

**THE DISCIPLES AT  
SAÏS AND  
OTHER FRAGMENTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649469512

The Disciples at Saïs and Other Fragments by Una Birch

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**UNA BIRCH**

**THE DISCIPLES AT  
SAÏS AND  
OTHER FRAGMENTS**



THE DISCIPLES AT SAÏS  
AND OTHER FRAGMENTS

BY

NOVALIS

*Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek  
Wolfenbüttel*

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY  
F. V. M. T. AND U. C. B.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
UNA BIRCH

METHUEN & CO.  
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.  
LONDON

1903

81

Charles de la Roche

24208 S. U. C.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	3
FRIEDERICH VON HARDENBERG: THE MAN . . . . .	13
NOVALIS: THE AUTHOR . . . . .	34
SELECTIONS FROM THE WORKS OF NOVALIS—	
SPIRITUAL HYMNS . . . . .	53
THOUGHTS ON PHILOSOPHY, LOVE AND RELIGION . . . . .	68
THE DISCIPLES AT SAIS . . . . .	91
FLOWER POLLEN . . . . .	144
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	174
INDEX . . . . .	175





## PREFACE

**I**N the last years of the eighteenth century between two and three thousand students worked and fought and made love at Jena, as the manner of students is. As an apple encloses a core, so did this large academic circle enclose an inner ring of men who had taken it upon themselves to reform thought and taste in Germany, and these men possessed by the idea of Unity, whose passion, whose dream, and whose ideal was the realisation of the Unity of the Universe, were called by the world Romantics. They lived among the students and yet were not of them, existing in a fairy world of their own apart from life's ugly realities, lotus eaters feeding on flowers of poetry, art, music and philosophy, and distributing to the outside world, as a result of their eclectic culture, a new criticism, a new æsthetic and a new philosophy of life. The very air in the streets of Jena was charged by them with an idealistic intellectualism, and the town seems to have become for a few

years a Parnassus of Romance, and the meeting-ground for all spirits touched by the mystic yearning. The more important of the would-be reformers were Novalis, Schelling, Schleiermacher, the two Schlegels, Tieck and Wackenroder; with these were associated Caroline, the wife of A. W. Schlegel, and Dorothea Veit, a Jewess. Fichte, who had no great sympathy with Romanticism, even during the time he lived at Jena, greatly influenced its apostles, and determined most of their thought. Schiller, through his affection for Novalis, came into contact with the movement, but he, like Goethe, disapproved of its tendency towards obscurantism. His friend Novalis would seem to have been the typical Romanticist, possessing as he did a genius for unification, a passion for religion, a highly poetic imagination and energy without will. Typical, too, in so far that his mature life began and ended with the movement, typical in that his outer life did not correspond with his thought, and typical because his writings embodied the highest aspiration of the movement.

He and his Romantic friends wrote and read and translated and talked and did everything but act; they were still vague as to their ultimate goal. "Christianity is the order of the day—the men are rather mad. . . . I

## THE ROMANTICS AT JENA 5

wager they do not understand themselves or each other," wrote Dorothea Veit, commenting on the prevailing uncertainty. Catholicism, antique symbolic art, mediæval romance, strange legends and Indian Sagas—everything that seemed to offer by its mystery an outlet for the soul attracted them. A desire for freedom in love, freedom from social restrictions, annihilation of limitations, all parts of the desire for unity, led them, uncorrected by action, to a species of mystic voluptuousness which proved the destruction of their circle.

The town of Jena is not many miles from Weimar, and at this time Goethe and Schiller were fast friends, and their opinion of the Romantics is to be seen in the letters they exchanged. Goethe laughs at them half-scornfully and straightforward Schiller is vexed at their posturing. The former was so greatly admired by the inner ring that the latter was in danger of being undervalued.

Goethe occasionally came to Jena to visit Schiller, but generally when the Romantics wished to see the object of their devotion they pilgrimaged along the avenue of plum trees that led to Weimar and there offered him the incense of their adulation. "Frederick the divine," writes Dorothea Veit of F. Schlegel one day, "went this morning to