

an arbitrary extension. Gaier quite intentionally restricts himself to that "which can be seen on the grounds of direct or indirect indications to have been used by Novalis" (p. 109).

This aspect of the tradition, too, is unfolded with the intention of providing an exemplary illustration: it shows on the one hand Novalis' accurate and comprehensive knowledge of the tradition and on the other hand the conscious constructivist working plan on which the romantic poet based his work. That which Novalis himself in a letter to Friedrich Schlegel of 7. 11. 1798 calls the "doctrine of construction of the creative mind" is the principle of 'making' for the poet within the sphere of language. It is a "krumme Regel" (crooked rule) – this too is a formulation of Novalis himself – insofar as every ideal is based on a deviation from the "gemeine Regel" (common rule). But the reader, who is present from the very beginning in the theory as well as in the practice of Novalis, is to be intentionally diverted through the application of the principle of construction. "Poetry is ... an art of exciting the mind" (p. 2).

The findings of the investigation are supplemented and made more precise by comparisons with Goethe and Hölderlin. In a longish digression (pp. 253 ff.) Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* is interpreted as an 'experiment' on the basis of the principle of construction.

Gaier's work throws a new and almost surprising light on the relationship between poetic theory and poetic practice in Novalis's writings. The author himself expressly points out (p. 105) the fundamental importance his findings have primarily for Novalis's own works, but – from the point of view of method – also for those of other members of the German Romantic movement, such as for instance Friedrich Schlegel. At the same time the synthesis of poetry and philosophy to the "progressive Universalpoesie" (progressive universal poetry) touches upon the problem of the specific 'modernity' of the Romantic movement, which features so largely in present-day discussions of this age.

Professor Dr. Wilfried Barner

GEIGER, SIEGFRIED

Recognizing and Voting. A Cybernetic Model

["Erkennen und Wählen. Ein kybernetisches Modell"]

Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1970; 234 pp.

In the empirical and statistical search for analogies between psychological, social and political phenomena Geiger's study proves to be a true product of cybernetic thinking. Its structure is strictly geometrical and it presupposes a knowledge of the theory of information, particularly of the theory of

codification and of higher statistics, without which its vast data material and statistical apparatus (105 tables!) would remain a complete mystery. The starting-point is (also in international comparisons) scattered election data pointing toward a regularity in the distribution of votes in democratic elections and suggesting the hypothesis that the statistic "probability of certain election results" is "higher than that of other election outcomes" (23). Thus hypothesis No. I is: "The votes cast by a voting population for different parties fall into groups in such a way as if the total voting population had accidentally been divided into groups with the subsidiary condition that in accidental procedure each party has same chance" (31). Geiger's verificational procedure in which the "real voter is reduced to a person throwing a dice" (23) also elucidates the psychological question of how the human brain digests the masses of data that come to it before an election. Geiger introduces the so-called "channel capacity" (2,6 bit) that states the limit beyond which "nothing more" is perceived. An election is thus seen as the outcome of a calculation of the type carried out in the theory of information and as resulting from the number of parties offered as entropy (in bit); thus, in a 3 bit election system the voters have the choice among $8 = 2^3$ parties. Depending on the entropic characteristics of the election system Geiger discovers a characteristic distribution of votes in his material; the same proportions he also finds *mutatis mutandis* in the medial section (including the Fibonacci series (186 ff.), in the formation of categories within a language (191 ff.) and in social classifications (200). Geiger's study is without doubt an interesting contribution to the problem of the applicability of the cybernetic method to the social sciences and anthropology. It is at the same time a witty and ingenious further development of the (colour) experiments that Marbe began a generation ago in Würzburg and that led to the discovery of regularities in human reactions. Nevertheless Geiger's investigation confronts us with the old philosophical question of what, in the face of undeniable psycho-social regularities, freedom might be.

Professor Dr. Werner S. Nicklis

GRIESE, ANNELIESE – LAITKO, HUBERT (Eds.)

Weltanschauung and Method. Philosophical Essays on the Unity of the Natural and Social Sciences

["Weltanschauung und Methode. Philosophische Beiträge zur Einheit von Natur- und Gesellschaftswissenschaften"]

Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1969; 249 pp.

Since the Second World War philosophy in the two halves of Germany has