Women, Women Writers, and Early German Romanticism
Anna Ezekiel

Early German Romanticism is sometimes claimed to present a radical challenge to the gender norms of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[1] However, critics argue that the romantic concern with the efforts of an active "male" subject to rediscover its lost wholeness and create an aesthetic self through interactions with a "feminine" nature, often through the intercession of women, has reinforced a dichotomous view of gender, along with its damaging stereotypes.[2] In particular, women are often presented in early German Romanticism as connected to nature and able to mediate the divine, already experiencing the unity with nature and the absolute that the alienated male subject must retrieve.[3] Overt statements that associate women with passivity, motherhood, non-discursive reasoning and "otherness" add to the moments in which early German Romanticism risks reinscribing, rather than undermining, the longstanding association of women and the feminine with nature and their exclusion from reason and subjecthood. Even Schlegel's famous call for a "gentle masculinity" and an "independent femininity," which would mitigate the characteristics bestowed on men and women by nature, arguably presupposes the dichotomies that he aims to subvert. The same can be said of Novalis' depictions of gender fluidity, in which male protagonists become "feminized," and thereby productive, through taking on the features of the female characters with which they interact. The early German romantic ideal of a unified humanity that merges masculine and feminine characteristics and re-integrates the alienated subject and object, together with the modes of knowledge of discourse and intuition, arguably does not reject gender stereotypes, but can only function as part of a paradigm in which these gendered characteristics are seen as fundamental.

Nonetheless, this chapter argues that a critique of gender norms is present in early German Romanticism, although it appears inconsistently and competes with a more conservative model. The first two sections of the chapter respectively describe the thought of Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis on women and gender and present feminist criticisms of this model, without attempting to defend early German Romanticism from this critique. A third section explains the integral place of gender in early German romantic thought, showing why problems with the early German romantic model of gender create more thoroughgoing difficulties for the romantic project in general. Section four provides a partial defense of early German Romanticism against

the criticisms raised in sections two and three, arguing that early German romantics such as Schlegel and Novalis were well aware of the difficulties and pitfalls of attempting to move beyond the perspective of the subject, and, in particular, of the implication of this subject in a masculinist discourse. However, I argue that, despite this self-awareness, the emancipatory potential of some early German romantic ideas about women cannot be realized within the romantic project of self-poiesis as it is conceptualized by Friedrich Schlegel, Novalis, and other male romantics, i.e., within a world characterized in dichotomous terms that are heavily gendered.

The last two sections of the chapter focus on the work of two female writers associated with early German Romanticism, arguing that these writers provide a more consistent critique of gender norms and that their writings show promise for creating a model of self and world that escapes these problematic stereotypes. Dorothea Veit-Schlegel's novel *Florentin* highlights problems with the romantic model of self-poiesis, while Karoline von Günderrode challenges the dualistic view of nature that forms the starting point for early German Romanticism, and with it its dichotomous view of gender. In rejecting a model that presents the subject as constituting itself through interactions with its complementary opposite, these writers also create alternative conceptualizations of the tension between fragmentation and wholeness, and the quest for identity and unity, that is central to the early German romantic project.

1. The early German romantic account of gender and its emancipatory aspirations

It has sometimes been claimed that early German Romanticism presents a radical and emancipatory view of women, gender, and gender relations, particularly in the early work of Friedrich Schlegel. Hans Eichner, for example, states that "Schlegel's *Lucinde* is a passionate protest against the inequality of the sexes and the condemnation of sexuality."[4] In particular, Schlegel's essays "On Diotima" (1795) and "On Philosophy: To Dorothea" (1799) and his novel *Lucinde* (1799) question conceptions of the nature and role of women that prevailed at the time and attempt to undermine a rigid division of characteristics according to gender. The same effort to undermine fixed gender categories is found in the work of Novalis and other writers associated with early German Romanticism such as Schleiermacher, Eichendorff, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Kleist, and Johann Wilhelm Ritter.[5]

Schlegel wrote against a background of debate about whether women were capable of

pursuing an intellectual education and whether they ought to even if capable, and in which the natural suitability of women to domesticity and motherhood was widely asserted.[6] The early Schlegel argued that women could and should be encouraged to develop intellectually, and that they should especially study philosophy. He devoted "On Diotima" to demonstrating that women in certain periods and states of ancient Greece were educated, aesthetically creative, and participated in public life, to no detriment of health or morals, and claimed, in "On Philosophy," that "philosophy is indispensable to women[.]"[7] Schlegel recognized, furthermore, the social constraints affecting women's development, arguing that women's expected roles as wives and mothers placed burdens on them that prevented their full flourishing:

> Not the vocation of women but their *nature* and *position* are domestic. And I hold it for a more useful than pleasant truth that even the best marriage, motherhood itself and the family can so easily so entrap and pull them down with needs, with economy and the world, that they are no longer mindful of their divine origin and likeness.[8]

> The lifestyle of women has the propensity to limit them ever more and more and to bury their spirit[.][9]

Closely associated with these claims was a theory of gender that Schlegel linked to his philosophy. To Schlegel, full humanity would comprise an integrated whole of masculine and feminine characteristics, whereas the strict separation of these characteristics into different individuals resulted in incomplete human beings: "In fact masculinity and femininity, as they are usually taken and practiced, are the most dangerous hindrances to humanity, which, according to an old legend, is at home in the middle and can only be a harmonious whole, which suffers no segregation."[10]

Accordingly, the realization of full humanity would require a mitigation of the extremes of gender characteristics:

> Only gentle masculinity, only independent femininity is the right, the true, and beautiful. If it is so, then one must in no way further exaggerate the character of gender, which is only an inborn, natural profession, but rather seek to mitigate it through strong counterweights, so that individuality may find a potentially unlimited space, in order to move freely in the whole region of humanity[.][11]

Thus, men should attempt to become more complete human beings by mellowing their masculine characteristics and taking on characteristics of femininity, while women should develop more masculine traits. Schlegel concludes from this that women should pursue philosophy, developing their intellectual faculties to counteract their "poetic" and "religious" nature. Men, conversely, have a "philosophical" nature and should pursue poesy.[12]

As this last point indicates, while Schlegel claims men and women should each combine masculine and feminine characteristics, he *does* maintain that there are essential differences between men and women. In the above quote, he claims that gender is an "inborn, natural profession," even if it can be "mitigated" by "strong counterweights." Elsewhere, he states that "Every *man* has genius; harmony is the essence of woman"[13] and that woman's "innermost essence is poesy."[14] At various points, Schlegel explicitly connects women by nature to poesy, religion, moral goodness, intuition, beauty, harmony, love, passivity and sympathy, and men to philosophy, independence, energy, rationality, activity, genius and the sublime.[15] These align with associations between these categories and characteristics of masculinity and femininity that were propounded by Schlegel's contemporaries.[16]

Schlegel thus claims that men and women do have stereotypically gender-coded essential characteristics, but that, in pursuit of perfected humanity, efforts at self-development should aim to mitigate, rather than exaggerate, these differences: "the sex-difference is only an externality of human existence and in the end indeed nothing more than a good establishment of nature, that one indeed cannot arbitrarily destroy or reverse, but certainly may subordinate to reason, and form according to its higher laws." The result will not be unfeminine women or unmasculine men; the development of the opposing characteristics will round out, rather than obscure, those that each gender naturally possesses. In the case of women, "the concern of suffering damage to moral innocence and especially femininity through this gain of spiritual development [...] seems to me to be as ungrounded as it is unmasculine! For where once femininity is present, there is no moment in which it does not remind its owner of its existence[.]"[17]

Schlegel's ideal end-point for this exchange of characteristics would be an androgynous being that combined male and female characteristics.[18] However, this end-point is only a regulative ideal. On Schlegel's model, the characteristics of sex and gender that are bestowed upon human beings by nature can be shaped, enhanced, minimized, and exchanged, but in the end women will remain feminine and men will remain masculine. The realizable objective that

Schlegel hopes can emerge is a reduction in the extremes of masculinity and femininity that, he believes, limit individual human beings. This is to occur through a continual back-and-forth exchange of characteristics between the two poles of a masculine and a feminine being. As Lisa Roetzel notes, "In the play of *Wechsel* [alternation, or exchange], [...] each side takes on the qualities of the other without losing its own fundamental characteristics."[19]

In *Lucinde*, Schlegel presents his theory of gender in the romantic form of the novel. In one passage, the protagonist, Julius, describes to Lucinde the significance of playfully reversing the roles expected of male and female lovers:

> One [of the shapes and situations of happiness] above all is wittiest and most beautiful: when we exchange roles and in childish high spirits compete to see who can mimic the other more convincingly, whether you are better at imitating the protective intensity of the man, or I the appealing devotion of the woman. [....] I see here a wonderful, deeply meaningful allegory of the development of man and woman to full and complete humanity."[20]

For the early German Romantics, the practical outcomes of this exchange for the development of individual human beings include a coherent, meaningful life and the development of creative genius. Both Schlegel and Novalis present the adoption of feminine characteristics by men as essential to the emergence of a higher level of human existence, represented by the artist. In *Lucinde*, an "Apprenticeship for Manhood" describes Julius' development through interactions with various women, especially Lucinde, into an artist and complete human being. This development culminates in Julius' relationship with Lucinde, who he describes as uniting all the characteristics of women—"at once the most delicate lover, the most wonderful companion, and the most perfect friend"[21]—and representing the unity of nature: "you know of no separations; your being is one and indivisible."[22] Julius experiences that unity himself and recognizes himself in the other through the mirror of Lucinde: "In you [my most cherished and secret intention] has come to fruition and I'm not afraid to admire and love myself in this mirror. Only here do I see myself complete and harmonious, or rather, see all of humanity in me and in you."[23] Once Julius is in a relationship with Lucinde, his life acquires cohesion and meaning and he finally enjoys success as an artist: "Just as his artistic ability developed and he was able to achieve with ease what he had been unable to accomplish with all his powers of exertion and hard work before, so too his life now came to be a work of art for him[.]"[24]

A similar movement drives Novalis' novel *Henry of Ofterdingen*, in which Henry becomes a poet through the mediation of women, particularly his fiancée Mathilde. As in the work of Schlegel, Novalis' writings present gender as, to some extent, fluid and allowing an exchange of gendered characteristics between men and women, or at least from women to men. Like Schlegel, Novalis claims that gender characteristics are not absolutely tied to physical sex but can also be developed in the opposite sex, stating, for example, that "man is to an extent also woman, as woman is man."[25] *Henry of Ofterdingen* involves numerous examples of men taking on stereotypically feminine characteristics and absorbing women into themselves. Most literally, in a story told by Mathilde's father Klingsohr, the ashes of a dead mother are consumed by the surviving characters, who seem transfigured.[26] Several scholars mention the feminization of Henry himself, especially in frequent references to his lips and mouth,[27] which are presented as open, receptive and productive, suggesting, as Alice Kuzniar notes, "a conflation of parturition and conception metaphors."[28] Kuzniar points out the connection in the novel between voices— especially women's voices—and the lips or mouth, which are used to speak and, in several cases, to transfer the ability to sing and write poetry from women to Henry or other male characters.[29] In particular, it is Mathilde's opening of Henry's lips with her kiss and whispering into his mouth that allows Henry to "give birth to poetry," as Kuzniar puts it.[30] As Kuzniar concludes, "Novalis aligns motherhood with poetic creativity, with the result that the male hero must ultimately become feminized in order to write."[31]

As in Schlegel's writings, in Novalis' work women function as mirrors to male protagonists, revealing the protagonists as ultimately one with nature and the universe, and mediating unification with that oneness—a return to their original, absolute self. For example, in "Hymns to the Night," the narrator's dead beloved appears in a vision and connects him to eternity.[32] In *Henry of Ofterdingen*, too, the ultimate unity that is mediated by women to men is unity with the Absolute. Henry says of Mathilde, "Does a distinct, undivided being not belong to her contemplation and worship?"[33] and, to her: "You are the saint who brings my wishes to God, through whom he reveals himself to me[.]"[34] In *Henry of Ofterdingen*, as in "Hymns," this unity is ultimately achieved through death. In the unfinished second volume, it is after Mathilde's death that Henry finds his voice and becomes a poet, prompted by hearing Mathilde's voice echoing from a rock. In the published part of the novel, this event is prefigured in Henry's observation of Mathilde, shortly before dreaming of her death, that "She will dissolve me into

music. She will become my inmost soul, the guardian of my holy fire."[35] In "Hymns," the narrator's dead beloved plays this role of mediator of the infinite. The idea that death will enable the final unification of an alienated (male) subject with nature (represented by a female figure) is also suggested by Schlegel. For example, in *Lucinde* Julius imagines Lucinde's death and the subsequent continuation of his own life: "The years slowly passed by and one event tiresomely succeeded another; one task and then another achieved its end [...]. They were only holy symbols for me, all of them referring to the only beloved one, who was the mediator between my dismembered self and indivisible eternal humanity."[36] This echoes Henry's reflection, following the manifestation of the dead Mathilde's voice, that "Voice and language became living again within him and everything seemed to him more known and prophetic than before, so that death appeared to him a higher revelation of life[.]"[37]

The ability of women, associated with nature, to mediate unity, selfhood, and completion to men is thus an important theme in early German Romanticism. Although this chapter does not explore the work of other male romantic writers, others have argued that Schleiermacher, Eichendorff, E.T.A. Hoffmann, and Johann Wilhelm Ritter also present gender categories as fluid and women as having a high moral or religious value that they can mediate to men.[38]

Another important aspect of the position of women in early German Romanticism is the status granted to sexuality. Schlegel maintained that the ideal relationship between lovers would be both sexually fulfilling and spiritually significant. As Sara Friedrichsmeyer puts it, in *Lucinde* "sexual love, the prototypical combination of dichotomous entities, was vested with the metaphysical force to symbolize all such unions within the universe and could consequently be proffered as a saving religion."[39] In associating sexual intercourse between a man and a woman with spiritual development, Schlegel aimed both to undermine the conventional separation of sexuality and sensuality from spirituality and to challenge the concomitant idealization of women as either asexual spiritual beings or lovers—hence Julius' belief, in *Lucinde*, that "he possessed united in one person all those things which before he had loved separately and disjointedly: the beautiful newness of the senses, the ravishing passion, the modest activity, the docility, and the noble character."[40] Lucinde is both friend and lover, both earthly wife and spiritual mediator.[41] By presenting women—and relationships of men with women—as ideally both spiritual and sexual, Schlegel contributes to rescuing sexuality from the social opprobrium with which female sexuality in particular has often been regarded, presenting it as a fulfilling and even spiritually

important part of human development.

Although the early German romantic understanding of gender does not challenge the existence of stereotypical gendered characteristics, it arguably weakens gender dichotomies by maintaining that extreme manifestations of masculinity and femininity are undesirable. Instead, the development of masculine characteristics in women and feminine characteristics in men is both possible and desirable. This, along with its positive view of sexuality, underlies claims that the early German romantic view of women was radical for its time and had the potential to emancipate women.

2. Criticisms of the early German romantic model of gender

A number of commentators point out that, although early German romantics such as Schlegel intended to undermine gender dichotomies by advocating an exchange of gendered attributes between male and female partners, in fact this model reinforces the gendered constructions it claims to mitigate, since it must presuppose them in order to function.[42] This reliance on gender stereotypes emerges in frequent references to the characteristics of men and women by Schlegel and Novalis which, as noted above, follow the same categories as stereotypical conceptions of gender. In "On Philosophy" and *Lucinde*, Schlegel refers to women's "nature,"[43] and Novalis, too, speculates about the "nature" of women and, occasionally, men, retaining a traditional assignation of gendered characteristics (for example, women "live in the true state of nature"[44] and "Reason is in man, feeling in woman"[45]). The undermining of the male-female dichotomy that Schlegel and Novalis imagined is thus not as profound as might be expected based on their advocacy of exchanging masculine and feminine characteristics. This exchange is premised on an original possession of gendered characteristics by men and women, which can be mitigated, but never obliterated.

Furthermore, the romantics portray the development of an individual towards complete humanity in terms of an asymmetrical appropriation of supposedly feminine characteristics by a male subject.[46] One commentator describes *Lucinde* as "an egocentric account of how Lucinde, and to a lesser extent one or two of the earlier women whom Julius meets, contributed to his sexual, emotional, and intellectual *Bildung*[.]"[47] As we have seen, the same movement occurs in Novalis' *Henry of Ofterdingen* and "Hymns." As Friedrichsmeyer notes, in Novalis' depictions love "is primarily an exploitative union and one which benefits the male protagonist[.]"[48]

In addition to its heteronormativity, this relationship does not benefit the female partner in the same way it benefits the male. As many writers argue,[49] women in early German Romanticism are instrumentalized, idealized, and excluded from the kind of moral and creative development experienced by men. This asymmetry is not accidental, but is based on early German romantic conceptions of gender and gender relations. As we saw above, Novalis and Schlegel present women as intrinsically connected to nature, spirituality and love. This idealization ostensibly confers high status on women, as it presents them as unalienated from nature and the divine and as naturally grasping moral and religious truths. However, it also depicts women as less active and intellectual than men, repeating the stereotypical association of masculinity with activity, consciousness and reason and of women with passivity, intuition, feeling and mysticism.[50]

This model excludes women from the moral and spiritual development that is at the heart of the early German romantic conception of the subject. The idealization of women as inherently connected with the unity of nature and with love posits that women are by nature suited to mediating unity to men, and that they themselves do not need this kind of development towards oneness.[51] For example, we saw above how *Lucinde* describes Julius' development, through a series of relationships with women, especially Lucinde, into a successful artist and complete human being. By contrast, Lucinde, who was also an artist when Julius met her, does not experience a similar development; in fact, the culmination of her humanity achieved through her relationship with Julius is her pregnancy. That Schlegel equates Lucinde's fulfillment in motherhood with Julius' as an artist is further suggested by the fact that, when he learns Lucinde is pregnant, Julius claims she should receive a poet's laurel.[52] Elsewhere, Schlegel claims that "love is for women what genius is for men"[53] and Novalis asks: "Should an inspiration in a woman not be able to express itself through a pregnancy?"[54]

In *Henry of Ofterdingen* it is through the mediation of women that the protagonist matures into a poet, while these women not only do not develop, but seem to lose their status as artists through their contact with him. Henry learns music from Zulima, who is not heard from again, and Mathilde teaches him guitar but then, rather than becoming a poet alongside him, dies. Similarly, the beloved in Novalis' "Hymns" is dead, and in Schlegel's *Lucinde* two women, Lisette and Lucinde, suffer real and imaginary deaths, respectively.

Both women's deaths are associated with their pregnancies, and Elena Pnevmonidou notes that Novalis and Schlegel connect pregnancy with female death and male creativity.[55] In *Lucinde*, Lisette is associated with an early, failed effort by Julius to become an artist; when she becomes pregnant he leaves her and she kills herself. By contrast, Julius greets Lucinde's pregnancy with joy—he is now a successful artist and views her pregnancy as her corresponding manifestation of their union; however, he still dreams of her death. In Klingsohr's tale in *Henry of Ofterdingen*, the consumption of the mother's ashes allows the capacity for creativity to pass from the dead mother to the remaining characters, and in Novalis' "Hymns," the dead beloved provides a route for the male narrator to sink into the "father's womb."[56]

Several writers argue that this association of pregnancy, women's deaths, and men's creativity reflects the romantic male poet's need "to appropriate woman's child-bearing capabilities[.]"[57] While women manifest the union of male and female in heterosexual love through the birth of a child, the male genius needs to manifest this generative creativity in another way. The artist's search for creative self-expression thus becomes a search for male procreativity. Corresponding to this elevation of the male genius as bearer of the fruits of heterosexual union is the exclusion of women from creativity and their marginalization from pregnancy itself. The generative power of women is appropriated by men for their creative endeavors, after which women themselves become superfluous.[58]

The achievement of lost wholeness that the early German romantics depict as the goal of the male subject, epitomized by the male artist, is not a goal they envision for women. In fact, in one fragment Novalis explicitly asks: "Is woman the goal of the man, and is woman without a goal?"[59] As intrinsically whole and connected to nature, woman is already at her goal. Consequently, there is no future for her in the early German romantic model; female characters often die, their feminine characteristics absorbed by the male subject who combines "feminine" access to nature, the divine, love, inspiration and creativity with their own active form-giving in painting, music and song.[60]

In addition to the above problems, scholars have pointed out the failure of early German Romanticism to advocate concrete social and political changes to accompany the supposed conceptual emancipation of women. Richard Littlejohns notes that "Schlegel never deals directly in *Lucinde* with the economic or legal position of women in marriage or their status in society[.]"[61] Barbara Becker-Cantarino agrees, arguing that Schlegel was interested in

"'femininity' as completion and station towards his own self-development to 'masculinity' as poet, but not the social position of actual women."[62]

More than failing to undermine traditional roles for women, early German Romanticism may promote and even exacerbate them. Julius and Lucinde's relationship reflects traditional gender roles, with Lucinde as mother and companion while Julius fulfills his vocation as an artist,[63] and, as we saw above, both Schlegel and Novalis describe motherhood and love of a man as the desired state for women. In fact, the situation for women within the paradigm of love as presented by Schlegel and Novalis may be worse than in traditional marriages. According to this paradigm, women should provide their husbands with sexual satisfaction, romantic fulfillment, and spiritual enlightenment in addition to their existing duties as mothers and household managers.[64]

The focus of writers like Schlegel and Novalis on sexuality as a natural and even spiritually important aspect of human life is sometimes seen as transgressive and liberating—a protest against bourgeois social mores and late eighteenth/early nineteenth century prudishness. But, as Becker-Cantarino notes, it is men and men's pleasure that are liberated, not women or women's pleasure.[65] Women, on early German romantic accounts, remain intrinsically connected to nature and to motherhood, to passivity, objectification, and appropriation, and early German Romanticism describes their role in sexual intercourse in terms that reflect this. This emerges in what has been described as "Romanticism's most transgressive philosophical moment":[66] Novalis' claim that "Rape is the strongest pleasure."

Unfortunately, this is not merely an isolated[67] or chance remark by Novalis, but is drawn from ideas about women's connection to nature, the body and maternity that are widespread in early German romantic writings. Like other writers of the time, including Schlegel,[68] Novalis uses an analogy with plants to link women essentially with motherhood, passivity and receptivity, while likening men to animals, as actively consuming and fertilizing.[69] He states, for example, that: "The life of plants is, compared to the life of animals—an unceasing conceiving and giving birth—and the latter, compared to the former—an unceasing eating and fertilizing."[70] And, more explicitly: "*Conception* is the feminine enjoyment—consuming the masculine."[71] This is problematic in the first place because it links women's nature essentially to the role of motherhood—a view shared by Schlegel, even in relatively early pieces such as *Lucinde*, as we saw above. In "On Philosophy," for example, Schlegel claims that "the female organization is

wholly directed toward the one beautiful purpose of maternity."[72] Novalis, meanwhile, notes "[w]omen's similarity to plants. [....] (Flowers are vessels.)"[73] But the connection of women essentially to the combination of passivity and conception, and perhaps even more problematically the connection of men to both activity and consumption, has worse consequences. Novalis draws the implication from this that women's sexual enjoyment is linked to the passive role he grants them in conception, and consists in pleasure in being overcome. Men's sexual enjoyment, meanwhile, is linked to the pleasure of overcoming resistance: "She wants—but her sensations resist and can only be suspended for a moment by means of a foreign power. / He senses—but he does not want—and his will can only be suspended for a few moments by a foreign yielding."[74] The conclusion of a line of reasoning that links women to receptive plants, and women's pleasure and purpose to conception, which is presented as passive—the same line of reasoning that links men to activity and animals, and men's pleasure to fertilizing and devouring—is: "The more lively the thing to be devoured resists, the livelier the flame of the moment of pleasure will be. [....] Rape is the strongest pleasure."[75]

3. The role of gender in early German romantic philosophy

While the above criticisms should raise concerns about the conceptualizations of women and gender relations in early German Romanticism, there is a larger problem insofar as these conceptualizations are implicated in central aspects of early German romantic philosophy. These include fundamental dichotomies that Novalis and Schlegel saw as characterizing the world—activity and passivity, form and material, spiritual and physical—with their long, gendered history, and the human vocation, as they saw it, of reconciling these differences by integrating the world of the object into the mind of the subject and the subject's creative imposition of form on the object. This gendered background also informs the early German romantic conception of the genius and its theories of language and representation.

The fundamental movement of early German Romanticism is from an original unity of the divine, spirit, or universe, through a fragmented and alienated state of individuation—the world as we experience it—to a future reconciliation of these alienated individuals with the divine.[76] The human vocation, and goal of early German Romanticism, is to work towards this reconciliation of alienated entities.[77] For the early German romantics, heterosexual love is an instance of, analogy for, and initiation into this reconciliation of dualities.

Underlying the ability of heterosexual love to play this role is the fact that early German Romanticism conceived the dualities characterizing the fragmented universe of earthly life in gendered terms. On this model, the original division of the universe into subject and object underlies other divisions, including those between the individual entities that make up the world and between the characteristics that accrue to the subject—mind, cognition, consciousness, reason, form—and those that accrue to the object—nature, body, feeling, intuition, imagination, material.[78] These attributes have, of course, often been ascribed, respectively, to men and women, including on the early German romantic theory of gender. As a result, for the romantics heterosexual love can instantiate and begin to realize the union of the male-coded world of the subject, or mind, and the female-coded world of the object, or body, nature, and original unifying ground. For example, Novalis depicts sexual love as prefiguring the dissolution of the individual male self in a feminine nature:

> Whose heart does not [...] skip delightedly, when the deepest life of nature in its whole fullness comes to mind! when then that powerful feeling, for which speech has no other name than love and lust, expands in him, like a powerful, all-dissolving mist, and he sinks quivering with sweet fear in the dark, alluring womb of nature[.][79]

One might argue that the problem with this model is relatively superficial: the gendering of the divisions it depends on, rather than the divisions themselves. In other words, one might conceive of a world divided dualistically along the same lines without the baggage of traditional gender stereotypes. However, even if we can rid ourselves of the time-worn associations of masculinity with the active, observing subject, the mind, reason, and form, and of femininity with the passive, observed object, the body, emotions, and material, early German Romanticism does not do so, but adopts the gendering of these divisions as a central metaphor.

This metaphor plays a formative role in important areas of early German romantic philosophy, including the quest of the individual subject for wholeness and the associated concept of genius. We saw above how early German Romanticism presents the reunification of the world and the alienated individual as achieved through the appropriation by the (male) subject of aspects of the (feminine) object. This is illustrated in the stories of Julius and Henry, and in the romantic theory of the genius, which Julius and Henry exemplify. The epitome of the human being who reintegrates the lost elements of the self is the poet, artist, or genius—the

individual who, like Julius and Henry, absorbs the alienated aspects of the world and is consequently able to create art, in the process raising, poeticizing, or romanticizing[80] the world. Thus, according to Novalis, the poet "represents in the truest sense *subject object—mind and world*[.]"[81]

Although the concept of the genius is ostensibly gender-neutral, the gendered dualities that underlie it imply that it can accrue to men only—and Novalis and Schlegel draw this implication. As we saw above, early German Romanticism depicts women as already unified with nature and connected to the divine. Consequently, there is no mechanism for women to follow the human vocation of overcoming alienation, or to become geniuses. Women may require intellectual development to overcome their nature as inherently natural, intuitive and poetic—hence Schlegel's claim that philosophy is indispensable to women. However, as we saw, Schlegel and Novalis do not depict women's interactions with men as leading to women becoming artists (or even philosophers). Rather than integrating masculine characteristics and achieving genius in a mirror image of the process by which men become geniuses, women's roles are presented as mediating artistic ability to men and becoming mothers. In fact, Schlegel explicitly describes women as possessing "love" and "harmony" where men have "genius."[82]

Gender also plays a role in the early German romantics' attempt to retrieve what they saw as the neglected other of the Enlightenment, and in the ideas about language that emerge from this attempt. One of the complaints of early German Romanticism, indeed a driving force of the movement, was the overvaluation of characteristics belonging to the mind in Enlightenment science and society, and the corresponding denigration and exclusion from our sense of identity of the other side of the equation, including the body, the emotions, nature and things considered feminine.[83] The solution, according to Romanticism, is the revalorization of the latter aspects and their retrieval for our sense of self.[84] It is for this reason that early German Romanticism is sometimes called a "feminine philosophy":[85] as a counterweight to the Enlightenment emphasis on "masculine" reason and discourse, Romanticism places a high value on "feminine" intuition and forms of communication, and attempts to create ways of speaking, writing and thinking that incorporate these.

In keeping with this view, early German romantic theories of language attempt to retrieve aspects of experience that are outside discourse—the gaps, unspoken things, intimations, and failures of thought and language. This project underlies Novalis' claims about the impossibility

of literal communication[86] and his statement that "The sense for poetry [….] represents the unrepresentable."[87] Schlegel's claims about irony and incomprehensibility also reflect this effort to use language to represent what is beyond language.[88]

The early German romantics explicitly viewed these things as "feminine."[89] They also applied these characteristics to real women, expecting these to be the ways that women understood the world and communicated. Thus, Novalis claims: "Man must transform his sensations into concepts, woman her concepts into sensations."[90] Schlegel frames "On Philosophy" as an attempt to put "masculine" writing and argumentation in dialogue with "feminine" conversation, embodied by his partner, Dorothea Veit-Schlegel. He claims to be writing the essay partly "to tease such a decided despiser of all writing and letters" and adds: "A conversation would perhaps be preferable to you."[91] The unrepresentable and mysterious "feminine" aspects of the universe, as well as the unwritten perspectives of women, are presented in male writing and indicated by references to their absence, for example in Schlegel's deferrals in "On Philosophy" to the opinions of the "you" of Veit-Schlegel.

Notably, these elements are retrieved by language on the same basis as the alienated other of nature is appropriated by the individual subject in its quest for wholeness. The incomprehensible "feminine" is expressed by men, whether in language—using allegory, irony, fragments and reference to an unspeaking "you" to point beyond what is said—or in the perfected humanity of the poet-genius and his artistic creations, through his appropriation of female characteristics to articulate what is given in nature and express it in a "higher" form.

Early German romantic ideas about women are thus interwoven with their basic picture of the world, idea of the human vocation, concept of human genius, and theories about language. Romanticism maintains the traditional association of women with the mysterious, unspoken, unconscious, undifferentiated; with nature, feelings and intuition. It increases the importance of this association by making it the task of the subject to integrate these elements with itself, and by making that task the vocation of humankind and the means by which the purpose of the universe—its self-differentiation in order to know itself—is realized.

4. Complexities in the early German Romanticism approach to gender

To be fair, the deliberately self-critical and polyvalent nature of early German romantic discourse complicates the above picture. Novalis and Schlegel were aware of many of the problems just

noted and gave some of them a central position in their work. In particular, they were very conscious of the impossibility of fully integrating the world of the object in the representations of the subject, and the need to address other perspectives, including those of women, alongside the perspective of the male subject. Some commentators argue that Romanticism describes "competing discourses on gender[,]" using female voices and perspectives to critique the dominant, male-centered model.[92] Indeed, on one view, a central purpose of early German Romanticism is to perform a self-critique of masculine culture.[93]

From the outset, the early German romantics presented the goal of the individual's reunification with aspects of the world it experiences as outside itself as a regulative ideal rather than something that could actually be realized. It is largely for this reason that death held such significance for early German Romanticism, as the site of complete unification of the individual with its greater self.[94] While alive, the individual can never completely overcome its individual perspective; the subject can never fully absorb or represent the object; and, correspondingly, the efforts of the poet or genius to communicate about what is beyond language and thought are always only guideposts and approximations. Similarly, Schlegel's idea of a *Wechsel*, or exchange, of characteristics between men and women envisions a mitigation, rather than obliteration, of the differences between the poles of masculinity and femininity, as we saw above. All these situations are based on the same principle of separate dualities that, while the differences between them can never be totally overcome, are nonetheless capable of interaction, communication, and exchange.

This idea of a dynamic exchange between opposites was an important feature of early German Romanticism, differentiating their approach in particular from that of Fichte. Novalis and Schlegel were dissatisfied with Fichte's focus on the subject as the place in which the object would be recreated through philosophy. Instead of deciding between basing their philosophy on the world of the object (what Fichte called "dogmatism") or the world of the subject ("idealism"),[95] they imagined a foundation for philosophy in mutual exchange: a *Wechselerweis* or *Wechselgrundsatz*—a principle of reciprocity.[96] Thus they explicitly opposed the idea, apparently illustrated in their accounts of male *Bildung* and the genius, that the subject should appropriate the world of the object and represent it; instead, they imagined the two realms participating in a friendly exchange.[97]

In keeping with this model, the early German romantics aimed to engage women as the

other that is imperfectly represented by male discourse, and as representing the other of the rest of the world. For early German Romanticism, women and nature are not passive objects of the creative activity of the male subject, but participate in the poeticization of the world, joining in dialogue with the subject—especially the genius—and speaking through his words and images.[98] Consequently, women were called on to engage with the writings of male romantics—within certain limits, of course, as their input was supposed to contribute the neglected "feminine" perspective, which should be connected to nature, the divine, and the beautiful, and grasped through emotion and intuition rather than structured reasoned argument.[99]

Of course, this model presupposes gender stereotypes, especially the association of women with intuition and the world of the object (nature) and their inability to articulate ideas in systematic form. Furthermore, the outcome of this interaction is always represented by the male subject in language, art, and thought. In other words, the realm of the object, including women, does not so much speak as it is spoken for.

Even granting this, however, there is a strong argument that early German Romanticism deliberately critiques its own narrative of male appropriation of an ideal female sphere. Alongside the dominant heterosexual model of the subject's development, romantic texts often incorporate a homoerotic or homosocial subtext which suggests an alternative model and, as Martha B. Helfer puts it, "subtly debunks the feminine ideal."[100] Helfer argues that early German Romanticism often uses female muses as foils for men who are the "real source of poetic inspiration[.]"[101] She analyzes a number of texts that ostensibly present women as the source of unity, poetic inspiration, and male development, but subordinate them to a male character. For example, in *Henry of Ofterdingen*, Mathilde supposedly mediates unity and artistic development to Henry, but is repeatedly presented as a "projection" of her father Klingsohr.[102] She teaches guitar to Henry, but emphasizes that she learned it from her father; Henry first notices and is attracted not to Mathilde but to Klingsohr; and Mathilde seems to be "the spirit of her father in the loveliest disguise."[103] Helfer also points out the importance of male narration in *Henry of Ofterdingen* and the paucity of female narratives. Klingsohr, Henry's father, a male stranger, merchants and a miner all tell stories that inspire Henry, prefigure events in his life, and promote his development as a poet. By contrast, women in the novel rarely speak and, when they do, do so "through male narration, omitted storytelling, insipid conversation, as the projections of male desire, or through death."[104] Thus, claims Helfer, in *Henry of Ofterdingen* "male discourse—

language written, spoken or sung by men— [...] is the inspiration, source, and ground of Romantic poesy[,]" and the novel "works to expose the traditional female poetic ground—woman and her voices—as constructed within and controlled by a male representational system."[105]

According to Helfer, Novalis' re-gendering of the "originary poetic ground" as male—and corresponding feminization of the poet Henry—is deliberate, and aims to draw attention to what Helfer describes as Romanticism's "constructedness of gender and subjectivity within its own patriarchal representational system."[106] In other words, Novalis recognizes his status as a man writing from a man's perspective and, consistently with early German romantic ideas about communication, rather than attempting to complete the picture by adding the pieces he knows are missing, he instead highlights this inadequacy. As Helfer puts it:

> Novalis as male author writes woman's originary poetic voice *as mediated by man, as ultimately unnecessary to man*. In accordance with Romantic theory the text calls attention to its own casting of woman as the source of true poesy ironically and self-critically, and presents a counter-paradigm in which the male poet produces the male subject as text, i.e., as a discursive construct.[107]

Helfer traces this self-critique back to the early German romantic's engagement with Fichte, arguing that Romanticism's dominant goal of reunifying the individual self with its world undermines itself through a competing paradigm of the self-construction of the subject in language. In other words, the subject attempts to go beyond itself and integrate with itself aspects of the object-world that lie outside it, but can always only construct itself within its own system of representation. Thus, according to Helfer, "the self-positing of the male subject must occur within a 'male' representational system," or "male discourse[.]"[108]

Gender stereotypes are foundational to early German romantic metaphysics, account of the human vocation, and ideas about language and representation, but Schlegel and Novalis were aware of their perspective as male authors writing within a discourse controlled by men. They foregrounded the one-sidedness of their account, especially its inability to fully represent the "other," and questioned their own paradigm of male self-poiesis though the appropriation of feminine characteristics. When interpreting early German romantic claims about women, it is therefore necessary to recognize simultaneously their efforts to provide increased value to women and the feminine, their reliance on gender stereotypes, and their own—not always

successful—attempts to acknowledge and address this failing.

5. Early German romantic women

In addition to Schlegel, Novalis and the other male romantics mentioned above, a number of women were associated with early German Romanticism, including several published authors. These include Dorothea Veit-Schlegel and Karoline von Günderrode (discussed below), Bettina von Arnim, Henriette Herz, Sophie Mereau, Caroline Schlegel-Schelling, and Rahel Varnhagen. Given the involvement of women in the production of romantic literature and thought, as well as early German Romanticism's statements about the importance of women's contributions to philosophical dialogue, and simply in the interests of comprehensiveness and accuracy, it is essential to consider what women romantics had to say about gender.

Although there is a body of scholarship on women associated with early German Romanticism, these women are often depicted as muses and assistants for male philosophers and facilitators of interactions between male intellectuals rather than as contributors to early German romantic philosophy in their own right.[109] It is also sometimes claimed that, while male early German romantics wrote and theorized about Romanticism, the women of this movement embodied this theory in their lives. For example, Roetzel states that "for Schlegel-Schelling and Veit-Schlegel, Romantic critique meant *living* as Romantics[,]"[110] and Helfer suggests that "one might read Günderrode's suicide as the highest expression of Romantic theory."[111] Although this position may seem strange, especially since many of these women were published authors, it reflects early German romantic ideas about gender. On this model, women have no goal of their own except to help men achieve creative development; women enjoy conversation, not writing, and can have intuitive access to truths that are beyond men, but it is men who write down these ideas and give them systematic form. In keeping with this view, Veit-Schlegel in particular worked hard in support of her husband's work. She edited and critiqued his writings, copied out his manuscripts, and published reviews, translations and her novel *Florentin* under Schlegel's name.

The idea that women lived Romanticism while men wrote it has pernicious effects, undermining the significance of women's writing, which is construed as secondary to their roles as wives, mothers, muses, helpers, and spiritual mediators, while the latter acquire increased significance as the only authentic sites for women to engage with romanticism. Nonetheless,

women did write on topics related to early German romantic philosophy. Whether we understand these contributions as representing the "feminine" perspective that early German Romanticism recognized was missing from its work—as some commentators view Veit-Schlegel's writings[112]—or as critiquing or standing beside the work of male writers, these women provided significant commentary on and interpretations of ideas that are better known in the work of their male colleagues.

The last two sections of this chapter explore the writings of Veit-Schlegel and Günderrode, which critique and provide alternatives to the ideas of male romantics. Veit-Schlegel's novel *Florentin* situates the Early German Romantic model of the self-poiesis of the artist subject in a real world that does not fit neatly into the developmental trajectories suggested by Schlegel and Novalis. Meanwhile, Günderrode creates a non-heteronormative vision of unifying love that avoids the dualisms and gender stereotypes that pervade the work of Novalis and Schlegel.

6. Veit-Schlegel's (anti-)Bildungsroman

Dorothea Veit-Schlegel is counted among the women of early German Romanticism almost automatically because of her marriage to Friedrich Schlegel and her contributions to his work, as well as because of her status as supposedly embodying the romantic ideal of the feminine philosopher.[113] However, there are other reasons to consider Veit-Schlegel an author of Romanticism. In particular, her novel *Florentin* provides a perspective on early German romantic ideas of self-poiesis, the artist, gender and social roles that is grounded in recognition of social realities, especially those affecting women.

Florentin is sometimes considered a counterpart to *Lucinde*, perhaps constituting Schlegel's promised sequel from the "feminine" perspective.[114] However, although the novel resembles a *Bildungsroman*, *Florentin* focuses not on the self-creation of an ideal woman, but on failures in the romantic ideal of self-poiesis. As such, it critiques the early German romantic model of the development of the artist-subject, and has been described as an "anti-*Bildungsroman*."[115]

The novel centers on the arrival of a young man, Florentin, in a noble country household shortly before the wedding of the daughter of the house, Juliane, to Eduard. The name Juliane connects the heroine to Julius, the hero of Schlegel's *Lucinde*, suggesting that *Florentin* will describe Juliane's development in relation to Florentin, analogously to Julius' development in

relation to Lucinde in Schlegel's novel. However, that is not what happens in Veit-Schlegel's story. If that were the case, we would see Juliane maturing to a more balanced womanhood and, possibly, motherhood, as she adopts masculine characteristics mediated by male characters, especially Florentin. But instead, the book focuses on Florentin's search for identity, while Juliane's only effort to transgress gender boundaries (discussed below) results in failure and her relieved return home, where she marries Eduard. The novel ends with Florentin's disappearance.

In *Florentin*, it is not Juliane, but Florentin, whose story most resembles Julius'. Like Julius, Florentin is an artist, and attempts to create an identity for himself largely through interactions with others. However, in Florentin's case, these others more obviously include men, notably in his passionate relationships to Manfredi, Eduard, and the Doctor. Helfer argues that *Florentin*'s homoeroticism subverts the masculinist discourse of Schlegel's *Lucinde*[116]—a more overt critique of the construction of the romantic subject in male discourse than that given by Schlegel or Novalis. Meanwhile, Florentin's relationships with women end in disappointment: his "mother" casts him out; his "sister" stays in a convent rather than escaping with him; his wife has an abortion and leaves him; Juliane marries Eduard. In this way, Veit-Schlegel undermines the early German romantic ideal of heterosexual romantic love as the culmination of the artist's successful effort at self-poiesis. Instead, she emphasizes the importance of circumstance and social context for relationships, especially marriage.[117] In direct reference to Schlegel's description of Lucinde, Florentin complains: "What use is it that I found everything my wishes could grasp united in *one*? She is the loving bride of [Eduard]!"[118]

As others have noted, Florentin's disastrous relationships with women depict failed attempts of the romantic subject to idealize and appropriate women for his own self-construction —an effort that stumbles against the unwillingness or incapacity of real women to embody these ideals.[119] Veit-Schlegel makes this point vividly in an episode that parallels Julius' relationship with Lisette in *Lucinde*. Florentin's wife is an artist's model, who he paints as different ideals of womanhood. When she becomes pregnant, Florentin (unlike Julius) is delighted, believing he has found his true vocation as a father, and anticipates enjoying his own lost childhood through his child.[120] While Florentin is happily fixated on the prospect of fatherhood, his wife feels increasingly constrained by her role as mother-to-be, and eventually has an abortion. Florentin is so angry that he throws a knife at her, nearly killing her,[121] and flees, leaving his dreams of fatherhood and life as a successful artist behind him.

As Pnevmonidou states, this episode is "an explicit de-mythologizing of Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*."[122] Romantic stories of masculine development such as *Lucinde* and *Henry of Ofterdingen* depend on idealized images of women, which suppress the ways real women do not meet these ideals or resist figuration as mediators of male fulfillment. Florentin's wife's desire not to bear children frustrates Florentin's use of her to enable his paternity and his artistic development.[123] In addition, in contrast to Schlegel's *Lucinde*, early German Romanticism's claims about women, and prevailing opinion at the time, which present women as naturally fulfilled by motherhood, Veit-Schlegel depicts Florentin, and decidedly not his wife, as anticipating fulfillment in parenthood.

The above episode also indicates the significance of Florentin's lost childhood: Florentin's search for identity is at the same time the quest for a homeland, a family, and his origins. This appears congruent with the early German romantic notion of an alienated subject seeking unity with its original greater self. However, Florentin's search differs from those of Schlegel's Julius and Novalis' Henry in a number of ways, including its disassociation of femininity from the unity and sense of belonging that the subject seeks. While some writers claim that Florentin's true quest is the quest for his mother,[124] this is only part of the story—Florentin is seeking his lost childhood and therefore not only his mother but also a father. He frames his journey to Juliane's father as: "I have always been an orphan and a stranger on earth, and so I will call that country fatherland where I first hear myself called father[,]"[125] and the book includes many other references to fathers as well as mothers.[126] Nonetheless, Florentin's ultimate encounter—or near-encounter—with his childhood occurs when he meets Juliane's aunt Clementina, who may be the woman Florentin grew up believing was his mother. Florentin finds Clementina's features familiar and, watching her, hears music he remembers from his childhood; meanwhile, Clementina is so struck by seeing him that she faints.[127] However, Florentin never notices this possible connection and leaves without realizing he may have found his "mother," and at the same time his home and the means to learn his true identity.

As several commentators note, Florentin's obsessive self-focus and self-image as an alienated individual seeking a homeland result in his frequently missing points of connection with others, and at the same time failing to create a stable identity for himself and find a place he belongs.[128] In one episode, Florentin describes himself as "the poor, the lonely, cast out, the child of chance[,]" to which Eduard replies "why would you think yourself always alone? In our

midst, alone?"[129] Florentin's interactions with others, especially women, are shaped by delusion and an aestheticization of his experiences that do not address individuals in their concrete, complex reality.[130] He paints his wife in costumes; he describes Juliane's mother Eleanore as like "an image of the beneficent Ceres"; he first encounters Clementina in the form of a portrait, which also includes a portrait of Juliane as a child.[131] Veit-Schlegel thus presents the romantic subject's attempts to create an identity by aestheticizing relationships with others as foundering in narcissism and self-delusion.[132]

Florentin's efforts to create an identity and find a home, like the stories of Julius in *Lucinde* and Henry in *Henry of Ofterdingen*, depict a male subject attempting to develop artistic genius and achieve unity with the lost original sphere of nature and the divine. However, whereas in *Lucinde* and *Henry of Ofterdingen* the protagonists' efforts show a progression, culminating in their successful emergence as artists, the incidents comprising Florentin's history do not bring Florentin closer to his longed-for "fatherland" or to successfully constituting himself as an individual, let alone an artist. From one episode to another, Florentin remains steeped in self-delusion, isolation, and failures to recognize the others around him. The novel begins with Florentin lost in a forest: "Sunk in enjoyment of the magnificence that surrounded him and in fantasies that swept him now forwards, now backwards, he had lost the right path[.]"[133] The last line of the novel, "Florentin was nowhere to be found[,]"[134] simultaneously shows Florentin leaving his potential home with Juliane and Eduard's family and indicates the failure of his construction of identity.

While Florentin's story critiques the romantic ideal of male self-poiesis as unstable, delusional, and foundering in narcissism, Juliane's trajectory undermines the idea of a self-creative *Bildung* for women[135] and critiques the idea of gender fluidity as it applies to women. Juliane is destined to marry Eduard from the outset. Her only attempt to step outside social norms occurs when she dresses as a boy to go out with Eduard and Florentin. This episode ends in disaster as Eduard abandons self-restraint and attempts to embrace Juliane, which frightens her, and the three are forced to shelter from a storm in the house of a miller and his wife. There, Juliane faces the embarrassing and unpleasant fact that the miller's wife does not recognize her as a noblewoman. She insists on revealing her identity and returns gratefully to her home, with its usual social constraints.[136]

In this episode, Veit-Schlegel does not present gender fluidity as liberating or otherwise

desirable for women, but as stripping away the protections of social conventions. As Elisabeth Krimmer notes, "Cross-dressing in *Florentin* does not reclaim male privilege for women but induces a dissolution of established gender roles that leaves the disguised woman unprotected and helpless. Schlegel seems to suggest that traditional gender roles, though restrictive, also function as safeguards against male license[.]"[137] This episode is paralleled by Florentin's attempt to help his "sister" escape her confinement to a convent, which ends in failure as she refuses to leave, accepting the role defined for her, although she was originally sent to the convent against her will.[138] Florentin, by contrast, escaped. Veit-Schlegel reminds her readers of the social realities and dangers that constrain women's ability to choose their vocation.

Nonetheless, Veit-Schlegel does sketch ways that women's roles can be extended, while remaining broadly consistent with social expectations. Juliane's mother Eleonore broke with tradition by accompanying her husband to war, but did so out of love and in order to care for him.[139] Clementina composes music, adopting a role typically reserved for men, but her compositions lie exclusively within the feminine-coded spiritual or religious realm.[140] Eleonore's traditionally feminine role as household manager extends to the affairs of the village.[141] Liesl Allingham argues that Veit-Schlegel depicts these extensions of women's roles in order to create possibilities for female *Bildung* within the traditionally feminine private sphere "us[ing] the very constructions designed to limit women's participation in the public sphere, such as loyalty to one's husband and maternal instincts."[142]

Veit-Schlegel's novel highlights problems in early German Romanticism's focus on the aesthetic self-creation of the subject, which not only occludes the experiences of the women — and men—around him, but also results in a perpetually lost and disconnected subject and the failure of the romantic project of reconciliation. On Veit-Schlegel's reading, the problem with overemphasizing the perspective of the male subject is not primarily the reinforcing of gender stereotypes, but the failure of this project to provide a path for recuperating the lost world of the object in a way that is not delusional. Veit-Schlegel's critique in *Florentin* not only identifies the problematic narcissistic appropriation of others in the early German romantic model of self-poiesis, but also demands that social roles and constraints are acknowledged in considering an individual's identity and relationships, including romantic relationships.

7. Karoline von Günderrode, gender, and the idea of the earth

Unlike Veit-Schlegel, Günderrode was not a member of the Jena circle that included Schlegel and Novalis, although she studied their writings along with those of Fichte, Schelling, and others. Her work incorporates features of early German Romanticism, including ideas of the universe as progressing towards unification through a succession of raised or more adequate forms, death as the site of final unity with other individuals and the natural world, and love as unifying force. However, a non-dualistic metaphysics underlies Günderrode's approach, which means gender stereotypes cannot play the central role they do in the work of Schlegel and Novalis. Despite this, Günderrode, like Veit-Schlegel, is keenly attentive to issues of gender, especially regarding social roles for women and their impact on women's identity and ability to act. This combination of factors makes Günderrode's writings an alternative to early German romantic models that reinforce traditional conceptions of gender.

Like Novalis and Schlegel, Günderrode presents love as a unifying force, emphasizing the capacity of love to unite individuals in death. For example, in "The Malabarian Widows," she writes that "Death will become sweet celebration of love, / The separated elements unified" and that "the previously sundered flames of love / Are struck hotly together into one."[143] In "The Bonds of Love" she depicts a connection between the living narrator and a dead "beloved," writing that "Love this bond is called."[144] And "The Kiss in the Dream" describes a longing for a lover's kiss that can only be satisfied in death. However, unlike Novalis and Schlegel, Günderrode does not present this unifying love as necessarily heterosexual. Many pieces, including "The Malabarian Widows," "Timur," "Mora" and "Don Juan," depict romantic love between a man and a woman, while others, including "The Bonds of Love" and "The Kiss in the Dream," do not mention the sex of the narrator and can therefore be interpreted heteronormatively. But other pieces, especially the ballad "Piedro," are homoerotic, leading some writers to claim that Günderrode presents homosexual love as paradigmatic of union.[145] In fact, however, Günderrode's account of the unifying force of attraction between individuals privileges neither heterosexual nor homosexual love—nor romantic love at all.

This is evident in Günderrode's philosophical dialogue "The Manes," which describes the connection a "student" feels with a long-dead king. The student's teacher explains that there exist hidden connections between things that are similar, i.e., that "harmonize" with each other, and that such a connection exists between characteristics of the student and characteristics of the dead king. These allow the king to affect the student and, in a sense, to live on in him: "As surely

as all harmonious things are connected, whether they are visible or invisible, just as surely we, too, are connected with the *part* of the spirit world that harmonizes with us"; "he lives on in you only insofar as you have a sense for him, insofar as your system makes you capable of receiving him inwardly, insofar as you have something homogeneous with him. What is foreign in you enters into no connection with him[.]"[146]

The "separate elements" that are unified in death in "The Malabarian Widows" are not, therefore, the two separate individuals of husband and wife. Rather, they are the many elemental forces that constitute the husband and wife, like all other human beings and other entities, some of which harmonize with each other and which, once released from their earthly constraints in two separate bodies, can join together. Günderrode explains this idea more fully elsewhere. In her unpublished essay "Idea of the Earth" she presents the world and every entity within it, including human beings, as created from "elements" that, over time, group together, then separate and recombine to form new entities, as individual creatures live and die, while "the life-principle in the elements is immortal; it requires only contact and connection again like before and the new life blossoms."[147]

Günderrode states explicitly that the recombination of elements occurs through "attraction" and "laws of affinity."[148] What we experience as love—whether romantic, between friends, or in a perhaps less intense form as a draw or pull towards others, living or dead—is an expression of inner harmony between elements of our own individuality and elements of theirs. After death, the attraction between these harmonious elements brings them together to create new entities. We saw above how, in Schlegel and Novalis' dualistic universe, heterosexual love was paradigmatic of the unification of polar opposites through mutual exchange. Günderrode's model of love also functions as a paradigm of unification within her universe, which is characterized, not by dual polarities, but by a large set of elements. Consequently, on Günderrode's model gender is irrelevant to love, the emergence of unity, and, therefore, the human vocation.

As we saw, on Novalis' and Schlegel's account, the task of human being, especially the poet or genius, is to reshape what is given in nature in higher forms—the "cultivation of the earth," as Novalis puts it.[149] "Idea of the Earth" suggests a course of action that corresponds to this task. For Günderrode, the succession of forms in which the universe manifests itself can constitute a more or less perfect whole, ideally progressing towards complete unification: "each mortal gives back to the earth a raised, more developed elemental life, which it cultivates further

in ascending forms, and the organism, by assimilating ever more developed elements, must thereby become ever more perfect and universal."[150] Human beings can help or hinder progress towards this point, as their actions serve either to increase harmony (virtuous actions) or decrease it (unvirtuous actions).[151] In this way, the rest of the world is (potentially) reclaimed for the individual self by the merging of elements with others that are, increasingly, like its own. Unlike the model of reunification presented by Novalis and Schlegel, in which the fragmented parts of the universe are reconciled through the appropriation of one pole (the object) by the other (the subject), Günderrode's account entails a non-hierarchical joining of elements through self-improvement and mutual attraction.

Although gender is irrelevant to Günderrode's metaphysics, she does see gender as important for how identities are constituted and how people live their lives. Many of her writings explore the implications of gender for agency, subjecthood, and self-determination, in particular addressing the different ways that men and women are viewed and treated and the possibilities for action and self-image that these open or close. For example, in "Hildgund," the heroine must decide whether to marry Attila in order to forestall his invasion of her homeland—but first she must establish her right to act on her own behalf in the face of her fiancé Walther's machismo.[152] In "Mora," the title character wears her male lover's armor in order to protect him and assert her decision not to marry his rival, who wants to kill Mora's lover to claim her. And, as Allingham has argued, in "Darthula" Günderrode's refocusing of the action of Ossian's piece on Darthula herself involves a nuanced consideration of the ways male and female heroism is constructed.[153]

Some writers suggest that Günderrode understood gender according to conventional categories,[154] and she did occasionally make statements that presuppose stereotypical ideas about of gender. For example, in a letter to a friend she exclaims: "Why was I not a man! I have no sense for feminine virtues, for feminine happiness. [....] It is an unfortunate but incurable discrepancy in my soul; and it will and must remain so, for I am a woman, and have desires like a man, without manly strength."[155] However, whereas for Schlegel and Novalis gendered characteristics are essentially related to men and women, and can only be partially mitigated through exchange between the sexes, nothing in Günderrode's work entails a necessary connection between men and masculine characteristics or women and feminine characteristics, even as a starting point. To be clear, Günderrode does not indicate decisively either that gendered characteristics are to some degree essential or that they are entirely socially

determined. Her depictions of women show that she imagined women possessing characteristics and adopting roles that are traditionally considered masculine. For example, Hildgund makes decisions coolly and rationally (while the male characters around her are too weak or emotional to act effectively), and Hildgund, Darthula, Mora and many other female characters are brave and willing to kill to protect their loved ones and for the sake of honor and their country. However, Günderrode does not specify whether this reflects a lack of essential gender characteristics or an ideal of "independent femininity" such as that advocated by Schlegel, in which an originally "feminine" nature adopts "masculine" characteristics to temper its one-sidedness.

Whichever is the case, Günderrode's treatment of her heroines highlights the significance of how women are viewed and treated by others for their ability to act outside the roles determined for them, to control their own destinies, and even to constitute themselves as active subjects. Thus, like Veit-Schlegel's *Florentin*, Günderrode's work highlights the need to consider the social conditions under which the self develops its identity, vocation, and relationships.

Conclusion

Scholarship has barely begun to address women's contributions to early German romantic thought, but already it is clear that neglected authors such as Veit-Schlegel and Günderrode provide sharp criticism of the dominant, male-authored paradigm of Early German Romanticism, and suggest routes to solving some of the issues identified by critics. In particular, these two authors highlight the importance of social conditions for the quest of the individual to create an identity and achieve reconciliation with alienated aspects of itself. Veit-Schlegel's unmasking of the narcissism and self-delusion that underlie this quest and lead to its eventual failure, and Günderrode's situating of women's actions in the context of their interpellation by others, along with her monistic metaphysics, indicate directions that could be followed in addressing the problematic aspects of early German Romanticism that are noted by critics.

The integral place of gendered concepts in the work of Schlegel and Novalis means that their reliance on gender stereotypes has wide implications, affecting their ideas about language and representation, genius, the self and its vocation, and metaphysics. Attention to the work of women writers associated with early German Romanticism contributes both to recognizing these

failings and finding new ways to address them. The question remains whether changes to our understanding of early German Romanticism that address contributions by Veit-Schlegel or Günderrode would result in a metaphysics and an account of human identity and the human vocation that are still recognizably romantic. Nonetheless, given the problems with the dominant model of early German Romanticism that have been described in this chapter, it may be time to rethink our understanding of early German Romanticism, which until now has been based almost exclusively on the writings of men.

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[1] E.g., Hans Eichner, "*Lucinde,*" in *Friedrich Schlegel* (New York: Twayne, 1970), 85; M. Kay, "Women and Individualism: A Re-examination of Schlegel's 'Lucinde' and Gutzkow's 'Wally die Zweiflerin,'" *Modern Language Review* (1975), 557.

[2] E.g., Barbara Becker-Cantarino, "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation'? Zum Geschlechterdizkurs der deutschen Romantik am Beispiel der *Lucinde* und ihrer Rezeption," in Hartwig Schultz, ed., *Salons der Romantik: Beitrage eines wiepersdorfer Colloquiums zu Theorie und Geschichte des Salons* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1997): 21–44; Martha B. Helfer, "Gender Studies and Romanticism," in Dennis Mahoney, ed., *The Literature of German Romanticism* (Rochester: Camden House, 2004), 33; Richard Littlejohns, "The 'Bekenntnisse eines Ungeschickten': A Re-examination of Emancipatory Ideas in Friedrich Schlegel's 'Lucinde,'" *Modern Language Review* 72.3 (1977): 605–614; Elena Pnevmonidou, "Die Absage an das romantische Ich. Dorothea Schlegels *Florentin* als Umschrift von Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*," *German Life and Letters* 58.3 (2005): 273, 275; Lisa C. Roetzel, "Feminizing Philosophy," in Jochen Schulte-Sasse, Haynes Horne, and Andreas Michel, eds., *Theory as Practice: A Critical Anthology of Early German Romantic Writings* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota: 1997), 362; Michaela Schrage-Früh, "Subversive Weiblichkeit?: Die Frau als Muse, Geliebte und Künstlerin im Werk Friedrich Schlegels und Karoline von Günderrodes," *Subversive Romantik* (2004): 371–72.

[3] See, for example, Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 47, and Schlegel's repeated claim that "Mysteries are feminine" (KFSA 2, 268 Nr. 127, 269 Nr. 137).

[4] Eichner, "*Lucinde*," 85.

[5] Martha B. Helfer, "The Male Muses of Romanticism: The Poetics of Gender in Novalis, E.T.A. Hoffmann, and Eichendorff," *The German Quarterly* 78.3 (2005): 299–319; Alice A. Kuzniar, "Hearing Women's Voices in *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*," *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 107:5 (1992): 1204–5; Grant Profant McAllister, Jr., *Kleist's Female Leading Characters and the Subversion of Idealist Discourse* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005); Catriona MacLeod, "The 'Third Sex' in an Age of Difference: Androygyny and Homosexuality in Winckelmann, Friedrich Schlegel, and Kleist," in *Outing Goethe and His Age*, ed. Alice. A. Kuzniar (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996), 194–214; Joachim Pfeiffer, "Friendship and Gender: The Aesthetic Construction of Subjectivity in Kleist," trans. Robert D. Tobin, in *Outing Goethe and His Age* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996), 215–227; Val Scullion and Marion Treby, "Sexual Politics in the Narratives of E.T.A. Hoffmann," *Journal of Gender Studies* 22.3 (2013): 297–308.

[6] E.g., Ernst Brandes, *Ueber die Weiber* (Leipzig: Weidmanns Erben und Reich, 1787); Wilhelm von Humboldt, "Über den Geschlechtsunterschied und dessen Einfluß auf die organische Natur," *Die Horen* 2 (1795): 99–132; Wilhelmine Karoline Wobeser, *Elisa, oder das Weib, wie es seyn sollte* (Leipzig: Heinrich Gräff, 1795).

[7] Schlegel, "On Philosophy. To Dorothea," in Ernst Behler, ed., *Friedrich Schlegel – Kritische Ausgabe seiner Werke* (Munich: F. Schöningh, 1958–2002), 8, 42, 54. All references to Schlegel's work are to this edition, hereafter, KFSA. All translations in this chapter are my own, except citations from Schlegel's novel *Lucinde*, which follow Peter Firchow's translations in *Lucinde and the Fragments* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1971).

[8] Schlegel, KFSA 8, 43.

[9] Schlegel, KFSA 8, 44.

[10] Schlegel, KFSA 8,45.

[11] Schlegel, KFSA 8,45.

[12] Schlegel, KFSA 8, 44, KFSA 2, 269–70, Nrs. 127, 128, 270, 137.

[13] Schlegel, KFSA 7, 59.

[14] Schlegel, KFSA 2, 268 Nr. 127.

[15] Schlegel, KFSA 8, 46–47; KFSA 2, 258, Nr. 19, 270 #137; *Lucinde*, 108.

[16] E.g., Humboldt, "Über den Geschlechtsunterschied"; Friedrich von Schiller, "Würde der Frauen" (1800).

[17] Schlegel, KFSA 8, 41.

[18] Becker-Cantarino, "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation'?" 29; Sara Friedrichsmeyer, *The Androgyne in Early German Romanticism: Friedrich Schlegel, Novalis, and the Metaphysics of Love* (Bern: Lange, 1983), 2; Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 279.

[19] Roetzel, "Feminizing Philosophy," 369.

[20] Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 49.

[21] Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 47; see also 43.

[22] Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 47.

[23] Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 46.

[24] Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 102.

[25] Novalis, *Schriften. Zweite, nach den Handschriften ergänzte, erweiterte und verbesserte Auflage in vier Bänden*, ed. Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1960–), vol. III:262 #117.

[26] Novalis, *Schriften* I, 311–312.

[27] Novalis, *Schriften* I, 277, 279.

[28] Alice Kuzniar, "Labor Pains: Romantic Theories of Creativity and Gender," in Richard Block and Peter Fenves, eds., *"The Spirit of Poesy": Essays on Jewish and German Literature and Thought in Honor of Géza von Molnár* (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 2000) 81. See also Helfer, "Male Muses," 307.

[29] Kuzniar, "Labor Pains," 79. Kuzniar notes the roles of the characters Zulima, Mathilde, Ginnistan and Fable in this respect; the unnamed princess in a story told to Henry by the merchants provides another example of a woman transferring the power of song to a male character.

[30] Kuzniar, "Labor Pains," 80–81.

[31] Kuzniar, "Labor Pains," 79.

[32] Novalis, *Schriften* I, 135 s.3.

[33] Novalis, *Schriften* I, 277.

[34] Novalis, *Schriften* I, 288.

[35] Novalis, *Schriften* I, 277.

[36] Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 116–17.

[37] Novalis, *Schriften* I, 322.

[38] See footnote 4.

[39] Friedrichsmeyer, *Androgyne*, 146.

[40] Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 101.

[41] Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 112.

[42] Becker-Cantarino, "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation'?" 21–44; Friedrichsmeyer, *Androgyne*, 158; Helfer, "Gender Studies and Romanticism," 33; Schrage-Früh, "Subversive Weiblichkeit?" 371–72.

[43] Schlegel, KFSA 8, 43; *Lucinde*, 59–60, 74–75.

[44] Novalis, *Schriften* III, 568 Nr. 92; see also II, 610, Nr. 404. See Schrage-Früh, "Subversive Weiblichkeit?" 369.

[45] Novalis, *Schriften* II, 275, Nr. 576.

[46] Becker-Cantarino, "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation'?" 35; Friedrichsmeyer, *Androgyne*, 104–105, 158; Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 273–75; Roetzel, "Feminizing Philosophy," 370.

[47] Littlejohns, "Bekenntnisse eines Ungeschickten," 613.

[48] Friedrichsmeyer, *Androgyne*, 104.

[49] Becker-Cantarino, "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation'?" 32, 35; Friedrichsmeyer, *Androgyne*, 62, 83, 159; Theresa M. Kelley, "Women, Gender, and Literary Criticism," in Marshall Brown, ed., *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 325; Kuzniar, "Hearing Women's Voices," 1205; Littlejohns, "Bekenntnisse eines Ungeschickten," 606; Schrage-Früh, "Subversive Weiblichkeit?" 377–78.

[50] Friedrichsmeyer, "The Subversive Androgyne," in Marianne Burkhard and Edith Waldstein, eds., *Women in German Yearbook 3* (Lanham: UP of America, 1987), 69; Kay, "Women and Individualism," 552.

[51] Friedrichsmeyer, *Androgyne*, 159; Elisabeth Krimmer, "Abortive *Bildung*: Women Writers, Male Bonds, and Would-Be Fathers," in Marjanne Goozé, ed., *Challenging Separate Spheres: Female* Bildung *in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth Century Germany* (Oxford: Lang, 2007), 235; Schrage-Früh, "Subversive Weiblichkeit?" 369–71.

[52] Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 107.

[53] Schlegel, KFSA 2, 258, Nr. 19.

[54] Novalis, *Schriften* III, 569, Nr. 97.

[55] Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 276.

[56] Novalis, *Schriften* I:157, s.6. See Helfer, "Male Muses," 304–5.

[57] Helfer, "Gender Studies and Romanticism," 239.

[58] Helfer, "Male Muses," 306; Krimmer, "Abortive *Bildung*," 237; Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 276; Schrage-Früh, "Subversive Weiblichkeit?" 375–76.

[59] Novalis, *Schriften* III:692 #702.

[60] Friedrichsmeyer, *Androgyne*, 84.

[61] Littlejohns, "Bekenntnisse eines Ungeschickten," 606.

[62] Becker-Cantarino, "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation'?" 35.

[63] Becker-Cantarino "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation'?", 29; Littlejohns, "Bekenntnisse eines Ungeschickten," 606; Schrage-Früh, "Subversive Weiblichkeit?" 369, 375.

[64] Becker-Cantarino, "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation'?" 28, 42–43; Schrage-Früh, "Subversive Weiblichkeit?" 366.

[65] Becker-Cantarino, "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation'?" 35.

[66] Helfer, "Gender Studies and Romanticism," 33.

[67] See, for example, Schlegel's equation of masculinity with both fertilizing and overcoming in his claim that: "Mysteries are, as already mentioned, feminine; orgies want to conquer or fertilize everything around them in the joyful exuberance of masculine power." Schlegel, KFSA 2, 269 Nr. 137.

[68] See, e.g., Schlegel, KFSA 18, 144, 145; Johann Wilhelm Ritter, *Fragmente aus dem Nachlasse eines jungen Physikers: Ein Taschenbuch fur Freunde der Natur* (Heidelberg: Mohr & Zimmer,

1810), vol. 2, 45 Nr. 434.

[69] Novalis, *Schriften* III, 87–88, 255 Nr. 81.

[70] Novalis, *Schriften* III, 264 Nr. 126.

[71] Novalis, *Schriften* III, 262, Nr. 117; see also 255, Nr. 81, 264, Nr. 126.

[72] Schlegel, KFSA 8, 46.

[73] Novalis, *Schriften* III, 651, Nr. 564.

[74] Novalis, *Schriften* II, 260, Nr. 511.

[75] Novalis, *Schriften* III, 262, Nr. 117.

[76] Novalis, *Schriften* II, 104, Nr. 1, 412, Nr. 1, 455, Nr. 95; Schlegel, KFSA 2, 201, Nr. 222.

[77] Novalis, *Schriften* I, 88–90, III, 314, Nr. 398; Schlegel, KFSA 2, 182–83, Nr. 116, 185, Nr.125.

[78] Novalis, *Schriften* I, 82; Schlegel, KFSA2, 270, Nr. 137.

[79] Novalis, *Schriften* I:104; see also 284, 287–88; Schlegel, *Lucinde*, 49.

[80] Novalis, *Schriften* II:545 #105, III:390 #654.

[81] Novalis, *Schriften* III:686 #671.

[82] Schlegel, KAII:258 #19, 267 #116.

[83] Novalis, *Schriften* III:520, I:84; Schlegel, KAVIII: 54.

[84] Novalis, *Schriften* I:96, II:524–55 #13; Schlegel, KAII:267 #111.

[85] Gisela Dischner, "Die Guenderrode," in *Bettine von Arnim: Eine weibliche Sozialbiographie aus dem 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1977), 75; Roetzel, "Feminizing Philosophy," 362–63, 370.

[86] Novalis, *Schriften* II:672, 522 #3, 523 #8, 427 #32–33, 463 #114.

[87] Novalis, *Schriften* III:685–86 #671; see also II:439 #68.

[88] E.g., Schlegel, KAII:42, 152 #42, 363f.

[89] Schlegel KAII:267 #128; Novalis, *Schriften* II:617 #17.

[90] Novalis, *Schriften* II:275 #577, 261 #519.

[91] Schlegel, KAII:42.

[92] Helfer, "Male Muses," 300. See also Kuzniar, "Hearing Women's Voices," 1196.

[93] Roetzel, "Feminizing Philosophy," 361–62.

[94] Novalis, *Schriften* II:417 #14, III:559 #30; Schlegel, KAII:286.

[95] J.G. Fichte, "First Introduction to the *Wissenschaftslehre*," in *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre and Other Writings (1797–1800)*, ed. and trans. Daniel Breazeale (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 9–11.

[96] Schlegel, KAII:72; KAXVIII:521 #22. See also Novalis, *Schriften* II:546 #111.

[97] Novalis, *Schriften* III:430 #820.

[98] Novalis, *Schriften* II:421 #21.

[99] May Mergenthaler, "Die Frühromantik als Projekt vollendeter Mitteilung zwischen den Geschlechtern: Friedrich Schlegel und Dorothea Veit im Gespräch über Friedrich Richters Romane," *The German Quarterly* 81.3 (2008): 306–7; Lisa C. Roetzel, "Positionality and the Male Philosopher: Friedrich Schlegel's 'Ueber die Philosophie. An Dorothea,'" *Monasthefte* 91.2 (1999): 188, 193, 199.

[100] Helfer, "Male Muses," 300. See also MacLeod, "Third Sex," 207; Pfeiffer, "Friendship and Gender"; Schrage-Früh, "Subversive Weiblichkeit?" 373.

[101] Helfer, "Male Muses," 301.

[102] Helfer, "Gender Studies and Romanticism," 243; "Male Muses," 301, 304.

[103] Novalis, *Schriften* I:271, 276.

[104] Helfer, "Male Muses," 303.

[105] Helfer, "Male Muses," 303.

[106] Helfer, "Male Muses," 308.

[107] Helfer, "Male Muses," 305.

[108] Helfer, "Male Muses," 308.

[109] Becker-Cantarino, "'Feminismus' und 'Emanzipation?'" 25; Gabriele Dürbeck, "'Sibylle,' 'Pythia' oder 'Dame Lucifer.' Zur Idealisierung und Marginalisierung von Autorinnen der Romantik in der Literaturgeschichtsschreibung des 19. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für Germanistik* 2 (2000): 258; Helfer, "Gender Studies and Romanticism," 229.

[110] Roetzel, "Feminizing Philosophy," 365.

[111] Helfer, "Gender Studies and Romanticism," 240.

[112] Helfer, "Gender Studies and Romanticism," 242; Mergenthaler, "Frühromantik als Projekt, 316.

[113] Roetzel, "Feminizing Philosophy," 376.

[114] Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 273; Liliane Weissberg, "Schreiben als Selbstentwurf. Zu den Schriften Rahel Varnhagens und Dorothea Schlegels," *Zeitschrift fuer Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 47.3 (1995): 244.

[115] Helfer, "Dorothea Veit Schlegel's *Florentin*," 150; Krimmer, "Abortive *Bildung*," 247; Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 271–92.

[116] Helfer, "Gender Studies and Romanticism," 241.

[117] Juliane's father's remarks about her splendid but unflattering wedding attire ("it is not about the beauty of the clothing, but its appropriateness") and her mother's claim that Juliane will remain in her arms after marrying Eduard also indicate that Veit-Schlegel means to highlight marriage's social and cultural role (*Florentin*, 118).

[118] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 38.

[119] Helfer, "Dorothea Veit-Schlegel's *Florentin*," 156; Johnson, "Dorothea Veit's *Florentin*," 43, 55; Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 275, 281–83.

[120] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 72, 74.

[121] Florentin defends himself to Juliane for this action, in the process revealing the narcissism that characterized his relationship to his wife and her pregnancy, crying: "Was she not a hard-hearted, faithless, unnatural murderer? She most unmercifully murdered me, me!" (Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 74–75). Florentin also does not give his wife's name, resisting Juliane's questioning and complaining "Do not ask me about those sort of contingencies [...] they do not belong to me in the remotest way" (81).

[122] Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 280.

[123] Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 281.

[124] Johnson, "Dorothea Veit's *Florentin*," 53.

[125] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 15.

[126] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 12, 16, 41–43, 46, 51–52.

[127] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 145–47; see also 96–100.

[128] Helfer, "Dorothea Veit-Schlegel's *Florentin*," 156; Johnson, "Dorothea Veit's *Florentin*, 41–42.

[129] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 94.

[130] Helfer, "Doroethea Veit-Schlegel's *Florentin*," 152; Johnson, "Dorothea Veit's *Florentin*," 43, 52; Kelley, "Women, Gender, and Literary Criticism," 327; Pnevmonidou, "Absage," 288.

[131] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 17, 26–27; see also 13, 77, 80, 82–85, 139–40, 116.

[132] Liesl Allingham, "Revolutionizing Domesticity: Potentialities of Female Self-Definition in Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin* (1801)," *Women in German Yearbook* 27 (2011): 14–15; Helfer, "Dorothea Veit Schlegel's *Florentin*: Constructing a Feminist Romantic Aesthetic," *German Quarterly* 69.2 (1996): 156; Laurie Johnson, "Dorothea Veit's *Florentin* and the Early Romantic Model of Alterity," *Monatshefte* 97.1 (2005): 42, 43.

[133] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 10.

[134] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 153.

[135] Veit-Schlegel may indicate that different types of *Bildung* are suited to different women. For example, Clementina maintains that Juliane and another girl, Therese, should follow opposite paths in their development (*Florentin*, 138). See Allingham, "Revolutionizing Domesticity," 15–16, 19.

[136] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 35–38, 86–95, 101–105.

[137] Krimmer, "Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin*," in *In the Company of Men: Cross-Dressed Women Around 1800* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 2003), 185. See also Allingham, "Revolutionizing Domesticity"; Helfer, "Dorothea Veit Schlegel's *Florentin*," 155.

[138] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 61–62.

[139] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 18–19.

[140] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 129.

[141] Veit-Schlegel, *Florentin*, 18–19, 108f.

[142] Allingham, "Revolutionizing Domesticity."

[143] Karoline von Günderrode, *Sämtliche Werke und ausgewählte Studien. Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Walther Morgenthaler (Basel: Stroemfeld/Roter Stern, 1990–1991), vol. I:325.

[144] Günderrode, *Sämtliche Werke* I:68.

[145] Joachim Heimerl, "Dem Tode verfallen: Die Ballade 'Piedro' im Kontext des literarischen Werks der Karoline von Günderrode," *Wirkendes Wort* 53.3 (2003): 408; Karin Obermeier, "Karoline von Günderrode (1780–1806)," in *Women Writers in German-Speaking Countries. A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook*, ed. Elke P. Frederiksen and Elizabeth G. Ametsbichler, 180–88 (Westport, CT: Greenwoord Press, 1988), 183.

[146] Günderrode, *Sämtliche Werke* I:33, 32.

[147] Günderrode, *Sämtliche Werke* I:446–47. Similarly, in her prose poem "An Apocalyptic Fragment" Günderrode describes cycles of existence as individual forms are absorbed into the whole and born again (I:53).

[148] *Anziehung* ("attraction" or "affinity") and *Gesezen* [*sic*] *der Verwandschaft* ("laws of affinity" or "laws of relationship") (Günderrode, *Sämtliche Werke* I:446–47).

[149] Novalis, *Schriften* II:427, #32.

[150] Günderrode, *Sämtliche Werke* I:447. Unlike Novalis and Schlegel, Günderrode is ambivalent about whether this is the purpose of existence or just a natural fact, and about whether the ideal end-point will ever be reached (448).

[151] Günderrode, *Sämtliche Werke* I:449.

[152] Anna C. Ezekiel, "Introduction to *Hildgund*," in Günderrode, *Poetic Fragments*, trans. Anna C. Ezekiel (Albany: SUNY Press, 2016), 39–55.

[153] See Liesl Allingham, "Countermemory in Karoline von Günderrode's 'Darthula nach Ossian': A Female Warrior, Her Unruly Breast, and the Construction of Her Myth," *Goethe Yearbook* 21 (July 2014): 39–56.

[154] E.g., Karin Obermeier, "'Ach diese Rolle wird mir allzu schwer': Gender and Cultural Identity in Karoline von Günderrode's Drama 'Udohla,'" in *Thalia's Daughters: German*

Women Dramatists from the Eighteenth Century to the Present, ed. Susan Cocalis, Ferrel Rose, Karin Obermeier (Tübingen: Francke, 1996), 100.

155 Günderrode, letter to Gunda Brentano, Aug 29 1801, *Der Schatten eines Traumes. Gedichte, Prosa, Briefe, Zeugniss von Zeitgenossen*, ed. Christa Wolf (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1997 [1979]), 160.