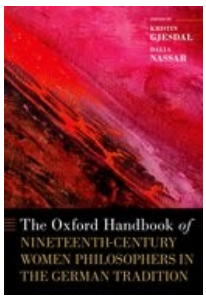

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CHAPTER

23 The Idea of the Earth in Günderrode, Schelling, and Hegel

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Abstract

This chapter provides an interpretation of Karoline von Günderrode's fragment "The Idea of the Earth" and argue that it contributes to central theoretical and practical questions in the idealist context. The chapter considers Günderrode's use of the term *Idea*, in relation to Kant, Schelling, and Hegel, focusing on Schelling's account of the Idea in *Bruno* in particular. Günderrode's theoretical contribution consists in presenting the earth as a context of truth and knowledge, and her practical contribution consists in situating living activity in relation to the goal of realizing what she calls a "collective organism" (*gemeinschaftlicher Organismus*). In arguing that the Idea of the earth provides a context for both truth and ethical action in a unified philosophy, the chapter suggests that Günderrode presents an earthly, ecological approach to idealism that intervenes in a number of long-standing assumptions and debates.

Keywords: Günderrode, Schelling, Hegel, idealism, idea, earth, organism, ecology, theoretical, practical

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An exciting array of philosophical and historical scholarship has now established beyond doubt that the concept of nature lies at the center of German idealism and romanticism, bringing into view how the systematic (and antisystematic) ambitions of this period all revolve around thinking about the place of humanity within a distinctly modern understanding of nature. In noting that this approach to nature is *modern*, I mean to suggest a number of interconnected features that define this philosophical context. First, there is the new, emerging science of biology at the turn of the nineteenth century, a context in which German *Naturphilosophie* played a central role.[1] Second, there is the increasing awareness of a global,

universal humanity continuous with nature (what Herder called *Humanität*), alongside a creeping sense of alienation from nature resulting from the disintegration of traditional forms of life (well-documented, for example in the writings of Schiller and Hegel).[2] Third, there is, following Andrea Wulf, the very *invention* of the idea of nature itself, an invention led, on her account, by Alexander von Humboldt. Humboldt, she argues, "saw the earth as one great living organism where everything was connected," changing the way we
p. 528 understood our relation ↳ to nature while at the same time inventing the very idea of nature as we understand it today.[3] Against the background of these complex but interconnected developments, the question of the relation between human beings and nature gradually came to be understood as a question about our relation to the *earth*.[4] More specifically, the human question came to be understood as part of a larger question about *life on earth*, a question that stretched beyond biology into epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, and social and political philosophy.

Within this wide-ranging context, Karoline von Günderrode's 1805 unpublished fragment "The Idea of the Earth" is noteworthy for a number of reasons. Although her contributions have long been neglected by philosophers, Anna Ezekiel's extensive research and translation work has shown that Günderrode's writings, which include philosophical fragments, dialogues, poetry, dramas, ballads, and fictional and semifictional fragments, were not only in dialogue with the central figures and ideas of German idealism and romanticism, but moreover, make distinctive philosophical contributions to the major questions of the period from a unique and underappreciated perspective.[5] With respect to the philosophy of nature in particular, both Ezekiel and Dalia Nassar have recently argued that her position cannot be easily assimilated with the views of figures such as Herder, Fichte, Schelling, or Hegel, despite engaging seriously with the work of the first three.[6] Building on this attempt to recover her distinctive philosophical contribution to this period, I argue that in focusing on the *earth*, Günderrode's fragment, and her philosophy of nature more broadly, provides a different model for a unified idealist philosophy, shedding new light on both theoretical and practical questions.

On the theoretical side, Günderrode's claim that the *earth* is a "realized Idea" (*eine realisirte Idee*) suggests an alternative approach to the complicated concept of "the Idea" (*die Idee*) that plays an important role in
p. 529 both Schelling and Hegel's philosophies.[7] ↳ In Schelling and Hegel, the Idea represents the foundation of their philosophies, providing an absolute criterion of truth. Although their views differ in a number of ways, the Idea as an absolute criterion of truth is generally presented by both in connection with organic form, with Hegel arguing in the conclusion of the *Science of Logic* that *life* is the immediate manifestation of the Idea. In presenting the *earth* as the realized Idea, I suggest that Günderrode offers an alternative way of understanding both the Idea as a criterion of truth and the role of earthly life as a manifestation of the Idea. "The Idea of the Earth" resists both the more Platonic aspects of Schelling's approach to the Idea, and the tendency in Hegel's approach to strongly identify actuality with rationality. The focus on the earth as the context of truth also provides a different approach to idealism beyond the near exclusive focus on a subject/object schema. Instead, idealism is organized around an earthly context of knowledge that Günderrode calls "the All" (*die Allheit*).

On the practical side, Günderrode's fragment suggests that the activities and processes of earthly life strive toward the realization of a "collective organism" (*gemeinschaftlicher Organismus*). Although this idea is admittedly somewhat obscure, I suggest that the idea of a collective organism provides a different model for thinking about the ethical aims of living beings in relation to the earth, one in which virtue and justice are measured in relation to the achievement of a "collective organism." Here, I will focus on Günderrode's suggestion that the Idea of the earth is yet to be realized, arguing that she puts forward an ecological ethic of sustainability. In presenting her fragment as putting forward *both* theoretical and practical claims via the Idea of the earth, I argue that Günderrode presents a viable and unified idealist philosophy, one that departs from, and also corrects, her contemporaries in novel ways.

This chapter will proceed as follows. In section 1 I briefly take up the Idea in Kant, Schelling, and Hegel. I focus on three features of Schelling's account of the Idea from his *Bruno* in particular, and also point out some of the differences between Schelling and Hegel insofar as these are helpful for understanding Günderrode's employment of the term. Section 2 begins by framing Günderrode's fragment in connection with two claims: first, her claim that the earth is a *realized Idea*; and second, her claim that the Idea of the earth *is in the process of being realized*. Arguing against Nassar's interpretation of the fragment that divides theoretical and practical concerns and emphasizes Günderrode's engagement with Fichte's account of human vocation, I suggest that the former claim addresses a number of theoretical questions in the idealist context, whereas the latter claim addresses practical ones, taken up in sections 2 and 3, respectively. Section 3 further defends the compatibility of the two claims by presenting the unity of Günderrode's thought as taking a *dual aspect* approach and provides an interpretation of the goal of a collective organism. Section 4 concludes by considering the unity of the theoretical and the practical in the Idea of the earth. I argue that Günderrode provides an alternative to the idealist schema of subject/object identity and opposition in her understanding of theoretical and practical aims, and suggest that her fragment gestures toward an ecological holism.

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1 The Idea (*Die Idee*): Kant, Schelling, Hegel

Within the context of German idealist and romantic *Naturphilosophie*, one of the most innovative features of Günderrode's fragment is her deployment of the term "Idea" as directly associated with the earth. Her fragment begins by stating that "the earth is a realized Idea," a claim that immediately calls to mind the broad aims of *Naturphilosophie* to grasp the emergent ideal features of nature's processes and forms. For the German idealists and romantics, the philosophy of nature was essential for combatting the dualistic metaphysics of Kant and earlier thinkers: if features of the ideal (unity, organization, form, mindedness, intelligibility, self-relatedness, self-determination) were manifest in the real (nature broadly understood), then long-standing philosophical dualisms could be discarded and overcome, leading to a unified philosophy in which human activity and behavior were continuous with the natural world. Given these aims, it is no surprise that the philosophy of nature played a central role in nineteenth-century thought in thinkers as varied as Carl Friedrich Kielmeyer, Alexander von Humboldt, Bettina von Arnim, and Lou Salomé.

Günderrode stands out in this context by drawing our attention not just to the ideal features of nature generally, but to the ideality of the earth and its processes in particular. In the period immediately preceding the composition of this fragment, Günderrode engaged in an intensive study of Schelling's philosophy of nature, and many Schellingian themes are evident throughout the text. Most notably, it is Schelling who first makes reference to "the idea of earth" in *Bruno*, published in 1802, which Günderrode read in 1804.[8] Thus, in order to understand Günderrode's fragment in its proper philosophical context, I will begin by charting the most prevalent ways in which the term "Idea" was employed in Kant, Schelling, and Hegel, emphasizing Schelling's discussion in *Bruno* in particular.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant introduces his discussion of the transcendental ideas by affirming the Platonic origins of his use of the term:

> Plato made use of the expression *idea* in such a way that we can readily see that he understood by it
> p. 531 something that not only could never be borrowed from the senses, but ↳ that even goes far beyond the concepts of the understanding (with which Aristotle occupied himself), since nothing encountered in experience could ever be congruent to it. Ideas for him are archetypes of things themselves, and not, like the categories, merely the keys to possible experience. In his opinion they flowed from the highest reason, through which human reason partakes in them.[9]

In affirming Plato's general approach to the idea as untouched by anything borrowed from sensation, Kant draws a distinction here between his own account of the categories, which, although a priori, are nonetheless congruent with objects of possible experience, and ideas, which are *archetypes of things themselves* and whose objects cannot be given in experience whatsoever. As archetypes, the ideas originate from reason's activity of making syllogistic inferences, which is driven by the demand to search for the unconditioned—a totality of conditions that provides unity and a complete explanation of all the concepts of the understanding.[10] Although Kant discusses three transcendental ideas in the Transcendental Dialectic of the first *Critique*—the soul, the idea of the world as a whole, and the idea of God—that correspond to the categorical, hypothetical, and disjunctive syllogisms, respectively, there is, ultimately, one, overarching idea of reason, namely, the idea of the *unconditioned*.[11] In associating reason's demand for the unconditioned as a demand for something that can never be an object of cognition, the idea for Kant represents an absolute limit to reason's systematic ambitions, barring it from playing a foundational role in a system of knowledge.[12]

Schelling and Hegel affirm and reject different aspects of Kant's way of employing this term, but for both, the Idea becomes central for how they approach the construction of their philosophical systems. Although they affirm Kant's association of the Idea with the unconditioned, both reject the limitations that Kant places on the possibility of knowing the Idea, and instead present the Idea as a foundational, absolute criterion of truth. The analysis of the Idea as foundational for a system of philosophy is particularly evident in *Bruno*. The discussion of the Idea in this text, written as a dialogue in which Schelling (represented by the titular Bruno, loosely referencing Giordano Bruno) presents his philosophy of absolute identity against Fichte, and showing clear sympathies with Plato's *Timaeus*, is particularly instructive for understanding Günderrode's fragment.

There are three features of the Idea from *Bruno* that I want to highlight in particular. The first is Schelling's appropriation of the Idea as the unconditioned first principle of his absolute idealism. Marking the height of his identity philosophy, Schelling's choice to associate his principle of identity with the Idea is, at least in
p. 532 part, an attempt to ↳ respond to Kant's suggestion that the Idea cannot be an object of cognition.[13] In this period of Schelling's philosophical development, he is in the midst of a dispute with Fichte in which he accuses Fichte of putting forward a merely subjective philosophy of consciousness, while at work constructing a philosophy of identity that comprises both a transcendental philosophy and a philosophy of nature.[14] The principle of this philosophy is the absolute identity of opposites, an identity that lies at the source of all reality and knowledge. Discussing the first principle of philosophy as the Idea, Bruno states the following shortly after entering the dialogue:

> now to lay the foundation for our dialogue! … We can all agree on this fundamental notion: the Idea, wherein all opposites are not just united, but are simply identical, wherein all opposites are not just cancelled, but are entirely undivided from one another. So I begin by praising this principle as first and prior to all else … 'identity' itself along with 'opposition' will form the highest pair of opposites … the identity of identity and opposition, or the identity of the self-identical and the nonidentical.[15]

As the identity of opposites—Hegel will call this "speculative identity"[16]—the Idea here opposes Kant's approach to dialectic, in which reason is faced with irresolvable antinomies in its search for the unconditioned, but also opposes Plato's approach to the Idea, despite the many Platonic resonances that are scattered throughout the dialogue. (Obviously the dialogue form itself hearkens back to Plato.) One of the central oppositions united in the Idea is that between the finite and the infinite, and throughout, Schelling also insists that the Idea is eternal. Many scholars have noted that Schelling's understanding of eternity here is Spinozist, disassociated with time, duration, and most important, transcendence, instead referring to the necessary or intrinsic connection of things.[17] In rejecting the transcendence of the Idea and

appropriating the dialectic of opposites as the key to his philosophical system, Schelling's principle of identity becomes the basis for linking his transcendental philosophy with his philosophy of nature, providing an alternative to Fichte's merely subjective approach to identity and opposition. Looking ahead,
p. 533 Günderrode will reinterpret the identity of opposites in terms ↳ of processes of synthesis and dissolution, with the interconnections between mortality and immortality giving shape to the earth as Idea.

In addition to being the absolute principle of the identity of opposition, the Idea for Schelling, as mentioned, is also a criterion of truth. Schelling continues, speaking as Bruno:

> the Idea ... inasmuch as it unites multiplicity and unity or finitude and infinity, is identically related to both factors. Since we learned earlier that philosophy is concerned solely with the eternal concepts of things, we now realize that philosophy has but one sole object of study, the Idea of all Ideas. And this one Idea is exactly what we conveyed in our formulas for the supreme principle, "the indivisible unity of the identical and the differentiated" and "the inseparability of thought and intuition." The nature of this Idea's identity is that of truth itself, and beauty. For the beautiful is what absolutely identifies the universal and the particular, or unites the species and the individual, as in the [ideal human] forms of the gods. But this same identity is truth too, and the sole truth. And since we regard this Idea as the best criterion of truth available, we will accept only what conforms to this Idea as absolutely true, but what does not measure up to the Idea's truth, we will account merely relative and unreliable truths.[18]

Putting aside the question of beauty, why is the Idea the best criterion of truth available?[19] In defining the Idea in terms of the unity of opposites, Schelling (and Hegel, too) have in mind particular sets of oppositions whose unity and relation are generally taken to be a condition for truth. In this passage, "thought and intuition" as well as "universal and particular" are clear instances of this, but the most general unity and relationship that is at stake for all the German idealists is the one between the *subjective* and the *objective*, with Schelling claiming that "all knowledge is founded upon the coincidence of an objective with a subjective.—For we *know* only what is true; but truth is generally taken to consist in the coincidence of presentations with their objects."[20] Hegel defines the Idea as the unity of concept and objectivity or the unity of concept and reality, going as far as to say that the Idea is the "objectively *true*, or the *true as such*. If anything has truth, it has it by virtue of its Idea, or *something has truth only insofar as it is Idea*."[21] Truth, then, for Hegel and Schelling, is measured in connection with the degree or extent to which the relationship expressed in the Idea is realized. Although I will discuss in a moment a disagreement
p. 534 between Schelling and Hegel in their understanding of the ↳ Idea, they agree that it supplies a criterion or model for truth insofar as both also define the Idea in connection with the principle of identity. Schelling concludes *Bruno* by claiming that to know the indifference contained in the principle of identity is to "uncover the original metal of truth."[22]

Third and finally, Schelling, but *not* Hegel, understands the Idea in terms of a relationship between archetypes (*Urbilder*) and their visible appearances, variously described as embodiments, copies, images, and models of the Idea (*Körperwerdung*, *Abbilder*, *Vorbilder*).[23] Thus, despite Schelling's anti-Platonism in rejecting the consignment of Ideas to a transcendent heaven, he nonetheless employs a Platonic model in understanding how the Idea appears in the visible, temporal world.[24] In *Bruno*, and consistent with other writings from this period, Schelling grants pride of place to the appearing form of an organism, suggesting that it, more than other finite entities, provides an image of the archetype of the absolute Idea, uniting actuality and possibility, the ideal and the real, soul and body, and concept and reality.[25] Although all finite things in the universe are an embodiment or image of the Idea to some degree, organic nature, Schelling writes, is the "most visible proof" of transcendental idealism, offering an image not only of the archetype of the Idea, but also an image of consciousness, the deduction of which occupies a large part of *Bruno*.[26] The organism provides an image or model for the organization of the universe itself, which "is such a well-

organized animal that it can never die."[27] In short, the appearing form of the organism is the key to Schelling's understanding of how archetypes of the Idea become embodied in the visible world, instead of being consigned to a transcendent beyond.

Before turning directly to Günderrode's fragment, I want to note some differences between Schelling and Hegel in their approach to the Idea, ones that are important for situating her presentation of the earth as Idea. First, Hegel eschews Schelling's Platonic model of archetypes and images, largely on account of the fact that the apprehension of such archetypes depends upon what Hegel takes to be a problematic theory of intellectual and aesthetic intuition. Instead, Hegel adopts an expressive or manifestation model of how the absolute appears, arguing that there is an essential relation between the inner and the outer in the manifestation of the absolute.[28] This allows him to avoid a tendency in Schelling to present a reified version of the absolute in terms of a principle of identity or an eternal archetype, with Hegel focusing instead on
p. 535 presenting the absolute as a ↳ method that results from a developmental process, rather than serving as an unconditioned first principle. In line with this shift, Hegel argues at the end of his *Science of Logic* that the immediate manifestation of the Idea is *life*, where the emphasis is placed on understanding living activity as a form of knowing, rather than on grasping the archetypal form of the organism. For Hegel then, the activity of life is a realization or actualization of the Idea, rather than simply an image of the Idea.

Second, in adopting a manifestation model for understanding the appearing of the absolute, Hegel, notoriously, establishes a very tight connection between the actual and the rational. He writes:

> We now reserve the expression 'Idea' for the objective or real concept ... [and] definitely reject that estimate of it according to which the Idea is something with no actuality ... we must not regard it as just a *goal* which is to be approximated but itself remains always a kind of *beyond*; we must rather regard everything *as being* actual only to the extent that it has the Idea in it and expresses it.[29]

This passage expresses Hegel's characteristic critique of merely approximating or striving for goals that are in principle unattainable or that lie in a transcendent *beyond* (Kant and Fichte are frequent targets here). In avoiding the Schellingian language of archetypes and images,[30] Hegel focuses on presenting the Idea as actuality and living activity, one manifest in various modes and that expresses varying stages of development, but always contains a kernel of reason. As the manifest reality of rationality as such, the Idea is not something we can strive for directly or intentionally, and finite individuals are ultimately subject to the cunning of reason.

In the following sections, I consider how Günderrode transforms the idealist context that is familiar to us in the works of Schelling and Hegel. Taking a *dual aspect* approach to the Idea of the earth, her theoretical and practical contributions correct some of the problems we find in both Schelling and Hegel, while also developing and transforming idealism in the process.

2 The Earth as a Realized Idea

Günderrode composed "The Idea of the Earth" during a period in which she was engaged in intensive study of both Fichte and Schelling, and resonances of Schelling's philosophy of nature can be heard throughout
p. 536 the fragment.[31] In spite of this, Nassar ↳ has argued that we should instead understand Günderrode's fragment as a critical engagement with Fichte's idea of human vocation, which she transforms in light of thinking about the moral goals associated with the vocation of the earth itself.[32] Although I agree with Nassar that the fragment can be helpfully read with the question of human vocation in view, Nassar's argument is premised on a division between the theoretical and practical insights of *Naturphilosophie*, a division in which one strand privileges metaphysical and epistemological questions over moral ones (for example, Schelling), and another strand privileges moral questions over theoretical ones (for example, Novalis).[33] Within this presupposed division, Günderrode presents a third path, arguing that human beings ought to transform themselves for the sake of the earth's vocation.[34] However, I think that framing Günderrode's contribution against the background of a division between the theoretical and the practical misconstrues what I take to the be the holistic and monistic framework of German idealism and romanticism, which, despite their differing approaches, defend the ultimate *unity* of theoretical and practical aims. I argue that focusing on Günderrode's approach to the earth as *Idea*, rather than as vocation, can better account for this unity, a unity that is clearly presented in the fragment itself.[35]

One of the most striking features of Günderrode's fragment is her suggestion both that

> 1) the earth is a realized Idea, and
>
> 2) that the Idea of the earth is something that is in the process of being realized.

Trying to understand both of these claims as well as their relation and compatibility for Günderrode's idealism will take up the remainder of the chapter, but for now we can note the following:

> 1) As a realized Idea, the claim appears to be that the unity and processes of the earth are a manifest reality or actuality of the Idea;
>
> 2) but as something that is in the process of being realized, the Idea of the earth appears to be a projected goal, whose complete realization is as yet uncertain.

p. 537 This section takes up the first claim from the perspective of theoretical questions surrounding the Idea, and the next section will take up the second claim from the perspective of the practical. Günderrode opens the fragment with the first claim, writing:

> the earth is a realized Idea [realisirte Idee], one that is simultaneously effective (force) and effected (appearance). It is thus a unity of soul and body [Leib], of which we call the pole of its activity that it turns outward extension, form, body; the one it turns inwards *intension*, essence, force, soul. Now, as the whole of the earth only exists through this unification of soul and body, so, too, the individual and smallest things only exist through it and cannot be conceived as split in two, for an outer without an inner, an essence without form, a force without some sort of effect, is not comprehensible.[36]

As a realized Idea, the unity that is realized in the earth is that between body and soul, but this unity has two poles of activity: an activity that turns *outward,* appearing as extension, body, and form; and an activity that turns *inward*, manifest as essence, force, and soul. The earth exists in virtue of this unity of inner and outer. Günderrode claims that this unity is the condition of individual things in two senses: first the earth, as an existing, realized unity of inner and outer, sustains the *existence* of earthly individual things; and second,

the unity between inner and outer realized in the earth is a condition for the *comprehensibility* of individual things. In combining the conditions of existence and comprehensibility in this way, Günderrode provides an alternative approach to the idealist problem of the relationship between being and thinking, or the real and the ideal, suggesting that the existence and comprehensibility of earthly things are ultimately sustained and conditioned by the earth as a realized Idea. I take it that whereas the former is not so controversial (namely, the claim that the *existence* of earthly things is sustained by and stands in a necessary relation to the unity of the earth), the latter is certainly novel, and at least potentially controversial (namely, the claim that we can only *comprehend* earthly, individual things on the basis of a unity of the inner and outer that is realized in the unity of the earth). Her presentation of the unity of the earth in terms of activity that turns outward and inward also anticipates Hegel's approach to the manifestation of the absolute against Schelling, well before Hegel himself had settled on his own view.[37]

p. 538 That the Idea for Günderrode serves as a ground for thinking about the relation between the real and the ideal is also clear from her notes on *Naturphilosophie*.[38] Here she discusses nature as the realized Idea: "now, this eternal nature is neither only real nor only ideal, neither only essence nor only form, but, again, an absolute unity of both: a realized Idea, an essence that molds itself in forms, forms that dissolve themselves in essence, and a unity of both."[39] Her emphasis on the realized Idea is philosophically important for a number of reasons. First, like Schelling and Hegel, she eschews placing the Idea in a transcendent beyond, but she also directly claims that nature, and more specifically *the earth as a whole*, is a realized Idea. Although Schelling and Hegel do affirm that nature is a realization of the Idea *to an extent*, both set clear limitations on nature as Idea in a way that Günderrode does not. For Schelling and Hegel, nature is "petrified intelligence,"[40] it is an unconscious, weak, and incomplete form of mind, whose *telos* is the spiritual life of human beings. In arguing that the earth is a realized Idea, Günderrode deliberately resists this teleological, anthropocentric view, claiming instead that the unity of the earth is self-sufficient for unfolding the unity of the ideal and the real. In her understanding of the Idea, then, she not only eschews the difficult Schellingian problem of how archetypes relate to their images, but she also displaces the organism as the key to grasping the unity of the ideal the real. Instead, she proposes an *earthly* model of idealism in which the unity of essence and form can take myriad shapes in connection with the earth as a whole.

Second, the realized Idea for Günderrode is not defined primarily by opposition, which is the case for both Schelling and Hegel. Instead, the earth expresses its unity through the synthesis and dissolution (*Auflösung*) of different elements, with life being but one result of these processes. She writes: "the most intimate mingling of different elements with the highest degree of contact and attraction we call life."[41] These processes of synthesis and dissolution generate degrees of liveliness, harmony, death, and separation, but each individual, mortal element is sustained and comprehensible only on account of participating in the unity of the earth. Although she suggests that the activity of elements on earth must itself be understood within the context of the whole solar system, and even beyond that, the entire universe, it is the unity of the earth that sufficiently manifests the realized Idea.[42] One reason for this can be found in her use of the term "collective organism" (*gemeinschaftlicher Organismus*), which suggests that the earth itself can be treated as an organism only insofar as it forms a unified ecosystem. In the context of what I have called her earthly model of idealism, the "indifference point" or identity between the ideal and the real is realized in the unity
p. 539 of the earth itself, rather than the unity of the organism. Instead of modeling idealism on the unity ↳ and activity of an organism standing in opposition to inanimate, recalcitrant nature, the unity of the earth unfolds through processes of synthesis and dissolution in which the relation between life and death is fluid and deeply interconnected. As in an ecosystem, life and death are intimately comingled and death sustains new life. Günderrode writes: "now, when a person is dead, their mixture returns to the substance of the earth, but that within them which we called force, activity, or rather that of its materials in which the more active pole predominated, reverts to that which is related to it in the earth … these elements increase the earth's life in returning to the earth."[43]

Third and finally, the earth as realized Idea is also a condition for truth. Earlier I noted Günderrode's claim that the *comprehensibility* of individual, earthly things depends upon grasping their unity of inner and outer, or essence and form, a unity that is realized most fully in the unity of the earth itself. Near the end of her fragment, Günderrode also speaks directly to the question of truth, stating:

> truth is the expression [Ausdruck] of what *is always the same* as itself; justice is the striving of the All [Allheit] in the particular [Einzelheit] to be the same as itself; beauty is being the same as oneself and harmonious; love, benevolence, compassion is the longing of the particular to enjoy itself in the All, i.e., to become aware of the All in the particular, and, renouncing personhood [Personlichkeit], to surrender itself to the All.... Through any kind of truth, justice, beauty, and virtue it becomes more like itself, more harmonious, and freer of the bonds of personhood; through every act of injustice, untruth, and selfishness this state is made more distant.[44]

Truth is situated within a holistic but differentiated context that Günderrode calls the All (*Allheit*), which exists in varying degrees of harmony and dissolution. Truth is measured in relation to the degree of harmony and reality of the All. Whereas expressions of truth, justice, beauty, and virtue bring us closer to the All and to its realization, expressions of untruth, injustice, and selfishness create distance between us and the All and diminish its degree of reality. As the context for the possibility of truth, Günderrode directly associates the All with the realized Idea of the earth, but here, she argues that the immortal All is always in the midst of a process of being realized, something that can manifest degrees of reality. One way to interpret Günderrode's argument that the earth is a context of truth is through the idea of environments, or *Umwelten*, which open up a perceptual field of significance in which forms of theoretical and practical knowledge become possibilities.[45] Taking the earth as the interconnected system of all such environments, the increase of knowledge allows us to better bring that unity and harmony into view, whereas untruth and falsehoods diminish our capacity to see and ↳ comprehend that same unity. Moving beyond the prevalent idealist schema of thinking about knowledge and truth according to the relation between subject and object, Günderrode's earthly model of idealism does away with the need for the very division between transcendental philosophy and a philosophy of nature, and instead conceives of truth and knowledge in connection with the unity of the earth as a whole.

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3 The Idea of the Earth in the Process of Being Realized

Although Günderrode begins her fragment with the claim that earth is the realized Idea, as the fragment progresses, she also suggests that the Idea of the earth is in the process of being realized, where this realization remains an uncertainty. Although Günderrode expresses uncertainty concerning whether or not the Idea of the earth will be fully realized, she does discuss in detail the processes through which the Idea *may* be realized, as well as the ultimate goal of these processes, which she calls the earth as a "collective organism" (*gemeinschaftlicher Organismus*).[46] Importantly, the uncertainty concerning the realization of the earth as a collective organism is not barred in principle, condemned to an infinite striving whose ultimate failure is assured in advance. Nothing in Günderrode's metaphysics suggests that the achievement of this goal is an ontological impossibility, which means that the uncertainty and even unlikelihood of its achievement is due to the contingency of history and individual agents acting within the limitations of prescribed social and political contexts.[47]

Before turning directly to Günderrode's discussion of the processes through which the Idea of the earth may or may not be realized, I want to address a potential objection here, namely, that she cannot claim *both* that the earth is a realized Idea, *and* that the earth is in the process of being realized without falling into a contradiction. To answer this, I propose that she takes a *dual aspect* approach to the Idea of the earth, one that is suggested in her claim that "all things have a double being." She writes:

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> all things are, so to speak, finite presentations of the infinite, and so to a greater or lesser extent, all things have a double being [ein doppeltes Dasein]: an individual ↳ limited being, insofar as they constitute an independent entity [Wesen] for themselves; and a universal being, insofar as they are dependent on and connected with the universe, and therefore are, at the same time, participants in the infinite. This double being is the principle of all entities [Wesen]. Thus all the bodies [Körper] and materials of the earth are each an individual being for themselves and also, at the same time, a universal being insofar as they are an element that belongs to the great whole of the earth. The earth itself has this double life.[48]

Günderrode goes on to discuss the double life of the earth in terms of the earth's movement around its own axis and the earth's movement around the sun, but this general, philosophical distinction between the aspect of things taken as individual, independent, and limited, in contrast to the aspect of things taken as universal, connected with the universe, and participants in the infinite, can helpfully situate what I am calling Günderrode's dual aspect approach to the Idea of the earth. My suggestion is that whereas her treatment of the earth as a realized Idea considers the earth from the aspect of its universal, infinite being, her treatment of the earth as something that is in the process of being realized considers it from the aspect of its individual, limited being. That is, as a universal being that is connected with the broader universe, the earth is a realized Idea because it participates in the universe and manifests the unity of essence and form that supports and sustains the individual elements of the earth. As an individual being that is both limited and independent, the earth is continually in the process of being realized in virtue of the ongoing synthesis and dissolution of elements that can enliven or devitalize the earth. Whereas the first perspective presents the general, theoretical tenets of an idealism in which the unity of the earth as the All supplies a condition and context for truth, the second perspective takes up the practical dimension of agential activity within the context of earthly life. I now want to turn to this second perspective to consider Günderrode's understanding of the earth's processes which strive to realize the earth as a collective organism.

Although there are undoubtedly ethical undertones in Günderrode's account of what is at stake in the realization of the Idea of the earth, I will begin by turning to the way she describes the processes at work in this development. She writes:

> each form that [the elements] produce is only a development of their life-principle. But the earth bears the life-material given back to it again in ever new appearances, until through ever new transformations everything capable of life in it has come to life. This would be when all mass would become organic; only then would the idea of the earth be realized.[49]

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> Thus the All [Allheit] comes to life through the downfall of the particular [Einzelheit], and the particular lives on immortally in the All whose life it developed ↳ while alive, and even after death elevates and increases, and so by living and dying helps to realize the Idea of the earth.[50]

The earth's ongoing realization takes place by means of the combination of earthly elements into determinate forms and appearances, some combinations of which constitute life, and their dissolution back into the earth by breaking up or dying as the case may be. As I showed earlier within the context of the earth as an ecosystem, life and death are intimately comingled, so much so that Günderrode claims that the particular lives on after death in the All. In addition, Günderrode suggests that the realization of the earth strives toward the increase and elevation of life, with the goal of all mass becoming organic. On the surface, the goal of all mass becoming organic seems not only impossible, but somewhat absurd. Moreover, why would this be a desirable goal at all? I suggest that her further formulation of the collective organism clarifies this somewhat, as well as warns against reading the goal of all mass becoming organic too literally. Instead, it is more fruitful to read Günderrode as suggesting that processes that enliven and harmonize the earth bring us closer to the goal of realizing the earth as a sustainable, well-functioning, and flourishing

ecosystem, and that there are clearly processes both human and nonhuman that can undermine that goal—emphasizing of course that human activity overwhelmingly undermines that goal to the point of catastrophe in our present historical stage.

She describes the idea of a collective organism and her doubts concerning its realization as follows:

> the earth can therefore only attain its proper being [*Dasein*] when its organic and inorganic appearances dissolve in a collective organism [*gemeinschaftlichen Organismus*], when both factors —being (body) and thinking (spirit)—penetrate each other to the point of indistinguishability, where all body would also at the same time be thought, all thinking at the same time body, and a fully transfigured body, without lack or illness and immortal... I do not assert whether the earth will be altogether successful in organizing itself immortally like this.[51]

The idea of a collective organism suggests thinking about the earth as a collective community of both living and nonliving elements. The elements are mutually sustaining, and so their "dissolving" into a collective organism suggests that they coexist in symbiotic relations giving shape to a living ecosystem. The immortality of the earth can be understood in terms of sustainability: processes and relations that enable the long-term sustainability of the earth as a living ecosystem help to realize the Idea of the earth, whereas processes and relations that destroy the possibility of a sustainable earth devitalize the earth and move us further away from the goal of a collective organism. To be clear, although I think that Günderrode's
p. 543 approach to immortality extends beyond the thought ↳ of sustainability, venturing into considerations of reincarnation and the afterlife,[52] the emphasis in this fragment on the goal of a collective organism makes sustainability a central feature of her ethical outlook. In fact, individual acts are measured according to whether or not they bring us closer or further from the goal of a collective organism. She writes: "all single virtues and excellences are therefore mere attempts by the earth-spirit to bring itself nearer to [realizing the earth as Idea]," whereas acts of injustice, untruth, and selfishness make the realization of the earth as Idea more remote.[53] Günderrode presents a novel and clear path for her practical philosophy, which extends the context of ethical life to the context of the earth as a whole. In presenting an ecological, earthly approach to thinking about the ultimate ends of both human and nonhuman activity, the idea of a collective organism is a powerful alternative to the near-exclusive attention in the idealist tradition on the goal of human freedom. Without denying the absolute importance of that latter goal, human freedom can nonetheless only be realized within the context of a habitable, enlivened, and sustainable earth.

4 Conclusion: The Unity of the Theoretical and the Practical in the Idea of the Earth

In focusing on Günderrode's presentation of the earth as Idea, I have argued that she defends both a theoretical and practical dimension of the Idea, addressing on the one hand, questions of knowledge and truth, as well as the long-standing idealist problem of the relation between the ideal and the real; on the other hand, her fragment also addresses questions of ethical agency and the ultimate goals toward which living activity strives. In combining these considerations through a focus on the earth, I want to conclude by suggesting that her approach puts forward two innovations, perhaps even two challenges, to prevailing idealist assumptions of this period.

First, in contrast to the focus on a subject/object schema that defines how Schelling and Hegel (and also Fichte) understand the absolute, Günderrode proposes that questions about the existence and comprehensibility of things can instead be addressed by considering the earth as a context of knowledge and truth. Generalizing somewhat across different figures and texts, the problem of knowledge for the idealists is always framed via the distinction, relation, identity, and opposition between subject and object,

which results in different problems to be solved depending on whether one has theoretical or practical questions in view. Taking Hegel as the representative here, the Idea of the true consists in reconciling
p. 544 subject/object opposition into identity through theoretical means—that ↳ is, subjects make the world intelligible by rendering it conformable with their theoretical capacities, which, depending on the subject in question, involves capacities such as sensation, as well as more sophisticated means such as definitions and theories, all of which are mediated by concepts, judgments, and syllogistic inferences. The Idea of the good consists in reconciling subject/object opposition into identity by transforming the world through action to make it conformable and hospitable to the living agent's needs and desires, and ultimately, its freedom.[54] For Hegel, this general schema for both theoretical and practical activity both privileges and is modeled on the activity of life. He states: "the perpetual action of life is thus Absolute Idealism; it becomes an other which, however, is always sublated. If life were a realist, it would have respect for the outer world; but it always inhibits the reality of the other and transforms it into its own self."[55] Although he indeed describes the earth itself as an organism that is the basis of life, the relation of living things and the earth consists in overcoming the opposition set by the subject/object divide, such that theoretical and practical aims, for humans and nonhuman animals alike, are fulfilled by transforming the world into an image of the self.[56]

In proposing the earth as a model for and realization of the Idea, Günderrode challenges the insistence on subject/object opposition and identity as the only path for understanding both theoretical and practical aims. On her account, individual things become comprehensible (*begreiflich*) not by sublating them into the form of self, but by grasping their connection to the unity of the earth. In claiming that "truth is the expression of what *is always the same* as itself," she does not mean that truth is static, ever-present, or self-evident; rather, she means to suggest that truth is measured in connection with its ability to reveal the earth's underlying unity and harmony. This is not to privilege unity and harmony over opposition and strife, for the latter are essential to the processes of synthesis and dissolution of elements that make up the life of the earth, contributing to its overall enlivenment or devitalization. Instead, truth, along with justice and virtue, bring us closer to comprehending and realizing the earth as a unified, interconnected, and
p. 545 sustainable totality, whereas untruth and injustice bring us further ↳ from that goal. Theoretical and practical aims are comprehensible, determined, and realized not through the form of the self, but in relation to the earth as a living whole.

With the earth as a model for the realization of the Idea, Günderrode's second innovation and intervention pertains to the question of holism. It is relatively uncontroversial that the idealists—especially Schelling and Hegel—are committed to holism in a number of respects. Indeed, the extensive interest and emphasis on the form of the organism is due in part to their contention that it provides the best model for understanding genuine, self-sufficient wholes. Organic unity, as opposed to mere mechanical connection, becomes a standard for both truth and goodness: in connection with the former, Hegel goes as far as opposing his "living" logic to the "lifeless bones" of his opponents; in connection with the latter, he claims that ethical life is the "living good," developing an organic concept of the state as part of his theory of ethical life.[57] In associating the Idea of the earth with what she calls the All, Günderrode subtly shifts her holism in an ecological direction, making the earth the relevant whole of which we, and all other earthly elements, are a part. The elements of this whole include both living and nonliving individuals, self-conscious and unconscious beings, but it is through the processes of living and dying that the Idea of the earth as genuine whole might be realized. Günderrode's ecological holism attempts to uncover what it might mean for the earth to be the context for knowledge and truth, as well as a context for ethical action. The shift from the organic to the ecological, where the ecological does not exclude the organic, but sets its unity and activity in a wider context, opens up a new way of understanding the ultimate aims of living and human activity, which extend beyond individuals and even individual species, but takes into consideration how that activity contributes to, is dependent on, and is sustained by the earth as a whole.

Two features of Günderrode's ecological holism are worth mentioning in particular. First, an ecological approach does not eschew the importance of organic activity and form. Instead, it proposes that the best model for understanding a genuine, self-sufficient whole is not an organism per se, but the essential relations between organisms and their environments, where the earth constitutes the totality of such interconnected environments. As I have shown, the key terms of Günderrode's idealism are not identity and opposition, but synthesis and dissolution: an ecological holism makes categories such as reciprocity and symbiosis central for understanding the essential relations that constitute a genuine whole. A second consequence of this ecological approach is a deprioritizing—though *not erasure*—of the importance of self-sufficient individuals and individuality. This is signaled through Günderrode's talk of "elements," but it is also evident in her suggestion that "renouncing personhood" is a necessary aspect of understanding the truth of the particular in connection with the All.[58] For Günderrode, ↳ the boundaries of an individual are often indeterminate, in constant flux, and always permeable, features that are necessary if we are to grasp the relations that constitute a genuine whole. Although Günderrode's fragment no doubt only presents a gesture toward this ecological holism, rather than its full, systematic articulation, this gesture is nonetheless an important intervention to existing idealist debates, posing a challenge to long-standing frameworks and assumptions.

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In this chapter, I have argued that Günderrode's fragment, "The Idea of the Earth," represents a novel contribution to idealist philosophy that addresses both theoretical and practical concerns. Focusing on a dual aspect approach framed by her claim both that the earth is a realized Idea, and that the Idea of the earth is yet to be realized, I suggested that she presents an earthly model of idealism, arguing for the importance of the earth as a context of both truth and ethical life. In situating her work in contrast to Schelling and Hegel, I hope to have shown that Günderrode's work is an original contribution to the philosophical period of German idealism and romanticism. As philosophical research on her work continues to grow, our narratives of this period will no doubt change in interesting and unexpected ways.

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Notes

1 See John Zammito, *The Gestation of German Biology: Philosophy and Physiology from Stahl to Schelling* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018); Robert Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life: Science and Philosophy in the Age of Goethe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); and Peter Hanns Reill, *Vitalization Nature in the Enlightenment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

2 See Alison Stone, "Alienation from Nature in early German Romanticism," *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 17, no. 1 (2014): 41–54. Stone contrasts the approach to alienation from and reconciliation with nature taken by Hegel, Fichte, and Marx with that of Schlegel and Novalis, arguing that the latter, romantic approach in which reconciliation with nature involves an ineradicable dimension of alienation, is better suited to understanding and addressing our present environmental crisis.

3 Andrea Wulf, *The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2015), 2.

4 On the importance of the study of the earth and its history in the shift from a descriptive, classificatory approach to nature to the "history of nature" approach that explicitly recognized nature as undergoing change and development, see Zammito, *Gestation of German Biology*, 173.

5 See Anna C. Ezekiel, introduction to *Poetic Fragments*, by Karoline von Günderrode, trans. Anna C. Ezekiel (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2016), 1–37. On Günderrode's contributions to the philosophy of nature, see Wolfgang Westphal, *Karoline von Günderrode und "Naturdenken um 1800"* (Essen: Verlag Die Blaue Eule, 1993).

6 See Anna C. Ezekiel, "Revolution and Revitalization: Karoline von Günderrode's Political Philosophy and Its Metaphysical

Foundations," *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, September 17, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2020.1806033; and Dalia Nassar, "The Human Vocation and the Question of the Earth: Karoline von Günderrode's Philosophy of Nature," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 104, no. 1 (2022): 108–130. Günderrode's notes on Fichte's *Bestimmung des Menschen* and her notes on Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* are translated by Ezekiel in Dalia Nassar and Kristin Gjesdal, eds., *Women Philosophers in the Long Nineteenth Century: The German Tradition* (New York: Oxford, 2021).

7 I will capitalize "Idea" when referring to its technical use in the texts discussed in order to distinguish it from ordinary uses of the term.

8 See Ezekiel, "Earth, Spirit, Humanity: Community and the Nonhuman in Karoline von Günderrode's 'Idea of the Earth,'" forthcoming in *Romanticism and Political Ecology*, ed. Kir Kuiken (Romantic Praxis Circle); and Ezekiel, "Revolution and Revitalization," 4. Nassar notes that Günderrode first learned of Schelling's philosophy in the summer of 1804 ("The Human Vocation," 4). In *Bruno*, Schelling writes: "the created earth, for instance, is not the true earth, but only an image of the earth which is uncreated, unoriginated, and never to pass away. But the idea of the earth also contains the ideas of all things that are included in it or that come into existence in it." See F. W. J. Schelling, *Bruno, Or On the Natural and the Divine Principle of Things* (1802), ed. and trans. Michael G. Vater (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 125; F. W. J. Schelling, *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Hartmut Baumgartner, Wilhelm G. Jacobs, Jörg Janzen, and Hermann Krings (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1976–), I:11, 1:347.

9 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. and trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) /*Werkausgabe in 12 Bänden*, ed. Wilhelm Weischedel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974), III/IV: A313/B370.

10 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason/Werkausgabe*, III/IV: A321–322/B378–379.

11 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason/Werkausgabe*, III/IV: A409/B436.

12 The ideas have a regulative rather than a constitutive use for theoretical reason and also serve as the ground of the postulates of pure practical reason.

13 Schelling's choice also reflects his attempt to revive Neoplatonic philosophy in a post-Kantian context. On Schelling's engagement with Neoplatonic ideas, see Werner Beierwaltes, "The Legacy of Neoplatonism in F. W. J. Schelling's Thought," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 10, no. 4 (2002): 393–428.

14 This is most clearly stated in the opening of Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism*, a text with which Günderrode was familiar.

15 Schelling, *Bruno*, 136/*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, I:11, 1:358–359.

16 On the development of Hegel's speculative identity thesis during this same period, see chap. 3 of Karen Ng, *Hegel's Concept of Life: Self-Consciousness, Freedom, Logic* (New York: Oxford, 2020).

17 Julie R. Klein, "'By Eternity I Understand': Eternity According to Spinoza," *Iyyun: The Jerusalem Philosophical Quarterly* 51 (July 2002): 297. On eternity in Schelling's *Bruno*, see also Jason M. Wirth, "Who Is Schelling's Bruno?" *Rivista di estetica* 74 (2020): 181–190.

18 Schelling, *Bruno*, 143/*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, I:11, 1:365–366.

19 *Bruno* opens with a discussion of the relation between beauty and truth, which is often read as a continuation of the account of the relation between art and philosophy in the conclusion of the *1800* System. In Hegel's aesthetics, beauty is understood as the sensuous appearance of the Idea.

20 F. W. J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), trans. Peter Heath (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978), 5/*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, I:9, 1:29.

21 G. W. F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. George DiGiovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 670/*Werke in 20 Bänden*, ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1969), 6:462.

22 Schelling, *Bruno*, 221/*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, I:11, 1:446.

23 See Schelling, Bruno, 151, 160, 162, 202, 210–211/*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, I:11, 1:373, 383, 384, 425, 435–436.

24 Another possible model here for understanding Schelling's account of the archetype/image relation is Kant's account of symbolic intuition and aesthetic ideas. See chap. 2 of Eliza Starbuck Little, "The Self-Exhibition of Reason: Hegel on Intuition and Logical Content" (PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 2020).

25 Schelling, *Bruno*, 150–151/*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, I:11, 1:372–373.

26 Schelling *System*, 122/*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, I:9, 1:187.

27 Schelling, *Bruno*, 176/*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, I:11, 1:399.

28 Hegel discusses the essential relation between inner and outer as manifestation in the transition to the section on "Actuality" in the *Science of Logic*. See Hegel, *Science of Logic*, 460–464/*Werke*, 6:179–185.

29 Hegel, *Science of Logic*, 671/*Werke*, 6:463–464.

30 Hegel does not *entirely* eschew this language; in the addition of the opening of the *Philosophy of Mind*, it states that the philosophical approach to *Geist* comprehends it as "ein Abbild der ewigen Idee" (Hegel, *Werke*, 10:§377Z).

31 The "Idea of the Earth" was meant to be published in Günderrode's third collection of writings, *Melete*, in 1806. However,

its publication was stopped by Georg Friedrich Creuzer after her death in that same year for fear of exposing their affair, and the collection remained unpublished until 1906. See Ezekiel, introduction to *Poetic Fragments*, 7. There are two versions of the fragment, and in what follows I cite from the following text: Karolina von Günderrode, "Idee der Erde," in *Sämtliche Werke und ausgewählte Studien*, ed. Walter Morgenthaler (Frankfurt am Main: Roter Stern, 1990–91), vol. 1, 446–449 (henceforth SW, followed by volume and page number). The English translations used are Anna Ezekiel's, found in Nassar and Gjesdal, *Women Philosophers in the Long Nineteenth Century*.

32 Nassar contrasts her Fichtean reading with those of Morgenthaler, Westphal, and Helga Dormann, who all interpret Günderrode on Schellingian terms. See Nassar, "The Human Vocation," 5, n.13.

33 Nassar, "The Human Vocation," 2–3.

34 Nassar, "The Human Vocation," 6.

35 Alison Stone and Giulia Valpione also remark that within their consideration of the women philosophers writing during this period, Günderrode's work comes closest to "Idealist system-building." See chapter 17 here.

36 SW I, 446.

37 Hegel's 1804–1805 Jena system of logic and metaphysics contains some of the categories of his mature logic, but the relation between inner and outer as a key component for understanding infinity, life, and the manifestation of the absolute had not yet been fully developed at this time. In the Jena system, Hegel discusses some of the relevant categories (most notably, *Wechselwirkung*) under the heading "Das Verhältnis." See Hegel, *Jenaer Systementwürfe II: Logik, Metaphysik, Naturphilosophie*, ed. Rolf-Peter Horstmann (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1982). In the *Science of Logic*, Hegel discusses the concept (*der Begriff*) as turning inward and outward. See Hegel, *Science of Logic*, 529–549/*Werke*, 6:273–301; and the discussion in chap. 5 of Ng, *Hegel's Concept of Life*.

38 These are notes taken from her study of Schelling, published in SW II.

39 SW II, 379.

40 Schelling, *System*, 6/*Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, I:9, 1:31; Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature/Werke*, 9:§247Z.

41 SW I, 446.

42 SW I, 448.

43 SW I, 447.

44 SW I, 448–449.

45 See Jakob von Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*, trans. Joseph D. O'Neil (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). On *Umwelten* and their connection to species-specific capacities and senses, see Ed Yong, *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us* (New York: Penguin, 2022).

46 For a recent attempt to reconsider the idea of the earth as an organism (known as the Gaia hypothesis) from a Darwinian perspective, see W. Ford Doolittle, "Is the Earth an Organism?," *Aeon*, December 3, 2020, https://aeon.co/essays/the-gaia-hypothesis-reimagined-by-one-of-its-key-sceptics.

47 Günderrode addresses questions concerning agency within the constraints of social and political contexts in a number of her dramas, including *Hildegrund* and *Muhammad, the Prophet of Mecca*, which are published in *Poetic Fragments*. Ezekiel argues that Günderrode's model of agency should be understood in contrast to the Kantian notion of freedom as autonomy, emphasizing instead that agency depends fundamentally upon the finitude and vulnerability of human subjects in relation to environments that escape their full control. See Anna C. Ezekiel, "Metamorphosis, Personhood, and Power in Karolina von Günderrode," *European Romantic Review* 25, no. 6: 773–791.

48 SW II, 368.

49 SW I, 447.

50 SW I, 447.

51 SW I, 448.

52 In "The Idea of the Earth," Günderrode associates her account of the relation between life and death with the "idea of the Indians of the transmigration of souls" (SW I, 447–448). See also "An Apocalyptic Fragment"; and "Piedro," "The Pilgrims," and "The Kiss in the Dream," in *Poetic Fragments*.

53 SW I, 449.

54 See the discussion of the Idea of the true and the Idea of the good in *Science of Logic*, 689–734/*Werke*, 6:487–548, which take their point of departure from subjective drive. Hegel also discusses the activity of the animal organism in terms of theoretical and practical processes. See *Philosophy of Nature/Werke* 9:§§357–366.

55 Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature/Werke*, 9:§337Z.

56 For attempts to employ Hegel's thought as instructive for environmental philosophy, see Alison Stone, *Petrified Intelligence: Nature in Hegel's Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004); Nicholas Mowad, "The Natural World of Spirit: Hegel on the Value of Nature," *Environmental Philosophy* 9, no. 2 (Fall 2012): 47–66; and Wendell Kisner, *Ecological Ethics and Living Subjectivity in Hegel's Logic: The Middle Voice of Autopoietic Life* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014). For attempts to employ Schelling's thought for the same, see Elaine P. Miller, "'The World Must be Romanticised …':

The (Environmental) Ethical Implications of Schelling's Organic Worldview," *Environmental Values* 14, no. 3 (August 2005): 295–316; Vincent Le, "Schelling and the Sixth Extinction: The Environmental Ethics Behind Schelling's Anthropomorphization of Nature," *Cosmos and History* 13, no. 3 (2017): 107–129; and Dalia Nassar, "An 'Ethics for the Transition': Schelling's Critique of Negative Philosophy and Its Significance for Environmental Thought," in *Schelling's Philosophy: Freedom, Nature, and Systematicity*, ed. G. Anthony Bruno (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 231–248.

57 Hegel, *Science of Logic*, 12/*Werke*, 5:18; and *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)/*Werke* 7:§142. Dean Moyar's *Hegel's Value* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), develops an interpretation of Hegel's theory of value modeled on the concept of life.

58 SW I, 449.