**Earth, Spirit, Humanity: Community and the Nonhuman in Karoline von Günderrode’s “Idea of the Earth”**

**Author biography**

Anna Ezekiel is an independent scholar working on feminist history of philosophy. Since receiving her Ph.D. in Philosophy from McGill University, her work has focused on the Romantic poet and philosopher Karoline von Günderrode (1780–1806). Dr. Ezekiel is the author of several articles on Günderrode and German women philosophers, including “Sincerity, Idealization and Writing with the Body: Karoline von Günderrode and Her Reception,” in *Aufrichtigkeitseffekte* (Rombach, 2016), “Metamorphosis, Personhood, and Power in Karoline von Günderrode,” *European Romantic Review* (2014), and “Women, Women Writers, and Early German Romanticism” in *The Palgrave Handbook of German Romantic Philosophy* (ed. Elizabeth Millán, forthcoming). She has translated Günderrode’s *Poetic Fragments* (SUNY Press, 2016) and most of the texts in Oxford University Press’ forthcoming *Women Philosophers of the Long Nineteenth Century: The German Tradition* (ed. Kristin Gjesdal and Dalia Nassar). She is currently working on a volume of translations of Günderrode’s philosophical writings, titled *Philosophical Fragments*,for Oxford University Press.

**Abstract**

Karoline von Günderrode (1780–1806) has long enjoyed a reputation as a Romantic poet, but her philosophical contributions have largely been neglected. This paper is one of the first to address Günderrode’s political thought, especially her view of the interrelationship between human society and the broader environment. The paper argues that Günderrode develops resources for reconceiving the relationship of human beings to the nonhuman and to each other that work against an instrumentalizing view of nature and programmatic political ideals. Günderrode’s normative restraint, concept of harmony, and view of human beings as part of and the same in kind as the rest of nature contribute to a vision of sociality, grounded in her metaphysics, that envisions small communities fostering connections between human beings and the nonhuman. On Günderrode’s model, these connections can grow and strengthen and eventually, perhaps, enable the emergence of the single, perfect organism that she calls the “realized idea of the earth.”