk lends itself to the association with antimodern movements such as occultism, paganism, and right-wing politics. It is important to note that not all neofolk bands espouse right-wing views, and some only use them playfully to question what they see as “mainstream” liberal views; again, Rammstein with its roots in the left-wing Prenzlauer Berg punk scene of the 1980s would be a case in point. However, a sizable share of the genre can be defined as what Anton Shekhtovtsov calls “apoliteic” music, “in which the ideological message contains obvious or veiled references to the core elements of fascism but is simultaneously detached from any practical attempt to implement that message through political activity. *Apoliteic* music is characterized by highly elitist stances and disdain for ‘banal petty materialism.’”⁹⁰

Shekhtovtsov regards apoliteic music as an instance of a “metapolitical fascism” inspired by right-wing thinkers such as Ernst Jünger (1895–1998) and the Italian fascist Julius Evola (1898–1974). While distancing themselves both from liberal democracy and “plebeian” right-wingers, apoliteic thinkers are disengaged from practical politics, but tend to believe in an “aristocracy of the soul.” *Apoliteic* thinkers generally regard the present era as an “interregnum” after the defeat of fascism in World War II that will eventually yield to a renaissance of national glory.⁹¹ Many neofolk bands take up similar views in their lyrics, namely Death in June (or Di6), *the* defining band of the genre; the band’s name is usually interpreted as alluding to the killing of SA leader Ernst Röhm on June 30, 1934.⁹² Similarly, Seelenlicht’s singer Troy Southgate is a former member of the National Front in Britain, but only abandoned the party to become the leader of the “apoliteic” New Right.⁹³

“Ghost Over Europe” takes up one of the key topics of neofolk lyrics—apocalyptic visions of a “real,” though forgotten Europe that lies hidden beneath modern Western culture.⁹⁴ This essentialist notion of Europe as a “homogenous cultural entity or primordial racial community”⁹⁵ consisting of distinct and immutable national collectives is not per se chauvinist, as it accepts a plurality of cultures. The neofolk variety of this idea, which Stéphane François sees rooted in neopaganism, is “a differentialist, *völkisch* ethnocommunitarianism: since each ‘race’ is adapted to its environment, different ways of life must be respected.”⁹⁶ At the same time, there often is a latent racism present in the idea that all European nations have descended from the Indo-Europeans, an “ur”-white race superior to all other races.⁹⁷ However, every nation is seen as self-contained, and its identity must not be watered down by multiculturalism.⁹⁸

These ideas of returning to a national “essence,” to the traditional and the naïve, even if under the roof of a common European identity, cannot only be traced back to

Herder, but also to the romantic movement⁹⁹—particularly to German romanticism after 1806, when the Napoleonic invasion of Germany prompted the demise of the Holy Roman Empire and a surge in nationalist sentiment. Brentano's and von Arnim's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's *Deutsche Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (*German Children's and Household Tales*, 1812) are the immediate results of this surge, as are the violent nationalism in Theodor Körner's poetry and Heinrich von Kleist's final plays *Die Hermannsschlacht* (The battle of the Teutoburg forest, 1810) and *Der Prinz von Homburg* (*The Prince of Homburg*, 1811). As Kennet Granholm points out, this mindset continued well into the twentieth century; the "idea of a folk-spirit, a Volksgeist, which unified all members of a particular folk throughout the ages" was combined with "strong apocalyptic notions of the nation and the people—the very ethnic uniqueness of the German folk—being in danger of extinction due to the influences of foreign people and ideas."¹⁰⁰

The image of Europe in ruins so prominent in "Ghost Over Europe" is a staple of neofolk lyrics and is indebted to Julius Evola's work *Gli uomini e le rovine* (*Men Among the Ruins*, 1953) that praises Europe under the "Third Reich" for standing up to communism,¹⁰¹ and wants to revive the continent as a "Reich Europa" under a common spiritual idea,¹⁰² rejecting both Marxism and democracy in favor of authoritarian rule. Evola's theories, on the other hand, were in turn inspired by his reading of Hardenberg.¹⁰³ In fact, there is a broad Hardenberg reception among right-wing thinkers throughout the twentieth century, namely in the "Conservative Revolution" before 1945,¹⁰⁴ but extending all the way to the antimodern polemics of writer Botho Strauß in the 1990s.¹⁰⁵ Hermann Kurzke is probably right when he argues that the interpretation of Hardenberg as a harbinger of the imminent conservative revolution is a deliberate misreading.¹⁰⁶ And Jay Rosellini writes that Hardenberg mostly

appears as a utopian dreamer who refused to participate in traditional politics—in contrast to some of his contemporaries, who served the cause of restoration rather than utopia. . . . Novalis chose . . . to ignore the possibility of political activity or change in the framework of the system that existed in his own time. Second, when he did ponder the nature of society and history, he did not separate such themes from his identity as a poet.¹⁰⁷

All the same, contemporary apoliteic authors do continue to claim Hardenberg as an important predecessor. And while there is no evidence of mutual reception between neofolk and writers like Strauß, it is important that both share a general admiration of Hardenberg, whether they actually engage with his writings or merely invoke his name. While Hardenberg's "Die Christenheit oder Europa" seems to advocate transcending national boundaries in favor of a common religion, present right-wing interpretations capitalize on his apparent nostalgia for the more "organic" forms of

feudal society before the French Revolution. In this light, the overcoming of national boundaries becomes less important, while there is still a plurality of “organic” nations, which may nevertheless be under threat.

Death in June, the most influential neofolk band, captures apoliteic visions of Europe in song: “Sons of Europe / Sick with liberalism / Sons of Europe / Chained with capitalism . . . On a marble slab in Yalta / Mother Europe / Was slaughtered,”¹⁰⁸ and similar bands as Darkwood, Wolfsblood, Von Thronstahl, and Seelenlicht echo these sentiments in their lyrics.¹⁰⁹ Novalis Deux’s “Ghost Over Europe” fits in well with this imagery, but while Death in June explicitly attributes Europe’s downfall to the 1943 Yalta Conference, Novalis Deux omits any reference to specific events. However, similar images of a downtrodden, decadent Europe that will one day be resurrected are scattered throughout their lyrics. Current society is metaphorically likened to the downfall of the Roman Empire: “Glory, power, eternity, Rome / No mistake / This empire can’t exist / Breath [*sic*] the air, it’s sick / This is the end.”¹¹⁰ Schumann elaborates: “In Rome’s history in particular we see clear parallels to our contemporary society. The corruption of values and humanity’s increasing decadence lead us ever closer to our own destruction and inevitably remind me of those times.”¹¹¹

While Novalis Deux clearly belongs to the neofolk subset of Goth culture, this does not mean it is necessarily an apoliteic band as defined by Shekhtovtsov. While Schumann acknowledges Death in June as a key influence,¹¹² the band does not espouse clear right-wing views, unlike Seelenlicht singer Troy Southgate or the German band Von Thronstahl.¹¹³ While Novalis Deux does use imagery culled from apoliteic discourses on Europe and society in general, the band may not necessarily reflect on its origin. Discussing the song “Ghost Over Europe,” Schumann provides a remarkably unrelated interpretation: “The ghosts over Europe are intended to symbolize the many small and big personal and societal disasters, which thousands of people, just like us, have lived through and are going to live through. But they also stand for those many happy moments or the dull everyday life that every one of us experiences each and every day.”¹¹⁴ If anything, Novalis Deux’s lyrics appear to be an apolitical homage to the musicians they admire, a reading underlined by the band’s stilted, at times incorrect, use of the English language. Novalis Deux also does not directly engage with Hardenberg’s writings, unlike the band’s Krautrock counterpart. If there is any trace of Hardenberg’s poetry present in Novalis Deux, it is twice removed, in a line that runs via other neofolk bands and their reception of writings by Evola, Jünger, and others. At the same time, the band’s choice of a name is indicative of the favorable general reception of Hardenberg in Goth.

Given the prominent gap between “high” and popular art in German culture, it seems surprising that there would be significant attempts by pop musicians to adapt canonical

authors' writings or at least appropriate their names for their musical projects. However, both (West German) Krautrock and Goth have witnessed some significant attempts to integrate elements of and references to authors from "high" culture into their works. As the examples of Novalis and Novalis Deux show, on a superficial level both subcultures' approaches have a lot in common. Both bands invoke Friedrich von Hardenberg in a way that is consistent with their own subculture's views. This is all the more remarkable as these views are diametrically opposed to each other: While 1960s counterculture linked Hardenberg to a future egalitarian society, neofolk as a small, mostly apoliteic subset of Goth culture tends to indirectly take up Hardenberg as a prophet for a revolution resulting in the restitution of an "organic Europe" that would do away with modernity, multiculturalism, and democracy.

To be sure, both the Krautrock band Novalis and Novalis Deux offer a much watered-down variation of these visions, but their choice of name is highly indicative of the specific images of Hardenberg that prevail in their respective subcultures. By this gesture, they symbolically claim an oppositional stance towards German mainstream culture that traditionally identifies with the "healthy" values of Weimar classicism, which have traditionally served as reference figures for German mainstream culture and the country's political regimes in particular, a stance that is equally reusable for the Conservative Revolution, 1960s counterculture, and contemporary Goth. Therefore, I would like to contradict Martin A. Völker's statement: "If the names Novalis, Schlegel, Brentano, and Hoffmann pop up somewhere, that does not necessary have anything to do with romanticism. Romanticism existed exclusively in the nineteenth century, everything else is a stale surrogate, a fad, consumerism."¹¹⁵ When bands recycle elements of romanticism, they will necessarily adapt it to their own context, and therefore must modify and "distort" the original content. In this light, Völker's verdict that such adaptations are merely "old high school topics, more or less badly regurgitated in the rehearsal room" is remarkably shortsighted.¹¹⁶ Both subcultures and both bands invoke specific interpretations of literary romanticism exactly because they fit with their general worldviews, although these worldviews may be diametrically opposed, except in their self-understanding as rebelling against the cultural and political mainstream; both bands exist in a context that uses romanticism in a way that neatly links with a specific cultural outlook on history; utopian and progressive in the case of 1960s counterculture, nostalgic and pessimistic in the case of Goth, in spite of the fact that the latter provides ample freedom for individual transgressions of contemporary societal norms. But both bands also accentuate different aspects of a complex and contradictory artistic movement: while the 1970s band refers to Hardenberg as an author of *early* romanticism as a period of societal optimism and artistic experiments, Goth bands like Novalis Deux champion the "Schwarze Romantik" of Hoffmann, Bonaventura, and Hardenberg's poetry—a dark undercurrent of

romanticism that is not limited to a specific period but is present throughout its life span, to be eventually taken up by later writers such as Poe, Baudelaire, and the German expressionists.

To be sure, the results of this study are still preliminary. Only two bands have been examined here, and research on the reception of literary texts even in specific genres should be expanded with a broader set of data. Such a study could remain within the context of Krautrock and Goth on the national level, be expanded to German pop music in general, or even include international references to literary writers, such as a comparison of literary references in music from specific subcultures across various cultures. There is, to quote punk poetess Patti Smith, a “sea of possibilities”¹¹⁷ to choose from.

Notes

This article is dedicated to my former roommate, Freiburg journalist Christian Rath, who first introduced me to Novalis (the band, not the writer). With thanks to Nadine Höppner, Laurie Johnson, Elaine Kelly, Sascha Seiler, and two anonymous peer reviewers.

1. Mohler introduced and defined this controversial term in *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918–1932* (Stuttgart: Vorwerk, 1950).
2. Cf. for example: John Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer 1993).
3. Cf. Jürgen Teipel, *Verschwende deine Jugend. Ein Doku-Roman über den deutschen Punk und New Wave* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2001).
4. John T. Littlejohn, “Introduction: Special Krautrock Issue,” *Popular Music and Society* 32 (2009): 577–578, 577. For more details on the international impact of Krautrock, see David Stubbs, *Future Days: Krautrock and the Building of Modern Germany* (London: Faber & Faber, 2014), 425–466, and Rüdiger Esch, *Electri_City. Elektronische Musik aus Düsseldorf* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2014), *passim*.
5. Matthew Moyer, “Don’t call it Krautrock,” *Library Journal*, Mar. 1, 2010, 56.
6. Henning Dedekind, *Krautrock. Underground, LSD und kosmische Kuriere* (Munich: Hannibal, 2008), 11.
7. H.P. Daniels, “Neu!-Legende im Interview—Michael Rother. Für mich ist das kein Nostalgie-Trip,” in *Der Tagesspiegel*, Sept. 22, 2010, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/kultur/pop/neu-legende-im-interview-michael-rother-fuer-mich-ist-das-kein-nostalgie-trip/1939586.html>.
8. Stubbs, *Future Days*, 257.
9. Cf. Stubbs, *Future Days*, 105–106.
10. Büsser 19; also cf. Edward Larkey, “Just for Fun? Language Choice in German Popular Music,” in *Popular Music and Society* 24 (2000): 1–20, 3–4.
11. Arne Koch and Sei Harris, “The Sound of Yourself Listening: Faust and the Politics of the Unpolitical,” in *Popular Music and Society* 32 (2009): 579–594, 582. For a general overview of Krautrock see Julian Cope, *Krautrock sampler* (London: Head Heritage, 1995); Dedekind, *Krautrock*; and Stubbs, *Future Days*.
12. Cf. Stubbs, *Future Days*, 118–121.
13. Esch, *Electri_City*, *passim*.
14. Ralf Dombrowski and Andreas Schumann, “Vergessenes Erzählen. Das Konzeptalbum der 70er Jahre,” in *Hidden Tracks. Das Verborgene, Vergessene und Verschwundene in der Popmusik*, ed. Thorsten Schüller and Sascha Seiler (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2012), 113–132, 121.

15. See Esch, *Electri City*, 113. Paul Hegarty and Martin Halliwell identify five cardinal traits of prog: “1) it is visionary and experimental; 2) it is played, at least in significant part, on instruments typically associated with rock music . . . ; 3) it is played, in significant part, by musicians who have consummate instrumental and compositional skills; 4) it is a phenomenon, in its ‘core’, of English culture; 5) relatedly, in significant part, it is expressive of romantic and prophetic aspects of that culture”; Paul Hegarty and Martin Halliwell, *Beyond and Before: Progressive Rock Since the 1960s* (New York: Continuum, 2011), 5. Most of these observations are equally valid for Krautrock—with the references to English culture mostly replaced by their German counterparts.
16. Edward Macan, *Rocking the Classics: English Progressive Rock and the Counterculture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 147–149.
17. Bernward Halbscheffel, “Living in the Past. Rock-Opern, -Symphonien, -Suiten und Parodien,” in *Rock in den Siebzigern. Jazzrock, Hardrock, Folkrock und New Wave*, ed. Tibor Kneif (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1980), 40–81, 57. All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.
18. Sascha Seiler, “Prog-Rock, vom Mainstream in die Nische,” in *Testcard 19* (2010): 92–93.
19. Dennis F. Mahoney, *Friedrich von Hardenberg (Novalis)* (Stuttgart; Weimar: Metzler, 2001), 2. To distinguish the author from the bands discussed below, he will be referred to by his birth name Friedrich von Hardenberg, while I will call the bands Novalis and Novalis Deux.
20. See Ludwig Tieck, “Vorrede zur dritten Auflage von Novalis Schriften,” 1815, in: Friedrich von Hardenberg, *Schriften*, ed. Richard Samuel et al., 6 vols. (Stuttgart; Wien; Köln: Kohlhammer, 1960–2006), 4:551–560.
21. Mahoney V.
22. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Conversations of Goethe: With Eckermann and Soret*, trans. John Oxenford, vol. 2 (London: Stewart & Murray, 1850), 149–150.
23. Dedekind, *Krautrock*, 283.
24. Stephan Schelle, Andreas Braus, Carsten Agthe, Ralf, and Ernst Herzner, “Novalis-Biographie,” *German Rock e.V.* 19/2002, <http://www.germanrock.de/alt/n/novalis/index.htm>.
25. Dedekind, *Krautrock*, 283–284.
26. Schelle et al., “Novalis-Biographie.”
27. Cf. Sascha Seiler, “Kraut, Machines and Eternal Grooves: The Cultural Importance of German Popular Music in the 1970s,” (lecture, ,University of Calgary, Canada, Mar. 20, 2015).
28. Steve Braun, “Interview mit Hartwig Biereichel. Auch mit dem Wissen von heute, würde ich nur wenige Sachen anders machen!,” *RockTimes*, Jun. 12, 2012, <http://www.rocktimes.de/gesamt/n/novalis/interview12.html>.
29. Novalis, “Es färbte sich die Wiese grün,” *Novalis*, Brain Records, 1975, LP, track 5; Novalis, “Wenn nicht mehr Zahlen und Figuren” and “Astralis,” *Brandung*, Brain Records, 1977, LP, tracks 2 and 3. For the original texts, see Hardenberg, *Schriften*, 1:413–414; 344–345; and 318–319, respectively.
30. Novalis, “Wunderschätze,” *Sommerabend*, Brain Records, 1976, LP, track 2; original text in Hardenberg, *Schriften*, 1:161–162.
31. Friedrich Schlegel, Letter to Friedrich Schleiermacher, Nov. 15, 1799, in Hardenberg, *Schriften*, 4:646.
32. The lyrics of the song “Sommerabend” also contain a brief segment from *Hymnen an die Nacht*, but cannot be discussed here for the sake of brevity.
33. Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel, “*Hymnen an die Nacht* und *Geistliche Lieder*. Einleitung der Herausgeber,” in Novalis, *Schriften*, ed. Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel, vol. 1 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977), 115–128, 123.
34. Margot Seidel, *Novalis’s geistliche Lieder* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1983), 235–236.
35. Friedrich von Hardenberg, “Der müde Fremdling ist verschwunden,” in *Schriften*, 1:405; also cf. Seidel, *Novalis’s geistliche Lieder*, 237.
36. Johannes Mahr, “Anmerkungen. Geistliche Lieder,” in Novalis, *Gedichte / Die Lehrlinge zu Sais*, ed. Johannes Mahr (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1984), 249–266, 257.

37. Friedrich von Hardenberg, letter to Friedrich Schlegel, Jan. 20, 1799, in Hardenberg, *Schriften*, 4:272–274, 274.
38. Reinhold Grimm, “Romanticism Today: Critical and Self-Critical Notes,” in *Romanticism Today*, ed. Reinhold Grimm (Bonn: Inter Nationes, 1973), 5–16, 8–9. For the German right-wing reception of romanticism and especially of Novalis, also see: Hermann Kurzke, *Romantik und Konservatismus. Das “politische” Werk Friedrich von Hardenbergs (Novalis) im Horizont seiner Wirkungsgeschichte* (Munich: Fink, 1983); Rüdiger Safranski, *Romantik. Eine deutsche Affäre* (Munich: Hanser, 2007), 317–369.
39. Claus Träger, “Novalis und die ideologische Restauration. Über den romantischen Ursprung einer methodischen Apologetik,” in *Sinn und Form* 13 (1961): 618–660, 621.
40. Träger, “Novalis,” 645.
41. Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, 1959, trans. Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 1315.
42. Richard Faber, *Novalis. Die Phantasie an die Macht* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1970), 11.
43. Faber, *Novalis*, 89–90.
44. Faber, *Novalis*, 33.
45. Faber, *Novalis*, 45.
46. Faber, *Novalis*, 46.
47. Grimm, “Romanticism Today,” 8; also see Safranski, *Romantik*, 384–392 and Gerhard Schulz, “The Stranger and the Blue Flower,” in Grimm, *Romanticism Today*, 27–43.
48. Faber, *Novalis*, 63.
49. Friedrich von Hardenberg, “Die Christenheit oder Europa,” in *Schriften*, 3:507–524, 522.
50. Faber, *Novalis*, 78.
51. Jens Reislöh, *Deutschsprachige Popmusik. Zwischen Morgenrot und Hundekot—Von den Anfängen um 1970 bis ins 21. Jahrhundert* (Münster: Telos, 2011), 408.
52. The liner notes for Hoelderlin’s first album provide a good example. Only the first names of the musicians are listed, suggesting informal relations, and the text begins with: “seit dezember 1970 träumen und machen wir zusammen Musik”; Hölderlin, “Liner Notes,” *Hölderlins Traum*, 1999, Ohr/ZYX Records, CD. Originally released in 1972. The exact spelling of the band’s name varied over time; since 1975, it has been using the “oe” version.
53. While the existence of *one* unified, monolithic Goth subculture has been called into question, and while I agree with Isabella van Elferen that Goth may be heterogeneous in nature, consisting in numerous overlapping microcultures, a common ground between them does exist, namely the fact that they are difficult to pin down and playfully transgress societal boundaries (cf. Isabella van Elferen, *Gothic Music: The Sounds of the Uncanny* [Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012], 131–132). I will therefore treat Goth as one cultural formation with different subsets, the most important of which for my purposes is neofolk.
54. Cf. David Shumway and Heather Arne, “Playing Dress Up: David Bowie and the Roots of Goth,” in *Goth: Undead Subculture*, ed. Lauren M.E. Goodlad and Michael Bibby (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 129–142; Michael Bibby, “Atrocity Exhibitions: Joy Division, Factory Records, and Goth,” in Goodlad and Bibby, *Goth*, 233–256.
55. Cf. Paul Hodkinson, *Goth: Identity, Style, and Subculture* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 35–37.
56. Isabella van Elferen, “East German Goth and the Spectres of Marx,” *Popular Music* 30.1 (2011): 89–103, 89.
57. Cf. Gabriele Eckart, “The German Gothic Subculture,” *German Studies Review* 28, no. 3 (2005): 549.
58. Dunja Brill, *Goth Culture: Gender, Sexuality, and Style* (Oxford: Berg, 2008), 4–6.
59. Cf. Hodkinson 37–38. For introduction to the role of music in Goth subculture and an overview of prevalent styles, see van Elferen, *Gothic Music*, 128–172.
60. Hodkinson, *Goth*, 73.
61. Cf. Brill, *Goth Culture*.

62. Cf. Anton Shekhtovtsov, "Apoliteic Music: Neofolk, Martial Industrial, and 'metapolitical fascism,'" *Patterns of Prejudice* 43 (2009): 431–457, 454.
63. Ken Gelder, "The (Un)Australian Goth: Notes toward a Dislocated National Subject," in Goodlad and Bibby, *Goth*, 217–230, 221.
64. Gelder, "The (Un)Australian Goth," 218. Other prominent traditions include fantasy and vampire fiction; see Nancy Gagnier, "The Authentic Dracula: Bram Stoker's Hold in Vampiric Genres," in Goodlad and Bibby, *Goth*, 293–304.
65. Eckart, "The German Gothic Subculture," 550.
66. van Elferen, "East German Goth," 96.
67. Eckart, "The German Gothic Subculture," 551.
68. Cf. Eckart, "The German Gothic Subculture," 259.
69. Cf. Fred Botting, *Gothic* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), 6–7.
70. van Elferen, "East German Goth," 94.
71. Cf. van Elferen, "East German Goth," 98.
72. Cf. "Goethes Erben Homepage," <http://www.goetheserben.de>.
73. Cf. Gabriele Eckart, "Georg Trakl and the Goth Band L'Âme Immortelle," *Popular Music Review* 16.2 (2005): 97–107.
74. Das Ich, *Morgue*, 1998, Danse Macabre/EFA, CD.
75. Cf. Eckart, "The German Gothic Subculture," 551.
76. "Zusammengeführt. Novalis," *German Gothic Board*, <http://www.nachtwelten.de/vB/history/topic/4749-1.html>.
77. Cf. Teufelchen (Ingrid Döring), "Definition von Gothik bzw. Was ist Gothik eigentlich," *Gothic Forum. Teufelchen2704*, May 17, 2012, <http://teufelchenundteufel.xobor.de/t8f5-Was-ist-Gothic.html>.
78. Das Ich, "Novalis," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vb2guAEPvkk&list=PLB30E0BA406119ECF>.
79. Seelenlicht, "Vergiss mein nicht," *Love and Murder*, 2009, Trutzburg Thule Records, CD, track 1.
80. Friedrich von Hardenberg, "Vergiss mein nicht," in *Schriften* 1:384. Here, "Geist" clearly is intended to mean "spirit," but can also be read as "ghost."
81. For more information on the band's history, see their homepage <http://novalisdeux.de>.
82. Hans D., "Novalis (Deux)," *funprox.com*, May 19, 2005, <http://www.funprox.com/articles/interviews/novalis-deux>.
83. Hans D., "Novalis (Deux)."
84. Cf. Larkey, 13–14.
85. Novalis Deux, "Ghost Over Europe," *Ghosts Over Europe*, 2008, Ars Musica Diffundere, CD, track 3, 0:49 to 3:00.
86. Hardenberg, "Die Christenheit oder Europa," 524.
87. Shekhtovtsov, "Apoliteic Music," 442–443.
88. Johann Gottfried Herder, "Alte Volkslieder, 1774 (Vorreden)," *Werke in zehn Bänden*, vol. 6, ed. Ulrich Gaier (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker, 1990), 11–68, 68. For Herder's reception in paganist neofolk also see Stéphane François, "The Euro-Pagan Scene: Between Paganism and Radical Right," trans. Ariel Godwin, *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 1, no. 2 (2008): 35–54, 44 and Kennet Granholm, "'Sons of Northern Darkness': Heathen Influences in Black Metal and Neofolk Music," *Numen* 58 (2011): 514–544, 521.
89. Shekhtovtsov, "Apoliteic Music," 441.
90. Shekhtovtsov, "Apoliteic Music," 439.
91. Shekhtovtsov, "Apoliteic Music," 437–438.
92. Founder Douglas Pearce, however, reports that the name simply refers to mishearing what a band colleague said during a recording session in 1981; cf. "Article: Statement 1," <http://deathinjune.org>.

93. Shekhtovtsov, "Apoliteic Music," 455. For a discussion on the wide range of political attitudes within neofolk, see Emily Turner-Graham, "Keep Feeling Fasci/nation: Neofolk and the Search for Europe," *Monsters in the Mirror: Representations of Nazism in Postwar Popular Culture*, ed. Sara Buttsworth and Maartje Abbenhuis (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010), 201–226.
94. Cf. Turner-Graham, "Keep Feeling Fasci/nation," 205.
95. Shekhtovtsov, "Apoliteic Music," 444.
96. François, "The Euro-Pagan Scene," 44.
97. Cf. François, "The Euro-Pagan Scene," 45–47.
98. Shekhtovtsov, "Apoliteic Music," 446.
99. Cf. Granholm, "Sons of Northern Darkness," 520–521.
100. Granholm, "Sons of Northern Darkness," 521.
101. Julius Evola, *Menschen inmitten von Ruinen*, 1953, trans. Rainer M. Natlacen (Tübingen: Hohenrain, 1991), 206.
102. Evola, *Menschen inmitten von Ruinen*, 202.
103. H.T. Hansen, "Julius Evolas politisches Wirken," *Menschen inmitten von Ruinen*, by Julius Evola, (Tübingen: Hohenrain, 1991), 21.
104. Cf. Kurzke, *Romantik und Konservatismus*, 36–49.
105. Jay Julian Rosellini, *Literary Skinheads? Writing from the Right in Reunited Germany* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2000), 42, 46, 65.
106. Kurzke, *Romantik und Konservatismus*, 256–257, 260; also see Gerhart Hoffmeister, "Rhetorics of Revolution in West European romanticism," *The French Revolution and the Age of Goethe*, ed. Gerhart Hoffmeister (Hildesheim: Olms, 1989), 91–106, 94.
107. Rosellini, *Literary Skinheads?*, 8.
108. Death in June, "Sons of Europe," *Burial*, Leprosy Discs, 1984, LP, track 4.
109. Shekhtovtsov, "Apoliteic Music," 446–451.
110. Novalis Deux, "Rome," *Ghosts Over Europe*, Ars Musica Diffundere, 2008, CD, track 7.
111. "Interview mit Novalis Deux zum neuen Album *Ghosts over Europe*," *Treffpunkt Schwarz*, Jan. 7, 2009, <http://www.treffpunkt-schwarz.de/interview-mit-novalis-deux-zum-neuen-album-ghosts-over-europe>.
112. "Interview mit Novalis Deux."
113. For a discussion of Von Thronstahls more or less open affinities to Nazism, see Turner-Graham, "Keep Feeling Fasci/nation," 207–214.
114. "Novalis Deux (Stev Schumann)," *Terrorverlag. Alternative Music Magazine*, Jan. 20, 2009, <http://www.terrorverlag.de/interviews.php?id=641>.
115. Roland Klein and Martin A. Völker, "War Kurt Cobain der Novalis des 20. Jahrhunderts?" *www.satt.org*, Feb. 2008, http://www.satt.org/gesellschaft/08_02_voelker.html.
116. Klein and Völker. It is also incorrect, as Goth bands do not reference Brentano and the Schlegels (as Völker suggests), since they are largely devoid of "dark" elements.
117. Patti Smith, "Land," *Complete: Lyrics, Reflections, and Notes for the Future* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 31–38, 36.

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