<u>The metaphysics and epistemology of the young Herder, Nigel DeSouza</u>

The following consists of a set of analytical summaries of several short pieces by Johann Gottfried Herder from the 1760s in which he lays out his metaphysics and epistemology. It will appear in: *Herder Handbuch*, ed. Heinrich Clairmont, Stefan Greif, and Marion Heinz, Paderborn, Germany: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, forthcoming 2015.

II.1.2.3 Aufklärerische Selbstentwürfe

1) *Über Christian Wolfs Schriften*: This 1768 text is divided into three Betrachtungen and consists of Herder's critical reflections on the philosophy of Christian Wolff. It is primarily based on his reading of Wolff's *Discursus praeliminaris de philosophia in genere* which was composed as a general introduction to his series of Latin treatises on the branches of philosophy and was published alongside the first of these, the *Philosophia rationalis sive logica*, in 1728.

In the first, untitled, Betrachtung, Herder in fact begins with the *Vorrede* (*Praefatio*) to the latter where (like Herder in his 1765 text *Wie die Philosophie zum Besten des Volks allgemeiner und nützlicher werden kann* [→ II.1.2.2]), Wolff asserts that his goal has been "eine für die Menschheit nützliche Philosophie zu entwickeln".[1] What has prevented this from being achieved, Wolff claims, are two things that are still missing from philosophy. Translating from "der Vorrede zu seiner größern lateinischen Vernunftlehre", Herder cites Wolff's own characterization of these two things: "die Evidenz, die allein einen gewissen und vesten Beifall erzeugt, und die Anpassung ihrer Lehren auf den Gebrauch des Lebens" (HWP 2, 9).[2] Although Herder started his text by lamenting the fact that Wolff, who, more than any other philosopher, had made philosophy into a *science*, had now been too soon forgotten in Germany, he quickly turns to criticism. For precisely what Wolff goes on to propose as the solution to these problems, Herder attacks as only worsening them. Wolff confidently asserts that what is needed are "bestimmte Begriffe und Lehrsätze" that are "genügend erklärt und hinreichend bewiesen" and that "[er, Wolff] die Worte von verworrenen Begriffen auf deutliche und von einer schwankenden Bedeutung auf eine feste zurückführte sowie

1 "philosophiam generi humano utilem effecturus", Christian Wolff: *Discursus praeliminaris de philosophia in genere. Einleitende Abhandlung über Philosophie im allgemeinen*. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe. Ed. Günter Gawlick and Lothar Kreimendahl. Stuttgart 1996, Anhang 4: Praefatio, 262 / Anhang 5: Vorrede, 272. See also 264/275.

2 Cf. Wolff, op. cit., Vorrede, 262: "Deest illa evidentia, quae sola assensum gignit certum atque immotum, nec, quae in ea traduntur, usui vitae respondent". Wolfgang Pross' reference in his commentary on Herder's text (see HWP 2, 853) to the Praefatio to Wolff's *Cogitationes rationales de viribus intellectus humani earumque usu legitimo in veritatis cognitione* (1730) is thus incorrect.

wohlbestimmte Lehrsätze aufstellte, wie sie die Philosophierenden bisher noch nicht kannten".[3] Herder does not quote this in his own text, but is implicitly referring to it when he claims that Wolff's 'evidence' is "bloß eine Evidenz in Worten […] Willkührliche Definitionen, eckelhaft wiederholte Demonstrationen sind nur zu oft die Folge davon." (HWP 2, 9) This critique is directed at Wolff's esteem for nominal definitions, which he recommends as the premisses for conclusions without, Herder is implicitly arguing, ensuring their objective reality. Herder will direct a similar critique, whose origins lie in Crusius and Kant, against Baumgarten and Mendelssohn, as will be seen below.

Herder's (by no means exclusively[4]) negative assessment of the so-called Leibniz-Wolffian *Schulphilosophie*, which is clear in earlier pieces such as the *Versuch über das Sein* [→ II.1.2.1] and *Wie die Philosophie* [→ II.1.2.2], can be traced back at least to his notes from Kant's lectures at the University of Königsberg from 1762-1764 where Wolff is criticized for wanting to demonstrate everything and for believing that he was fully capable of doing so.[5] Drawing on Crusius, Kant had taught Herder that there are in fact *Grundbegriffe* (such as *Sein*, *Raum*, *Zeit*, *Kraft*) that are unanalyzeable or not fully analyzeable (*unzergliederlich*)—and thus unproveable—on which other concepts rest but which in turn have no support of their own.[6] Herder is thus taking issue with Wolff's philosophical conviction that there are no unanalyzeable concepts[7] and that the rational order of the world, the organization of being into species and kinds, originating in the divine intellect, is fully accessible to and demonstrable by human beings via the instrumental science of logic. With his critical observation, "indem man lediglich die Form abmißt, verliert man zu sehr die Materie" (HWP 2, 9), Herder is indirectly referring to Baumgarten and the precritical Kant. Baumgarten's distinction between intensive and extensive clarity, i.e., between logical and aesthetic or sensuous perfection in thought (discussed below), informs Herder's accusation that Wolff has neglected "die Materie", the richness of which is the basis of extensive clarity.[8] Herder was also familiar with Kant's attempt to distinguish between the matter and form of thinking and thus to direct attention to a decisive problem for philosophy: the clarity and distinctness that are the object of the philosopher can only be obtained on the basis of *given* representations.[9]

In turning to the question of the application of philosophy to life, Herder praises Wolff for having mentioned it, but immediately quips that according to Herder's own times, this very objective serves as testimony *against* Wolff's proposed

[3] "notiones ac propositiones determinatae", "satis fuerit explicatum ac sufficienter probatum", "voces a notionibus confusis ad distinctas & significatu vago ad fixum reducerem, & propositiones determinatas, quas hactenus nullas noverunt philosophantes, conderem", Wolff, op. cit., Vorrede, 262/272.

[4] See Herder's defence of it in his polemic against Riedel in the *Viertes Kritisches Wäldchen* [→ II.3.2.6], for example.

[5] Kant-AA 24, *Logik Herder*, 4; AA 28.1, *Metaphysik Herder*, 5, 10, 156.

[6] Kant-AA 28.1, 5, 156, 158. See also Kant-AA 2, 60-61, 280.

[7] Kant-AA 28.1, 156.

[8] See, e.g., Alexander Baumgarten: *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus*. Ed. Heinz Paetzold. Hamburg 1983, §XVI, 16-17.

[9] See, e.g., Kant-AA 2, 276-277.

solution because, Herder's critique implies, the latter postulates a kind of evidence based on *immediate* knowing of which the finite human mind is incapable. "Seine meisten Sätze und Demonstrationen sind Feen, die in der Luft tanzen, und jede nur zu oft zum Vorschein kommt. Erdgeborne Töchter und also Bürgerinnen der Erde sind sie eigentlich nicht; und es ist schon zu lange hin, daß Luftgespenster auf der Erde regieren."[10] Herder is continuing here the same line of critique as above, implying that because Wolff's philosophy is formal and abstract, it is not genuinely useful to earthly (i.e., embodied, sensuous) human beings. Wolff's conception of philosophy as a demonstrative science of possibles[11] and of logic as the science of directing the cognitive faculty in knowing the truth[12] may have yielded concepts, propositions, and principles that form a harmonious system of interconnected truths[13], but, for Herder, the latter's abstract, *sui generis* quality and disconnectedness from sensuous human experience, its paucity of "Materie", fatally undermine its applicability to actual human life. It appears, instead, merely to generate imaginary figments or thought structures instead of real knowledge that can only be obtained by proceeding from what is actually given to the human understanding.

Herder pushes deeper in his critique by turning to Wolff's conception of the human soul. In the *Vorrede*, citing a letter by Campanella in which he had bemoaned the way in which the spirit of invention (*inventione*) had been extinguished by school philosophers, Wolff declares that his own philosophy has finally granted inventors access to the schools.[14] Herder seizes on this and asks whether it is indeed true that Wolff's philosophy is such that it can open up "die Erfindungsschätze unsrer Seele" (HWP 2, 10). The question, he says, is difficult. "Die dunkelsten Gegenden der Seele, aus denen sich das meiste von Erfindungen emporhebt, sind von ihm unbeleuchtet geblieben. Er spricht von den untern Kräften der Seele als ein Geist von seinem abgeschiedenen Körper, und welche obere Kraft der Seele hat je den Erfindungsgeist durch eine Inspiration gehabt." (Ibid.) Wolff's philosophy is thus inadequate in two respects: first, due to its ideal of clear and distinct knowledge of the upper cognitive faculty it has not sufficiently examined the lower regions of the soul or the lower cognitive faculty, especially the most

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10 Ibid. The following passage from Kant's 1768 treatise *Träume eines Geistersehers* is noteworthy (Kant has just mentioned the difference Aristotle notes between the world we share when awake as opposed to the individual worlds we inhabit when we dream and claims that we should perhaps hold instead that those who have their own world are dreaming—Kant later calls them "Träumer der Vernunft"): "Auf diesen Fuß, wenn wir die *Luftbaumeister* der mancherlei Gedankenwelten betrachten, deren jeglicher die seinige mit Ausschließung anderer ruhig bewohnt, denjenigen etwa, welcher die Ordnung der Dinge, so wie sie von *Wolffen* aus wenig Bauzeug der Erfahrung, aber mehr erschlichenen Begriffen gezimmert, […] bewohnt, so werden wir uns bei dem Widerspruche ihrer Visionen gedulden, bis diese Herren ausgeträumt haben." (Kant-AA 2, 342) The dating of Herder's text to 1768 [*Der handschriftliche Nachlass Johann Gottfried Herders*, ed. Hans Dietrich Irmscher and Emil Adler. Wiesbaden 1979, 198] is corroborated by Kant's 1768 treatise, if it is in fact the source for Herder's imagery; if it is not, Kant may also have used it in his lectures and may thus still be the source.

11 Wolff, op. cit., §§ 29, 30, pp. 32-33.

12 Ibid., § 61, pp. 72-73.

13 Ibid., Vorrede, 262/272.

14 Ibid.

obscure regions, and second, its model of knowledge fails to grasp properly the role these lower regions play in human thought and creativity.[15]

In the second *Betrachtung*, “Über die drei Gattungen der Menschlichen Känntnis”, Herder takes up the three-fold division of knowledge into historical, philosophical, and mathematical knowledge that Wolff discusses in the first chapter of the *Discursus praeliminaris*. Historical knowledge is knowledge of what is or what occurs in the material world or in immaterial substances, philosophical knowledge is knowledge of the reason for what is or what occurs, and mathematical knowledge is knowledge of the quantity of things.[16] Herder’s opening remark is: “[m]ich dünkt, die drei Gattungen sind nicht auf gleichem Boden nebeneinander geordnet.” (HWP 2, 10) This might appear to be an erroneous interpretation of Wolff who clearly states that historical knowledge constitutes the foundation of all other forms of knowledge, that knowledge begins with experience.[17]

However, Herder does not deny this. The problem with Wolff’s theory, Herder clarifies, is that Wolff thinks that the distinction between the three types of knowledge resides in the *object* (“im Gegenstande”) whereas it in fact resides in the *kind* of *knowing* (“in der Art des Erkennens”) (HWP 2, 11); that is, Herder distinguishes between three types of knowing and not three types of knowledge. First, there is a certain overlap between the three types of knowing such that they do not properly constitute three distinct kinds of objective knowledge: “[d]as Warum? das ich Philosophisch erkenne, ist doch ein Etwas, [...] die Quantität kann so gut bei Sache, als Ursache ausgemessen werden” (ibid., 10). What Herder is talking about here is thus different from the apparently equivalent possible combinations that Wolff mentions, such as the historical knowledge of philosophical or mathematical knowledge.[18] For Herder, it is rather a question of what he calls the “Haupt- und Unteranwendungen meiner Kraft des Erkennens”, and the three types of knowing (Herder in fact posits more) all derive from one and the same power of knowing. (Ibid., 11) Second, Herder illustrates what he means by taking up the very first paragraph of the *Discursus* where Wolff begins, “[m]it Hilfe der Sinne erkennen wir, was in der materiellen Welt ist und geschieht, und der Geist ist sich der Veränderungen bewußt, die in ihm selbst stattfinden. Es gibt niemanden, der dies nicht weiß, wenn er nur auf sich selbst achtgibt.”[19] Wolff provides this as an explanation of the two-fold basis of historical knowledge, that is, of what occurs in material and immaterial substances, and this repository then constitutes the material on which philosophical knowledge operates to discover the reasons for what occurs.

[15] It should be noted that Wolff did, in fact, attribute a *facultas fingendi* or faculty of invention to the lower cognitive faculty. See Buchenau 2009, 74ff.

[16] Wolff, op. cit., §§3, 7, 14, pp. 4-5, 6-7, 14-15.

[17] Ibid., §§10, 12, pp. 11, 13. Cf. Günter Gawlick and Lothar Kreimendahl, “Einleitung” zu Wolff, *Discursus praeliminaris*, XXVI: “Kritisch wäre anzumerken, daß Wolff es leider unterließ, sich näher zur Empirie zu äußern, der er [...] eine so vielfältige Funktion in der Philosophie zusprach und damit große Bedeutung beimaß. Trotz der Hochschätzung, die Wolff der Erfahrung entgegenbrachte und die sicherlich nicht nur als ein Lippenbekenntnis oder eine Konzession eines Rationalisten and die Empiristen zu werten ist, hat er in seiner Philosophie empirische und rationale Elemente nicht in ein ausgewogenes Verhältnis gebracht; die letzteren überwiegen deutlich.”

[18] Wolff, op. cit. §§8, 15, pp. 9, 17.

[19] Ibid., §1, p. 3.

But Herder shows the connection with philosophical knowledge differently. Herder writes, "[s]innlich werde ich inne, daß etwas ist – Eins. Im Innern werde ich etwas inne, daß ich bin: ein Anders: Ursache *schließe* ich, und die Ausmessung der Ursache zur Würkung, und der Würkung zur Ursache ist schon ein sehr componierter Schluß der Vergleichung: keine einfache Erkennung." (HWP 2, 11) Through outer and inner sense, I am aware that something is, and in both cases this is simply *given* to me, but then from this same power of knowing to which these things are given emerges the activity of reflecting on causes and effects and the application of this kind of knowing to other similar cases by comparison ("Vergleichung"). Herder's point is that philosophical knowledge should not be characterized by its object qua the reason for why something is, but rather, from the perspective of the power of knowing of the soul from which it emerges. In this respect, philosophical knowledge is "keine einfache Erkennung", but rather an active form of knowing—that genetically depends on earlier, sensuous forms of knowing—in which one actively draws conclusions ("ich *schließe*") and makes comparisons. Herder is implicitly calling for a re-orientation of philosophy from an exclusively outward concern with the objective order of the world to an inward concern with the knowing subject. As opposed to Wolff's three types of knowledge which, Herder claims, obviously derive from the "drei Hauptwissenschaften" of history, philosophy, and mathematics, Herder seeks to show how different kinds of knowing all develop from the same "Kraft des Erkennens" and how they consequently border on each other. (Ibid.) It is thus ultimately on the basis of psychology, Herder claims, that Wolff's division can be grounded—and *not* on the basis of nominal definitions. The perspective of psychology will in fact yield many more types of knowing and corresponding sciences, and, when the investigation is complete, will provide us with "eine Landcharte der Menschlichen Seele". (Ibid.)

Herder's third and final *Betrachtung*, "Über die Freiheit zu philosophieren", bears the same title as the final chapter of Wolff's *Discursus praeliminaris*, in which Wolff insists both on the necessity for the freedom of philosophy to obey only its own principles of knowledge and hence for the freedom from censorship, and on the impossibility that genuine philosophical inquiry will lead to doctrines contrary to religion, virtue, or public life.[20] Herder's central criticism here takes up the distinction he made in the first *Betrachtung* between the matter and form of thought and the related criticism of Wolff's philosophical method as too one-sidedly focussed on the latter, i.e., on logical form. Those who follow the "method of philosophy" as defined by Wolff—which was the subject of its own chapter in the *Discursus praeliminaris* and according to which all terms must be defined, all principles proven, all propositions derived from principles, etc. in compliance with the principles of identity, contradiction, etc.[21]—think they are philosophizing when they are in fact only demonstrating and counter-demonstrating in a manner that is "bloß Formell und Methodisch", such that "die ganze Schlußkette ist Hypothetisch". (HWP 2, 12) The only way that this approach to philosophy could

[20] Ibid., §§151ff, pp. 180ff. Wolff's own denial of the freedom to philosophize and his exile from Halle are referred to in §153, pp. 186-187 and in some detail in the Vorrede.

[21] Ibid., §§115ff., pp. 126ff.

not contradict religion, virtue, or the state (i.e., be considered as true), Herder speculates, is under the following conditions: “die Bibel muß ganz richtig ausgelegt, und selbst nach Philosophischen Begriffen geschrieben, die Tugend muß kein Hypothetischer Begriff, und der Staat keine beliebige privilegierte Verfassung sein”. (Ibid.) That is, these institutions would have to have been produced according to the principles of reason.

Herder opposes to Wolff’s conception of philosophy with its “äußere Methode” a philosophy where the outer method would at the same time be “innerer Geist”, which starts from “wirklich wahre Grundsätze” that “Materiell sein muß, nicht bloß Formell und Methodisch”. (HWP 2, 12) This kind of philosophy, the only genuine kind for Herder, will not be able to contradict religion, virtue, or the state because it will start from an acknowledgement of the nature of religion, virtue, and the state as themselves contingent products of history, and proceed on this *material* basis. For example, Herder explains, “[i]st die Bibel bei aller innern Wahrheit nicht hypothetisch ihrer damaligen Zeit bis auf Unwissenheit und Irrtümer der Verfasser und der Zeiten geschrieben? wird sie nicht hypothetisch nach den Gesichtspunkten unsrer Zeit ausgelegt […]?” (Ibid.) Similarly, the anchoring of virtue and morality in the feelings and drives of the lower region of the soul, from which it originates as a concrete historical and cultural phenomenon, is hidden by the Wolffian concept of virtue which is nothing more than “ein abstrakter, gesammleter, collektiver Begriff, der keine Empfindung, kein Begriff des Anschauens sondern eine Folge von vielen Sätzen, Folgen, Schlüssen, Beweisen [...]”. (Ibid., 12-13)

Herder’s reflections on Wolff point to a new conception of philosophy whose basic concepts do not derive from the logical relations of the contents of thought alone nor from an immediate grasp of the rational order of the world. This new philosophy directs its attention to the origin of concepts in the human soul, on the one hand, and to their historical appearances and expressions on the other. In this way, Herder takes Kant’s theory of the analytical method of philosophy, used to criticize Wolff, a step further: critical investigation of the givenness of the content of the basic concepts of philosophy is needed, and not just the external method whose object is their logical order.

2) *Von Baumgartens Denkart in seinen Schriften*: Herder’s engagement with Baumgarten’s philosophy began during his time at the University of Königsberg (1762-1764) where Kant based his metaphysics lectures on Baumgarten’s *Metaphysica*, from which Herder’s copious notes have been preserved.[22] Herder’s later interest in aesthetics, evidenced by his call in 1765 that “wir wenigstens unsere Aesthetik sichern” (FHA 1, 37)[23], led him to Baumgarten’s writings on poetry and aesthetics. The three pieces by Herder on Baumgarten discussed in this article all date from around 1767[24] and contain Herder’s reflections on Baumgarten’s

22 Kant-AA 28.1, 1-166, 28.2,1, 839-962. Herder also studied Baumgarten’s *Ethica philosophica* as his notes from Kant’s ethics lectures, which were based on this text, demonstrate. See Kant-AA 27.1, 1-89.

23 Cf. Gaier, *Kommentar*, FHA 1, 1233ff.

24 See Irmscher and Adler, *Der handschriftliche Nachlass*, 196-197 and Gaier, “Kommentar”, FHA 1, 1237.

metaphysics and aesthetics. In *Von Baumgartens Denkart in seinen Schriften*, Herder's critical engagement is very much continuous with his critique of Wolff (who even appears in this text) in its repudiation of an excessively formal approach to philosophy that is too detached from actual human beings and the historical and cultural reality they produce. This continuity is evident from Herder's opening observation about the great extent to which the "Inner[e] der Baumgartenschen Philosophie […] mit der Sprache verknüpft sei, so daß sich seine Erklärungen, Unterschiede, und Beweise oft in das Namentliche zu weben scheinen." (FHA 1, 653) One of the most obvious places to start in remedying this problem is to produce a genuinely German philosophy in the German language, rather than one like Baumgarten's that remains tethered both to the Latin language and to the accumulation of "viele Jahrhunderte" of Greek, Roman, and scholastic philosophy. (Ibid.) "Ein Werkchen in dieser Gestalt auf *deutschen* und nicht auf römischen und halbgriechischen Schulboden gebauet, wäre kein vollständiges System nach Zirkel und Winkelmaß der Kathedersprache, aber unserer Sprache nützlich, der Weltweisheit vielleicht zu neuen Bahnen förderlich, dem guten gesunden Verstande angenehm, dem gemeinen Gebrauch zur Hand, und der deutschen Nation ein schätzbares Eigentum." (Ibid., 654)[25] Herder is implying that the language and style of Baumgarten's philosophy, which betrays its misguided quest for universality and timelessness, renders it incapable of speaking to his own age or of serving any truly practical purposes.

This does not mean that Herder was a relativist, for his own developing philosophical project sought to understand the nature of the human soul and its products—what he rejected was a philosophy that reified these historically and culturally contingent products and tried to draw universal principles or truths from them. Similarly, Herder rejected the more general tendency of Wolffian and Baumgartenian philosophy to arrogate to itself a capacity to understand the world as God does. "Eine völlig philosophische Sprache müßte die Rede der Götter sein, die es zusahen, wie sich die Dinge der Welt bildeten, die die Wesen in ihrem Zustande des *Werdens* und Entstehens erblickten, und also jeden Namen der Sache *genetisch* und *materiell* erschufen." (FHA 1, 655) But this divine view is denied "irdischen zur Erde schauenden" human beings who instead "bezeichnen die Dinge nicht wie sie sich *erzeuget*, sondern wie sie ihnen erscheinen: nicht nach ihrem Wesen, sondern nach ihrer Form; jenes kann *scheinbare Substanzen*, diese *leere Benennungen* geben, und also beides trügen." (Ibid.) The clear precursor of the distinction Herder is making here is that between nominal and real definitions found in Leibniz.[26] Herder is perhaps more immediately drawing on the pre-critical Kant and his distinction between mathematics, which proceeds from synthetic concepts that it defines itself, and philosophy, which must rely on given concepts that it analyzes. Philosophy can separate out the characteristic marks (*Merkmale*) of its

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[25] For an example of what Herder had in mind, see Gaier, "Kommentar", FHA 1, 1239-40, where he cites an unpublished note on this passage in which Herder demonstrates the etymological connection between schön and scheinen/Schein.

[26] Leibniz most famously draws this distinction in the *Meditationes de cognitione, veritate et ideis* (1684) which Herder knew and studied. See Irmscher and Adler, *Der handschriftliche Nachlass*, 198.

initially confused, given concepts (e.g., of space or time) and arrive at a nominal definition, but since it has not generated the concepts itself, as in mathematics, it falls into error, Herder believes, when it treats such "Nominalerklärungen", which are mere "*leere Benennungen*", as providing an understanding only God can have of the essence of the substances that he alone thinks and creates.[27]

Herder illustrates what he means by returning to an example he had first discussed in the *Versuch über das Sein* [→ II.1.2.1][28], namely, Baumgarten's attempt to prove the existence of a being from the logical impossibility of its having no ground. Baumgarten's error was to move from the strictly logical or mathematical plane, in which "das *Nichts* als *Etwas* berechnet werden [kann]", to the philosophical plane, where the latter is not possible, since the appeal to the principle of contradiction on which this proof depends can only demonstrate logical truths, not truths pertaining to reality or real being (*Realsein*). That is, one cannot prove the existence of a *real* being from the logical impossibility of its having no ground because to do so is to treat 'no ground' or 'nothing' as a 'something'. "Wie fruchtbar diese scheinbar, realisierten Begriffe an unsichern Folgerungen sind, wird vielleicht aus dem Folgenden erhellen: wo viele Beweise auf *ein Nichts*, im eigentlichen Verstande gebauet sind, als wenn es ein *Etwas* wäre." (FHA 1, 656)[29] Herder attributes this "Blendwerk" both to Wolff and to Baumgarten, in whom, he claims, it is shrouded in the Latin language, and he sees its origin as lying in mathematics. (Ibid.) Herder gives further examples "von dem Leeren in den Nominaldefinitionen, das mit dem vorigen *Scheinbaren* gränzet", all of which provide a merely formal understanding of a concept, but not one that 'exhausts its essence'. (Ibid.) For example, with respect to Baumgarten's definition of a reason or ground (*ratio*) as "id, ex quo cognoscibile est, cur aliquid sit" ("das, woraus zu erkennen ist, warum etwas ist"), Herder asks simply about the word "cur" or 'why', which, he claims, "trägt den ganzen Knoten im Schoße: qua ex ratione [aus welchem Grund]?" (Ibid.)[30] The implication is that understanding *why* something exists is beyond human capacity; only God can grasp this. Similarly, the definition of "Exsistenz", Herder continues, as the "complementum essentiae sive possibilitatis internae" ("das Komplement des Wesens oder der inneren Möglichkeit") in no way explains what this "complementum" is nor what must be added to it—"sinnlich zu reden", Herder clarifies—for the merely possible to become actual. (Ibid.) Again harking back to the *Versuch über das Sein*, human beings, Herder is implying, have their own sensuous mode of access to and certainty about being (including the forces underpinning its actualization, as we shall see below). Baumgarten's philosophy, in contrast, is guided by the belief that we can reach divine-like insight into and certainty about the underlying essence of things, whereas this is impossible on the basis of inescapably inadequate and

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27 Kant-AA 28.1, 8; AA 2, 276-277, 284; Herder, FHA 1, 655. Cf. Gaier, "Kommentar", FHA 1, 1240-1241.

28 Cf. FHA 1, 12ff.

29 Cf. Alexander Baumgarten: *Metaphysica. Metaphysik*. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe. Ed. Günter Gawlick and Lothar Kreimendahl. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 2011, §§7, 8, 20, pp. 56-7, 62-3; see also Gawlick and Kreimendahl, "Einleitung", LI-LII; Kant-AA I, 397-98; AA II, 171ff.

30 Cf. Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, §14, pp. 58-59.

incomplete nominal definitions ("nicht Data gnug" (ibid.), Herder writes) that are all that human beings can devise.

Herder believes that all his examples together account for the whole polemic about (what he at this point in the text calls) Wolffian philosophy. In trying, for example, to refute idealists and atheists by using the logical concepts of the possible and the actual, or to base contingency and creation on the logical concepts of the necessary or the ground ("*Grund*"), one is seeking to deduce the real from the merely formal. (Cf. FHA 1, 657) Herder asserts that instead of simply opposing to (Wolff's or Baumgarten's) uncertain deductions his own equally uncertain claims (and thereby erecting a system of his own), he has accomplished more by correctly discovering the reason for that very uncertainty. Speaking from the perspective that the critical distance he has achieved affords him, Herder reflects: "Es liegt in der Schwäche der menschlichen Natur, immer ein System errichten zu wollen; vielleicht liegt es auch in der Schwäche derselben, es nie errichten zu können. Wer diese letzte zeigt, wird nützlicher, als wer drei Systeme errichtet; und es ist gewiß, daß diese gerügten Begriffe Adern sind, die das ganze Baumgartensche System durchlaufen, oder Knochen sein sollen, die dasselbe stützen." (Ibid.)

The danger of such a system is that, unless one is able to affect a critical detachment from the outset, one's whole way of thinking philosophically comes to be determined by it. "Unvermerkt wird die Bahn, die unser Verstand einmal genommen hat, uns zur Gewohnheit, und ein Kopf, der gleichsam mehr mit der Sprache denkt, als ein andrer, nimmt bald gewisse Worteinteilungen zu Leitfäden, denen er folgt." (FHA 1, 657) Baumgarten's method, Herder explains, of grouping similar concepts together and his beloved tabular ("tabellarische") method, according to which concepts are placed next to, below, and behind one another until they fit into his favourite arrangements—which in turn habituates our eye to seeing things in certain places—produces a "große Symmetrie" that entices the mind and helps make insights uncommonly easy just at the point where it is most difficult, i.e., where one begins to think and must take uncertain steps without any supports. (Ibid.) But, Herder continues, "so bald ich auf einem bekannten Gleise bin, so bald ich die neue Sache in der alten Figur sehe: so bin ich gleichsam zu Hause, und weiß mich einzurichten." (Ibid., 658) The danger, again, is that one becomes trapped by the classificatory conceptual web of the system, by the "Worteinteilungen" that are to be found in all of Baumgarten's writings and which do so much to facilitate the reader's progress. Herder warns: "[a]llein sie können der Weltweisheit schädlich werden, wenn man sich zu sehr an sie gewöhnet. Denn sie können sehr bald Schranken der Erkänntnis werden, die uns hindern, weiter zu sehen, und zu gehen." (Ibid.) Finally, and more prosaically, the "Worteinteilungen" make the presentation of ideas "monotonisch, unfruchtbar, und gezwungen" because the author is always ready with his classification formula as though with a shoe-last in hand. (Ibid.)

3) *Bruchstück von Baumgartens Denkmal*: In this piece and the next, we turn to Herder's engagement with Baumgarten's writings on aesthetics, of which Baumgarten is generally considered the founder. Baumgarten's very first treatise on aesthetics is entitled *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* (*Philosophische Betrachtungen über einige Bedingungen des*

Gedichtes), published in 1735. Herder's reflections on this work in the *Bruchstück von Baumgartens Denkmal*, form, with the preceding piece on Baumgarten's *Denkart*, part of a set of drafts Herder composed for a homage to Baumgarten which, in the end, remained unpublished. Herder had originally intended to compose what he called a written monument to Baumgarten and two other writers, Thomas Abbt and J. D. Heilmann, all of whom had recently died. In the *Entwurf zu einer Denkschrift auf A. G. Baumgarten, J. D. Heilmann und Th. Abbt*, Herder expresses his deep desire to have met these three authors, whose writings, he reminisces, occupied his most pleasant hours, and he mourns the fact that Germany was deprived of them too soon. (Cf. FHA 1, 677)

The *Bruchstück* is divided into three sections: an introduction and two numbered sections. The introduction opens with some reflections on aspects of Baumgarten's biography which demonstrate how profoundly external causes can shape a life, and which thus also demonstrate Herder's belief in the importance of the lower regions of the soul as the foundation of individuality. "Die mancherlei Zeitläufte und Situationen des Lebens geben der Denkart ihre verschiedne Richtungen, und insonderheit trägt die Farbe der Untwerweisung, gleichsam als der erste Überguß der jungen Seele das meiste zu der Gestalt bei, in der sie nachher der Welt vortritt." (Ibid., 681)[31] Herder has in mind here Baumgarten's daily study of Latin verse as a boy (which Baumgarten himself admits was the inspiration for his *Meditationes* in the Preface to that work[32]), his mastery of the language being developed to the point that he translated the Sunday sermons into Latin and was later even able to give his inaugural lecture at the University of Frankfurt (Viadrina) in Latin verse. (Cf. ibid., 681)[33]

"Ein ungemeiner Nutzen!", Herder sarcastically remarks of the latter feat. A second key influence came later, when Baumgarten, who was "zum Nachdenken geboren", developed himself into a philosopher through his study of Wolff's writings. (Ibid., 681-682) Baumgarten himself and Abbt (his "Lebensbeschreiber", as Herder calls him; ibid., 681), emphasize the importance of these two influences in generating Baumgarten's *Meditationes*[34]*,* while Herder adds that they are responsible for the "abenteuerliche Erscheinung" of an individual who combined Wolffian philosophy and poetry in an era in which one philosophized about everything, "nur nicht über Schönheit und über das Gefühl derselben." (Ibid., 682) Herder clearly appreciated Baumgarten's innovative and countercultural move, in his first academic writing, to force philosophy to address questions of taste—two things, Herder notes, that at that time could not have been more opposed. (Cf. ibid.) Hence Herder's general observation, which rang all the more true for him in the case of Baumgarten: "[d]ie Erstlinge eines Geistes betrachte ich allemal mit einem kleinen Schauder der Ehrfurcht vor eine menschliche Seele". (Ibid.)

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[31] Cf. Abbt's very similar remarks in his *Leben und Charakter Alexander Gottlieb Baumgartens*. In: Thomas Abbt: *Vermischte Werke*. Vierter Theil. Berlin 1780 (Nachdruck: Olms Verlag, 1978, Bd II), 222.

[32] Alexander Baumgarten: *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus*. Ed. & transl. Heinz Paetzold. Hamburg 1983, 3.

[33] Herder's source here is Abbt, *Leben*, 217.

[34] Cf. Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, 3; Abbt, *Leben*, 222-223.

Herder describes Baumgarten's *Meditationes* as an attempt to transplant Wolffian philosophy onto the ground of poetry. "Zu diesem Zwecke also sucht er eine philosophische Erklärung von der Dichtkunst auf, und zählet aus der Seelenlehre mit philosophischer Sparsamkeit die *Begriffe* hin, die zum Poetischen beitragen." (FHA 1, 683) Herder's enthusiasm for this early work of Baumgarten's derives from his own dissatisfaction, as we have seen above, with Wolffian philosophy's neglect of the lower, sensuous regions of the soul. It was a complaint already familiar from the writings of Johann George Sulzer[35] and Georg Bernhard Bilfinger.[36] Baumgarten's "Metapoetik", as Herder calls it, following Abbt[37], was only the beginning of Baumgarten's philosophical project of aesthetics, whose object was the kind of knowledge associated with the lower regions of the soul, i.e., sensuous knowledge, and which culminated in the publication of the two volumes of his *Ästhetik* in 1750 and 1758, respectively (we turn to Herder's critical reflections on this work in the next section).

Above all, Baumgarten's *Meditationes* represented for Herder a philosophical attempt to understand poetry as a product of the human soul, based on the "Hauptidee 'die Poesie ist eine sinnliche vollkommne Rede'" (FHA 1, 683). Herder explains: "[s]o war dieser Aufsatz das Werk eines scharfsinnigen Zergliederers, der aus dem Keime einer kleinen Erklärung von drei Worten: *oratio*, *sensitiva*, *perfecta* das ganze Wesen der Poesie, diesen so herrlichen und fruchtbaren Baum entwickelt". (Ibid.) This is the definition of a poem that Baumgarten gives in §9 of the *Meditationes*: "Oratio sensitiva perfecta est poema" ("Eine vollkommene sensitive Rede ist ein Gedicht").[38] And as Baumgarten himself explains, a poem is a certain kind of speech or discourse (oratio), different from the "oratio" of a theologian, logician, or rhetorician; it consists of sensate representations associated with "partem facultatis cognoscitivae inferiorem" ("den niederen Teil des Erkenntnisvermögens") as opposed to the distinct representations associated with the upper part of the faculty of knowledge; and finally, it is perfect insofar as the parts of the poem "tendunt ad cognitionem repraesentationum sensitivarum" ("zur Erkenntnis sensitiver Vorstellungen streben").[39] Herder asserts that of all the definitions of poetry that seek to capture its essence in one concept, Baumgarten's appears to him as the most philosophical. (Cf. FHA 1, 683) This is not, Herder goes on to say, because the three words it is based on, being the most indeterminate,

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35 Johann Georg Sulzer: *Kurzer Begriff aller Wißenschaften*. 2. Aufl. Leipzig 1759, §206, p. 159: "Da nun die Kenntnis der menschlichen Seele der edelste Theil der Wissenschaften ist, so ist die Erweiterung der empirischen Psychologie den Liebhabern der Weltweisheit bestens zu empfehlen. Insonderheit möchten wir sie erinnern, die genaueste Aufmerksamkeit auf die dunkeln Gegenden der Seele (wenn man so reden kann) zu richten; wo sie durch sehr undeutliche und dunkle Begriffe handelt." Quoted in Adler 1990), 25.

36 Georg Bernhard Bilfinger: *Dilucidationes philosophicae de Deo, anima humana, mundo, et generalibus rerum affectionibus*. Tübingen 1746, §268, p. 262: "*Vellem existerent, qui* circa facultatem sentiendi, imaginandi, attendendi, abstrahendi, & memoriam praestarent, quod *bonus ille Aristoteles*, adeo hodie omnibus sordens, praestitit circa intellectum: hoc est, ut in artis formam redigerent, quicquid ad illas in suo usu dirigendas, & juvandas pertinet & conducit".

37 Abbt, *Leben*, 222.

38 Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §9, pp. 10-11.

39 Ibid., §§1, 3, 7, pp. 7-11.

allow for the longest explanation, nor is it because its basis in Wolffian philosophy lends it the stamp of philosophy. “Nichts von diesem! sondern weil diese Erklärung *mich am weitesten in die Seele hineinführet*, und mich gleichsam das Wesen der Poesie aus der Natur des menschlichen Geistes entwickeln läßt”. (Ibid.) Herder is palpably excited by Baumgarten’s attention to the lower, sensuous regions of the soul and by the vistas it opens up.

The first numbered section of the *Bruchstück* begins with the observation that the psychological explanation of poetry, the tracing of it back to the human soul was “Baumgartens große Ahndung” (FHA 1, 684). “Hier müssen Kräfte liegen”, Herder elaborates, “die dieselbe hervorbrachten, und Kräfte, die sie wieder beschäftiget. Hin also in diese dunkle Gegenden, um aus ihnen, wie aus einer Wunderhöhle Nachrichten zu bringen, wo diese Göttin wohne.” (Ibid.) With his typical acuity, Herder claims, Baumgarten sought out everything poetic in what, in Wolffian language, he called “*das Gebiet der untern Kräfte*”, more specifically, in its various faculties, “in der Sinnlichkeit, in der Einbildungskraft, im Witze, im Vermögen der Dichtung, im Urteil, im Bezeichnungsvermögen, im Gefühl und in der Leidenschaft”. (Ibid.) Herder emphasizes the special merit of Baumgarten’s psychology, deriving from its awareness of the gaps in other psychological systems and its appreciation of discoveries in the human soul. So many psychologies and logics, Herder notes, allow one to learn about the upper forces of the soul because everything there comes down to less confused concepts such as “Idee, Satz und Schluß”. (Ibid.) In contrast, “allein in der Sinnlichkeit meiner Seele, in Phantasie und Geschmack, Gefühl und Leidenschaft, wie unaufgeräumt war hier alles!” (Ibid.) This is the reason why philosophers had been loathe to accord this region of the soul any serious attention, Herder implies.

Despite his enthusiasm for Baumgarten’s investigation, however, it appears that Herder considered it to be only preliminary in nature. For his reflections turn now away from Baumgarten and towards an imaginary writer who would delve deeper. “Und wenn eben in diesem dunkeln Grunde mein ganzes Gefühl für das Schöne und Gute liegt: o so komme ein *Montagne*, ein *Roußeau*, ein *Locke*, ein *Home*, mir nach ihrer Seelenkänntnis die *Baumgartensche* Psychologie zu erklären und voll zu füllen.” (FHA 1, 684-685) The first and most important feature of the approach of this “Sokrates unsrer Zeiten” would be to turn his attention to the soul itself *qua* “Würkende[ ]” as opposed to the artistic object *qua* “abgetrennete Würkung”. (Ibid., 685) Herder associates the principles of Aristotle and Charles Batteux with what he calls the “trockne[n] Vorwurf” whereby poetics focusses on the imitation of the object. But for a wise man examining poetry according to Baumgarten’s conception, the starting point is the human soul and its sensuous, liveliest, and most effective parts, which Herder portrays as a huge ocean whose waves even in moments of calm reach up to the clouds. (Ibid.) The “Philosoph des Gefühls” is on a high cliff in the middle of the waves and he looks down “in den dunkeln Abgrund der menschlichen Seele hinunter, wo die Empfindungen des Tieres zu den Empfindungen des Menschen werden [...] in den Abgrund *dunkler* Gedanken, aus welchem sich nachher Triebe und Affekten, und Lust und Unlust heben.” (Ibid.) For Herder, this productive ground of the soul is like a continuum with the feeling for beauty situated between the sensuous pleasure of the brute and the perfection of the infinite of the angel. (Cf. ibid.) His philosopher will carefully examine the thoughts and feelings of the sensuous region of the soul, separating the “schwangere”, “nachdrucksvolle Vorstellung” from “dem Schimmer der Rede”, demonstrating the moving power of the spirit of beauty that is so different from reason, and showing “wie die Empfindungen meiner Sinne Bilder meiner Seele werden, und meine Einbildungskraft Entzückung in meine Adern gießet, und eben zu der Zeit einen Nebel vor meine Vernunft webet.” (Ibid., 685-686) Out of all this, the philosopher of feeling will then show how poetry is created, by means of a language that “die Seele auf so entschiedne Art bestürmen und besänftigen, in süße Freude und in noch so süßern Schmerz zerschmelzen, erleuchten und entzücken kann.” (Ibid., 686) The key here is the translation of the sensuous in all its variety and power into language as a tool of expression via the education and refinement of taste, acuity, wit, judgement, etc. Why Herder’s philosopher will be successful is clear: “weil du aus meiner Seele redest, und mich in meine Seele hinein lehrest. Philosoph der Schönheit, des Gefühls, und der Dichtkunst, alsdenn hast du Worte der Allmacht!” (Ibid.) In this extended description of his imaginary philosophical hero, Herder provides us with a sketch of human cognition that reveals his conviction that any genuine understanding of poetry, or art, will not be *sui generis*—which is what focussing on the artistic object itself amounts to—but genetic, demonstrating and preserving the constitutive connection to the various stages of its origin in the soul, starting with the latter’s obscurest regions.

Herder again invokes the division between upper and lower regions of the soul and their associated kinds of knowledge in order to bring out the appeal of this philosophy which, instead of wandering about the world and forgetting itself, is a friend of nature and the “Hausphilosophie deines Herzens”. (FHA 1, 687) Focussing on the artistic *object* alone demands a one-sided perspective suitable for those obsessed with “bloße Wissen” and the “Lehrgebäude” of distinct principles that can be extracted from experiences and sensations. (Ibid.) Opposed to this “objektive[] Philosophie” is the “subjektive[] […] Philosophie” of those for whom everything lies not only in knowing, but also in “*Untersuchen*” and “*Kennenlernen* […] diese mögen nichts so gern lesen, als ihr eigne Seele.” (Ibid.) Herder draws a connection between the first kind of philosophy and the principle of imitation of Aristotle and Batteux, which, he says, as true and complete as it may be, is not as “menschlich[]” as Baumgarten’s, whose excellence derives from its initiating us in “die tiefsten Geheimnisse unsrer Seele”. (Ibid.)[40] Herder’s immediate inspiration for this whole discussion is Mose Mendelssohn’s *Über die Hauptgrundsätze der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften* from the beginning of which he quotes a long passage. Mendelssohn himself takes up Batteux’s principle of imitation and subjects it to his own critique by showing, in part, that art in fact improves on (‘*verschönerte*’) nature, rather than just imitating it.[41] In the opening lines of *Über die Hauptgrundsätze*, Mendelssohn provides the foundation of the latter claim by

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40 This expression is taken from the beginning of the work by Mendelssohn mentioned in the next sentence, but it is not cited by Herder.

41 Cf. Moses Mendelssohn: *Über die Hauptgrundsätze der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften*. In: *Ästhetische Schriften*. Ed. Anne Pollok. Hamburg 2006, 190ff.

drawing a close connection between “die schönen Künste und Wissenschaften” and psychology, between the rules according to which a beautiful object can have the greatest effect and the nature of the human mind.[42] Mendelssohn’s claim that the “bloße Nachdenken” of “Vernunftschlüsse” cannot uncover how the drives of the sensuous region of the soul are put into motion by artistic objects is praised by Herder as building on Baumgarten’s aesthetics and pointing us in the right direction. (FHA 1, 687-688) Herder concludes section 1 with a clear declaration of his preference for which principle he thinks is most appropriate and fruitful in aesthetics: “Es bleibt dabei: der Grundsatz allein: *Ahme die Natur nach!* führet mich meistens auf tote Betrachtungen; der Grundsatz aber: *Spüre* der *sinnlichen Vollkommenheit* nach, versammelt gleichsam die Strahlen der ganzen Natur in meine Seele, und ist nichts als die Anwendung jenes Orakels: O Mensch! lerne dich selbst kennen.” (Ibid., 688)

In section 2 of the *Bruchstück*, Herder expresses his pleasure at seeing how Baumgarten derives from just three words (*oratio*, *sensitiva*, *perfecta*) the most significant features of poetry and how Mendelssohn, on this basis, then works out the main principles of the *schönen Künste und Wissenschaften*. Baumgarten’s talent for saying so much with so little, as Herder puts it, is unparallelled: “ich kenne wenig andere, denen es mit einem Einstrich […] so gelänge, den verwickeltsten Begriff in aller seiner Größe und Wahrheit zu zeichnen.” (Ibid., 689) Herder even endorses what he terms Baumgarten’s “barbarische Sprache, sein Neulatein, seine scholastische Kunstworte”, for once one has finally come to grips with it, a whole field of thoughts and explanations opens up. (Ibid., 689-690)

After a break in the manuscript, we find Herder now adopting a critical tone towards Baumgarten, whom he now accuses of wrapping up his aesthetics in Latin school language. At the same time, Herder’s point is also that this was entirely understandable given that the philosophical culture of his own day was so different from that of the Greeks: when one is initiated as a child into scholarly languages before one can even abstract concepts from words for oneself, one’s way of thinking assumes a form that it preserves. The form of Baumgarten’s aesthetics was, in this way, ready even before Baumgarten turned his attention to the subject: “die Lieblingsworte der Wolfischen Schule, ihre Einteilungen und Zauberformeln, waren schon wie Grundfäden im Weberstuhl gespannet, und nun wurden die Begriffe des Schönen hindurchgeschlagen”. (Ibid., 691) The contingency of the form thus exposed, Herder considers whether the “Einfalt und Mäßigung” of Aristotle and Longinus, an aesthetics “nach griechischer Manier”, would not be preferable, for it would not only shed much that is hazy and superfluous but also gain in “Wesen und Schönheit”. (Ibid., 692)

Herder then squarely turns to his central criticism of Baumgarten’s aesthetics, which is repeated in all three of his pieces on Baumgarten. “Es ist, wie man weiß, ihr erster Fehler, daß sie alles zu sehr a priori und wie aus der Luft hernimmt, und sich also auch in die Luft allgemeiner Sätze verliert, die oft zu weit sind, um sich mit Einzelnheiten füllen, oft zu eigensinnig sind, um, was man will, an sich anpassen zu lassen.” (Ibid.) Herder explicitly contrasts this lamentable feature of

[42] Ibid., 188.

modern philosophy with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, all of whom in their own way reflected Greek philosophy's admirable tendency to remain within the ambit of present things and experience, and of usefulness and truth. (Cf. ibid.) No philosopher "nach neuer Zucht", Herder admits, will remain content with just this, preferring rather the "hochgespannte Schwung neuerer Abstraktion, der oft ans Leere hin streift". (Ibid., 693) Examples of this abound in Baumgarten's philosophy with its "Kunstwörtern, Namenerklärungen, Wortabteilungen, und scholastischer Subtilitäten", all of which would be swept away if a Greek hand could be found to sift everything through the sieve of "Nutzbarkeit und Wahrheit". (Ibid.) Baumgarten's aesthetics is thus, despite the name, not a "Lehre des Gefühls", for its first source is not "[g]riechisches Gefühl, Empfindung, innere Empfindung des Schönen [...] aus dem sie schöpfte; vielmehr ist dieser, Spekulation." (Ibid.) And just where this speculation should approach the sea of the human soul and become psychology, "nun da schwimmt sie über der Empfindung des Schönen, glatt wie Öl, dahin". (Ibid.) Herder envisions instead an aesthetics that would draw on the depths of our feeling and philosophize in the human soul as a swimmer who swims half-immersed in the sea. This new aesthetics would combine Henry Home's *Elements of Criticism* (1762) (which was novel in its questioning of the fixed and arbitrary rules of literary composition and its attempt to develop a new theory grounded in the principles of human nature) with German psychology, and would then be '*hellenized'* by leading it back to the "Volk" whose "Lehrsätze[] des Schönen" remain most faithful to natural sensation. (Ibid., 694)

4) *Auseinandersetzung mit Baumgartens* Aesthetica – *Plan zu einer Aesthetik*: Herder's deepest and most detailed critique of Baumgarten is to be found in his reflections on the opening paragraphs of the latter's *Aesthetica* (1750, 1758). In order to come to grips with this critique, we thus need to push further in our understanding of Baumgarten's project. Towards the end of the *Meditationes philosophicae de nonullis ad poema pertinentibus* (1735), Baumgarten widens his view from poetry to the lower faculty of knowledge from which originate the sensuous representations and speech that constitute poetry's matter. It is in these closing paragraphs of the treatise that Baumgarten introduces the world to his proposal for establishing the discipline of aesthetics by introducing a distinction in instrumental philosophy that had not existed before him. Whereas logic had been considered by Wolff to be the instrument or tool for guiding the faculty of knowledge in general[43], Baumgarten now restricts logic to the direction of the upper faculty of knowledge and proposes aesthetics as the instrument or tool for directing the lower faculty of knowledge. Logic becomes the science of distinct knowledge, aesthetics the science of sensuous knowledge; Baumgarten even uses the term *analogon rationis* to convey how closely aesthetics parallels logic as an instrument of knowledge, as we will see below. This two-fold division is grounded in the existing division of the soul in psychology into upper and lower faculties of knowledge and in the distinction originating in ancient Greek philosophy between

[43] Wolff, *Discursus praeliminaris*, §§60, 61. See Solms 1990, 26ff.

aistheta and *noeta*.[44] Baumgarten's aesthetics thus responds to Bilfinger's call, as we saw above in the discussion of the Bruchstück, for a philosophical theory of sensuousness analogous to what Aristotle's logic provides for the intellect; but it also aims to satisfy Wolff's demand for a philosophy of the liberal arts (*philosophia artium liberalium*), which would consist of a science of the general rules of grammar, rhetoric, poetry, and of other such arts.[45]

Baumgarten lays the groundwork for the *Aesthetica* through his detailed exploration of the inferior cognitive faculty and sensuous knowledge in his treatment of psychology in Part III of the *Metaphysica* (1739, §§519-623), where he also mentions aesthetics itself, defining it as the science of sensuous knowledge and presentation, but also, among other things, as the logic of the lower faculty of knowledge.[46] A decade later, in 1750, Baumgarten presented the first volume of his (incomplete) exposition of the new science of aesthetics, with the second volume following in 1758. The *Aesthetica* was to be divided into a theoretical aesthetics and a practical aesthetics, and the theoretical aesthetics was in turn to contain three parts: heuristics, methodology, and semiotics. Due to Baumgarten's ill health and premature death in 1762, only an extensive but still incomplete section of the heuristics was ever published. Herder's critical reflections are on the opening paragraphs of the first volume of the *Aesthetica*, comprising the "Prolegomena" (§§1-13) and Section 1, "Pulcritudo cognitionis" ("Die Schönheit der Erkenntnis") of Chapter 1, "Heuristica" ("Heuristik"), of Part 1, "Aesthetica theoretica" ("Theoretische Ästhetik") (§§14-28).

For Baumgarten aesthetics begins with the human capacity to experience pleasure at the sensuous perception of perfection, or beauty, in a phenomenon.[47] Perfection is the agreement of several things according to the same ground[48], and when this is true of an appearance or phenomenon, it is perceived sensuously as beautiful. Such sensuous perception occurs in the lower faculty of knowledge and is analogous to the distinct perceiving and knowing of the upper faculty of knowledge via reason and the intellect.[49] In both cases, a nexus of things is perceived, either confusedly or distinctly—the former Baumgarten equates with sensuous knowledge, the latter with intellectual knowledge.[50] Both lower and upper faculties of knowledge in turn consist of bundles of other faculties. The upper faculty of knowledge, which knows things distinctly, is the intellect and reason is the specific

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44 Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §§ 115-116, pp. 84-87. In a lecture on aesthetics from 1750-51, Baumgarten makes this innovation clear: "Die Wissenschaften von Kenntnissen rechnet man zur philosophia instrumentali oder organica, folglich gehöret auch sie [i.e., aesthetics] zur philosophia instrumentali, und die Logik und philosophia instrumentalis werden nun nicht mehr als synonima anzusehen sein." Baumgarten, *Ästhetik-Vorlesungsmitschrift*. In: Bernhard Poppe: *Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten: seine Bedeutung und Stellung in der Leibniz-Wolffischen Philosophie und seine Beziehungen zu Kant*. Borna-Leipzig 1907, §1, p. 71.

45 Wolff, *Discursus praeliminaris*, §72. See the detailed discussion of Baumgarten's founding of aesthetics within the framework of *Schulphilosophie* in Solms, *Disciplina aesthetica*, ch. 1, here, 18ff.

46 Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, §§502, 533, pp. 268-269, 282-283.

47 Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, §662.

48 Ibid., §§94-95.

49 Ibid., §§624, 640.

50 Ibid., §§521, 640,

faculty of distinct perception.[51] The intellect comprises the faculties of attention, abstraction, reflection, comparison; both reason (as the faculty for distinct perception) and the lower faculty (as the faculty for confused perception, and thus the "analogue of reason"[52]) have equivalent intellectual and sensitive faculties such as wit, acumen, memory, judging, expectation, and characterization; and the lower faculty, beyond sense and imagination, has the additional faculty of invention or *facultas fingendi/Dichtungskraft*.[53] It is this faculty of invention—consisting in the separating and combining of images[54]—that underlies the capacity of an artist or poet to create works of art whose sensuous beauty, which consists in their sensuous perfection, is analogous to the intellectual beauty one distinctly perceives in the ordered whole that is the divinely created universe.

Now for Baumgarten, aesthetics assumes and builds upon the psychological framework above as it is laid out in the *Metaphysica*. Aesthetics is concerned with the sensuous knowledge of the lower faculty of knowledge, but its objective, as Baumgarten explains in §14 of the *Aesthetica*, is the perfection, i.e., beauty, of sensuous knowledge. Every individual has an innate ability to think beautifully and can also naturally learn rules for doing so, through the mere use of this faculty. This is what Baugmarten calls "natural aesthetics" and it is analogous to the natural logic each person has through which they are able to represent the nexus of the world to themselves distinctly.[55] But just as one can study the science of logic and explicitly learn its rules and their foundation and thus improve one's ability to think distinctly, so too can one study the science of aesthetics and learn its rules and their foundation and improve one's ability to think beautifully—this Baumgarten calls "artificial aesthetics".[56] Artificial aesthetics—which takes up most of the 900 paragraphs of the *Aesthetica*, only 18 paragraphs being devoted to natural aesthetics (§§28-45)—is based on a study of the beauty of knowledge in the liberal arts in general.[57] There are three kinds of beauty that sensuous knowledge (which Baumgarten defines as "die Gesamtheit der Vorstellungen, die unter der Deutlichkeit bleiben") can have, each of which corresponds, respectively, to the three planned parts of the *Aesthetica*, i.e., heuristics, methodology, and semiotics, which, in turn, correspond to the three parts of rhetoric: *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*: "DIE SCHÖNHEIT DER SACHEN UND DER GEDANKEN [...] DIE SCHÖNHEIT DER ORDNUNG [...] DIE SCHÖNHEIT DER BEZEICHNUNG".[58] Further, aesthetics studies the aesthetic qualities that give rise to the perfection and beauty of the sensuous, including "der Reichtum, die Größe, die Wahrheit, die Klarheit, die Gewißheit und das Leben der Erkenntnis".[59]

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51 Ibid., §§ 624, 640.
52 Ibid., §640.
53 Ibid., §§624-626, 640-641.
54 Ibid., §589.
55 Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §§2, 28ff.
56 Ibid., §§3ff.
57 Ibid., §§14ff.
58 "complexus repraesentationum infra distinctionem subsistentium", "PULCRITUDO RERUM ET COGITATIONUM, PULCRITUDO ORDINIS, PULCRITUDO SIGNIFICATIONIS". Ibid., §§14, 13, 18-20.
59 "Ubertas, magnitudo, veritas, claritas, certitudo, et vita cognitionis". Ibid., §22.

Turning now to Herder's critical reflections on Baumgarten, §1 of the *Aesthetica* reads as follows: "DIE ÄSTHETIK (Theorie der freien Künste, untere Erkenntnislehre, Kunst des schönen Denkens, Kunst des Analogons der Vernunft) ist die Wissenschaft der sinnlichen Erkenntnis."[60] Baumgarten thus intended his aesthetics to be many different but related things at once. Aesthetics was first and foremost to provide a theory of the liberal arts in general (i.e., not *just* of poetry), and since these are all primarily sensuous in nature, aesthetics also had a clearly defined epistemological and psychological domain of inquiry: sensuous knowledge and the lower regions of the soul from which such knowledge originates. Finally, aesthetics was also meant to be an art, which would appear to contradict its status as a philosophy or science. In the *Ästhetik-Vorlesungsmitschrift*, however, Baumgarten defines an "art" as "ein[en] Inbegriff mehrerer Regeln etwas vollkommener zu machen" and as "de[n] Inbegriff der Regeln, wie eine Sache einzurichten ist".[61] A science, however, consists of the sufficient *grounds* of these rules.[62] Aesthetics thus has as its object both the rules of the various arts as well as the grounds of these rules and is therefore both an art and a science, and in this sense even logic is both an art and a science as well.[63]

In his commentary on the opening paragraphs of the *Aesthetica*, Herder highlights two related distinctions: between what he calls objective and subjective aesthetics, and between what Baumgarten terms natural and artificial aesthetics. With respect to §1 of the Aesthetica, Herder uses the former distinction to reproduce Baumgarten's own characterization of aesthetics as both a science and an art. On the one hand, aesthetics can be taken either objectively, in which case it is a science, "eine *philosophische Untersuchung*, der sinnlichen Erkenntnis, als *ihres Gegenstandes*" or it can be taken subjectively, in which case it is "*bloß eine Fertigkeit*, meine *sinnliche Erkenntnis zu brauchen* und alsdenn ist sie eine *Kunst*". (FHA 1, 659)[64] Herder accuses Baumgarten of confusing the two because they differ not so much in their object (which is sensuous knowledge, in both cases), as in their "*Form und Methode*". (Ibid.) That is, the first is a genuine science that seeks to analyze and describe sensuous knowledge as a product of the soul, which Herder terms "eine Wissenschaft, die über *das Schöne philosophisch* nachdenkt" ("*de pulchris philosophice* cogitans scientia"), as opposed to the second, which he calls the "Kunst schön zu denken" ("ars *pulcre* cogitandi"). (Ibid.) As a theory of the liberal arts, Herder also notes, Baumgarten's aesthetics is lacking insofar as it is only a theory of rhetoric and poetry—all the beautiful arts are missing. (Cf. ibid.) What is needed, rather, is a theory of the beautiful in general first, and then of the beautiful in each art and science. (Cf. ibid., 660) In his proposal for a revised §1,

60 "AESTHETICA (theoria liberalium artium, gnoseologia inferior, ars pulcre cogitandi, ars analogi rationis) est scientia cognitionis sensitivae." Ibid. §1.

61 Baumgarten, *Ästhetik-Vorlesungsmitschrift*, §§10, 68, pp. 77-78, 110.

62 Ibid., §10, p. 78.

63 Ibid. See the discussion in Michael Jäger: *Kommentierende Einführung in Baumgartens „Aesthetica"*. Hildesheim 1980, 27ff.

64 This same point is also to be found in chapter 4 of the *Viertes Kritisches Wäldchen*, whose contents closely match Herder's commentary on §§1-14 of the *Aesthetica* in the *Auseinandersetzung*. See FHA 2, 267-272.

Herder thus writes “Die Ästhetik ist die Wissenschaft von der sinnlichen Erkenntnis 1) *objektiv*: als allgemeinste Theorie der freien Künste und Wissenschaften, deren Teil die untere Erkenntnislehre oder die Wissenschaft vom Vernunftanalogon ist. 2) *subjectiv*: als Kunst schön zu denken; diese ist hier nirgends <zu finden>” (“Aesthetica est scientia cognitionis sensitivae 1) *objective*. theoria summa artium et scientiarum liberalium cuius pars est gnoseologia inferior sive scientia analogi rationis 2) *subjective*. ars pulcre cogitandi; quae hic nusquam”). (Ibid.) Herder thus recognizes that Baumgarten saw aesthetics *qua* science of sensuous knowledge through the lens of the liberal arts and sciences, for which he sought to provide a foundation.[65] But whereas Baumgarten sees the relationship in aesthetics between the art of thinking beautifully and the science of sensuous knowledge as continuous, i.e., that the latter studies both the rules embedded in the former explicitly as well as the types of beauty that can be produced, Herder is at pains to see the validity of aesthetics as the *art* of thinking beautifully. (Cf. FHA 2, 267) In his commentary on §1, Herder instead construes aesthetics as a science that is analytic and descriptive, investigating the beautiful in general and in each liberal art and science. In the corresponding passage in the *Viertes Kritisches Wäldchen* [→ II.3.2.6] (that is reminiscent of Herder’s imaginary ‘Philosoph des Gefühls’ of the *Bruchstück* encountered above) Herder praises aesthetics *qua* “*Wissenschaft des Gefühls des Schönen*, oder nach der Wolfischen Sprache, *der sinnlichen Erkenntnis*” as “eine große Philosophie” that will study both the forces of the soul that feel the beautiful as well as the products of beauty that the soul brings forth. (Ibid.) He contrasts this with aesthetics as the art of thinking beautifully which he interprets as skills or guidelines for applying the forces of one’s genius or taste or for using one’s sensuous cognitive capacities beautifully—“und das ist Ästhetik ihrem Hauptbegriffe nach nicht”, Herder concludes. (Ibid.)

Herder thus also takes issue with another feature of Baumgarten’s project, that is, its practical aspect, whereby aesthetics shows how one can improve one’s capacity for thinking beautifully, in a manner analogous to how the study of logic improves one’s ability for thinking distinctly.[66] For Herder, this is clearly related to his own distinction between aesthetics as an objective science as opposed to a subjective art. “Ich kann das *sinnliche Erkennen*<,> seine *Beschaffenheit* und *Grade* und *Nutzen* kennen lernen; ohne doch es *auszubessern*”. (FHA 1, 660)[67] This in turn lines up closely with the second distinction mentioned above, that between natural and artificial aesthetics. Baumgarten defines natural aesthetics in the following manner: “Der natürliche, nur durch den Gebrauch, ohne dogmatische Lehre beförderte Grad der Verfassung der unteren Erkenntnisvermögen kann die NATÜRLICHE ÄSTHETIK genannt [werden]”.[68] This he in turn further divides into an innate and an acquired aesthetics, the latter of which is once again divided into “eine lehrende und eine ausübende”.[69] Innate aesthetics corresponds to one’s innate capacities for thinking

[65] Cf. Solms, *Disciplina aesthetica*, 126.
[66] Cf. Adler 1990, pp. 78ff.
[67] Cf. FHA 2, 268.
[68] “Naturalis facultatum cognoscitivarum inferiorum gradus solo usu citra disciplinalem culturam auctus AESTHETICA NATURALIS dici potest”. Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §2.
[69] “docentem et utentem”. Ibid.

beautifully, while acquired aesthetics corresponds to the skills one develops merely by using this innate capacity over time but without instruction. "[L]ehrende" aesthetics would then be one's confused knowledge of the rules of thinking beautifully and "ausübende" aesthetics would be the ability to apply these rules in practice.[70] Following this detailed breakdown of natural aesthetics, Baumgarten introduces artificial aesthetics in §3, but fails to provide any definition for it, instead proceeding immediately to enumerate the various ways in which it is useful.[71] We have, however, already seen above what this involves, as artificial aesthetics is the science by which the rules of thinking beautifully are distinctly known, analogously to what Wolff calls 'artificial logic's' distinct knowledge of the rules by which one uses one's understanding.[72] This artificial aesthetics is what constitutes, or was planned to constitute, the vast majority of the *Aesthetica*, comprising its three parts of heuristics, methodology, and semiotics, as seen above.

Herder provides his own somewhat different construal of natural and artificial aesthetics which, among other things, rejects the retroactive dimension Baumgarten attributes to artificial aesthetics whereby its primary function is to improve the capacities of natural aesthetics. This is grounded in the fundamental difference between the two that Herder believes Baumgarten fails to recognize. "Die *natürliche* Aesthetik ist von der *künstlichen* (so auch die Logik) nicht bloß in *Graden* sondern wesentlich unterschieden; da jene *immer* habitus, diese aber scientia ist; jene in *Empfindungen* und *dunklen* Begriffen *wirkt*; diese in *Sätzen* und deutlichen *Begriffen lehrt*, *überzeugt*". (FHA 1, 660) To be sure, Herder does acknowledge the dependence of artificial on natural aesthetics since the former cannot exist without the latter ("die *künstliche* aus der *natürlichen entstanden*"; ibid.[73]), but the relationship is nonetheless conceived of differently. Natural aesthetics manifests itself first in an "Aesthetica connata" that all human beings, qua sensuous animals, are born with and which preponderates over their innate logic, "weil sie mehr Tiere als Geister sind". (Ibid.) Herder is here already pointing to his broader conception of natural aesthetics (which we will explore below) that is not framed by the capacity for thinking beautifully as with Baumgarten, for he immediately adds, with reference to aesthetica connata, "[d]aher entstand die *sinnliche* Empfindung des Schönen, die allen Völkern gemein ist".[74] That is, there is more to natural aesthetics than just the sensuous feeling of the beautiful. Nevertheless, even the innate and acquired capacity for thinking beautifully that Baumgarten associates with natural aesthetics is understood differently by Herder, since, as he makes clear in the *Viertes kritisches Wäldchen*, it is fundamentally opposed to all rules. In response to the question as to how the natural ability to feel the beautiful operates, Herder responds, "in den Grenzen des Gewohnheitartigen, in verworrenen, aber desto lebhaftern Ideen, kurz als eine Fertigkeit des Schönen." (FHA 2, 268) Herder then draws from this the following conclusion: "Da ist sich

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70 Cf. Jäger, *Kommentierende Einführung*, 44ff.
71 Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §3.
72 Christian Wolff defends the need for artificial logic, beyond mere natural logic. See the discussion in Jäger, *Kommentierende Einführung*, 48ff.
73 Cf. FHA 2, 268-269.
74 Ibid.

weder Dichter, noch jedes andre feurige Genie, der Regeln, der Teilbegriffe des Schönen, und mühsamer Überlegung bewußt: seine Einbildungskraft, sein Feuerblick aufs große Ganze, tausend Kräfte, die in ihm sich zusammen erheben, würken; und unselig wenn ihn Regel störet! Eine solche natürliche Ästhetik kann weder durch Regeln gegeben, noch ersetzt werden, und es ist Unverstand, zwo so unendlich verschiedne Sachen zu vermischen." (Ibid.) Now, to be sure, Baumgarten does not maintain that one can simply entirely learn from artificial aesthetics how to think beautifully; he does also acknowledge that there must first exist a natural talent for doing so in the first place.[75] But it is the conviction that artificial aesthetics can improve that natural ability that Herder disputes—this is where the "wesentliche Unterscheidung" between the two is most palpable: for the very nature of the creative capacities of the artist renders them unsusceptible to effective direction by distinct knowledge, according to Herder. "Eben das Gewohnheitsartige, was dort schöne Natur war, löset sie, so viel an ihr ist, auf, und zerstörts gleichsam in demselben Augenblick. Eben die schöne Verwirrung, wenn nicht die Mutter, so doch die unabtrennliche Begleiterin alles Vergnügens, löset sie auf, sucht sie in Deutliche Ideen aufzuklären". (FHA 2, 269) Distinct knowledge may serve to guide the upper faculty of knowledge, but it is powerless with respect to the lower, and indeed even antithetical to it. Natural aesthetic capacities and the principles that are abstracted from their use are simply too 'heterogenous' to be able mutually to affect each other. (FHA 1, 661)

Ultimately it is Baumgarten's "verworrene[r] Begriff der Ästhetik" (FHA 2, 270) that is to blame both for the above misconceptions and for his misapprehension of many of the uses of (§§3-4) and objections to (§§5-12) aesthetics that he discusses in the *Aesthetica*, which Herder discusses in some detail and which we will summarize here. Underlying Baumgarten's discussion of the uses of, and objections to, aesthetics is what Herder perceives as a problematic privileging of the philosophy of the upper faculty of knowledge, of distinct knowledge, and an equally objectionable concomitant special pleading for the value and importance of aesthetics. This is evident, for example, in the very first use Baumgarten enumerates: aesthetics supplies "den Wissenschaften, die sich vornehmlich auf die Verstandeserkenntnis gründen, einen geeigneten Stoff."[76] That is, the genuine sciences of distinct knowledge, thanks to aesthetics, can now also verify the perceptual and experiential material that is the object of their investigation.[77] Perhaps bypassing the obvious criticism that this use fails to do justice to sensuous knowledge by subordinating it to distinct knowledge, Herder chooses to interpret it instead as problematically broadening the objects of philosophy and immediately

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[75] Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §28. This is more explicitly explained by Georg Friedrich Meier in his *Anfangsgründe aller schönen Künste und Wissenschaften*, §231: "Wenn sie [d.h., die Ästhetik] jemanden würklich geschickt machen sol, schön zu denken, so setzt sie bey demselben nothwendig voraus, daß er ein geborner schöner Geist seyn mus... Wer gar kein aesthetisches Naturel besitzt, der kann durch die Kunst niemals geschickt gemacht werden schön zu denken, und also hilft ihm die Theorie der Regeln des schönen Denkens gar nichts, nemlich in Absicht auf das schöne Denken". Quoted in Jäger, *Kommentierende Einführung*, 55; see the discussion, 53-55.

[76] "scientiis intellectu potissimum cognoscendis bonam materiam". Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §3.

[77] Cf. Jäger, *Kommentierende Einführung*, 60ff.

links it to a more general critique of philosophy as "eine ohne Not erweiterte Wißbegierde"[78] in which every broadening of philosophy is "ebenso *widerrechtlich* und schädlich". (FHA 1, 662) In our craze for knowledge, honour, and discovery[79] as well as for a general metaphysics, we expand philosophy to inappropriate domains, whereas in fact the best use for aesthetics today is as a *negative* philosophy which instead serves to show us the limits of "unseres *unendlichen* Fluges". (Ibid.) Again, the underlying issue is where and when distinct philosophical knowledge is in fact possible and useful, and the problem with Baumgarten's aesthetics is that it erroneously believes that such distinct knowledge about the lower faculty of knowledge can serve as a guide to its operation. Thus Herder also rejects the second use Baumgarten cites—that aesthetics adapts scientific knowledge to the grasp of every human being—claiming instead that aesthetics is adapted to the grasp of *philosophers* and that scientific principles and proofs cannot teach "*Einzelheiten*", that is, the kind of know-how involved in applying such principles to individual cases.[80] Herder equally casts into doubt, again, the ability of Baumgarten's aesthetics to contribute to the "Verbesserung der Erkenntnis" (third use) arguing that as one descends to the lower forces of the soul, the power of distinct knowledge to improve diminishes.[81] Similarly, Herder notes that "eine *metaphysische Erkenntnis* des Schönen schwächt die Empfindung" and that art itself is weakened by a consciousness of the rules, again evoking the fundamental divide between the upper and lower powers of the soul. (Ibid., 664) Herder provides an indication of how aesthetics should be conceived if it is to be genuinely useful: instead of attempting to derive distinct rules/knowledge that will guide the lower soul-forces, aesthetics *qua* science should be "Psychologie und Physiologie um die Seelenkräfte und Schönheiten zu kennen", adding, "dieser bisher unerreicht". (Ibid.) That is, it should be a theoretical, analytical, and descriptive science, not a normative or prescriptive one. He turns to this conception in his discussion of §14-25, below.

In his discussion of the objections to aesthetics that Baumgarten entertains, Herder brings us closer to this conception. The first objection maintains that aesthetics is far too expansive a subject to be covered in one book, and while Baumgarten grants this point, Herder claims that "die wahre Aesthetik" is in fact even broader than Baumgarten's conception of it. (FHA 1, 665)[82] We are given some sense of what Herder means by this in his commentary on the fourth objection—that the sensuous is unworthy of a philosopher's attention—for while Baumgarten replies that as a human being such a large part of human knowledge should not be unsuitable material for the philosopher, Herder argues that if aesthetics were accorded its proper extent, this objection would simply fall away: "dies [d.h., die Ästhetik] ist ein Stück von der *nötigsten* Anthropologie, da in dem *Grunde* der Seele unsere *Stärke* als *Menschen* besteht." (Ibid.) Herder will argue

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78 Herder makes a simliar point in *Wie die Philosophie zum Besten des Volks*. Cf. the discussion in [→ II.1.2.2].

79 The influence of Rousseau's *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* is evident here.

80 Ibid. Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §3.

81 "cognitionis emendationem". Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §3; FHA 1, 662-663.

82 Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §5.

that aesthetics must not be restricted to "die Schönheiten", but must rather study the full extent of the lower region of the soul, of the *fundus animae*. Similarly, with the objection that "die Verwirrung […] die Mutter des Irrtums [ist]", whereas Baumgarten responds that confusion is the indispensable condition for the discovery of truth, since nature makes no jump from obscurity to distinctness, and that we must thus pay heed to confusion in order to be on guard for errors that may arise from it and in order to improve our knowledge, Herder again dismisses this objection by arguing that it originates with Baumgarten's failure to distinguish between a science of the beautiful, i.e., of confusion, and a science of beautiful, or confused, knowing. (Ibid.)[83] What Herder means is that confusion should not be seen as merely a step on the way to distinct knowledge, but that rather, it should be accorded its own dignity as a form of knowledge. Of course, although not mentioned in the context of this objection, Baumgarten's aesthetics is precisely about seeing the sensuous and confused as a form of knowledge; nonetheless, the latter remains tethered to the liberal arts and sciences in a way that Herder contests.

In the final, thirteenth paragraph of the Prolegomena, Baumgarten lays out the proposed structure of the *Aesthetica*, as already encountered above. It was to be composed of a theoretical and a practical part, the former being comprised of three chapters: the first on heuristics and examining things that are thought; the second on methodology and the order of thought things; the third on semiotics and the signs of what is thought and ordered.[84] Prior to his discussion of the actual content of §13, Herder opens his commentary with the beginnings of an alternative proposed structure for an aesthetics: only a first theoretical division is given which has only a first part called metaphysics, which is in turn divided into subjective and objective sections. The latter do not correspond to Herder's early division between subjective and objective aesthetics; rather, Herder defines the subjective section as a part of psychology and examining both "*sinnliche[s] Gefühl* […] in seinen Trieben und Bewegungen" and the "*untere Vermögen*", while the objective section develops the general concept of the beautiful as well as "das *Schöne im Ausdruck*". (FHA 1, 665-666) What is important, however, is the continuity with Herder's preceding ideas: aesthetics should start with an examination of sensuous feeling at its origins and then work its way up through a conception of the beautiful in general to its expression in the beautiful arts and sciences. Baumgarten's failure even to conceive of this starting point, which Herder has been gesturing at throughout his critique, is perhaps what causes him to break off his outline here and baldly state: "Die Fehler des Autors weben diesen ganzen Paragraphen und das ganze Buch in eine Art von Fehltritten, die gar zu sehr mit seinem ganzen Lehrgebäude zusammenhängen." (Ibid., 666)

Herder then begins his analysis of the content of §13 of the *Aesthetica*, turning directly to the central error that he believes weaves its way through the entire project, namely, Baumgarten's top-down model for aesthetics that is premissed too much on a certain conception of logic. It is indeed true that Baumgarten sought to do justice to the lower cognitive faculty and to accord sensuous knowledge its own

[83] "Confusio mater erroris". Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §7.
[84] Ibid., §13.

logic, but Herder resolutely believes that Baumgarten does not go far or deep enough and is too beholden to his albeit renamed, but still traditional, conception of logic as the tool of the upper cognitive faculty and science of distinct knowledge. Herder takes Baumgarten to task for his claim that logic is the "older sister" of aesthetics[85], although it seems clear that Baumgarten means this not in terms of the order of development but only *qua* science—in the *Ästhetik-Vorlesungsmitschrift* Baumgarten explains that logic is the older sister only "in Ansehung der Theorie", not "in Ansehung der Ausübung".[86] Herder makes several points contesting this claim, as he understands it: the lower cognitive faculty is more practical and effective; it develops long before the upper cognitive faculty and in fact must do so; one sees it is no less noble once one really *knows* logic. (Cf. FHA 1, 666) This last point is clearly aimed at Baumgarten, whose actual conception of aesthetics now comes under fire. Herder repeats his earlier criticism that it is "das elendeste unnützeste Geschwätz […] daß man sie [i.e., aesthetics] bildend machen wollte." (Ibid.) The underlying error here is the belief that aesthetics can be a science that directs "de[n] *gemeine[n] Verstand*", whereas, in fact, any observations it makes about the lower cognitive faculty merely show not "wie man denken *soll*, sondern *denket*". (Ibid.) To then try to derive rules from these observations, Herder continues, is to produce the most useless and most false tool in the world: "zu *allgemein*, um angewandt zu werden: zu *trocken* um zu bessern, zu menschlich, um *Menschen* zu bilden". (Ibid., 667) Herder's point is not that the lower cognitive faculties are not susceptible to being shaped or moulded; on the contrary, as, e.g., his *Journal meiner Reise im Jahr 1769* [→ II.4.2.2] attests to, he very much saw his own vocation as being an instrument of a *Bildung* whose object was the whole human soul. Rather, Herder objects to the belief that clear and distinct rules or conceptual knowledge could guide and influence the lower cognitive faculty in its activities.

Herder zeroes in on the issue as he sees it in drawing a distinction between two conceptions of what "die *Logik*" should be. The first, which he associates with Baumgarten and which is a part of metaphysics, is characterized as neither organic nor possible a priori since it limits itself to effects, to "die *Wirkung*". (FHA 1, 667) This logic reifies or hypostasizes the *results* of "[des] *denkenden* Selbst[s]" into timeless and universal rules. Herder contrasts this with a second conception of logic, which he construes as a part of psychology and which *is* organic in that it is a genetic examination starting from the "Seelenkräfte[]" and yielding, in fact, multiple logics: "es ist also vor jede Kraft eine *Logik* (nicht aber als Besserungs-, sondern *Untersuchungs*logik) möglich; die aber je tiefer es zu den Seelenkräften kommt, desto weniger in Regeln wird ausschweifen können." (Ibid.) The object of this kind of logic is to examine how the various forces and powers of the soul operate and develop, from the bottom up. And undergirding it all would be a kind of foundational logic: "[d]ie Erste Logik untersuche den *Menschen*, das Tier, <das> vernunftähnlich nach Gedanken und Trieben handelt; und ist die kürzeste, die schwerste, die wichtigste, der Grund der andern, von der man noch nicht den

[85] Ibid.
[86] Baumgarten, Vorlesungsnachschrift, §13, p. 79. See Adler 1990, 74ff.

Schatten hat, da doch das *Wahre* der andern sich auf sie bezieht." (Ibid.) This is a logic that is descriptive, not normative, which is oriented towards a primordial knowing-how rather than an evolved knowing-that, and whose object is the development of the human soul and its capacities from their origins. It stands in contrast to traditional conception of logic which observes "den *Menschen* mit den *Auswüchsen* seiner *Erkenntnis* und Begierden; als ein vernünftelndes und feines Tier." (Ibid.) The aesthetics Herder favours "steige<re> […] vom heißesten Affekt, der *ganzesten* Empfindung immer mehr zum Ideenartigen" and it is only where feeling almost reaches consciousness that "die eigentliche *Logik*" begins. (Ibid., 667-668) Herder is implicitly referring here to the Leibnizian scale of ideas/notions from the obscure, through the clear and confused, to the clear and distinct and firmly opposing the privileging of the clear and distinct and its corresponding logic in order to call for an aesthetics that demonstrates the genesis of our rational capacities out of the obscure sensuous foundations of the soul that lie even below the threshold of consciousness or apperception, capacities which "in den Jahren der Unaffektiertheit erworben, unter der Sphäre unserer *Distinktion* begründet sind". (Ibid., 668)

Following this discussion of §13 of Baumgarten's *Aesthetica*, and before he turns to §§14-25, Herder returns to his ideas for an alternative proposed structure for aesthetics and inserts a more detailed *Plan zu einer Aesthetik* which, as before, is divided into a subjective part and an objective part. The subjective part will examine, first, "das *Schöne* in *den Sinnen*" and "das Schöne der *Empfindung*", and second, "das *Schöne* in den *untern Kräften*", while the objective part will examine the beautiful for vision (in nature and in art, e.g., architecture, sculpture, painting, dance) and hearing (music, e.g., harmony, melody). (FHA 1, 668) Herder's choice of authors and works that he lists for the section of the subjective part that looks at the senses and feeling (e.g., Rousseau's *Emile*, Reimarus' *Allgemeine Betrachtungen über die Triebe der Thiere*, Johann Gottlob Krüger's *Naturlehre*—whose title Herder gives as "*Physiologie*") clearly evinces the naturalistic, physiological foundation of aesthetics for him, which contrasts so sharply with Baumgarten's approach. (Ibid.)[87] The objective part turns from this foundation to the expressions of the beautiful in the various arts, which are arranged hierarchically, each building on the previous forms, starting with beauty in nature and culminating in poetry.[88]

Herder returns to his critical commentary on Baumgarten's *Aesthetica*, turning now to §§14-25, which make up Part I, "Theoretical Aesthetics", Chapter 1, "Heuristics", Section 1, "The beauty of knowledge". We saw above that Baumgarten interprets beauty as the sensuous perception of perfection, which, in turn, is the agreement of several things according to the same ground. Beauty is thus only perceived by the lower cognitive faculty and pertains to sensuous knowledge which, on the scale of ideas/notions, possesses clarity but falls short of distinctness. In the *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus*, Baumgarten had characterized in more detail the kind of knowledge

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87 Cf. Gaier, "Kommentar", 1258.
88 Ibid., 1261-1262.

that poetry, and by extension, art in general, trades in. Because obscure representations do not allow an object to be recognized again, they are not as poetic as clear ones, which do.[89] At the other extreme, distinct representations are not sensuous and thus not poetic.[90] Clarity is thus the key criterion and Baumgarten further divides it into intensive clarity, which is owed to the greater clarity or distinctness of the distinguishing marks, and extensive clarity, which is owed to the numerousness of the distinguishing marks.[91] Intensive clarity is characteristic of clear and distinct representations, while extensive clarity can be true of all clear representations: in poetry and art in general, the ideal is extensively clear representations where the distinguishing marks remain sensuous, i.e., clear and confused.[92] Now it is this specification and limitation by Baumgarten of the kind of knowledge that is the proper domain of the discipline of aesthetics that is taken up and elaborated on in §§14-17 of the *Aesthetica*, and that Herder zeroes in on in his discussion. Herder begins by making his position eminently clear: "So wie das Denken nicht das Iste am Menschen ist: so auch nicht die schöne *Erkenntnis* der Anfang der Ästhetik." (FHA 1, 670) Not only do human beings not possess from the outset the capacity for beautiful knowledge, i.e., the sensuous perception of perfection, their cognitive capacity does not even begin with anything that can be called knowledge. Herder explains: "Der Mensch, das Tier, *empfindet* erst; *dunkel sich selbst*; denn lebhaft sich selbst; und Lust und Schmerz dunkel in sich; denn *Lust und Schmerz* klar außer sich; und jetzt *erkennt* er erst." (Ibid.) This virtually ontogenetic perspective (which can be found in several of Herder's contemporaneous writings[93]) reveals most vividly just how deeply Herder believes aesthetics must delve into human cognition. Because he has erroneously construed the essence of the soul as "das Erkenntnisvermögen", Baumgarten has falsely concluded that "das Iste bei dem Schönen [...] ein *Gedanke* [sei]". (Ibid.) Rather, human cognition begins in obscure feeling, far below the threshold of clarity and, by extension, apperception. As we will see below in other writings, Herder interprets this obscure feeling biologically and physiologically, as the human soul unfolding itself in and through the body that it constructs for itself.

Baumgarten asserts in §14: "Aesthetices finis est perfectio cognitionis sensitivae, qua talis." ("Der Zweck der Ästhetik ist die Vollkommenheit der sinnlichen Erkenntnis als solcher").[94] Herder immediately corrects this in his commentary to read: "Aesthetices finis non est perfectio sed *scientia* cognitionis sensitivae." (FHA 1, 670) That is, the end of aesthetics is not the perfection, but rather the science, of sensuous knowledge, and this, as we have seen, must begin at a level far below clarity. Baumgarten's next claim, that this perfect sensuous knowledge is what we call beauty is rejected by Herder because this definition of beauty derives from the

89 Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, § XIII.
90 Ibid., § XIV.
91 Ibid., § XVI; Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, § 531. With respect to intensive clarity, in the *Meditationes*, Baumgarten speaks of the *distinctness* of the distinguishing marks, while in the *Metaphysica*, he speaks of their *clarity*.
92 Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, § XVII.
93 E.g., *Viertes Kritisches Wäldchen*, *Zum Sinn des Gefühls*, *Plato sagte*.
94 Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §14.

"Gipfel", that is, from its expression at the level of clear knowledge, and does not do justice to the true beginnings of beauty, which, with truth and justice, constitute "die 3 tiefsten und *schwersten*" concepts. (Ibid.) Herder is implying that a genuine and complete understanding of beauty must be one that is genetic, tracing it to its origins in sensuous knowledge, rather than one that remains satisfied with an 'arbitrary' definition of the concept based on clear and distinct concepts of the upper cognitive faculty, such as perfection. "*Perfectio*) es ist dies bloß das *Formale* der Schönheit dabei das Materiale was *Gefühl* voraussetzt ausgelassen wird", Herder explains. (Ibid.) Feeling or *Gefühl* is the precondition of all knowing or *Erkennen* (as Herder will later explore in detail in his three versions of his treatise *Vom Erkennen und Empfinden* [→ II.1.2.4] from 1774, 1775, and 1778) and aesthetics must therefore begin with it. Discussing the word "cognitionis" from Baumgarten's definition, Herder calls it fully undetermined and unsuitable. "Ist die Schönheit in der *Erkenntnis* das erste Originelle<?> Nein! sondern das letzte schwächste! ist sie das *einzige*, nein! sondern das am meisten abgeleitete. Weg also cognitio<:> Gefühl macht eine besondere *Gattung* aus." (Ibid., 671)

Herder's consistent and insistent call for aesthetics to explore the lower regions of the soul more deeply than Baumgarten's conception allows for obtains its clearest expression in his commentary on §§15-17. For in these paragraphs, Baumgarten explicitly excludes from aesthetics those perfections or imperfections of sensuous knowledge that are so hidden that they remain fully obscure ("*omnino nobis obscurae*") or that can only be known or uncovered by an act of thought or of the understanding.[95] To be sure, Baumgarten moves beyond Leibniz and Wolff in according obscure perceptions and representations a clear value and an important role, asserting in the *Metaphysica* that there are clear and distinct perceptions in which something confused and obscure can be found, that there is always something obscure in every sensation and, more radically, that the collection of obscure perceptions in the soul is what constitutes the "FUNDUS ANIMAE" ("GRUND DER SEELE").[96] Despite these claims, Baumgarten's philosophical attention, both in the *Metaphysica* and in the *Aesthetica*, is directed at *human* knowledge, which begins at a certain minimal level of clarity.[97] Herder's valuation of the obscure is both more profound and concrete. Commenting on §15, he writes: "Da im *verborgensten Grunde* der Seele die mächstigsten Triebfedern liegen, von denen die *bekannteren* getrieben werden: so wäre es eine vergebne Arbeit, von diesem *Mitteldinge* an; an beide Enden zu kommen; hier grabe also der *Aesthetiker* [...] Vielleicht ists völlig non-sens, wenn der Autor das aus der Sphäre des Aesthetikers bannt, quae non nisi intelligendo possimus intueri [was wir nur in einem verstandesmäßigen Begreifen anschauend erkennen können], bloß das ist vor ihn quae non nisi intelligendo possimus intueri." (FHA 1, 671)[98] The most hidden

95 Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §§15-16.

96 Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, §§522, 544, 511, 514. For discussion, see Adler 1990, 40ff; Mirbach, "Einführung", XXXVIIff.

97 Cf. Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §§120ff. Hans Adler characterizes human knowledge for Baumgarten as a kind of "mittlere Erkenntnis" falling between the equally blindness-inducing extremes of light and darkness. See Adler 1990, 40.

98 Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §15.

ground of the soul is *precisely* what the aesthetician must examine, rather than focus on a "*Mitteldin*g[]" like beauty. (Ibid.) It is thus wrong of Baumgarten to exclude those obscure representations from aesthetics that, he claims, we can only know through an act of thinking since the latter is true, Herder emphasises, 'merely for him', that is, it is only because of the inherent bias towards clear and distinct knowledge in Baumgarten's whole conception of aesthetics that the obscure is portrayed as accessible only in this way. Herder makes a connection between this exclusion and his earlier criticism of Baumgarten's claim that aesthetics can improve one's capacity for beautiful thinking: one can see "wie wenig die Aesthetik *bilden kann*: da die stärksten *Schönheiten* außer ihrem Gebiet (der Betrachtung) sind." (Ibid.)

At the beginning of §17, Baumgarten states, "Die SINNLICHE ERKENNTNIS ist gemäß der nach ihrer Hauptsache gewählten Benennung die Gesamtheit der Vorstellungen, die unter der Deutlichkeit verbleiben."[99] Continuing the same line of criticism, Herder attacks this statement on the grounds that it defines sensuous knowledge not in terms of what it is in its own right, but in terms of what it is not. "*[S]innliche* Klarheit und *verständliche Deutlichkeit*", Herder explains, "sind so verschiedne Extreme, daß man ohne Fortgang eines durch das andere erklärt." (FHA 1, 672) To construe "die Schönheit", Herder continues, as a partial representation of sensuous knowledge is "ein falscher Gesichtspunkt" since it is preferable, in fact, to see sensuous knowledge as a part of beauty. (Ibid.) What Herder means is that the roots of beauty lie below the level of clear knowledge in feeling, so to define beauty as sensously perceived perfection is only to speak of its manifestation at one particular level of human experience. "Da die Schönheit nun an sich bloß objektiv ist: so sieht man, daß hier das Gefühl des Schönen verstanden wird, dessen Wesen nicht Erkenntnis ist: sondern es ist eine von der ideenbildenden Kraft unterschiedne Grundkraft, das Band, was Seele und Leib verbindet […] Sie ist das erste, was sich entwickelt, der reichste Gegenstand der Betrachtung der aber nach der *Philosophia* cogitativa des Autors nach dem §15 ausgelassen wird." (Ibid.) Here one sees the sheer extent of the difference between Herder's conception of the obscure and the sensuous and Baumgarten's: they are not to be conceived of in cognitive terms, but rather as originally physiological and even biological, in the context of a theory of soul-body interaction, as we will see below.

Towards the end of §17, Baumgarten writes that the beauty to be elucidated is that which is common to all beautiful sensuous knowledge is to be elucidated, that is, "die ALLGEMEINE und allgemeingültige Schönheit".[100] Herder's commentary on this harks back to his criticism of Wolff and Baumgarten on nominal definitions. To think that the investigation of "einzelne Schönheiten" is opposed to the concept of science and thus to dream up "*allgemeine* Schönheiten im *wissenschaftlichen* Lehnstuhl" is precisely the path that has ruined all sciences, Herder claims, as arbitrary definitions in metaphysics, occult qualities in physics, and unscrutinized forces (such as a "moral sense") in morality all attest to. (FHA 1, 672) If only we

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[99] "COGNITIO SENSITIVA est a potiori desumta denominatione complexus repraesentationum infra distinctionem subsistentium." Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §17.

[100] "PULCRITUDINEM […] UNIVERSALEM et catholicam". Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §17.

could learn from nature, Herder continues, "daß unser Anfang im Denken, nicht Vernünfteln, sondern Sammlen ist; und daß die Vernunft das menschliche Alter; und die Wissenschaft die Kunst beschließt, (krönt, oder entstellt?)". (Ibid., 672-673) The fundamental error, then, is the reification of mature or developed human capacities and their products as somehow universal or timeless and then the erroneous use of these products to understand those capacities themselves, including their origins. Herder is keenly aware that his ideas are unorthodox, as he immediately asks, "Das aber ist *unphilosophisch*?" (Ibid., 673) That is, the kind of genetic study and attention to individualities Herder is calling for appears to have nothing to do with the clear and distinct conceptual knowledge philosophy is normally associated with. But it is in fact "recht philosophisch", Herder replies, "daß es durch die Analysis die Erklärung *endlich* herausbringt, oder sich ihr nähert." (Ibid.) In contrast, Baumgarten's aesthetics, Herder asserts, harking back to his earlier critique, is "im höchsten Grade unphilosophisch: da sie alle philosophischen Begriffe der Aesthetik, die sie entwickeln soll, der Metaphysik voraussetzt, sie ihr nachbetet, und eine Menge leerer, falscher, zu feiner Folgerungen herauszieht". (Ibid.) Employing an image also now familiar in his critique of Wolff and Baumgarten, Herder accuses Baumgarten of trying to build a tower to heaven that does not reach the earth, and it is "just der Menschheit entgegen, sich in den Himmel zu bauen, an statt Erdtiere zu sein". (Ibid.)

In §§18-20, Baumgarten explains what constitutes "die allgemeine Schönheit der sinnlichen Erkenntnis" and, in so doing, elaborates on the tripartite framework of the *Aesthetica* presented in §13 as it was originally conceived (though only the first and incomplete part of which was ever completed): the beauty of the thoughts (heuristics), of their order (methodology), and of their expression (semiotics). Central to Baumgarten's theory, and crucial for a proper understanding of it, is a constitutive feature of the beauty of sensuous knowledge mentioned in our discussion of the *Metaphysica* above but that, in the *Aesthetica*, only now, in these three paragraphs, is made explicit: namely, the beauty in question is that of a "phaenomenon" or "Erscheinung".[101] The beginning of §18 reads: "Die allgemeine Schönheit der sinnlichen Erkenntnis wird 1) die Übereinstimmung der Gedanken, insoweit wir noch deren Ordnung und Zeichen außer acht lassen, unter sich zu Einem sein, das Erscheinung genannt sei."[102] In fact, already in §14, in which Baumgarten claims that the purpose of aesthetics is the perfection of sensuous knowledge, he had referenced §662 of the *Metaphysica*, which begins, "Vollkommenheit in der Erscheinung, m.a.W. Vollkommenheit, die vom Geschmack in weiterer Bedeutung festzustellen ist, ist SCHÖNHEIT".[103] Baumgarten's key idea is that the perfection of the cosmos, which consists in the greatest possible agreement among the greatest possible number of parts in one world, has an analogue in sensuous knowledge in the perfection, or beauty, of a

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101 The following is indebted to the discussion in Solms, *Disciplina aesthetica*, 51ff.

102 "Pulcritudo cognitionis sensitivae erit universalis, 1) consensus cogitationum, quatenus adhuc ab earum ordine et signis abstrahimus, inter se ad unum, qui phaenomenon sit". Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §18.

103 "Perfectio phaenomenon, s. gustui latius dicto observabilis, est PULCHRITUDO". Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, §662.

phenomenon, which consists in the agreement and harmony of the parts of that phenomenon.[104] In §18, those parts are defined as "things" and "thoughts": "Die SCHÖNHEIT DER SACHEN UND DER GEDANKEN muß von der Schönheit der Erkenntnis, deren erster und vornehmlicher Teil sie ist, und von der Schönheit der Gegenstände und des Stoffes, mit welcher sie aufgrund der angenommenen Bedeutung von 'Sache' oft, aber zu Unrecht verwirrt wird, unterschieden werden."[105] The parts of the phenomenon are thus the objects of thought or thought things in contradistinction to the sensuous knowledge they are a part of but are here being analytically separated from (as Baumgarten will similarly do in §19 with respect to the order of these objects of thought and in §20 with respect to their expression), as well as to the objectively given objects themselves.[106] Baumgarten's primary concern in his aesthetics is thus with the phenomenal and subjective dimension of sensuous knowledge, that is, the sensuous representations that are the fodder of artistic representation, and not with sense objects themselves or the connection between sense objects and subjective phenomena. Herder's conception of aesthetics rejects this limitation: the science of sensuous knowledge *must* consider the connection between sense object, sense perception, and sensuous representation as well as the starting point of sensuous feeling, in its most obscure origins.[107]

This difference is brought out in Herder's commentary on §18 where he takes issue with Baumgarten's distinction between the sense object itself and the object as thought. Illustrating his belief that beauty pertains only to the object as thought, Baumgarten suggests at the end of §18 that "[h]äßliche Dinge können als solche schön gedacht werden und schönere Dinge häßlich."[108] Herder observes that the three "Gratien"[109] of beauty in general (i.e., of objects thought, of their order, and of their expression) that Baumgarten distinguishes, "alle 3. subjektiv sein sollen, so wird die Schönheit die [der?] Materie [i.e., the sense object] von der objektiven Schönheit der Sache [i.e., the object thought] unterschieden." (FHA 1, 673) With respect to the example of ugly things, Herder claims that the two kinds of beauty are "*übel* vermischt" since "an sich materialiter kann ein wirklich Häßliches mir nie schön sein". (Ibid.) That is, there must be some connection between the beauty or ugliness of the object itself and the beauty or ugliness of the object as thought.

In §19, Baumgarten claims that because there can be no beauty without order, "die allgemeine Schönheit der sinnlichen Erkenntnis, ist […] 2) die Übereinstimmung der Ordnung, in der wir über die schön gedachten Sachen nachdenken, sowohl in sich als auch mit den Sachen, insofern sie Erscheinung ist."[110] Herder notes that this is the actual "Formale der Schönheit" which can be

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104 Cf. Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, §436. See Solms, *Disciplina aesthetica*, 52-53.

105 "PULCRITUDO RERUM ET COGITATIONUM, distinguenda a pulcritudine cognitionis, cuius prima et primaria pars est, et pulcritudine obiectorum et materiae, quacum ob receptum rei significatum saepe, sed male confunditur." Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §18.

106 See Mirbach, "Einführung", LVI and Solms, *Disciplina aesthetica*, 55.

107 See Solms, *Disciplina aesthetica*, 60.

108 "Possunt turpia pulcre cogitari, ut talia, et pulcriora turpiter." Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §18.

109 Baumgarten describes them as such at the end of §20.

110 "Pulcritudo cognitionis sensitivae universalis […] 2) consensus ordinis est, quo res pulcre cogitatas meditemur, et internus, et cum rebus, phaenomenon." Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §19.

taken objectively, in philosophy, or subjectively, in aesthetics, and that these are "wirklich entgegengesetzt". (FHA 1, 674) He then proposes: "[d]ie Analyse der Philosophie da sie den Baum ganz sieht, und alsdenn in seine Äste zergliedert; ist gar nicht die sinnliche Synthese, die von Teilen das Ganze schöpfrisch baut, es durch die Einbildungskraft erweitert, und damit die Seele füllet; dagegen jene, es durch ein Urteil teilt, durch die Vernunft noch teilt, und endlich bloß den Geist überzeugt." (Ibid.) While philosophy analytically breaks down the given whole into its parts and can only convince the mind (Herder is harking back to the *Versuch über das Sein* [→ II.1.2.1] here) aesthetics studies how a whole is synthetically and creator-like constructed, a process that engages the whole soul. Baumgarten, Herder claims, fails to distinguish between these two different and opposed orders of the understanding and of the imagination. The clear implication is that Baumgarten's aesthetics should, but does not, do justice to the sensuous synthesis of the imagination. This is because in its virtually exclusive concern with 'die künstliche Aesthetik', it proceeds in an analytical manner proper only to philosophy. The result is clear: "die Ordnung der Kunst, bald der Ordnung der sinnlichen Natur schadet". (Ibid.)

Finally, in §20, Baumgarten addresses the third component of the beauty in general of sensuous knowledge: "die SCHÖNHEIT DER BEZEICHNUNG", which, again, similarly consists in the inner harmony of the "Zeichen" *qua* phenomenon, and, Baumgarten continues, "welche der Ausdruck und die Redeweise ist, wenn das Zeichen eine Rede oder eine Unterredung ist, und zugleich eine Handlung, wenn die Unterredung mündlich gehalten wird."[111] Herder approves of this component being third in line as one can imagine "einen Gefühlvollen" who feels beauty and order without signifying it. (FHA 1, 674) But signifying grows out of aesthetics and it is thus worthwhile, Herder says, to investigate to what extent it is natural to human beings. Again, Baumgarten comes up short, this time for privileging only one form of signification: "der offenbare Fehler des Autors zeigt sich auch wieder hier: bloß das schwächste und unnatürliche Zeichen der Schönheit die *Rede* zu nennen. Die Rede ist das Zeichen des Verstandes; die Handlung des Willens; Geberden und Mienen die Zeichen des Gefühls." (Ibid., 674-675) The repeated error Herder is referring to is obviously Baumgarten's privileging of the upper cognitive faculty in his conception of aesthetics, for actions, gestures, and facial expressions all involve forms of signifying that are illocutionary and that are not also the signs used by the understanding, as is the case with language or speech.

Baumgarten next enumerates the six characteristics of knowledge in general which, when they harmonize or agree with one another in a representation, constitute its perfection: "[d]er Reichtum, die Größe, die Wahrheit, die Klarheit, die Gewißheit und das Leben der Erkenntnis".[112] Now when these are true of a phenomenon, Baumgarten explains, "ergeben sie die Schönheit des Sinnlichen, und zwar eine allgemeine, vor allem der Sachen und der Gedanken".[113] Against the

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[111] "PULCRITUDO SIGNIFICATIONIS, qualis dictio et eloquutio, quando signum est oratio s. sermo, et simul actio, quando sermo viva voce habetur." Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §20.

[112] "Ubertas, magnitudo, veritas, claritas, certitudo, et vita cognitionis." Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §22.

[113] "phenomena sensitivae pulcritudinem, universalem, praesertim rerum et cogitationum." Ibid.

backdrop of his previous comments, Herder criticizes these characteristics, while singling out clarity, as merely “Schönheiten der *Erkenntnis*” and thus as insufficient for determining “das Schöne überhaupt”. (FHA 1, 675) When Baumgarten speaks of “Leben”, then, this is merely of the understanding, Herder claims, and life as associated with the will remains untouched by this account, as “das unentwickelte Gefühl”. (Ibid.)

In §24, Baumgarten explains that the beauty of sensuous knowledge always consists of compound or composite perfections, never simple perfections. This is for the simple reason that the sensuous perception of perfection always involves an agreement among several things while a simple perfection, though entirely possible ontologically, cannot be expressed as a (sensuous) phenomenon.[114] Herder, in asking why there cannot be “eine einfache Vollkommenheit” in his discussion of this paragraph, thus appears to misunderstand Baumgarten. But he does so in a creative manner as he proceeds to hypothesize that such a simple perfection must surely exist in God, and while Baumgarten would agree with this statement (e.g., with respect to the predicates of God[115]), Herder radically postulates that the “Materielle[]” on which our “Gefühl” is grounded is, in fact, “das Einfache der Grund der Vollkommenheit”. (FHA 1, 675) To explain how this can be the case, Herder draws on the three types of pleasure Mendelssohn outlines in his *Briefe über die Empfindungen*: intellectual perfection as the perception of harmony in multiplicity, beauty as unity in multiplicity, sensuous pleasure as an obscure representation of some perfection.[116] After listing them in this order, Herder elaborates: “die letztere ist das Gefühl des menschlichen Tiers; die 2te das Menschliche der Menschen und das Iste der Geist.” (FHA 1, 675-676) Herder may be implying that the simple material ground, deriving from God, and out of which this hierarchy emerges and unfolds is the human soul itself, a reading that is consistent with his views in other pieces from this period to be explored below. He goes on to explain that the human-animal “Gefühl”, as it becomes more lively, begins to approach the “dunklen *Empfindungen des Selbst*”, which would presumably be lowest on the level of apperception; the starting point is consequently shrouded in total obscurity. (Ibid., 676) From here, Herder continues, one can follow the ensuing “Abstufung” through sensuous pleasure, confused concepts, to beauty, which, he (again[117]) warns, is “ein Mittelbegriff bei dem man also nicht anfangen noch weniger beschließen muß”, a warning which, it is by now obvious, he believes Baumgarten fails to heed. (FHA 1, 676) And finally the scale continues through the “geistige” whose essence, “die Form des distinkten Begriffes”, is incommensurable with the form of the clear, until we arrive at the consummation of the scale in the “Eins” of God, whose essence likewise, cannot be posited in terms of distinctness. (Ibid.) While God is thus the unity that is perfection, the human modes of access to and forms of expression of perfection necessarily follow a scale from the obscure to the clear and distinct, each level of

[114] Baumgarten in fact references his discussion of simple and composite perfection in *Metaphysica*, §96 in this paragraph.
[115] Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, §812.
[116] See Mendelssohn, *Briefe über die Empfindungen*, Briefe 10, 11.
[117] See the discussion of Herder’s commentary on §15.

which has its own integrity and genetically relates to the foregoing. Baumgarten's model of beauty as sensuous knowledge skews our understanding of beauty from the outset towards the terms of clear and distinct knowledge, thus preventing us from seeing its genuine creative origins in the sensuous feeling of the lower regions of the soul, and leading us to falsely believe that rules (which Baumgarten speaks of in §25), which have no purchase here for Herder, can direct this process because "[d]as eigentlich Ästhetische ist Gefühl; nicht Begriff; noch weniger Urteil, des Geschmacks; und am wenigsten seine Regel." (Ibid.)

5) *Herder's review of Kant's* Träume eines Geistersehers: Herder's review of Kant's *Träume eines Geistersehers, erläutert durch Träume der Metaphysik* (1766) appeared in the Königsbergschen Gelehrten und Politischen Zeitungen in March 1766, just a few months after Kant's treatise was published.[118] Kant's immediate occasion for composing his treatise were his reflections on Emanuel Swedenborg's visions and supposed paranormal powers as described in his *Arcana cœlestia* (1749-1756). However, the issues of philosophical significance that Kant discusses there had in fact occupied him for several years, above all, the nature of soul-body relationship and whether spirits (*Geister*) exist, as Herder's notes from Kant's lectures on metaphysics attest.[119] These are also the issues to which Herder devotes his attention in his review after first discussing the form of Kant's work and reporting on the contents of the second, historical part, in which Kant recounts Swedenborg's stories of his powers and visions with a dismissive attitude that Herder clearly approves of: he praises Kant for his handling of the Swedish "Schwärmer[]" and calls him "einen großen Philosophischen Beobachter in der Pathologie unsrer Seele" (SWS I, 127).

In the first chapter of the first, dogmatic part of his treatise, Kant opens with the question as to what exactly that thing is that goes by the name of spirit (Geist) and, before proposing to analyze the various ways the term is used, he mentions the doctrine of certain modern philosophers according to which "[e]in Geist [...] ein Wesen [ist], welches Vernunft hat."[120] Herder begins his discussion of the first chapter with this same definition, which he characterizes as "willkührlich" and "unbestimmt", and reports that Kant then looks for a better way to define it which he finds through "diese Analyse des gewöhnlichen Verstandes" (SWS I, 127). Herder will throughout his review display his antipathy towards this modern concept of spirit, which, as he will later make clear in the 1775 version of *Vom Erkennen und Empfinden der menschlichen Seele* [→ II.1.2.4], he associates with Descartes, who "das Denken zu seinem ganzen zweifelnden Ich machte", and after whom, Herder adds, one more unnatural system after the other followed each of whose objective was to explain the soul-body relationship for the sole reason that the interaction between two such fully heterogeneous, immaterial and material, substances was inconceivable (SWS VIII, 266).

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[118] For a detailed analysis of Herder's review, see Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, chapter 2.
[119] Kant-AA 28.1, esp. 101ff., 145ff.
[120] Kant-AA 2, 319.

The substance of Kant's reflections via the path of the analysis of the common understanding in the first chapter of his treatise has to do with how we can have experience of the activity of spirits or immaterial substances if our only actual experience of activity in space is that of impenetrable bodies or material substances which display the force of resistance. We do have internal experience of our own soul or spirit *qua* immaterial substance as well as external sensuous experience of bodies *qua* material substance; however, because, as Kant posits, our only form of external experience is that of the activity of impenetrable bodies in space that display the force of resistance[121], and because this is not true of our external experience of spirits, we have no way of conceiving the latter.[122] Similarly, Kant maintains, while we may recognize the phenomenon of how our thinking and willing move our bodies, we cannot explain it, again, because our concrete experience of the movement of bodies is via relations of impact and this cannot hold in the case of the soul-body relationship, all attempts to explain which Kant therefore designates as fictions.[123] Kant's argument here is that philosophy proceeds by analysis according to the rules of identity and contradiction, explaining by reducing complex phenomena to simpler representations and fundamental concepts, which in turn can only be derived from experience.[124] And impenetrability, the force of resistance, and laws of impact are prime examples of the latter while soul-body *interaction* is not.

What is evident from Kant's treatise and from his explanation of his intentions in a letter to Mendelssohn a few months after the publication of the treatise is that Kant is starting from the idea of the soul as an immaterial substance. His question, he tells Mendelssohn, is the following: "*wie ist die Seele in der Welt gegenwärtig sowohl den materiellen Naturen als denen anderen von ihrer Art?* Man soll also die Kraft der äußeren Wirksamkeit und die Rezeptivität von außen zu leiden bei einer solcher Substanz finden, wovon die Vereinigung mit dem menschl. Körper nur eine besondere Art ist."[125] Herder rejects this very assumption of the soul as an independent substance, or of spirits, and only every posits, like Leibniz, the existence of souls as attached to bodies, both here and throughouth his œuvre. Later in chapter one, however, after the discussion about how spirit-substances might be present in space, Kant turns his attention to the soul as an immaterial nature that is closely associated with life ("[w]as in der Welt ein Principium des *Lebens* enthält, scheint immaterieller Natur zu sein."[126]) and whose presence in the body, which it permeates, we *feel*.[127] Drawing on his *Monadologia physica*, Kant hypothesizes that just as the physical monad fills space through its activity, via its repulsive force, but remains itself extensionless, so too could the soul be active in the body and yet also

[121] Kant's theory of how simple, indivisible, and extensionless monads, in virtue of their activity, fill space and obtain extension and impenetrability, via their forces of repulsion and attraction, is explained in his 1756 treatise, *Monadologia physica*.
[122] Kant-AA 2, 320ff.
[123] Ibid., 370-371.
[124] Ibid., 370. Kant had explained this in detail in his 1764 treatise, *Untersuchung über die Deutlichkeit der Grundsätze der natürlichen Theologie und der Moral*, Kant-AA 2, 280.
[125] Kant-AA 10, 8. 4. 1766, 71.
[126] Kant-AA 2, 327.
[127] Ibid., 324-325.

be immaterial and extensionless.[128] But how then would the soul interact with the body if not via relations of impact that exist between impenetrable bodies, which Kant clearly rules out—and even satirizes—for the soul-body relationship?[129] Kant's original answer is as follows: "Es scheint, ein geistiges Wesen sei der Materie innigst gegenwärtig, mit der es verbunden ist, und wirkte nicht auf diejenige Kräfte der Elemente, womit diese untereinander in Verhältnissen sind, sondern auf das innere Principium ihres Zustandes. Denn eine jede Substanz, selbst ein einfaches Element der Materie muß doch irgend eine innere Thätigkeit als den Grund der äußerlichen Wirksamkeit haben, wenn ich gleich nicht anzugeben weiß, worin solche bestehe."[130] In a footnote, Kant provides a justification for this theory by referencing Leibniz and his claim that the inner ground of all the external relations and inner changes of a substance is its power of representation (*Vorstellungskraft*).[131] This is precisely the hypothesis in Kant's *Träume* that Herder will explicitly approve of.

Returning to the review, Herder summarizes the results of the first part of the first chapter of the work—in which he had reported Kant as engaging in an analysis of the use of "Geist" in the common understanding—as yielding the following definition of the term: "'ein einfaches Wesen, das zu seinem innern Zustande Gedanken hat, und sich von der Materie äußerlich unterscheidet, daß es nicht undurchdringlich ist.'" (SWS I, 127) Herder immediately asks whether such beings are spirits and answers that the hypothesis can neither be rejected nor proven since the forces determining impenetrability cannot be further analyzed. He reports that a spirit can be active in a space without filling it and that "unsre Seele im ganzen Körper gegenwärtig seyn [kann], ohne einen räumlichen Ort in ihm zu bewohnen." (Ibid., 128) Herder zeroes in on the problem this poses for Kant and presents Kant's solution. "Freilich wird alsdenn die Gemeinschaft zwischen Geist und Körper Geheimnißvoll; allein wir wissen auch blos von Körperlichen Einflüßen; die Seele kann dem Körper innigst gegenwärtig seyn, daß sie auf das innere Principium seiner Materie würkt: und diesen innern Zustand können wir uns in Nichts als in Vorstellungen denken." (Ibid.) Herder's approval of this way of explaining the soul-body relationship is evident from the review itself, since he immediately adds "[d]ies sind des Verfassers neue und sehr lockende Hypothesen", and, more vividly, from the testimony of his later writings, which will consistently present the soul-body relationship in broadly these terms (as will be seen below). (Ibid.)

In the remainder of his review, Herder subjects Kant's hypotheses about spirits as independent immaterial substances to a barrage of criticism. Although Herder only rejects the very idea of a spirit in his commentary on the second chapter, his

128 Ibid., 324.
129 Ibid., 325ff.
130 Ibid., 328.
131 Ibid. But from Leibniz's point of view, Kant's theory that the soul, with its inner power of representation, can act on the inner principle of another substance and in this manner determine that substance's external activity qua body is 1) to fail to heed the "windowlessness" or complete independence of monads or substances, and 2) to confuse the fundamentally real level of the monad or substance and its representations and the purely phenomenal level of bodies and their interaction. Cf. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz: *Monadologie*, §7 and *Système nouveau de la nature*. In : *Die philosophischen Schriften*. Ed. C.I. Gerhardt. Hildesheim 1965, vol. VI, 607-608; vol. IV, 477-487.

remaining comments on the first chapter must be read in light of this later rejection.[132] Herder sarcastically claims that Kant's analytical method, which has defined what a spirit is only negatively[133] (i.e., as not impenetrable), has succeeded in giving its distinction from matter "eine bisher unbemerkte Klarheit" (SWS I, 128). He continues: "So wie Körperliche Begriffe uns aber so sehr umhüllen, daß wir uns schwerlich eine Art der Würksamkeit in einen Raum gedenken können, ohne daß das Principium der Würksamkeit wenigstens in Absicht auf ein anderes Wesen, das in seiner Natur mit ihm identisch wäre, eine Art von geistiger Undurchdringlichkeit hätte: so wird freilich diese Hypothese alsdenn erst eine Philosophische Gewißheit erhalten, wenn der Begrif des Raums völlig zergliedert, und der Begrif der Kraft *a priori* eingesehen werden wird." (Ibid.) Herder is here acknowledging that *if* we start from the concept of a spirit, Kant is right to assert that it is difficult to imagine how it might be active in space, and that we should thus be inclined to attribute to spirits something analogous to the kind of force we find in bodies in the form of a "spiritual impenetrability". Here, Herder is clearly referring to Kant's hypothesis in the second chapter of *Träume* that the moral feeling that manifests itself as altruism, benevolence, or duty, whereby we sense an impulse to harmonize our will with the general will, operates in spirits in a manner analogous to how Newtonian gravitation draws particles of matter closer to each other.[134] However, Herder refuses to start from this concept of a spirit, whose doubtful origins he emphasizes by repeating Kant's own claim that it is perhaps owed to "ein Wahn der Einbildung" (Herder writes that the concept "gar nicht einer Philosophischen Erfindung, sondern einem Wahn seinen Ursprung zu danken hat"[135]).

Herder's own position is finally made clear in his comments on Chapter Two of Kant's treatise. In this chapter, continuing with his concept of a spirit that animates both itself and dead matter through its inner activity, Kant hypothesizes the existence of two sets of causal laws, analogous to those governing matter, that apply to immaterial beings. The first set are called pneumatic and apply to immaterial beings, which as a whole constitute a *mundus intelligibilis*; the second are called organic and apply to immaterial beings whose activity is mediated by corporeal beings.[136] Thus, these immaterial beings primarily form a community of their own, with their relationship to bodies seen by Kant here as entirely contingent.[137] Herder summarizes this theory in his review and then makes his opinion of it perfectly clear: "Diese neue Geisterwelt, zu der der V[erfasser] und vielleicht einige ausser- und überordentliche Genies den Schlüßel haben möchten, ist allerdings ein Gebäude einer schöpferischen Philosophischen Einbildungskraft, die auf der Erde eine so systematische Verbindung unsichtbarer Dinge entwirft, als sie vormals am Himmel fand: sie zeigt von dem Scharfsinn und der Aufmerksamkeit ihres Urhebers, sein System auf allen Seiten zu zeigen." (SWS I, 129) Herder is alluding here to Kant's

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[132] Cf. Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 36.
[133] Cf. Kant-AA 2, 351.
[134] Ibid., 334-335. Cf. Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 36.
[135] Kant-AA 2, 320; Herder, SWS I, 128.
[136] Kant-AA 2, 329.
[137] Ibid., 330.

Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels (1755), in which he employed what he called Newtonian principles to explain how the universe formed by the sole operation of the forces of attraction and repulsion acting on matter, and claiming that Kant is providing a similar theory of spirits that completes his "system".[138] Herder explains his reason for his poor opinion of the hypothesis of a spirit world in the sentence that follows: "Allein worauf beruhet es? darauf, daß die Geister, vielleicht auch unmittelbar eine Gemeinschaft haben; möchte nicht aber eine Organische Gemeinschaft gnug seyn, wenn es keine mehr als Seelen giebt, und wer weiß von mehrern?" (SWS I, 129) Herder rejects the idea of a community of spirits in favor of the belief that there exist only souls joined to bodies, a belief that is to be found in all his other philosophical writings from this period. He explains that the moral unity and unselfish feeling that Kant had associated with attraction among spirits should rather be connected with "blos die Welt des Lebendigen" and that in fact his own more limited hypothesis has more beauty than Kant's "wenn sie immer bey Datis bliebe". (Ibid.) Kant ultimately claims in *Träume* that a philosophical theory of spirit-beings is in fact impossible because "die geistige Natur, welche man nicht kennt, sondern vermuthet, niemals positiv könne gedacht werden, weil keine *data* hiezu in unseren gesammten Empfindungen anzutreffen seien."[139] It appears that Herder is thus again using Kant's own ideas against him, here to support the claim that the whole idea of a spirit world is a figment of a creative philosophical imagination for which there is no "Datis".

What is strange in this critique, however, is that it appears that Herder has taken Kant's proposals about a spirit-world seriously, although it is not clear if he is doing so ingenuously or disingenuously. For Kant makes it quite clear in subsequent chapters of his work that his "anmaßlich Lehrbegriff von der Geistergemeinschaft" is meant to be taken tongue-in-cheek, that he is in fact mocking Swedenborg by showing just how far one can go with such hypotheses which one cannot prove one way or the other.[140] Indeed, in the final few pages of his treatise, Kant claims that *all* judgements about spirits or the soul-body relationship can only ever be fictions (*Erdichtungen*) because one *invents* (*dichtet*) relations of cause and effect where one has no experience and thus no means of conceiving of their possibility.[141] Now while Herder will indeed make positive claims about the soul-body relationship that Kant would take issue with, both in subsequent writings and implicitly here, which construe the soul, like Aristotle, as the principle of life, and thus start from the premise of souls as joined to bodies, Herder's critique here seems to be that if one begins instead, as Kant does, from the premise of *independent* immaterial substances or spirits, one is starting from a fiction. Herder's argument is that because our *only* experience is that of souls as joined to bodies, our theory must remain limited to explaining *this* reality. It remains true, however, that Herder is still making judgements about immaterial natures, even if the framework is that of the observable phenomenon of life.

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138 Cf. Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 38.
139 Kant-AA 2, 351-352.
140 Ibid., 350. Kant also makes this clear in his Letter to Mendelssohn from April 1766.
141 Ibid., 371.

6) *Wahrheiten aus Leibnitz*: Leibniz's *Nouveaux essais sur l'entendement humain*, although composed in 1704, was first published in 1765 by R. E. Raspe. Herder was first made aware of the publication in a letter to him from Hamann, who did not think much of the work ("[Leibniz's] scholastisches Geschwätz ist niemals recht nach meinem Geschmack gewesen"[142]). Herder was of a different opinion, and the extent of Leibniz's influence on his thought bears clear witness to this.[143] *Wahrheiten aus Leibnitz*, which was unpublished, consists mainly of a set of translated excerpts and paraphrasings of the Preface, Chapters 1-3 of Book I, and Chapter 1 of Book II of the *Nouveaux essais*.[144] The published versions of the text are, however, incomplete: Herder's excerpts in fact extend to Chapter 27, §13 of Book II.[145] We will restrict ourselves here to an outline of the major themes of these excerpts that are significant for Herder and to observations about where and how Herder departs from Leibniz's text.

The first five paragraphs of Herder's text are in fact taken not from Leibniz's work, but rather from the Preface to Raspe's edition by A. G. Kaestner. There are two main ideas from this Preface that Herder reproduces. The first is how, according to Kaestner, Leibniz built on the insight that "[d]as würkliche Weltall ist ganz was anders, als das anscheinende" in order to go beyond Descartes in showing that the *res extensa* which the latter took as basic and to which he reduced secondary qualities such as color was in fact itself a phenomenon resulting from our confused representation of a great number of unextended beings. (HWP 2, 32) Second, these unextended beings, whose universal possession of a representational power, Kaestner reports, was even doubted by Wolff, are seen to form an interconnected expressive whole as "Spiegel des Universi". (Ibid.)

Herder then turns to the text of the *Nouveaux essais* itself, starting with Leibniz's Preface. His translation/paraphrasing closely follows Leibniz's text. The central topics from the Preface that he covers are as follows. The soul is not an empty slate, but a veined marble containing the grounds *qua* inclinations, dispositions, etc. of many concepts and principles which external sensuous objects merely awaken in it.[146] Animals, and human beings most of the time, act on the basis of experience and not reason. (Cf. ibid., 35) *Petites perceptions*, obscure and not individually apperceived, together make up something clear, like the smaller waves that underlie the roar of the ocean. They are more significant than one thinks as they are the impressions that bodies around us make on us and they encompass the infinite as the connection that each being has with the whole world. (Cf. ibid.) Two ramifications of this concept of *petites perceptions* that Leibniz turns to that are of

[142] Hamann, Letter to Herder 21 January 1765, p. 299, in LB, 11.
[143] See, e.g., Beate Dreike: *Herders Naturauffassung in ihrer Beeinflussung durch Leibniz' Philosophie*. Wiesbaden 1973.
[144] A useful detailed concordance is provided in Pross, HWP 2, pp. 860-862, which is completed by the observation in the next paragraph with respect to the source for the first five paragraphs of Herder's text, which is left unspecified by Pross.
[145] See Haym 2, 265; Pross, HWP 2, 852; Irmscher & Adler, Der handschriftliche Nachlass Johann Gottfried Herders, 198-199.
[146] Cf. ibid., 34, 35.

great importance for Herder are first, that they extend through time, as Herder translates: “So ist die Gegenwart von der Zukunft voll, und voll von dem Vergangenen” (ibid.)[147], and second, that they are the basis of individuality, through the traces that they preserve of all previous states of the individual, in virtue of which no two human souls are entirely alike. (Cf. ibid. 35, 37) The next key passage Herder translates as follows: “Alle Genien, Seelen und einfache erschaffene Wesen haben Körper.” (Ibid., 37) This is a central tenet of Herder’s philosophy that he shares with Leibniz—its importance perhaps emphasized by the fact that Herder states it assertorically, whereas in the original the claim is part of a subordinate clause coming at the end of a long sentence.[148]

As far as modifications to Leibniz’s text are concerned, two things stand out in Herder’s excerpts from the Preface: 1) his scrupulous excision of the various occasions that Leibniz discusses or mentions his theory of the pre-established harmony between the soul and body (Cf. HWP 2, 35, 36, 37)[149], and 2) his omission of the example Leibniz provides three times in order to illustrate the kind of miracle or fully inexplicable force that he says one should not resort to in explaining the ordinary course of nature, namely, gravity. (Cf. ibid., 38, 39) The ostensible reasons for these omissions are that Herder is committed to soul-body interaction and that he accepts Kant’s cosmological theory about the formation of the universe that he bases on Newton and his theory of gravity.

Herder begins his excerpts from Book I, Chapter One with Leibniz’s own description of the aspirations and elements of his system: that he sought to explain the union of the soul and the body, to discover the true principles of things in the unities of substances and the harmony between them, that matter is something imperfect and transitory, that animals have souls and sensation, how the laws of nature stem from principles higher than matter, how our souls are imperishable without this implying metempsychosis since animals also live and sense (Herder here again omits Leibniz’s discussion of pre-established harmony), how everywhere there is organized matter, order, and regularity, and how the whole universe is reflected *en raccourci* from a different perspective in each substance (cf. ibid., 39). Herder then skips to Leibniz’s defense of innate ideas, which Leibniz claims cannot be based on universal agreement but only on the demonstration that their certainty derives from us. In the case of the principle of contradiction, Leibniz maintains that everyone acts according to it even though not everyone knows it explicitly. He then states that “nous avons une infinité de connoissances, dont nous ne nous appercevons pas toujours” which Herder renders in German as: “Es ist unmöglich an alles das, was wir wissen, auf einmal deutlich zu denken”, and then makes his own addition, “also der größte Teil dunkel”. (Ibid.)[150] In line with his epistemological leanings, as seen above in his writings on Baumgarten, Herder is seeking here to bring out Leibniz’s insight into the nature of human knowledge and

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[147] Hans Adler has analyzed the importance of the implied concept here of Prägnanz for Herder, who also derives it from the work of Baumgarten, in: Adler 1990. See also HWP 2, 47.

[148] Cf. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz: *Nouveaux essais*. In: Leibniz, *Œuvres philosophiques*. Ed. Eric Raspe. Amsterdam 1765, 13.

[149] Herder makes similar excisions on pp. 39, 41.

[150] Leibniz, Nouveaux essais, 33.

action as being mostly rooted in sensuous experience and inclinations and tendencies.

Herder reports Leibniz's rejection of Plato's theory of recollection on the grounds that there must be some first state in which the truths were innate or co-created with the soul. (Cf. HWP 2, 41) He also picks up three times on Leibniz's argument for why the knowledge of being is innate to us: "weil wir Wesen sind, so ist die Känntnis von Wesen in uns entwickelt". (Ibid., 45) However, while Leibniz contends that this knowledge of necessary truths, even in the form of a disposition towards them, can be in the soul without ever being used, Herder adds to the previous quote, "wir müssen sie entwickeln", and earlier, similarly inserts: "Aber was jetzt ist, ist nicht umsonst, es kann und muß sich im Lauf unseres Lebens hier oder in einem andern Zustande entwickeln." (Ibid., 45, 41) This teleological idea of the soul unfolding its capacities will be central to Herder's epistolary exchange with Mendelssohn, discussed below. The general principles and truths that the mind relies on for thought are like muscles and nerves, Herder reports (Leibniz speaks of muscles and tendons), that we use in walking without noticing them. "Der Geist stützt sich auf sie immer, aber denkt an sie nicht deutlich und abgesondert". (Ibid., 41) Innate ideas need work to be brought out. Herder repeats again, with Leibniz, that truths are in us even if we do not think of them, as tendencies and dispositions. (Cf. ibid., 42)

In turning to Book I, Chapter 2, Herder is provided with another example of such an innate principle: moral principles, which are first grounded in inner confused experience or which are primordially a kind of instinct or natural drive that is sufficient for human beings but which, like mathematics, are in need of rational proofs by a logician who can reveal ("entkleidet") them. (Cf. ibid., 42-43)[151] Along the same lines, there exists "*ein Instinkt zur Gesellschaft*", with parental and conjugal love, concern for dignity, conscience, etc., which remain the natural basis of morality even though they are strengthened by habit, education, tradition, and reason. (Ibid., 43) Indeed, reason is essential as Herder translates from Leibniz: "Ohne Vernunft zwar freilich nicht überzeugend; aber doch eine Empfindung, ein dunkles Gefühl einer eingebornen Wahrheit, ist, die aufgeklärt werden muß." (Ibid, 44) The italicized words are Herder's own addition that reflect, on the one hand, once again his belief in the importance of the lower, sensuous regions of the soul for human knowledge and action, and, on the other, his parallel conviction that human beings cannot act according to feeling alone but require norms and principles.[152]

In the published version of *Wahrheiten aus Leibnitz*, the last section of the *Nouveaux essais* that Herder considers is the first fifteen paragraphs of Book II, Chapter One. Here Herder reproduces Leibniz's distinction between ideas as the immediate inner objects of thoughts, external sensible objects as mediate outer objects, and God as the only immediate outer object. (Cf. HWP 2, 46) In response

[151] Cf. Herder, Wie die Philosophie [→ II.1.2.2].

[152] This latter point is brought out, e.g., in the 1775 version of *Vom Erkennen und Empfinden der menschlichen Seele* [→ II.1.2.4], SWS 8, 296. See Nigel DeSouza: "The Soul-Body Relationship and the Foundations of Morality: Herder contra Mendelssohn". In: *Herder Yearbook* 2014, vol. 21, 158.

to the contention that our souls are blank slates, Herder reports Leibniz as again affirming that no two human souls are alike as they differ in their inner determinations, even though experience is necessary for the soul to become aware of its innate ideas. But the senses do not extend further than this since "die Seele hat keine Fenster". (Ibid.) Although Herder reproduces this claim here, he will take issue with it in his reflections on Leibniz's *Principes de la nature et de la grace*. The remaining excerpts discuss how a soul is always in activity, is never without thoughts even when they are not sensed, and how it always preserves all previous impressions, even *petites perceptions*, such that "die Zukunft […] mit der Vergangenheit die genauste Verbindung [hat]". (Ibid., 46-48)

7) *Ueber Leibnitzens Grundsätze*: In this short, unpublished piece from 1769, Herder continues his independent study of the writings of Leibniz, engaging here with the latter's *Principes de la nature et de la grace, fondés en raison*. The text comprises a series of five numbered critical reflections on the first four numbered paragraphs of Leibniz's *Principes*. The overarching themes of these reflections are Herder's rejection of Leibniz's theory of the pre-established harmony of the soul and the body, already suggested by his scrupulous omission of all mention of it in *Wahrheiten aus Leibnitz*, and his replacement of it by a theory of soul-body interaction.[153]

In the first paragraph of the *Principes*, Leibniz declares that "[l]a Substance est un Etre capable d'Action" and explains how these simple substances or monads have no parts and form composites.[154] In his first reflection, Herder puts this definition into question: "Wenn eine Substanz ein der Tätigkeit fähiges Wesen ist: sollte daraus, aus ihrem Grunde, nicht gleich eine Einwirkung auf andre Substanzen folgen? Daß sie eine Einheit ist, was machts, als daß außer ihr mehr Einheiten da sein *können*, lauter simple Einheiten, die aber schon *ihrem Wesen nach Beziehung auf einander* haben müßten: sonst könnte selbst Gott keine in sie bringen: sonst wäre jede Monas für sich eine Welt, und mit keiner andern communikabel." (HWP 2, 49) There is a great deal going on here, but Herder's line of questioning essentially takes issue right from the start with the Leibnizian premise of the windowlessness of monads. Herder rejects the ideal, expressive relations that are the only form of connection or communication that Leibniz allows in autarkic monads.[155] He is most likely drawing on Kant's 1763 treatise, *Der einzig mögliche Beweisgrund des Daseins Gottes*, in which Kant argued that as soon as the decision to create matter was taken, the laws of motion, according to which physical monads are connected and interact, follow with "logical necessity of the highest kind".[156]

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[153] For a detailed analysis of this text see, Nigel DeSouza: "Leibniz in the eighteenth century: Herder's critical reflections on the *Principes de la nature de la grace*". In: *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, July 2012, vol. 20, no. 4, 773-795.

[154] Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz: *Principes de la nature et de la grace, fondés en raison*. In: *Die philosophischen Schriften*. Ed. C.I. Gerhardt. Hildesheim 1965, vol. 6, 598.

[155] See esp. Leibniz, *Système nouveau pour expliquer la nature des substances et leur communication entre elles, aussi bien que l'union de l'ame avec le corps*. In : *Die philosophische Schriften*, vol. 4, 477-87.

[156] Kant-AA 2, 100.

The background idea here is that some kind of "Principle of Co-existence" is required, according to which finite substances—here primarily taken to be material substances—stand in a relationship with each other (as laid out in Kant's 1755 treatise *Nova dilucidatio* and in his metaphysics lectures that Herder attended[157]). Herder is thus arguing that even if these monads are unities, in virtue of their very existence they have a relationship to each other such that they can mutually influence each other, i.e., "eine Einwirkung auf andre Substanzen [haben]", although he does not yet specify the nature of this "Einwirkung".

In the second paragraph of the *Principes*, Leibniz explains that monads can only be distinguished from each other in virtue of their internal qualities *qua* perceptions, which are representations of the composite or the external, and in virtue of their appetitions, which are the tendencies to go from one perception to the next (Herder takes up appetitions in his fourth reflection.)[158] Herder faithfully reports the first part of this doctrine and, turning now tot he soul(-monad), immediately asks: "wie werden diese [i.e., Perceptionen] aus der innern Kraft der Seele? ganz abstrahiert von einem Äußern, das da exsistiere? Woher, daß eine Seele sich ewig eine Welt träumen könnte, *aus ihrer innern Kraft*, ohne daß diese exsistierte, ohne daß sie zur Exsistenz derselben das geringste beantragen könnte?" (HWP 2, 49) Herder is dismissing the idea that a soul's perceptions could be entirely internally generated. As between bodies which mutually influence each other, Herder is here insisting that a soul's perceptions of the outside world must entail the real existence of that world and that its perceptions must in some way be *caused* by that world. Otherwise, "[s]o wäre Gedanke nichs Reelles". (Ibid.)

Herder continues his discussion of the second paragraph of the Principes in his third reflection where he takes up Leibniz's claim that the simplicity of the monad does not prevent it from experiencing a multiplicity of modifications. It is the very simplicity of the monad that unifies these modifications just as in a simple centre or point an infinity of angles is found by the lines that meet at it.[159] Herder raises the problem of the cause of this multiplicity and asserts: "Eine Gedenkkraft, die in sich eingeschlossen, aus ihrem Grunde herauf würkt, und gegen jede andre Substanz durchaus incommunikabel ist, kann ich mir in ihrer Gedankenreihe höchstens als eine Linie gedenken: aber in einer Linie ist bloß Vielheit *neben* einander." (HWP 2, 49) Herder's argument is that a simple substance that is windowless but that contains a multiplicity *in* itself is inconceivable. Rather, the multiplicity of modifications must be caused by something *outside* it. If the modifications are "[r]apports auf das Äußere [...] wie der Mittelpunkt eines Cirkels zu den Winkeln, die sich aus ihm ziehen lassen: wohl! diese Winkel können nicht ohne den Mittelpunkt, und der Mittelpunkt nicht ohne sie bleiben, was sie sind." (Ibid.) Leibniz's image of the centrepoint with the angles formed by lines extending outward from it is thus approved of by Herder, but whereas Leibniz sees this relationship of the monad to the world as ideal, with the cause of the perceptions of a monad being entirely internal to it, Herder believes this relationship must be

[157] Kant-AA 1, 412-413; AA 28.1, 51, 887-888.
[158] Leibniz, *Principes*, 598.
[159] Ibid., 598.

conceived of as real, and that the external world is in some way a cause of the multiplicity of its modifications.

The central philosophical object of concern for Herder in his engagement with Leibniz comes to the fore in the fourth reflection where the soul's relationship to the outside world is explicitly taken up. In the third paragraph of the *Principes*, Leibniz turns to living organisms which consist of a dominant soul-monad that is the principle of unity of the mass of an infinity of monads surrounding it that make up its organic body, through whose properties the soul represents the outside world and which is a "kind of automaton or natural machine" (i.e., the body mechanically acts according to efficient causes as determined by the predetermined laws of the entelechies governing the monads of which the body is an aggregate).[160] The soul's representations, however, are not *caused* by the body in any way; rather, the appetitions internal to the soul are the principle of change of its representations. Herder rejects this view in the fourth reflection and argues as follows: "Eine Monas soll ihre Vorstellungen ändern können, und nach ihrer Grundkraft ändern müssen; wenn diese Vorstellungen nun aber nichts als äußere Rapports sind, muß nicht in der Grundkraft auch der Grund zur Perceptibilität des äußern und zur immer veränderlichen Perceptibilität liegen?" (HWP 2, 50) Herder seems here to be apparently agreeing with Leibniz that the cause of the soul-monad's representations must be internal. In fact, however, his position is radically different. He continues: "Es muß also auch der organische Körper, der ihre Masse wird, eigentlich kein Avtomaton vor sich sein". (Ibid.) Herder is arguing here that the soul is indeed the ground both of its own perceptions and of their changes, but only insofar as it is the principle behind the body. In other texts from the same year, to be considered below, Herder argues that the soul builds itself a body, through which it interacts with the external world, by harnessing the forces of attraction and repulsion through its action on the inner principle of physical monads, as intimated in Herder's review of Kant's *Träume*. While Herder thus agrees with Leibniz that no soul is without a body, his belief in soul-body interaction entails that the body is no automaton. In the remainder of the fourth paragraph, Herder exposes the implausibility of Leibniz's theory of pre-established harmony by arguing that the relations of a mirroring monad and a mirrored universe make no sense if there is no real communication between the two, i.e., if the monad's mirroring is able to be generated entirely from itself and if the universe is not actually reflected. Herder questions the sense of a position according to which the soul and the body do not actually exist for the sake of each other, or interact, but only *appear* to, for the sake of a third, i.e. God, for whom it would only be a game. (Cf. ibid.)

In the final and fifth reflection of *Ueber Leibnitzens Grundsätze*, Herder turns to Leibniz's assertions in the fourth paragraph of the *Principes* that each monad, with its body, is a living substance and that there is "de la vie par tout, jointes aux membres ou organes".[161] Herder zeroes in on the key issue for him and asks: "wo

[160] Leibniz, *Principes*, 599; on the body as a natural machine, see Leibniz, *Considérations sur les principes de vie et les natures plastiques*. In: *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, vol. 6, 539-546.
[161] Leibniz, *Principes*, 599.

läge der Grund der Verknüpfung?" Leibniz's answer, he says, is not to be found in life itself or the body's organs, rather, "[e]s muß ein *Deus ex machina* gerufen werden, der den Grund der Verknüpfung beider [i.e., the soul and body] enthalte, so daß diese doch nichts davon enthalten, und das ist Widerspruch." (HWP 2, 50) This is again a reference to Leibniz's theory of the pre-established harmony of the soul and body, about whose implications Herder goes on to express his disbelief, namely, that a [soul-]monad should govern other monads but not contain within itself the reason for the changes in the others, that a [soul-]monad's forces should be heightened along with the organization of its body but that this should be merely a simultaneous occurrence. (Cf. ibid., 50-51) Herder thus categorically rejects Leibniz's doctrines of the windowlessness of monads and pre-established harmony. Nevertheless, his belief in the close relationship between the soul and body, and the soul as the principle of life and of the organization of the body is very close to Leibniz's position, although for Leibniz, these relations are purely ideal.

8) *Herder's epistolary exchange with Mendelssohn*: In April and December of 1769, Herder wrote two letters to Mendelssohn, the second in response to Mendelssohn's reply of May 1769. The catalyst for Herder's first letter was his reading of Mendelssohn's dialogue, *Phädon oder über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele* (1769) which consists of three conversations in which Mendelssohn, speaking through the character of Socrates, argues for the simplicity, indestructibility, and immortality of the soul and for the soul's continued pursuit of its vocation *qua* rational being of striving for perfection beyond death, once it is freed from the body.[162] Herder had initially planned a fourth conversation, of which he only composed a short fragment[163], but finally decided to write to Mendelssohn directly to lay out his objections and to propose to him a different conception of the soul and its vocation and of the soul-body relationship.[164]

In the first letter, after acknowledging that Mendelssohn's proofs of the indestructibility of the human soul are solid, Herder's begins by questioning (as he did in his review of Kant's *Träume*) the idea of the soul's *disembodied* existence after death: "allein woher, daß wir von einer ohne Körper bestehenden *Menschlichen Seele* wißen? Wir kennen keine in solchem Zustande: sie ist uns hier ohne Leib nicht denkbar in ihrer Würksamkeit: kann sie es, wird sie's künftig seyn?"[165] Herder notes that Mendelssohn and many other philosophers have a conception of pure spiritual perfection as the reward of a future state, but he is

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[162] Moses Mendelssohn: *Phädon oder über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele*. Ed. Anne Pollok. Hamburg 2013.

[163] Cf. Herder, "Ein Gespräch Zweifel", SWS 32, 200-201; but see also the unpublished manuscript, "Disposition zu einem Dialog über Mendelssohns Phädon", reproduced in Tino Markworth: *Unsterblichkeit und Identität beim frühen Herder*. Paderborn 2005, 161-164.

[164] For detailed discussion of the exchange between Herder and Mendelssohn, see Marion Heinz, "Die Bestimmung des Menschen: Herder contra Mendelssohn". In: *Philosophie der Endlichkeit*. Ed. Beate Niemeyer and Dirk Schütze. Würzburg 1992, 263-285; Markworth, *Unsterblichkeit und Identität beim frühen Herder*, chapters 1 & 3; Anne Pollok: *Facetten des Menschen: Zur Anthropologie Moses Mendelssohns*. Hamburg 2010, 531-574.

[165] Herder, *Briefe*, ed. Wilhelm Dobbek and Günter Arnold, (Weimar: Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1977), vol. I, 138.

himself less than convinced of this, admitting that he does not know what "eine von sinnlichen Begriffen befreite Seele" could be, although he goes on to claim a few lines later that from our earthly perspective, "diese Befreyung u. Entkörperung kann hier nicht Zweck seyn, da sie nicht Glückseligkeit ist", and that it is "eine Mißbildung", "ein Monstrum."[166] Herder makes the reason for his view clear. While Mendelssohn conceives of the vocation of human beings *qua* pure spirits as a continued development of "*Seelenfähigkeiten*", Herder maintains that "[i]n unserer Natur ist gleichsam mehr specifische Masse von einer Thiernatur als von einem reinen Geist, u. solchergestalt also *zu einem vermischten Wesen geschaffen* [...] muß ich mich auch *als eine vermischte Natur denken*, oder ich gerathe von beyden Seiten auf ein äußerstes."[167] On this basis, Herder postulates that our future state will not consist of our continued purely spiritual perfection; rather, "*alles bleibt in der Natur, was es ist*" and so "[wird] *meine Menschliche Substanz* […] *wieder ein menschliches Phänomenon* [...] *meine Seele bauet sich wieder einen Körper*".[168] Since the human being, or rather the human substance, is fundamentally a mixed nature, i.e, both bodily and sensuous *and* spiritual and rational, the human soul is always joined to a body; even after death, the soul soon returns to this embodied state (Herder later explicitly calls his doctrine 'a human palingenesis'[169]). We are thus intended to develop, perfect, and *enjoy* ourselves in *this* world, for *this* life, Herder concludes, and the skills we acquire in this life are not taken with us into some future world.[170] "In der ganzen lebendigen Schöpfung sehen wir keine Spur von *Aufstreben*, *Stuffenfolge* u.s.w. aber wohl von *Fortstreben*, und dies Forstreben ist eine Art von *Kreislauf* des Genußes. […] Umzirkter, eingeschränkter Genuß innerhalb den Grenzen seines Wesens: Gebrauch aller seiner Kräfte u. Anlage: das ist unsre Bestimmung u. Glück!"[171] The background picture here is that of the finite human soul constructing a limited sphere of activity for itself through its living body—limited by the this-worldly relations of space, time, and force—and fulfilling itself within those limits alone.

In his response to Herder, Mendelssohn claims that he too believes "daß *kein eingeschränkter Geist ganz ohne Körper seyn köne*" and that in no state of the human soul is there ever a separation of the sensuous from the spiritual.[172] This point of agreement notwithstanding, Mendelssohn goes on to insist that the development of our "Seelenfähigkeiten" (the enjoyment or "Genuss" that Herder speaks of being only an immediate feeling of their extension, Mendelssohn claims), and the skills that our soul acquires—which are "*Realitäten* [...] wahre *Vollkommenheiten*"—are *not* only for this world.[173] Rather, the harmonious acquisition of capacities, which is our highest goal, extends "über die Gränze diese

[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid., 138-139.
[168] Ibid., 139.
[169] Cf. ibid., 142, 143.
[170] Cf. ibid., 139-141.
[171] Ibid., 140, 141.
[172] Mendelssohn, 323. Brief an Johann Gottfried Herder, 2 Mai 1769. In: *Briefwechsel* JubA, vol. 12 / 1. Ed. Alexander Altmann. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1975), 182.
[173] Ibid., 183, 184, 185.

Lebens" and "eine wohlproportionirte Erweiterung unserer Fähigkeiten muß in jedem zukünftigen Zustande Vollkommenheit seyn."[174] Mendelssohn insists that nothing in nature is lost and thus remains committed to the belief that human perfection, which remains that of the soul as opposed to that of the embodied soul ("wir können weder empfinden, noch denken, weder begehren noch genießen, ohne irgend ein Vermögen unserer Seele zu beschäftigen"[175]), continues into the next life: "Wider die Palingenesie hätte ich nichts; nur nicht wieder das, was wir gewesen sind! […] wir werden Wesen von vermischter Natur bleiben; aber von einer bessern Art als jetzo."[176]

In his final letter to Mendelssohn, Herder begins by expressing his pleasure that they are both in agreement as to the necessary embodiment of the human soul, but quickly moves on to the issue that he believes still divides them. Quoting Mendelssohn's previous letter, Herder writes: "'Ausbildung der Seelenkräfte gibt Fertigkeiten: Fertigkeiten sind Realitäten, und in Proportion ausgebildet, Vollkommenheiten': Es kommt auf die Bestimmung dieser Begriffe an, so sind wir ganz auf Einem Punkte."[177] Herder then proceeds to elaborate on the position he already outlined in the first letter, namely, that the soul's development and acquisition of skills is oriented only towards *this* world. His first point is that this development and these acquisitions do not mean that we give ourselves anything that is "*materiell* neu"; rather, they are only "Modifikationen dessen, was schon völlig da war, und keine neuen Attribute: es sind Veränderungen in der Beschaffenheit, nicht aber in dem Seyn der Seele."[178] That is, we may give them shape and form, according to our spatio-temporal situation, but the "specifische Masse" remains the same. This is why all development and all skills acquired are fundamentally oriented towards that particular spatio-temporal situation: "Wenn unser Lernen Nichts als Erinnern, wenn unser Vollkommenwerden Nichts als Entwickeln ist, so ist's nichts, als Lernen, Ausbilden, Entwickeln *in und für diesen Zustand*."[179] Thus when the human being dies, while the soul certainly does not cease to exist but instead returns to its original state, "im Grundstoff ihrer Kräfte und Fähigkeiten", each of its acquired accidents, "was nichts als *Beziehung auf Lage* war", are indeed lost. The failure to grasp this ontological truth has, according to Herder, had serious and deleterious consequences for our self-understanding. "Nichts in der Welt, glaube ich, hat mehr Meinungen und vielleicht auch mehr Irrthümer erzeugt, als daß man abstrakte Begriffe als individuelle Existenzen betrachtet und realisirt hat. So realisiren wir das Wort Natur, Tugend, *Realität*, *Vollkommenheit*. Ursprünglich waren diese Begriffe nichts als Abstraktionen, Verhältnisse von dem auf dies, gleichsam Schatten und Farben von Dingen; wir machen sie zu Dingen selbst, und denken uns also Fertigkeiten, die die Seele wie Geldstücke sammle, Realitäten, die ursprünglich nur Relationen waren und die wir uns als Positionen gedenken, Vollkommenheiten die wir individualisiren und der

[174] Ibid., 185, 186.
[175] Ibid., 184.
[176] Ibid., 185.
[177] Herder, *Briefe*, vol. I, 178.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.

Seele also mitgeben."[180] Herder is accusing Mendelssohn of committing what he sees as the common philosophical error of taking what are only particular, historico-cultural products of human capacities to be timeless and universal concepts. He goes on to encourage Mendelssohn, through analysis of such concepts, to return to the origin of the words representing them, claiming that he will find that these concepts turn out to be simply "phaenomena substantiata" or substantiated phenomena, that is, what are really only *accidents* but which are taken to be subsisting in themselves.[181] In direct response to Mendelssohn's insistence that nothing in nature is lost and that "'was wir sind und seyn werden, hangt freilich genau zusammen'", Herder asks, "aber wie anders als durch Raum und Zeit und durch den Grundstoff der Kräfte", which he calls "die Bande des Universum und die Kette unserer Zustände."[182] Although the soul is in itself indestructible, its actual embodied existence in the relations of space, time, and force does not perdure, but is rather succeeded by a new one. "Meine Seele", Herder continues, "hat sich durch ihre Kräfte eine organische Welt gebauet; diese Welt nutzt sich nach ihren Gesetzen ab und eilet zu Ende; meine Seele fängt sich durch die Triebfeder ihrer Kräfte eine andere an zu bereiten, durch Raum und Zeit und Kraft mit der ersten verbunden".[183] In laying his position out in such clear terms, Herder probably succeeded in showing Mendelssohn just how different their beliefs were with respect to the nature of the human soul and the vocation of human beings. Indeed, Mendelssohn never responded to this second letter of Herder's; but he was not unmoved by Herder's objections, and even thought about revising the *Phädon* in response to them.[184]

9) *Plato sagte: daß unser Lernen bloß Erinnerung sei*: This unpublished manuscript, which is divided into four sections and which dates from 1766-1769, was edited and published for the first time by Marion Heinz in 1994.[185] As Heinz explains, although the text can be seen as an early version of the *Viertes Kritisches Wäldchen* (1769), insofar as both develop a theory of perception and philosophical aesthetics, the significant difference lies in the fact that the latter argues entirely on the basis of sensualism, while the former presents a *metaphysics* of perception that grounds sensualism in idealism.[186]

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180 Ibid., 179-180.

181 Ibid., 180. While the concept "phaenomena substantiata" goes back to Leibniz, Herder was most likely drawing here on the definition in Baumgarten's *Metaphysica*, §193, that he would have been familiar with from his study of the text in Kant's lectures at the University of Königsberg in the early 1760s: "Accidentia si videntur per se subsistentia, sunt PHAENOMENA SUBSTANTIATA", in Baumgarten, *Metaphysica. Metaphysik*, ed. Günter Gawlick and Lothar Kreimendahl, (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2011), 130.

182 Herder, *Briefe*, vol. 1, 180.

183 Ibid.

184 See Alexander Altmann: *Moses Mendelssohn: A Biographical Study*. University of Alabama Press 1973, 176ff.

185 See Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 175-182; for the date of composition, see p. 43. Heinz provides a detailed analysis of the text in Chapter Three of her book.

186 Cf. Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 43-44.

Herder's starting point for his reflections is Mendelssohn's attempt in his *Abhandlung über die Evidenz in Metaphysischen Wissenschaften* (1763) to provide a modern explanation (Herder says "nach der Wolfschen Terminologie"[187]) of Plato's theory of recollection, according to which the power of representation constitutes the essence of the soul, whose representations and concepts are unfolded on the occasion of sensuous impressions.[188] However, although Herder opens with the comment, "[a]lles dünkt mich noch undeutlich: ich widerhole es also", what follows, far from being a mere repetition of Mendelssohn, is an at times strikingly original set of ideas, which Heinz characterizes as an attempt to conceptualize "eine idealistische Metaphysik der Wahrnehmung in Anlehnung an Leibniz".[189]

In the first section, Herder begins with the familiar notion of the soul as a power of representation, but not with Mendelssohn's accompanying claim that upon entry into this life, the soul begins to have representations and to unfold its initially "eingewickelte" concepts.[190] Herder writes: "Die Seele tritt auf die Welt: Vorstellungskraft ist ihr Wesen: aber sie ist *sich selbst* ganz ihr Gedanke – der dunkle, aber lebhaftste Begriff ihres Seyns erfüllt sie ganz".[191] The soul thus begins not with a representation, but with a *feeling* of its own existence, and this feeling is the primordial manifestation of its thought of being. This thought is characterized by its *Prägnanz*: "Dieser Gedanke ist ein dunkles, aber Einziges lebhaftes Gefühl: so stark und fruchtbar, daß alle übrige künftige, auch sinnliche, und noch mehr Abstrakte Begriffe in ihm liegen."[192] Like Mendelssohn, Herder construes the senses as fundamental to the unfolding of these concepts; unlike Mendelssohn, however, he posits a much closer, teleological connection between the soul's representations and the senses. He continues: "Indem er [der Gedanke] sie [die Seele] also ganz mächtig erfüllt: so ists eben damit daß sie sich ihr körperliches Daseyn bereitet, wie Gott sich aus dem Begriff seiner selbst [...] eine Welt schafft."[193] The soul is construed here as the quasi-Aristotelian principle of life that is responsible for its body, through whose senses it engages with an external world. Both Shaftesbury and Kant are very much in the background of the analogy Herder draws between the soul's relationship to its body and God's relationship to the world.[194] On Herder's view, just as the entire world is God's thought, so too does the entire world lie in the soul as the thought of being (*Sein*), with the difference that the entire world is God's body which he knows distinctly, whereas our thought of being is known by us sensuously and obscurely, via our body, in which we are omnipresent in the same way God is in the universe.[195] The generation of the senses themselves is to be understood then as an unfolding of our thought of being through which the soul thinks the entire world, "d.i. ein Zweig Ast vom seyn, auf dem sie

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187 Herder, *Plato sagte*, 175.
188 Moses Mendelssohn: *Abhandlung über die Evidenz in Metaphysischen Wissenschaften*. In: *Metaphysische Schriften*. Ed. Wolfgang Vogt. Hamburg 2008, 30, 31; Herder, *Plato sagte*, 175.
189 Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 44.
190 See Mendelssohn, *Abhandlung*, 30.
191 Herder, *Plato sagte*, 175.
192 Ibid.
193 Ibid.
194 See Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 53-54.
195 Cf. Herder, *Plato sagte*, 175-176.

sich bestrebt einen Theil der Welt, die in ihrem allgemeinen Bau dunkel lag, zu enthüllen."[196] If the thought of being is thought of as a ray of light, Herder says, each sense is like a pair of binoculars that captures it and breaks it up with the resulting appearance being the sensuous object.[197]

Herder turns to the senses directly in the second section, entitled "Sinne". He begins with the following observation: "So wie unsre Sensationen in unserer Erkenntnis vereinigen: so in unsern Sinnen die ganze Welt. Alle Begriffe, die wir von ihr haben sind Entwicklungen unserer Gedanken nach den Schranken unserer Sinne."[198] Herder proceeds to lay out the specifically human manner of representing the world by subjectivizing the set of unanalyzable concepts of space, time, and force (that he originally learned from Kant and Crusius[199]) and associating them with what he takes to be the corresponding senses. Thus, subjectively, "das Nebeneinander gibt den Sinn des Gesichts, das Nacheinander gibt den Sinn des Gehörs, das Ineinander gibt den Sinn des Gefühls", and objectively, these yield, respectively, space, time, and force.[200] In this way, Herder is positing a fundamental correspondence—between the human being and the unfolding of its thought of being, on the one hand, and the structure of the world, on the other—that is, in turn, merely a consequence of his claim that both derive from the one divine thought. Herder next provides an ontogenetic outline, similar to the account he gives in the *Viertes Kritisches Wäldchen* [→ II.3.2.6], of how the senses differentiate themselves, how an individual gradually differentiates between what is in herself and what is in the outside world, and how, with repeated sensations, the soul gradually emerges out of sleep, out of its "dunkeln, ewigen lebhaften Traum": "Jede Sensation erinnert sie also an eine Modifikation ihres Gedankens, so samlen sich Begriffe – immer ein feiner Faden aus dem starken Knäuel mehr losgewickelt, der aber noch immer zusammenhängen bleibt."[201] That is, the knowledge of these concepts remains embodied and obscure and is still a long way from being distinct. There are two dimensions to this unfolding of the soul, according to Herder: "Unsere Seele wird Metaphysisch von innen determiniert aber die determinationen von außen geben ihr Form". (FHA 2, 178) Each soul unfolds its thought of being, but it can only do so via the body, qua externalization of this thought, and its senses, whose impressions give shape to the individual, Herder even noting how the earliest impressions can have a lifelong significance (cf. ibid.). To this process correspond two sciences: "Eine äußere, wie unsere Sinne müssen gereizt, unsere Nerven gestimt, unsere Bestimmungskraft gewogen werden um vollkommen zu seyn" and "[eine] Wißenschaft von innen: Wie viel Grad Gedanken erfodert wird, sich diesen und jenen Sinn zu bilden, in dem und jenem Maas z.E. So viel innerliches Bestreben sich den Raum der Welt vorzustellen, oder den Gedanken zu

196 Ibid., 175.
197 Cf. ibid.
198 Ibid., 177.
199 See Article [→ II.1.2.1], *Versuch über das Sein*.
200 Ibid.
201 Ibid. Herder's ontogenetic account of the origin of our most basic concepts, paralleling the account given in the *Viertes Kritisches Wäldchen* [→ II.3.2.6], is continued here in section 3, §§6ff. See Herder, *Viertes Kritisches Wäldchen*, FHA 2, 274ff.

entwickeln". (Ibid.) Both of these sciences can explain how the individuality of a human soul results, for while souls and senses are "immer in der Summe gleich"—i.e., ontologically, they all share the same thought of being, power of representation, and senses—they are *qualitatively* different both inwardly and outwardly, that is, the soul individualizes itself through its outward activity in relations of space, time, and force and it is in turn individualized by the effect of the external world on its senses. (Ibid., 178-179) In a word, each soul becomes an individual only in virtue of its spatiotemporally limited engagement with an external world, through which it becomes an appearance via its body, within the same relations of space, time, and force that define that world.

In section three, entitled "objektive Gewißheit und Wahrheit", Herder considers the question of the status of the external world. He begins with an image: just as a breath creates and gives limits to a soap bubble, so does the soul with its power of representation give rise to a body with its senses: "Die Realität mit Mangel gepaart gab Sinne, wie der Hauch, den Seifenblasen Einschränkung gibt, die schönfarbige Welt einer Blase macht." (FHA 2, 179) The soul is presented with a sensuously refracted world existing in the relations of space, time, and force that is fundamentally a product of the unfolding of the soul's own thought in the form of the body as itself an appearance within those same relations. "Der Gedanke im Sinn ist ein reiner Lichtstral, im Glase gebrochen, und repräsentiert sich farbig" (ibid., 180). The underlying idea here is that the sensuous is not to be seen negatively as merely confused representation, as with Leibniz, Mendelssohn, and Baumgarten, but rather positively as definitive of how a finite human soul necessarily represents an external world, including its own body, via the senses of sight, hearing, and touch within the corresponding external relations of space, time, and force.[202] "So sieht er [i.e., der Gedanke der Seele] andre Dinge außer sich, die er alle als außer sich erkennt, d.i. Wahrheit. Er sieht sie im Raum neben einander, nacheinander: Figur u.s.w. das ist Erscheinung."[203] But this raises the question: if the soul, in virtue of its own constitution, necessarily represents things outside it as sensuous appearances, "sind nicht auch diese blos Vorstellungen, oder ist was Außer uns?" Herder replies that this cannot be proven, only believed: as he had claimed in the *Versuch über das Sein* [→ II.1.2.1], the external world can only have subjective certainty. He continues: "Da unsere Seele sich diese immerwährende bestimmte Sensation gegeben: so ist sie auf einer Welt voll Träume, wo alles ihr gleich träumt, und sie sich in Absicht der Erinnerung doch auch immer gleich träumt, dies ist ihr statt äußerer Gewißheit."[204] Ostensibly drawing on Hume here, Herder is claiming that since we cannot prove that external objects are the causes of our representations, the objectivity of these representations can only be guaranteed by their constancy through time and intersubjective agreement.[205]

In the final and fourth section of *Plato sagte*, entitled "Von den Empfindungen des Schönen", Herder briefly turns the question of the beautiful which he

[202] For detailed discussion, see Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 73ff.
[203] Herder, *Plato sagte*, 180.
[204] Ibid.
[205] See Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 77-78.

associates, like Baumgarten, with a finite, sensuous spirit, and not with a pure, unsensuous spirit with which one can only associate perfection.[206] "Nun laßet ihn [i.e., der Geist] aber als endlichen Geist würken: so hat sein Wesen seine Kraft, seine Vorstellungskraft Schranken: er hat seine Sphäre der Würksamkeit und der Erkenntnis; in der gefällt er sich und daraus wird Schönheit."[207] The "Schranken" are of course the body and its senses, and the harmonious activity of the soul within these sensuous limits is the basis of its feelings of beauty.

10) *Grundsätze der Philosophie*: In this unpublished 1769 text, divided into four sections, Herder lays out, on the basis of an ontology of forces, the metaphysics of the relationship of God to the world (sections 1, 4), the nature of the soul and the soul-body relationship (sections 1, 2), and the relationship of human beings to God (section 1) and to each other (section 3).[208]

In the first section, Herder begins with the Leibniz-Wolffian notion of the soul as a power or force of representation/perception and draws a parallel with bodies. "Ich denke; dies Denken ist meinem innern Ich so eigen, als dem Körper die *Bewegung*: ich kanns also als dasselbe in der Seele betrachten, was bei den Körpern die Bewegungs- und Fortrückungskraft ist." (HWP 2, 52) Herder explains that this movement of bodies and thinking of the soul are "Phänomena" whose underlying nature or cause is unknowable by us; all that we can say is: "Hier ist also Körper und Kraft, sich fortzubewegen, parallel der Seele und der Kraft in gerader Linie fortzudenken." (Ibid.) In this way, Herder is replacing the standard substance ontology with an ontology of forces. Herder next considers how the "Gedankenkraft" of the soul "sich ins unendliche fortdenkt". (Ibid.) As in *Ueber Leibnitzens Grundsätze*, the problem of reconciling the multiplicity of thoughts and the unity of the soul is resolved by imagining the soul as a point from which an infinite number of lines can be drawn outward. The model for this is found in God himself: "der ist Alles: der ist Ein Punkt. Das ist Gott. Dieser Eine Punkt wird von nichts angezogen, daß die Propension beträchtlich sein sollte. Aber Er zieht alles an, was da ist: es wird ein unendlicher Kreis der Schöpfung: alles senkt in Radien zu Gott. Er ist der Mittelpunkt des Universum". (Ibid.) Herder is drawing here on Kant's cosmological theory in the *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels* and combining it with the Leibnizian concept of the monad to conceive of God's relationship to the world as one of the unitary divine thought giving rise to the universe existing within the relations of space, time, and force.

Two important points Herder makes clarify this relationship. First, although Herder sides with his necessitarianism, Spinoza was wrong, Herder says (drawing on Mendelssohn's interpretation that sought to rehabilitate Spinoza[209]), to maintain that "[a]lles in Gott exsistiere", for in fact, "außer dem vollkommenen Wesen, das sich selbst ein Gedanke ist, andre *notwendig* sind, die so von andern denken, als sie sich selbst denken." (HWP 2, 52-53) God, in order to fully realize himself, requires

[206] Herder, *Plato sagte*, 181.
[207] Ibid., 182.
[208] For a detailed analysis of the text, see Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, Chapter Four.
[209] Cf. Moses Mendelssohn: *Philosophische Gespräche*. In: *Gesammelte Schriften*, JubA. Ed. F. Bamberger. Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt 1971, vol. 1, 3-19.

the external manifestation of his thought in the form of the physical universe and the finite human beings that inhabit it and share in the divine thought in a limited fashion. Herder thus rejects the Leibnizian claim that God chooses from among possible worlds and Spinoza's elision of the difference between the divine thought and the created world and claims instead "daß der Eine Gedanke Gottes nicht anders als *alles Mögliche enthalten könne, was zugleich würklich ist*." (Ibdi., 53) Creation is no longer to be seen as a divine act of will, but rather as a necessary consequence of God's self-realization. Second, although Herder uses the analogy of the formation of a planetary system, God's relationship to the universe as its "Mittelpunkt" is not that of a physical body to others that orbit it. The external realization of God's thought occurs as "ein unendliches Continuum durch Raum: eine unendliche Succession durch die Zeit" and "[s]eine Kraft dachte alles Mögliche würklich", but God is then present to finite beings in this universe in two ways: "Er ist nur durch Licht von außen und durch die Anziehungskraft von innen gegenwärtig." (Ibid.) That is, God is present to finite beings from the outside as light insofar as he is what makes them visible *qua* existing thoughts of God, but he is also present to them *inwardly* in a manner analogous to how the soul is inwardly present to the body (a notion familiar from Herder's review of Kant's *Träume*). (Cf. ibid.)[210]

Human souls have a relationship to their bodies that is analogous to God's relationship to the universe: their bodies are the external sphere of activity of their thought-force, which is likewise realized in the relations of space, time, and force. "Unsre Seele dachte, das ist ihre Centralkraft: nach dieser nahm sie einen Raum im Universum", but because this force is limited, the soul's presence is not immediate, but mediate, obtained through its body. (HWP 2, 54) As parts of God's thought ourselves, we experience our own kind of gravitation towards God qua infinite thought-force: "Der Mensch gravitiert also gegen Alles, selbst gegen Gott: Alles gravitiert gegen ihn: er gibt und nimmt Gedanken vom Universum. Er ist ein Teil von Gottes Gedanke; ein Teil von Gottes Gedanke ist sein Gedanke." (Ibid.) The human soul, which is a part of God's thought, is drawn to that thought, but because it is finite, the soul's only mode of access to it is externally, through the manifestation of the divine thought in the correspondingly limited relations of space, time, and force. The soul's striving to have thoughts of the universe, as outlined in *Plato sagte*, lead to its construction of a sphere of activity for itself in the form of its body, by harnessing the forces of attraction and repulsion (as also mentioned in writings considered above), through which the soul then has a bodily presence in the universe within the same relations of space, time, and force that define this universe and to which it now has access via the senses, esp. sight, hearing, and touch. (Cf. ibid.) Analogously to how physical bodies are drawn to each other through the force of gravity, human beings qua thoughts of God are drawn to other beings *qua* thoughts of God—this is the ontological basis of their process of development and perfection: "In seiner [the human being's] Bildung muß Alles so aus dem Gedanken erklärt werden können, der gegen das Universum hinstrebt, und dadurch vollkommen ist". (Ibid.)

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[210] See Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 95-96.

This striving of each soul manifests itself in the human realm, as outlined in section three, as a gravitation we experience with our own species that takes different forms. "Andre Leidenschaften hat der natürliche Mensch nicht, als zu dauren und sich fortzupflanzen". (Ibid., 55) Herder is here inserting himself into contemporary theories of sociability and morality and tries to square them with his preceding reflections on the soul. Like many of his contemporaries, Herder sees self-preservation as the fundamental drive in human beings, but he explicitly rejects Rousseau's claim that human beings are not naturally sociable: "Rousseaus Naturmensch ist nichts etc. Gesellschaftstriebe im Menschen sind natürlich als Selbsterhaltung; nur jener unter diesen untergeordnet, sofern er dazu dient." (Ibid.)[211] Sociability is as natural to human beings as self-preservation because it promotes self-preservation through institutions such as the family—"er ist gesellig gegen Weib und Kind, damit er daure"—but also because it is a natural drive whose basis is to be found in the ontology of the soul qua thought-force as outlined in earlier sections: "Er ist geselliges Tier, um Gedanken zu sammlen". (Ibid.) This process of collecting thoughts, as seen above, manifests itself as the soul's process of self-perfection, which is achieved by the human being's participation in an increasingly wider circle of institutions: "Er ist geselliges Tier, um Gedanken zu sammlen – von seiner Art – also kleine Familie – viele kleine Familien – endlich spät Staat." (Ibid.) Herder tries to provide a response to Rousseau that shows how sociability is entirely natural to human beings by grounding it in a particular metaphysics that construes the social, historical, and political realm, which is fundamentally a kind of living collection of thoughts, as the arena that is produced by the interactions of human beings in the relations of space, time, and force through which alone they can perfect themselves. However, Herder is not entirely immune to Rousseau's social critique: at the very end of section three, he provides his own abbreviated version of the dialectic of Part Two of the *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité*, according to which different forms of government succeed each other in history, but Herder's account, like Rousseau's ends with despotism, to which Herder adds, "so ist die Welt vollendet". (Ibid.)

In the fourth and final section, Herder gives a brief explanation of the metaphysics underlying human history. He does so by pursuing the analogy between God and the human and explains that in both the human body and in God's body, i.e., the universe, there are changes that occur that may be "willkürlich[]" or "unwillkürlich[]". (Ibid.)[212] Herder contrasts two kinds of ideas, those that follow *logically* from God and are thus non-arbitrary and those that follow each other *in time* and are thus ultimately contingent. What God represents to himself as "*idea conseq*." (i.e., Latin "idea consequens") follows with logical necessity and "ist wie die unwillkürlichen Begriffe", whereas "*idea consec*." (i.e., Latin "idea consecutiva") are "willkürlichen" and involve only successive events in time that follow in accordance with laws, such as laws of impact. (Ibid., 55) The key example

211 See Jean-Jacques Rousseau: *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité*. In : *Œuvres complètes*. Ed. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond. Paris 1964, vol. III, Première Partie, 134-163.

212 Herder probably derived this distinction from Kant; see Kant: *Der einzig mögliche Beweisgrund zu einer Demonstration des Daseins Gottes*, Kant-AA 2, 100.

Herder provides here is the following: “Er [i.e., God] würkt also Alles und Nichts: Alles, er hat die Kräfte geordnet und gegen einander gravitiert: nichts: denn diese Kräfte würken jetzt Alles, der Mensch selbst und andere auf ihn. Das ist also Providenz.” (Ibid., 55-56) While God is the origin of forces that constitute the universe and its finite beings, once created, the interplay of these forces unfolds on its own. Herder is providing here a human analogy to the cosmological theory Kant had provided of the origins of the physical universe in his *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte*: “Einiges in der Geschichte der Menschen ist notwendig, was *von ihnen* abhängt: Andres notwendig, was vom *conflictus andrer* abhängt: aus dem Zusammenhange aller wird Geschichte des Raums, der Zeit.” (Ibid., 56) That is, the activity and interaction of human beings as ‘Gedenkkräfte‘ in relations of space, time, and force gives rise to the phenomenon of human history.

11) *Zum Sinn des Gefühls*: This unpublished text dates from 1769, the same year as the *Grundsätze der Philosophie*, and explores many of the same themes as the latter text and is also a preparatory piece for Herder’s 1770 treatise on sculpture, *Plastik* [→ II.3.3.5].[213] The central, original idea of this piece is this: the two basic kinds of forces that Herder had posited at the beginning of the *Grundsätze*, i.e., the power of representation or thought (‘*Vorstellungskraft*’, ‘*Gedenkkraft*’) and the force of movement and forces of attraction and repulsion that underpin it, are bridged by the sense of touch.

As in the *Grundsätze*, the universe is understood to be the external realization of God’s thought: “Gottes Kraft ist also Allmacht; er würkt ins Universum, das sein Körper ist: der Körper seines Gedankens”. (HWP 2, 245) While there is no space or time for God, the realization of his thought occurs in space, time, and force, and he is inwardly present in his universe, both to finite beings and to matter. (Cf. ibid.) As in the *Grundsätze* too, the human being has an analogous relationship to her body: the soul’s thought expresses itself externally in relations of space, time, and force as a body with its respective senses of sight, hearing, and touch. (Cf. ibid., 244-245) This model is also familiar from *Plato sagte*, whose genetic account of the senses Herder repeats here. What is new in *Zum Sinn des Gefühls*, however, is the physiological dimension Herder lends this account.

Echoing Kant’s cosmological theory of the origin of the universe, the soul is analogously understood to form its body by harnessing the forces of attraction and repulsion: “wie hat sich mein Körper gebildet. Durch Anziehung und Zurückstoßung? was will das sagen, wenn ich nicht eine Monas setze, die *Kraft*, die eingeschränkte *Kraft* hat, und das ist die *Seele*!” (Ibid., 245) But the soul does not form the body in precisely the same way as celestial bodies are formed, for on this model it would have to have a physical presence and possess the forces of attraction and repulsion itself. Herder’s solution to this problem dates from his review of Kant’s *Träume*: the soul, as a thought-force, can operate on the inner principle of material monads and thereby harness their externally effective forces of attraction and repulsion. In *Zum Sinn des Gefühls*, Herder finds in the sense of touch the bridge between these two kinds of forces: it is through the sense of touch that the

[213] For an analysis of this text, see Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, Chapter Four.

force which formed the body becomes perceivable to us. Herder's model for this process is the blind person. "Ich glaube, daß es für einen Blinden möglich ist, den ganzen Körper in seinem Gebäude auf Kräfte der Seele zu reducieren. Ich glaube, daß ein geborner Blinder sich gleichsam *erinnern* kann, wie die Seele sich ihren Körper bereitet, wie aus jeder Kraft jeder Sinn gleichsam gebildet wurde." (Ibid., 244) It is here that the ontological identity of the two types of forces, the thought-force and the forces of attraction and repulsion, is seen most clearly, for Herder is construing the latter as *modifications* of the former.[214] The soul as a thought-force feels its physical presence in the universe. "Wenn der Blinde auf die Art sich selbst erklärt, hat, wie *sein Gedanke sich im Universum offenbare, d.i.* wie er *ein Körper geworden ist*: so trifft er in diesem Körper, in diesem fühlenden Ich, *Empfindungen von Außen* an, d.i. das ist seine zweite Philosophie." (HWP 2, 244) The picture is as follows: the soul manifests its thought in the universe by constructing a body for itself in relations of space, time, and force; it has internal, phenomenological access to this process via the sense of touch which is ontogenetically the most fundamental sense, through which the externalized thought of the soul, the body, which constitutes the soul's external sphere of activity, is sensed. But because we *sighted* human beings have become "zu zerstreut, zu sehr aus uns geworfen", we are unable to remember this process in the way Herder hypothesizes a blind person, whose concepts are "stark, fühlbar, sinnlich", could. (Ibid., 244, 243) Herder also draws a lesson here for how philosophy should be done. Philosophy standardly studies "Erscheinungen", how things appear to us, which Herder elsewhere associates with nominal definitions.[215] But true philosophy should be interested in how things have come to be, above all, ourselves. "Wir sehen und studieren nur Erscheinungen; wie wir Erscheinungen geworden sind, studieren wir nicht." (HWP 2, 244) And this is the kind of philosophy that would result, Herder claims, if a blind person became a metaphysician. (Cf. ibid.)

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214 See Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus*, 104.
215 See above 2) *Von Baumgartens Denkart in seinen Schriften*.