

Title: Hidden Resonance: Physical Focalization in Novalis and Tyutchev
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While many have attested to resonance between the poetic worlds of German poet-novelist Novalis (1772–1801) and his so-called Russian “counterpart,” Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev (1803–1873), few have examined the nature of this resonance. This is likely because, in this case, the question of direct influence is a fraught one. To put it in the terms of Michael Wachtel, “[w]hile it is a commonplace of Russian criticism to speak of Novalis’s influence on Tyutchev, there is little evidence to suggest that Tyutchev had even read the verse of his German ‘counterpart’” (Wachtel 116). In this paper I argue that the similarities between the two writers is the result of their mutual erudition and familiarity with German literature and philosophy. In particular, I investigate role of unity in their works. Unity, I argue, is the common link between them. It is both the oft-cited overarching principle of Novalis’s writings and the defining organizational principle of Tyutchev’s night poetry. I explore the philosophical stakes of this by drawing on the philosophy of Fichte, Novalis’s own philosophical writings, and focalization theory. Unity in both Novalis and Tyutchev is the unity of the focalizing subjectpoet with his object, the abstract landscape. In the spatial realm, this results in the following: poet and landscape merge in mutual encompassing, which is seen in Tyutchev’s and Novalis’s respective works through the motifs of interpenetration, encompassing and borderlessness. The poetic subject in their works frequently navigates an internal space after experiencing the transition from light (day) to darkness (night), moving away from a standard landscape, in order to traverse subjective terrain.

Wachtel, M. (1994). *Russian Symbolism and Literary Tradition: Goethe, Novalis, and the Poetics of Vyacheslav Ivanov*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.

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