

“A Treasure Chamber of the Human Soul”:

Baumgarten, Mendelssohn, and Herder

Paul Guyer

1. Herder Across the Disciplines

Philosophy, psychology, linguistics, history, theology; poetry, painting, sculpture, music: to write anything about Herder is to write about Herder across the disciplines. Here I will discuss the relation of Herder’s thoughts about the arts of poetry and music to two main philosophical predecessors, and that would seem an attempt to confine Herder within one discipline rather than to discuss Herder across the disciplines. But what I will argue is that although it might seem surprising, what Herder was aided to see by these two philosophers, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (whose work was carried on by his disciple Georg Friedrich Meier) and Moses Mendelssohn, presumed paragons of purely rationalist philosophy, was, at a methodological level, precisely the fruitfulness of the miscegenation of philosophy, psychology, and even physiology, and, at a substantive level, the importance of what he called energy to our experience of poetry and music, the importance of the body to the experience of sculpture, and the complexity of language in general. As with most education, no doubt Herder’s exposure to the works of these philosophers only helped shape his own native tendencies, but if his method and the substance of his thought had any external sources, then these two predecessors must rank high among them.

In an early text on the recently and prematurely deceased John the Baptist of aesthetics, “A Monument to Baumgarten,” Herder criticized his subject for his excessive reliance on “a priori deduction” and “modern abstraction,”¹ but more emphatically claimed that “it is preeminently Baumgarten’s principle that teaches us to become initiated into the profoundest secrets of our soul and to make a psychological discovery with each rule of beauty.”² He described Baumgarten as a “Wolffian philosopher and a Christgauian poet conjoined in a single person”³ and praised Baumgarten’s early dissertation *Philosophical Mediations on Some Matters Pertaining to Poetry*⁴ as “an attempt to transplant Wolffian philosophy into the soil so dear to our

Baumgarten, the soil of his childhood sweetheart, poetic art.”⁵ In the “Fourth Grove” of his *Critical Forests* or (as I prefer) *Groves of Criticism*, which went unpublished during his lifetime, Herder again praised Baumgarten in the passage from which I have taken my title:

To me, Baumgarten’s psychology has ever seemed a rich treasure chamber of the human soul and a commentary on it that was able to combine, in the sphere of sound understanding, the poetic intuition of a Klopstock with the calm observation and serene introspection of a Montaigne, and, finally, in the higher realms of human thought, with the acute vision of a second Leibniz -- such a commentary would be a book of the human soul, a plan for human education,⁶ and the gateway to an encyclopedia for all the arts and letters.⁷

Thus, Herder saw Baumgarten as combining philosophy and poetics to yield a psychology, or synthesizing philosophy, poetry, and psychology -- Leibniz (instead of Wolff), Klopstock, and Montaigne -- to produce an encyclopedia of both all the arts and letters and the human soul.

Herder next praised Mendelssohn for developing “Baumgarten’s principle that teaches us to become initiated into the profoundest secrets of our soul and to make a psychological discovery with each rule of beauty,” thus for continuing Baumgarten’s crossbreeding of philosophy and psychology; he described the early line in Mendelssohn’s essay “On the Main Principles of the Fine Arts and Sciences” that “If the philosopher pursues the traces of the sentiments on their obscure paths, new perspectives in psychology must open themselves to him” as if it were a “eulogy” to Baumgarten.⁸ But in the “Fourth Grove,” Herder also praised Mendelssohn for distinguishing between “the contributions of both body and soul to agreeable sentiments” in his *Letters on the Sentiments* and following *Rhapsody*, thus for comprehending “man in the totality of his mixed nature,” and for doing this “more finely” than, for example, Johann Georg Sulzer.⁹ So Herder saw Mendelssohn as adding physiology to Baumgarten’s combination of philosophy and psychology, and presumably followed him in that amplification of the resources for the discussion of the arts and their impact on us.

Herder's praise of Baumgarten and Mendelssohn for adding psychology and then even physiology to philosophy in order to produce aesthetics might cause surprise in those accustomed to the textbook characterization of Baumgarten as the author of an aesthetics that is exclusively the *logic* of the lower or inferior cognitive faculties, that describes taste as the *analogon rationis* or "analogue of reason," and which generates its list of aesthetic qualities or in the preferred terminology of the time "perfections" simply by prefixing the adjective "aesthetic" to the properties or merits of ordinary cognition, and likewise accustomed to an image of Mendelssohn as an appropriator of the learned academic Baumgarten for the elegant audience of Berlin literary magazines and salons. There can be no doubt that Baumgarten did try to explain what the discipline of aesthetics does as well as to dignify it by associating it with logic: thus in the dissertation in which he first coined the new name for the age-old discipline, he said that it is "a task for logic in a more general sense to direct [the lower] faculty [of cognition] in the sensory cognition of things"¹⁰ and defined "aesthetics" as a form of cognition, "*epistēmē aisthētikē*" or the form of cognition that has "*aisthēta*" or objects of the senses as its subject;¹¹ and in his incompleting *Aesthetica* of fifteen years later, the first textbook to bear the new name of the discipline, he described his subject as the "theory of the liberal arts" and the "art of beautiful thinking" but also as the "lower epistemology" (*gnoseologia inferior*) and the "art of the analogue of reason" (*ars analogi rationis*).¹² And in his essay on the "Main Principles" of the fine arts and sciences, Mendelssohn adopted Baumgarten's original definition of a poem as a "sensuously perfect discourse"¹³ in its generalized form, applicable to all arts, as "the perfection of sensuous cognition as such" (*perfectio cognitionis sensitivae, qua talis*),¹⁴ in his own statement that "the essence of the fine arts and sciences consists in an artful, sensuously perfect representation or in a sensuous perfection represented by art",¹⁵ so if Baumgarten's conception of aesthetic qualities or merits is based solely on logic, if they are nothing but the merits of logical cognition and exposition with the word "aesthetic" stuck in front of them, then it might seem as if Mendelssohn's conception of aesthetics would also be based entirely on logic, that is to say, within philosophy at its most intradisciplinary. So whence Herder's praise for

Baumgarten and Mendelssohn as drawing on the resources of both philosophy and psychology, on poetry itself, and even on physiology to create their aesthetics, not perfect but the best model yet for this interdisciplinary discipline?

Herder's praise for Baumgarten and Mendelssohn as forerunners of his own interdisciplinary approach to aesthetics is not misplaced: in spite of Baumgarten's comparison of aesthetics to epistemology ("gnoseology") and logic, and in spite of Mendelssohn's adoption of Baumgarten's formula for beauty, Baumgarten was deeply attentive to the psychological impact of art as well as to its particular way of presenting cognitive content, and Mendelssohn also recognized the bodily aspect of aesthetic experience in a way that nobody before Herder himself did. In what follows, I will first draw attention to these aspects of the accounts of aesthetic experience in Baumgarten and Mendelssohn, and then highlight several of the key points in Herder's own aesthetics that can be thought of as developing the ideas of these two predecessors, or at least as developing within a framework that they made possible.

2. The Interdisciplinary Aesthetics of Baumgarten and Mendelssohn

Let us begin with Baumgarten. Stout as they are, the two volumes of his *Aesthetica* published in 1750 and 1758 are only the truncated torso of what was to be a much longer work. Baumgarten's ambitious plan for the work divided it into two main parts, a "theoretical" part that would offer "general precepts" and a "practical part" that would show how to "utilize" these.¹⁶ Alluding to the opening paragraph of the *Aesthetica*, Herder characterized these two parts of Baumgarten's plan as "the science of the feeling of the beautiful" on the one hand and "the art of thinking beautifully" on the other, and trenchantly objected that educating "philosophers of taste" and "connoisseurs of taste," or analyzing taste and improving it, are two very different projects, the mixture of which "naturally results in a monstrosity of aesthetics."¹⁷ But since Baumgarten did not live to write the "practical" part of his aesthetics, we need not worry too much about this criticism. Even the "theoretical" part of Baumgarten's work remained incomplete: it was to consist of a "heuristic," concerning the "beauty of things and thoughts"

represented by art, its subjects or contents; a “methodology,” concerning the “lucid order” or “beauty of order” of artistic representation; and a “semiotics,” concerning the “signs of that which is to be thought and disposed beautifully” or “the beauty of signification, which is expression and manner of speech.”¹⁸ Thus Baumgarten intended to describe the contributions to the aesthetic experience of art of both *what* is represented and *how* it is represented. But in fact all that Baumgarten lived to produce was only part, even though it comprises 904 paragraphs, of the intended “heuristics,” namely an initial characterization of the partially innate and partially acquired characteristics of the “aesthetician,” himself part artist and part audience, and then sections on five of the six merits or “perfections” of the contents of beautiful or successful works of art that he intended to describe. These perfections, all named in analogy with the “logical” perfections of cognition, were to be *ubertas aesthetica*, *magnitudo aesthetica*, *veritas aesthetica*, *lux aesthetica*, *certitudo aesthetica*, and *vita cognitionis aesthetica*, or “aesthetic wealth,” “aesthetic magnitude,” “aesthetic truth,” “aesthetic light,” “aesthetic certitude,” and “the life of aesthetic cognition.”¹⁹ Baumgarten’s text thus breaks off precisely where it should have reached that concept which I suggested was of most influence on Herder, namely the concept of *vita cognitionis* or the “life” of aesthetic cognition. But Baumgarten’s loyal disciple Georg Friedrich Meier did complete all three parts of a German exposition of Baumgarten’s plan, one that he claimed was based almost entirely on Baumgarten’s lectures, namely his *Anfangsgründe aller schönen Wissenschaften* or “Foundations of all the Fine Sciences” of 1748-54, and he not only reached the category of “life” of aesthetic cognition but also claimed that it was the most important of the aesthetic categories. Since Meier’s thought was uniformly accepted by contemporaries as a faithful rendition of that of his teacher and friend Baumgarten, it is safe to say that Herder would have taken Meier’s exposition of the life of aesthetic cognition as an authentic part of the Baumgartian theory. In Meier’s version of Baumgartian aesthetics, as expounded in his large *Anfangsgründe* and in a briefer *Betrachtungen über den ersten Grundsatz aller schönen Künste und Wissenschaften* (“Considerations on the first principle of all the fine arts and sciences”) published in 1757 (the same year as Mendelssohn’s “Main Principles),

Baumgarten's category of aesthetic "light" becomes the "liveliness and brilliance of cognition" (*Lebhaftigkeit und Glanz*), and the category of "life," while remaining the same in the *Anfangsgründe*, is tellingly replaced by that of "the touching" (*Das Rührende*) in the *Betrachtungen*.²⁰ That gives us the key to what was meant by the category of "the life of aesthetic cognition," and places the ultimate focus in the analysis of beauty on the emotional impact of a work of art upon its audience. But before we examine that category more closely, let us take a quick look at several of the others.

By the first category, "aesthetic wealth," Baumgarten means the "copiousness, abundance, multitudinous, treasures, and resources" (*copia, abundantia, multitudo, divitiae, opes*) of material that a work of art presents for sensitive cognition.²¹ "He who would think beautifully...offers...the overflowing fullness of objects...so that it seems to the observer that the material is inexhaustible."²² The category of "aesthetic wealth" thus develops Baumgarten's earlier famous thought that a poem should be "clear but confused," that is, convey a maximal amount of information but without articulating or sorting it out the way a "logical" or scientific work must.²³ This might sound as if it concerns solely the content of works of art, a requirement that a work of art give its audience "much to think about beautifully." In fact, in spite of Baumgarten's intended division between "heuristics" and "semiotics," the category of "wealth," like all his other aesthetic categories, has both an "objective" and a "subjective" side, that is, can be displayed in both the content of art and the manner of artistic representation. Thus,

AESTHETIC WEALTH is...either OBJECTIVE (the wealth of objects, of material), insofar as in the objects and what is to be thought itself there lies the foremost reason why the powers of the human genius [*ingenii*] can paint richly, or SUBJECTIVE (the wealth of the genius and the person), the natural possibility and the resources of certain people by means of which...a certain object can be richly represented [*ubertim representandi*].²⁴

Baumgarten continues the discussion under the rubrics of "wealth of material,"²⁵ which clearly concerns content, "topics"²⁶ and "enriching arguments,"²⁷ which both concern the ways in which

ideas are presented rather than the complexity of the ideas themselves, and then “the wealth of genius” (*ubertas ingenii*),²⁸ which concerns the sufficiency of the powers of the mind of the artist to “conceive the given material richly relative to the occasion, the time, and the place,”²⁹ or to invent appropriate ways of presenting his material. Thus “objective wealth” is the former is the requirement that works of art represent sufficiently diverse or complex objects to hold our interest, and “subjective wealth,” as Baumgarten’s word *representare* makes obvious, is the requirement that they represent their content in sufficiently diverse or complex ways to hold our interests.

Baumgarten’s second category is “aesthetic magnitude.” Here his concern is not the quantity of information contained in and conveyed by a work of art; rather, “aesthetic magnitude” is his term for the sublime, and he begins his discussion with a Latin translation from Longinus, “That is truly great which always returns to our thought and consideration, which hardly and not even hardly can be banned from our soul, but which is continuously, firmly, and indelibly retained in our memory.”³⁰ It may nevertheless seem as if “aesthetic magnitude” concerns primarily the content of art, namely that it represent *sublimia* or “sublime things.”³¹ Baumgarten’s further distinction between “natural” and “moral” aesthetic magnitude (which anticipates Kant’s later distinction between the “mathematical” and the “dynamical” sublime) also seems to concern primarily the content of art:

AESTHETIC MAGNITUDE, absolute as well as relative, is further either NATURAL, which pertains to that which is not closely connected with freedom, or MORAL, which is to be attributed to things and thoughts insofar as they are more closely connected with freedom.

Natural magnitude seems to be that which is vast or great in nature, and moral magnitude seems to concern the greatness of human actors and their intentions, thus both seems to concern greatness or sublimity in what is represented by art. But here too Baumgarten also has in mind greatness in the manner of artistic representation as well as greatness in content. Thus the passage just quoted continues to say that “If the themes that are to be found within the aesthetic

horizon are richly thought, and you know how to use topics and enriching arguments, then these will also have magnitude,³² that is, the artistic representation as well as the content will have magnitude. Indeed, the section on aesthetic magnitude began with the suggestion that magnitude is to be found in both represented content and representation -- “under this name we comprehend 1) the weight and gravity of the objects, 2) the weight and gravity of the thoughts proportionate to them, and 3) the fecundity of both together.”³³ Baumgarten’s conception of the perfection of sensuous cognition clearly comprises perfections on the side of both represented content and its representation, in this case sublimity of content and sublimity in the manner of representation -- his illustration of the category of magnitude with passages from the *Aeneid* and *Eclogues* of Virgil makes that clear. Of course, this is a central theme of (psuedo-) Longinus’s *On the Sublime*, so it is only to be expected in a discussion that begins with a quotation from that source.

Baumgarten’s category of “aesthetic truth” is the requirement of *possibility* -- physical and moral -- in objects depicted³⁴ so that they may produce a sense of *probability* in the audience for art, “that degree of truth which, if it does not rise to complete certainty, nevertheless may contain nothing of noticeable falsehood.”³⁵ This category thus clearly straddles the boundary between content and representation; it places certain constraints on the permissible content of art in order to ensure that the representation of the content can have a desired effect on the audience, an effect of acceptance of the content of the work even in the absence of “logical” truth or truth proper, an effect that is in turn necessary for the emotional impact of the work.³⁶ Baumgarten’s category of “aesthetic light,” by contrast, would seem to concern solely the way in which things are represented, and thus to be the first of his categories to concern solely perfection on the side of sensuous representation rather than perfection in what is sensuously represented. But even here Baumgarten stresses that “light” can be achieved by the choice of objects to be represented as well as by the manner of representing them strictly understood. He writes:

He who in thinking strives for a truer beauty and truer elegance must, in the fourth place, strive diligently for LIGHT, for the clarity and comprehensibility of all of his thoughts, but for AESTHETIC light...Quintilian, who recommends comprehensibility as one of the

foremost virtues of eloquence...thus distinguishes entirely correctly between *comprehensibility in words*...and the *comprehensibility of things*, by means of which objects for a graceful reflection should be *accessible and lucid even to those who listen and attend only negligently*.³⁷

Aesthetic light or comprehensibility is to be achieved by the appropriate choice of distinctive objects for artistic representation as well as by the lucid presentation of them; once again the perfection of sensuous cognition comprises perfection both on the side of the represented content of art and on the side of the manner of artistic representation. The concept of “aesthetic light” is obviously related to the concept of “clarity” that figured in Baumgarten’s original conception of “clear but confused representation,” and alludes to the particularly graphic but not analytic way in which dense content is artistically represented.

The last section of the completed portion of Baumgarten’s *Aesthetica* concerns “aesthetic certitude,” which clearly turns the focus of the work from the content to the manner of representation: aesthetic certitude concerns how content can be presented persuasively. But the work stops just where the discussion of the “life of aesthetic cognition” should have begun. So we must turn to Meier for the exposition of this category. When we do, we find a category that concerns primarily the emotional effect of art -- as noted, in Meier’s 1757 short presentation of his theory, the category of “life” is replaced with that of “the touching.” It is the introduction of this conception of emotional impact into the cognitivist account of art that represents for Herder Baumgarten’s synthesis of the Wolffian philosopher and Christgauian poet, or of the acute vision of a second Leibniz with the poetic intuition of a Klopstock, and the source of Baumgarten’s enduring influence on Herder.

That the interpretation of “the life of aesthetic cognition” as emotional impact is Meier’s fulfillment of Baumgarten’s plan and not his own addition to it is clear from Baumgarten’s original *Meditationes*, a text which remained of great importance for Herder. There Baumgarten employs the Leibnizo-Wolffian conception of sensation as clear but confused perception and of sentiment as the clear but confused perception of perfection, and thus infers that aesthetic

experience of the clear but confused content of poetry will have the form of sentiment.³⁸ He then infers that “Since affects are noticeable degrees of displeasure and pleasure, they will be the sentiments of that which is represented in a confused way as good and evil....Hence it is *poetic, to arouse affects.*”³⁹ More fully,

The same can also be demonstrated by the following consideration: In what is represented for us as good and evil, more is represented than if it were not so represented. Consequently those representations of things that are presented to us in a confused way as good and evil are extensively clearer than if they were not so presented. Thus they are more poetic. But such representations are the mental arousals of affects. Hence it is *poetic, to arouse affects.*⁴⁰

Indeed, “*Stronger sentiments* are clear, consequently *more poetic* than less clear and *powerless [kraftloser]* ones,” and “Thus it is *more poetic, to arouse stronger affects than less forceful [heftiger]* ones.”⁴¹ On a superficial glance, Baumgarten’s aesthetics can seem the paradigm of a purely cognitivist aesthetics, one that finds the value of art solely in the distinctive way in which it conveys information, but in fact in his view the point of both the artistic representation of content and the artistic manner of representation is the arousal of emotion. The kind of content and representation that Baumgarten discussed under the rubric of “aesthetic magnitude” might already have implied this, but Baumgarten’s doctrine of poetic affect makes it explicit. Thus when Meier proclaims that “The final chief perfection of cognition” is “its life,” he is faithfully developing the view of his master.

“A cognition is **living**,” Meier explains, “if through the intuition of a perfection or imperfection it causes gratification or vexation, desire or aversion.” Insofar as it is a sensuous cognition or cognition by means of the senses that has such an effect, then it has “**aesthetic life of cognition** (*vita cognitionis aesthetica*).” Such a cognition “fills the entire mind” because it occupies the “power of desire” as well as the “power of cognition”; it thus “inflames the spirits of life” and “takes possession of the heart” and for that reason Meier holds “the aesthetic life of cognition to be the greatest beauty of thoughts.” To convey the importance of the category of

aesthetic life, Meier illustrates this claim with an extract from a poem by Albrecht von Haller, which concludes with the lines “Certainly Heaven cannot enlarge the happiness/Of he who loves his condition and never wishes to improve it”; as the complete engagement of the two basic powers of the human mind, the power of cognition and the power of desire, aesthetic life is the perfection that completes all the other forms of beauty.⁴² The hundred pages of Meier’s extended discussion of the aesthetic life of cognition reiterate the preeminence of this perfection over all the other perfections comprising beauty, a preeminence based in the fact that “touching” works of art “fully move”⁴³ us because by “representing future good or evil” as things that can be “preserved” or “hindered” they “cause a sensory gratification or a sensory vexation.”⁴⁴ Meier emphasizes that although the depiction of the sorts of objects that naturally produce an emotional response -- “a beauty” or “an ugliness” or “hatefulness” -- is a necessary condition for aesthetic life, it is not sufficient; what is further necessary to produce this effect is that the content of the work of art *be presented* in such a way that attention is focused on it for maximal emotional impact: “Whoever would think in a touching way must (1) do everything by means of which attention will be drawn entirely or preeminently to the object itself.”⁴⁵ “The object must either be really sensed [*würcklich empfinde*] or by means of the imagination made present to the mind”; “attention must be entirely occupied with the object itself, so that one does not have time to think of anything else by means of which the intuition of the object itself might be hindered,”⁴⁶ and in particular “everything must be avoided by means of which the contemplation of the object could be diverted to the contemplation of the signs and images [*Zeichen und Bilder*] in which the object is enveloped”; the presentation of the object must not be “symbolic” but must instead be concrete.⁴⁷ In spite of the rebarbative academic framework of their writing, Baumgarten’s and Meier’s category of aesthetic life was meant to argue against symbolic or allegorical poetry in favor of poetry with immediate emotional impact, and thereby prepared the way for the impending literary movement of *Sturm und Drang*. This is precisely what Herder responded to in them.

But before Herder could respond to Baumgarten's aesthetics as completed by Meier, Mendelssohn also responded to their distinction synthesis of intellect and emotion, and added his own account of the rôle of the body in aesthetic experience. Herder's admiration for the quality of Mendelssohn's judgment in his literary criticism is evident throughout the "Fourth Grove,"⁴⁸ but as we saw earlier, he specifically praised Mendelssohn for his recognition of "the contributions of both body and soul" to aesthetic experience.⁴⁹ The rôle of the body in such experience is only touched upon in Mendelssohn's 1755 *Letters on Sentiments*, when he recognizes three distinct sources of pleasure, all of which can be exploited in our experience of art: "*sameness in multiplicity*, or beauty, *harmony in multiplicity* or intellectual perfection, and finally the *improved condition of the state of our body* or sensuous gratification" -- "How the muses must rejuvenate us," Mendelssohn exclaims, "they who draw upon [these] diverse sources in full measure and our them out over us in a pleasant combination!"⁵⁰ The first two of Mendelssohn's concepts here seem to correspond to Baumgarten's location of beauty in both the manner and content of artistic representation, and by the third, Mendelssohn seems to have in mind the direct effect of the perception of, for example, colors and sounds on our visual and aural organs: he says that "It is extremely possible that the neural parts of the eye and their harmonious tensions can be altered by colors in precisely the same way that the vessels of hearing can be altered by sounds," and when the effect of the perception of some particular sounds or colors is to improve the "harmonious tension" of our bodily parts, then "an obscure feeling of an improved condition of our body makes them," that is, the colored or sounding objects, "into objects of pleasure"⁵¹ -- our pleasure in the improvement of our own bodily condition is projected onto the objects -- in this dimension, beauty is "pleasure objectified," as George Santayana would argue more than a century later.⁵²

This account of the rôle of the body in aesthetic experience is minimal, and it may also seem as if there is no recognition of the emotional dimension of aesthetic experience in the *Letters on Sentiments*. The essay on the "Main Principles of the Fine Arts and Sciences" that Mendelssohn published two years after *On Sentiments* and then revised for his *Philosophical*

Writings four more years later as well as the *Rhapsody or additions to the Letters on Sentiment* that he wrote specifically for the 1761 collection certainly emphasize the emotional impact of art as well as adding at least a little to Mendelssohn's account of the bodily aspect of aesthetic experience. The *Rhapsody* begins with Plato's ancient question why we should take pleasure in seeing unpleasant things or representations of them.⁵³ This seems like a puzzle to Plato because he focuses only on the things that are represented; Mendelssohn's response is that we must consider the potential for pleasure or displeasure not only in things but also in the act of representing them, and he then argues that when we are dealing with *fait accompli*, that is, things already done that we cannot prevent, then we can enjoy the activity of both our cognitive and emotional responses to them even when the objects themselves are imperfections rather than perfections in the grand scheme of things. In making this argument, Mendelssohn stresses the engagement of our evaluative and affective powers as well as our purely cognitive powers. Thus, he says that "recognizing an evil action and disapproving of it are affirmative features of the soul, expressions of the mental powers of knowing *and desiring*, and elements of perfection which, in this connection, must be gratifying and enjoyable,"⁵⁴ and "in relation to the mind's projection, the movement *and stirring* which is produced in the soul cannot be anything else but pleasant."⁵⁵ Mendelssohn then adds that artistic representation or "imitation by art" is a way of creating the necessary separation between the object and our internal, mental representation of it that is necessary for us to enjoy the latter even when the former is unpleasant: when "the most terrifying events" are rendered "on the stage, on the canvas, and in marble,...an inner consciousness that we have an imitation and nothing genuine before our eyes moderates the strength of the objective and, as it were, elevates the subjective side of the representation,"⁵⁶ allowing us to enjoy the cognitive activity and emotional arousal that comprise the latter. Mendelssohn here acknowledges a version of what Edward Bullough would later call the "antinomy of aesthetic distance," namely that we must be sufficiently deceived by the art that "our imaginations is so swept away...that we fancy we truly see nature," but that this "magic" must last only "as long as is necessary to give our conception of the object the proper vitality and

fire” -- *Leben und Feuer*.⁵⁷ Mendelssohn’s use of the word *Leben* here says it all: the impact of artistic representations on our capacity for desire and emotion is his version of Baumgarten’s conception of *vita cognitionis aesthetica*. Allowing us to enjoy our own emotions is clearly the chief virtue of artistic representation for Mendelssohn, although in the essay on the “Main Principles” he also adds that we can take yet another layer of pleasure in the perfection of the artists who can produce such representations.⁵⁸

In the *Rhapsody*, Mendelssohn also amplifies somewhat the connection between body and soul he had already asserted in *On Sentiments*. Here he writes:

I have said of gratification of the senses that it consists in a feeling of the improved condition of the body that is pleasant to the soul. I have also regarded the body’s movements as the object, the soul merely as a spectator that takes pleasure in this representation because it perceives an objective perfection...But there is yet another source of the pleasure we take in sensuous gratifications that must not be disregarded. The soul enjoys the well-being of its body not merely as a spectator, that is, not merely in the general sense that it somehow perceives the perfection of an object with ease. Rather, by virtue of sensuous gratification, there accrues to the soul itself a no lesser degree of perfection, and by this means what is pleasant in the sentiment becomes incomparably more lively. Harmonious sentiments in the soul correspond to harmonious movements in the limbs and the senses. In a state of sensuous rapture, the entire neural structure [*Nervengebäude*] is set in motion, one harmonious motion, and since this is the case, the entire basis of the soul, the entire system of sentiments and obscure feelings, must be moved and put into play as well, one harmonious play. By this means every capacity for sentient knowledge, every power of sensuously desiring is engaged in the way most conducive and sustained in the exercise.⁵⁹

Here Mendelssohn emphasizes that the soul’s pleasure in the bodily effects of art is not just cognitive, not just like the approbation of perfection in any external object, but is much more direct than that, the direct effect of the transmission of the bodily condition to both the cognitive

and the affective and emotional capacities of the soul -- “every power of sensuously desiring is engaged.” So in this passage Mendelssohn stresses both the emotional as well as cognitive impact of art but also the immediacy of the mind-body connection; explicitly rejecting the ancient image of the soul as a spectator of its own body and implicitly rejecting the conception shared by Leibniz, Wolff, and Baumgarten of the soul and body as two separate substances linked only by a pre-established harmony, in the context of his aesthetics Mendelssohn evinces a conviction of the unity of mind and body that could not but have been deeply influential for Herder.

Let us now consider some of the ways in which these ideas of Baumgarten (posthumously expressed by his faithful disciple Meier) and Mendelssohn bore fruit in Herder.

3. Energy, Immediacy, and Emotion in Herder’s Conception of Art and Language

Here I want to argue that the influence of Baumgarten and Mendelssohn on Herder can be seen in a variety of ways in Herder’s aesthetics and beyond that in his philosophy of language: the emphasis on *energy* in his account of the experience of poetry and music is the heir to Baumgarten’s notion of the “life of aesthetic cognition” and its presence in Mendelssohn as the “life and fire” of the emotional impact of art; his emphasis on the sense of touch and the sense of one’s own bodily motion in the experience of sculpture, highly unusual in eighteenth-century aesthetics, can be seen as at least licensed by Mendelssohn’s recognition of the role of the body and not just purely cognitive capacities in aesthetic experience; and Herder’s recognition of the dual elements of emotion and cognition in language and the dual rôles of self-expression and the movement of others in its use can be seen as heir to Baumgarten’s and Mendelssohn’s emphasis on both the “subjective” and the “objective” sides in artistic representation.

First, then, Herder’s notion of aesthetic energy as the heir to the notion of life as the central aesthetic category for Baumgarten, Meier, and Mendelssohn: Herder develops this idea in his polemic with Lessing in the “First Grove” of the *Groves of Criticism*. In *Laocoön*, Lessing

had added to the argument, already hinted at by Du Bos,⁶⁰ that since visual arts represent by a stationary spatial array while poetry represents by a succession of sounds, the visual arts must represent a pregnant moment while poetry can represent a sequence of action,⁶¹ the further claim that the visual arts are constrained by the requirements of beauty in a way that poetry is not.⁶² Lessing objected to the failure to distinguish between painting and sculpture in this account of the visual arts (to which we will return), and to the characterization of poetry merely in terms of the successiveness of sounds and images in its linguistic medium. Herder observed that “the successiveness of sounds is actually characteristic not of *poetry* but rather of *all language*, and thus it does little to help define or distinguish [poetry] in its inner essence”⁶³ -- that is, not just can successiveness be only a necessary but not a sufficient condition of poetry, but it does not bring out what is unique about poetry. This lies rather in the fact that poetry concerns and communicates “action, passion, feeling”; it does not merely describe the sequence of actions in for example assembling an object rather than presenting an image of the finished object, as Lessing had argued in his famous discussion of Homer’s passage on the shield of Achilles,⁶⁴ but it communicates the energy and feeling that continuously pervades that action. “If I have learned anything from Homer,” Herder asserts,

it is that poetry operates energetically: never with the intention of delivering (albeit successively) a work, image, picture, down to every last detail, but rather that the whole force must be experienced and felt while the energy endures....That is how I set poetry against painting, and I regret that Mr. L[essing] did not pay heed to this focal point of poetry’s essence, its “effect on our soul, its energy.”⁶⁵

Herder’s equation of energy with the effect of a poem on the soul of its audience in his last phrase, set in quotation marks for emphasis, shows how he understands the concept: not objectively but subjectively, not as something that explains the action but as the emotional impact of the object on the audience. This subjective dimension is emphasized in his further statement that “poetry is *energetic*; that is, the soul must already feel everything while poetry operates and not begin to feel only after the energy has ended and not wish to feel through a

recapitulation of the succession.”⁶⁶ To be sure, since the poet himself is also a feeling as well as thinking human being, and the kind of poetry that Herder has in mind also typically describes the actions of human beings, or very human gods, poetry can express -- in both senses of being the effect of and giving voice to -- the energy of the poet, and can describe energy in the subject of the poem, and thus produce subjective energy in the audience in response to objective energy in the poet or the representation of energy in the poem. But whether it can produce its response only by these means or by other means as well, what is indispensable is that it produce this feeling of continuous energy, or continuous emotional arousal, in its audience. And this, I suggest, is what Baumgarten and Meier called the life of aesthetic cognition, and what Mendelssohn called the life and fire produced by the magic of artistic representation that must both take us in and yet also remind us that it is only imitation. Perhaps one could argue in Lessing’s behalf that the continuous emotional response of the audience is a natural response to the continuing action successively described in a poem that does not need to be separately identified by the theorist, but at the very least Herder’s emphasis on this subjective aspect of the experience of poetry can be seen as a lesson learned from the school of Baumgarten.

In the “First Grove,” Herder also credits James Harris, the nephew of Shaftesbury and author of *Three Treatises* including *A Dialogue concerning Art* and *A Discourse on Music, Painting, and Poetry* (1744) as well as *Hermes, or a Philosophical Inquiry concerning Universal Grammar* (1751),⁶⁷ both works of great interest to Herder, with the distinction between “arts that deliver a *work* and those which operate through *energy*,” and notes that the arts that operate by energy include not only poetry but also music. “*The subjects of music*,” Herder writes after Harris, “are all such things and incidents as are most eminently characterized by motion and sound; these include all species of motions, sounds, voices, passions expressed through sounds, and so on.”⁶⁸ Thus the objective side of music, motion and sound, includes the sound of passions, which in turn arouse passion or energy as its subjective side. Herder then expands on this account of music in the “Fourth Grove.” With music, Herder writes there,

Here a new sense opens up, a new gateway of the soul, and perceives *tones*: *tones*, whose every simple moment the ear absorbs with pleasure; *tones*, whose every simple moment touches the soul in a thousand new ways and produces a thousand new and different, yet inward and immediate, sensations; *tones*, the instrument that most directly affects the soul. Whereas the expression of visual art was nothing but surface, music is inner essence; that is, *energetic force, pathos* -- how else shall I name it. That which penetrates deep into the soul: the world of a new feeling.⁶⁹

Again, under the rubric of energy, Herder is clearly emphasizing the emotional impact of music above all other possible aspects of it or our experience of it, and thus characterizing the experience of music in terms of what Baumgarten and Meier identified as the most important aspect of aesthetic experience even though Baumgarten said nothing about music in the little he lived to write, Meier apparently nothing in the vastly more that he wrote, and Mendelssohn only a little.⁷⁰

Herder particularly emphasizes the *immediacy* of the emotional impact of music: “*Impression and tone directly affecting the soul, accent of sensation, harmony, and beautiful succession* -- wherever we find these, whether in thoughts or images, languages and colors, they are musical in nature; they have been borrowed in nature.” He is willing to say that “Music as such imitates human passions,” but only because it so immediately arouses passions in the auditor: “Music lamented; it sighed, it raged, it exulted”; that is, “you felt everything, your responded sympathetically as each string was struck,” but you did that without the intermediation of any determinate idea of an object or event being represented by the music -- “There was nary a hint of contemplation; everything stirred only in the darkest abyss of your soul.”⁷¹ Here perhaps we should say that Herder has gone beyond Baumgarten: focusing as he did solely on poetry, Baumgarten could assume that the subjective dimension of life always accompanied the objective dimension of aesthetic cognition, that is, that emotional impact accompanied determinate although dense representational content; but in the case of music, the emotional impact is produced by the immediate impact of the music on our senses, without the

intermediation of any determinate intellectual ideas about what it might represent. Yet the very fact that music can succeed in doing this may only confirm Baumgarten's and Meier's point that among the perfections of aesthetic cognition, its life or emotional impact is the chief one, sufficient by itself when it can occur by itself, that is, without representation, to make a powerful aesthetic experience. If only Herder's "Fourth Grove" had been published before Schopenhauer gave his famous account of music as the imitation of the will itself rather than of any of its phenomenal objectifications,⁷² we might even claim Herder's account as an ancestor of Schopenhauer's and thus trace a line from Baumgarten's foundation of eighteenth-century German aesthetics through Herder to one of the most characteristic productions of nineteenth-century German aesthetics.⁷³

Although Herder concentrated on Lessing's contrast between visual art and poetry in the "First Grove," differentiating within visual art between painting and sculpture became central to his project in the unpublished "Fourth Grove" and in 1778 publication *Sculpture (Plastik)* that traversed much of the same ground.⁷⁴ The basis of Herder's critique is that the sense of touch is the foundation of our knowledge of a three-dimensional world of bodies, of which sight alone would give us only a two-dimensional representation, and that "The beauty of bodies, as forms, is thus tactile"⁷⁵ as well. Of course, the philosophical debate from Descartes through Locke, Berkeley, and Diderot about how we place a three-dimensional interpretation upon the supposedly two-dimensional information provided by sight alone had really been a debate over the precise role of other bodily senses in this cognitive process: Descartes's argument that we tacitly compute the third dimension of bodily depth from differences in the tension on our optical muscles⁷⁶ treats our visual organs as parts of our own three-dimensional bodies providing information kinaesthetically as well as visually, and Berkeley's alternative theory that we correlate two-dimensional visual representations with the information about distance provided by our own bodily motions in approaching to or receding from objects⁷⁷ also treats us as three-dimensional bodies and not mere retinas feeding two-dimensional information to an as good as disembodied brain. But Herder moves from this to an emphasis on tactile and kinaesthetic

experience within his account of aesthetic experience that is novel in eighteenth-century aesthetics. As he puts the point, “there are three main senses, at least so far as aesthetics is concerned, although it has been customary to concede to it only two, the eye and the ear.”⁷⁸ Indeed, he presents his recognition of the importance of this aspect of experience for aesthetic experience as a critique of Baumgarten among others. He maintains that physical beauty, “the beauty of a form, of a body, is not a visual but a tactile concept; thus every one of these beauties must originally be sought in the sense of touch.” His argument for this claim, as is so often the case with Herder, is from our language to our thought or experience itself: “all aesthetic terms that describe such beauty, regardless of the context in which they are used, derive from touch: rough, gentle, soft, tender, full, in motion -- these and countless others derive from touch.” This is particularly evident in the case of sculpture, which is “above all tangible.”⁷⁹ We might argue for this point, empirically, by saying that our first impulse is to run our hands over sculpture, and that it is only convention and museum guards that prevent us from doing this, so that we settle for the enjoyment of visual experiences associated with tactile ones rather than enjoyment of the tactile experience itself. Herder does note that the tactile experience of sculpture would be less susceptible to deception than visual experience, so that from a cognitivist point of view “it approaches to the truth.”

In the next section of the “Fourth Grove,” Herder complicates this initial statement. Here he says that there are three “senses of the beautiful,” namely sight, hearing, and touch, and that these three senses perceive different things or aspects of things, namely “sight, which perceives *external things alongside one another*; hearing, which perceives *things in succession*; and *touch*, which perceives things *in depth*” -- or “surfaces,” “tones,” and “bodies”⁸⁰ -- but does not say that one of these objects is more true than another or one of these senses more veridical than another. He also goes on to argue that of course the experience of sculpture does involve sight as well as touch, but a use of sight that is in turn dependent on bodily motion: “From no single point do I survey the work [of sculpture] in its entirety; I must walk around it in order to have seen it.”⁸¹ Even the observer who does not appear to be moving, “the viewer sunk deep in silent

contemplation of the *Apollo Belvedere*,” in fact has a visual experience that is dependent upon his past experience of motion and perhaps imagined present motions, and that also runs in his sense of his own bodily motion with his sense of touch:

He seems to stand in a fixed position, but nothing could be further from the truth. He adopts as many viewpoints as he can, changing his perspective from one moment to the next so that he avoids sharply defined surfaces. To this end he gently glides only around the contours of the body...He tries his hardest to destroy every recess, every ceasura, every superficiality, and, as far as possible, to restore to the many-angled polygon, to which his eye has reduced the body, its beautiful ellipse, which had been blown into being only for his touch....And so he demonstrates in the very act of seeing that to experience the effect of sculpture, which is achieved only through bodies, he wanted only to feel, and he did.⁸²

Here Herder does seem to argue that the experience of sculpture is not only more complex but also more truthful than purely visual experience, thus than painting. But even if Herder does not mean to rank the different visual arts, it is clear that his account of sculpture depends on a recognition of the rôle of the body in the generation of both tactile and kinaesthetic sensation. He could not have given his account of sculpture within a framework that treated all imagery as if could be the experience of a bodiless eye.

Mendelssohn’s conception of the rôle of the body may have gone only so far as to recognize the effect of visual perception on the state of the body and then the transmission of that state to the mind in the form of an experience of pleasure. He did not single out the distinctive contributions of touch and kinaesthesia to aesthetic experience, in particular to the experience of sculpture. So he can hardly be claimed as a direct predecessor of Herder’s treatment of sculpture. Nevertheless, Mendelssohn’s addition of the bodily effect of aesthetic experience to the intellectual and emotional aspects of it recognized by Baumgarten might be considered at least to have opened the door to Herder’s fuller exploration of the rôle of the body in aesthetic experience.

I want to make one last point here, about Herder's conception of language. Of course this is not the place for an extensive treatment of that large subject, and the text I am going to draw on because of its proximity to the texts in aesthetics that I have been discussing, the 1772 *Treatise on the Origin of Language*, may not be representative of all of Herder's thought about language.⁸³ Nevertheless I do want to propose that Herder's philosophy of language as presented in this work suggests that language is typically meaningful in two complementary ways, on the one hand pointing to aspects of objects and to objects through their aspects, and on the other hand expressing the emotional response of humans to objects and communicating that response to others by arousing it in them. Herder thus recognizes both an objective and a subjective dimension of meaning in language, and this is analogous to Baumgarten's distinction between the objective and the subjective aspects of aesthetic qualities in particulars as well as in the general recognition of both the cognitive content and the emotional impact of art on the part of Baumgarten and his followers Meier and Mendelssohn. Baumgarten does not discuss language as such nor does Herder refer to Baumgarten in the *Treatise on the Origin of Language*, but we might still use Baumgarten's conceptual framework to illuminate Herder's philosophy of language and at least speculate that Baumgarten's way of thinking opened up a path for Herder in this area too.

As early as the *Fragments on Recent German Literature* of 1767-8, the youthful Herder had stressed the immediacy of expression of in language -- the oldest languages, "formed immediately according to living nature," "had much *living expression*" -- and thus the close original connection or even identity of language with song -- "For a long time with the ancients *singing* and *speaking*...were one thing"⁸⁴ -- because of the immediacy of expression in both. In the *Treatise on the Origin of Language*, Herder attacks the view of Condillac, Maupertuis, and Rousseau that all of language can be considered to have emerged from the musical or quasi-musical expression of sensation and emotion.⁸⁵ But he does not deny that human beings have a natural language of the passions. He begins with the claim that "*Already as an animal, the human being has language*. All violent sensations of his body, and the most violent of the

violent, the painful ones, and all strong passions of immediately express themselves in cries, in sounds, in wild, unarticulated noises.” And he immediately adds that these expressions of sensation and especially emotions sympathetically communicate the feelings they express to others: “This is how little nature has created us as isolated rocks, as egoistic monads! Even the finest instrument strings of animal feeling...are directed in their whole play, even without the consciousness of foreign sympathy, at an expression to other creatures. The struck string performs its natural duty: It sounds!, it calls to a similarly feeling Echo.”⁸⁶ What Herder does deny is that this emotionally expressive aspect is what is distinctively human in language. This aspect of language is shared with other creatures; what is distinctively human is the use of language to designate properties of objects and through them objects themselves. What is distinctively human is the capacity for recollection and reflection, the ability to pay attention to particular aspects of objects, recall that one has encountered them before, then the ability to name them and to use those names of properties for names of objects themselves. Thus Herder states that

The human being demonstrates reflection when the force of his soul operates so freely that in the whole ocean of sensations which floods the soul through all the senses it can, so to speak, separate off, stop, and pay attention to a single wave, and be conscious of its own attentiveness...freely dwell on a single image, pay it clear, more leisurely heed, and separate off characteristic remarks for the fact that it is this object and no other....not only recognize all the properties in a vivid or clear way, but...in his own mind *acknowledge* one or several distinguishing properties.⁸⁷

This is what Herder calls “taking-awareness” (*Besinnung*) or “awareness” (*Besonnenheit*). Herder then argues that the sounds that objects -- at least an animal, such as a lamb -- make are particularly striking, and that we focus our awareness on them, using them both to identify the object as we re-encounter it and to name the object that we so encounter -- thus early naming takes the form “Aha! You are the bleating one!” It is in such a way that the human being recognizes an object “in a human way” and “names it distinctly, that is, with a characteristic

mark.”⁸⁸ Herder thus argues that the distinctively human aspect of language begins with naming, the use of sounds to designate objects through their distinctive properties, in particular the use of sounds coming from the objects to name them, and he then develops an elaborate account of how verbs and other aspects of language emerge from the primordial activity of naming.

But Herder does not deny that the emotionally expressive aspect of language that we share with other animals remains a part of the human use of language. On the contrary, he makes it explicit that it does. Thus he says that “*In all original languages remains of these natural sounds still resound.*” In particular, he suggests that this common, expressive aspect of language is especially present in the poetic or artistic use of language. He continues that the remains of the natural sounds of expression “are not the main threads of human language,” but they are “the juices which enliven the roots of language.”⁸⁹ The “natural sounds” or more precisely “our tones of natural language (*unsre Töne der Natursprache*) that “are destined for the expression of passion” are “*the elements of all moving*” or *touching*” (*Rührung*) of other people are crucial to poetry and other artistic forms of speech, both in ancient and modern languages: “how much ancient poetry and music [were] enlivened by these natural sounds.”

And even in our case too, where, to be sure, reason often puts an end to the role of feeling and the artificial language of society to that of natural sounds, do not the loftiest thunders of oratory, the mightiest strikes of poetry, and the magical moments of accompanying gesture still often come close to this language of thought, through imitation? What is it that there among the gathered people works miracles, penetrates hearts, and bows over souls? Spiritual talk and metaphysics? Metaphors and rhetorical figures? Art and cold persuasion? To the extent that rapture is not blind, much must happen through these things, but everything? And precisely this highest element of blind rapture, what brought this about? A quite different force! These sounds, these gestures, those simple courses of melody, this sudden turning point, this twilight voice --⁹⁰ in other words, the natural language of passion, or the aspect of language that represents the survival of the immediate, primitive, and shared expression of passion. Thus Herder explicitly

argues that specifically artistic language combines the function of expressing and arousing feeling and passion, specifically of touching or moving others, with the referential function of specifically human cognition and the specifically human use of language. Thus artistic language, and presumably artistic media in general, both bind us to the rest of animate creation and also distinguish us from it.

As I said, this conception of language goes beyond anything to be found explicitly in Baumgarten or his immediate followers, who did not develop a full-fledged philosophy of language.⁹¹ But Herder's emphasis on both the cognitive, object-referring and expressive, emotionally revealing and moving sides of language do, as I suggested, reflect the emphasis on both objective and subjective, content and response, information conveying and emotionally arousing sides of art that we find in Baumgarten and in Mendelssohn. Herder's contrast between "metaphor and rhetorical figures" on the one hand and the immediate emotional impact of the expressive side of language might also remind us of the attack upon allegorical poetry in favor of more concrete and immediately moving poetry launched by Baumgarten and Meier. As I previously argued, Herder's emphasis on the role of the body in the experience of art, which leads, among its other implications, to his insistence on the distinctness of sculpture from painting, can also be seen as a development of Mendelssohn's recognition of the bodily aspect of aesthetic experience, even though it leads Herder to criticize an argument of Mendelssohn's close friend and colleague Lessing, even an argument that Lessing may have derived from Mendelssohn⁹² (who in turn may have derived it from Du Bos). Thus I think it safe to conclude that Herder's high praise for Baumgarten both in his "Monument" to him and in the *Groves of Criticism* and his equally high praise for Mendelssohn make sense, and that his own aesthetics and philosophy of language can be seen as building upon basic features of the aesthetics of Baumgarten and his followers although also of course going beyond them in both breadth and depth.

Notes

¹ Johann Gottfried Herder, “A Monument to Baumgarten,” from Herder, *Frühe Schriften, 1764-1772*, ed. Ulrich Gaier, in Herder, *Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985), Vol. I, pp. 681-94; translation from Herder, *Selected Writings on Aesthetics*, translated and edited by Gregory Moore (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 41-50, at p. 49.

² Herder, “Monument,” p. 45.

³ Herder, “Monument,” p. 41. The philologist and literary scholar Martin Georg Christgau (1697-1766) was among Baumgarten’s early teachers in Berlin and later the rector of the Viadrina university in Frankfurt an der Oder where Baumgarten taught; the catalogue of his works at the Staatsbibliothek Berlin includes Biblical commentaries, linguistic works, and orations, but no obvious works of poetry.

⁴ Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus/Philosophische Betrachtungen über einige Bedingungen des Gedichtes* [1735], ed. Heinz Paetzold (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1983).

⁵ Herder, “Monument,” p. 42.

⁶ Herder’s phrase is *Menschlicher Erziehung*, which I have translated as “human education” rather than, as Moore did, “a humane education.” See Johann Gottfried Herder, *Schriften zur Ästhetik und Literature, 1767-1781*, ed. Gunter E. Grimm, in Herder, *Werke* (Frankfurt am Main: Duetscher Klassiker Bibliothek, 1993), Vol. 2, p. 260.

⁷ Herder, *Critical Forests: Fourth Grove*, in Herder, *Selected Writings*, pp. 177-290, at p. 184.

⁸ Herder, “Monument,” p. 45. Following Daniel Dahlstrom rather than Moore, I have translated Mendelssohn’s word *Empfindungen* as “sentiments,” not “sensations”; see Moses Mendelssohn, *Philosophical Writings*, ed. and trans. Daniel O. Dahlstrom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 169. The sentence that Herder quotes occurs in the 1761 version of Mendelssohn’s essay in his *Philosophische Schriften*, not in the 1757 version published under the title “Betrachtungen über die Quellen und Verbindungen der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften”; compare the text of the 1757 version in Moses Mendelssohn, *Ausgewählte Werke: Studienausgabe*, ed. Christoph Schulte, Andreas Kennecke, and Grażyna Jurewicz (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2009), Vol. I, p. 173, with the text from the improved 1771 printing of the 1761 collection in Moses Mendelssohn, *Ästhetische Schriften*, ed. Anne Pollok (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2007), p. 188.

⁹ Herder, “Fourth Grove,” p. 274. Again I have translated *Empfindungen* as “sentiments” rather than “sensations”; see *Schriften zur Ästhetik und Literatur*, p. 392.

¹⁰ Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §CXV, pp. 84-5.

¹¹ Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §CXVI, pp. 86-7.

¹² Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Ästhetik*, bilingual Latin-German edition by Dagmar Mirbach, 2 vols. (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2007), §1, pp. 10-11..

¹³ Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §IX, pp. 10-11.

¹⁴ Baumgarten, *Ästhetik*, §14, vol. 1, pp. 20-1.

¹⁵ Mendelssohn, “Main Principles,” *Philosophical Writings*, pp. 172-3.

¹⁶ Baumgarten, *Ästhetik*, §13, vol. 1, pp. 16-19.

¹⁷ Herder, "Fourth Grove," pp. 189-90.

¹⁸ Baumgarten, *Ästhetik*, §§13 and 18-20, vol. 1, pp. 16-19, 22-3.

¹⁹ Baumgarten *Ästhetik*, "Synopsis," vol. 1, pp. 4-11.

²⁰ Georg Friedrich Meier, *Betrachtungen über den ersten Grundsatz aller schönen Künste und Wissenschaften* (Halle: Hemmerde, 1757), §22, reprinted in Georg Friedrich Meier, *Frühe Schriften zur ästhetischen Erziehung der Deutschen*, ed. Hans-Joachim Kertscher and Günter Schenk, 3 vols. (Halle: Hallescher Verlag, 2002), vol. III, p. 192.

²¹ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §115, vol. I, pp. 92-3.

²² Baumgarten, *Ästhetik*, §117, pp. 94-5.

²³ See Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §XV, pp. 16-17.

²⁴ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §118, vol. I, pp. 94-5.

²⁵ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §§119-29.

²⁶ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §§130-41.

²⁷ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §§142-8.

²⁸ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §§149-57.

²⁹ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §150, vol. I, pp. 126-7.

³⁰ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §177, vol. I, pp. 152-5.

³¹ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §179, vol. I, pp. 154-5.

³² Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §181, vol. I, pp. 156-7.

³³ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §177, vol. I, pp. 152-3.

³⁴ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §§424-34.

³⁵ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §483, vol. I, pp. 460-3.

³⁶ The German translator of Baumgarten's work indicates this by translating his Latin terms *probabilia* and *improbabilia* as "believable" and "unbelievable things" (*glaubhafte* and *unglaubhafte Dinge*) (Baumgarten, *Ästhetik*, §485, vol. I, pp. 462-3.).

³⁷ Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, §614, vol. II, pp. 602-3.

³⁸ Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §XXIV, pp. 24-5.

³⁹ Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §XXV, pp. 24-5.

⁴⁰ Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §XXVI, pp. 24-7.

⁴¹ Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, §XXVII, pp. 26-7.

⁴² Georg Friedrich Meier, *Anfangsgründe aller schönen Wissenschaften*, second edition, vol. I (Halle: Hemmerde, 1754), §35, vol. I, pp. 59-61.

⁴³ Meier, *Anfangsgründe*, §179, vol. I, p. 425.

⁴⁴ Meier, *Anfangsgründe*, §180, vol. I, p. 426.

⁴⁵ Meier, *Anfangsgründe*, §181, vol. I, p. 427.

⁴⁶ Meier, *Anfangsgründe*, §181, vol. I, p. 428.

- ⁴⁷ Meier, *Anfangsgründe*, §181, vol. I, p. 429.
- ⁴⁸ See Herder, “Fourth Grove,” p. 275.
- ⁴⁹ Herder, “Fourth Grove,” p. 274.
- ⁵⁰ Mendelssohn, *On Sentiments*, Eleventh Letter; *Philosophical Writings*, p. 48.
- ⁵¹ Mendelssohn, *On Sentiments*, Eleventh Letter; *Philosophical Writings*, pp. 49-50.
- ⁵² See Santayana, *The Sense of Beauty* (1896).
- ⁵³ Mendelssohn, *Rhapsody*; *Philosophical Writings*, p. 131.
- ⁵⁴ Mendelssohn, *Rhapsody*; *Philosophical Writings*, pp. 133-4; emphasis added.
- ⁵⁵ Mendelssohn, *Rhapsody*; *Philosophical Writings*, p. 137; emphasis added.
- ⁵⁶ Mendelssohn, *Rhapsody*; *Philosophical Writings*, p. 138.
- ⁵⁷ Mendelssohn, *Rhapsody*; *Philosophical Writings*, p. 138; see Edward Bullough, “‘Psychical Distance’ as a Factor in Art and an Æsthetic Principle,” *British Journal of Psychology* 5 (1912): 87-118, reprinted in his *Æsthetics: Lectures and Essays*, edited by Elizabeth M. Wilkinson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), pp. 91-130, at pp. 98-100.
- ⁵⁸ Mendelssohn, “Main Principles”; *Philosophical Writings*, p. 174.
- ⁵⁹ Mendelssohn, *Rhapsody*; *Philosophical Writings*, p. 140.
- ⁶⁰ Jean-Baptiste Du Bos, *Critical Reflections on Poetry, Painting and Music*, trans. Thomas Nugent, 3 vols. (London: John Nourse, 1748), Part I, ch. XIII, pp. 69-91, at pp. 69-72.

⁶¹ Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* [1766], trans. Edward Allen McCormick (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962), Ch XVI, pp.78-84.

⁶² Lessing, *Laocoön*, ch. II, pp. 12-18.

⁶³ Herder, "First Grove," *Selected Writings*, p. 144.

⁶⁴ Lessing, *Laocoön*, ch. XVIII, pp. 94-7.

⁶⁵ Herder, "First Grove," p. 154.

⁶⁶ Herder, "First Grove," p. 155.

⁶⁷ Both works were reprinted in *The Works of James Harris, with an Account of His Life and Character, by His Son, the Earl of Malmesbury*, 2 vols. (London: F. Wingrave, the Successor to Mr. Nourse, 1801), further reprinted (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 2003).

⁶⁸ Herder, "First Grove," p. 156.

⁶⁹ Herder, "Fourth Grove," p. 283.

⁷⁰ See Mendelssohn, "Main Principles"; *Philosophical Writings*, pp. 185-8.

⁷¹ Herder, "Fourth Grove," p. 284.

⁷² See Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E.F. J. Payne, 2 vols. (Indian Springs: Falcon's Wing Press, 1958), vol. I, Third Book, §52, especially pp. 257-61.

⁷³ Alas, the "Fourth Grove" was not published until 1846, two years after even the second edition of Schopenhauer's work. See *Schriften zur Ästhetik und Literature, 1767-1781*, p. 967.

⁷⁴ Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sculpture: Some Observations on shape and Form from Pygmalion's Creative Dream*, ed. and trans. Jason Gaiger (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

⁷⁵ Herder, "Fourth Grove," p. 210.

⁷⁶ René Descartes, "Optics," from the *Discourse on Method and Essays*; in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), vol. I, pp. 152-75.

⁷⁷ George Berkeley, *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision* (1710), in *The Works of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne*, ed. A.A. Luce and T.E. Jessop, 9 vols. (London and Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1948-57), vol. I, pp. 159-248.

⁷⁸ Herder, "Fourth Grove," p. 211.

⁷⁹ Herder, "Fourth Grove," p. 210.

⁸⁰ Herder, "Fourth Grove," p. 216.

⁸¹ Herder, "Fourth Grove," p. 217.

⁸² Herder, "Fourth Grove," pp. 218-19.

⁸³ See Michael N. Forster, "Herder's Philosophy of Language, Interpretation, and Translation: Three Fundamental Principles," *Review of Metaphysics* 56 (2002): 323-56.

⁸⁴ Herder, *Fragments on Recent German Literature*; in Johann Gottfried Herder, *Philosophical Writings*, ed. Michael N. Forster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 61.

⁸⁵ See *Treatise on the Origin of Language; Philosophical Writings*, pp. 75-7.

⁸⁶ Herder, *Treatise*, pp. 65-6.

⁸⁷ Herder, *Treatise*, p. 87.

⁸⁸ Herder, *Treatise*, p. 88.

⁸⁹ Herder, *Treatise*, p. 69.

⁹⁰ Herder, *Treatise*, pp. 74-5.

⁹¹ Although it should be noted that Meier did write a “general art of interpretation” of signs, the only one of his works to be given a modern edition in the *Philosophische Bibliothek* at a time when the works of prolific eighteenth-century authors selected for canonization in that series often reflected a linguistically-dominated conception of philosophy; see Georg Friedrich Meier, *Versuch einer allgemeinen Auslegungskunst*, ed. Axel Bühler and Luigi Cataldi Madonna (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1996).

⁹² At least Mendelssohn put it in print before Lessing; see “Main Principles,” *Philosophical Writings*, pp. 180-1.

