

Urgrund and access to the Urgrund in Karoline von Günderrode's discussion with the thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher

Hugo E. Herrera 

Faculty of Law and Institute of Philosophy,
Diego Portales University, Santiago, Chile

Correspondence

Hugo E. Herrera, Faculty of Law, Diego Portales University, Avenida República 105, Santiago, 8370089, Chile.
Email: hugoeduardoherrera@gmail.com

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Abstract

Friedrich Schleiermacher is among the philosophers who influenced Karoline von Günderrode's thought. Although this influence is relevant, it has received little attention. Both authors agree on distinguishing "spirit" and "body" or "the inner and the outer" in similar terms. However, there was a significant difference between them. In Schleiermacher's works that Günderrode considered (*On Religion* and *Soliloquies*), he conceives of the relationship as one in which the world or outer depends on the spirit or inner. For Günderrode, this relationship is polar, as "spirit" and "world" form part of an original totality. This difference from the philosopher influences the issue that both raised of access to the "primordial ground." For Schleiermacher, the world depends on spirit; the issue of access to that foundation is circumscribed to access to the spiritual dimension. In contrast, for Günderrode, "spirit" and "body" are poles of a previous original totality. Hence, access to the primordial ground does not coincide with the spirit's access to itself. Instead, access to unity is both spiritual and corporeal. Günderrode's differences from Schleiermacher are based on an argument we attempt to elucidate and evaluate in this article.

1 | GÜNDERRODE'S DIALOGUE WITH SCHLEIERMACHER

Karoline von Günderrode (1780–1806) is an author who has usually been better known for her life, tragic death, and corpus of literary works than for her philosophical ideas (for Günderrode's biography, cf. Hille, 1999; Gersdorff, 2006; Wolf, 2006; Lazarowicz, 2011; Brentano, 2006). In recent years this tendency has changed. There has been a movement to study her philosophical thought. The change is crucial because it reveals that women as well as men contributed to the formation of the interlinked movements of early German Romanticism and idealism.

Notable advances have been made in investigations into the influence of significant authors on her thought, authors such as Herder (cf. Becker-Cantarino, 2010; Ezekiel, 2020a; Figueira, 1989; Martinson, 2005), Kant (including a discussion of whether or not Kant directly influences her thought; cf. Raisbeck, 2019; Ezekiel, 2014), Hölderlin (cf. Albernaz, 2021; and from the fifties Howeg, 1952), Schelling (cf. Becker-Cantarino, 2010; Christmann, 2005; Dormann, 2004; Ezekiel, 2016; Martinson, 2005; Nassar, 2022; Wolf, 2006), Novalis (cf. Götz, 2000; Martinson, 2005), Fichte (cf. Christmann, 2005; Dormann, 2004; Ezekiel, 2020a; Martinson, 2005; Nassar, 2022); and Frederick Schlegel (cf. Dormann, 2004; Imgrund, 2012; Martinson, 2005; Schärf, 1988; Schuman, 2019).

Friedrich Schleiermacher also occupies an important place among the authors who influenced her thought. Günderrode expressly refers to two of Schleiermacher's works in her philosophical notes: *On Religion* and *Soliloquies* (Günderrode's two texts on Schleiermacher were excluded from Doris Hopp and Max Preitz's publication of Günderrode's theoretical texts, which only includes her *Studienbuch*; cf. Hopp & Preitz, 1975, vol. III. The manuscripts were included in Morgenthaler's *Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe* in 1990; cf. Günderrode, "C Schleiermacher," 1990, vol. II, p. 287; vol. III, p. 314). However, her discussion with Schleiermacher was not limited to these notes. It also comes through, as in the case of her consideration of other philosophers, in her literary works (cf. Bascov, 2012; Morgenthaler, in Günderrode, 1990, vol. III, p. 323; Westphal, 1993, pp. 37, 55–6, 143–4).

In addition to more general references made in the literature, several studies have dwelt on specific aspects of Günderrode's reception of Schleiermacher (cf. Christmann, 2005, pp. 84–5; Dormann, 2004, pp. 67, 104, 174, 232; Westphal, 1993, pp. 33, 36–7, 54–5, 140–4, 154; Becker-Cantarino, 2010, p. 54; Regen, 1910, pp. 73–4; Ens, 1995, p. 17; Wilson, 1964, pp. 189–99; Markewitz, 2008, p. 198; Martinson, 2005, pp. 309, 318; Raisbeck, 2019, p. 144). However, there is no work that, based on a detailed study of Schleiermacher's and Günderrode's texts, generally and critically considers Schleiermacher's influence on Günderrode and her resultant philosophical contributions.

This study aims to determine the influence of Schleiermacher's thought on that of Günderrode, especially in her conversation with the ideas found in *On Religion* and *Soliloquies*. Specifically, we address two internally related issues central to this reception and critique: first, the relationship between "spirit" and "body" or "interior" and "exterior"; and second, the knowledge of what Günderrode calls the "primordial ground" at the base of human experience (cf. Günderrode, "Geschichte eines Braminen," 1990, vol. I, p. 309).

Günderrode's evaluation of Schleiermacher addresses fundamental problems within the context of the discussions then taking place amongst the German idealists and early Romantics. In a manner analogous, as we shall see, to Schelling and Hölderlin, she identifies an inadequacy in discursive knowledge (Fichte also had noticed the deficiencies of what Dieter Henrich calls "Reflexionstheorie" for validating the consciousness of the I, though he inclines toward a position that privileges the subject, from which Hölderlin, Schelling and Günderrode distance themselves; cf. Fichte, 1962, p. 30; Henrich, 1967, pp. 11–26).

In the post-Kantian context, a question arose regarding the nature of the foundation of the unity at the basis of the subject and object that makes up conscious experience. Conscious knowledge supposes the division between a knowing subject and a known object. The question, then, is how the terms in each division remain united, despite this division, in conscious knowledge. If consciousness emerges by virtue of division, the partition might lead to a dispersal of the divided terms without return. To avoid this dispersal requires that the original division operate on the basis of a prior unity. Inaugurally and as a condition of possibility for the division between a subject and an object, some sort of unity of subject and object must be evident. Hölderlin argues along these lines: "The concept of division itself contains the concept of a reciprocal relationship between object and subject, and the necessary premiss of a

whole of which object and subject are the parts" (Hölderlin, 2009, 231): in the absence of this prior unity, division would lead to "absolute division and isolation" (Hölderlin, 2009, 304).

Schleiermacher responds to this problem by affirming that the subject-object division must be sustained upon an ultimate foundation of spiritual, or interior, character (cf. Schleiermacher, 2015, pp. 35, 37; 2002, pp. 16, 17, 25, 92). He distinguishes "spirit" and "world" (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 16), "inner life" and "outward life" (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 20), "the inner and the outer" (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 20; cf. 2015, pp. 35, 36, 37). He conceives of their relationship as one in which the world or the exterior depends on the spirit or interior. Hence, spirit is the fundament of existence and of the unity at the basis of the division into subject and object. On the contrary, spirit cannot be explained based on the world. "To me the spirit is the first and only being [...] nothing is a mere effect of that world upon me, every real influence is exerted by me upon it" (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 17; see 2015, p. 37).

Günderrode agrees with Schleiermacher in arguing for the insufficiency of discursive or conceptual knowledge to explain the unity of experience adequately. Furthermore, she acknowledges, again like Schleiermacher, the need for a direct access to the fundamental unity at the basis of the subject-object division. In contrast with Schleiermacher, however, for Günderrode the relationship between "world" and "spirit" is polar (Günderrode, "Idee der Erde," 1990, vol. I, pp. 446, 448). These terms are parts of an original totality (cf. Günderrode, "Geschichte eines Braminen," 1990, vol. I, pp. 308–9; "G Naturphilosophie," 1990, vol. II, pp. 368–70; 374–5; 377–8).

She reaches this conclusion by means of a reflection that takes note of the irreducible character of these parts of existence. Just as the interior is not reducible to the exterior, neither is the exterior or corporeal reducible to the spiritual, as Schleiermacher would have it. Consequently, for Günderrode fundamental unity at the basis of the subject-object division must encompass both: the spirit and the world (cf. Günderrode, "Geschichte eines Braminen," 1990, vol. I, pp. 309–10; "Idee der Erde," 1990, vol. I, p. 446).

Günderrode does more than identify a weak point in Schleiermacher's argument. Beyond that, through her critique and proposed solution, she places herself in a position that, as we shall see, is closer to that of those authors who, like Hölderlin and Schelling, go beyond the Schleiermachian approach that limits the common foundation at the basis of the division to the spirit. Her debate with Schleiermacher on this issue parallels, in a way, the debate of Schelling and Hölderlin with Fichte. Schelling and Hölderlin find it inconsistent that Fichte puts the original unity of the subject and object on the side of the subject and that he simultaneously understands that the subject is the unity of both (cf. Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/1, pp. 100–36; vol. I/2, pp. 11–56; vol. I/3, pp. 1–268, 271–326; vol. I/4, pp. 213–329; vol. I/5, pp. 211–352; Hölderlin, 2009, 48). Similarly, Günderrode criticizes that Schleiermacher considers primordial unity both as the unity of spirit and body *and* as spiritual unity.

Schleiermacher and Günderrode operate in a dynamic and complex philosophical context that includes discussions of the status of the spirit and the world, or of subjectivity and reality, and the links between them. Enquiries into the relationship that Günderrode asserts between the spirit and body and regarding access to the original unity at the base of the division between "the inner" and "the outer" necessitate that we bear in mind, in addition to Schleiermacher's texts and Günderrode's comments on them, her dialogue with the positions of other philosophers. To address the issues of the status of primordial unity and access to it, Günderrode's notes on Schelling are significant. There Günderrode finds a reflection on the inadequacies of the attempts to explain existence either by way of objective knowledge or by starting from one of its poles, in this case, the purely interior or spiritual one.

This difference in the conception of the relationship between "world" and "spirit" is significant when considering the issues we address in this study. As Schleiermacher's "world" is dependent on "the spirit," in his thought, the problem of access to the "primordial ground" has a different scope than in Günderrode's work. For Schleiermacher, the issue is confined to the question of access to the spiritual dimension. For him, the exterior or corporeal ultimately depends on the interior or spiritual, with the spirit being the ultimate origin of existence. Hence, access to the origin coincides with the spirit's access to itself. Conversely, since for Günderrode the spirit and the body are not in a founder-founded relationship, but rather are the poles of a previous original totality, access to the "primordial

“ground” does not coincide with the access of the spirit to itself. Instead, it is the access to a unity that encompasses both the spiritual and corporeal (Günderrode, “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309).

In addition to shedding light on these questions, relevant within the intellectual contexts of German idealism and early Romanticism, the study of Günderrode’s discussion with Schleiermacher that we propose is significant to the task of completing the broader set of participants in these contexts. Despite the notable efforts of Dieter Henrich, Manfred Frank, and others to account for this broader discursive community, even they did not include women like Günderrode.

2 | SPIRIT AND BODY

The first editions of *On Religion* and *Soliloquies* are dated 1799 and 1800, respectively. Although *On Religion* uses a philosophical language while *Soliloquies* is a more personal book, the texts are closely related (refer to the links between both of Schleiermacher’s works, for example, Schultz, 1924, 1968; Meckenstock, 1998; Nowak, 2002; Grove, 2004; Ehrhardt, 2005; Fischer, 2001; Ellsiepen, 2006; Friess, 2002, pp. xlvi–lvi, and Albrecht, 2017, pp. 118–20, 121–2).

In the two texts Günderrode considered, Schleiermacher tries to justify the plausibility of religious experience within a context in which such experience has become debatable. In the post-Kantian context, critical philosophy’s restriction of the scope of knowledge to sensory-perceptible experience and to its conditions of possibility are in full force (cf. Kant, *Critique of pure reason*, 1998, A 92–3/B 124–6 [224]; A 478–9/B 506–7 [504–5]; Cassirer, 2000, pp. 1–2). Schleiermacher seeks to rehabilitate religious experience not as objective knowledge or thought but as the acknowledgment of an “intuition or feeling” through which one can reach the “infinite” (Schleiermacher, 2015, pp. 22, 23, 24; Arndt, 2013, pp. 22–3; Crouter, 2015, pp. xi–xv, xix–xxv; Friess, 2002, xxxviii–xlvi). Inasmuch as this is access to a unity that is the condition of the unity of all experience, this access also takes on a character that is not only theological or religious but also philosophical.

In *Soliloquies* and *On Religion*, Schleiermacher understands existence to be presented to human beings as divided into what he calls “world” and “spirit.” “World,” he says, is the dimension “of the outward life,” of “the outer,” of “external things” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 20), where entities are extrinsically conditioned, “determined by external circumstances” (Schleiermacher, 2002, pp. 15, 19). On the other hand, he calls “Spirit” the “inner life” or “the inner” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 20), referring to an active or spontaneous interiority (cf. Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 37; 2002, pp. 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22, 25–6; Albrecht, 2017, p. 120). The spirit responds to an “inner determination,” and its actions are independent of the world (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 18; cf. 19).

In addition to being independent of the world, the spirit is the producer of the world. It is “the first and only being” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 16; cf. pp. 17, 25, 92; 2015, p. 37), which “creates both world and time” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 23). “[T]he world is the fairest creation of spirit” (2002, p. 16; cf. pp. 16, 20, 21–2, 24, 25, 92; 2015, p. 37; Dilthey, 1985, p. 539; Arndt, 2013, pp. 10, 156, 368–9). The spirit is the fundament of existence, and a proper understanding of existence requires attending to the relationship between the spirit and the world. “[O]nly the person who [...] in all existence, finds nothing else but a production of this spirit [...], only to him is everything visible really a world [...] only through the internal is the external comprehensible” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 37). The reverse, instead, would be impossible to explain, as “the masse does not make up the world” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 35).

If the spirit escapes mundane determinations and produces the world, how can one explain humans’ evident experience of “Necessity” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 18)? Schleiermacher argues that such an experience depends on the multiplicity of spiritual spontaneities. The multiplicity of spirits operating in the same dimension causes them to collide, thereby limiting each other. “Necessity” is ultimately “a chord determined by the harmonious clash of various inner liberties” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 18; cf. pp. 17, 19, 20, 72). To that extent, this necessity of the world is

traceable to the spirit, “the first and only being” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 16; cf. Dormann, 2013, p. 67 n. 22; Albrecht, 2017, p. 120; Günderrode, “C Schleiermacher,” 1990, vol. II, p. 287).

Multiple spirits constitute the “community of spiritual beings” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 17). The spirit can be apprehended from the perspective of the “particular powers” of the individual, which Schleiermacher understands as the perspective proper of “morality” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 23). The spirit can also be considered in (religious) vision or in the intuition that pays attention to “the infinite nature of totality, the one and all,” in which the various spontaneities are integrated into the “community” or spiritual whole (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 23; 2002, p. 17).

Schleiermacher formulates two arguments to affirm his position on the relationship between “spirit” and “world,” one of which is ontological, while the other is epistemological. The first notices the difference between the “body” animated by “spiritual life” and “inanimate matter” (Schleiermacher, 2002, pp. 16–7, 25; 2015, pp. 34, 35). The animated body is “living” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 33, cf. pp. 32–6), and its “inmost being” is “spiritual activity” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 15; cf. 2015, p. 44; cf. pp. 24, 34, 36, 37). “Dead matter,” on the other hand, would be characterised by passivity devoid of any spontaneity, “determined by external circumstances” (Schleiermacher, 2002, pp. 15, 19; 2015, p. 36). Without life or unity, such material would be an absolute dispersion of simple particles. Each particle would be “something simple” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 36; cf. pp. 36–7) and ultimately “particular” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 17). “Having clearly differentiated between the inner and the outer,” it is then impossible to explain the spontaneity of the spirit and the whole in which the parts are intrinsically linked starting from an “inanimate matter” of separate parts (Schleiermacher, 2002, pp. 19–21; see 2015, pp. 24, 34–7).

The epistemological argument attends to the fact that access to the interior of the spirit is impossible for senso-perceptible knowledge. The “inner life” is not “comprehensible” “through” “the external” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 37). The “empiricist” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 21) or the “sensuous mind” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 25), “who only knows and sees his extrinsic appearance” (Schleiermacher, 1975, vol. I/3, p. 8; 2002, p. 15), assumes an objectifying mode of explanation. He tries to access the interiority of the spirit (the spirit as an “inner process”; 2002, p. 21) “from the outside” (Friess, 2002, p. xliii), “look[ing] outwards” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 21; one should note the inapposite character of the terms “empiricist” and “sensuous mind,” as well as that of the German terms they translate, “der Sinnliche” and “der sinnliche Mensch,” respectively [Schleiermacher, 1975, vol. I/3, pp. 12, 14]: rather than to a properly empiricist position, in which the condition of the world is not yet prejudged, Schleiermacher seems to be referring to that of the philosophical naturalist: to someone who holds the reality of the exterior or physical world to be the ultimate foundation of existence). The inappropriate mode of approximation leads empiricists to erroneous results: “They naturally think of the world as the primary reality” (Friess, 2002, p. xliii). The world becomes independent and even decisive in the empiricist’s consideration (cf. Schleiermacher, 2002, pp. 72–3; 2015, p. 37). “[I]n the image which he [i.e., the ‘empiricist’ or the ‘sensuous mind’] constructs of himself, this very self becomes something external, [...] determined by external circumstances” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 15). Hence, it happens that the spirit, that is, an “inner process,” ends up being considered “the shadow of an outward act” (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 25). To the extent that the mode of access to existence postulated by the empiricist is corporeal or external, he cannot “adequately” comprehend the “inner life of spirit” (2002, p. 13), the life of the spirit as an interiority that is capable of self-awareness and spontaneity in thought and action. The empiricist’s “false philosophy” loses sight of the spiritual experience itself, the character of which is an inner event that is elusive from the outside (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 21; cf. pp. 11, 13, 15, 22–5; 2015, p. 37).

Additionally, the empiricist’s perspective prevents a correct explanation of the other pole of existence: the world. Schleiermacher argues that the fundamental notions in which the “world” can be understood, the notions “by which nature first becomes for you an intuition of the world,” namely “individuality and oneness [...] derive originally from the interior of the mind” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 37). Only then are they “directed from there to nature” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 37). Without access to that interiority (to the “spirit” at the base of existence), there would be no way to explain the presence of these notions in our minds or how we “get these concepts” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 37). For Schleiermacher, existence is the unity of the multiple, in which “everything is ornately connected and intertwined” so that it is possible to refer to a “spirit of the world” (Schleiermacher, 2015,

p. 36). The fundamental notions according to which the world is understood, individuality and totality, consider the two moments of the division between the whole and the things by which the things remain, despite being divided among themselves and discerned with respect to the whole, although nevertheless included in the whole.

Unlike Schleiermacher, Günderrode argues that existence is not ultimately purely spiritual. She calls what she understands as the fundament of existence “the one and all” (Günderrode, “Ein apokalptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, p. 54), the “primordial Being [Urseyn]” (“Des Wandrs Niederfahrt,” 1990, vol. I, p. 72), the “primordial ground [Urgrund]” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309), the “source of life” (“Ein apokalptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, p. 53; “Einstes lebt ich süßes Leben ...,” 1990, vol. I, p. 386), the “founding force [Grundkraft]” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 308), the “primordial force [Urkraft]” (“Des Wandrs Niederfahrt,” 1990, vol. I, p. 72; “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 312), and “original life [Urleben]” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 308). With these designations, Günderrode alludes to the primordial (“founding”), vital, and all-encompassing character of that “Urgrund.”

The “primordial Being” or “primordial ground” is an ultimate or absolute fundament. It depends only on itself, on its self-production, rather than on another. The primordial ground “self-generates” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309), “it self-produces” (“G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 375), “is not limited by anything else, [it] limits itself and is in itself cause and effect at once, and consequently has no ground outside itself” (Günderrode, 2021, 76; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 369). It is also a vital fundament: “[A]n infinite life” (“Ein apokalptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, p. 54). It is spontaneous and capable of self-organisation and self-direction (cf. “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 374; Nassar, 2022, 119, 123). Furthermore, the “Urgrund” is an all-encompassing fundament: “It is everything that is, was, and will be” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). “[N]othing is outside it” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 78; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 375; cf. pp. 369–70, 375–6).

The primordial ground precedes the division of spirit and body. “[I]t is not separate body and spirit [...] it is one” (“Ein apokalptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, p. 54). In the original totality, self-determination occurs. The “Urgrund” “divides and separates itself” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309, cf. p. 305; “Des Wandrs Niederfahrt,” 1990, vol. I, p. 73; “C Schleiermacher,” 1990, vol. II, p. 283; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 375). From this division, it is possible to discern, on the one hand, the “primordial ground” and, on the other, as a product of self-determination, the determined or finite (cf. “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). The fundament “divides and specifies itself in multiple conformations; it becomes sun, moon, stars, plants, animals and human beings simultaneously” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). Those parts or things that emerge with the self-division of the fundament are distinguished from it by their determined and dependent character. They are dependent on it. The “Urgrund” “has no ground outside itself” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 76; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 369, cf. “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). Instead, the parts emerging from it do not meet this condition: “[T]hey have a ground outside themselves” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 76; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 370; cf. “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309).

Insofar as the “Urgrund” produces things thanks to the fact that it “divides and separates itself,” it “is both the ground of all things and the things themselves, the condition and the conditioned, the creator and the creature” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). By dividing from the primordial ground that which is determined, the primordial ground is not radically detached, but rather inhabits and works in what is produced or determined. It “flows through” the determinate parts (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). Notwithstanding that “things” “remain themselves,” “they, however, at the same time form a unity with the primordial force [Urkraft] from which they emerged and thus unite the universality [...] of the creator with the individuality of the creature” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 312). The original fundament maintains its founding character when this division occurs. “[T]he infinite, or One is present in the finite,” and “the finite [...] is infused with the infinite” (Martinson, 2005, p. 309). Günderrode writes: “[S]ince everything finite is cut off from the infinite, then everything finite is also an infinite [ein Unendliches], which only exists finitely through the determination of its limits” (“C Schleiermacher,” 1990, vol. II, p. 283).

In the original division, Günderrode argues that the whole and the whole in things (which are always “finite presentations of the infinite;” Günderrode, 2021, p. 75; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 368) are divided into poles of a relationship (cf. “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446). She calls these poles “body [Körper]” and “spirit [Geist]” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 83; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 448), “body [Leib]” and “soul [Seele]” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 82; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446), “the visible” and “the invisible” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 308–9), “the exterior” and “the interior” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 82; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446), or “extension” and “intensity” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 82; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446).

The poles are irreducible to each other and inseparable. Their common origin is primordial total unity. They are the result of the polar tension that emerges with the division of that unity, and both have that unity as their unitary source (cf. Günderrode, “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 308–9; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, pp. 368–70, 374, 375, 377–8). In the things that arise from the self-determination of the whole, the poles are also irreducible and reciprocally remitted (cf. “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446).

The irreducibility between the poles runs in both directions. It is impossible to explain the external as a product of the spirit in the way that Schleiermacher attempts. Günderrode departs from the philosopher in this regard. The genesis of exteriority cannot be elucidated through a spiritual or interior principle. There is no record of that genesis or a faculty capable of accessing such a genesis. Its origin is inaccessible or “mysterious [geheimnißvoll]” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). In “Idee der Erde,” Günderrode identifies the whole with the earth (1990, vol. I, p. 446). This is “a unity” of “body” and “spirit” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 83; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 448; cf. vol. I, p. 446). The earth figures as the whole of existence. It includes “the visible” and “the invisible” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 308–9). The earth is, then, also essentially corporeal.

Nor is the spirit traceable to a bodily or exterior principle. Here, Günderrode’s position approaches Schleiermacher’s and criticises the empiricists’ claim to explain the spirit—access to which they do not explain—from the body—access to which they do explain. Hence, the intention is to account for the interior through external or senso-perceptible access (cf. “C Schleiermacher,” 1990, vol. II, p. 287). This effort also appears impossible if one considers that due to the origin’s mysterious nature, the genesis by which the spirit emerges from the outside is not recorded anywhere (cf. “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). Furthermore, the exterior is only such for an interiority that understands it, for a mind before which the exterior appears (cf. Günderrode, 2021, p. 82; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446; “C Schleiermacher,” 1990, vol. II, p. 287).

The interior and exterior poles are not separable from each other. Günderrode indicates that both in “the whole” and “the individual,” each of the poles is “inconceivable [nicht begreiflich]” without the other. “[S]oul and body [...] cannot be conceived as split in two” (“Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446; cf. “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 404). The poles are reciprocally dependent, and whoever says “outside” also says “inside,” by reference to which the outside is just defined as “outside,” and vice versa: The interior is only conceivable in relation to exteriority with respect to which the interior is interior. The relationship between the terms is reciprocal and not unidirectional (cf. “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 373). Günderrode also states that whoever says “being [Wesen]” also says “form [Form],” in which the being is expressed (furthermore, she points out that there is no form of the nonbeing); whoever says “force” says “some sort of effect” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 82 transl. modified; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446), and vice versa. The relationship of cause and effect is a reciprocal link.

Given the impossibility of reducing the exterior to the interior and vice versa, as well as the impossibility of conceiving them separately, for Günderrode it only remains to bring the exterior together with the interior to a “primordial ground [Urgrund]” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). Günderrode understands that the division of the poles “of the objective and subjective, the ideal and real” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 77; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 375), emerges from a fundamental unity that embraces poles and leaves them in their polar irreducibility. While this supreme unity divides itself, giving rise to the poles “of the objective and subjective, the ideal and real” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 77; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 375), it prevents one from “separating [trennen]” from the other (Günderrode, 2021, p. 78; transl. modified; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 377). The

unity of the divided aspects is a “whole” (“Briefe zweier Freunde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 354) or “the totality [Allheit]” (Günderrode, 2015, p. 97; “Briefe zweier Freunde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 360) that is prior to the “particular aspects”; it is not an agglomeration that “consists only of particular parts” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 310). Without this primordial unity, the opposite activities, the interior and exterior, the subject and object, would have nowhere to meet (cf. “Wandel und Treue,” 1990, vol. I, p. 38; “Des Wandrers Niederfahrt,” 1990, vol. I, p. 73; “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 305, 310; “Briefe zweier Freunde,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 354–5; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 371).

The foundation cannot be bodily and spiritual in the same sense as the finite entities that emerge from it once it has divided. In these cases the bodily and spiritual already find themselves divided and appear, as Günderrode understands it, not as original identity but in various combinations (cf. “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446; “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 309–10; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, pp. 369–70).

Günderrode postulates that “the poles” are realised “in each individual [...] in various proportions of both, so that either the spiritual pole or the bodily pole can predominate” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 82; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446). In the inorganic the corporeal element prevails, and in humans the spiritual pole does. However, none of the poles can be missing in the various individuals. Just as “the absolute is everything (the ideal and real at the same time)” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 78; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, pp. 377–8), individuals also always emerge in the combination of spirit and body, activity and passivity, the ideal and the real (cf. “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446). Following Schelling, and to characterise this unity of the diverse, Günderrode writes: “[A]s nature is visible spirit, spirit is invisible nature” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 77; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 374).

3 | THE INAUGURAL UNITY

We have seen that the fundament Schleiermacher writes about in *On Religion* and *Soliloquies* is definitively spiritual. Günderrode departs from Schleiermacher’s position in favour of an affirmation of a “primordial ground” that is no longer only spiritual but includes both poles.

For Günderrode, the polar division of spirit and world, subject and object, involves a prior unity capable of sustaining the division (cf. “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, pp. 368, 371, 373–5, 377; “Ein apokaliptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 53–4; 309). “[O]pposite activities” are contained in the fundament from which they emerge and, despite the division, preserved in “unity” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 78; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 377). Primordial unity is required so that when the division occurs, the divided aspects do not end in radical disintegration (cf. “Ein apokaliptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 53, 54; “Des Wandrers Niederfahrt,” 1990, vol. I, p. 72; “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 308, 309; “Einstes lebt ich süßes Leben ...,” 1990, vol. I, p. 386; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, pp. 368–9, 371, 373–5, 377–9).

Regarding Günderrode’s position and her distance from Schleiermacher, her readings of other authors are relevant. Although the direct influence of Hölderlin is not documented in her notes, it should be pointed out that Günderrode’s notion of a primordial ground prior to the division between spirit and matter is very close to his idea of the primal unity. We might consider, also, a possible indirect influence of Hölderlin, through Schelling (on Hölderlin’s influence on Schelling, cf. Frank, 2003, pp. 97–111; 1986, pp. 61–70; Bowie, 1993, pp. 26–9; 46–7, 96–7, 109–10, 132–3). Any determination on the influence of Hölderlin’s philosophical thought on that of Günderrode remains fundamentally undecided. The influence of Friedrich Schelling in the matter, however, is documented. Günderrode’s philosophical notes and literary texts show that in her study of Schelling, she finds the basis for a plausible alternative to what she understands as insufficient in Schleiermacher’s position. Critical considerations of a conception, such as Schleiermacher’s, are contained in “Idee der Erde” (cf. “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446) and “Geschichte eines Braminen” (cf. “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309), bearing a striking similarity to Schelling’s thought. In these texts, Günderrode asserts the difficulty of reducing the external or material mundane to the spiritual.

In the works by Schelling that Günderrode read (Morgenthaler indicates the following texts on the basis of Günderrode's notes: *Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums*; *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur*; *System des transzendentalen Idealismus*; *Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie*; *Allgemeine Deduktion des dynamischen Prozesses*; *Bruno*; cf. Morgenthaler, in Günderrode, 1990, vol. III, pp. 334, 336, 337, 339–43; Martinson notes Günderrode's reading of *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur* y “Über die Mythen, historischen Sagen und Philosopheme der ältesten Welt”; cf. Martinson, 2005, pp. 308–9, 313), he also maintains a critical position toward a stance similar to that of Schleiermacher (cf., for example, *Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie* of 1799, in Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/3, pp. 1–268; “Einleitung zu dem Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie” of 1799, in 1856–1861, vol. I/3, pp. 271–326; *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur* of 1797, particularly “Einleitung,” in 1856–1861, vol. I/2, pp. 11–56; “Allgemeine Deduction des dynamischen Naturprocesses,” in 1856–1861, vol. I/1, pp. 100–36; vol. I/2, pp. 3–87; *Bruno*, in 1856–1861, vol. I/4, pp. 213–329; *Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums*, in 1856–1861, vol. I/5, pp. 211–352; cf. also *Philosophische Briefe über Dogmatismus und Keticismus* of 1795, 1856–1861, vol. I/1, pp. 281–341; *Darstellung meines Systems der Philosophie* of 1801, in 1856–1861, vol. I/4, pp. 107–212; Scheerlinck, 2020, especially 8–24, 25–43). In these works, Schelling distinguishes the original fundament from a finite I confronted with an object. Schelling is probably influenced by Friedrich Hölderlin's critique of the absolute I as the fundament of unity at the base of the division of subject and object (cf. Frank, 2003, pp. 97–111; 1986, pp. 61–70; Hölderlin, 2009, pp. 231–2). The primordial ground is an original trans-subjective fundament beyond a finite subject. Hölderlin postulates that the subject, as a conscious subject, is defined by an object that conditions it (Hölderlin, 2009, p. 48). Consequently, as Schelling points out, the subject cannot be absolute in the precise sense of “what from itself is both cause and effect, producer and product, subject and object [...] original identity in duplicity” (Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/3, pp. 369, 373; cf. 678–9). The subject is distinct from a fundament that is “one” and “all” (Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/4, pp. 121, 123), “the unity of thought and being” (Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/4, p. 325), of “the ideal” and “sensible world,” of “subject” and “object” (Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/4, p. 328). The words are similar to those Günderrode subsequently uses in “Ein apokaliptisches Fragment” (see Günderrode, 1990, vol. I, p. 54) and “Geschichte eines Braminen” (see Günderrode, 1990, vol. I, p. 309).

Günderrode's idea of a fundamental being that is both spirit and body, subject and object, falls within this tradition. We have also seen that for Günderrode, it is impossible to elucidate the genesis of exteriority from a purely spiritual or interior principle. There is no possible record or faculty aware of the emergence of the corporeal or exterior from the spiritual or interior (cf. “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). Thus, the exterior or corporeal is an ultimate aspect of existence. Furthermore, for Günderrode, there is no way to plausibly explain interiority without referencing exteriority, nor can exteriority be explained without referencing interiority. We have seen that the poles as one without the other are “inconceivable” for her (“Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 446).

It should be added that the existence of a purely spiritual nature without corporeality or exteriority would render it impossible to explain the resistance humans face when they act. The experience of action is also that of a reality that is resisted to various degrees. It is not perfectly compliant with this action. Schleiermacher aims at explaining this resistance within the framework of a world that is ultimately spiritual. He argues that resistance is the expression of the joint operation of a multiplicity of free spirits on the same dimension. There is a multiplicity of spirits—a “community of spiritual beings” that, while acting in the same sphere, exert “their influence upon each other” and that are limited by one another (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 17). The “clash of various inner liberties” is the source of the finitude of human spontaneity and of the aforementioned resistance that the individual faces in acting (Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 18).

Schleiermacher's explanation is not enough. The “community of spiritual beings” is not a spiritual community in the strict sense. Different spirits do not act on each other in such a way that their barriers fall and their interiorities become utterly accessible for all. Schleiermacher's texts do not prove spiritual access to another spirit. Access only applies to its outward manifestation. In other words, the exterior or bodily has, by Schleiermacher's own explanation,

a character that is irreducible to the spiritual or interior, as the interaction between spiritual beings is always mediated by the exterior.

Finally, it should be noted that, for Günderrode, the Urgrund is “mysterious” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 304, 308). There is an “abyss,” that also operates in the interiority of the self, which refers “toward the depths” of the Being (“Briefe zweier Freunde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 354, cf. “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 304, 308). If the background is mysterious, it is impossible to define it as strictly homogeneous with the spiritual (insofar as existence is a mystery, not only the conscious subject but also the spirit are limited, affected by an uncontrollable otherness).

These difficulties constrain Günderrode to understand these terms (i.e., mind and body, self and other, interiority and exteriority) as irreducible poles and to refer them to an original tensional unity rooted in the primordial Being. “Günderrode [...] integrates these categories, placing the spiritual and material firmly in the same world” (Ezekiel, 2014, p. 776).

Günderrode’s argument reveals a conspicuous insufficiency in Schleiermacher’s position. Although the philosopher justifies the irreducibility of the spirit to the body, his approach to the spiritual character of existence is not justified in the texts considered here. Schleiermacher sees only two possible paths: either the spirit ultimately determines the body or the body ultimately determines the spirit. Having proven that the body does not determine the spirit, what remains for Schleiermacher is that the spirit determines the body. However, the relationship between spirit and body does not have to be unidirectional: neither from the spirit to the body, as Schleiermacher points out, nor from the body to the spirit, as “the empiricist” affirms. As Günderrode suggests, a different totality is possible.

4 | ACCESS TO THE INAUGURAL UNITY

Günderrode and Schleiermacher assert direct access to the original whole. She calls it “intuition of the primordial ground” (Günderrode, “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). He calls it “intuition” “of this world and its spirit” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 33; cf. 22, 24, 35; about the notion of “intellectual intuition” in *Soliloquies* and *On Religion*; cf. Arndt, 2013, p. 368; Raisbeck, 2019, p. 144; Günderrode, “C Schleiermacher,” 1990, vol. II, pp. 282, 284). Insofar as the whole Schleiermacher writes about in *On Religion* and *Soliloquies* is ultimately spiritual, the intuition he affirms is different from that to which Günderrode refers, namely the intuition of a whole that is the basis of the spiritual and the corporeal—he intuition of a unity of opposites.

Schleiermacher maintains that “only through the internal is the external comprehensible” (Schleiermacher, 2015, p. 37). He rejects access to the primordial being as occurring via senso-perceptible knowledge—nor, he says, is it through “reflective thought [Nachdenken]” (Schleiermacher, 1975, vol. I/3, p. 8; 2015, p. 13). Reflection is impossible without prior direct access. “Reflective thought and contemplation become impotent for those who no longer know the inner being of the spirit [innere Wesen des Geistes]” (Schleiermacher, 1975, vol. I/3, p. 8; cf. 2015, p. 13). Reflective thought is both insufficient and erratic. “The reckoning is never right” when the capacity with which “I intuit the action of the spirit” is not considered (Schleiermacher, 1975, vol. I/3, pp. 8, 13; cf. 2015, pp. 14, 22, 24; Nivelle, 1970, p. 96; Arndt, 2013, pp. 368–9; Westphal, 1993, p. 54). Without intuition of the spirit, judicative or discursive knowledge cannot access its interiority. Human beings would lack a criterion to identify spontaneity. Nothing in the bodily dimension taken by itself allows us to verify spontaneity. A body animated by spontaneity is indiscernible from a body only apparently animated. In this sense, the solution to the ontological problem Schleiermacher identifies regarding the spirit-body relation requires the solution of the epistemological problem. A direct inner experience (not mediated by the body or by reflection) is needed to acquire a spontaneity criterion: direct access to the subject’s interior through “self-intuition” (Schleiermacher, 2002, pp. 15, 21, 25; 2015, p. 37).

Schelling’s influence on Günderrode operates not only on the idea of an original whole comprising both poles but also on the notion of direct access to the “primordial ground [Urgrund].” Schelling affirms intellectual intuition as affording access to the whole prior to division. The intuition of the whole is a central doctrine of those of Schelling’s

texts that Günderrode read (cf. Günderrode, “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, pp. 370–9). In *System of Transcendental Idealism*, “intellectual intuition” is the intuition of the primordial fundament—of “what from itself is both cause and the effect, producer and product, subject and object [...] original identity in duplicity” (Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/3, pp. 369, 373; cf. 678–9). In Bruno, “intellectual intuition” grasps “the unity of thought and being” (Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/4, p. 325), of “the ideal” and the “sensible world,” of “subject” and “object” (Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/4, p. 328). Though it is not documented that Günderrode read *Darstellung meines Systems der Philosophie*, the text was published during a period when she could have read it. There Schelling refers to the “original knowledge of absolute identity,” by which one accesses the “one” and the “all,” the “subject and the object” (Schelling, 1856–1861, vol. I/4, pp. 121, 123).

Günderrode postulates that at the base of the poles there is unity between “body and spirit” and “the visible and the invisible” and that this is a “unity that belongs to itself,” which she characterises as “infinite life” (“Ein apokaliptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 53–4). That unity is grasped directly in an “intuition” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). It cannot be apprehended in a conscious knowledge of objects. It operates at the basis of the conscious knowledge of objects, keeping the terms separated in subject-object division from dispersion. It operates implicitly, as a pre-objective knowledge (cf. “Ein apokaliptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 53–4; “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309; “C Schleiermacher,” 1990, vol. II, p. 283; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, pp. 373–9; Westphal, 1993, p. 55; Regen, 1910, pp. 73–4).

5 | GÜNDERRODE'S ARGUMENT REGARDING THE INTUITION OF THE FUNDAMENT

Similar to Schleiermacher, Günderrode mentions the inability of the discursive faculties – “reason [Vernunft]” and the “understanding [Verstand]” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 305, 309; “Vorzeit, und neue Zeit,” 1990, vol. I, p. 375)—to access original unity.

She uses an etymology extended in her time, although false, to allude to a real problem. Fichte (see Fichte, 1976, p. 182) and Hölderlin (see Hölderlin, 2009, pp. 231–2) use it (on the origin of the etymology, cf. Waibel, 2000, pp. 141–3; Frank, 1997, p. 723; Frank suggests that an antecedent could be found in Reinhold; see Reinhold, 1795, pp. 435–40). Discursive capacities operate through judgment or “Urtheil,” which Günderrode links with “Theilung,” meaning “partition” or “division.” Discursive knowledge or the knowledge of those who “judge [beurtheilt]” is the knowledge that “parts [theilet]” (Günderrode, “Wandel und Treue,” 1990, vol. I, p. 38) or “dissects [zertheilt]” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 76; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 371).

The “Theilung” executed by “Urtheil” is essential for knowledge. It coincides with the “consciousness [Bewußtsein],” where consciousness is “division” (Günderrode, “Des Wandrers Niederfahrt,” 1990, vol. I, p. 73) or the separation of “object and subject” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 76; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 371). Without division, consciousness would not emerge as a capacity that can distance itself from itself and from objects to thematise things and self-thematise.

Reflection [...] separates intuiting from what is intuited, myself from objects, spirit from material. Finally, it dissects my own life into two parts in order to observe one half with the other. It therefore makes me into object and subject at the same time. (Günderrode, 2021, p. 76; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 371; cf. “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 305; “Briefe zweier Freunde” 1990, vol. I, p. 359; “Idee der Erde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 447)

Consciousness leaves the subject “torn off” from “the womb”: “[D]ue to your consciousness you are already separated from the dream” (“Des Wandrers Niederfahrt,” 1990, vol. I, p. 73). Consciousness makes the self “come out of itself” (“C Schleiermacher,” 1990, vol. II, p. 281).

Reflexive division demands “intuition of the primordial ground” (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309; see “D Fichte,” 1990, vol. II, p. 291). This intuition must operate even when the division has occurred. Günderrode writes: “The first moment of intuition is the unity of the intuiting and what is intuited. Reflection divides this primitive unity” (Günderrode, 2021, p. 76; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 371). Her assertion implies that there is a second moment of intuition in which the division has already been established. Therefore, “intuition of the primordial ground” continues to operate despite division.

Only an intuitive grasp of the original unity will prevent the division of spirit and world, or the interior and exterior, from ending in radical separation and complete disintegration. The terms of the division have different contents and emerge from a break of the whole (cf. “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, pp. 371, 375, 377; “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309). However, they persist in common unity. Their unity, despite division, requires direct access to the primordial ground at the base of the division (see “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 309; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 371). Without intuitive access, there will be nowhere for the terms of the division to connect. They would appear—if they appear—as simply different, unconnected, and disintegrated (cf. “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 371). The situation of the mind in the world, in which it relates to other individuals and itself as an object, requires the mind to access the context in which it can meet others and itself (see “Ein apokaliptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 53–4; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 371).

Access to the common ground is not understandable in a spatial sense, that is, as to be in a whole without grasping it. Since the original being is the base of “the body” or “the exterior” and “the spirit” or “the interior,” and the context in which they meet, the original being cannot be purely exterior, nor can it be accessed in a purely exterior way. The Urseyn “[i]s one and all[; it is not separate body and spirit [...] it is one” (“Ein apokaliptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, p. 54). It is impossible to be in the “Urgrund” without somehow grasping it because the spirit (as an aspect of the being) is not just spatial or exterior, but also interior (cf. “Die Manen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 34–5; “Ein apokaliptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, p. 54; “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 308).

Judicative division cannot be overcome through reflection, not only because of the divisive nature of this knowledge into subject and object. The “Urgrund” is “singular [Einzelne]” and, as singular, heterogeneous with “general rules” and “general concepts” of the discursive capacities (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, p. 307; “Briefe zweier Freunde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 354; cf., vol. I, p. 310). “[I]t is an abyss, a night, which is illuminated only partially and scarcely by the light of general concepts” (“Briefe zweier Freunde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 354).

Theoretical reason without intuition of the “Urgrund” is also insufficient here (cf. “F Philosophische Propädeutik,” 1990, vol. III, p. 335). A theoretical approach that postulates fundamental unity as a necessary condition of the relation of subject and object, an approach for which there is no access to unity except as a condition required by thought or reason to explain the unity of knowledge despite the division, is inadequate. Unity ignored in an absolute sense would be unintelligible. The subject would not know what it is about if its starting point were the division without prior access to the primordial ground. Consequently, this condition would be impossible. Only insofar as the poles and parts are already known in the unity can any reference to unity be made, and the division become not only dispersion but also the division of a previous unity (cf. “Des Wandrers Niederfahrt,” 1990, vol. I, p. 73; “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 305, 309; “G Naturphilosophie,” 1990, vol. II, p. 373). The “primordial ground” is simultaneously intuitable and mysterious (“Geschichte eines Braminen,” vol. I, p. 309; “Briefe zweier Freunde,” 1990, vol. I, p. 354). It is mysterious in two partially related senses. The Urgrund is mysterious because the subject directly accesses it without being aware of having produced it (see “Ein apokaliptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, p. 54). Access to the “Urgrund” is only to its fact. As a fact, it is intuited. The genesis of the Urgrund is inaccessible: it “self-generates in a mysterious way” (“Geschichte eines Braminen, vol. I, p. 309). The Urgrund is mysterious, moreover, because though we intuit it (as a fact), we cannot rationally comprehend or reconstruct it, as it necessarily evades the conditions of discursive knowledge (cf. “Ein apokaliptisches Fragment,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 53–4; “Des Wandrers Niederfahrt,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 78–9; “Geschichte eines Braminen,” 1990, vol. I, pp. 308–9, 312).

The idea of direct access to the whole as a sphere (in which the individual feels it) and to its original ground seems to go beyond philosophical criticism and fall into dogmatic metaphysics, which postulates a being beyond knowable objects. Despite this, Günderrode's argument makes no pretension of affirming a discursive knowledge that goes beyond experience, toward a transcendent foundation. Dogmatism arises when discursive concepts are applied to the transcendent. Günderrode deals, by contrast, with an intuition as immediate access to the Urgrund. This access is required to explain conscious experience and to overcome the manifest insufficiency of discursive knowledge (discursive division of subject and object requires a unity that prevents complete dispersion; insofar as it is dividing, discursive knowledge cannot access that unity).

6 | CONCLUSION

We have presented Schleiermacher's thought on the relation between spirit and body as well as Günderrode's consideration of his arguments. Günderrode goes beyond receiving the thought of the philosopher. She additionally detects a severe deficiency in his thought and proposes a solution to the problem she identified. Günderrode agrees with Schleiermacher in affirming the need for an access to the Urgrund. She distances herself from him, however, in his conception of the character of the Urgrund. Schleiermacher attributes a spiritual character to this primordial ground. Günderrode replies that the spirit cannot account for matter and that, consequently, the primordial ground cannot be purely spiritual. She understands the Urgrund, in close affinity with the thought of Schelling, as the basis of both the material and the spiritual. And she understands the access to the Urgrund as a grasping of the unitary foundation of the whole.

Günderrode's treatment of Schleiermacher's thought has philosophical value regarding each of the three issues treated here (on the philosophical value of Günderrode's thought in general, see Ezekiel, 2020b): her identification of the inadequacy of discursive knowledge to account for experience (despite division); her bringing forward of the problem she detects in Schleiermacher's attribution of a purely spiritual character to the Urgrund; and finally the solution she proposes to this problem, a solution that she argues for in alignment with the standards of the most advanced philosophy of her time. Günderrode is thus revealed to be a philosopher relevant to our understanding of the idealist period and of early Romanticism, as regards the authors and topics she treats. In the case to which we have confined this investigation, Günderrode makes an important contribution to our understanding of the scope and limits of the thought of Schleiermacher in *On Religion* and *Soliloquies*.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

ORCID

Hugo E. Herrera  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4868-4072>

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