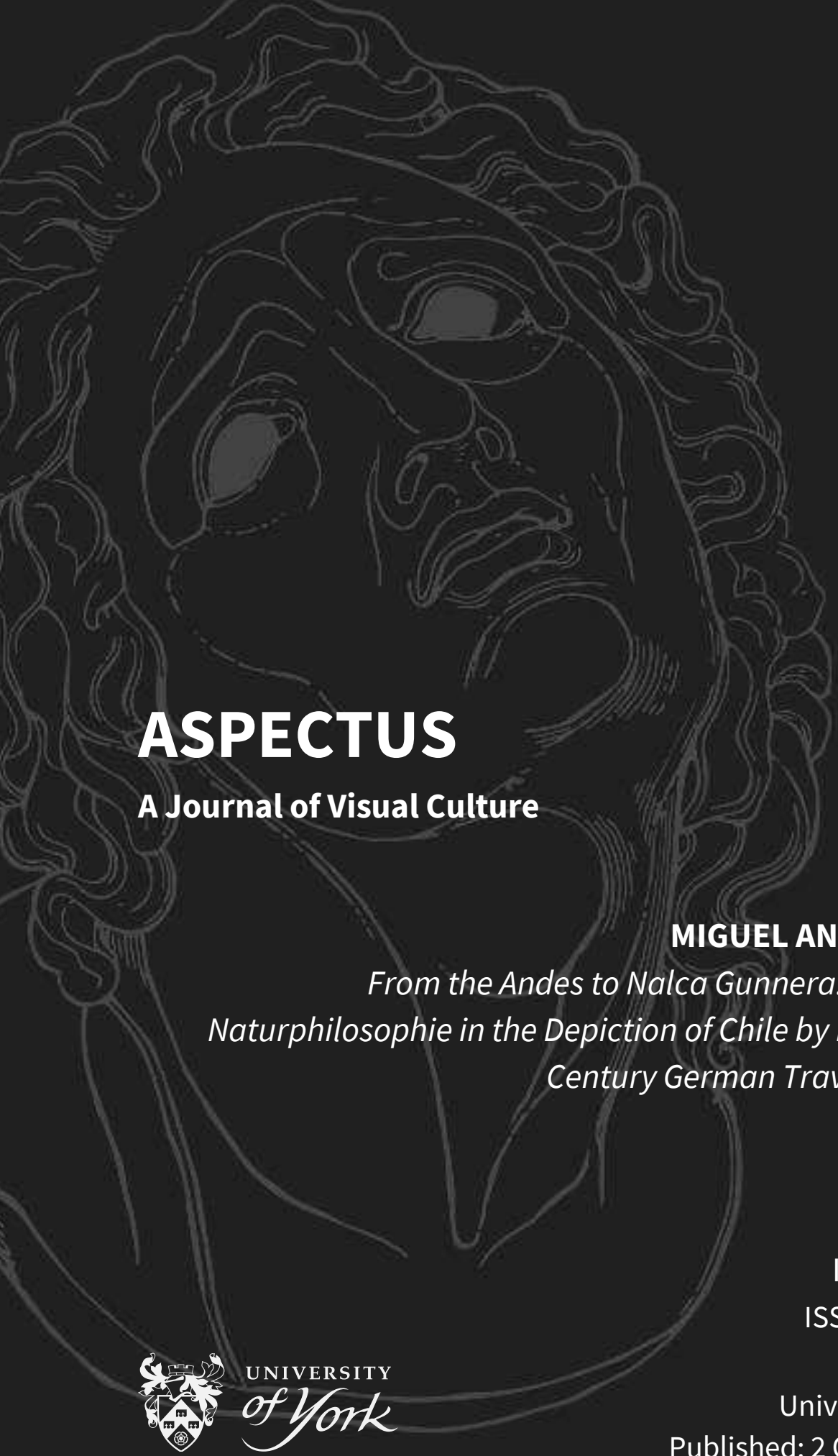

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From the Andes to *Nalca Gunnera*: Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* in the Depiction of Chile by Nineteenth-Century German Traveller Artists

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Introduction

The attempts to understand Nature through the intellect, as well as the sensuous connection of man and landscape, were amongst the most captivating chapters in German Romanticism. German philosophers, in particular, strove to comprehend these aspects of reality from objective reason, but they also sought an alternative appreciation of Nature through sensory-emotional values as part of their new philosophy based on aesthetics and self-knowledge. Therefore, throughout this article Nature must be understood in the specific way that German romantic thinking did, that is, as a journey of self-discovery, where Nature is "the outer, visible side of the spirit" and where "human consciousness is the highest form of Nature."[1]

Consequently, theoretical constructions such as the philosophy of Nature as well as discussions on taste and arts were driven by ideas about the sublime and the beautiful, and flourished extensively among German intellectuals and artists. Moreover, these elements would come to gain new meanings when used to understand philosophical and visual approaches to the New World throughout the nineteenth century.

F.W.J Schelling's *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature* (1797), his inaugural publication on *Naturphilosophie*, has been rated as one of the most influential theoretical treatises on Nature ever developed in Germany.[2] However, its use in interpreting artworks has hitherto been a problematic subject for most of the scholars who have tried to apply his philosophical theory of natural sciences to elucidations on art and landscape paintings of that period. Various factors make Schelling's theory a challenge. To begin with, Schelling was a pioneer in incorporating an understanding of Nature within a deeply intricate philosophical system that addressed a mystical orientation toward the determination of its essence, cause, and origin.[3] The outcome was that the internal dynamic of Nature became a philosophical system fully grounded in tenets of polarity and dualism, that is, on the belief that matter admitted only two forces: "attraction and repulsion."[4] Moreover, Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* projected an understanding of Nature as a whole which became the theoretical framework that served as the foundation of natural sciences.[5] The main difficulty with linking *Naturphilosophie* to a philosophy of art was that Schelling sought to trigger a cultural revolution that would allow natural sciences themselves "to arise philosophically" and not just to apply philosophy instrumentally to natural sciences.[6] As a result, Schelling's philosophy would be "itself nothing else than natural science."[7]

The aim of this article is to investigate this philosophical notion and to determine to what extent it represents a valid theoretical framework through which to construe specific artworks on Nature done by a group of German explorers in Chile. This group was composed of Otto Grashof, Carl Alexander Simon, Johann Moritz Rugendas, Eduard Friedrich Poeppig, and Rudolf Amandus Philippi. Biographical

facts about these explorers and examples of their scientific botanical illustrations and artistic engagement with subjects such as the Andes Mountains will be contrasted with some crucial ideas drawn from Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*. In doing this, the paper demonstrates that innovative approaches are required to ascertain the impact of *Naturphilosophie* on these explorers The article will conclude by evaluating the direct influence of Schelling on the group, as well as considering his impact on nineteenth-century German education, and the indirect dissemination and influence of his ideas via figures such as the revolutionary Alexander von Humboldt, who was as a pioneer and promoter of the German aesthetic and scientific exploration of South America.

Naturphilosophie, Aesthetics and the Explorers.

At first glance *Naturphilosophie* is not explicitly involved with the arts. However, that does not mean that the theory is totally alien to aesthetics. In fact, Schelling's mere act of thinking about Nature recalls the basis of aesthetics, which concerns the appreciation of art objects as well as those produced by Nature.[8] Nonetheless, Schelling aimed to separate the two domains, although acknowledging that beauty certainly materialises in Nature.[9]

Schelling fostered an aesthetic theory, namely *Philosophy of Art*, expressly centred on artworks.[10] This occurred because Schelling undermined Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's definition of aesthetics, and refused to use the term *aesthetic* synonymously with the 'Philosophy of Art'. The ambiguity in the definition and uses of the term aesthetic in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries rendered it an abstruse field of study. This definitional crisis may be the main reason why Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* is so problematic when seeking to apply it to any art theory and even more so when applied to the art of German explorers in America.

Naturphilosophie cannot function as an aesthetic system or aesthetic category to elucidate the arts as it does not adhere to a set list of definitions such as those found in classic aesthetic categories. Consequently, the form in which Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* might have created a sharper awareness of Nature for German explorers becomes less obvious and can be best realised by exploring connections ascertainable only through presumptions and inferences. These conjectures might derive from multiple perspectives, oscillating from internal to external factors, or even from primary to secondary sources. Thus, it is feasible to pose an aesthetic appreciation of Nature in the New World in which its foundation could be traced to Schelling's belief in the mind and Nature as one. This notion was both transmitted directly by Schelling to various members of this artistic group and passively through the figures who followed his principles on Nature and would influence these voyagers. Alternatively, we must consider the social impact of Schelling which encompassed a philosophical worldview (*Weltanschauung*) that was inserted in the German education system and the new sciences.

Man, and Nature As One

In 1824, twenty-six years before Carl Alexander Simon was to roam across the Chiloé Archipelago in the extreme south of Chile, he received a scholarship to improve his drawing and painting skills with Peter Cornelius in Munich.[11] Simon, an enthusiast of philosophy, would have attended Schelling's lectures as the philosopher began to teach at the University of Munich just by those years.[12] How Simon's interest in philosophy might have influenced his depiction of the Chilean natural world is hard

Figure 1. Carl Alexander Simon, *Entrance to the jungle of the Tepuales*, 1849, Oil on paper, 25 x 33 cm, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Chile.

to ascertain since there is no documentary evidence of further connections between them. However, this can be conjectured by both looking at the overall cultural impact that Schelling had in Germany and by assessing elements of Schelling's philosophy in Simon's oeuvre.

According to Simon's letters and notes written on some of his drawings, he completely seems to have been aware of the natural grandeur of the New World and was immersed in chronicling its colours, shapes and textures. He mapped the rainforest, registered landmarks, and produced images that, according to his biography, convey the feelings of an artist to whom Nature revealed itself as a mystery, a realm he penetrated through long excursions to create his drawings and paintings.[13]

For instance, in *Entrance to the Jungle of the Tepuales* (Fig. 1, 1849) Simon represents a wall of lianas, ferns and ficus trees. It acts as a symbolic veil behind which a deeper idea of Nature rests. The snaking trunks in the foreground create the entryway to a murky and dense sunken forest of evergreen that he, as a *Naturforscher*,[14] was able to conquer. The artist proudly exposed this feat in this oil on paper. Simon writes at the bottom of the sheet: "entrance to the Tepuales jungle that I crossed in six days on foot to reach the Reloncavi."[15]

Trips like this can be analysed on different levels. On the one hand, the act of travel for romantics like Simon itself signified a complete break from the steadiness and safety provided by civilisation. The certainties of life were replaced by the search for the enigmatic, if not the death—symbolically, but also in the literal sense—in Nature.[16] On the other hand, to scout new lands and penetrate the unknown while enduring extreme climates with minimal supplies in order to produce drawings and paintings, all whilst in perfect communion with 'goddess Nature', was a practice that echoed Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*. Simon's excursions were not just physical but also journeys into a pre-philosophical state where questions about an external Nature were not relevant. In this state of nature, mankind,

Schelling points out, "was still at one with himself and the world about him."[17] Such a state of unity between the part and the whole continually appears throughout Simon's diverse account. Though his journey in Chile was erratic and there are gaps of time where his location was unknown, according to evidence from his letters and reports, as well as diaries by other colonists, by 1850 he was established in Bellavista, even though at the outset the conditions were undoubtedly hostile:

> The conditions are so miserable and ridiculous and so sad that I'm just going to breathe when I sail the Trumao river downstream and live in distant jungles in the huts of the good Indians, or in my own. One sleeps so sure, so quiet with these poor people, or in the loneliest forests under the flowery myrtles and the perfumed laurel; the nights are so wonderful, the stars so bright. The silver currents, the rough sea…[18]

By 1852 the artist was wandering and begging across the islands and forests of the region while continuing to draw and write poetry.[19] There are also records of him living in a hut next to the Pacific Ocean in an inaccessible location, isolated and starving in the midst of "a poetic nature", while he was "away from the world of the living."[20] All these experiences describe a man who was capable of harmonising himself with Nature but who was also clearly at risk of "self-intoxication through metaphysical speculation", as Schelling himself was.[21] The philosopher referred to such a state of communion as a way of accessing the *absolute* and the human existence itself:

> So long as I myself am identical with Nature, I understand what a living Nature is as well as I understand my own life… As soon, however, as I separate myself, and with me everything ideal, from Nature, nothing remains to me but a dead object, and I cease to comprehend how a life outside me can be possible.[22]

In Simon's oeuvre there are neither hints of existential hesitations nor of distress because of Nature's ambiguities. On the contrary, Simon predominantly emphasises the exuberance and the strangeness that those landscapes elicit in him. Even the menaces within Nature are stoically assumed as part of a superior call for "Art." Some indication of this appears in *Nalca Gunnera* (Fig. 2, 1851), a sketch of the bizarre plant life of the region where Simon settled. In this sketch, a male figure emerges from the foliage whose giant dimensions and bizarre morphology capture Simon's attention. It seems obvious that through amplified magnitudes and proportions that the artist was inspired by his own feelings of an overwhelming Nature, endowing it with otherworldly features. Nature embraces and devours Simon with its colossal hanging arms whilst the artist stoically deals with his assignment. A letter addressed to his brother-in-law confirms his self-perception as someone called to a superior mission. In it Simon warns him about this alluring yet perilous Nature: "I will be exposed to many dangers in Chile, my stay will be several months in the most secluded jungle, where my studies call me."[23]

Such disposition of spirit while coping with wilderness had already been decreed by Schelling, for whom whoever is absorbed in their research into Nature "and in the sheer enjoyment of her abundance, does not ask whether Nature and experience be possible."[24] In Schelling's belief, for any human involved with Nature, as Simon was, "it is enough that Nature is there for him."[25] Nature, thus, is made real by the very act of Simon's surveying, painting and drawing. He does not question this reality since this interrogation, Schelling thinks, is raised "only by one who believes that he does not hold the reality in his hand."[26] Simon, while an artist, explorer and colonist, must have been convinced of having a kind of kingship over the milieu. In line with the edicts of *Naturphilosophie,* Simon would have acquired consciousness that he, as a man, was not born "to waste his mental power in conflict against the fantasy of an imaginary world, but to exert all his powers upon a world which has influence upon him, lets him feel its forces, and upon which he can react."[27]

Figure 2. Carl Alexander Simon, *Nalca Gunnera*, 1851, drawing, 23 x 35 cm, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Chile.

Schelling and the Wissenschaft

The artistic legacy left in Chile by German explorers mostly consists of drawings and sketches of natives, landscapes, and wildlife. These pictures display several elements strongly attached to Schelling's perspectives. In this respect, the blend of natural science, mythology, and a poetic force is noticeable. The way in which this philosophy reached these artists, however, would have been mostly indirect. It is reasonable, therefore, to suggest a transference of *Naturphilosophie* either through its impact on German education or through cultural figures who demonstrably influenced these artists' worldview and systems of representation and imbued them with Schelling's ideas.

Schelling pointed out that art, science, and Nature progress along different paths of consciousness which necessarily unite when apprehending what only exists outside of us.[28] Similarly, it might be argued that science accomplishes the practice of mediation. Like art, science endows Nature with a degree of consciousness, though unlike art, its entire process lacks the unconscious phase. Schelling suggests that, as both science and art are mental progressions, they act as means of disclosing the *Absolute,* which appears even in the more modest form of matter in Nature.[29] To him, Nature is produced by the mind, being at the same time its counterpart, "only that mind may, by its agency, attain to self-consciousness or a pure perception of itself."[30] Thus for science, the task of producing and revealing is endless, whereas for art it is not, since art "has always already fulfilled this task by the fact of its being art."[31] Furthermore Schelling believed that there was a force beyond the control of the artist—the unconscious element—called *genius*.[32] This concept of the genius would principally remain as a cultural construct of the arts, although also it would integrate the scientific lexicon of the romantic period.[33]

Expounded in this way, the contrasting cores of science and art are clear. Nonetheless, it becomes contentious when acknowledging that in Germany such a division was intentionally evaded. In effect, both science and art can be allocated within the inclusive concept of *Wissenschaft,* which in its widest sense means science, knowledge, scholarship, or discipline. Hence, it is possible to maintain that a scientific culture whose core was a *Wissenschaftliche Bildung* and in which Schelling took part,[34] would

have intellectually moulded the group of German explorer artists in Chile. This scientific culture was summarised by Friedrich Schlegel who maintained that "all art should become science and all science art; poetry and philosophy should be made one."[35]

Naturphilosophie and Biology

Schelling's impact on the sciences and German education can be assessed from multiple angles. Firstly, Schelling set up a methodology necessary to comprehend Nature which entailed "experimental observation and empirical measure to establish natural law in the study of the life."[36] In other words, a scientific process not unlike what is used today. Additionally, Schelling, as a member of the select group of the early German Romantics, would have conveyed the idea that "all Nature was organic and had to be understood ultimately from that point of view."[37] All these ideas, but particularly the organicist conception of the world, were determinant in the development of biology as a scientific study.[38]

It is precisely through biology and the scientific approach shaped by Schelling that we can raise new interpretations of some artworks by German explorers in Chile. On this subject, the oeuvres fashioned by eminent scientists and illustrators such as Poeppig[39] or Philippi[40] shed some light upon to what extent Schelling's view stimulated German exploration and depiction of Nature in the New World.

Objectively, an organicist conception of the world proposed that the external world, because of its rhizomatic condition, is interconnected with us. This conceptualization could have evoked the notion of the earth as a body. If so, any *Naturforscher* would be obliged to study it in depth, although aware that unlike a human body "the beginning of Nature is everywhere and nowhere, and whether in retrospect or prospect, the investigating mind finds the same endlessness of her phenomena."[41] Both Poeppig and Philippi comprehensively accomplished that task, exploring, classifying, and illustrating the tremendous diversity of flora and fauna of Chile on the premise that by doing so they would achieve unification with themselves and the world. Indeed, that was the aim of German education in the nineteenth century: to attain an understanding of their own human nature through the study of plants and animals.[42] This dogma owes a great deal to Schelling who played a crucial role in the new institutional reforms set up in Germany in the early nineteenth century, and consequently in the intellectual formation of an entire generation of artists and explorers.[43]

Peculiarly, Philippi strove for carrying out a meticulous survey of Chilean flora and fauna. Art historians locate his artworks on the edge between standard scientific illustrations and a sensitive exquisitely executed study of nature. He mastered the use of watercolours and graphite pencil, which he employed in the service of zoology and malacology, his main fields of research within biology. As a result of his inclination towards morphology, he left a huge volume of drawings, watercolours, and sketches of birds, mammals, and molluscs, which have greatly helped to reconstruct the Natural history of South America (Fig. 3, 1854).

On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that Schelling added a theological component to his philosophy, ascertaining a correlation between Nature and God, impugning any attempt to reduce Nature to mere inert and mechanical processes. Accordingly, "the whole of Nature, inclusive of mind, was conceived as essentially equal and identical; animal, electricity, sun, god, copulation."[44] In Schelling's philosophy Nature and God share identical principles of ubiquity and endlessness in such a way that "eternal Nature, is just Mind born into objectivity, the essence of God introduced into form."[45] Within the cluster of explorers in Chile, Philippi was the one who most visibly manifested a disposition

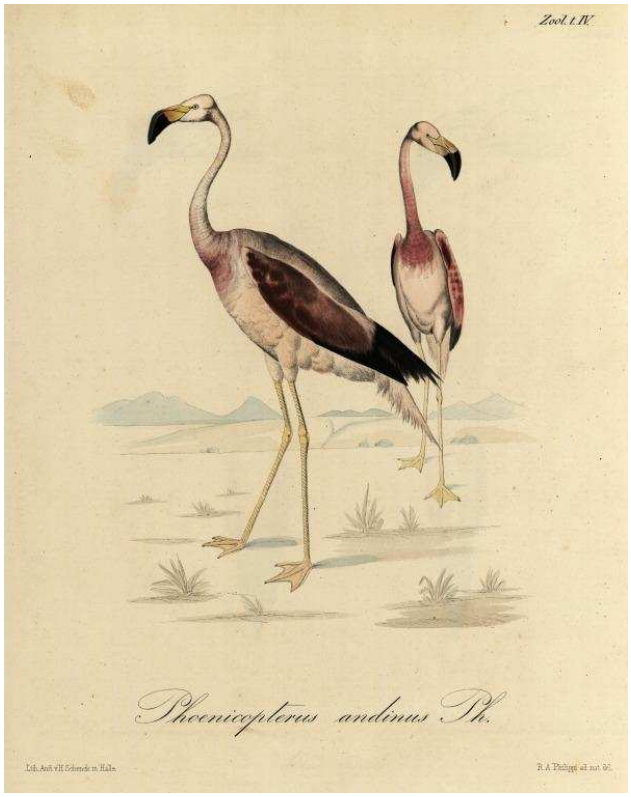

Figure 3. Amandus Philippi Rudolf, *Phoenicoparrus andinus*, 1860, Watercolours and line drawings, in the publication in Reise durch die Wueste Atacama, sheet 4.

to unify his scientific studies with a sort of religious commitment. In his writings Philippi asserts: "the study of Nature, the contemplation of its various products will always be an inexhaustible source of the deepest joys, which never leave remorse, and never arouses petty passions." He added later that there was "Nothing more sublime, nothing more religious, than the study of Nature. By the work, the master is known, and in the wonders of the world its creator has been revealed."[46] His rich botanical and zoological accounts of the country, both written and visual, complement his pantheistic vision.

Schelling through Alexander von Humboldt

It can also be hypothesised that there is a third source that mediated the impact of Schelling on these explorers and artists in Chile. Schelling thoroughly influenced Humboldt, a determinant figure for most of these explorers who either encouraged them to make the journey to South America or who imbued them with understanding both of Nature and the world which owed much to Schelling's points of view.

It is thus feasible that a layer of Schelling's philosophy would be present in Humboldt's agenda in America since Humboldt's oeuvre mirrored quite a few elements of *Naturphilosophie*. In this respect, their friendship and Humboldt's involvement with the early German Romantics were contributing factors.[47] Like Schelling, Humboldt supported the idea of a balance among electricity, magnetism, and heat inside every living organism. Similarly, Humboldt persisted in his own identical search for an essential unity in Nature.[48] When Humboldt returned to Europe after five years of journeying across the New World, between 1799 and 1804, Schelling welcomed and acknowledged him as an exemplary

Figure 4. Eduard Friedrich Poeppig, *Vulcan von Antuco*, 1836, Lithography, 27 x 41 cm, album Reise in Chile, Peru und auf dem Amazonasstrome während der Jahre 1827-1832, Leipzig, Fleischer, 1834-36.

Naturforscher.[49] Schelling recognized that Humboldt, through the use scientific instruments, proved the principles of *Naturphilosophie*, showing "each point on the earth's surface to be the product of global forces acting locally."[50] Humboldt replied to this compliment saying that Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* was "the bold undertaking of one of the most profound men of our century."[51]

There exist some indications that Humboldt himself encouraged some of these explorers to sail toward America. Rugendas, Philippi, and Grashof would have received first-hand counsel from Humboldt before departing to the New World.[52] As for the elements of *Naturphilosophie* that would have been passed on to them through Humboldt, perhaps the most noticeable is a conception of the explorer as a *Naturforscher*. In this period, the attraction of America was increasing not simply because of its nature, but also because it was a territory unknown by Europeans. Accordingly Rugendas intended to create a graphic collection of the American vegetal forms using Humboldt's *Geography of the Plants* as a model,[53] emulating in the artistic field what Humboldt had done in sciences and what Schelling had theorised in his *Naturphilosophie*.[54] On the other hand, Poeppig, scholar of medicine, natural history and botany, as well as a dexterous artist, surveyed between 1826 and 1829 the most inaccessible spots of Valparaiso and the south of Chile to discover and research species of plants and fauna hitherto unknown.[55]

The *Naturforscher* spirit was also reflected in excursions by these Germans whose goal was not only to gather scientific data but also to express their impressions through art. There is a noteworthy engraving by Poeppig of the Antuco volcano which sheds light on how Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* might have been transmitted via Humboldt (Fig. 4, 1836). The theme of this illustration is the key to the triangulation amongst these figures. In this regard, it is important to mention that Humboldt's greatly contributed to

Figure 5. Otto Grashof, *Chilean mountain landscape*, 1854, oil on canvas, private collection.

the fields of geography and geology. His fascination with volcanoes became even more evident when, on June 23, 1802, accompanied by Aimé Bonpland and Carlos Montúfar, he attempted to reach the summit of the Andean peak Chimborazo, a volcano which was then believed to be the highest mountain in the world.[56] It was twenty-seven years later, in February of 1829, that Poeppig climbed the Antuco volcano in Chile. Both feats have in common a scientific purpose mixed with an aesthetic sensibility toward an element of Nature which embodies Schelling's idea about strong elements—the life force—acting inside every single element of Nature. Since primeval times such an animated principle was called "the world soul."[57] Part of that dynamism is visible in Poeppig's illustration. The forces electricity, magnetism, and caloric energy, in balance, like Schelling and Humboldt thought, appear in action in this lithograph published in Germany in 1836. This interesting picture gives a schematic vision of the volcano, designed in layers and differentiated levels which highlight the "organic relationships into the landscape and the morphological character of the rocks."[58] A male figure and his dog occupy the central portion of the composition. The man, presumably Poeppig himself, is heading toward the volcano carrying a walking stick and a sketchbook to put his observations into practice, so epitomising the social conception of a *Naturforscher*, that is, scientist, adventurer, and Romantic. The fumarole at the top, the bodies, and the stream of dark lava flowing in the side denote a planet-body in motion, a Nature alive and interconnected, just like Schelling posited.

The mountain epitomises the obsessions of the new scientism, but also it brings old Romantic aspirations alive again. Humboldt's *Vues des Cordillères*, originally published in French between 1810 and 1813, inaugurates the account of the Andes Mountains range by German explorers. In this manuscript the Andes are exalted, both as a territory in which the people of the Americas and Nature were one, and for its awe-inspiring aesthetic qualities. These explorers were deeply absorbed and fascinated by the Andes, as well as inspired by the ideas of Humboldt.[59] Grashof,[60] for example, acts as an observer and included such a motif in most of his artworks, whether as the central theme or at the background of

10 Grashoff's Reise von Buenos Ayres durch die argentinischen Pampas und über die Cordillere nach Coquimbo in Chile.

fängt die Thiere mit einem Lasso ein, bindet ihnen die Beine zusammen und steckt Stangen zwischen diese hindurch, an denen sie in die Höhe getragen werden. Man beschlägt die gespaltenen Hufe mit stiefelförmigen Eisenstücken, was sehr schnell von den Leuten besorgt wird; dann kann der Transport über die Anden beginnen.

Hinter Santa Rosa, nach Westen zu, dehnt sich ein schönes grünes Thal aus, dann kamen große Sandflächen, in denen die Maulthiere bis an die Knöchel versanken. In den großartigen Felsmassen, die sich zu beiden Seiten des Weges ausdehnten, hört die Vegetation fast gänzlich auf. Verkrüppelte, rundliche, nackte und verfaulte Cactusarten sind neben verschiedenem dürren Strauch- und Wurzelwerk, das Wind und Wetter zusammengejagt hatte, Alles, was sich dem Auge bietet. Kein Grashalm, keine grüne Moose kommt in dem dürren Boden auf. Die Felsen werden immer massenhafter, nur in den Spalten und Schluchten wächst noch vereinzelt ein Algarrobestrauch oder ein hundertjähriger Cereus. Plötzlich öffnet sich die drückende Masse der Berge und die Quebrada de la Troya liegt vor den Blicken des Reisenden. Quebrada de la Troya bedeutet eine vom Wasser durchgegangene Schlucht. Hier ist es aber nicht das Wasser, was besonders auffällt, sondern es sind die herrlichen Reste einer alten Indianerstadt.

In zwei halbkreisförmigen Parallelen zeigen sich die

Tanz der Sambacueca.

Ruinen der alten Ansiedelung. Die Grundmauern sind meist noch gut erhalten, zumal an dem Kazikenhause, das sich an einen Hügel im Süden anlehnt. Noch auf den Bergen findet man Ueberbleibsel der Mauern, die aus bunten, meist blaurothen und schwarzen Steinen bestehen, und sich bis an einen noch 18 Fuß hohen Thurm hinziehen. Dieser beherrscht die ganze Gegend und gestattet durch eine enge Thüre und einige kleine Fensteröffnungen Blicke in die Ferne; er ist, wie die Wohnhäuser, von runder Form. Die inneren Wände sind mit Lehm und Thon sauber verputzt. Andere Häuser, in viereckiger Form angelegt, haben gleich den runden, nur eine

Figure 6. Otto Grashof, *Tanz der Sambacueca*, 1864, engraving, 29.2 x 20.6 cm, published in Zeitschrift Globus.

sensation of isolation and a panoramic view wherein people in nature "do not stand before the image of landscape, but are part of it", and so forth.[61] In this regard, Rugendas' engagement with the Andes might be compared, for instance, with that of Caspar Wolf with the Alps.[62]

Paintings and drawings concerned with the Andes such as these demonstrate how *Naturphilosophie* was also closely linked with other aesthetic concepts. We have seen how Schelling allowed a random and scenes about dances and traditions, underlining the ubiquity of the observer within the South American landscape (Fig. 5-6, 1854-1864). In contrast, Rugendas went directly into the perennial snowed mountains spending months with muleteers and indigenous people between December 1837 and March 1838.[63] There is a set of paintings and sketches of this crossing whose central theme is the overwhelming magnificence of the Andes (Fig. 7-8, 1837-1838). These mountain scenes were painted and drawn in the style and techniques of the German romantic landscape tradition, namely, with a casual embodiment of beauty in Nature. Nevertheless, and consistent with the same principle of dualism professed by the *Naturphilosoph*, if there is beauty, there should also be a counterpart which would be, in such a case, a degree of sublimity. This is the theory advocated by some scholars for whom the sublime

Figure 7. Johann Moritz Rugendas, *Mountain landscape with local characters*, circa 1837-1838, oil on canvas, 35 x 53 cms. Pinacoteca Universidad de Concepcion, Chile.

Figure 8. Johann Moritz Rugendas, *Lagoon between the mountains*, 1837-1838, Graphite pencil, white chalk, and ink on paper, 24x18 cm. Biblioteca Nacional, Chile.

underpins Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*.[64] This presumption is grounded in the coincidence of essential elements. Like *Naturphilosophie*, the sublime comprises a tension between movement and quietness, cognate to Schelling's attraction-repulsion notion.[65] Likewise, the formless and the infinite, features integrated in the dialectic of the sublime and widely discussed by Immanuel Kant in his *Critique of Judgment* (1790), also seem to be essential to Schelling to whom Nature, through its different unities, "signifies a definite degree of embodiment of the infinite into the infinite."[66]

Humboldt's *Views of Nature, or, Contemplations on the Sublime Phenomena of Creation* (1850) demonstrates the concurrency of these ideas. In fact, even the title unites *Naturphilosophie*, the inference of God, the unity, and the sublime. His prose, descriptions, and depictions of Latin America, as conveyed to a whole generation of explorers, would have recaptured the sublime as the main aesthetic resource to describe and experience Nature. Hence, Humboldt would prove to be an alternative way to disseminate Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* in a geographical setting so dissimilar to Europe. In America, championed by explorers who merged art and science, journeying the continent and Chile throughout the nineteenth century, *Naturphilosophie* found its home, demonstrating its huge impact on a worldview and as a form to conceptualise Nature whose scope and impact require constant reappraisal.

Conclusions

Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* might be considered as one of many endeavours which aimed to understand the relationship between humankind and Nature as they originated within the framework of Romanticism. In this regard, Schelling's *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature* is crucial as it gave basis to new sciences in the nineteenth century. Additionally, it had a profound impact in aesthetic discourses, setting up new ways of thinking about Nature and landscape which affected, directly or indirectly, the depiction of the natural landscape of the New World by explorers who arrived in Chile throughout the nineteenth century.

The way in which Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* may have induced original approaches to Latin American Nature took multiple directions. Firstly, there is a confirmed direct contact between Schelling and Simon, who came across each other in Munich in 1827. At that time Schelling had already published his *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature,* so it is realistic to think of Schelling as the philosopher lecturing on this topic while being mindfully listened to by Simon. Simon's chronicles and artworks indicate several elements of Schelling's philosophy, such for the harmonization with Nature and the whole, and an attitude of regarding nature which can be traced to Schelling's thinking.

Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* also enabled significant progress in German sciences, particularly in biology, by providing a new system to manage research on Nature based on the principle of organicism and the unity with the whole. Scientific explorers such as Poeppig and Philippi displayed in their research and illustrations all these elements, also reflecting the mystic component professed by Schelling.

There is a third source for Schelling's influence: through Humboldt. Some ideas such as the balance among active forces acting inside every living organism, as well as a manner to describe Nature which united *Naturphilosophie* with aesthetic categories such as the sublime, would have been conveyed by Humboldt to Rugendas, Philippi, and Grashof. Stunning portrayals of volcanoes and the Andes by these explorers would demonstrate, thus, how essential Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* was for the visual representation of Chile two centuries ago.

[1] Nicholas Saul, *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism [Electronic Resource]*, German Romanticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 211.
[2] Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling was born in 1775. At the age of twenty-three was appointed as a professor of philosophy at the University of Jena. Manuscripts such as *New Deduction of Natural Law* (1797), *Ideas Concerning a Philosophy of Nature* (1797) and *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800) have led him to be considered 'father of absolute Idealism' alongside Hölderlin and Schlegel. Frederick C. Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative*: *The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2003), 10.
[3] Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science, 1797* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 9.
[4] Schelling, 11.
[5] Hans Georg Artur Viktor Schenk, *The Mind of the European Romantics*: *An Essay in Cultural History* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 177.
[6] Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science, 1797*, 5.
[7] Schelling, 5.
[8] Kai Hammermeister, *The German Aesthetic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 11.
[9] Hammermeister, 73.
[10] Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (London; New York: Bloomsburry, 1997), 85.
[11] Carl Alexander Simon was born in Frankfurt an der Oder in 1805. His father was a physician who had a considerable collection of drawings being so Simon's first approach to arts. It has also been stated that in his stage as a student in the Frankfurt Gymnasium, Simon inclined to the scientific ambit. This situation came to shift when he received his first drawing lessons. Marijke Van Meurs, *Carl Alexander Simon en Chiloé* (Ancud: Ediciones Museo Regional de Ancud, 2016), 14.
[12] Van Meurs, *Carl Alexander Simon en Chiloé*.
[13] Simon's trips and their aesthetic results are far from being an isolated phenomenon. On the contrary, it concurs with the romantic tradition of long hikes that came into fashion with artists and scientists since the late eighteenth century, the outcomes of which were outstanding artworks. It can be mentioned a couple of examples about this, such as the partnership of Carl Friedrich Lessing and Johann Wilhelm Schirmer, who teamed up in 1827 forming "the landscape composition association" or Caspar David Friedrich and the sculptor Gottlieb Christian Kühn who made a 300 kilometres trip along the Harz Mountains in June of 1811, setting on paper their intimate impressions of nature. Dieter Graf, *Nineteenth-Century German Drawings and Water-Colours* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1968), 15. And also Herrmann Zschoche, *Caspar David Friedrich im Harz* (Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 2008).
[14] As specified by Dietrich von Engelhardt, the romantic *Naturforscher* (investigator of Nature) are themselves investigators of history who strive to overcome any separation of disciplines. Moreover, for them "physics and metaphysics should not be mutually exclusive but interrelated." Andrew Cunningham and Nicholas Jardine, *Romanticism and the Sciences* (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 55.
[15] "Entrada de la selva de las Tepuales que atravesé en seis dias a pie para llegar al seno de Reloncavi."
[16] Carl Thompson, *The Suffering Traveller and the Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2007), 4.
[17] Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science, 1797*, 5.
[18] Ingeborg Schmalz, *Carl Alexander Simon. Dokumente zur Geschichte der Deutschen Einwanderung* (Santiago: Heft 1), 91.In Van Meurs, *Carl Alexander Simon en Chiloé*, 40.
[19] Van Meurs, *Carl Alexander Simon en Chiloé*, 40–45.
[20] Eduard Winkler, 'Aufzeichnungen seiner Beobachtungen und Erlebnisse in Chile', in *Geschichtliche Monatsblätter. Quellensammlung und Beiträge zur Geschichte der Deutschen Einwanderung nach Chile*, ed. Heft X (Valdivia, Chile, 1917), 36–37.In Van Meurs, *Carl Alexander Simon en Chiloé*, 43.
[21] Schenk, *The Mind of the European Romantics*: *An Essay in Cultural History*, 178.
[22] Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science, 1797*, 36.
[23] Schmalz, *Carl Alexander Simon. Dokumente zur Geschichte der Deutschen Einwanderung*, 91.
[24] Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science, 1797*, 9.
[25] Schelling, 9.
[26] Schelling, 9.
[27] Schelling, 10.

[28] Hammermeister, *The German Aesthetic Tradition*, 75.
[29] James Lindsay, 'The Philosophy of Schelling', *The Philosophical Review* 19, no. 3 (1910): 259–75.
[30] Lindsay.
[31] Andrew Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*: *An Introduction* (Routledge, 2002), 53.
[32] Hammermeister, *The German Aesthetic Tradition*, 71.
[33] "Moreover, the self-image of the new 'men of science' was to be largely constituted by Romantic themes - scientific discovery as the work of genius, the pursuit of knowledge as a disinterested and heroic quest, the scientist as an actor in a dramatic history, the autonomy of a scientific elite." Cunningham and Jardine, *Romanticism and the Sciences*, 8.
[34] Schelling himself studied medicine, physics, and mathematics.
[35] "Alle Kunst soll Wissenschaft, und alle Wissenschaft soll Kunst werden; Poesie und Philosophie sollen vereinigt sein". August Wilhelm von Schlegel, *Athenäums-Fragmente: und andere Schriften* (Berlkin: Taschenbuch, 2013), 22.
[36] Robert J. Richards, 'The Impact of German Idealism and Romanticism on Biology in the Nineteenth Century', in *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought: Volume 1: Philosophy and Natural Sciences*, ed. Karl Ameriks, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 105–33.
[37] Richards, 'The Impact of German Idealism and Romanticism on Biology in the Nineteenth Century'.
[38] Richards.
[39] Poeppig was a German biologist and traveller. He was born in Plauen on 7 July 1798 and died near Leipzig on 4 September 1868. In 1826 he arrived at Valparaiso Seaport, Chile. There he worked until 1829. In 1835 Poeppig published a book on this journey: *Eduard Poeppig's Reise in Chile, Peru und auf dem Amazonenstrome, während der Jahre 1827-1832*. A. S. Troelstra, *A Bibliography of Natural History Travel Narratives* (KNNV Publishing, 2016), 340.
[40] Rudolph Amandus Philippi was born on 14 September 1808 in Charlottenburg and died in Santiago, Chile, in 1904. He is considered one of the most relevant scholars of zoology, botany, natural history, and geography of Chile. Philippi studied medicine and natural sciences at the University of Berlin and received his doctorate in 1830. Thomas Adam, *Germany and the Americas*: *Culture, Politics, and History*, Transatlantic Relations Series (California: ABC Clio, 2005), 882.
[41] Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science, 1797*, 87.
[42] Lorenz Oken, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: J. Schuster, 1939), 258–59.
[43] Cunningham and Jardine, *Romanticism and the Sciences*, 8.
[44] H. A. M. Snelders, 'Romanticism and Naturphilosophie and the Inorganic Natural Sciences 1797-1840: An Introductory Survey', *Studies in Romanticism* 9, no. 3 (1970): 195, https://doi.org/10.2307/25599763.
[45] Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science, 1797*, 50.
[46] María Teresa Eyzaguirre Philippi, 'Homenaje', *Gayana. Botánica* 65 (2008): VII–XI.
[47] Richards, 'The Impact of German Idealism and Romanticism on Biology in the Nineteenth Century', 105–33.
[48] Snelders, 'Romanticism and Naturphilosophie and the Inorganic Natural Sciences 1797-1840: An Introductory Survey'.
[49] Michael Dettelbach, 'Alexander von Humboldt between Enlightenment and Romanticism', *Northeastern Naturalist* 8, no. 1 (2001): 9–20.
[50] Dettelbach.
[51] Dettelbach.
[52] Further antecedents about the personal relationship between Humboldt and the artists in America and the contacts they had in Europe can be reviewed in Renate Löschner, *Alexander von Humboldt, inspirador de una nueva ilustración de América : artistas y científicos alemanes en Sudamérica y México* (Berlín: Instituto Ibero-Americano Patrimonio Cultural, 1988).
[53] Johann Moritz Rugendas was born in Augsburg in 1802 and died on 29 May 1858 in Weilheim an der Teck, Germany. He journeyed through Latin America between 1822 and 1846, visiting and living in Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and Uruguay, depicting landscapes, people, and local customs. Rugendas has been pointed as the precursor of the landscape painting in Latin America. Efrén Ortiz Domínguez, *Johann Moritz Rugendas: memorias de un artista apasionado* (Bogota: Luna libros, 2013).
[54] Pablo Diener, *Rugendas: América de punto a cabo*: *Rugendas y la Araucanía* (Santiago: Aleda, 1992), 15.

[55] Löschner, *Alexander von Humboldt, inspirador de una nueva ilustración de América*: *artistas y científicos alemanes en Sudamérica y México*, 51.
[56] Caroline Schaumann, 'Who Measures the World? Alexander von Humboldt's Chimborazo Climb in the Literary Imagination', *The German Quarterly* 82, no. 4 (2009): 447–68.
[57] Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science, 1797*, 35.
[58] Löschner, *Alexander von Humboldt, inspirador de una nueva ilustración de América*: *artistas y científicos alemanes en Sudamérica y México*, 51.
[59] Löschner, 51.
[60] The romantic painter Otto Grashof was born on 12 June 1812 in Brandenburg and died on 23 April 1876 in Cologne. He arrived in Chile in 1854 and settled in Valparaiso working as a landscape and portraits painter. Ricardo Bindis, *Pintura chilena 200 años*: *despertar, maestros, vanguardias* (Santiago de Chile: Origo, 2006), 56.
[61] Boris Asvarishch et al., *Caspar David Friedrich & the German romantic landscape* (London: Lund Humphries, 2008), 30.
[62] Some paintings by Caspar Wolf can be found in the following link: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Caspar_Wolf_-_Lauteraar.jpg
[63] Diener, *Rugendas: América de punto a cabo*: *Rugendas y la Araucanía*, 40.
[64] Gabriel Trop, 'The Aesthetics of Schelling's Naturphilosophie', *Symposium* 19, no. 1 (2015): 140–52.
[65] In Kant "the mind feels itself moved in the representation of the sublime in nature, while in aesthetic judgment on the beautiful in nature it is calm contemplation". Robert Doran, *The Theory of the Sublime from Longinus to Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 214.
[66] Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of This Science, 1797*, 51.