

*How the Romantic ideal has become entangled
in its own paradoxes*

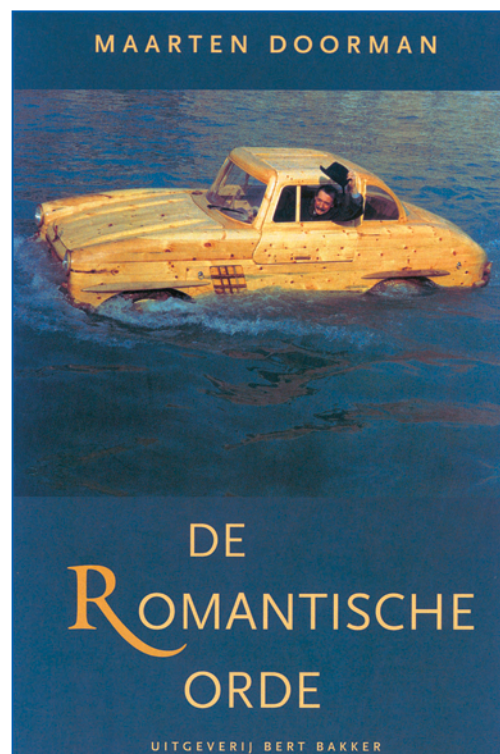
Maarten Doorman The Romantic Imperative

MODERNISM AND POSTMODERNISM are the pivotal concepts that Western man uses in his attempts to come to grips with his situation in the early years of this new millennium. But in *The Romantic Imperative*, philosopher and poet Maarten Doorman shows us that our contemporary way of life is actually influenced more than we may realise by the Romantic revolution of the early nineteenth century. For it was then that people began seeing themselves not as creatures who existed, but as creatures who became, who were in possession of an authentic 'I' that was more than the sum of their strict societal roles, and who had received the calling to be creative.

Two centuries later, that call is still heard clearly, even in the remotest corners of our culture. In the panorama Doorman presents to his readers, the modern world appears as a bundle of contradictions that can only be understood when seen in the light of their common Romantic background. With an easy and natural erudition, he shows us how the Romantic ideal has become entangled in its own paradoxes: the belief in an authentic 'I' led to the discovery of the subconscious; the imperative of self-realization led to the awareness of alienation; the glorification of the imagination resulted in a banal culture of self-gratification. Although the artist has been elevated to the status of genius, this has also caused the work of art itself to gradually fade into the background. And those who have heeded the Romantic summons to be aware of national identities have, finally, also been unable to resist the temptation of creating for themselves a largely fictitious, and preferably illustrious, past.

The Romantic Imperative is a lucid look at a culture in a state of crisis, prompted by its failure to understand its own motivating forces. Doorman clearly shows us not only the roots of this confusion, but also the challenge it poses for such diverse fields of endeavour as history, the arts and the body of thought concerning nations and democracy.

With true virtuosity, the author shuttles back and forth between the founders of Romanticism (Herder, Schiller, Byron, Novalis, Nietzsche and Rousseau) and their heirs: from Jimi Hendrix and Jeff Koons to Pierre Boulez, Marcel Duchamps and Andy Warhol. In Doorman's view, Woodstock and the events of May 1968 were the culmination of a process that lasted two hundred years, a process which now seems about to collapse under its own contradictions, but one which Western culture is still unable to get along without.



Maarten Doorman is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Maastricht, Extraordinary Professor of Art and Culture Criticism at the University of Amsterdam, and a working poet. He has edited the literary journals *Hollands Maandblad* and *Krisis*, and contributed to *NRC Handelsblad*. His earlier work includes *Art in Progress: A philosophical response to the end of the avant-garde*, which was published in 1994.

The Romantic Imperative is extremely well written.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

THE PRESS ON *ART IN PROGRESS*:

An erudite and well-written analysis of an issue that satisfies all the criteria for ongoing discussion.

VRIJ NEDERLAND

A wealth of inspiration.

HET PAROOL



Foundation for
the Production and
Translation of
Dutch Literature

Singel 464
NL - 1017 AW Amsterdam
TEL. 31 20 620 62 61
FAX +31 20 620 71 79
E-MAIL office@nlpvf.nl
WEBSITE www.nlpvf.nl

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De romantische orde (2004)
283 pp, with illustrations, notes
and references

RIGHTS

Prometheus / Bert Bakker
Herengracht 507
NL - 1017 BT Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 624 19 34
FAX +31 20 622 54 61
E-MAIL rights@pbo.nl
www.pbo.nl

TRANSLATED TITLES

*Art in Progress: A philosophical response to
the end of the avant-garde*. Amsterdam:
Amsterdam University Press, 2003.

Sample translation from

The Romantic Imperative by Maarten Doorman
(Amsterdam: Prometheus/Bert Bakker, 2004)

Translated by Andrew May

Chapter II

WOODSTOCK AND THE SWANSONG OF THE ROMANTIC LIFE

In *Footsteps. Adventures of a Romantic Biographer* (1985), Richard Holmes describes tuning in to Radio Luxembourg in spring 1968 and hearing a live report on the storming of the Bourse in Paris: crowds shouting, the crack of tear-gas grenades, breaking glass and cheering. Suddenly, continues this authority, eminent biographer of Shelley and Coleridge, he was gripped by ‘the Revolution’:

It was not the destruction that excited me but the sense of something utterly new coming into being, some fresh, immense possibility of political life, a new community of hope, and above all the strangely inspired note – like a new language – that sounded in the voices of those who were witnessing it. It was a glimpse of ‘the dream come true’, the golden age, the promised land.

Moreover, I identified it – immediately, naïvely – with that first French Revolution as seen by the English Romantics (...). For what I was feeling,

what my friends were feeling, seemed to be expressed perfectly by the Romantics, and by no one else.

Quoting the lines Wordsworth wrote on the first anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, Holmes links the revolutionary events of the Romantic era and those of that legendary May 1968 in Paris:

'Twas a time when Europe was rejoiced,
France standing at the top of golden hours
And human nature seeming born again.

Red graffiti on the walls of the faculty of medicine declared *Imagination au Pouvoir* – power to the imagination – and though there was no Robespierre this time, there were many rabble-rousers to resemble his right-hand man, the youthful, long-haired Saint-Just.

The whole ethos of the Sixties counter-culture was based, according to Holmes, ‘on a profoundly romantic rejection of conventional society, the old order, the establishment, the classical, the square’.¹ That hypothesis was hardly original in 1985, but it is still inspiring enough today to prompt further inquiry, certainly for those who prefer to consider the counter-culture in its broader cultural context and not simply from the largely political perspective of Paris ’68.² After all, these political aspirations were informed by the wish for a fresh look at mankind and at life, for a humanity and way of living inspired by the ideals of authenticity and self-realisation broached in the previous chapter.

A look at the most famous pop festival of all time, held at Woodstock in the United States a year later, might explain such aspirations. Which conventions were rejected at this focal point of the Sixties? What values stirred the imagination of the new generation? What was the role of the imagination itself? If one ignores the political dimension, which in Paris was largely about demanding more democracy in the universities, and at Woodstock was a protest against the war in Vietnam, a number of things stand out.

To start with, the primacy of youth: previous generations have had their day, since their ideas are outdated and, where this is not the case, then the new generation is unquestionably right simply because it is young. And visitors to Woodstock were indeed young, as a documentary by Michael Wadleigh about this muddy festival shows. Was it not the very childlike spontaneity of this unexpectedly massive gathering which lent it the character of an almost unreal Utopia?³ The four organisers were young too, the oldest only twenty-six. The documentary records some festival-goers talking pityingly about older people and their parents. Most of the musicians were under thirty. The Who played *My Generation*, with the following lines, to enthusiastic applause:

People try to put us down
Just because we get around
Things they do look awful cold
I hope I die before I get old

Music was the great divide between young and old. Even Theodore Roszak, advocate of the counter-culture and its theoretical designer, was unable to identify with the new generation. In 1968 he was ready to admit that ‘the pop and rock groups [were] the real “prophets” of the rising generation’, but he could not stand ‘the raucous style of their sound and performance’, much of it being ‘too brutally loud... too electronically gimmicked up’.⁴

Prior to the Woodstock generation, musicians’ ages had scarcely mattered in music – even popular music. Elderly soloists or jazz musicians were common, as they are still, but something changed for ever then. The Rolling Stones, now in their sixties, are increasingly reproached for hauling their old bones on stage to perform. Woodstock was youth and youth was the criterion. In the twenty-first century, pop idols are sometimes younger than fifteen.

It seems familiar. The fact is that the first generation of Romantics, both in England and in Germany, was young and all too conscious of its own youthfulness, even considering it a quality. Henrik Steffens wrote about his years spent in Jena around 1800:

A new era dawned and manifested itself in the spirit of all the young people who were receptive to it [in allen empfänglichen Jugendgemütern]. – We beheld the blossoming spring of a new spiritual age, which we jubilantly welcomed with youthful élan.⁵

The premium placed on youth was foreshadowed in two eighteenth-century best-sellers: Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*) and Rousseau's *Émile, ou de l'Éducation* (1762, *Émile, or On Education*). Both books show unprecedented attention to the brittle disposition of the adolescent, to deferred adulthood and budding sexuality. Moreover, Rousseau's influential work explores the emotional world of early childhood, and advocates bringing up children as naturally as possible, an argument that was applied and elaborated by Romantic pedagogues like Pestalozzi and Fröbel.

Youth is not spotlighted merely as a phase in life distinct from adulthood; the young are also held in high esteem because, in the words of Rousseau, they are not yet tainted by culture. In post-Revolutionary Europe, where the twenty-something Napoleon held sway, the ambivalent interest in the youthfulness of a suicidal Werther turned into admiration for young people who were decisively energetic and vital, and among youngsters themselves into a mood of self-assuredness and power. According to Novalis, the French Revolution and the conflicts that followed were actually a struggle about whether the maturity of adulthood should prevail or the blossoming of youth. As far as the Romantics were concerned, the latter was more important, at least while they were still young. Wordsworth wrote lyrically in *The Prelude* (1805):

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!

From a societal perspective, the triumph of youth was for the time being perhaps limited to the upper crust – student movements in the nineteenth century burgeoned everywhere, with far-reaching political consequences – but something

definitively seems to have changed across a broad front in the perception of what youth is, and not simply in what Anita Brookner terms ‘the right to earn disapproval from one’s elders’⁶.

Childish naïvety, fantasy and impulsiveness were no longer to be censored; now they gained the much more positive overtone of open-mindedness, imaginative power and spontaneous creativity, character traits that are also marks of genius, as discussed later in this volume. Therefore even among students, Schopenhauer wrote, it is still sometimes possible to descry some spark of brilliant eccentricity. Yet as soon as these youngsters become adults, ‘they pupate and are then resurrected as obdurate Philistines [*eingefleischter Philister*], who shock one if one comes across them later.’ This could well have come from *Émile*, just like Novalis’ lament that ‘*Wo Kinder sind, da ist ein goldenes Zeitalter*’ (‘Where children are, there is a golden age’) or, in the words of the painter Runge, ‘*Kinder müssen wir werden, wenn wir das Beste erreichen wollen*’ (‘We must become children, if we want to achieve the best’).⁷ Schiller goes considerably further in his *Über naïve und sentimentalische Dichtung* (1795-96, *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*), comparing children with fauna and flora and peasants and primitives, all bearing witness to a natural state. ‘Children *are* what we *were*,’ he wrote, ‘they are what we should become once more. We were nature like them and our culture should lead us back to nature.’⁸

What else was remarkable about Woodstock? Many have mentioned ‘free love’ either with enthusiasm or with indignation. There is, however, little to suggest a three-day orgy, though the *idea* of liberated sexuality hung heavy in the air, for example, in the large-scale, public skinny-dipping, experienced by participants as liberating but seen as a threat by conservative critics. It caused almost as much brouhaha as the Broadway production *Oh! Calcutta!* which had its première that same year, with naked actors indulging in erotic acts on stage. In Wadleigh’s documentary, two cohabiting youngsters arrive at the festival and, with barely concealed pride, explain that they will be hanging out there separately. They

obviously have no desire to be forced into the straitjacket of a marriage devoid of fantasy.

Here, too, it is tempting to draw a parallel with early Romanticism, if only because of the similarities with a long literary tradition which contrasts oppressive marital ties with true and spontaneous love, taking as its springboard Rousseau's *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761, *Julie, or the New Heloise*) – already mentioned in the previous chapter – and, once again, Goethe's *Werther*. The spontaneity of romantic love forces a surrender that no longer has much to do with the classic convention that prevailed far into the eighteenth century which harmonised passion and reason and lent the institution of marriage its enduring resilience.⁹ The new, boundary-breaking love can be detected in the sometimes fickle, eternal alliances of the English poets, and even more so in the relationships within the Romantic circles in Jena and Berlin. The making and breaking of relationships seen there might at first seem to continue an eighteenth-century hedonism, but that impression soon pales against the backdrop of profound seriousness with which those relationships start and end, a gravitas that is rooted in the desire for authenticity and mutual self-actualisation. The novel *Lucinde* (1799) by Friedrich Schlegel, scandalous at the time, also originated in this milieu.

Lucinde is a hybrid, part epistolary, part fantasy, dialogue, allegory, autobiography and polemic; it has virtually no plot. This experimental work, described by Schlegel's critical brother, August Wilhelm, as an *Unroman*, a 'non-novel', portrays the love between Julius and Lucinde, who are betrothed to another. It was offensive because unlike *La Nouvelle Héloïse* or *Werther*, romantic love eventually triumphs, and not traditional marriage. Liberated Lucinde has no sense of guilt, and the mutual self-fulfilment of the subject described in the previous chapter is taken to such an extreme in the romantic *Verwirrung* – confusion – that polarity between male and female no longer obtains, the man displaying feminine traits and vice versa. This is sexually exciting, explains Schlegel, while also being 'an allegory for the completion of

masculine and feminine in the unified fullness of humanity’. That hybridisation of gender is highly reminiscent of the androgyny which is brought to the fore in so many Romantic portraits and in the supposedly feminine traits of the predominantly male Romantic genius.¹⁰

The book was scandalous, even ignoring Schlegel’s controversial personal outpourings and his implicit reference to his adulterous relationship with Dorothea Veit. Sensual and spiritual love were present in equal measure, and the former was described without the usual scruples. Despite sensuality alternating with lofty passages about love, the book was considered pornographic. But was not this intense and multifaceted love in fact true marriage, teased Schlegel, when compared with the loveless traditional marriage driven by self-interest that his critics were defending?¹¹

Another striking theme that surfaces repeatedly with Woodstock is a return to nature and the unspoilt countryside. ‘I wanna leave the city...’, sings the singer with the ever-so subtle name of Country Joe, and Canned Heat’s *Going up the Country* has a similar thrust. And when Max Yasgur – dairy farmer and owner of the land where the festival was held – is brought on stage to speak to the hundreds of thousands, the rhetoric of his opening sentence played up to this theme. ‘I’m a farmer,’ he proclaimed, and cheers rang out. The organisers had deliberately chosen a rural setting, about one hundred miles from Manhattan, since this tallied with the ‘back-to-the-land spirit of the counter-culture’. (The area was hardly farmland pure and simple: besides country bumpkins, musicians such as Bob Dylan, Van Morrison, Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin were already living there.)¹²

The glorification of the countryside as opposed to unpleasant and noxious life in the big city is a theme that is perhaps as old as the city itself. The nostalgia for simple country life returns time and again, from Virgil’s *Georgica* to the bucolic poetry and Arcadian painting of the Renaissance. At Woodstock, though, the desire for naturalness acquired typically romantic traits, since it not only centred

on the simplicity of the farmland but looked to a more radical back-to-nature lifestyle, one which flew in the face of societal conventions in a way similar to those shown by Rousseau. Woodstock's visitors longed for the natural – in themselves and their surroundings – in the same way as the pastoral play as a pastime for the bored aristocracy of the Romantic era was supplanted by a call to pare down life to its natural roots. Youngsters not only lost themselves spontaneously in free love, they also cast off a prudishness imposed by society by stripping bare, exchanging artificial, feminine make-up for natural, manly stubble and the unnatural bra and off-the-peg suit for loose and fanciful clothes. This generation also looked up to the natural *Urmensch* – primitive man: the native Indian, the long-haired, wise, close-to-nature, drug-using variant of Karl May's Winnetou who would re-emerge in Carlos Castaneda's cult books.¹³

This matches Rousseau's previously mentioned ideal of the *homme sauvage*: the all-natural man still wholly at one with himself. Rousseau's adoration of nature is not limited to the authenticity described earlier in this book, but is also directed at the wealth of what grows and flourishes there, as captured wonderfully in *Les rêveries du promeneur solitaire* (1782, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*), which portrays a philosopher wandering in the fields and admiring the flora. The love of nature – which lent 'nature' its present-day meaning, as in terms like 'nature conservation' or the expression 'untouched, open nature' – is a sentiment that resonates loudly in the work of the English Romantic poets, for example in Wordsworth, as restless and as great a devotee of flora and wandering as Rousseau. He, or at least his poetic alter-ego, settles down beneath a hazel tree. 'Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played,' he writes in *Nutting*, continuing,

And – with my cheek on one of those green stones
That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep –
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease (...) ¹⁴

Relaxing in the bosom of nature as captured in these lines still falls under the classic division of town versus country, but the poet's childlike receptiveness is already less classical as he lays his cheek against the moss and feels sheltered and secure under the shady trees. It becomes truly romantic when the stones seem to metamorphose into sheep and nature becomes animated, foreshadowing the last line of the poem: 'Touch – for there is a spirit in the woods.' In the holistic words of Novalis, 'People, animals, plants, stones and stars, flames, tones, colours... must act and speak together, like a single family or community, as a single race.'¹⁵ Heinrich Heine wrote with his characteristically melancholic irony about this rapt veneration of nature in *Die romantische Schule* (1833, *The Romantic School*):

Novalis saw nothing but miracles, sweet wonders everywhere. He listened to the conversation of the plants, he knew the secret of every budding rose, he ultimately identified with the whole of nature, and when autumn arrived and the leaves fell, he died.¹⁶

Surrender to nature touches on something else that is remarkable about Woodstock: a general leaning towards spirituality and mysticism, in which the bounds between imagination and reality are stretched. The preacher man Joe Cocker eventually has no real-world contact with his audience and dissolves into a kind of trance, while the crowd at the performance by Santana seem to hypnotise themselves with rhythmic clapping. As the fences around the grounds are broken down and thousands enter the festival for free, the organisers shrug their shoulders. For them it's not about the money, though their takings will certainly be hit hard, but about celebrating togetherness: 'People communicate!' one of them exclaims, and that, clearly, is enough.¹⁷ The sense of community

takes all of them to a higher plane – and the music helps as, for instance, with Sly & the Family Stone, driving the crowds ecstatic with an infinitely spun-out ‘I wanna take you higher’.

Such a shared, mass experience of ‘spirituality’ was foreign to Romanticism with its fixation on the subjective individual. Yet the substance of that transcendental experience does have a link with the Romantic era with its interest in theosophy, pantheism, magnetism and somnambulism that had already existed in the eighteenth century now flourished. The aversion of the Romantics to matters financial and worldly possessions, to a way of life focused on the material, was as strong as their predilection for the inexplicable, the enigma of another, spiritual world filled with mysterious forces. These could, on the one hand, be terrifying and represent the ‘dark side’ of existence, like the ghost ship in Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798) and countless scenes from the gothic novel, and the supernatural phenomena in tales by the musician, painter and writer E.T.A. Hoffman. Hoffmann’s oeuvre, Heine wrote, is ‘nothing other than a terrible cry of anguish over twenty volumes’.¹⁸

The enigmatic forces could also, however, exercise a more salutary influence, as in Novalis’ *Hymnen an die Nacht* (1800, *Hymns to the Night*), in which night-time actually provides solace from ‘the other side’, or with Gustav Carus, who establishes a link between spirituality and health that has experienced a recent popular revival. This is also true of work by the visionary poet and painter William Blake, which, while conjuring up threatening forces, in imitation of the mystical writings of Swedenborg still focuses on Christ, angels and less well-defined forces offering hope and other forms of succour. The supernatural stirred the imagination of many of the Romantics alarmingly. ‘I have very little of Mr Blake’s company,’ his wife Catherine once said, ‘he is always in Paradise.’¹⁹

From surrendering to nature and a penchant for spirituality only a small leap of the imagination is needed to arrive at the next thing that was remarkable at Woodstock, namely the open use of drugs. Besides marijuana, a whole medicine

chest of psychedelic drugs was consumed. Tens of thousands of people sat and lay tripping or half-stoned around the immense stage, and many of the musicians were patently under the influence. At Woodstock, this widespread use of drugs was less manifest in any demented, bacchanalian ecstasy, since these spiritual youngsters – devotees of free love and longing for a return to nature – were sooner into relaxation, wholly in keeping with the renowned motto of the drugs guru Timothy Leary: ‘Turn on, tune in, drop out.’²⁰ They probably identified closely with what Jimi Hendrix sang on Monday morning, at the end of three days of ‘love, peace and... music’:

Purple haze all in my eyes
 Don’t know if it’s day or night
 You got me blowin’, blowin’ my mind
 Is it tomorrow, or just the end of time?

And while ‘the end of time’ might have been understood as an allusion to the end of the festival by the odd soul who was not too hazed, even fewer people would have interpreted it as the biblical ‘Day of Judgement’ which had exercised its threatening influence for so many centuries. ‘The end of time’ points rather to the experience of rapture, the feeling of no longer belonging to a world in which Monday mornings exist, the trip through a different region of reality, the kingdom of the imagination, *The Other Side Of This Life* (Jefferson Airplane).

This escapist longing is not far removed from the interest of the Romantics in dreams, in hypnosis and sleep walking. ‘We believe in an inner life of the soul and in a higher consciousness,’ wrote Justinus Kerner, the German physician and poet who lived at the foot of a ruin, in *Die Seherin von Prevost* (1829, *The Seeress of Prevost*): ‘In a normal state both are inaccessible, but in preternatural conditions they open up.’²¹ The gateway to the other side can be accessed in the dream state and in ecstatic rapture or being ‘high’, and the latter is induced by alcohol and drugs, which were used by many Romantics as a means to broaden the mind. Though it is true that Thomas De Quincey started out using opium as a painkiller, he soon cultivated an addiction that offered him the glimpse of another

world, as recorded in his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1821), which has seen a resurgence in interested readers since the late 1960s.

Coleridge, De Quincey's contemporary and spiritual kinsman, also experienced the double-edged blessings of the medicine, which was then easy to procure and was usually drunk as laudanum, a concoction of wine and opium. The creation of his fragmentary and unfinished poem, *Kublai Khan*, is often attributed to an opium-induced high. Charles Rosen notes that this strange work is the embodiment *par excellence* of Novalis' methodology for the writing of poems and stories 'without meaning or logic, with nothing but associations as in dreams or music'. Coleridge's and De Quincey's use of drugs predated Prosper Mérimée's, who perhaps knew better how to handle them – partly thanks to his Oriental travels – as well as Baudelaire's drug experiments (and later Rimbaud's). Sometimes you have the feeling that you are evaporating, wrote Baudelaire about his opium experiences, 'and you will attribute to your pipe... the strange faculty of *smoking you*.' He was deeply curious about other, exotic worlds, which he was able to conjure up with hashish, though he repeatedly warned of the addiction that 'the transient Paradise of the pharmacy' might lead to.²²

Edgar Allan Poe, so deeply admired by Baudelaire, was no less colourful an example, and in the midst of his turbulent life he regularly set aside objections to opium and drink. Poe's *Adventures of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838) ends with a pointless description of a journey by canoe on the Southern Ocean, which is difficult to interpret as anything other than an opium-induced vision. In this vision, the protagonist and his companions glide across a milky white ocean, and they are overwhelmed by a white, ash-like shower. A gigantic curtain of vapour spreads out in front of them, behind which indistinct images flit, and huge, pallidly white birds continuously fly. A chasm throws itself open and a giant, shrouded human figure arises, with skin as white as snow...

The intoxicating, rapturous dream has also, of old, been fed by music, and the important role of that music is, in the final analysis, perhaps still most remarkable in the case of Woodstock and in the pop culture of recent decades for which Woodstock has been a model. It is the music that drives all these hippies and youngsters into their altered state and helps them to escape their everyday existence and societal conventions. ‘You know,’ declaims Janis Joplin in typical Sixties vernacular, ‘I mean you don’t have to go take anybody’s shit, man, just to like music... You know, it’s just music.’ Music was the element which bound together the counter-culture, and rapidly turned it into a worldwide youth culture. At the pop concert the music culminated in an overwhelming experience for various senses: thanks to new technology it became loud, it encouraged dancing without the restrictions of a concert hall, and it induced a mental trance. It appealed to unrealised emotions, to feelings of solidarity and to a longing for transcendence. Music opened *The Doors of Perception*.²³

As discussed later in this volume, music became the most important art form for the Romantics because it could express the inner world of emotions in the most immediate way, without the intercession of language – a necessity in literature – and without the distanced and static character of the visual arts. Music is the ultimate expression of the imagination – like mind-altering substances, it offers a portal to ‘the other side of this life’. It is an emotional language, said August Wilhelm Schlegel, independent of all extraneous objects. It is, to quote E.T.A. Hoffmann, the most romantic of all the arts, perhaps the only one that is ‘purely romantic’. Among the Romantics, music enjoyed almost religious significance; Ludwig Tieck called it ‘the last secret... the wholly revealed religion’.²⁴ It is remarkable, in retrospect, that the genre of art song, notably the German *Lied*, grew in popularity during the Romantic era, while at the same time the Romantics were starting to perform and arrange folk songs from times past, in a manner that is not so far removed from the folk and country revival that started in the Sixties and was also a major element at Woodstock.

It is tempting to extrapolate these parallels and compare the long hair of poets like Shelley, Coleridge, Keats, Novalis, Rückert and Hölderlin, of composers like Schumann and Beethoven, of writers like Gogol, Chamisso, Wackenroder, Heine, Constant and Balzac, or painters like Millet, Gros and David, with the hairstyles of the male heroes of Woodstock, or to devote more attention to clothing and appearances. Although these parallels are intriguing, something else is important here: a way of understanding and experiencing life and reality that is expressed in these appearances, these fashions.

Since the above does at least suggest that the cultural revolution of the late 1960s was composed of romantic shifts, it prompts the question to what extent those changes actually signified a break with previous decades or whether it was sooner the revival of a more comprehensive and more extended period. Foucault argues that the standard division of history into periods based on political upheaval is not always the best form of division, and this line of enquiry has proved fruitful.²⁵ It can therefore do no harm to turn one's attention to the supposed discontinuity. Did the Sixties represent a revolutionary change? To what extent did Woodstock simply fall out of the sky?

Though there had been pop concerts before, and with very similar components, Woodstock was much more large-scale and recordings were made there, which became a great commercial success, ensuring that musically (and visually) the festival could become the myth which it still is. One is still left with the question of whether there was a revolutionary transition in culture during these years. Thanks to the rich diversity of history, such revolutions are always accompanied by a series of phenomena, which casts doubt on the apparent break with preceding decades. The rise of youth culture and a new self-awareness among youngsters had already been seen on the West Coast of the United States in the late 1940s, for example. Beat poets such as William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, who looked up to Baudelaire and Rimbaud, shaped this culture and were the mouthpieces of a counter-culture that saw a revival from

about 1950, a counter-culture in which young people experimented with alcohol and drugs and free love, and protested against bourgeois lifestyles. Spontaneity, imagination and new ‘spiritual’ values were almost as important then as at Woodstock.²⁶

Various avant-garde circles of the twentieth century briefly displayed the same anti-bourgeois and romantic traits, as already demonstrated by the Dada movement. In *Children of the Mire* (1974), Octavio Paz pointed out the many similarities between the Romantic era and the avant-garde, also clarifying to what extent thinking in terms of watersheds in history is *itself* a romantic artefact. The early Romantics were initially profoundly impressed by the French Revolution, and it was already evident that their thinking was permeated with a keen desire to definitively break with the past.²⁷ One can, however, pinpoint a number of features of the counter-culture even before the avant-gardist revivals. In France, or rather in Paris, the tradition of an artistic Bohemia started to define itself in the mid-nineteenth century. In its ‘adolescent rebellion and withdrawal’, this group of young artists, journalists and drop-outs taunted the bourgeoisie with a lifestyle that ranged from dandyism to the anti-social.²⁸ Although these circles usually lacked an admiration for nature and the countryside, their use of drugs was chiefly restricted to alcohol, and music was not their only ‘chosen’ art form; they did however demonstrate an anti-bourgeois stance that corresponds with much of the youthful rebelliousness noted above.²⁹

In addition to all this, there is a long tradition of youth movements from the first half of the twentieth century. This ranges from youngsters motivated by political idealism to be affiliated with revolutionary parties (Communists, fascists and socialists) to the scouting movement of Baden-Powell and many national variants of youth organisations that focused on the appreciation of nature. Many of the above traits can be found in these youth movements: anti-bourgeois sentiments and rejection of prudery, and idolisation of nature, dance and music, albeit in the form of folk music, folk dancing and campfire songs which have been considered fuddy-duddy since the Seventies.

In this light Woodstock is indeed subversive, but not so revolutionary as it seems. Put differently, it was revolutionary in its largeness of scale and in its influence dispersing a counter-culture that, because of increasing prosperity and the technological capability to broadcast that culture (radio, gramophone record and television), would eventually become the mainstream. The massiveness of the resistance was undoubtedly threatening for traditional faith-based values and the family. However, with the advantage of hindsight, Woodstock was hardly revolutionary in its ideas, which had a respectable and widely dispersed prehistory, nor in the desire for a new way of life. The six points mentioned above can be found everywhere, in the twentieth *and* the nineteenth centuries, though perhaps not in so concentrated or innocent a form as in the pure culture of the three-day pop festival. The illustrious Sixties have, in short, the character of a romantic revival rather than demarcating a definitive break with the past.

In their concentration of romantic ideas, Woodstock and Paris '68 present a useful panorama of western culture. They blow away the dust of a whole array of securely anchored but by no means outdated clichés of a culture which displays a remarkable stability in its desire for change and the accompanying revolutionary rhetoric.³⁰ It is a culture that had already been driven by a dynamic of resistance and aspiration for about two hundred years.

Perhaps that could be said just as easily of the eighteenth century and, ultimately, of other periods and cultures. However, the enduring force behind this dynamic resides in something that emerged in the course of the eighteenth century and only began to manifest itself fully in the Romantic era: the imagination. The gradual dawning of the idea that it is possible to invent a different world and a new life – one that does not lie ‘on the other side’ as Christian precepts would have it, but is also accessible in other ways – and the idea that this newness is attractive rather than corrupting, implies that reality would be perceived differently from then on. The world is potentially somewhat different to how it is and, where this is not the case, it should be transformed with the aid of the imagination. That is what science achieved at the dawn of the

nineteenth century, and what the arts and politics achieved: all present us with a different and better world, thanks to the imagination. The proclamation daubed in red in Paris in 1968, the call to give power to the imagination, was therefore a fairly hollow slogan: the imagination had already been the leading light for almost two centuries.

The birth of the imagination, a revolution in the understanding and perception of the world that was as complex as it was wide-ranging, occurred across epistemological, aesthetic and ethical domains and will be discussed in greater depth later in this book, primarily in Chapter Five.³¹ The way it starts to manifest itself in a poeticisation of the world – romanticisation, as the German Romantics called it – strikes to the heart of the romantic programme. Using the somewhat peculiar idiom of the time, Novalis expressed it thus:

The world must be romanticised. Thus shall its original meaning be rediscovered. To romanticise is nothing save a qualitative potentialization [Potenzierung]. By means of this activity [Operation], the lower self is identified with a better self. (...) When I attribute a higher meaning to the commonplace, and lend to the familiar the value of the unknown, and to the finite the semblance of the infinite, then I am romanticising it.³²

Such highfaluting hyperbole seems to detach itself from reality, but is in fact thoroughly permeated by the way in which Westerners perceive and understand the world to this day. The idiom of Novalis and his contemporaries marks the dawn of a duality that has dominated life ever since, structuring the way in which the world is approached.

It is a duality that may well be inherent to the world, but is above all attributed to it by mankind. It is an equivocality that, philosophically speaking, can be traced back to the epistemological precepts of Kant and, in particular, of Fichte, mentioned in the previous chapter. According to the latter, the ‘I’ posits a ‘not-I’ opposite to itself, a not-I that only comes into existence because it is created by the I. In this parallel between the ‘infinite striving’ of the I as formulated by Fichte and the view of the Romantics that the imagination is the progenitor of all

things lies the crucial similarity between Germanic idealism and Romanticism: in the creative faculty that inevitably ‘animates’ the world, culture and politics, in fact *must* animate them. That is why art became so important, because it is the ideal vehicle for this. In the winged words of Blake, the ultimate goal is:

To see a World in a Grain of Sand:
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.³³

The fact that the imagination has, since the dawn of Romanticism, formed one of the main features of human experience does not have a wholly auspicious significance. The spaces of the imagination are peopled by fears and horrific fantasies, as Goya illustrated with his monsters, and as were also evident in the improvised medical facility at Woodstock where many a ‘flipped-out’ hippie had to be treated for the horrors of a fantasy speeding on amphetamine. Here, too, lies the basis of what has come to be known as the ‘romantic agony’, thanks to the English translation of Mario Praz’s standard work about the secretly admired offshoots of Romanticism: the mixture of decadent debunking and exuberant erotic desires, of satanism, the death urge, sado-masochism, spleen and *femmes fatales*.³⁴ However, for most of the Romantics the longing inspired by the imagination was first and foremost an expression of optimism, hope of the kind that Holmes characterised so tellingly at the start of this chapter.

In the years after the Revolution the imagination conjured up ‘a visionary world’, to quote the writer Robert Southey, brother-in-law and friend of Coleridge. Southey echoes the lines of Wordsworth quoted above: ‘Old things seemed passing away, and nothing was dreamt of but the regeneration of the human race.’ In short, it was the dawn of an era of a ‘dizzying sense of total possibility’, as George Steiner would later describe it.³⁵ Though the enthusiasm for the Revolution among the German and English Romantics quickly waned during the first decades of the nineteenth century, and eventually disappeared,

political aspirations for a better world were an enduring component of romantic thinking.

The hope sparked by the imagination was, however, not merely Utopian and civic in nature, but also extended to an extremely personal perception of the world and of ‘the Other’, as expressed in Hölderlin’s ode *An die Hoffnung*:

Im grünen Tale, dort, wo der frische Quell
Vom Berge täglich rauscht, und die liebliche
Zeitlose mir am Herbsttag aufblüht,
Dort, in der Stille, du Holde, will ich

Dich suchen (...) ³⁶

Woodstock and Paris ’68 display the rebelliousness and aspirations – Utopian and personal, in politics, and in affairs of the heart and love of nature – which were ignited by the imagination. Now, a few decades on, this hope sometimes evokes compassion, since various aspects of the ideals of Romanticism that were reformulated during those years now seem naïve and sometimes even to have been corrupted. Is it not true that a good few of the above-mentioned aspirations for freedom have degenerated into frenetic pursuit of self-fulfilment and pursuit of pleasure, in the same way as Horkheimer and Adorno saw the craving of the Enlightenment for freedom and emancipation transform into its very antithesis, into an ever-stricter control of the subject?

In *La défaite de la pensée* (1987, *The Defeat of the Mind*), for example, Alain Finkielkraut pointed out that the underground character of youth culture has established itself as the leading ideology. The lifestyle of adolescents is decisive for contemporary culture, and is forced on everyone through advertising, television and myriad independent radio stations. It is no longer teenagers who flee the world; it is the world which trails along behind adolescence, infatuated with it.³⁷ ‘Teenagers,’ grumbles the Polish philosopher Kolakowski, ‘are often irritating and intolerable, but even more annoying and insufferable are adults and senior citizens who act like teenagers.’³⁸

Besides the romantic infantilism that induces pensioners dressed in gaudy T-shirts to dance in twisted glee at beach discos and makes mature students read children's books, other faults are to be found in the dictatorship of romantic love. This critique is no longer dressed up in the Classical manner espoused by Denis de Rougemont, who considered the passion of such love to be incompatible with Christian love of one's neighbour, nor in the abstract manner in which René Girard levelled his critique at romantic love.³⁹ It is much sooner prompted by a new brand of hedonism, one far removed from the scheming, eighteenth-century role-play of the last chapter, a hedonism that in its consumerism seems to have become the nightmare made flesh of what the Frankfurt School feared so intensely in the culture industry.

The romantic struggle of the Frankfurt School for emancipation of the subject is, however, just as responsible for this nightmare made flesh. The appeal by Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm for the sexual liberation of mankind, for mankind's liberation from the oppressive strictures of a capitalist, performance-driven society, was an important impulse for the Sexual Revolution. This revolution seems not only to have been a romantic emancipation but also heralded a new hedonism – a hedonism in which consumerism and eroticism have become interchangeable, and in which the individual's pursuit of romantic love is perverted by the culture industry, symbolised by a deluge of television commercials and monotonous soft porn.⁴⁰

This formulation may be rather rhetorical, but such hedonism still casts a different light on the romantic ideals of Woodstock and before, and not just those of youth and free love. The sentimentality of closeness to nature in fundraising campaigns by whale-saving Greenpeace is another instance of this – it at least demonstrates how the naturalness of the countryside is exploited in advertising or how nature is sold to consumers by a worldwide mass tourism industry. This is a hedonism that also translates the romantic longing for a different world into a need for 'spirituality' that is served by an enormous post-modern supermarket for health and mental wellbeing. It is a hedonism which is also evident in a

worldwide dance culture in which youngsters use music and drugs to lose themselves, without the authentic goal of making new discoveries in another world, within or beside themselves.

This hedonism is also ruthlessly depicted in a novel by Michel Houellebecq. *Les particules élémentaires* (1998, *Atomised*) is a bitter indictment against the generation of '68 which, in celebrating its sexual freedom, blinkered out the resulting broken marriages and neglected children. A similar critique is expressed in *Plateforme* (2001, *Platform*), Houellebecq's sarcastic description of Westerners' sex tourism as symptomatic of the degeneracy of romantic love.

An increasing attention to the quality of life, revisited in Foucault's late period and in the recent work of philosophers like Michel Onfray, is the philosophical counterpart to a cultural shift that puts the enjoyment of life's pleasures first, free of guilt and responsibility. While with Foucault this involved well-considered, existential ethics, Onfray's 'hedonistic materialism' happily drops any such pretext in order to flippantly hitch along behind Nietzsche's rejection of the traditional 'asceticism' that supposedly governs philosophy and morality.⁴¹

The question of how these romantic desires could become so banal cannot be dealt with in a few pages, not least because the expressions of the imagination in novels, films, advertising and all manner of theatrical forms have been endlessly elaborated, but perhaps the writer Herman Franke can offer a useful key. In his Kellendonk Lecture of 2000, he argued that there is a difference between what he labels 'literary Romanticism' and

the Romanticism that splashes across the screen every day and is integrated in many people's behavioural repertoire. That Romanticism – even if it consists of the use of ecstasy during trail-blazing house parties, bungee-jumping or going on a survival course – is a Romanticism lacking in irony; it does not challenge reality, and nor is it profoundly imbued with a realisation of an underlying chaos.⁴²

Franke is referring primarily to the irony of Kierkegaard, but the notion of irony also occupies an important place in the whole romantic imperative. For the

Romantics, irony was the tension that inevitably results from the absolute language they employ; the longing is not for something of this world, but is transcendent; it is not love for a tangible, living being from the here and now, but a longing for the dead lover or the unattainable; the desired self-knowledge is not focused on one's own behaviour but on the suggestive dark side of one's inner being; art does not exist for the pleasant passing of time or for adornment, but is a gateway to another world of contentment and infinity. Such absolute aspirations inevitably bring disappointment, if not the perplexing determination of the fundamental shortcomings of the world and of oneself; an awareness that the ineluctable longing for the infinite and transcendental as inevitably entailing the despair of the unfulfillable is the very crux of romantic irony.⁴³

Here we become entangled in a Gordian knot of romantic concepts and intuitions. It is not easy to ascertain whether the romantic longing has become less absolute, healthier and more everyday, and whether the irony therefore becomes obsolete, which means the longing is, in turn, trivialised even further. Or, indeed, whether the aspirations have themselves become banal through a lack of irony, namely existing without the awareness of the fundamental unfulfillability, which ultimately transforms the irony into numbing ennui. Or if the desire has degenerated into a rancorous, childish disappointment that can sometimes take the form of a reproach levelled at parents, government or society.

Nevertheless, the imagination that blossomed with Romanticism still underpins this complex constellation of longing and irony, that thoughtlessly acclaimed faculty without which it is now almost impossible to imagine our culture, from which it is still difficult to formulate abstractions, as we cannot properly grasp who we are or what the world is without at the same time imagining an alternative world. It is the imagination that awakens the *Sehnsucht*, the longing and nostalgia for another world. And it is the *Sehnsucht* which spawns *Weltschmerz*, the world-weary disappointment that what is longed for can never be realised. Then it is the irony that recognises the tension between *Sehnsucht* and *Weltschmerz* and reconciles it by making it productive. And this is

how imagination and irony eventually stand facing one another, like Achilles and Hector.

What, as suggested above, if that ubiquitous imagination were not an unqualified positive power, because it generated the ‘romantic agony’ of Mario Praz, because it was the core reason for Goethe judging the Romantic ‘sickly’?⁴⁴ What if there were to be a *dictatorship* of the imagination?

From this perspective it is remarkable that quite a few novels of recent years can be read as an indictment of the imagination, even though the genre is one of its exemplary products. In his *Don Quixote*, Cervantes combatted the outgrowths of the imagination with verve (and with imagination), although the Romantics actually understood *Don Quixote* as a song of praise to the imagination. Since Cervantes, however, the imagination has not been so viciously and wittily attacked as in some recent English novels. In Ian McEwan’s *Atonement* (2002), a highly fanciful girl imagines, for example, that she sees things that require her to make accusations against others. She therefore wrecks various lives and, as a writer, attempts to atone for it by committing these tales to paper. But reconciliation is impossible because she, as a writer with her imagination, enjoys absolute power – and therefore cannot be forgiven. Imagination, McEwan’s book seems to argue, undermines responsibility.

A similar charge against the imagination is found in *Night Train* (1997) by Martin Amis, in which a female detective is confronted with a remarkable suicide that might also have been a staged murder.⁴⁵ She identifies so closely with the victim that in the end one is no longer sure whether these two women are not in fact one and the same. That is thanks (or due) to the imagination of Amis and of the main character. It is also intriguing that the way the police work in this novel is a pale reflection of what is served up in crime and police series on television. The agents therefore experience reality as less real, as does the policewoman, who also becomes less real because of the imagination that she needs to apply: she loses herself. *If* that suicide episode is not a product of her imagination in overdrive, then it is the product

of the imagination of the victim. It is, after all, the *imagination* which can make existence so horrendous that someone draws the most radical conclusion.

Schopenhauer noted that suicide is not so much a denial of life in general, but of one's personal, real life. Someone who commits suicide does not want not to live, but rather to have a *different* life, a better life that is not attainable.⁴⁶ That other life is a product of the imagination, and even a poisonous one seen from this perspective.

The criticism of the self-evident admiration for the imagination which surfaces in literature cannot be seen independently of the post-modern interest in representation, which is also revealed in other art forms. Whether in the post-modern films by David Lynch or the deliberate trivialisation of the imagination in *Pulp Fiction* (1994) and *Kill Bill* (2003) by Quentin Tarantino, more and more doubts are being raised about the oppressive inevitability of the imagination. Such questions are also thrown up time and again in the visual arts. 'Higher beings,' scribbled Sigmar Polke as far back as 1969 on one of his now-famous paintings with the top right-hand corner painted black, 'Higher beings command: paint top right-hand corner black!' It was still a form of irony, in which the powers of the imagination were mockingly blown up to god-like proportions in order to place them in perspective. It is an irony that predated countless artists bidding their goodbyes to the imagination, artists who from the 1980s and '90s started to make art in which quotation started to replace the original creation, in which the depiction referred to the depiction and to the manner of representation and depiction, and less and less to the subject depicted.

If the imagination occupies such a central place in the romantic imperative, then a pertinent question is whether it most recently flourished profusely in the Paris of '68 and at Woodstock. Was the revival of Romanticism in the late 1960s its swansong? And is the demise of the romantic Sixties described above indicative of the fact that the romantic imperative in its entirety is in a state of demise, since the imagination without its counter-pole of irony is reduced to predictable, commercially driven and fulfillable desires which are then indeed fulfilled in an endless consumptive pattern of romantic clichés, ranging from love songs and

winter sport vacations to the seal sanctuary, computer games, wildlife documentaries and homeopathy? Or is it that imagination is perhaps being dissolved in a reality that is increasingly controlled by the media, which no longer positions it as a counter-pole to the world but sublimates the real world and the imagination as, for example, the increasing commingling of news, propaganda and amusement entertainment suggests?

It is not the easiest of tasks to be the ideological historian of one's own era. With the shift in the regard for the imagination, as well as in its very character, it is possible that the whole romantic imperative is as yet stable. It is also still far from clear whether the imagination is really undergoing a process of transformation owing to the demise of romantic irony in everyday life. This question returns in various contexts in the ensuing chapters. For the time being, from the perspective described here, it can at best be concluded that the revolutionary character of the late 1960s was more limited than might be expected. It only became truly revolutionary when graffiti, instead of calling for imagination's elevation, was to declare war on it.

1 Richard Holmes, *Footsteps. Adventures of a Romantic Biographer*, London 1985, pp. 73-75. Cf. Richard Holmes, *The Romantic Poets and Their Circle*, London 1997, p. 7.

2 Cf. Bas van Stokkom, *Emotionele democratie. Over morele vooruitgang*, Amsterdam 1997, pp. 11-26. For two recent interpretations of 1968 from a political perspective see Mark Kurlansky, 1968. *The Year that Rocked the World*, New York 2004; Kristin Ross, *May '68 and its Afterlives*, Chicago/London 2004.

3 Michael Wadleigh, director, *Woodstock. Three days of Peace, Music ... and Love*, 1970 (Warner Bros. home video, 1989). The spontaneity of the mass gathering that has often been suggested after the fact was relative, as there had been a long-running advertising campaign. See, for example, Alf Evers, *The Catskills. From Wilderness to Woodstock*, New York 1972, pp. 711-712 and p. 714. For a statistical impression of the opinions held by the American Woodstock generation see Rex Weiner and Deanne Stillman, *Woodstock Census. The Nationwide Survey of the Sixties Generation*, New York 1979. A manageable account of the Woodstock festival is the anonymous '*How Woodstock Happened...*', reprinted from *The Times Herald Record* at <http://www.geocities.com/~music-festival/how-w.htm>. Cf. http://www.woodstock69.com/Woodstock_songs.htm.

4 Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture. Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition*, London 1970 (1968), p. 291.

5 Quoted in Eduard Engel, *Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts und der Gegenwart*, Vienna / Leipzig 1913, p. 23. Cf. Robert J. Richards, *The Romantic*

Conception of Life: Science and Philosophy in the Age of Goethe, Chicago / London 2002, pp. 193-194 and p. 18.

6 Gerald N. Izenberg, *Romanticism, Revolution, and the Origins of Modern Selfhood*, 1782-1802, Princeton 1992, pp. 51-52; Anita Brookner, *Romanticism and Its Discontents*, New York 2000, p. 56. A literal and militant form of enthusiasm for youth is expressed in Victor Hugo's poem *Mon enfance*, in which a young soldier broadcasts the French Revolution throughout Europe: 'Et, tout enfant encor, les vieillards recueillis / M'écoulaient racontant, d'une bouche ravie, / Mes jours si peu nombreux et déjà si remplis!' (Victor Hugo, *Les plus beau poèmes*, Paris 1995, pp. 11-13 (esp. p. 12).

7 Arthur Schopenhauer, *Werke in zehn Bänden*, Zürich 1977, vol. 4, p. 469. The quotes from Novalis and Runge are cited in Eckart Klessmann, *Die deutsche Romantik*, Cologne 1987, p. 161. Cf. M.H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism. Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature*, New York / London 1973, pp. 413-415.

8 Quoted in Hugh Honour, *Romanticism*, Harmondsworth 1991, p. 311.

9 Cf. John Armstrong, *Conditions of Love. The Philosophy of Intimacy*, London 2002, pp. 1-7.

10 Klessmann 1987, pp. 164-165. See also Friedrich Overbeck's portrait of Franz Pforr from 1810, p. 119, or Pforr's *Allegorieder Freundschaft* (1808), p. 147. On the Romantic genius, see Chapter Five of this book.

11 Maurice Cranston, *The Romantic Movement*, Oxford / Cambridge, Mass. 1995, pp. 33-34; Lilian R. Furst, *Romanticism in Perspective. A comparative study of aspects of the Romantic movement in England, France and Germany*, New York 1970, p. 224; Isaiah Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism* (ed. Henry Hardy), London 1999, pp. 113-114.

12 *How Woodstock happened...*, <http://www.geocities.com/~music-festival/how-w.htm>.

13 Carlos Castaneda, *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*, Berkeley / Los Angeles / London 1968. (Followed by three sequels.)

14 William Wordsworth in R.S. Thomas (ed.), *A Choice of Wordsworth's Verse*, London 1971, pp. 27-28. (The poem does not unequivocally sing the praises of nature, since in the following lines the 'I' attacks the hazel tree and later regrets it.) On the 'gaze' of the English Romantic poets see Max Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness. From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*, New Haven / London 1991, pp. 110-121; cf Alan Day, *Romanticism*, London / New York 2001, pp. 39-64. On the relationship between city and countryside see Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World. Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, London 1983, p. 243 ff. On the representation of nature in the landscape, see Honour 1991, Ch. 2.

15 Quoted in Klessman 1987, p. 79.

16 Heinrich Heine, *Die romantische Schule*, in Otto F. Lachmann (ed.), *Heinrich Heines Sämtliche Werke in vier Bänden*, Leipzig n.d., Vol. III, pp. 116-237 (esp. p. 186).

17 Here it concerns ideology, which played a much lesser role in the financial aspects of the festival. See '*How Woodstock Happened ...*', <http://www.geocities.com/~music-festival/how-w.htm>.

18 Heine, n.d., p. 186.

19 Holmes 1997, p. 17. Cf. Marilyn Butler, *Romantics, Rebels & Reactionaries. English Literature and its Background*, Oxford / New York 1981, pp. 41-53; Honour 1991, pp. 286-293; Berlin 1999, pp. 49-51; Joseph Viscomi, '*The Lessons of Swedenborg; or, The Origin of William Blake's The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*' in Thomas Pfau and Robert F. Gleckner (eds.), *Lessons of Romanticism. A Critical Compendium*, Durham / London 1998, pp. 173-212. See also Verder Gerhard Schulz, *Romantik. Geschichte und Begriff*, Munich 1996, pp. 119-125; Abrams 1973, p. 169 ff.; Paul Kluckhohn, *Das Ideengut der deutschen Romantik*,

- Tübingen 1966, pp. 31-34, 50-54, 135 ff. *On the spiritual interest of the Romantics in France*, see Auguste Viatte, *Les sources occultes du romantisme. Illuminisme - Théosophie 1770-1820, Deuxième Partie, La génération de l'Empire (1800-1820)*, Paris 1979.
- 20 Weiner and Stillman 1979, pp. 73-74.
- 21 Kluckhohn 1966, p. 42.
- 22 Charles Rosen, *Romantic Poets, Critics, and Other Madmen*, Cambridge, Mass. 1998, p. 47. See also Jerrold Seigel, *Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830-1930*, New York 1986, p. 116; Abrams 1973, p. 416; Richard Davenport-Hines, *The Pursuit of Oblivion. A Global History of Narcotics 1500-2000*, London 2001, pp. 35-47.
- 23 <http://www.lyrics.net.ua/song/61425>. Cf. Jan Stroop, 'Popmuziek als romantisch fenomeen' in Jan Stroop et al., *Popmuziek. Kunst, cultuur of koopwaar?*, Amersfoort 1977, pp. 13-31 (esp. pp. 18-19). 'The Doors of Perception' alludes to William Blake's statements: 'In the universe there are things that are known, and things that are unknown, and between them there are doors,' and 'If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.' The Doors of Perception is also the title of Aldous Huxley's book from 1954 about experiences with drugs. The name of the band The Doors is an abbreviation of Blake's The Doors of Perception. See <http://www.rockmine.music.co.uk/Doors/DrkStr18.html>.
- 24 M.H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp. Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*, London / Oxford / New York 1971, pp. 50-51 and pp. 91 ff. See also H.G. Schenk, *De geest van de romantiek*, Bilthoven 1966; Arnold Whittall, *Romantische muziek. Van Schubert tot Sibelius*, Utrecht 1991, p. 10 and p. 187 (originally published as *Romantic Music. A Concise History from Schubert to Sibelius*, London 1987); Paolo d'Angelo, *L'estetica del romanticismo*, Bologna 1997, pp. 186-188.
- 25 Michel Foucault, 'Sur les façons d'écrire l'histoire' in *Dits et écrits I (1954-1969)*, pp. 585-600 (esp. p. 586). Cf. Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses. Une archéologie des sciences humaines*, Paris 1966, pp. 64 ff.
- 26 Andrew Jamison and Ron Eyerman, *Seeds of the Sixties*, Berkeley / Los Angeles 1994, p. 152. Cf. Greil Marcus, *Lipstick Traces. A Secret History of the Twentieth Century*, London 1989, p. 268 ff.
- 27 Octavio Paz, *Children of the Mire: Modern Poetry from Romanticism to the Avant-Garde* (trans. Rachel Phillips) Cambridge, Mass./London 1975.
- 28 Seigel 1986, p. 270.
- 29 M. Easton, *Artist and Writers in Paris. The Bohemian Idea, 1803-1867*, London 1964. Cf. Chapter 5 of this book.
- 30 Cf. Maarten Doorman, *Steeds mooier. Over vooruitgang in de kunst*, Amsterdam 1997, pp. 66-69, 79- e.v.
- 31 A standard text is James Engell, *The Creative Imagination. Enlightenment to Romanticism*, Cambridge, Mass. / London 1981. See also Furst 1970, pp. 136-209; J.J.A. Mooij, *Fictional realities. The use of literary imagination*, Amsterdam / Philadelphia 1993. Cf. Doorman 1997, pp. 52-62.
- 32 Quoted in Klessmann 1987, p. 79. Cf. Richards 2002, p. 200.
- 33 René Wellek, 'The concept of Romanticism in literary history' in *Romantic Writings* (ed. Stephen Bygrave), New York 1996, pp. 326-335. On the transition from imagination in German Romanticism to that of English Romanticism see Forest Pyle, *The Ideology of Imagination. Subject and Society in the Discourse of Romanticism*, Stanford 1995, pp. 6-10.
- 34 Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony* (trans. Angus Davidson), Oxford / New York 1970. For

- a wide-ranging anthology with stories in this tradition see Anton Haakman, *Afgronden. Verontrustende literatuur uit de Romantiek*, Amsterdam / Antwerp 1997.
- 35 Quoted in David Duff, 'From Revolution to Romanticism: The Historical Context to 1800', in *A Companion to Romanticism* (ed. Duncan Wu), Oxford 1999, pp. 23-34 (esp. p. 25).
- 36 Friedrich Hölderlin, *Gedichte* (ed. Konrad Nussbächer), Stuttgart 1981, p. 89.
- 37 Alain Finkielkraut, *La défaite de la pensée*, Paris 1987, pp. 157-162.
- 38 Leszek Kolakowski, *Over het alledaagse leven*, Amsterdam 2000, p. 99 (Freedom, Fear, Lying and Betrayal: Essays on Everyday Life, trans. Agnieszka Kolakowski, Boulder/Oxford 1999). Cf. Piet Joostens, 'De wereld met kind bekleed. Over deugd en ondeugd van het infantiele', in *Yang*, no. 1, April 2003, pp. 9-22.
- 39 Denis de Rougemont, *L'Amour et l'Occident*, Paris 1956 (1939); René Girard, *Mensonge romantique et vérité romanesque*, Paris 1961. See also Chapter One, fn. 26.
- 40 Cf. Eva Illouz, *Consuming the Romantic Utopia. Love and the Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, Berkeley / Los Angeles / London 1997, pp. 7, 145 ff. Stijn Reijnders argues – not without reason – that for the time being there is no question of the end of Romantic love as described by Illouz in 'De romantiek voorbij? Representaties van liefde in de contemporaine populaire cultuur' in *Skript. Historisch tijdschrift*, vol. 21, no. 3, autumn 1999, pp. 198-209.
- 41 Michel Foucault, *Le souci de soi. Histoire de la sexualité III*, Paris 1984; Michel Onfray, *L'art de jouir. Pour un matérialisme hédoniste*, Paris 1991; Michel Foucault, *Théorie du corps amoureux. Pour une érotique solaire*, Paris 2000.
- 42 Herman Franke, *De ironie van de romantiek*. Kellendonk-lezing 2000, transcript of Kellendonk Lecture, Nijmegen 2000, pp. 18-19.
- 43 A standard overview of the concept of irony is Ernst Behler, *Klassische Ironie, Romantische Ironie, Tragische Ironie. Zum Ursprung dieser Begriffe*, Darmstadt 1972. On theorisation about the concept of irony by the Romantics, especially by Friedrich Schlegel, see Paolo d'Angelo, *L'estetica del romanticismo*, Bologna 1997, pp. 98-106; Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760-1860. The Legacy of Idealism*, Cambridge 2002, p. 160 ff. On irony in art, see Chapter Five of this book.
- 44 See, for example, Lilian R. Furst, *Romanticism. The Critical Idiom*, London 1971, p. 2 and p. 64. There is a rebuttal to this critique in Charles Larmore, *The Romantic Legacy*, New York 1996, pp. 16-21. There is a critique of a suspect Utopianism fed by the Romantic imagination in Forest Pyle's study of the ideological content of that imagination in Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and George Eliot (Pyle 1995).
- 45 Ian McEwan, *Atonement*, London 2002; Martin Amis, *Night Train*, London 1997. The following was previously published in Maarten Doorman, *Genealogie van de verbeelding*, Maastricht 1998, pp. 20-22.
- 46 Schopenhauer 1977, Vol. 2, pp. 492-494.