ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN

PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE, COGNITION, AND SEMIOTICS (PSCS)

Ciclo 37

in cotutela con MARTIN-LUTHER-UNIVERSITÄT HALLE-WITTENBERG

On the Problem of Obscure Representations in Kant's Anthropology

A Historical-Critical Survey

Presentata da: Manuel Fiori

Supervisore: Prof. Francesco Cerrato

Coordinatore Dottorato:
Prof. Claudio Paolucci

Co-supervisore: Prof. Heiner F. Klemme

Settore Concorsuale:
11/C5 – STORIA DELLA FILOSOFIA

Settore Scientifico Disciplinare:
M-FIL/06 – STORIA DELLA FILOSOFIA
[PHIL-05/A – STORIA DELLA FILOSOFIA]

Esame finale anno 2025

Table of Contents

1. Abstract

The present dissertation is divided into three main sections.

In the first, the history of the doctrine of obscure representations is reconstructed, starting with the Leibnizian critique of the Cartesian classification of the degrees of cognition, passing through the major representatives of the vast debate that arose within the Wolffian school. We will discuss, in particular, the positions of Kant's "masters", Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten and Georg Friedrich Meier, and then focus on the figure of Johann Georg Sulzer. One of the central claims of this research is that Kant's engagement with Sulzer's psychological treatises exerted a substantial influence on his thought – both in articulating a broader conception of the unconscious and in his interest in understanding the effects of obscure representations on the will.

The second section, after discussing the Kantian conception of empirical psychology and its development in anthropology, focuses on the theoretical assumptions of the Kantian transformation of the field of the unconscious, with particular regard to the aforementioned influence of Sulzer.

The third and final section is devoted to the discussion of dunklen Vorstellungen in anthropology. The main objective here is to highlight the Kantian theory of the development of dunklen reflections from the comparison with the Meierian concept of evolution/Auswickelung.

1. Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Dissertation gliedert sich in drei Hauptabschnitte.

Im ersten Abschnitt wird die Geschichte der Lehre von den dunklen Vorstellungen rekonstruiert, ausgehend von der Leibnizschen Kritik an der Cartesianischen Gliederung der Erkenntnisgrade und über die Hauptvertreter der breit geführten Debatte innerhalb der Wolffschen Schule. Wir werden insbesondere die Positionen von Kants „Meistern", Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten und Georg Friedrich Meier, diskutieren und uns zuletzt auf die Figur Johann Georg Sulzers konzentrieren. Eine der Hauptthesen des Aufsatzes ist, daß Kant aus der Lektüre der psychologischen Abhandlungen Sulzers relevant beeinflußt wurde – sowohl bei einer Vertiefung der Untersuchung der Dunkelheit der Seele als auch in seinem Interesse an der Untersuchung der Auswirkungen unbewußter Vorstellungen auf den Willen.

Der zweite Abschnitt befaßt sich, nach der Erörterung von Kants Konzeption der empirischen Psychologie und der Gründe für das Engagement in der Anthropologie, mit den theoretischen Annahmen der Transformation des Feldes des Unbewußten, insbesondere im Hinblick auf den bereits erwähnten Einfluß Sulzers.

Der dritte und letzte Abschnitt ist der Behandlung dunkler Vorstellungen in der Anthropologie gewidmet. Das Hauptziel besteht hier darin, die Kantsche Theorie der Entwicklung dunkler Vorstellungen im Vergleich mit dem Meierschen Konzept der Evolutio*/Auswickelung hervorzuheben.*

1. Table of Abbreviations

The following abbreviations for frequently-cited sources have been used in the text (for complete bibliographical data see the *Bibliography*):

Baumgarten

AE	*Aesthetica/Ästhetik*
EP	*Ethica philosophica*
BPE	*Baumgarten's Philosophical Ethics. A Critical Translation*
M	*Metaphysics: A Critical Translation with Kant's Elucidations*
Med	*Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus*
Metaph	*Metaphysica/Metaphysik*
RP	*Reflections on Poetry*

Descartes

AT	*Œuvres de Descartes*
PWD	*The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*

Kant

AA	*Akademie Ausgabe (Kant's Gesammelte Schriften)*
AHE	*Anthropology, History, and Education*
Anth	*Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*
CPR	*Critique of Pure Reason*
KrV	*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*
LA	*Lectures on Anthropology*
LL	*Lectures on Logic*
Refl	*Reflexionen zur Anthropologie (AA XV)*
V–Anth	*Vorlesungen über Anthropologie (AA XXV)*
V–Anth/Bus	*Vorlesungen Anthropologie Busolt*
V–Anth/Coll	*Vorlesungen Anthropologie Collins*
V–Anth/Dohna	*Vorlesungen Anthropologie Dohna–Wundlacken*
V–Anth/Fried	*Vorlesungen Anthropologie Friedländer*
V–Anth/Mensch	*Vorlesungen Anthropologie Menschenkunde*

V–Anth/Mron	*Vorlesungen Anthropologie Mrongovius*
V–Anth/Par	*Vorlesungen Anthropologie Parow*
V–Anth/Pill	*Vorlesungen Anthropologie Pillau*
V–Logik	*Vorlesungen über Logik (AA XXVI)*
V–Lo/Blom	*Vorlesungen Logik Blomberg*
V–Lo/Bus	*Vorlesungen Logik Busolt*
V–Lo/Dohna	*Vorlesungen Logik Dohna–Wundlacken*
V–Lo/Herd	*Vorlesungen Logik Herder*
V–Lo/Phil	*Vorlesungen Logik Philippi*
V–Lo/Pöl	*Vorlesungen Pölitz*

Leibniz

AG	*Philosophical Essays*
G	*Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottlieb Wilhelm Leibniz*
NE	*New Essays on Human Understanding*

Malebranche

ST	*The Search After Truth: With Elucidations of the Search After Truth*

Meier

AV	*Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre*
VL	*Vernunftlehre*

Sulzer

ATK	*Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste*
E	*Explanation of a Paradoxical Psychological Proposition: That We Sometimes Act Not Only Without Motive or a Visible*

	Cause, But Even Against Compelling Motives and Despite Fully Convincing Reasons
KB	*Gesammelte Schriften I: Kurzer Begriff aller Wissenschaften*
SPA	*Gesammelte Schriften II: Schriften zu Psychologie und Ästhetik*

Wolff

ADM	*Anmerckungen über die vernünfftige Gedancken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen*
AN	*Ausführliche Nachricht von Seinen Eigenen Schriften*
DL	*Vernünftige Gedanken von den Kräften des menschlichen Verstandes und ihrem richtigen Gebrauche in Erkenntnis der Wahrheit (Deutsche Logik)*
DM	*Vernünfftige Gedancken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen, auch allen Dingen überhaupt (Deutsche Metaphysik)*
GM	*Rational Thoughts concerning God, the World, and the Human Soul, and also All Things in General (German Metaphysics)*
PE	*Psychologia empirica*
PR	*Psychologia rationale*

Wherever available, published English translations have been used. All other translations are my own.

2. Introduction

The present research aims to reconstruct and discuss some fundamental moments of Immanuel Kant's "philosophy of the unconscious," starting with the investigation of the theories with which he was directly or indirectly confronted. To speak of "philosophy of the unconscious" in reference to a thinker like Kant – but the same could be said about any 18th-century author – immediately imposes some clarifications. For as is well known, the substantive use of the term "unconscious" (*das Unbewußte*) is not attested in the German language before Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800). "Unconscious," therefore, stands here to designate certainly not an unambiguous and definite concept, but rather a vast set of mental contents and phenomena that are not currently "illuminated" or governed by the light of consciousness, but are waiting to be illuminated and known.

In other words, "unconscious" here has to do with the deep darkness of the soul, a dimension of the spirit that precisely in the Age of Enlightenment begins to be recognized as a space that deserves to be investigated, as its richness and at the same time its immense creative – no less than destructive – potential is felt. To the development of a *pre-tracted* empirical *methodo-scientific* psychology, which characterizes the first half of the century, are to be added the resources offered by the new aesthetic science and the "physics of the soul," in an attempt to understand the inner world and its manifestations better and better. In the face of all this, the contribution of the philosopher *of the Critiques* certainly cannot be ignored.

The present work is divided into three main sections.

In the first, the history of the doctrine of obscure representations is reconstructed, starting with the Leibnizian critique of the Cartesian classification of the degrees of cognition, passing through the major representatives of the vast debate that arose within the Wolffian school. We will discuss, in particular, the positions of Kant's "masters," Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten and Georg Friedrich Meier, and then focus on the figure of Johann Georg Sulzer. One of the main theses of the paper, in fact, is that Sulzer's reading of psychological treatises influenced Kant in a major way, both in his elaboration of a broadening of the field of the unconscious and in his interest in the appreciation of the effects of obscure representations on the will.

The second section, after discussing the Kantian conception of empirical psychology and its development in anthropology, focuses on the theoretical assumptions of the Kantian transformation of the field of the unconscious, with particular regard to the aforementioned influence of Sulzer.

The third and final section is devoted to the discussion of *dunklen Vorstellungen* in anthropology. The main goal here is to highlight the Kantian theory of the development of dunklen reflections from the comparison with the Meierian concept of *evolution/Auswickelung*.

2.1 The "obscure" as a problem of the Enlightenment

By far the most frequently evoked image when discussing the age of the *Aufklärung*, suggested moreover by the very semantics of the term, is that of a historical period dominated by the tension or effort to eliminate the obscurity that tradition has helped to produce over the centuries, and which in various forms is opposed to the free development of reason. The broad and successful metaphor that sees in the element of light the determining instance of the age of Lessing and Kant, of Voltaire and Rousseau, implies an eminent devaluation of all that is unknown, uncertain, undefined, not perfectly reducible to the transparency of the "higher" cognitive faculties.

To give just one example, paradigmatic of this, we need only think of the ideal of philosophy pursued by Christian Wolff and famously represented on the frontispiece of his *German Metaphysics* (1720)[1]. *Lucem post nubila reddit*: it is necessary to dissolve the clouds that have thickened over the sciences and letters, preventing their natural development, by means of the brightening sun of methodical rationality, inspired and guided by the certainty of the mathematical sciences. Only in this way is it possible to achieve the progress of civilization. Norbert Hinske, for that matter, counted *Kampf* against obscure representations and against prejudices among the "tragenden Grundideen" of the German Enlightenment[2].

---

[1] Christian Wolff, *Vernünfftige Gedancken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen, auch allen Dingen überhaut* (*Deutsche Metaphysik*) [DM]; Eng. Trans. *Rational Thoughts concerning God, the World, and the Human Soul, and also All Things in General* (*German Metaphysics*), in C. Dyck (ed.), *Early Modern German Philosophy (1690–1750)*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2019, pp. 95– 134 [GM].

[2] Norbert Hinske, *Die tragenden Grundideen der deutschen Aufklärung Versuch einer Typologie*, in Karlfried Gründer, Nathan Rotenstreich (Hrsg.), *Aufklärung und Haskala in jüdischer und nichtjüdischer Sicht*, Max Niemeyer, Berlin–Boston 1990, pp. 67-100. See also Ulrich Im Hof, *Enlightenment – Lumieres – Illuminismo –*

This representation, however, aimed at privileging optimism over the ability of the human spirit to free itself from the "shackles" of the dark, whether it associated with ignorance or superstition, the principle of authority or deference to inherited value systems, began to prove one-sided, when not completely false.

In recent decades, in fact, thanks in part to a series of innovative studies, we have begun to shift our gaze on the Age of Enlightenment, and to consider whether, on the other hand, the obscure was not – and therefore should not be understood – only as the negative or residual element that the light of reason must gradually dissolve or transform, but also possesses its own specific field of relevance, which certainly can be circumscribed in its own boundaries, but which at the same time highlights the limits of the enlightening action. Enlightenment, in this key, should not be read as the triumphal march of rationalism that tends to – and in some way inevitably will lead to – *the end of* the obscurity that opposes it, but as the age of self-criticism of knowledge, of the realization of its own insufficiency by the will to know.

Let us ask then, with Hans Adler: in what sense does the obscure (*das 'Obskure'*) demand its own legitimacy? To give legitimacy to the obscure is to recognize it as an essential component of the Enlightenment. Indeed, Enlightenment exists insofar as its opposite exists. As Adler writes, questioning the authority that has traditionally delegitimized the obscure requires "rethinking our representations of 'Enlightenment' and progress in the sense of enlightenment." Obviously, he points out, "not to abolish the concept of Enlightenment, but to establish Enlightenment more clearly in its historical, epistemological and anthropological profile."[3]

Aufklärung: Die 'Ausbreitung Eines Besseren Lichts' Im Zeitalter Der Vernunft, in M. Svilar (Hrsg.), *"Und Es Ward Licht": Zur Kulturgeschichte Des Lichts*, Peter Lang, Berlin 1983, pp. 115–135.

[3] Hans Adler, *Die Legitimität des Obskuren*, in M. Neugebauer–Wölk (Hrsg.), *Aufklärung und Esoterik*, Max Niemeyer Verlag, Berlin–New York 2009, pp. 377–394: p. 377. See also Id., *Fundus Animae – Der Grund der Seele Zur Gnoseologie des Dunklen in der Aufklärung*, "Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte," 62 (1988), pp. 197–220.

Among the many studies on the traditional dialectic between light and obscurity as a representative figure of the Enlightenment see at least Rolf Reichardt, Deborah L. Cohen, *Light against Darkness: The Visual Representations of a Central Enlightenment Concept*, "Representations", 61 (1998), pp. 95–148; Daniela Kneißl, *Die philosophisch–politische Aufladung der Licht-Finsternis-Metaphorik*, in Id., *Die Republik im Zwielicht: Zur Metaphorik von Licht und Finsternis in der französischen Bildpublizistik 1871–1914*, Oldenburg Wissenschaftsverlag, München 2010, Kap. II, pp. 25–35; Michael Hartmann, *Die Lichtmetaphorik in der Aufklärung*, in Id, *Die Metaphorik des Immateriellen bei George Berkeley*, Brill–Mentis, Leiden 2020, pp. 3–18; Karin E. Becker, *Licht–[L]umières[s]–Siècle des Lumières: von der Lichtmetapher zum Epochenbegriff der Aufklärung in Frankreich,* Phil. Dissertation, Köln 1994. See also Hans Blumenberg, *Light as a Metaphor for Truth: At the*

This operation, among other things, could sharply reconfigure the *communis opinio* that sees the Romantic Age as the result of an epochal upheaval compared to the previous period, in favor of an interpretation that rather emphasizes its continuity features. More recently, Adler himself returned to the issue, observing that:

> it is a difficult misunderstanding to correct to believe that Enlightenment philosophy would have advanced a total claim on human knowledge, certainty and its peripheries-intuition, opinion, belief. Rather, the efforts of the Enlightenment's many divergent directions of thought tended to determine the scope of humanly possible knowledge, that is, to define its limits.[4]

This consideration, it is worth noting here, does not apply only to those authors who over the course of the century sought to moderate the claims of the purest rationalism. In fact, as we shall have occasion to show, it could or, rather, should also be extended to philosophies that are more staunchly confident – at least in appearance – about human cognitive potential, such as the case of the aforementioned Wolff. The need for a reassessment of the philosophical problem of the obscure, on the other hand, reflects the gradual increase of interest in the issue, and the associated recognition of its importance, in historiography. In fact, critical awareness of the relevance of the issue at hand is nothing new in our time.

Suffice is to recall what Kurt Joachim Grau wrote more than a century ago, that is, thanks to the contributions of Wolff, Baumgarten and Meier, "the doctrine of obscure representations becomes a dominant factor (*einen beherrschenden Faktor*) of the entire German philosophy of the 18th century."[5] What is surprising, then, and should nonetheless question scholars, is what the substantial dearth of studies on the subject depends on. A dearth, to which Fernando Silva has appropriately drawn attention in a recent study on the conception of obscure representations in Baumgarten's thought[6]. In particular, he also emphasizes the serious historical "omission" of

---

Preliminary Stage of Philosophical Concept Formation, in David M. Levin (ed.), *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1993, pp. 30–62.

[4] Hans Adler, *Bodenlosigkeit als Grund: Erkenntnis und Darstellung als Kryptographie der Seele in der Aufklärung*, in G. Boehm, M. Burioni (Hrsg.), *Der Grund. Das Feld des Sichtbaren*, Fink, München 2012, pp. 303-315: p. 303. Compare, on the subject, the remarks of Giorgio Tonelli, *The "Weakness" of Reason in the Age of Enlightenment*, "Diderot Studies," 1971, 14 (1971), pp. 217-244.

[5] Kurt J. Grau, *Die Entwicklung des Bewußtseinsbegriffes im XVII. und XVIII. Jahrhundert*, Max Niemeyer, Halle 1916; Olms, Hildesheim–New York 1981, p. 205.

[6] Fernando M. Silva, *Baumgarten and the problem of obscure representations*, "Daimon. Revista Internacional de Filosofía," 79 (2020), pp. 101–116: in part. pp. 101-104.

the topic among the problems of major philosophical importance – a discourse he also extends to German philosophers up to Baumgarten himself.

2.2 Kant and the obscure representations

In a 1987 book, Margaret Kaiser-El-Safti had to call Kant "der eigentliche Philosoph des Unbewussten" and the one "who perhaps gave the decisive setting for a psychology of the unconscious."[7] About a decade later, Günter Gödde associated Kantian reflection with one of the three "traditional philosophical lines" of elaboration of the concept of the unconscious, the one that goes by the name of "cognitive unconscious" or "perceptual unconscious."[8] In the wake of Leibniz's insights, Kant's theory of obscure representations would have been a relevant link to the nineteenth-century developments due to thinkers such as Herbart, Fechner or Helmoltz. One can add, moreover, Ludger Lütkehaus' significant observation that "in Kant's unconscious, cognitive and psychosexual aspects also converge simultaneously."[9]

These are, to be sure, remarkable statements, which could perhaps give the impression that we are discussing an issue – the Kantian philosophy of the unconscious – that is widely recognized. And yet, that would be a false impression. Indeed, in a seminal essay on the subject, Claudio La Rocca was to record in 2007 how, within the main historical reconstructions available, Kant was "almost never mentioned" or at most "remembered only in passing."[10] This tendency to overlook Kant's contribution, in his opinion, constituted a serious fact, owing to the philosopher the merit of even having inaugurated an investigation of the unconscious as an

---

[7] Margret Kaiser–El–Safti, *Der Nachdenker. Die Entstehung der Metapsychologie Freuds in ihrer Abhängigkeit von Schopenhauer und Nietzsche*, Bouvier, Bonn 1987, pp. 143, 316.

[8] Günter Gödde, *Traditionslinien des „Unbewußten". Schopenhauer – Nietzsche – Freud*, Diskord, Tübingen 1999: p. 11 and pp. 29–31.

[9] See *Einleitung* in L. Lütkehaus (Hrsg.), *Dieses wahre innere Afrika. Texte zur Entdeckung des Unbewußten vor Freud*, Fischer, Frankfurt Am Main 1989, pp. 20–21.

[10] Claudio La Rocca, *L'intelletto oscuro. Inconscio e autocoscienza in Kant*, in Id., *Leggere Kant. Dimensioni della filosofia critica*, Edizioni ETS, Pisa 2007, p. 64. The same is true, more specifically, regarding the research on Kant, as Paola Rumore notes in the same year: "The idea that Kant was not interested in the problem of unconscious representations constitutes a widespread, though unfounded, opinion within *Kant-Forschung*" (Id., *L'ordine delle idee. La genesi del concetto di 'rappresentazione' in Kant attraverso le sue fonti wolffiane (1747–1787)*, Le Lettere, Firenze, 2007, p. 250n). A notable exception in this framework is the essay by Birgit Althans, Jörg Zirfas, *Die unbewusste Karte des Gemüts: Immanuel Kants Projekt der Anthropologie*, in M. Buchholz, G. Gödde (Hrsg.), *Das Unbewusste*, 3 voll., Psychosozial-Verlag, Gießen 2005–2006.

autonomous and articulate sphere, and thereby having laid "the basis for any further analysis of the hidden depths of the human soul."[11]

The same conviction is found, moreover, behind the important collection of studies on *Kant's Philosophy of the Unconscious*[12], which appeared in 2012. Here, too, however, the editors cannot refrain from denouncing the surprising scarcity that seems to persist in the field of Kantian studies on the subject, the lack of which is described as "a substantial gap in Kant research."[13] This scarcity, they add, may depend on the fact that "Kant himself leaves his real idea of it undetermined and unthematized."[14]

In 2011, moreover, in an essay on *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Gilles Blanc-Brude had observed that "despite Kant's interest in the analysis of obscure representations, [...] this sort of psychology of the unconscious [...] is barely sketched out and similarly left to posterity."[15] On the other hand, if Carl Rabstejnek places Kant among the "Key Contributors" to the concept of the unconscious[16], for Sebastian Gardner it "cannot [...] be attributed a direct Kantian origin," although it is possible to find in Kant "the seeds of [...] relevant later developments."[17] Opinions, as we can see, not unambiguous, testifying to an enduring difficulty and perplexity in recognizing the unconscious as a relevant problem for Kant.

---

[11] Ibid.

[12] Pietro Giordanetti, Riccardo Pozzo, Marco Sgarbi (eds.), *Kant's Philosophy of the Unconscious*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2012.

[13] Ibid., p. 3.

[14] Ibid., p. 2. Birgit Althans and Jörg Zirfas characterize Kant's philosophy of the unconscious as "unfinished" (Cf. Althans, Zirfas, *Die unbewusste Karte*, p. 72).

[15] Gilles Blanc–Brude, *L'*Anthropologie du point de vue pragmatique *est-elle une psychologie?*, in S. Grapotte, M. Lequan, M. Ruffing, (éds.), *Kant et les sciences. Un dialogue philosophique avec la pluralité des savoirs*, Vrin, Paris 2011, p. 321.

[16] Carl V. Rabstejnek, *History and Evolution of the Unconscious Before and After Sigmund Freud*, www.HOUD.info, 2011, p. 9.

[17] Cf. Sebastian Gardner, *The unconscious: transcendental origins, Idealist metaphysics and psychoanalytic metapsychology*, in N. Boyle, L. Disley, K. Ameriks (eds.), *The Impact of Idealism. The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, 4 voll., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013, I, in part. pp. 134-138.

Symptoms of a change in trend, however, can already be detected in the pages that Alfred Schöpf[18] and Rosemarie Sand[19], among many possible examples, devote to Kant's position. And nonetheless, only later, with the works of Johannes Gstach[20] , Tobias Schlicht and Albert Newen[21] , and with the inclusion of the entries *klare/dunkle Vorstellung* and *Unbewußtsein* in the latest *Kant-Lexikon*[22], does the awareness of the problem seem to know a certain expansion. In this context, Kant may "become" even "the most significant modern philosopher [...] to lay the foundation for the concept of unconscious thought in the science of psychoanalysis."[23]

On the wave of this increasingly widespread academic recognition, to which Yibin Liang[24] has most recently contributed, we also want to place the present thesis work. Our aim, then, is first of all to further highlight the scope of the Kantian conception of the non-conscious, highlighting its specific *novum* with respect to previous elaborations: *novum* which, as we shall see, has to do with the structural and revolutionary principles of Kant's own philosophy.

On the other hand, we will try to show the transversality of Kant's interest in the obscurity of the soul, which uniformly, though often implicitly, runs through the areas investigated from time to time: in this sense, Kant's unconscious is indeed characterized as a *border phenomenon* (*Grenz-phänomen*)[25]. Finally, we point to the recent chapter compiled by Chong-Fuk Lau for the *Palgrave Kant Handbook*[26], where the problem of unconscious representations is

---

[18] Alfred Schöpf, *Philosophische Grundlagen der Psychoanalyse. Eine wissenschaftshistorische und wissenschaftstheoretische Analyse,* Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 2013, pp. 19-32.

[19] Rosemarie Sand, *The Unconscious without Freud*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham 2013, pp. 63-66.

[20] Johannes Gstach, *Die Seele und ihre dunkle Seite. Zur Entwicklungs–geschichte der Idee des "Unbewussten,"* in M. Fürstaller, W. Datler, M. Wininger (Hrsg.), *Psychoanalytische Pädagogik: Selbstverständnis und Geschichte*, Barbara Budrich, Opladen-Berlin-Toronto 2015, pp. 71–93.

[21] Tobias Schlicht, Albert Newen, *Kant and Cognitive Science Revisited*, "History of Philosophy & Logical Analysis," XVIII, 1 (2015), pp. 87-113.

[22] Marcus Willaschek, Jürgen Stolzenberg, Georg Mohr, Stefano Bacin (Hrsg.), *Kant–Lexikon*, 3 voll., De Gruyter, Berlin–Boston 2015, III, p. 2391 and pp. 2572-2573.

[23] John S. Hendrix, *Unconscious Thought in the Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*, in Id., *Unconscious Thought in Philosophy and Psychoanalysis*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2015, p. 148.

[24] Cf. in part. Yibin Liang, *Kant on Consciousness, Obscure Representations and Cognitive Availability*, "The Philosophical Forum," XLVIII, 4 (2017), pp. 345-368.

[25] Cf. Althans, Zirfas*, Die unbewusste Karte*, p. 72.

[26] Chong–Fuk Lau, *Kant's Concept of Cognition and the Key to the Whole Secret of Metaphysics*, in M.C. Altman (ed.), *The Palgrave Kant Handbook*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2017, pp. 117-137.

considered extensively. On the wave of this growing, though not yet unanimous, academic recognition, we would also like to place the present research.

Acknowledgements

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to sincerely thank all those who have followed my research over the years with incomparable competence and generosity, providing me with valuable advice and suggestions, which I hope I have been able to treasure, at least in part: Professors Giovanni Bonacina and Francesco Cerrato, who have never failed to offer me their wise encouragement; Professor Heiner Klemme, who welcomed me as an auditor to his Kantian seminar at the University of Halle and provided decisive support for my joint doctoral application; Professors Claudio La Rocca and Marco Sgarbi, reviewers of the thesis, with whom I had the opportunity to discuss fundamental aspects of the work and who allowed me to make essential corrections. I would also like to thank my girlfriend Anna-Lena, because her unconditional closeness, patience, and love were essential in helping me overcome the difficult moments. Finally, I would like to thank my parents and my brother Christian, who never stopped believing in me.

In writing every page of my thesis, I was always fully aware that without their help I would not have been able to complete my research project.

3. Kant's sources

3.1 The origin of the question: Leibniz *contra* Descartes

3.1.1 The Meditationes de Cognitione, Veritate et Ideis

To properly frame the Kantian conception of unconscious mental activity, it seems necessary to recall its main theoretical antecedents. We shall proceed, therefore, to an examination of the philosophies that, beginning with the Leibnizian one, have rejected the Cartesian idea that the soul, as *res cogitans*, would be co-extensive with consciousness.

In Article 45 of the first part of the *Principia Philosophiae*, Descartes famously defined what should be meant respectively by *clear* and *distinct* perception:

> I call a perception 'clear' when it is present and accessible to the attentive mind – just as we say that we see something clearly when it is present to the eye's gaze and stimulates it with a sufficient degree of strenght and accessibility. I call a perception 'distinct' if, as well as being clear, it is so sharply separated from all other perceptions that it contains within itself only what is clear.[27]

These Cartesian claims, the result of a reworking of notions from late Scholasticism[28], immediately sparked a wide-ranging debate on the theory of knowledge and ideas. Among the main figures in this debate, Leibniz occupies a particularly prominent position. In a 1699 letter to the Scottish theologian Thomas Burnett, Leibniz makes the following remark: It seems to me that my conception of these terms, clear and distinct, is not very far from the meaning of Descartes, who put them into vogue. However, I admit that this celebrated author somewhat overused these ideas."[29] He adds then, shortly afterwards:

---

[27] René Descartes, *Principia Philosophiae* (1644), in *Œuvres de Descartes*, éd. par Charles Adam et Paul Tannery, 12 voll., Vrin, Paris 1965, VIII [AT]; Eng. Trans. *Principles of Philosophy*, in J. Cottingham, D. Murdoch, R. Stoothoff (eds.), *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, 3 voll., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2012, I, pp. 177-291: pp. 207-208 [PWD].

[28] See Stephan Meier-Oeser, *The Intersubjective Sameness of Mental Concepts in Late Scholastic Thought (and some Aspects of its Historical Aftermath)*, in G. Klima (ed.), *Intentionality, Cognition and Mental Representation in Medieval Philosophy*, Fordham University Press, New York 2015, pp. 287-322; Norman Wells, *Descartes' Idea and Its Sources*, "American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly", 67 (1993), pp. 513-535.

> Whether we talk about ideas or notions, whether we talk about distinct ideas or definitions (at least when the idea is not absolutely primitive), it is the same thing. And those who decide on the claim of their ideas say nothing unless they explain them and come to reason according to the rules of Logic.[30]

Leibniz is here referring to his early work entitled *Meditationes de Cognitione, Veritate et Ideis*, published in the November 1684 issue of the Leipzig journal *Acta Eruditorum*[31]. To appreciate the significance and influence of this contribution in later german philosophy, at least up to Kant, it is instructive to recall what Herder wrote about it in his final work, *Adrastea*:

> For the doctrine of reason, [...] Leibniz worked out a *map of ideas*, which he illuminated, as it were, with obscure, distinct, clear, highly luminous colors. In the school of Wolff-Baumgarten it became the model map, to which the most excellent observations were subsequently added, applying it also to morals and the arts; just as Leibnitz himself had then preceded it in his *Essay on the human understanding* with the manifold applications of these degrees of clarity of ideas.[32]

In his *Meditationes*, indeed, Leibniz sets out his conception of the degrees or types of knowledge, representing it in an ascending scale that proceeds from *cognitio obscura* to *cognitio intuitiva*. "Knowledge", he states, is first and foremost "either obscure or *clear* (*vel obscura, vel clara*)"; clear knowledge, in turn, is "confused or *distinct*; and distinct knowledge either inadequate or *adequate*; the latter still is symbolic or *intuitive*." If adequate knowledge is also intuitive, finally, "it would be absolutely perfect"[33] – something reserved for the divine mind. Each stage, moreover, is defined according to a logical criterion, related to the possibility of recognizing, in the representation (or *notio*) of an object, sufficient marks to distinguish it from others. In this sense:

> a notion which is not sufficient for recognizing the thing represented is *obscure*, as, for example, if whenever I remember some flower or animal I once saw, I cannot do so sufficiently well for me

---

[29] *Briefwechsel zwischen Leibniz und Thomas Burnett de Kemney (1695-1714)*, in C.I. Gerhardt (Hrsg.), *Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, 7 voll., Weidmann, Berlin 1880, III, pp. 149-329: p. 247 [G].

[30] G III, p. 248.

[31] Leibniz*, Meditationes de Cognitione, Veritate et Ideis* (1684), in G IV; Eng. Trans. *Meditations on Knowledge, Truth and Ideas*, in R. Ariew, D. Garber (eds.), *G.W. Leibniz: Philosophical Essays*, Hackett, Indianapolis 1989, pp. 23-27 [AG].

[32] Johann G. Herder, *Adrastea*, in M. Bollacher, G. Arnold (Hrsg.), *Werke in 10 Bänden*, Deutscher Klassiker, Frankfurt am Main 1985-2002, X, p. 453.

[33] AG, p. 23.

to recognize that flower or animal when presented and to distinguish it from other nearby flowers or animals.[34]

In contrast, knowledge is said to be clear "when I have the means for recognizing the thing represented."[35] Announced, in these lines, is that nexus between clarity of knowledge and the act of distinguishing that we shall see to be one of the pillars of the conceptualization of consciousness – and thus of its absence – at least until Kant. A clear representation, then, is confused, "when I cannot enumerate one by one marks sufficient for differentiating a thing from others"[36], distinct, if I succeed in this operation.

This reformulation of epistemology, the discussion of which concerning further degrees we may now omit, is understood by Leibniz as a critical reaction toward the then dominant approach, dating back to Descartes, who had assumed the clarity and distinctness of ideas as the indubitable criterion of their truth. Indeed, in the *Discourse on the Method*, the rule is famously stated that "everything we conceive very clearly and very distinctly is true," and therefore "our ideas or notions, being real things and coming from God, cannot be anything but true, in every respect in which they are clear and distinct."[37]

According to Leibniz, this "famous principle" is as abused as it is useless, since it postulates the clarity and distinctness of ideas as consequences from God's perfection, rather than grounding them on the plane of conceptual analysis. Only on this logical basis, however, can it be determined whether an idea is true or false: in the absence of the above criteria, as in the case of the Cartesians, it often happens that "things seem clear and distinct that are instead obscure and confused."[38]

In addition to this, the Leibnizian conception implies a profound revaluation of the lower degrees of the cognitive *continuum*, admitting the epistemological legitimacy of obscure and clear-confused representation. This means, we shall soon see: the possibility of non-conscious representations. In the Cartesian perspective, in effect, according to the rule stated above,

---

[34] AG, pp. 23-24.

[35] AG, p. 24.

[36] AG, p. 24.

[37] Descartes, *Discours de la Méthode* (1637), in AT VI; Eng. Trans. *Discourse on the Method*, in PWD, I, pp. 111-115: p. 130.

[38] AG, p. 26.

whatever presents itself to the mind as not perfectly clear and distinct, whatever is obscure or confused, is deemed false or deceptive. In essence, it is not even a thought:

> Thus, if we frequently have ideas containing some falsity, this can happen only because there is something confused and obscure in them, for in that respect *they participate in nothingness*, that is, they are in us in this confused state only because we are not wholly perfect.[39]

The obscurity of our mental acts thus stems from our cognitive error, or, as it is put in the *Principles of Philosophy*, from the fact that we delude ourselves that we perceive something that we have in fact not sufficiently thought about. Thought, moreover, is conceived by Descartes as "everything which we are aware of as happening within us, in so far as we have awareness of it (*illa omnia, quae nobis consciis in nobis fiunt, quatenus eorum in nobis conscientia est*)"[40].

As is well known, and although some recent studies attempt to problematize this thesis, the Cartesian philosophy of mind is based on the identification of thought and consciousness[41]. If, then, on the one hand, to think something is to think it clearly and distinctly, and if, moreover, thought is essentially and necessarily conscious thought, it goes without saying that clarity and distinction must imply consciousness of the thing represented.

---

[39] PWD, I, p. 130.

[40] PWD, I, p. 195.

[41] This interpretation, although widely accepted, has been variously challenged in recent secondary literature. In particular, several scholars have acknowledged the possibility of unconscious mental activity even in Descartes's thought. One may think, for instance, of Lilli Alanen, according to whom, in Descartes, "the equation of the terms 'thought' and 'consciousness' is [...] problematic for more reasons than one". For istance, she argues, "although he agrees that 'it is self-evident there can be nothing in the mind, in so far as it is a thinking thing, of which it is not aware' (AT VII 246, CSM II 171), he immediately qualifies this by pointing out that 'we cannot have any thought of which we are not aware at the very moment when it is in us' but since many thoughts are not retained in memory, we are not aware of them. We can have thousands of thoughts in an hour, and countless thoughts that occur while we are sleeping, or even at the fetal stage, that we cannot remember having ever noticed".

Such unperceived thoughts, Alanen concludes, "have more in common with Leibniz's *petites perceptions* than with the paradigmatic clear and distinct Cartesian thoughts" (L. Alanen, *Descartes's concept of mind*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) 2003, pp. 82-83). The theory of *petites perceptions* will be discussed in the next section. On the problem of a "Cartesian unconscious", see also: Anna M. Belgrado, *Uno spazio per l'inconscio? Memoria e passioni in Descartes*, "Rivista di Storia della Filosofia", 61, 4 (2006), pp. 837-871; Matthew C. Eshleman*, The Cartesian Unconscious*, "History of Philosophy Quarterly," 24, 2 (2007), pp. 169-187; Xavier Kieft, *Le problème de l'inconscient selon Descartes***,** "Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger", 132, 3 (2007), pp. 307-321. A fundamental, albeit dated, overview is offered by Geneviève Rodis-Lewis in *Le problème de l'inconscient et le cartésianisme*, PUF, Paris 1950.

This correlation, which remains implicit in Descartes, will be explicitly affirmed and – as it were, *canonized* – in Christian Wolff's psychology, by means of the formula "ex claritate perceptionum partialium nascitur apperceptio"[42].

3.1.2 Perceiving without apperception: the doctrine of "petites perceptions"

On the other hand, the cognitive rehabilitation of the obscure cognition allows Leibniz to challenge the equivalence between the thought of something and the consciousness-clarity of its perception, and consequently to justify the existence of unconscious mental contents, as *petites perceptions*[43], that is: representations too minute to be individually noticed by the mind. These perceptions, however, do not fail to manifest their effect in aggregate form, as pointed out in the famous preface to the *Nouveaux Essais sur l'entendement humain*. In expressing his disagreement with the claim that there is "nothing that we do not always currently apperceive"[44], Leibniz affirms that:

> there are hundreds of indications leading us to conclude that at every moment there is in us an infinity of perceptions, unaccompanied by awareness or reflection; that is, of alterations in the soul itself, of which we are unaware because these impressions are either too minute and too numerous, or else too unvarying, so that they are not sufficiently distinctive on their own. But when they are combined with others they do nevertheless have their effect and make themselves felt, at least confusedly, within the whole.[45]

---

[42] Christian Wolff, *Philosophia rationalis sive Logica methodo scientifica pertractata* (1728), in Id., *Gesammelte Werke* (II Abt., Bd. 1), ed. by J. École, Olms, Hildesheim 1983, § 20, p. 16 [Logica].

[43] Among the many contributions on the theory of „petites perceptions", see at least Tanehisa Otabe, *Der Begriff der "petites perceptions" von Leibniz als Grundlage für die Entstehung der Aesthetik*, JTLA, vol. 35 (2010), pp. 41-53; Sebastian Bender, *Leibniz and the 'petites réflexions'*, „Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie", 102, 4 (2020), pp. 619-645; Ralf Simon, *„Petites perceptions" und ästhetische Form*, in W. Li, M. Meier (Hrsg.), *Leibniz in Philosophie und Literatur um 1800*, Olms, Hildesheim-Zürich-New York 2016, pp. 203-230. For the Augustinian derivation of the concept, see Johann Kreuzer, *"Petites perceptions". Über Hintergründe eines Theorems bei Leibniz*, in C. Hubig, H. Poser (Hrsg.), *Cognitio humana – Dynamik des Wissens und der Werte*, XVII. Deutscher Kongress für Philosophie, Leipzig 1996, II, pp. 974-981; Id., *Petites perceptions e identità della coscienza in Leibniz*, in P. Giordanetti, G. Gori, M. Mazzocut-Mis (a cura di), *Il secolo dei Lumi e l'oscuro*, Mimesis, Milano-Udine 2008, pp. 209-224.

[44] Leibniz, *Nouveaux Essais sur l'entendement humain* (1714/1756), in G V; Engl. Trans. *New Essays on Human Understanding*, ed. by P. Remnant and J. Bennett, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1996, p. 25 [NE].

[45] NE, p. 27.

It should be emphasized here how the non-conscious is essentially conceived as that which is not, or at least not yet, *noticed*, that is, which escapes the mind's attention at present. Thus, for Leibniz, if it is true – as Descartes thought – that our mind always thinks or perceives, nevertheless it does not always perceive to perceive or, rather, according to the notion he himself made famous, it does not always "apperceive" its contents. In his *Principles of Philosophy or Monadology*, in this regard, the introduction of the famous distinction between perception, as an unreflective mental act, and "apperception or consciousness," is followed by the statement that the Cartesians "have failed badly", since "they took no account of the perceptions that we do not apperceive."[46]

As has been noted, at the heart of Leibnizian philosophy of mind can be discerned the idea of a "quantitative threshold", below which lie representations that are only perceivable in a confused, aggregate form. In this regard, both the structure of the self and that of the natural world follow the fundamental conception of the *continuum*, in which each successive stage, corresponds to a greater degree of awareness and perfection[47]. In this sense, the same *lex continuitatis* that governs creation in its entirety for Leibniz applies at the psychological level: it is no coincidence that each simple substance or monad constitutes, in the terms of the *Monadology*, a "perpetual living mirror of the universe."[48]

In contrast to Descartes' dualistic perspective, for which only one type of mental substance, *res cogitans*, is given, for Leibniz there are three types of immaterial substances: simple monads (or entelechies), endowed only with perception, and thus incapable of consciousness; souls, capable of conscious sensation; and spirits, the only ones capable of reason and reflection. Small perceptions, then, insofar as they express a "necessary pre-cognition,"[49] a sensitive "I know not what" from which knowledge begins, also determine the bond that God has established between creatures.

---

[46] Leibniz*, Principes de la philosophie ou monadologie* (1714), in G VI; Eng. Trans. *The Principles of Philosophy, or, the Monadology*, in AG, pp. 213-225: p. 214. See on this Johannes Oberthür, *Verdrängte Dunkelheit des Denkens. Descartes, Leibniz und die Kehrseite des Rationalismus*, in Gödde, Buchholz (Hrsg.), *Das Unbewusste*, pp. 35-69.

[47] On the importance of the principle of continuity for Leibnizian theory of consciousness, see Larry M. Jorgensen, *The Principle of Continuity and Leibniz's Theory of Consciousness*, "Journal of the History of Philosophy", 12 (2009), pp. 223-248.

[48] AG, p. 220.

[49] Adler*, Fundus animae*, p. 199.

In this sense, they find a metaphysical foundation, which rests on the very nature of *vis repraesentativa* of the soul-monad: this, in fact, represents itself the entire universe, but through the particular perspective of its own body: the result is that the representation is "only confused as to the details of the whole universe," and can only be distinct "for a small portion of things."[50] Thus, the confused perception, however lacking on the epistemological level, thus assumes a central role on the metaphysical level, where it founds the universal harmony that mutually determines the monads, differentiating them with respect to the Creator, to whom alone it is given to perceive everything clearly and distinctly.

From this perspective – according to the *New Essays – petites perceptions* prove "more efficacious than we think."[51] Indeed, they, at the very moment they ground individual identity, as mediums of the interconnectedness of different psychic states over time, also serve as unconscious motives for our actions. It is precisely unconscious perceptions, in fact, "that determine us on many occasions, without our thinking about it."[52] Thus, a complex characterization of the unconscious emerges, in which, moreover, the monads are distinguished according to the degree of clarity of their perceptions.

Monads are indeed divided into three categories: the so-called simple monades, the souls and the spirits. To each class corresponds a peculiar ability of perception, hence a different degree of perfection of *vis repraesentativa*. Which also means, as we shall see, a different degree of awareness of one's mental contents.

Let us start, of course, from the lowest degree, which, playfully, constitutes the most interesting for us. Leibniz starts from a psychological-empirical assumption. That is, the fact that sometimes animals – here to be understood in the broad sense, including human beings – are in the state of simple living beings, in which the souls correspond precisely to simple monads (*simples Monades*). This condition occurs, Leibniz writes, "when their perceptions are not so distinct that they can be remembered (as in the state of deep sleep devoid of dreams, or of a fainting spell)," in which case they may even be "entirely confused *(entierement*

[50] AG, p. 220.

[51] NE, p. 28.

[52] NE, p. 29.

confuses)."[53] The empirical observation of the existence of simple monads, which Leibniz also calls "bare monads"[54], thus leads him to admit unconscious perceptions.

From this circumstance, Leibniz is prompted to formulate or, rather, reformulate, after the *Nouveaux essais*, his famous distinction between *perception (perception*) and apperception (*apperception*)[55]. If the former designates the inner state, common to every substance, by which the monad represents external things to itself, apperception "is the *consciousness* or reflective knowledge of that inner state," which conversely "is not given to all souls," nor does it represent a stable condition of being[56].

3.2 Towards a "Science" of the Soul: Wolff as Innovator of Psychology

One of the fundamental characteristics of Wolff's psychology, as well as one of the most decisive and influential innovations it introduced, is the distinction between empirical psychology and rational psychology[57]. With this distinction, as is well known, Wolff effectively established *psychologia empirica* as a somewhat autonomous discipline[58].

---

[53] AG, p. 219.

[54] AG, p. 216.

[55] AG, p. 216. Recently, Gil Morejón has pointed out that the distinction between perception and apperception would not be introduced for the first time by Leibniz, but is already found in a 1672 work by an author familiar to him, the physicist Ignace-Gaston Pardies (G. Morejón, *The Unconscious of Thought in Leibniz, Spinoza, and Hume*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2022, p. 5, note 9). Indeed, in § 90, Pardies argues that "sometimes we also have perceptions (*perceptions*) that do not carry with them these strong reflections, and where we perceive, without perceiving that we perceive (*où nous appercevons, sans nous appercevoir que nous appercevions*)" (Pardies, *Discours de la connoissance des bestes*, p. 175).

For a discussion of the problem within the dispute with the Cartesians, see Sophie Roux, *Pour une conception polémique du cartésianisme. Ignace-Gaston Pardies et Antoine Dilly dans la querelle de l'âme des bêtes*, in D. Kolesnik-Antoine (éd.), *Qu'est-ce qu'être cartésien?*, ENS Editions, Lyon 2013, pp. 315-337 and Evan Thomas, *Animals and Cartesian Consciousness: Pardies vs. the Cartesians*, "Journal of Modern Philosophy", 2 (2020) 1, pp. 1-17.

[56] See Leibniz, *Principes de la nature et de la grâce fondés en raison* (1714), in G VI; Eng. Trans. *Principles of Nature and Grace, Based on Reason*, in AG, pp. 206-212: p. 208.

[57] See Charles Corr, *Wolff's distinction between empirical and rational psychology*, "Studia Leibnitiana Supplementa", 14 (1975), pp. 195-215. On Wolff's psychology in general see at least Jean-François Goubet, Oliver-Pierre Rudolph (Hrsg.), *Die Psychologie Christian Wolffs. Systematische und historische Untersuchungen*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2004; Saulo Araujo, Thiago C. Ribeiro Pereira, Thomas Sturm (eds.), *The Force of an Idea: New Essays on Christian Wolff's Psychology*, Springer, Cham 2021.

[58] Cf. Wolf Feuerhahn, *Comment la psychologie empirique est elle-née?*, "Archives de Philosophie", 65, 1 (2002), pp. 47-64; Soo Bae Kim, *Die Entstehung der kantischen Anthropologie und ihre Beziehung zur empirischen Psychologie der Wolffschen Schule*, Lang, Frankfurt a.M. 1994, p. 35. See also Hans-Jürgen Engfer,

Whereas rational psychology deals with the nature of the soul, its metaphysical essence, empirical psychology – also part of metaphysics – addresses those aspects of the mind that can be studied through observation and experience. Nevertheless, the connection between the two is strongly emphasized. In § 55 of the *Anmerckungen* to *German Metaphysics*, Wolff explains the significance of the empirical investigation of the soul, conducted in the third chapter of the work, in the following terms:

> From what I have said here about the soul, we learn to explain in an understandable way why this or that thought comes to mind to us or to another, and why this or that appetite arises in us. And from this it is possible to explain the modifications of the soul as, in physics, the modifications that occur in nature are increasingly explained. This is not only pleasant in itself, but can be used in many ways.[59]

With his doctrine of the soul, therefore, Wolff ultimately intends to investigate the *why* of its functioning, to give an account of it, not limiting himself to a mere description of its operations. The empirical-observational moment, therefore, however fundamental, constitutes only the first part of the investigation. In this sense, the parallel with physics certainly testifies to the ambition to extend the application of the scientific method to this field of philosophy as well, even if this does not make psychology an experimental science in the modern sense of the term.

Rather, Wolff reiterates, it is a "science aimed at establishing principles through experience, with which we can account for the things that are in the human soul"[60]. The goal is to identify a legality specific to the mental realm through a theory of the faculties and dispositions that we can observe in it. The soul, in fact – says the *Ausführliche Nachricht* –

> has its own laws, according to which its modifications occur in accordance with its essence, just as bodies have the laws of motion, according to which their modifications occur in accordance with their essence.[61]

Von der Leibnizschen Monadologie zur empirischen Psychologie Wolffs, „Il cannocchiale", 2-3 (1989); now in *Nuovi studi sul pensiero di Christian Wolff*, hrsg. von S. Carboncini und L. Cataldi Madonna, Olms, Hildesheim 1992, pp. 193-215.

[59] Wolff, *Anmerckungen über die vernünfftige Gedancken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen*, in Id., *Gesammelte Werke* (hrsg. von Jean École *et al.*, Georg Olms, Hildesheim 1968), I Abt., Bd. 3, § 55 [ADM].

[60] Wolff, *Psychologia empirica* (1732), in Id., *Gesammelte Werke*, II Abt., Bd. 5, § 1 [PE].

[61] Wolff, *Ausführliche Nachricht von seinen eigenen Schrifften* (1726), in Id., *Gesammelte Werke*, I Abt., Bd. 9, § 93 [AN].

According to Wolff, this constitutes a new undertaking that is not without difficulties[62]. He is well aware, in fact, that he is marking an important advance in the psychology of his time, in which, until then, "it was considered almost impossible to philosophize in the way we are accustomed to doing with physical entities"[63].

In fact, the very possibility of knowing the soul and its operations in some way had long been the subject of debate, and Descartes' famous thesis that nothing can be known more easily and clearly than the mind, with the related assumption that its essence coincides with thought, had aroused, together with the approval of his followers, very strong opposition. It seems appropriate, then, in order to better evaluate Wolff's position and his contribution, to briefly recall at least the most significant and influential ones, including those on Wolff himself: namely, those of Nicholas Malebranche, John Locke, and Leibniz himself.

3.2.1 The knowledge of the soul in Malebranche, Locke, and Leibniz

The interest in the problem of the knowledge of the mind, together with a more broadly psychological and anthropological concern, takes on increasing significance in the philosophies of the late seventeenth century[64]. As for Malebranche, whom Wolff knows and quotes extensively[65], reference should be made above all to what he writes in *Elucidation 11*[66] of *The Search after Truth*, aiming to demonstrate the thesis that "we have no clear idea of our soul, but only consciousness or inner feeling"[67]. According to Malebranche, in fact, our knowledge of the soul is completely lacking and imperfect, and it is only possible to know what we feel

---

[62] Indeed, Wolff states, it is not „within the capacity of all to apply the level of attention necessary to comprehend the very foundation of truth" (AN, § 89).

[63] „Preface" to the Fourth Edition of *German Metaphysics* (1729), § 3.

[64] See Charles Mccracken, *Knowledge of the soul*, in D. Garber, M. Ayers, (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000, pp. 796-832.

[65] Already in a letter to Leibniz dated April 4, 1705, Wolff mentions Malebranche among his key philosophical sources, particularly in the field of metaphysics: „in Metaphysica, Cartesio, Ludovico de la Forge, Malebranchio, Poireto utor" (C.I. Gerhardt, *Briefwechsel zwischen Leibniz und Christian Wolff*, Schmidt, Halle 1860, p. 23). Later on, Wolff continues to engage – mostly critically – with Malebranche and his followers, as evidenced, for instance, in the *Anmerckungen* to the *German Metaphysics* (cf. ADM, §§ 242, 275, 286).

[66] Nicolas Malebranche, *Elucidation 11* (1678), in Id., *The Search after Truth. With Elucidations of the Search after Truth*, ed. by T.M. Lennon, P.J. Olscamp, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1997, p. 167 [ST].

[67] Ibid.

happening within ourselves. Only in God, in fact, can our spiritual nature become perfectly intelligible.

In our mortal and sinful condition, our experience of ourselves always remains obscure, so much so that, according to a famous expression, "we are nothing but darkness to ourselves."[68] Therefore, the conclusion that must be drawn is that both Descartes and his followers fall into a great error when they claim to know the nature of the soul with certainty, since in reality they do not have – nor can they have – any clear and distinct idea of it.

In view of this, it should be emphasized that Malebranche certainly shares Descartes' starting point: namely, the certainty of the existence of the soul. Not only that, but he also shares the assumption that "the more we know about the attributes of a substance, the better we know its nature"[69].

However, the objection here is that these attributes are never accessible to our knowledge. In fact, they would only be accessible if we had a clear idea of the soul: only from this could we derive its characteristics. But, as mentioned above, we cannot draw on this idea. Consequently, Malebranche argues, Cartesians usually derive the attributes of the soul from their idea of the body, and they make the latter coincide with that of extension. Given that, they say, the sensible qualities of heat, pain, and color are not among the attributes of extension, which are instead those of figure and movement; given, moreover, that there are only two kinds of substances, body and spirit, they conclude that those modifications must be attributes of the spirit or mind.

---

[68] Malebranche, *Elucidation 10* (1678), in ST, p. 154. On this issue, among the numerous studies, see Desmond Connell, *La passivité de l'entendement selon Malebranche*, in "Revue Philosophique de Louvain", Troisième série, 53 (1955), 40, pp. 542-565 ; Denis Kambouchner, *Des vraies et des fausses ténèbres. La connaissance de l'âme d'après la controverse avec Malebrance*, in J.-C. Pariente (éd.), *Antoine Arnauld. Philosophie du langage et de la connaissance*, Vrin, Paris 1995, pp. 153-90; Nicholas Jolley, *Malebranche on the Soul*, in S.M. Nadler, *The Cambridge companion to Malebranche*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2000, pp. 31-58; Dominik Perler, *Die Obskurität des Geistes. Zum Problem der Selbsterkenntnis bei Malebranche*, in U. Meixner, A. Newen (Hrsg.), *Seele, Denken, Bewusstsein: Zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Geistes*, De Gruyter, Berlin-New York 2003, pp. 197-231. With regard to the relationship with St. Augustine, see usefully Philippe Desoche, *Dic quia tu tibi lumen non es: Augustin et la philosophie malebranchiste de la conscience*, Corpus: "Revue de philosophie", 37 (2000), pp. 169-207.

[69] Malebranche, *Elucidation 11*, in ST, p. 168.

Faced with this reasoning by exclusion, from which no positive idea of the soul clearly emerges, Malebranche asks: “How can [the Cartesians] maintain that the nature of the soul is known more clearly than that of the body?”. He adds:

> The idea of body or extension is so clear that the whole world agrees on what it contains and what it excludes; and that of the soul is so confused that the Cartesians themselves argue every day whether modifications of color belong to it.[70]

Descartes and his followers therefore confuse what is knowledge “by consciousness” or feeling with knowledge “by clear idea.” He then continues with the following more subtle example:

> When I know that 2 plus 2 equals 4, I know it very clearly; but I do not know at all clearly what it is in me that knows it. I feel it, it is true; I know it by conscience or inner feeling. But I have no clear idea of it as I have of numbers, within which I can clearly discover the relationships.[71]

In order to be able to say, therefore, that one clearly knows a being and that one knows its nature, one must be able to compare it with others, of which one also has a positive idea. But this, in the absence of a clear idea of the soul or spirit, is obviously not possible.

Let us now turn to the perspective of John Locke, according to whom, even more radically, it is not possible to know the nature of any substance, whether material or spiritual. Sensations and reflection, the tools through which we know physical and spiritual things, provide us only with the attributes of bodies and intelligence, respectively.

If it is true, therefore, with Descartes, that we can intuitively know that we exist as thinking beings, we can in no way have an idea of what thinks in us. Therefore:

> The substance of Spirit is unknown to us; and so is the substance of Body, equally unknown to us: Two primary Qualities, or Properties of Body, viz. solid coherent parts, and impulse, we have distinct clear Ideas of: So likewise we know, and have distinct clear Ideas of two primary Qualities, or Properties of Spirit, viz. Thinking and a power of Action.[72]

---

[70] Malebranche, *Elucidation 11*, in ST, p. 169.

[71] Ibid.

[72] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* ed. by A. Campbell Fraser, Dover, New York 1959, II, XXIII, § 30.

We know the acts that the mind performs, but not the subject, the substratum to which they belong: it can only be inferred, insofar as those properties and operations cannot exist by themselves. Once again, therefore, it is impossible to know the essence of the soul with certainty.

Finally, according to Leibniz, Descartes is right in saying that we can have a *clear* idea of the nature of the mind, but he goes too far when he believes that this idea is also *distinct*. With this, Leibniz clearly rejects both Lockean and Malebranchian skepticism, as he believes that through self-reflection – or apperception – it is absolutely possible to perceive not only the identity of the mind over time, but also its unity at any given moment, since it is only thanks to this unity of consciousness that we can perceive different things at the same time.

This unity, according to Leibniz, is a primary and fundamental given, not derived from the union of parts. Identity through change and unity that cannot be further broken down constitute the characteristics of substance – or monad. Therefore, through self-reflection, the mind experiences itself as a simple substance. In addition to this, from the simplicity of substance it is easy to infer its incorporeality, since what is corporeal, insofar as it is extended, is necessarily composed of parts. Therefore, according to Leibniz, Descartes rightly conceives of the mind as a simple, unitary, and unextended substance.

However, this is not enough to have a distinct idea of it. As we saw above, according to Leibniz, we perceive something clearly when we can distinguish it from other things, but we perceive it distinctly only when we know all its characteristics. Descartes claims to identify the essence of the soul with thought, assuming it to be the main attribute of substance. But thought, Leibniz objects, is rather an activity, a succession of "thoughts", which in turn are composed of a multitude of perceptions that we could never know individually.

Furthermore, these thoughts or perceptions have different degrees and, depending on the degree, there are different types of substance. This is clearly demonstrated, among many other examples, in a passage from his correspondence with Arnould in 1687, where he questions the Cartesian thesis that there can be no substance other than the spirit, understood as a thinking thing. After expressing strong reservations on the subject, Leibniz states that "there is much more evidence that nature, which loves variety, has produced forms other than those that think."

He continues, echoing Malebranche:

since we do not have a distinct idea of thought, and we cannot prove that the notion of an indivisible substance is the same as that of a thinking substance, we have no reason to assert it. It is only through inner feeling that we know thought (as Father Malebranche has already observed); [...] It is an abuse to use confused ideas, however clear they may be, to prove that something cannot exist.[73]

In his later *Theodicy* (1710), Leibniz clarifies his perspective even further when he writes that "it is impossible for the soul to know distinctly its whole nature and to perceive how this infinite number of small perceptions, piled up or rather concentrated together, are formed.". For this to happen, it would have to know perfectly the entire universe contained within it; this means, he concludes, that "it would have to be a God."[74].

3.2.2 Consciousness, and the obscurity of the soul

In the theoretical architecture of *German Metaphysics*, the *Seelen-Lehre* occupies a privileged position, coming immediately after the opening chapter, which demonstrates "how we know that we are," and the following chapter, dedicated to the foundations of our knowledge and of all things in general. In stating the purpose he intends to achieve with it, Wolff states that he does not want for the moment "to show what the soul is and how changes take place in it" – which will be the subject of the rational part, in the fifth chapter – but only "to explain what we perceive of it by means of everyday experience." In particular, he adds:

I will not introduce anything more here than what anyone can cognize who attends to himself. This will serve as a basis for the derivation of other things that one cannot so easily see. In fact, we will seek distinct concepts of what we perceive in the soul and note from time to time some important truths that can be demonstrated.[75]

We will return below to the importance that Wolff attributes to the distinctness of concepts. As for the "important truths" that he already identifies in this part of the investigation, it is necessary to mention – among the others – the "rule of the image," introduced in § 238 to explain the relationship that links images to sensations and images to each other.

[73] G II, p. 121.

[74] G VI, 1, § 403, p. 357.

[75] DM, § 191; GM, p. 108.

According to this rule, when a present sensation has something in common with a sensation experienced in the past, the latter reappears in its entirety in the form of an image. Furthermore, every image reproduced in this way, if it in turn has elements in common with a sensation or image experienced previously, causes these to reappear, creating a chain of perceptions.

The importance of this rule is the subject of a specific note, which states that it is "a principal truth (*eine Haupt-Wahrheit*) that we know about the soul, since it explains many things and is also very useful in practice."[76] While acknowledging that it has already been used by others, Wolff believes that "its usefulness has not been sufficiently recognized, as it has been used less than it could be." However, this comes as no surprise to him, since:

> not only they have been immersed in the prejudice that nothing can be known distinctly about the soul, but they has also neglected, with regard to the things that occur in the soul, to investigate their reason and to treat the truths that belong to them in a mutual connection. If I had not remedied these errors, I would not, like others, have understood the importance of this rule.[77]

The "prejudice" referred to here is clearly the same as that discussed above, and Wolff is most likely referring primarily to the anti-Cartesian position of Malebranche and his followers, which was very influential at the time.

Added to this is the criticism of the failure to apply the logical-mathematical process, which is properly philosophical, to the psychological field, with the aim of seeking the reason for phenomena and their mutual connection. The rule of image, in fact, clearly presupposes the principle of sufficient reason.

With his work, as we saw above, Wolff believed he had remedied the errors of his predecessors by constructing a 'science' of the soul in the sense seen above. In this perspective, he even agreed with the Cartesian thesis that the soul is better known to us than the body, provided that, he emphasized, 'its opinion is well understood'. However, Wolff admits that Descartes himself "failed to clearly distinguish each faculty of the soul and to explain the modifications of the soul in an understandable way"[78]. This is precisely the task that Wolffian psychology sets itself.

---

[76] ADM, §74.

[77] ADM, § 74.

[78] „Preface" to the Fourth Edition of the *German Metaphysics* (1729), § 3.

According to Wolff, the human soul has both cognitive and volitional faculties, depending on whether we are simply aware of something or whether our awareness is accompanied by an inclination or desire for the object of our representation. Furthermore, in accordance with the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition, the structure of the soul consists of an upper and a lower part, from which the same division in the cognitive and volitional faculties derives[79].

Wolff ascribes clear and distinct representations to the *pars superior*, composed of intellect and will, and confused and obscure ones to the *pars inferior* – sense, memory, imagination. This is a theoretical framework that was to have a great influence among Wolff's followers, even among the less orthodox ones, such as Baumgarten, and was accepted in its fundamental lines even by his most important opponents and critics, such as Crusius.

3.3 Christian Wolff and the praise of distinctness

3.3.1 The critique of the Cartesian criterion of evidence

Among the many places in which Wolff confronts Descartes or the Cartesians, the *Annotations to the German Metaphysics*, which first appeared in 1724, take special prominence. In this work, in fact, explicit references to Cartesian thought are even more numerous than those to Leibniz's work. In § 92, in particular, Wolff points to "one of Descartes' greatest merits" as having reintroduced into philosophy the Platonic principle that prescribes "to turn the soul away from the senses" (*Platonis studium mentem a sensibus abducendi*)[80] .

It is of the utmost importance, in fact, "that we separate what we know distinctly in things [...] and abandon the images of the imagination, which we owe first to the senses." Thanks to

[79] With this distinction, Wolff adopts the partition of the soul already employed by "certain ancient philosophers" (ADM, § 142). In the *Ausführliche Nachricht*, however, after reiterating that the Ancients had long recognized it, Wolff significantly links this very distinction to the work of the Cartesian De la Forge: "Ich nehme aber den Unterscheid der Seele zwischen dem oberen und dem unteren Theile derselben bey beydem Vermögen auf das genaueste in acht, welcher von den Alten längst erkandt, und auch von einigen Cartesianern, z.B. dem *de la Forge* in seinem *Tractatu de mente humana* beybehalten worden: denn ich habe ihn von grosser Wichtigkeit, sowohl in der Logik, als in der Moral gefunden" („However, I take the distinction of the soul between the upper and the lower part into account in both faculties, which was long recognized by the ancients and also maintained by some Cartesians, e.g., *de la Forge* in his *Tractatus de mente humana*, for I have found it of greater importance, both in logic and in morality") (AN, § 90, p. 253).

[80] ADM, § 92.

this operation, which Descartes put back at the center, "philosophy has returned to its proper position." However, he continues,

> it would be good if all who wish to follow him also sufficiently understood whether they have distinction in their knowledge, and how they should seek it. So, a great deal of self-deception takes place here, too, as in all things, and this gives occasion to many fables that are laid on others as truth [...]. But precisely this effort to divert the soul from the senses is the most important (*das Vornehmste*) that I have lavished in philosophy, and impartial people recognize that my efforts on this point have not been in vain.[81]

In Wolff's view, Descartes failed to sufficiently explain how clear and distinct knowledge is achieved, once the senses are set aside. This is primarily because he thereby disqualified experience as the foundation and test-bed of every cognitive act.

According to Wolff, in fact, "turning the soul away from the senses" does not at all mean denying them any role in cognition. On the contrary, the senses provide the occasion for a concept of something to be formed. In this regard, in another annotation Wolff specifies that he does not at all despise sensible knowledge *per se*, but only the persistence "in the confused propositions and concepts of the senses". On the other hand, he continues, "I even demand that propositions must be taken from experience as principles of demonstration, in order that certainty in knowledge may be obtained."[82]

Not only that, but this would be "the most secure way"[83] to that end. Safer, it is meant, than the other way, which assumes principles of demonstration from concepts derived *a priori*, abstracting from definitions and axioms. Experience, then, plays a crucial role in that mathematical-demonstrative method that Wolff – like Descartes – considers the only adequate one should one aspire, in philosophy, to achieve the certainty of science[84].

And yet, experience is a source of knowledge *not immediately*, but only insofar as it is examined by reason: as, that is, repeated reflection on internal and external perceptions. In this sense, Wolff states that "the mathematical method consists in the careful exercise of logic (*in einer sorgfältigen Ausübung der Vernunft-Lehre*)."[85] Here, then, lies the fundamental limitation

---

[81] ADM, § 92.

[82] ADM, § 122bis.

[83] ADM., § 122bis.

[84] Given that philosophy must be science, in it "one must strive for absolute certainty (*studendum esse omnimodae certitudini*)" (Wolff, *Discursus praeliminaris de philosophia in genere*, in Logica, § 33, p. 15).

[85] AN, § 22, pp. 53-4. For the definition of experience see DM, § 325; GM, p. 113.

of Descartes. That is, not having understood that the *regulae* in themselves are not enough without constant exercise of them. Just as, for that matter, reason alone is insufficient unless it empirically verifies its results. Hence the *connubium rationis et experientiae*, which Wolff even considers "holy"[86].

As mentioned, we derive obscure and confused concepts from the senses. It is therefore necessary first to subject them to analysis: to "separate what we know distinctly in things," through attention. The reason why evidence and utility for life have been lacking in philosophy is identified by Wolff, in effect, in the fact that there have been no "determinate notions and propositions (*notiones ac propositiones determinatae*)."[87]

Wolff's entire philosophical quest, after all, is driven by the urgency, which then becomes a programmatic task, to counter the prevailing obscurity in the sciences and knowledge of his era[88] . It is, in his eyes, a serious cultural crisis, caused primarily by a persistent lack of intellect, on the one hand, and virtue, on the other. Regarding intellect, the "Preface" to the *German Metaphysics* notes that "distinct concepts, demonstrations and solid connections of truths have been lacking."

What has ultimately led to the "present unhappy times" is the neglect of the proper understanding and rigorous application of the aforementioned method, the structure of which reflects the proper functioning of the intellect. Descartes himself, "although he was a great mathematician," showed extreme frailty in both analysis and demonstration, where he even went so far as to deny the usefulness of the syllogism[89] . He considered, in Wolff's opinion, the intellect, or natural lumen, to be more "reliable" than it in fact is. He did not understand that in order to enable it to know with evidence, "the exercise must do more than the rules (*die Uebung muß mehr thun als die Regeln*)."[90]

---

[86] Cf. PE, § 497, p. 379; Logica, § 1232, p. 684. The unity of historical, i.e., empirical, and philosophical, or rational, knowledge is defined *per omnem philosophiam sanctum* (*Discursus praeliminaris*, § 12, p. 5). See Hans W. Arndt, *Rationalismus und Empirismus in der Erkenntnislehre Christian Wolffs*, in Schneiders (Hrsg.), *Christian Wolff (1679-1754)*, pp. 31-47.

[87] Cf. Logica, p. 11.

[88] Cf. Christian Wolff*, Vernünfftige Gedancken von den Kräfften des menschlichen Verstandes und ihrem Richtigen Gebrauch in Erkäntniss der Wahrheit (Deutsche Logik)* (1713), in Id., *Gesammelte Werke*, I Abt., Bd. 1, § 23 [DL].

[89] See DL, "Preface". Cf. DM, § 349.

[90] See DL, "Foreword to the third edition" (1722).

3.3.2 "The understanding is never pure": exercise and natural lumen

Having reached this point, the meaning of that "clarification effort" for which Wolff is credited should become more defined. In summary, we might say this: it involves making immediate concepts distinct, in a process that requires the constant exercise of attention to the individual components of representation. That is, there is a need to develop what Wolff calls an "ability of distinct knowledge (*eine Fertigkeit deutlicher Erkäntniß*)."[91] . Hence the importance of acquiring a certain virtue as a condition of the proper use of the intellect. For without a rigorous commitment to the analysis of concepts, neither correct demonstrations nor "solid connections of truths" through syllogisms are possible.

In other words, no certain and indubitable knowledge is possible. In this regard, the annotation to § 143 is interesting, in which Wolff discusses the fact that Descartes failed to determine, in the *Meditations*, the distinction between dream and truth. This would not be due, in the first place, to a lack of acumen or intellect, but rather to the fact that he "proceeded too quickly and did not reflect enough on the nature of the dream." And this despite the cautions he himself recommends:

> Indeed, he himself gave the rules that one should not rush into either judging or reflecting, but it went to him as is ordinarily wont to go to those who prescribe rules that are not sufficiently determined. He believed he was observing them, while he violated them.[92]

Again, then, the insufficiency of the Cartesian rules and their use. Descartes, on the other hand, correctly noted the difference between the representations of the imagination and those of the intellect. "While he was on such a good path," however, he stopped too early in the analysis, and "[granted] imagination a more extensive right than it is due."[93]

The distinction of concepts, in fact, increases only gradually as one pays attention to their parts and compares them with each other. In this consists reflection, as an intermediate faculty between the lower and higher parts of the soul. In his theory of concepts, Wolff follows quite closely the classification offered by Leibniz, in his *Meditationes de Cognitione, Veritate et Ideis*. Concepts are thus first divided into obscure and clear; clear ones into distinct and indistinct[94];

---

[91] DM, § 356.

[92] ADM, § 44.

[93] ADM, § 219.

[94] Wolff shows that he prefers the term *undeutlich*, "indistinct," to the more common *verworren*, "confused," as it further emphasizes the importance he attaches to *Deutlichkeit* and to higher degrees of cognition.

distinct ones into complete or incomplete, then into adequate or inadequate, up to the level of intuitive knowledge, which is the most perfect.

To know a thing means nothing more than to have distinct concepts of it, and the greater the degree of distinction, the better the knowledge. Conversely, confusion and obscurity represent an imperfection of knowing, a mere defect: the sign "that knowledge is not yet conducted to the highest degree."[95] In this sense, obscure representations are "the worst of all"[96], as, providing no knowledge, "we cannot make much of it (*haben wir damit nicht viel zu tun*)."[97]

Obscurity, moreover, also prevents the consciousness of representations, which is based precisely on their degree of clarity and distinction. And yet, unconscious, or obscure, representations remain for Wolff forms of representing in their own right: unlike what Descartes held. For according to the latter, thinking, understood as the totality of the operations of the soul, is always marked by consciousness.[98]

For Descartes, after all, to perceive something obscurely is tantamount to deceiving oneself, to not really perceiving, since "the light of nature, that is, the faculty of knowing given to us by God, can never draw any object that is not true, insofar as it is drawn from it, that is, insofar as it is clearly and distinctly perceived."[99] The validity of the criterion of evidence, therefore, has a theological foundation. It is through a divine gift, after all, that the human mind can recognize the truth of its perceptions directly, without the need for inference or reasoning. The intellect, therefore, guided by this inner light, is guaranteed from all error.

This is not at all true for Wolff, for whom the intellect, although a divine endowment[100], "is never entirely pure, but, as to distinction, there still remains much confusion and obscurity."[101]

---

[95] DM, § 281.

[96] DM, § 900.

[97] AN, § 91, p. 254.

[98] AT VIII, § 9; DPW, p. 195: "By the term 'thought', I understand everything which we are aware of as happening within us, in so far as we have awareness of it (*quatenus eorum in nobis conscientia est*). Hence, thinking is to be identified here not merely with understanding, willing and imagining, but also with sensory awareness". For an insightful comparison between Wolff and Descartes on consciousness and thinking see Heiner F. Klemme, *Denken und Bewusstsein bei René Descartes und Christian Wolff*, in D. Arbib, V. Carraud, E. Mehl, W. Schweidler (Hrsg.), *Mirabilis scientiae fundamenta. Das Erwachen der kartesischen Philosophie*, Karl Alber, Baden-Baden 2022, pp. 365-89.

[99] AT VIII, § 30; DPW, p. 203. Obscure ideas or notions, in this sense, "participate in nothingness" (AT VI; DWL, p. 130).

[100] See DL, "Preface".

[101] DM, § 285; GM, p. 112.

The lumen animae, which Wolff assumes in a philosophical rather than theological sense[102], is for him a *claritas* of perceptions that is achieved through the acquisition of a specific faculty to make the obscure clear[103]. No illumination immediate or innate, then: only reflective, methodical and rigorous exercise can gradually, and never completely, dissolve what Wolff, perhaps influenced by Nicolas Malebranche, calls „darkness of the soul (*tenebrae animi*)"[104].

We conclude then with the following *Anmerckung*, where he criticizes the "precipitation of the learned," pointing out how necessary it would be:

> that what is taught in theory should also be reflected in practice, that is, that the intellect is myopic and weak (*der Verstand blöde und schwach ist*); that, consequently, even in natural things it must first attain by suitable exercises a habit (*durch gehörige Ubungen eine Fertigkeit erreichen muss*) and that therefore it is impossible for the same to possess a habit if it has not yet performed the exercises required for the purpose.[105]

3.3.3 Obscurity as limit and obstacle

While in Leibniz's perspective, therefore, although marked by a lack of logical distinction from the higher degrees of cognition, obscure and confused perceptions retain a positive value as factors in the dynamic interconnectedness of monads. The same cannot be said of Wolff, who, assuming pre-established harmony only limitedly to the relationship between the soul and the body, cannot but conceive of the obscurity of representations as an absolutely negative and useless epistemological form.

In his *German Logic* (1713), Christian Wolff claims credit for bringing "clear light" to the metaphysics of his time, thereby eliminating the obscurity that reigned there. This obscurity, moreover, depended mainly on the difficulty in identifying in the object "what distinguishes it from other things"[106], namely: an insufficient number of notes to *recognize it*.

---

[102] Cf. PE, § 35, note.

[103] PE, § 35, where the soul is said to be enlightened "to the extent that it *acquires* the capacity to perceive things clearly (*quatenus acquirit facultatem res clare percipiendi*)".

[104] PE, § 36 and note.

[105] ADM, § 163.

[106] DL, § 23.

As can be seen, the definition of concept and, similarly, obscure representation traces back to Leibniz's *Meditationes*[107]. It must be said in this regard that the conception of unconscious representations in Wolff's school finds its fundamental reference in the early Leibnizian text, the *New Essays* being published only in 1765. As Patrick Leland has noted, however, "Wolff's appropriation of Leibniz's taxonomy in the *Deutsche Logik* restricted its application to consciously possessed representations."[108]

This is especially true of the Breslau thinker, who, unlike his followers, also distances himself from the monadological perspective. In this sense, Wolff seems to prefer to Leibnizian metaphysical monism a Cartesian dualistic conception. No longer, then, the monad as a single substance, but a soul-body parallelism that determines representations as modifications of sense organs. Through these modifications, we read in the *German Metaphysics*, "we are conscious of us and of other entities outside us."[109] Consciousness, in fact, is for Wolff a derived condition, proper to the *pars superior animae*, afferent to the intellect. What we first perceive, conversely, produces sensations that are not always accompanied by apperception.

In this sense, the unconscious pertains to the sphere of the sensible, that is, to a lower level in the state of the soul. Obscurity, in other words, arises where the "observation of the distinction in the manifold" is lacking[110]. And yet, the Wolffian 'physiological' conception entails an unprecedented restriction of the soul's representational activity, according to which it can represent only those objects that affect its sense organs, thus only *a part* of the universe. As for the formal aspect, on the other hand, the clarification of concepts is no longer bound primarily to the logical plane, but recalls the optical model of vision[111]. With this, ultimately, the obscure comes to be configured as a mere *defectus lucis*.

---

[107] In the preface, Wolff speaks of an "unexpected and great light" received from reading Leibniz's *Meditationes* (DL, „Preface"). See C. Leduc, *Les* Meditationes *de Leibniz dans la tradition wolffienne*, "Archives de Philosophie," vol. 76, no. 2 (2013), pp. 295-317. On the evolution of terminology in the post-Leibnizian context, cf. Patrick Leland, *Wolff, Baumgarten and the Technical Idiom of Post-Leibnizian Philosophy of Mind*, in K. Dunlop, S. Levey (eds.), *From Leibniz to Kant*, Series Logical Analysis and History of Philosophy, vol. 21 (2018), 129-148, according to whom the assumption of unconscious representations in Wolff is "a topic in need of further study" (p. 133n).

[108] Patrick Leland, *Unconscious Representations in Kant's Early Writings*, "Kantian Review", XXIII (2018), pp. 257-284: p. 260.

[109] DM, § 193.

[110] DM, § 201; GM, p. 109.

For one to perceive what goes on in the soul, Wolff argues, it is first and foremost necessary that one be self-conscious, since "we cannot perceive anything other than what we are conscious of."

In this sense, soul is now to be understood as "that entity which is conscious of itself and of other entities outside itself"[112]. However, this definition, which would seem to identify consciousness or self-consciousness as the essential character of the soul, should not mislead. Indeed, Wolff asserts:

> let no one think that I am looking for the essence of the soul in the consciousness of ourselves and other entities as external to us, and that, with the Cartesians, I wish to argue that there can be nothing in the soul of which it is not conscious; in fact, it will be shown later that the opposite is true.[113]

Wolff, therefore, unhesitatingly admits the possibility of nonconscious mental activity and, a little further on, justifies this anti-Cartesian assumption by discussing the definition of thought as a modification of the soul of which it is conscious.

The first thing we perceive about our soul when we pay attention to it, Wolff writes, is "that we are conscious of many entities as external to us. When this happens, we say that *we think*"[114]. Consciousness or, more precisely, "being conscious (*das Bewust seyn*)", is thus the hallmark of what is called thought. Since, as mentioned above, we can perceive of the soul only that of which we are conscious, Cartesians inferred from this that the soul can have no action other than thoughts, thus believing that "consciousness constitutes the whole essence of the soul".

Conversely, according to Wolff, not only can the soul have unconscious perceptions, but these can be derived through reasoning, precisely from what we are conscious of. Indeed, states Wolff :

> Right now, I cannot attend to anything other than what we are conscious of in ourselves, since I am determined to report only what we perceive of ourselves; but we can perceive nothing other

[111] Cf. DM, § 200. On this issue see P. Pimpinella, Sensus *and* Sensatio *in Wolff and Baumgarten*, in Id., *Wolff e Baumgarten. Studi di terminologia filosofica*, Olschki, Firenze 2005, pp. 47-52.

[112] DM, § 192; GM, p. 108.

[113] DM, § 193.

[114] DM, § 194; GM, p. 108.

than what we are conscious of. For if there is indeed more in us than what we are conscious of, we must derive it through reasoning—starting, precisely, from what we are conscious of .[115]

On the other hand – another essentially Leibnizian aspect – according to Wolff, the degree of consciousness of mental acts varies according to the degree of clarity in them.

Clarity, in turn, arises "from observing the distinction in the manifold (*aus der Bemerckung des Unterscheides im mannigfaltigen*)". In other words, if, while we are thinking, we can distinguish the thought object from others, we have clear thoughts; if we also distinguish in it the individual parts of which it consists, it will also be distinct. When this operation is not possible, and "we do not quite know what we are to do with what we think, our thoughts are obscure." One can discern, here, a further eloquent clue to Wolff's negative view of the obscure.

In §900 of the *German Metaphysics*, in outlining his conception of simple substances, obscure representations since they express the furthest psycho-cognitive level from distinctness:

all entities can be distinguished from one another only in degrees of representational force (§ 894): but the representations of the physical things of which the world consists are either clear or obscure, and those that are clear are either distinct or confused (§§ 198, 199, 206, 214); thus, the species of these entities, which possess a force to represent the world, are distinguishable in the following manner. The first species is that which represents the world obscurely, so that in the whole representation, which takes place at once, the smallest part cannot be distinguished. And these entities have the lowest degree of perfection, obscure representations being the worst of all (die allerschlechtesten). They are not even conscious of themselves (§ 731), and therefore have no sensation or other thoughts (§ 194).[116]

[115] DM, § 193. Cf. also ADM, § 85. Lancelot Whyte notes in this regard that Wolff „was possibly the first to state explicitly that nonconscious factors must be *inferred* from those of which we are conscious" (Lancelot L. Whyte, *The Unconscious Before Freud*,, Basic Books, New York 1960, p. 102). An idea that, as we will see, would have a significant influence on the Wolffian tradition – particularly on Georg Friedrich Meier – and will also play a central role in Kant's thought.

[116] DM, § 900.

3.4 The emancipation of the obscure: Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten

3.4.1 Confusio conditio veritatis

In this section we have to deal with the one who is unanimously considered the most important among Wolffian philosophers – although he was not Wolff's direct pupil[117] – to whom we owe a contribution of absolute relevance and influence with respect to the construction of a philosophical discourse on psychological *obscuritas* in the 18th century. We refer to Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, who interests us primarily as *Kant's Leitautor*[118], at least with respect to courses in logic and metaphysics, anthropology and ethics. Whose fame is mainly linked to the foundation of modern aesthetics as an autonomous philosophical discipline, characterized as a "science of sensible knowledge (*scientia cognitionis sensitivae*)"[119].

As we have seen, Wolff had regarded the refinement of the higher faculties and the pursuit of rational knowledge as the task and goal of philosophy. The understanding, it is true, is never free from remnants of obscurity, but nonetheless, if sufficiently exercised according to the rules of the mathematical-demonstrative method, it is undoubtedly capable of attaining certainty. The obscure, then, is understood as the main obstacle to this end, a defective element peculiar to the – even qualitatively – inferior cognitive faculties: an error that must be eliminated.

In this sense, Wolff makes himself a spokesman for a devaluative conception of the obscure-indistinct that was widely prevalent in the philosophy of the *Aufklärung*, and which therefore must have been well in Baumgarten's own mind as well, when, in the 1750 prologue to the *Aesthetics*, he includes among the possible objections to the new science precisely the thesis that "confusion is the mother of error (*confusio mater erroris*)."[120]

Let us see then the Baumgartenian response, which immediately offers us important hints for framing the innovative spirit of his contribution:

---

[117] Mario Casula, *A. G. Baumgarten entre G. W. Leibniz et Chr. Wolff*, in "Archives de Philosophie," 42 (1979), 4, pp. 547-574.

[118] The expression is in the subtitle of Clemens Schwaiger, *Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten – Ein intellektuelles Portrait. Studien zur Metaphysik und Ethik von Kants Leitautor*, frommann-holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 2011.

[119] Alexander G. Baumgarten, *Aesthetica/Ästhetik* (1750/58), hrsg. von D. Mirbach, 2 voll., Meiner, Hamburg 2007, § 14, p. 20 [AE].

[120] AE, § 7, p. 15.

> I answer, (a) [confusion] is an indispensable condition for the discovery of truth though, since nature does not make a leap from obscurity to distinction. From night, through aurora, one arrives at full noon; (b) one must take care of confusion precisely so that the many and so grave errors that are habitual in those who do not take care of it do not arise from it; (c) one does not recommend confusion, but one corrects knowledge, insofar as some confusion is necessarily mixed with it.[121]

Confusion is necessary for the discovery of truth. Already in this first, brief statement, much is condensed of the program of cognitive rehabilitation of the obscure that runs throughout Baumgarten's work. A statement that, by radically reversing Wolff's "reductionist" perspective, explicitly re-engages with Leibnizian theorizing, not without, however, developing it in an original way.

Indicative of this, moreover, is the metaphor that exemplifies the traditional succession of representative stages. Just as in the natural world only *ex nocte* and *per auroram* can the full light of day arise, so only from the richness of the depths of the soul, and through the clarity–confused dynamics of its development, can true knowledge ripen. We will return to these key–concepts shortly.

Let us only anticipate, here, that precisely in such a process of maturing and elevating the *fundus animae* Baumgarten will recognize, precisely in *Aesthetics*, the highest expression of the potential of the obscure. In order for this to happen, however, it is appropriate to "take care of confusion," which means: carefully exercising and thereby perfecting the lower faculties – no less than the higher ones – in order to avoid their misuse or deterioration, and making them capable of beauty. The perfecting *of cognitio sensitiva*, which coincides with beauty, is in fact the goal of aesthetics, as well as the task assigned to aesthetes, so that "we do not deprive ourselves of a talent assigned by God"[122].

Before moving on to the elucidation of the process we have alluded to, it is appropriate to clarify the assumptions – and also evidently the limits – of the Baumgartenian turn, which began in the youthful *Reflections on Poetry* (1735) and took shape especially in the section on *Empirical Psychology* of the *Metaphysics* (§§ 504-623), the fourth edition of which, as we know, Kant used as his textbook for forty years of lectures. A brief mention will also be made

[121] AE, § 7, p. 15.

[122] AE, § 12, p. 17.

of some passages from the *Ethica philosophica* of 1740, a text also chosen by Kant for decades of moral philosophy courses.

3.4.2 The emancipation of the obscure: analogon rationis and gnoseologia inferior

Baumgartenian reevaluation of the obscure must be read as part of a larger operation of rethinking the entire lower cognitive faculty and the kind of knowledge it expresses. In particular, Baumgarten soon notes the need to "fill a gnoseological deficit"[123], as Hans Adler happily put it: that is, to remedy the absence of a logic afferent to sensible knowledge, i.e., one that is in charge of guiding the lower faculties in their refinement, just as traditional logic directs the higher ones.

The Wolffian system, on this point, could hardly satisfy the young poet from Berlin. Rather, inspiration came from a pupil of Wolff's, G.B. Bilfinger, who in his *Dilucidationes philosophicae de Deo, anima humana, mundo*, had expressed the following wish:

> I wish there were people who could do, with regard to the faculties of feeling, imagining, attention, abstraction and memory, what that valiant Aristotle, now so disliked by all, did with regard to the understanding: that is, to bring back to a system (*in artis formam redigerent*) all that pertains to and is pertinent to directing and helping them in their use, just as Aristotle in the Organon ordered (*redegit in ordinem*) logic, that is, the faculty of demonstration.[124]

What is needed, then, is a "new Aristotle," so to speak, who can bring to system a very rich sphere of knowledge that has been singularly neglected, and which traditional logic – as *Vernunftlehre* – cannot deal with.

This arduous but necessary task is revived by Baumgarten in much the same terms. "Since psychology affords sound principles," we read in *Reflections on Poetry*, "we have no doubt that there could be available a science which might direct the lower cognitive faculty in knowing things sensately (*scientiam sensitive quid cognoscendi*)."[125]

---

[123] Adler, *Bodenlosigkeit als Grund*, p. 308.

[124] Georg B. Bilfinger, *Dilucidationes philosophicae de Deo, anima humana, mundo, et generalibus rerum affectionibus*, Tübingen 1725, reprinted. Olms, Hildesheim 1982, § 268, pp. 254-255.

[125] Alexander G. Baumgarten, *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* (1735), § 115 [Med]; *Reflections on Poetry*, Eng. Trans. by K. Aschenbrenner, W.B. Holther, University of California Press, Berkeley-Los Angeles 1954, p. 78 [RP].

It should be noted, incidentally, that the reference to the *principia firma* of psychology can only be a reference to Wolff and his new empirical doctrine of the soul, within the framework of which, incidentally, Baumgarten will include aesthetics in his *Metaphysics*. Nevertheless, as we shall now see, Baumgartenian empirical psychology greatly extends Wolff's treatment[126] , especially with regard to the part devoted to the lower faculty.

Recalling a distinction already proper to the Greeks and the Christian Fathers, in § 116 of the same text Baumgarten calls "aesthetic" (*aistheta*) and "noetic*" (noétha*) representations, respectively, the objects of the new science he undertakes to determine in his specific domain – which he renames *aesthetica* – and the objects of logic, studied through the higher faculty[127] . Within this framework, the task Baumgarten entrusts to the project of aesthetics is to radically re-evaluate sensible knowledge, thereby unhinging the vertical hierarchy of cognitive degrees, which destined it to a position of total subordination to its rational counterpart.

This is done through two theoretical operations, which Baumgarten presents in the *Metaphysica*. First, the quantitative reconfiguration of the complex of sensible faculties, significantly named *analogon rationis*. On the other, the discovery of a gnoseology of the obscure, which sheds light on the specific truth potential of the faculties themselves, so that they are no longer considered cognitively inferior to the rational faculties, but rather complementary to them or, rather, precisely, "analogous."

As for the first point, the four Wolffian faculties – sense, imagination, inventive faculty and memory – become as many as nine in Baumgarten, with the addition of foresight, judgment, presentiment and the characteristic faculty. As for the "emancipation of sensibility"[128] and its

---

[126] See Courtney B. Fugate, John Hymers, *Introduction*, in Alexander G. Baumgarten, *Metaphysics: A Critical Translation with Kant's Elucidations, Selected Notes, and Related Materials*, Eng. Trans. by C. Fugate and J. Hymers, Bloomsbury, New York 2013, p. 21 [M].

[127] On this, see Hans Adler, Lynn L. Wolff, (Hrsg.)*, Aisthesis und Noesis: Zwei Erkenntnisformen vom 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2013). See also Ted Kinnaman*, Aesthetics before Kant*, in S. Nadler (ed.), *A Companion to Early Modern Philosophy*, Blackwell, Malden 2002, pp. 578-582.

[128] The expression, which has become a historiographical *topos*, is first employed by Ernst Cassirer in *Philosophie der Aufklärung*, (1932), [3]1973, p. 475 ("Emanzipation der Sinnlichkeit"). See also Panajotis Kondylis*, Die Aufklärung im Rahmen des neuzeitlichen Rationalismus*, Stuttgart 1981, p. 558 ("Rehabilitation der Sinnlichkeit"), p. 559 ("philosophische Emanzipation des Sinnlichen", "Aufwertung der Sinnlichkeit"); Theodor Verweyen*, Halle, die Hochburg des Pietismusus, die Wiege der Anakreontik*, in N. Hinske (Hrsg.), *Zentren der Aufklärung I: Halle. Aufklärung und Pietismus*, Heidelberg 1989, pp. 209-238: p. 223 ("moralische Emanzipation der Sinnlichkeit"); Wolfgang Preisendanz, *Naturwissenschaft als Provokation der Poesie*, in S. Neumeister (Hrsg.), *Frühaufklärung*, München 1994, pp. 469-490: p. 487 ("Emanzipation der Sinnlichkeit").

cognitive performance, it is pursued by Baumgarten through the redefinition of the Leibnizian-Wolffian gnoseological theory, in function of a new determination of the non-distinct *perceptio*. This implies, as we shall see, a new evaluation of *perceptio obscura*.

First of all, the representations below the distinction, which, as in Wolff case, are those inherent in the lower cognitive faculty, are called *sensitive* representations, rather than confused or indistinct. In § 521 of the *Metaphysica*, for istance: "repraesentatio non distincta sensitiva vocatur. Ergo vis animae meae repraesentat per facultatem inferiorem perceptiones sensitivas"[129]. Significant fact in itself, attesting to the willingness to give it an unprecedented value, not connoted in a defective sense. On the other hand – and this is the decisive move – sensitive representations are such *insofar as* they contain obscure perceptions.

The latter, in other words, are thought of as necessary components of non-distinct representations. In this way, while they cannot be object of analysis – as they already are in Leibniz and Wolff[130] – they nonetheless gain a positive valence[131], which is possible only through a sharp rapprochement to Leibniz's metaphysical horizon. Indeed, as is well known, Baumgarten is strongly influenced by Leibniz[132], of whom he has a "deep and extensive knowledge."[133]

---

[129] Alexander G. Baumgarten, *Metaphysica* (1739), Reprograph. Nachdruck der 7. Auflage 1779, § 521 [Metaph]; M, p. 202.

[130] Hans Adler, *Prägnanz des Dunklen*, p. 40.

[131] On the positive value of *fundus animae* in Baumgarten see Ursula Franke, *Kunst als Erkenntnis. Die Rolle der Sinnlichkeit in der Ästhetik des Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten*, Steiner, Wiesbaden 1972 (Studia Leibnitiana Suppl. IX), p. 47; Adler: *Prägnanz des Dunklen*, p. 40; Friedhelm Solms, *Disciplina aesthetica. Zur Frühgeschichte der ästhetischen Theorie bei Baumgarten und Herder*, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart, pp. 39-42; D. Mirbach, *Einführung*, in AE, p. XXXVII.

[132] Mario Casula, *A.G. Baumgarten*; Ursula Goldenbaum, *Die Karriere von Leibniz' idea clara et confusa bei Alexander Baumgarten und Moses Mendelssohn*, in Friedrich Beiderbeck, Stephan Waldhoff (Hrsg.)*, Pluralität der Perspektiven und Einheit der Wahrheit im Werk von G. W. Leibniz*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2011, pp. 265-283; Clemens Schwaiger, *Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten*, pp. 25-26; Dagmar Mirbach, *Die Rezeption von Leibniz' Monadenlehre bei Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten*, in Hans-Peter Neumann (Hrsg.), *Der Monadenbegriff zwischen Spatrenaissance und Aufklarung*, De Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2009, pp. 271-300.

[133] Dagmar Mirbach, Andrea Allerkamp, *Ale.theophilus Baumgarten / Wenn die Magd in den Brunnen fällt,* in Id., *Schönes Denken: A.G. Baumgarten im Spannungsfeld zwischen Ästhetik, Logik und Ethik*, Meiner, Hamburg 2016, pp. 317-340: p. 320. In his private library, after all, dozens of writings by and about Leibniz have been found. See [Anonym], *Catalogus librorum a viro excellentissimo amplissimo Alexandro Gottlieb Baumgarten* [...], Frankfurt a.d.O. 1762. Clemens Schwaiger also mentions that Baumgarten is a "key figure in the complex reception of Leibniz around the mid-eighteenth century" (Schwaiger, *Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten*, p. 26).

Within this framework, it is necessary to recall the Leibnizian foundations of Baumgarten's metaphysics in order to verify the ways in which the gnoseological transformation of the obscure that we have mentioned is accomplished. A transformation which, as we shall see, is substantiated by innovations that exceed Leibniz's perspective – such as the concepts of extensive clarity and *fundus animae* – but which only from that take on their proper meaning.

So let us proceed, no doubt, starting from a fundamental fact: the explicit resumption of monadology. From which derive, on the one hand, the ontological interconnectedness of individual substances, and on the other, their differentiation according to their different capacity to represent the world. As to the first point, each monad is a *vis repraesentativa* that grasps the different parts of the universe as involved in a universal nexus (nexus *universalis*), such that each can know all the others[134]. This means that, as with Leibniz, the monad represents itself, at least obscurely, as the whole universe.

In *cosmology*, even, it is expressly said that, as representative forces of their own world, monads "are active mirrors of their universe."[135] In *empirical psychology*, we read that the soul – with which Baumgarten identifies the monad[136] – "is a representative force of the universe according to the position of its own body."[137] Body position, Baumgarten explains, determines whether I represent certain things more or less obscurely than others.

Before looking at the conception of representational types, it is worth briefly recalling the Baumgartenian definition of the soul, with which the section opens, as it expresses with particular distinctness the author's – anti-Cartesian – position with respect to the possibility of a nonconscious representing. "If there is something in a being that *can* be conscious of something (*quod sibi alicuius potest esse conscium*)," Baumgarten writes, "that is the soul"[138]. Being conscious of something, then, is a contingent trait, not constitutive of the substance-monad.

But that is not all: the polemical reference to Descartes becomes even more explicit in the next paragraph, where, in a lapidary but philosophically dense formula, Baumgarten responds

---

[134] Metaph, § 751; M, p. 264.

[135] Metaph, § 400; M, p. 175.

[136] Metaph, § 744: "anima humana monas"; M, p. 263.

[137] Metaph, § 513; M, p. 200. See also Metaph, § 741; M, p. 261

[138] Metaph, § 504; M, p. 198.

to the Cartesian *cogito*. Indeed, he writes, "Cogito, mutatur anima mea"[139]: in the moment I think, not only do I know that I exist, but the changing and dynamic essence of my soul, which is always affected by a plurality of representations, is revealed. In this locution, Salvatore Tedesco recognized a reformulation of the criticism that Leibniz had already addressed to Descartes, according to which, in addition to the "ego cogito," a second factual truth must be admitted, namely that "varia a me cogitantur"[140]. "Unde consequitur," Leibniz later explains, "non tantum me esse, sed et me variis modis affectum esse".[141]

Precisely against the background of the intuition of the variety of affections of the soul, moreover, Leibniz builds his successful classification of the different cognitive degrees, delivered in the *Meditationes*, which Baumgarten, like Wolff, largely recovers. It is precisely in this gnoseological conception, however, that we find the decisive modifications mentioned above. The first level of distinction of representing is presented in *cosmology*:

> Monads that represent their own worlds (§400) either represent it to themselves while at least partially conscious of their perceptions, or not (§10). And hence the monads of this universe represent this world either only obscurely, or at least partially clearly. The former are BARE MONADS (slumbering monads).[142]

Following Leibniz's scheme, and against Wolff, Baumgarten calls the former "BARE MONADS (slumbering monads)", while the latter, endowed with understanding, "spirits"[143]. At a degree in between is the soul, which, however, appears only in the section on psychology.

---

[139] Metaph, § 505; Ibid.

[140] See G IV, p. 357*: Animadversiones in partem generalem Principiorum Cartesianorum*, *ad artic. 7*. Cf. Salvatore Tedesco, *L'estetica di Baumgarten*, Aesthetica, Palermo 2000, p. 22. Anselm Haverkamp, more recently, after also remarking that Baumgarten's "varied cogito" "unveils the background, the changing subiectum of Descartes' concept of subject," identifies its ancestry in the "Augustinian cogito" of *De trinitate* (X, X, 14), "at that time still well present and conscious in Baumgarten": see A. Haverkamp, *'Wie die Morgenröte. Baumgartens Innovation*, in R. Campe, A. Haverkamp, Ch. Menke (Hrsg.), *Baumgarten-Studien. Zur Genealogie der Ästhetik*, August Verlag, Berlin 2014, pp. 15-47: pp. 36-37 and notes.

[141] G IV, p. 357.

[142] Metaph, § 401: "Monades mundum suum repraesentantes, § 400, aut sibi eum repraesentant, suae perceptionis, saltim ex parte, consciae, ut minus, § 10. Hinc & monades huius universi mundum hunc aut obscure tantum repraesentant, aut clare, saltim ex parte, Illae sunt MONADES NUDAE (sopitae)"; M, p. 175.

[143] Metaph, § 402: "Monades clare mundum repraesentantes aut sibi eum distincte, saltim ex parte, repraesentant, aut minus, § 10. Priores intelligunt, § 69. Ergo facultatem habent distincte cognoscendi, § 216, i.e. INTELLECTUM (strictius dictum, cf. § 519). Substantia INTELLECTUALIS, i.e. intellectu praedita, est SPIRITUS (intelligentia, persona). Ergo monades huius universi intellectuales sunt spiritus, § 230"; M, p. 175.

We then come to § 510, where, in the first part, the difference between distinct and confused thoughts (or representations) is enunciated:

> I think about some things distinctly, and some confusedly. One who is thinking about something confusedly does not distinguish its notes, although one nevertheless represents or perceives them. For, if one distinguished the notes of something confusedly represented, then one would have thought distinctly what one confusedly represented.[144]

Up to this point, Baumgarten would seem to adhere closely to Leibnizian and Wolffian dictate, identifying the distinct or confused character of representation with the ability to distinguish in the object the known characteristics. But Baumgarten goes a step further, specifying as follows the difference that exists between a distinct and a clear-confused representation:

> If one did not at all perceive the notes of something confusedly thought, then through these one would not be able to distinguish the thing confusedly perceived from others. Therefore, one who is confusedly thinking something represents some things obscurely (*Ergo confuse quid cogitans, quaedam obscure repraesentat*).[145]

Here is the novelty. The confused, or *sensitive*, representation is not such simply because of a lack of distinction, because *it does not allow* the notes to be recognized – as in Wolff – but because of a positive determination: because it contains the obscure. Which means, more precisely: because it represents obscure notes, the notes are *of the object*[146] .

Indeed, "I represent things to myself such that some of their notes are clear, and others are obscure. Perception of this sort is distinct with regard to the clear notes, and it is sensitive perception with regard to the obscure notes (§521)." Every sensory representation, therefore, is also partly distinct: it is, that is, a complex perception.

This configuration is specified by Baumgarten in §530, where "complex perception" is defined as that representation or thought which contains, "in addition to those notes to which I pay the greatest attention" – the complex of which is called "primary perception", "other less clear notes" – which, gathered together, form the "secondary" or "ancillary" perception. In this sense, there is an essential interrelationship between obscure and distinct, which, as we shall

---

[144] Metaph, § 510; M, p. 199.

[145] Ibid.

[146] We will return to this important clarification later.

see, also characterizes the entire state of the soul, and underlies the aesthetically cognitive potential of the obscure.

But there is also a further aspect that contributes to this reevaluation: the theorization of extensional clarity:

> Greater clarity due to the clarity of notes can be called INTENSIVELY GREATER CLARITY, while greater clarity due to the multitude of notes can be called EXTENSIVELY GREATER CLARITY. An extensively clearer PERCEPTION is LIVELY.20 The liveliness of THOUGHTS and of SPEECH is BRILLIANCE (splendor), and its opposite is called DRYNESS (a difficult type of thinking and speaking). Either type of clarity is PERSPICUITY.[147]

According to this concept, a perception is all the clearer not only according to the degree of logical distinction of the notes it contains (intensive clarity), but also according to their number. Therefore, given that "the more notes a perception includes, the stronger it is,"[148] it goes without saying that a obscure perception that includes more notes than a clear one is stronger than the latter, and the same is true for confused versus distinct perceptions.

3.4.3 Dynamics of the fundus animae between philosphy and mystics

Finally, this new potentiality of the obscure originates, for the first time, in a well-defined domain, which Baumgarten calls *fundus animae*. In § 511 he states: „sunt in anima perceptiones obscurae (§ 510). Harum complexus FUNDUS ANIMAE dicitur"[149]. This space, also referred to as *Campus obscurantis* or *tenebrarum*[150], is contrasted with the broader *Campus claritatis* (or *lucis*), which includes the complex of clear perceptions and their subsets.

The concept of the "foundation of the soul" (*Grund der Seele*) has a long theological and spiritual tradition. Through the Greek-Latin Church Fathers, and in particular the authority of Augustine of Hippo, the development of the notion underwent at least two moments of crucial intensification, first in 14th-century Rhenish-Flemish mysticism – through the work of Meister

---

[147] Metaph, § 531: "Claritas claritate notarum maior, INTENSIVE, multitudine notarum, EXTENSIVE NOTARUM MAIOR dici potest. Extensive clarior perceptio est VIVIDA. Vividitas COGITATIONUM et ORATIONIS NITOR (splendor) est, cuius oppositum est SICCITAS (spinosum cogitandi dicendique genus). Utraque claritas est PERSPICUITAS"; M, p. 204.

[148] Metaph, § 517; M, p. 201.

[149] Metaph, § 511; M, p. 199. See also Metaph, §514; M, p. 200.

[150] See Metaph, §514; M, p. 200.

Eckhart and his disciples Tauler and Seuse – then in 17th-century French spirituality, thanks to the teachings of authors such as François de Sales and Pierre Poiret. To understand the meaning of the term in Baumgarten, it is necessary to briefly trace its development in these two significant phases.

The Augustinian *abditum mentis*, which in *De Trinitate* was understood as the deep place of memory where the true image of God resides, is translated in Eckhart's sermons into *Seelen-Grund*, understood as the divine essence of the soul and, as such, the privileged place of mystical union. This ontological consideration of the *grunt*, a concept that indicates the region of the soul's being, as absolutely superordinate to that of doing, of the individual faculties, forms the basis of the mystical topology that remained central until the 16th century.

Starting in the 17th century, in fact, with the Salesian idea of the "point of the soul" (*pointe de l'âme*), a new conception emerged which, as Mino Bergamo has shown, was the result of a process of "psychologization of the ground of the Rhenish-Flemish soul"[151]. François de Sales, in fact, "by reintegrating the mystical place into the orbit of the rational faculties and identifying it with a certain operating regime of these faculties," brings the discourse on the depths of the soul – which is thus connected to the upper and more noble part of the soul – back to the level of psychology[152].

This real "turning point" in the history of mysticism will have a huge influence on subsequent theorization, laying the conditions for the assimilation of the concept into philosophy. And first and foremost by Leibniz. This does not mean, however, that the mysticism of essence disappeared from the intellectual horizon; on the contrary, through Pietism, and in particular Spener's translation of Tauler, it too should be considered a potential source of Baumgarten's concept.

While Baumgarten's debt to Leibniz's theory of minute perceptions has often been acknowled[153] in secondary literature, it has only recently been pointed out that Leibniz himself used the term[154]. This use, which also occurs in a work, the *Nouveaux Essais*, very likely

---

[151] Mino Bergamo, *L'anatomia dell'anima. Da François de Sales a Fénelon*, Biblioteca Francescana, Milano 2021[2], p. 63.

[152] Ibid.

[153] Franke, *Kunst als Erkenntnis*, p. 46.

unknown to Baumgarten[155], is interesting in that it confirms the above idea, namely that the philosophical and psychological-empirical conversion of the idea of *fond de l'ame* took place very gradually, only finding fulfillment in Wolffian Germany in the early 18th century.

Even in 1703, Leibniz seems reluctant to adopt this terminology, as he perceives it to be somewhat alien to his own domain of inquiry:

> Now, in accordance with the new system, I go even further and believe that all the thoughts and actions of our soul come from its own fund (*toutes les pensées et actions de notre âme viennent de son propre fonds*), without being given to it by the senses, as you will see below. But for the moment, I would like to put this investigation aside and adapt to the accepted expressions (*et m'accommodant aux expressions receuës*), because they are in fact good and sustainable, and because it can be said, in a certain sense, that the external senses are partly the cause of our thoughts.[156]

The reference to the "new system" refers to the *Système nouveau de la nature*, an essay published anonymously in the *Journal des sçavans* in 1695, in which the idea that the soul is the source or foundation (fonds) of all its changes appears for the first time.

In presenting the harmonist hypothesis as a solution to the mind-body problem, Leibniz identifies the nature of every substantial form with the power to represent the entire universe from its own point of view. In this way, the perceptions of the soul do not depend on the action of external substances, but, in accordance with them, on its own internal spontaneity. Thus, in

---

[154] On this, see Tanehisa Otabe, *Der Begriff der petites perceptions*, pp. 41-53; Id., *Der Grund der Seele*: *Über Entstehung und Verlauf eines ästhetischen Diskurses im 18 Jahrhundert*, in *Welt der Gründe*, ed. By J. Nida-Rümelin, E. Özmen, Meiner, Hamburg 2012, pp. 763-774: pp. 763-764.

[155] Baumgarten in fact died three years before the first – posthumous – publication of the *Nouveaux Essais*, in 1765. It is important to note, however, the interesting hypothesis – put forward by Petra Bahr as deserving of further investigation – of a possible familiarity with the text on Baumgarten's part through oral transmission. Indeed, Bahr writes: "Der perzeptionstheoretische Schwerpunkt und der breite Raum, den die Theorie des Wahrscheinlichen in Auseinandersetzung mit John Locke hier einnimt, weisen eine Koinzidenz mit Baumgartenschen Fragestellungen auf, die über das problemgeschichtliche Feld hinausführt und die Forschung auf die verschlungenen Wege frühaufklärerischer Wissensproduktion zurückwirft, die noch über mündliche Traditionsbildung bestimmt ist. Indizien für die Referenz Baumgartens an die *Nouveaux Essais* gibt es reichlich" (The perception-theoretical focus and the extensive space devoted to the theory of probability in engagement with John Locke reveal a coincidence with Baumgartenian lines of inquiry that goes beyond the bounds of problem-oriented intellectual history and redirects scholarly attention to the intricate paths of early Enlightenment knowledge production—still shaped by oral forms of transmission. There is ample evidence of Baumgarten's reference to the *Nouveaux Essais*) (P. Bahr, *Darstellung des Undarstellbaren. Religionstheoretische Studien zum Darstellungsbegriff bei A.G. Baumgarten und I. Kant*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2004, p. 26).

[156] G VI, p. 124.

the few instances in which it appears, the expression "ground of the soul" – probably taken from Pierre Poiret – is understood by Leibniz in a psychological-metaphysical sense, but is not associated with obscure perceptions.

In an important recent study, Alessandro Nannini has reconstructed the process of assimilation of the concept of *fundus animae* – as well as its "psychological revival"[157] – in Wolffian circles in the early 18th century. In particular, he highlighted how, at a time when Pietism was strongly influential, the first attempt to connect the mystical-religious matrix of the theme with the problem of the unconscious was made by Israel Gottlieb Canz, a Lutheran philosopher and theologian, who was certainly familiar to Baumgarten.

In the second volume of his *Philosophiae Leibnitianae et Wolffianae usus in theologia*, he offers a new interpretation of the "abyss" or "depths of the mind" (*animi abyssus*, *seu fundus*), as intimately connected to a multitude of infinitely minute perceptions. To demonstrate its existence, he cites both biblical references and rational arguments, considered equally indispensable for grasping the nature of this obscure region. This, Nannini observes, is not only intended to conceal one's thoughts from an interlocutor, but also from oneself. Furthermore, in *Philosophiae Wolffianae consensus cum theologia* (1737), he deals with the subject in the second chapter, where he examines the faculty of the soul "that others have called 'ground of the mind' (*animi fundus*)"[158]. By this, Canz means the lower faculty of the mind, or its abyss, where an infinity of obscure and confused perceptions lie, as opposed to the higher faculty, where distinct perceptions are gathered.

This configuration is based mainly on the text *De eruditione solida, superficiaria et falsa libri tres* (1692) by the mystic Pierre Poiret, according to whom, after the Fall, an impenetrable darkness took the place of the light that was radiated from the depths of the human soul, described as an immense sphere, towards each of its faculties. This condition can only be overcome through the purification of this depths, to be achieved through the acquisition of solid erudition. This task, however, seems impossible for man, since "the depths of the mind (*fundus mentis*) and its divine faculties are made only for the eternal and infinite God"[159].

---

[157] See Alessandro Nannini, *At the Bottom of the Soul: The Psychologization of the "Fundus Animae" between Leibniz and Sulzer*, „Journal of the History of Ideas", 82, 1 (2021), pp. 51-72: pp. 53, 64.

[158] Israel G. Canz, *Philosophiae Leibnitianae*, 2, pp. 9, 11.

[159] Pierre Poiret, *De eruditione solida, superficiaria et falsa libri tres*, Wetstein, Amsterdam 1692, p. 17.

Unlike Poiret, for Canz the center of the soul is still somewhat luminous, given that dark perceptions gather at its extremities. Its light, however, is no longer that which emanates from God, but the faint light of reason, which, being finite, will never be able to completely dispel the darkness of the soul. Nevertheless, by depriving the concepts of light and darkness of their theological meaning, Canz justifies the possibility and, at the same time, the necessity of an autonomous investigation of one's own mental darkness as a way of knowing oneself.

In the *Meditationes philosophicae* (1750), in this sense, he argues that the usefulness of the *abissus mentys* is precisely to make us recognize "the supreme necessity (*summam necessitatem*)" of the task of *nosci te ipsum*. Since it is evident that "the soul is influenced by countless perceptions and inclinations unknown to us," God cannot be considered the sole scrutinizer of the soul. He adds: "although the latter is a reckless statement"[160].

This last clarification testifies to the highly innovative nature – even in the middle of the century – of the psychologization of the theme that Canz promotes. In light of what we have seen, we can also better understand how Baumgarten could assert in the same year that the concept of *fundus animae* was "hitherto unknown to many, even among philosophers," and that "the extraordinary effect it causes has been attributed to divine power." Baumgarten refers to the *impetus aestheticus*, a condition whereby:

> the whole soul truly unfolds its powers (at least, to the greatest extent, the lower faculties), so that, so to speak, the whole depth of the soul rises somewhat higher and breathes something greater, easily providing us with what we seemed to have forgotten, not experienced, or been unable to foresee for ourselves, and even more so for others.[161]

This particular poetic inspiration, however, which must distinguish the character of the *felix aestheticus*, "cannot happen by miracle," but presupposes "a nature that is already rather excited" that directs its powers to the highest degree to the act of thinking beautifully. The awakening and igniting of these previously dead forces thus allows us both to recover representations that had previously fallen into obscurity and to produce new ones that we did not know we could create. This happens precisely through the raising of the mass of obscure perceptions, which from the bottom approach the realm of clarity, so that they become partially conscious and "all the concepts of the beautiful spirit become more vivid."

---

[160] Israel G. Canz, *Meditationes philosophicae*, Cotta, Tübingen 1750, § 977.

[161] AE, § 79.

This dynamism of *Aufklärung*, which was unknown "before the perfection of psychology"[162] and which makes *obscuritas* the basis of every invention, justifies the motto "ex nocte per auroram meridies" seen above. Ultimately, Baumgarten probably takes the thesis that the complex of partial dark perceptions lies at the bottom of the soul from Canz, as well as the idea that the faculty of knowing something obscurely and confusedly is the "lower faculty" in general.

However, compared to Canz's approach, Baumgarten distinguishes the depths of the soul from the individual lower faculties and includes only obscure perceptions in it—and not indistinct ones. It should be noted that Canz himself, before Baumgarten, had argued that the strength of perceptions is due not to their intensive clarity, as Wolff believed, but to the number of their notes.

Finally, mention should be made of the discussion of the ground of the soul in the *Ethica philosophica* (1740), a text chosen by Kant for his lectures on moral philosophy, although until recently surprisingly ignored by critics.

> What penetrates most decisively into the depths of the mind becomes a kind of second nature, as in the case of habitual virtues, which disappear the more deeply they are assimilated. Thus, the very depths of the soul can be indirectly perfected, to the extent that one is able to manage its constituent drives.[163]

These lines highlight the pietistic roots of Baumgarten's interest in the problem. Moreover, in the same work, Baumgarten emphasizes the pietistic motif of consecrating the depths of the soul to the glory of God, thereby echoing almost literally the *Medicina Mentis* of his theology professor Joachim Lange[164]. For this to happen, he explains, obscure matters must be clarified, since obscure representations in divine things are to be considered sins[165].

It should be noted, however, that in Lange's case, who was accused of coming too close to Poiret's "heretical" positions with regard to the fundus, the depths of the soul coincide with its

---

[162] Bernhard Poppe, *Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, Seine Bedeutung und Stellung in der Leibniz-Wolffischen Philosophie und Seine Beziehungen zu Kant*, p. 162.

[163] Baumgarten, *Ethica philosophica*, § 242.

[164] Joachim Lange, *Medicina Mentis*, Berolini, Wessel 1704, pp. 10, 491.

[165] Baumgarten, *Ethica philosophica*, § 49.

higher faculties – appetite, intellect, and acquiescence[166]. On the contrary, with Canz's mediation, Baumgarten shifts the focus from the immeasurable height of mystical union to the lower, abyssal region of the mind, thus paving the way for the empirical-aesthetic elucidation of certain mental phenomena.

3.5 G.F. Meier and the typology of the obscure

Of the same opinion would seem to be Meier, for whom obscure knowledge constitutes "the worst and most imperfect."[167] For as for Wolff, lacking sufficient notes to distinguish its object from other things, it does not even constitute thought. While accepting, however, both the rationalistic assumption of the necessary *Erklärung* of knowledge and the identification of consciousness and clarity *of representatio*, Meier's position is not reducible to Wolff's.

In particular, unlike Wolff, Meier defends the monadological nature of the soul and the ontological principle of pre-established harmony. Thus, he classifies simple substances according to the kind of representations they are capable of: starting from the so-called bare monads, to which Leibniz already attributed only unconscious representations, to more developed levels.

In his first philosophical work in print, Meier develops an argument based on the Leibnizian principle of continuity, arguing that – because there are no leaps in nature – even the conscious states of finite beings must gradually derive from mental states composed of unconscious representations, to which consciousness is gradually added[168]. It is precisely on this basis that Meier asserts the explanatory priority of obscure representations over clear ones: "Our soul first receives obscure representations, before it can develop them and make them clear (*Unsere Seele bekomt erst dunckele Vorstellungen, ehe sie dieselben auswickeln und klar machen kan*)"[169]. He initially hypothesizes mental states completely devoid of consciousness, and then explains the gradual emergence of consciousness through a continuity of mental states that are gradually richer in conscious representations.

---

[166] Lange, *Medicina Mentis*, p. 480.

[167] Georg F. Meier, *Vernunftlehre* (1752), Hildesheim, Olms, 2009, p. 185 [VL].

[168] Georg F. Meier, *Beweis: Daß keine Materie dencken können* (1742), Hemmerde, Halle, §45.

[169] Ibid.

In classifying the different types of representation possible for monads, Meier closely follows the technical terminology introduced by Leibniz and reworked by Baumgarten, especially with regard to the human mind. It is essential, in order to understand his theory of representation, to recognize that Meier often uses the terms *Vorstellung* (representation) and *Erkenntnis* (knowledge/cognition) as equivalent.

In his 1752 texts on logic, he explicitly states, "There is no mistake in considering the representation of a thing and its cognition as one and the same thing"[170]. Once this assumption is made, it becomes clear that many of his observations about human cognition can be generalized to the nature of mental representation.

A fundamental distinction for Meier – and the first he introduces in his discussion of knowledge – is that between representations of which we are conscious and representations of which we are not. The former are called "clear" (*klar*), the latter "obscure" (*dunkel*): "A clear knowledge is always accompanied by consciousness and is therefore a thought (*Gedanke*)[171]; on the other hand, we are not conscious of an obscure knowledge, so it is not a thought." In other words, for Meier the basic distinction between representations and cognitions is not qualitative but phenomenological: what is clear is accompanied by consciousness, what is obscure is without it.

Meier further points out that cognitive obscurity is susceptible to a twofold gradation. On the one hand, it can be evaluated on a quantitative basis: a cognition composed partly of clear and partly of obscure representations is called "partially obscure" (*einesteils dunkel*), while a cognition composed entirely of obscure elements is "completely obscure" (*ganz dunkel*). On the other hand, there is a qualitative variation in the degree of obscurity: some representations are defined as "relatively obscure" (*beziehungsweise dunkel*), in the sense that they can become conscious – for istance –, as a result of recollection or voluntary attention. In these cases, they are unconscious contents in a weak sense: forgotten, disregarded or momentarily unattainable.

Alongside these forms of relative obscurity, Meier also contemplates representations that are unconscious in the strong sense, that is, that have never been conscious and cannot be conscious in any way. A cognition that is "absolutely obscure" (*schlechterdings dunkel*) constitutes an example of such a condition: it is a complex representation, the constituent features of which

---

[170] Georg F. Meier, *Vernunftlehre* (1752), Neuausgabe hrsg. von G. Schenk, Halle 1997, § 25 [VL]

[171] VL, §26.

are entirely obscure from the beginning, to the point that any future clarification is impossible. In such cases, Meier states that "we confess that we cannot experience obscure cognitions," sanctioning the structural impossibility of their transformation into conscious states. It is precisely due to his systematic attention to such nuances that Hans Adler could refer to Meier as the "Linné of *perceptio obscura*."[172]

In the third part of his *Metaphysics*, devoted to the exposition of his Psychology, Meier provides several important indications of the intensity of the ongoing debate at the time concerning the existence of obscure representations. On the one hand, the Wolffians, he states, "who need the doctrine of obscure representations, to explain certain of their views, the doctrine has not remained unchallenged by their opponents". He then examines the most commonly raised objections on the matter, dividing them into two main groups:

> One may in particular raise a twofold objection against the reality of obscure representations in our soul. First, it might be argued that one cannot be convinced of their reality, since we are not conscious of these representations and therefore cannot experience them.[173]

According to this view, the existence of such representations "would be nothing more than an uncertain opinion, adopted by philosophers to explain the changes of the soul". In response, Meier argues that while it is indeed true that we cannot have immediate experience of them, this does not preclude the possibility of being convinced of their existence indirectly. From the changes we become immediately aware of within our soul, he contends, it can be demonstrated that these are in part composed of unconscious representations and, in part, originate from them. Therefore, "it is foolish to deny what one does not know through immediate experience"[174].

It should be noted that this position, which recalls the one already articulated by Wolff in the *German Metaphysics*, is also found in the earlier *Vernunftlehre*, where it is stated that:

> there is an infinite number of things that are possible and real, regardless of the fact that we are not aware of them. [...] Yes, we admit that we cannot experience obscure knowledge ourselves; we can only experience its effects, which perfectly assure us that it, as their cause, must be present in the soul.[175]

---

[172] Adler, *Prägnanz des Dunklen,* p. 91.

[173] Georg F. Meier, *Metaphysik*, Dritter Theil: Psychologie (1757), § 486.

[174] Ibid.

[175] VL, p. 194.

Here Meier explicitly attributes to unconscious knowledge effects, through which its existence can be inferred. The experience he refers to, in particular, is that of psychological states such as depression or enthusiasm, the reason for which we sometimes cannot tell. Assuming, however, that such states must always be based on some idea of good or evil, that reason must lie in unconsciously possessed ideas.

This last remark leads us directly to the second type of objection mentioned above, namely, that it is not worth engaging with obscure representations, "since they serve no purpose and should be regarded as a useless and inoperative furnishing of the soul". To this, Meier responds that the objection can easily be refuted – on the basis of the aforementioned indirect experience – by noting that all clear cognition is composed of confused representations, and that, similarly, all confused cognition "is a whole made up of obscure parts". This implies that:

> Obscure representations are [...] the materials, the chaos of the soul, from which the soul's creative power gradually composes all of its clear and distinct knowledge of this world.

Thus, also for Meier, obscure representations form the necessary basis of the successive degrees. Nonetheless, once again, they must be clarified and refined by the intellect; to that extent, Meier eloquently defines them as a "necessary evil (*nothwendige Uebel*)"[176].

3.6 The investigation of Johann Georg Sulzer

3.6.1 Preliminary remarks

That Sulzer occupies a "special position" in the history of the "discovery of the unconscious" is widely known[177] . Suffice it to mention, among many possible examples, the second edition of the *Kurzer Begriff aller Wissenschaften*, which appeared in 1759 – and, most importantly, is

---

[176] VL, p. 216.

[177] See Wolfgang Riedel, *Erkennen und Empfinden. Anthropologische Achsendrehung und Wende zur Ästhetik bei Johann Georg Sulzer*, in H.-J. Schings (Hrsg.), *Der ganze Mensch. Anthropologie und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert*, DFG-Symposion 1992, Metzler, Stuttgart-Weimar 1994, pp. 410-439: p. 422. On this see also Riedel, *Erster Psychologismus. Umbau des Seelenbegriffs in der deutschen Spätaufklärung*, in J. Garber, H. Thoma (Hrsg.), *Zwischen Empirisierung und Konstitutionsleistung*, pp. 1-17; and Id., *Die Aufklärung und das Unbewusste. Die Inversion des Franz Moor*, in D. von Engelhardt, H. Wißkirchen (Hrsg.), *Von Schillers Räubern zu Shelleys Frankenstein – Wissenschaft und Literatur im Dialog um 1800*, Stuttgart 2006, pp. 18-40. More recently, Ingo Uhlig has argued that precisely with reference to the Sulzerian work, its "articulations, illustrations and manifestations, a psychology of the unconscious begins to form around 1750" (Ulig, *Traum und Poiesis. Produktive Schlafzustände 1641-1810*, Wallstein, Göttingen 2015, p. 141).

included in the catalog of books owned by Kant[178]. In this text, Sulzer, while acknowledging the merits of Wolffian psychology, at the same time stresses a serious limitation of it, that of not having given due attention

> to the obscure regions of the soul" (*auf die dunkeln Gegenden der Seele*), where it acts through very unclear and obscure concepts. Wolf[f] gave an excellent description of the effects of the understanding in clear thinking and judgment. If the behavior of the soul in unclear knowledge and in the quick judgments that follow intuitive knowledge were precisely separated in this way in all kinds of cases, this part of philosophy would be greatly expanded.[179]

It is of the utmost importance, then, to extend the domain of psychological inquiry beyond the *Campus claritatis* – as Baumgarten put it – to the furthest reaches of the soul. Which, nonetheless, Baumgarten himself first intended to do, with his foundation of a *gnoseologia inferior* and theoretical legitimization of the *fundus animae* as the locus of pertinence of unconscious perceptions. And yet – what is more interesting – even the father of aesthetics does not seem to escape Sulzer's critique: the work done by Baumgarten, Sulzer seems to imply, however meritorious, is by no means sufficient and much remains to be done to illuminate the deep motives of our thinking and feeling.

Not only, in fact, "has it not yet been sufficiently clearly and adequately explained how in the soul the state of clear and [that of] obscure representations alternate and pass from one to the other" but "still no one has explained how the soul, without thought or reflection, recognizes

---

[178] See Arthur Warda, *Immanuel Kants Bücher*, Breslauer, Berlin 1922, p. 55.

[179] J.G. Sulzer*, Kurzer Begriff aller Wissenschaften. Erste (1745) und zweite (1759) Auflage*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 1, Hrsg. von H. Adler und E. Décultot, Schwabe, Basel 2014, § 206, p. 141 [KB]. This is an extremely important and influential statement in the later development of the inquiry into the unconscious, the radicality of which, as we shall show below, certainly did not escape Kant. Herder himself, moreover, in his remarks on Wolff's philosophy, makes a criticism of the latter that takes up Sulzer's words almost literally: "Ich wollte, daß Wolf weniger die Evidenz als die äußere Fruchtbarkeit, den Reichthum an Gedanken, Beweisen und Sätzen erstrebt: indem man lediglich die Form abmißt, verliert man zu sehr die Materie. [...] Die dunkelsten Gegenden der Seele, aus denen sich das meiste von Erfindungen emporhebt, sind von ihm unbeleuchtet geblieben" („I would have preferred Wolf to strive less for evidence than for external fruitfulness, for the richness of thoughts, proofs, and propositions: by merely measuring the form, one loses too much of the matter. […] The most obscure regions of the soul, from which most inventions arise, have remained unilluminated by him") (see J.G. Herder, *Ueber Christian Wolfs Schriften*, in Herder, *Werke*, Hrsg. von W. Pross, Bd. 2: *Herder und die Anthropologie der Aufklärung*, Wiss. Buchges., Darmstadt 1987, pp. 9-12: p. 10. On the Herderian interpretation of Wolff see Nigel Desouza, *Deux périodes et métaphysiques de l'Aufklärung: Herder et sa critique de Wolff*, in P. Girard, C. Leduc, M. Rioux-Beaulne (eds.), *Les Métaphysiques des Lumières*, Classiques Garnier, Paris 2016, pp. 191-205.

certain very important things, which could not be recognized by the longest reflection and very clear concepts"[180].

In light of this denunciation, which finds its *pars construens* in the coeval *Erklärung eines psychologischen paradoxen Satzes*[181], here we propose two tasks: first, to clarify the extent to which Sulzer intends to consciously move 'beyond' Baumgarten and his psychology of the obscure. Second, and from such clarification, we will try to determine the influence exerted by Sulzer on the development of the Kantian conception of unconscious representations, and in particular on the process of reworking and progressively overcoming the Leibnizian model[182] , initially accepted in Baumgarten's version of *empirical psychology.* Indeed, we are convinced that in this respect Sulzer's work provides Kant with decisive critical stimuli.

3.6.2 Beyond Baumgarten: between power of sensation and impotence of the soul

To understand what this "extension" consists of, we find it useful to start with the following remarks by Anne Pollok:

---

[180] Ibid, § 210, p. 143. Important in this regard is the article "Enthusiasm" in the *Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste*, where Sulzer comments on the definition given by Baumgarten – "one of our greatest philosophers" – stating that "no one has sufficiently explored the depths of the soul to fully explain this state" (*Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste, Erster Theil: von A bis J*, Weidemann und Reich, Leipzig 1771, pp. 136-42: p. 139 [henceforth ATK]).

In this regard, I disagree with the hypothesis suggested by Hans Adler, according to which Sulzer's assertion may have been "influenced" by § 80 of Baumgarten's *Aesthetics*, where he states that "the *fundus animae* has so far been an unknown concept to many, even among philosophers" (Adler, *Die Prägnanz des Dunklen*, p. 26, note 181). On the inadequacy of Baumgartenian investigation of mental obscurity, albeit without reference to Sulzer, see Jeffrey Barnouw, *The Cognitive Value of Confusion and Obscurity in the German Enlightenment: Leibniz, Baumgarten, and Herder*, "Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture" 24 (1995), pp. 29-50: in part. pp. 37-38, 40.

[181] This essay originally appeared in French in 1766: see J.G. Sulzer, *Expliquation d'un paradoxe psychologique: Que non seulement l'homme agit et juge sans motifs et sans raisons apparentes, mais même malgré des motifs pressans et des raisons convainquantes*, in *Histoire de l'Academie Royale des Sciences et Belles-Lettres de Berlin. Année 1759*, Haude et Spener, Berlin 1766, pp. 433-50. We will quote hereafter from J.G. Sulzer, *Explanation of a Paradoxical Psychological Proposition: That We Sometimes Act Not Only Without Motive or a Visible Cause, But Even Against Compelling Motives and Despite Fully Convincing Reasons (1759)*"; Eng. Trans. by Nicholas Rand, „American Imago", 61, 3 (2004), pp. 291-304 [henceforth E]. Finally, the german edition we will be referring to is in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 2: *Schriften zu Psychologie und Ästhetik* [henceforth SPA], Hrsg. von E. Décultot und A. Nannini, Schwabe, Basel 2024, pp. 273-289. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Sulzer's works follow this edition.

[182] On such 'overcoming' see C. La Rocca*, L'intelletto oscuro*, pp. 64-87. See also Id., *Unbewußtes und Bewußtsein bei Kant*, in M. Kugelstadt (Hrsg.), *Kant-Lektionen. Zur Philosophie Kants und zu Aspekten ihrer Wirkungsgeschichte*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2008, pp. 47-68.

> [Sulzer] has decisively expanded the 'activity' of the unconscious [...]. [He] intended to reveal the laws of the human psyche in the analysis of inner conflicts, inhibitions of action, unexplained emotional resistance, ambivalence and self-contradictions. Long before Freud, Sulzer was concerned with phenomena such as the "Freudian slip." He was interested not only in "unclear and obscure concepts," but also in "special kinds of confusion of the mind" (Kurzer Begriff (1745), § 207) [...]. In the *Untersuchung über den Ursprung der angenehmen und unangenehmen Empfindungen* (1751/52) Sulzer still attempts a (tenuous) connection with Wolffian psychology; however, this breaks down more and more with later writings.[183]

Next, Pollok lists the three "writings" in which Sulzer elaborates a new conception of the unconscious, under the banner – we should reiterate – of a decisive expansion of his work. Besides the *Erklärung* (1759), the essay *Von dem Bewußtseyn und seinem Einfluße in unsre Urtheile* (1756)[184], and the *Anmerkungen über den verschiedenen Zustand* (1763)[185]. Before mentioning these texts, however, we want to return to the *Untersuchung*, to understand in what sense Sulzer maintains there – in Pollok's words – a "tenuous connection" with Wolffian (and, we add, Baumgartenian) psychology.

In the first of the work's four contributions, on the general theory of pleasure, Sulzer takes his starting point from the definition of the soul that "our modern philosophers since Mr. Wolff" have sufficiently demonstrated, for which – we have seen – it is a *vis repraesentativa*, whose essential activity consists in the production of ideas. Admitting this, however, it must be remarked that since "the soul never enjoys the objects themselves, but only its ideas of them, it *also only desires* ideas," which is why "even the essentials in men's pleasures and inclinations are always reduced to something ideal"[186].

If for Wolff (and Baumgarten), in other words, pleasure originates from the intuitive knowledge of the perfection inherent in the object, that is, from a form of confuse knowledge, according to Sulzer the feeling of pleasure or displeasure depends on the ideational-intellectual action of the soul. Therefore,

---

[183] Anne Pollok, *Facetten des Menschen. Zur Anthropologie Moses Mendelssohns*, Meiner, Hamburg 2010, pp. 306-307.

[184] SPA, pp. 333-351.

[185] SPA, pp. 302-315.

[186] SPA, p. 143, my italics.

> for my part, I shall consider here this basic instinct as the origin of all pleasant and unpleasant feelings, which are, as it were, the seed of the passions or rather the spark from which their fire springs. For I confess that neither Wolff nor Descartes suffices for me in the theory of pleasure.[187]

Sulzer particularly insists on the abolition of all confusion. This is evident, among other things, in the idea that "the soul's strength is determined by the fact that it prefers clear ideas to obscure ones, and distinct to merely clear ones," since "a distinct representation of an object [...] better satisfies the need of the soul"[188].

The human soul, insofar as it tends by nature to think, that is, to process ideas, enjoys (takes pleasure in) their progressive distinction. With this, the Sulzerian theory of pleasant feelings departs sharply from Wolff's perspective. As for Baumgarten, who also – as stated in the *Allgemeine Theorie* – "builds on the Wolffian doctrine of the origin of pleasant feeling", linking the pleasure of the beautiful to the intuition of perfection and thereby to the lower faculties, it must be said that he does not limit himself to this.

In fact, as Clemens Schwaiger has shown, Baumgartenian reflection on the psychology of pleasure and desiring substantially modifies the Wolffian model, beginning with the reformulation of the fundamental *lex appetitus*. According to this law, "we do not want except what we consider good and nothing of what we consider bad"[189].

In short, it is not possible to desire something bad except by exchanging it for something good, just as it is impossible to deliberately oppose the good. For Baumgarten, conversely, there is no doubt that one can sometimes desire or do evil while recognizing it as such. Moreover, since the object of my desire can only arouse pleasure in me, and since pleasure always follows from some knowledge, the drive toward that object – whether it is deemed good or evil – depends strictly on the kind of knowledge we have of it. Hence, the already Wolffian distinction between intuitive, sensible knowledge and symbolic, rational, abstract knowledge is determined as an opposition between cognitio viva, the only one capable of moving to action, and *cognitio mortua*.

---

[187] SPA, p. 146.

[188] Ibid.

[189] DM, § 306.

In § 669 of the *Metaphysica*, Baumgarten calls "incentives of the mind (*elateres animi*)"[190] the perceptions that cause desire, containing its reason, and living knowledge that which possesses such propulsive drives. The capacity to move, or vitality, of *cognitio viva* – which is contrasted with the inertia of mediated knowledge –, corresponds to the strength of perceptio, or the amount of notes each perception presents. It follows that a perception will be all the stronger and more vital the more extensively clear it is: hence, by reason of the peculiar *claritas* it derives from the immediacy of the senses and imagination.

Therefore, although obscure representations are in Baumgarten necessary components of clear-confused knowledge, for the purposes of action they would seem less relevant than clear ones, which alone can offer a recognizable motive to the will. On the contrary, according to Sulzer, "obscure representations have far more power over us than clear and distinct ones"[191] and not infrequently impel us to act and deliberate against our own firmest intentions and convictions.

This paradox, however, as we shall see, is not to be traced for Sulzer to a deception of the will or ignorance (Wolff), nor does it depend on abstract or inadequate knowledge (Baumgarten), but arises – a thesis that marks, as has been noted, the originality of the Sulzerian solution[192] – from the coexistence of two opposing forces, which generate mental conflicts and behavioral imbalances of various kinds.

In order to better appreciate the novelty of Sulzer's position, however, it is appropriate to bear in mind the centrality that comes to assume in it the medical-physiological explanation of psychic phenomena, based on observation, and self-observation, of the psycho-pathological conditions in which the soul comes to find itself from time to time.

In this perspective, the influence of the Stahlian medical tradition, already evident in his training, leads Sulzer to relativize the importance of speculative or metaphysical questions for the purposes of psychological investigation, which is configured, rather, increasingly as a physics of the soul (*Physik der Seele*): a science – we read in *Von dem Bewußtseyn* – that,

---

[190] Metaph, § 669; M, p. 241.

[191] E, p. 300.

[192] Daniel Dumouchel, *"Tiefen der Seele. Veränderte Zustände und psychologische Paradoxe. Die empirische Psychologie bei J.G. Sulzer*, in É. Décultot, P. Kampa, J. Kittelmann (Hrsg.), *Johann Georg Sulzer – Aufklärung im Umbruch*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2018, pp. 14-35: p. 30.

starting from the description of the states, changes and effects that the soul manifests in the body, leads to "establishing a correct system that serves as a sure basis for judgments about the nature of diseases and their remedies"[193]. Hence, the privileged role that sensations, defined in the same text as "the true driving forces in the soul"[194], acquire in Sulzer, along with very confused and somewhat obscure representations.

Caused by the impressions of external objects on the sense organs, sensations arise from a similar movement aroused in the nerves – a movement, that is, with proportional strength and composition to those of the sensation it produces. According to the strength or vividness of the sensations, therefore, the soul will experience pleasant or unpleasant feelings, the degree of intensity of which varies according to circumstances.

In the third part of the *Untersuchung*, in fact, after defining immediate sensations as "moments of the [whole] sensation", Sulzer explains that they "may be so strong that they shake the nerves instead of touching them, and then the movement [...] spreads over a large part of the body or over the whole nervous system", In this condition the soul "sees itself, as it were, violently attacked by innumerable points at once; hence a confusion arises which, when it becomes very strong, is also very unpleasant"[195].

Sensible impressions, in other words, when they exceed a certain speed and intensity, give rise to confused and painful sensations. The latter sometimes "take man completely out of himself"[196]. In such cases, the soul

> does not know where to turn its attention first. If the sensation is pleasant in itself, and does not exceed in these circumstances a certain degree of strength, it puts the soul in its most pleasant state [...]. If, however, the nerve movements are too violent, this state must degenerate into helplessness and total insensibility [...]. Since in this case the soul is attacked simultaneously and violently by an infinite number of sensations, it is impossible for it to distinguish the least of them; it thus falls into confusion and a state of obscure representations.[197]

---

[193] SPA, p. 334.

[194] SPA, p. 343.

[195] SPA, p. 180.

[196] SPA, p. 188.

[197] SPA, pp. 189-190.

Not surprisingly, at this point, it was precisely the *Zustand dunkler Vorstellungen*, with the pathological conditions associated with it, that became the main object of Sulzer's psychological investigation in the following years.

About the "total insensibility" mentioned, for example, Sulzer argues that if the sensation caused by an object "is strong enough to communicate the shock to a considerable part of the nervous system, it draws all the forces of the soul to itself. [...] The soul seems completely enervated and deprived of all impulse". And precisely in this power of sensations, and in the way in which they effectively impel man to action – as Elisabet Décultot observes – lies „one of Sulzer's main concerns"[198].

Such efficacy justifies the thesis, formulated in the *Anmerkungen* of 1763, that "the human being is not master of the first motions of his soul"[199]. Indeed, he only "rarely enjoys his own moral freedom [...] For the most part, he knows neither the motives that determine his judgment nor the impulses that determine his actions"[200].

Here again is that paradoxical psychological condition, which for Sulzer calls into question the core of the practical philosophy of his time: the freedom of the will, the self-determination of the spirit with respect to the constraints of the body. The most careful observation, in short, clearly shows that *necessitatio* is not an accidental condition, always subservient to the *spontaneitas* of the soul (Baumgarten), but a law that governs even the intellectual world.

The basis of this assumption ultimately lies the renewed doctrine of faculties that finds accomplished form in the above-mentioned text, where the shift from the single representative force to the opposition of *vorstellen* and *empfinden* is thematized, whereby the cognitive sphere no longer communicates with the irrational sphere. The rupture of the continuum between higher and lower faculties – which implies the impossibility for the former to 'stem' the obscure actions promoted by the latter – constitutes "the decisive step beyond Wolff and especially beyond Baumgarten."

What moves, now, is what moves abruptly, without mediation: it is the obscure feeling, which takes root in the body and escapes all possible cognitio. A turn Sulzer prepares for in

---

[198] Décultot, *Die Schattenseiten der Seele*, p. 267.

[199] SPA, p. 314.

[200] Ibid.

earlier works, and especially in the *Erklärung* of 1759, where the intention to integrate the theory of obscure representations that Leibniz and "[his] pupils" formulated is explicit.

"I want to add here", he states,

> that not only ideas or representations, but also all the activities of the soul can be obscure (*alle andere Handlungen der Seele dunkel sein können*). There are obscure judgements we make without being conscious of them; also obscure feelings, obscure desires, obscure repugnancies [...] In short, all the forces operating in the soul can be expressed in two ways: clearly, when we know what we are doing and can account for it; after an obscure fashion, when we do not know how something is happening within us.[201]

These two modes, above all – as already noted, and as will be examined in greater detail late –, often coexist in the soul, causing it to spiral out of control. This leads to a substantial extension of the domain of the obscure, which comes to include a whole series of pathological cases never before considered.

This theoretical gesture, as we will show below, definitely influenced Kant in his personal reflection on *dunklen Vorstellungen*, leading him to overcome the gnoseological constraints of the Wolffian tradition and to articulate the problem of the unconscious in a new way. Moreover, we shall attempt to show how the insistence on the dimension of the effects, even irrational or pathological effects, of the obscure find themselves at the center of Kant's anthropological inquiry.

Prior to this, however, we need to dwell on what were the relationship between Sulzer and the pre-critical Kant, with particular regard to the problem we are discussing here.

3.6.3 Sulzer as a source for Kant

Let us begin by saying that the idea of Sulzer's influence on Kantian elaboration on the unconscious has already been suggested in the literature.

Most notably, Reinhard Brandt, who, in the introduction to the critical edition of the *Vorlesungen über Anthropologie*, writes that "in some of his thoughts" Kant develops the suggestions contained in Sulzer's "famous treatise" *Erklärung eines psychologischen*

[201] E, pp. 296-297.

paradoxen Satzes, in which it is argued that "in certain situations we may be determined by the unconscious against our will. It is not we who play with the obscure representations, but the obscure representations [...] that play their game with us, or as it will be said constantly [by Kant] from the mid-1770s onward: 'even we ourselves are a game of obscure representations'"[202].

Brandt's hypothesis, reiterated moreover in the important commentary *on Anthropology from the pragmatic point of view*[203], represents an authoritative and innovative contribution to research on *dunkle Vorstellungen* in Kant: not least in that it valorizes a "minor" author, so to speak, or one who is foreign to the roster of philosophers commonly considered in this regard.

Despite this, the quoted passage has received very little critical attention: indeed, the main works aimed at reconstructing the genesis of Kant's theory of the non-conscious have totally neglected Sulzer's contribution, in favor of authors more "familiar" to Kant, such as Baumgarten and Meier[204] . Two exceptions in this trend, however, are worth noting.

On the one hand, Anne Pollok's article on Sulzer in the recent *Kant-Lexikon*, where she acknowledges that "Sulzer's psychological treatises exerted a significant influence on Kant's reflections on the 'dunkelen Vorstellungen'"[205]. On the other, the short *Exkurs* "On the Concept

---

[202] Reinhard Brandt, Werner Stark*, Einleitung*, in *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. XXV: *Vorlesungen über Anthropologie*, hrsg. von R. Brandt und W. Stark, De Gruyter, Berlin 1997, VII-CLI: XXXVI-XXXII. The Akademie-Ausgabe (*Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, hrsg. von der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin 1902-) is cited below with the abbreviation AA and the indication of the volume in Roman numerals.

[203] Reinhard Brandt*, Kritischer Kommentar zu Kants Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht (1798)*, Meiner, Hamburg 1999, pp. 150 and 157.

[204] Cf. La Rocca, *Das Schöne und der Schatten. Dunkle Vorstellungen und ästhetische Erfahrung zwischen Baumgarten und Kant*, in H. Klemme, M.L. Raters, M. Pauen (Hrsg.), *Im Schatten des Schönen. Die Aesthetik des Häßlichen in historischen Ansätzen und aktuellen Debatten*, Aisthesis, Bielefeld 2006, pp. 19-64; C. La Rocca, *L'intelletto oscuro*, pp. 63-116; D. Heidemann, *The 'I Think' Must Be Able to Accompany All My Representations. Unconscious Representations and Self-consciousness in Kant*, in P. Giordanetti, R. Pozzo, M. Sgarbi (eds.), *Kant's Philosophy*, pp. 37-60. Only a hint can be found in Michael Oberhausen, *Dunkle Vorstellungen als Thema von Kants Anthropologie und A.G. Baumgartens Psychologie*, "Aufklärung," 14 (2002), pp. 123-146, here p. 144.

Among the studies on the theory of obscure representations in Sulzer, which also fail to note its connection with Kant, see Falk Wunderlich, *Kant und die Bewußtseinstheorien des 18. Jahrhunderts*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2005, pp. 49-52; Élisabeth Décultot, *Die Schattenseiten der Seele: Zu Johann Georg Sulzers Theorie der dunklen Vorstellungen*, in H. Adler, R. Godel (Hrsg.), *Formen des Nichtwissens der Aufklärung*, Brill, Leiden 2010, pp. 263-278; Daniel Dumouchel, „*Tiefen der Seele"*, pp. 14-35.

[205] See Anne Pollok*, Sulzer, Johann Georg*, in M. Willaschek, J. Stolzenberg, G. Mohr, S. Bacin (Hrsg.), *Kant-Lexikon*, III, pp. 2215-2216.

of Obscure Representations in Kant and Sulzer," which appeared in Andreas Degen's 2017 volume on aesthetic fascination[206] .

In this study, starting from Brandt's observation about Kant's indebtedness to Sulzer's essay, the author offers an interesting comparative examination of the two positions in order to determine the Kantian idea – evoked above – of the "play" of obscure representations as *unfries Spiel*: the condition, that is, in which man loses control of his mental processing and is forced to undergo its effect.

In a book that is still valuable today, on the other hand, Anna Tumarkin observed as early as 1933 that "Kant's repeatedly expressed respect for the 'excellent' Sulzer certainly did not refer only to the aesthete," but that the investigation of the possible direct influence by Sulzer's "science of sensations, which [Kant] must have known from the Annuaries of the Academy of Sciences"[207], was beyond the scope of her discussion.

Subsequent research on the Kant-Sulzer relationship, however, has insisted on privileging its aesthetic or moral side[208], rather than the more strictly anthropological, and therefore psychological, side that that relationship also implies. Not only, in fact, do both stand "against the intellectualism of Leibnizian-Wolffian philosophy [...] and against Hume's skepticism," but for both of them "empirical psychology and the anthropological turn that results from it around the middle of the eighteenth century is of eminent importance."[209]

Recall, incidentally, that for Sulzer "knowledge of the human soul is the noblest part of the sciences"[210]. A fact that only in the last two decades has begun to attract the attention it deserves, so much so that Sulzer is considered the "author who made the first constitutive contributions to the problematics and cultural history of a fundamental anthropology of the late

---

[206] Andreas Degen, *Ästhetische Faszination. Die Geschichte einer Denkfigur vor ihrem Begriff*, De Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2017, pp. 66-70.

[207] Anna Tumarkin, *Der Ästhetiker Johann Georg Sulzer*, Von Huber & Co., Frauenfeld-Leipzig 1933, p. 84.

[208] On Sulzer's influence on Kantian moral theory see Heiner Klemme, *Johann Georg Sulzers 'vermischte Sittenlehre' Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte und Problemstellung von Kants Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, in F. Grunert, G. Stienig (Hrsg.), *Johann Georg Sulzer (1720-1779): Aufklärung zwischen Christian Wolff und David Hume*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2011, pp. 309-22.

[209] Marion Heinz, *Johann Georg Sulzer und die Anfänge der Dreivermögenslehre bei Kant*, in G. Stiening, F. Grunert, *Johann Georg Sulzer*, pp. 83-100: p. 84.

[210] KB, § 206.

Enlightenment"[211].

In what follows, we will attempt to illuminate the early stages of Kant's "encounter" with the figure and philosophy of Sulzer. We will do so by starting from the sphere of morality and then shifting our attention to the more strictly psychological and anthropological sphere.

3.7 Kant, Sulzer and the *Preisschrift* of 1762/64

In a letter to Mendelssohn dated April 8, 1766, Kant concludes by begging his friend "to present Prof. Sulzer with [his] special regards and to express his desire to be honored with a kind letter from you"[212]. Kant's admiration for Sulzer is sincere, and is perhaps most eloquently evinced in his decision to send the Swiss philosopher – along with a few other scholars – first the text of *Dreams of a Visionary*[213]; then, in September 1770, no less than his inaugural *Dissertatio.*

Sulzer, then already a full member of the Berlin Academy of Sciences, was greatly impressed and responded enthusiastically to the newly appointed Königsberg professor, fully reciprocating his esteem[214]. Indeed, with his text, he writes, Kant has granted "a great gift to the public"; and he adds that

> a confluence of many affairs and daily work on my work on the Fine Arts [...] have not yet enabled me to fully grasp each of the important new concepts found in considerable numbers in your work. I think you would give a new impetus to philosophy with these concepts if you would take the trouble to develop each one in particular and show its application in some detail.[215]

---

[211] Gideon Stiening, *Zur physischen Anthropologie einer "Unsterblichkeit der Seele*" in G. Stiening, F. Grunert (Hrsg.), *Johann Georg Sulzer*, pp. 57-81: p. 57. Also significant in this regard are the words used by the editors of Sulzer's *Gesammelte Schriften* – Elisabeth Décultot and Hans Adler – to motivate the whole project, in the preface to the first volume (2013). The intent is "to give the author the place he deserves in the present and future discussion of the 18th century and the Enlightenment". What has been done so far, they add, "has not made it possible to do justice to his role as an Enlightenment philosopher who reflected on the limits of the Enlightenment as conditions of the culture and sciences of his time" (KB, "Vorwort," XI).

[212] I. Kant, *An Moses Mendelssohn* , AA X [39], pp. 46-52.

[213] I. Kant*, An Moses Mendelssohn* (February 7, 1766), p. 67.

[214] See former student Johann Lüdeke's letter of January 18, 1781: "My venerable master [...]. I have only you to thank for the most sincere map of the so cluttered field of philosophy, and my daily experience now confirms what Sulzer said to me when, on my return to Berlin, I expressed my displeasure at having to study theology in Königsberg. "Thank God! What you have lost in theological wealth, you have gained by serving a Kant" (I. Kant, *Von Johann Ernst Lüdeke*, AA X [160], p. 263).

In the second part of the letter, moreover, before wishing him "sincerely all the best in the glorious career that has opened up [for him]," Sulzer confides in Kant that he hopes "to see his work on the metaphysics of morality soon," believing it to be "extremely important for the still faltering theory of morality"[216].

The mention of morality, which together with aesthetics and psychology forms the core of Sulzer's work, allows us to introduce the writing that marks Kant's first "public confrontation" with the problem of obscure representations and, in a way, also with the Swiss philosopher.

This is the essay, written for the Berlin Academy's prize competition in 1763 and published the following year, on the *Distinctness of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morality*[217]: a text that, according to Borowski's testimony, earned Kant the Academy's appreciation as a "profound thinker"[218]. Sulzer himself, who, by the way, had been the originator of that year's question, wrote to Lambert after the competition was over that the winning essay – by the aforementioned Mendelssohn – "shared the Academy's votes with another, in which the author gives a very beautiful description of the analytical method that must be followed in philosophical research"[219].

In what follows, therefore, we want to emphasize, on the one hand, the relevance of the theme of the obscure in the text in question, and on the other, the presence in it of Sulzer as an implicit interlocutor of Kant.

Let us start at the end. Having to determine the degree of certainty that can be expected from propositions relating to the moral realm, as opposed to those of the geometrical sciences, Kant

---

[215] I. Kant, *Von Johann Georg Sulzer*, AA X [62], Dec. 8, 1770, p. 111. The "work on the Fine Arts," of course, is the *Allgemeine Theorie*, the reading of which – we note – Kant will even recommend to his students, including Sulzer among the examples of "genuine aesthetic perfection (see I. Kant, *Wiener Logik* (1780-82), AA XXIV 790-940).

[216] Ibid.

[217] Kant, *Untersuchung über die Deutlichkeit der Grundsätze der natürlichen Theologie und der Moral* (1764), AA II; Eng. Trans. *Inquiry concerning the Distinctness of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morality* [Inquiry], in Id., *Theoretical Philosophy*, *1755-1770*, ed. by D. Walford, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1992, pp. 243-270.

[218] See Felix Gross, *Immanuel Kant. Sein Leben in Darstellungen von Zeitgenossen*. Die Biografien von L.E. Borowski, R.B. Jachmann und E.A.Ch. Wasianski, p. 98.

[219] *Brief von Sulzer an Lambert* (4. Juni 1763): http://www.sulzer-digital.de/briefe/letter-s-lambert-1763-06-04.html.

comes to find that, "while it should be possible" to bring the first principles of morality to the highest degree of philosophical evidence,

> the supreme fundamental concepts of obligation have yet to be determined with greater certainty; and in this respect the defects of practical philosophy are even greater than those of speculative philosophy, since it still has to be determined whether it is the cognitive faculty alone, or feeling (the first internal foundation of the faculty of desiring) that decides these first principles.[220]

The very bipartition of human faculties into knowledge, as "the faculty of representing the *true,*" and feeling, "as the faculty of feeling the *Good*," Kant admits, is a "modern-day" discovery[221]: the reference is to Francis Hutcheson, who constitutes in the moral field the Kantian author of reference in that period[222].

Mai Lequan noted, among other things, that "English empiricist moral philosophy (Hutcheson, Shaftesbury and Hume) in its connection with a theory of the beautiful (and the sublime)" constitutes "a common inheritance" that pre-critical Kant shares with Sulzer[223]. Given, then, the general confusion that reigns in the field of practical philosophy, the determination of moral feeling as a faculty distinct and independent from the cognitive faculty at least allows one to think of obligation on the ground of "the necessity of ends (*necessitas legalis*)," in which only the morality of an action is immediately realized (not as a means to something else, but) as a necessary end, insofar as it coincides with the necessity (duty) of the action itself.

In particular, Hutcheson's *moral sense* is a fundamental corrective to Wolff's rational ethics, which instead subordinates the end of morality, understood as the highest perfection, to an action or an omission of action, respectively. In this way, says Kant, one remains on the formal plane and "no particularly determinate obligation arises from these two rules of the Good unless the indemonstrable material principles of practical knowledge are attached to them"[224].

These principles, precisely impossible to grasp theoretically as objects of feeling, cannot be

---

[220] Inquiry, p. 246.

[221] Inquiry, p. 245.

[222] Borowski writes, indeed, that "in the years when I was his pupil, he favored Hutcheson and Hume, the former in the field of morals, the latter for deep philosophical research" (Gross, *Immanuel Kant*, p. 72).

[223] Mai Lequan*, Esthétique et morale selon Kant et Sulzer*, in B. Deloche (éd.), *L'esthétique de Johann Georg Sulzer (1720-1779)*, Université Jean-Moulin, Lyon 2007, pp. 147-212: p. 149.

[224] Inquiry, p. 245.

dispensed with, since, "as postulates, they contain the foundation of all other practical propositions. Hutcheson and others, under the designation of moral feeling, have given us in this sense a beginning of fine observations"[225].

At this point Kant, to exemplify his theory, connects the indemonstrability of moral principles with the irresolvable character of the representations one has of them. It should be noted at once, moreover, that here the adjective irresoluble (*unauflöslich*) is used by Kant as a synonym for not subdividable further into its components, not susceptible, that is, to that analysis which is in charge of making obscure concepts clear and determined: analysis, which constitutes nothing less than "the task of philosophy"[226].

Given then the existence of an "irresolvable feeling of the Good," and posited the office of the understanding to "clarify the composite and confused concept of the Good," moral judgment "that is good"

> is completely indemonstrable, and is an immediate effect of the consciousness of the feeling of pleasure together with the representation of the object. And since many simple feelings of the Good are certainly found in us, many are those unsolvable representations [*unauflösliche Vorstellungen*].[227]

Such unsolvable representations of the Good – on the basis of what was said earlier –, are nothing more than representations that cannot be further clarified, thus destined to remain obscure to varying degrees. With this in mind, the title of the third paragraph of the first Consideration, to which we now turn, can be read as: "in mathematics*, obscure* – rather than ‚unsolvable' – concepts and indemonstrable axioms are few; in philosophy, they are innumerable." Assumption, the latter, which Kant will discuss extensively in anthropology courses, regarding obscure representations.

While it is true that philosophy must be concerned primarily with "subdividing concepts that are confusingly given and making them evident and determinate"[228], in metaphysics – Kant

---

[225] Inquiry, p. 246.

[226] Inquiry, p. 221. This is a cornerstone idea, to which we will have to return later. In the preserved transcript of the *Enzyklopädievorlesungen*, for example, we read that "the greatest and most important part of philosophy consists in the analysis of the concepts we already have" (I. Kant, *Philosophische Enzyklopädie* (ca. 1775), AA XXIX 5-45).

[227] Inquiry, p. 245.

[228] Inquiry, p. 221.

admits – such an operation is even necessary, depending on it "both the clarity of knowledge and the possibility of making confident deductions." And yet, he goes on, subdivision often proves ineffective, since it leads to unsolvable concepts, "as such either in themselves, or if nothing else for us, and [...] of such concepts there are a great many, since it is impossible that the great multiplicity of general knowledge can be composed of a few fundamental concepts"

Among them, therefore, "many cannot be resolved almost at all," while others

> are only partially resolved, such as the concept of *space*, *time*, or those of the various *feelings* of the human soul, the sense of the *sublime*, the *beautiful*, the *disgusting*, etc., without the exact knowledge and solution of which the motives of our nature are not sufficiently known, and where [...] the subdivision is far from adequate. I confess that the explanations of *pleasure* and *displeasure*, *desire* and *repulsion*, and countless others, have never been sufficiently resolved.[229]

The references to the "motives of our nature" and the feelings of pleasure and displeasure cannot but refer back to Sulzer's famous paper – which Kant owned – on the *Origin of Pleasant and Unpleasant Feelings*. In it, in fact, the origin of the latter, which are "constantly the motives of our actions"[230], is identified in the one "fundamental impulse of the soul": thought, understood as "the incessant effort that sets everything in motion [...] for the production of ideas."[231] . An explanation that, in Kant's eyes, appears simplistic and inadequate. "The mistake made by some," he continues in fact in the quoted text, is to "treat this knowledge as if it could all be reduced to a few simple concepts"[232], thereby neglecting its complexity.

The same assumption is found in the coeval *Logik Herder*, where it is said that "extending the field of ideas is *a* fundamental impulse of the human soul (Sulzer makes it *the first* fundamental impulse). This must be distinguished from the remaining modes of knowledge."[233] For Kant, then, already at this height, the soul does not coincide with a single original force, but is a set of independently defined faculties.

Hence, the large number of indemonstrable metaphysical propositions (in the sense seen above), the analysis of which constitutes the first step of all metaphysical knowledge. Where

---

[229] Inquiry, p. 223.

[230] SPA, pp. 139-207: p. 175.

[231] SPA, p. 9.

[232] Inquiry, p. 241.

[233] *Logik Herder* (1762/64), AA XXIV, 3-6: p. 6, my italics.

the analytical moment is neglected, one runs the risk of producing "cheap knowledge," lacking consistency; what is evident from the common consideration of the representations one has during a deep sleep:

> Most philosophers, as an example of obscure concepts point to those we have when we are deeply asleep. *Obscure* representations are those of which we have no consciousness. Now, some experiences stand to indicate that even in deep sleep we have representations, and since we have no consciousness of them, they are said to be dark. In this case, *consciousness* has a twofold meaning. About representations, one either has no consciousness of having them, or one has no consciousness of having them. In the first case, it is meant to indicate the obscurity of the representation, as it is in the soul; in the second, it only indicates that one no longer remembers it.[234]

From the fact of the forgetfulness of some representations upon waking, Kant adds, "it does not at all follow that they were not clear and conscious during sleep." The basic error, however, lies in the widespread habit of not paying due attention "to the various cases, giving the concept its meaning each time." In doing so, however, it is likely to overlook "a great secret of nature": namely, that "in the deepest sleep the soul could draw the maximum of its capacity in thinking rationally."[235]

This is an important passage, from which we can glean at least two elements. First, the distinction between obscurity as non-consciousness *of a* representation and obscurity as non-consciousness *of having* a representation: in this case, Kant would seem to recognize only the first of the two definitions; and yet, by implication, he also admits that in the moment of sleep one is not conscious *of* having the representations one has, however clear they may be.

Here, then, is the second element: the "great secret of nature" alludes to the primacy of an unconscious form of thought ("rational" activity). In this, arguably, a clue to the future Kantian tension to extend the scope of the soul's obscure activity to all its faculties: a tension which, this is our thesis to prove, finds in Sulzer an effective and suggestive model.

---

[234] Inquiry, p. 234.

[235] Ibid.

5 Precritical Kant

5.1 Kant and coeval empirical psychology

Psychology, in Kant's time and in the context in which he is formed, is essentially a psychology of the faculties of the soul, in a Wolffian matrix. The soul, as we have seen, expresses through its various faculties its *vis repraesentativa*. The psychology or doctrine of the soul, therefore, presupposes a theory of representation.

With respect to the problem of representation, and thus, it goes without saying, also of the representation of which we are not aware, beyond the influence of Sulzer – though not secondary in this sphere either – the continuous, methodical and critical confrontation with the Wolffians Baumgarten and Meier, who guided Kant through forty years of lectures, remains inescapable.

This confrontation, as we shall see below, pushes Kant to progressively distance himself from the canonical conception *of repraesentatio*, with a view to the elaboration of a new representationalist theory, as well as a different articulation of the realm of the unconscious. We now want to contextualize Kant's relationship with the two textbooks and reconstruct the foundations of his psychology, with particular regard to the shift from empirical psychology to anthropology.

In 1755 Kant was granted *libertas docendi* and began lecturing in logic and metaphysics. In 1770 he succeeded Prof. Friedrich Johann Buck as full professor of the same disciplines. He would hold regular classes in logic and metaphysics for forty years, until the summer semester of 1796, when he was forced to quit due to poor physical and mental condition.

For the metaphysics lectures, as we have seen, he adopted the fourth edition of Baumgarten's highly successful *Metaphysica* (after a brief period in which he followed Baumeister, probably the *Institutiones metaphysicae*), for *the* logic lectures Meier's *Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre.* As for the former text, in the *Neuen Anmerkungen zur Erläuterung der Theorie der Winde* (1756), Kant calls it "the most useful and exhaustive of all compendia."[236]

In the First *Critique*, Kant praises its author by speaking of the "excellent analyst Baumgarten"[237]. As is well known, then, the section on empirical psychology (§§ 504-739) of the Baumgarten text also constitutes the textbook for the new anthropology courses, which Kant begins to teach in the winter semester of 1772/73 until his retirement. Regarding this choice, the *Menschenkunde* (1781/82) states that "since there is no other text on anthropology, we shall adopt as our guiding thread the metaphysical psychology of Baumgarten, a man very rich in subject matter and very short in execution."[238]

As is well known, Kant sets out to redefine at the same time the status of the two disciplines we have seen co-present in the metaphysics of the Wolffian school: *empirical psychology* and *psychologia rationalis*. This theoretical operation is configured in both cases in a negative sense.

As far as rational psychology is concerned, with which we are not concerned here, it is subjected to a critique of the foundations: from Kant's point of view this is a closed road, however much positive results and arguments of great interest can be drawn from this same critique philosophically with respect to transcendental philosophy and the philosophy of mind. Empirical psychology is first separated from the metaphysical domain in which it had been placed, and then its nature and limits are redefined. The ouster, however, does not result from a dry and unqualified devaluation; on the contrary, it is accompanied by a recognition of its importance.

Metaphysics, according to Kant, is not the proper place for empirical psychology. In the "Transcendental Doctrine of Method", as is well known, the latter is defined as "a long accepted foreigner (*ein so lange aufgenommener Fremdling*)"[239]. While, therefore, he affirms the need to banish empirical psychology from metaphysics, Kant affirms at the same time the need to continue to house it within it, to still reserve a "little place" for it, since it is not yet so rich as to constitute an autonomous study, but in the firm conviction that it is "too important for one to

[236] Kant, *Neuen Anmerkungen zur Erläuterung der Theorie der Winde* (1756), AA I, p. 503.

[237] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1781/87), AA III, A 21/B 35 [KrV]; Eng. Translation, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. By P. Guyer, A.W. Wood, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998, p. 145n [CRP].

[238] V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82) AA XXV 849-1203: 859.

[239] KrV A 849/B 877; CPR, p. 700.

expel it entirely or attach it somewhere else."[240] Such provisional placement appears necessary "untill it can establish its own domicile in a complete anthropology."[241]

Despite the conceptual change just mentioned, however, Kant continues to deal with empirical psychology even in his metaphysics lectures. In Wolff's perspective, the "first thing" we know about the soul remains the fact that it is conscious of itself and of other things outside itself; this is the fundamental "experience" datum whose foundation *psychologia rationalis* must then explain. In the early seventies of the eighteenth century, during the period when he began lecturing on anthropology, Kant also presents, albeit in different forms, self-consciousness as a way to access metaphysical properties of the soul (substantiality, simplicity).

Although he had already criticized the incorporation of empirical psychology and "knowledge of man" into metaphysics, Kant particularly sees the intuition of self in the inner sense as something from which important metaphysical properties can be derived through the "analysis of the ego".

Kant to hold that from the representation of the self it is possible to derive – by analysis precisely – the simplicity, substantiality, rationality and the very freedom of the soul[242]. Kant later abandons, with the development of the extensive critique of rational psychology, these conclusions. He retains, on the one hand, in his idea of empirical psychology, the prevalence of the self-observational, introspective moment, but on the other hand he abandons the ontological-metaphysical value of the Cartesian argument, asserted by Wolff, and thus can interpret empirical psychology more decisively in the direction of an empirical doctrine of the soul.

In other words, psychology is understood in a more decisively empiricist conceptual framework, which nevertheless retains the methodological primacy of introspective observation, of an approach that takes place through what Kant calls – as Locke and Baumgarten already did – the "inner sense". The idea that the fundamental methodological framework of empirical psychology is one based on the observation of what constitutes the

[240] Ibid.

[241] Ibid.

[242] See, for istance, V-Anth/Par (1772/73), AA XXV 243-245; V-Anth/Fried (1775/76), AA XXV 473.

object of the "inner sense" will be maintained for a long time, and to some extent also in anthropological reflection, albeit with a different theoretical orientation, as we shall now see.

To understand how the idea of teaching courses on anthropology arose in Kant and in what sense this new discipline should be understood, it is useful to start with an important letter to Marcus Herz, a physician and former student of Kant, dating from late 1773. After complimenting him on a review he had written of Ernst Platner's *Anthropology*, Kant writes that "this winter I am giving, for the second time, a lecture course on *Anthropologie*, a subject that I now intend to make into a proper academic discipline"[243].

He immediately adds, in reference to Platner's book:

> But my plan is quite unique. I intentend to use it to disclose the sources of all the [practical] sciences, the science of morality, of skill, of human intercourse, of the way to educate and govern human beings, and thus of everything that pertains to the practical. I shall seek to discuss phenomena and their laws rather than the foundations of the possibility of human thinking in general.[244]

To clarify this last statement, he immediately adds that "the subtle and, to my view, eternally futile inquiries as to the manner in which bodily organs are connected with thought I omit entirely"[245]. In other words, the Kantian project has nothing to do with medical-physiological anthropology, widely popular in his time, but aims precisely at a practical, or, according to a designation that Kant introduces a few years later, "pragmatic" inquiry. Starting from the *Anthropologie Friedländer* (1777/78)[246], where the concept of "pragmatics" is introduced, anthropology is no longer defined by its connection to empirical psychology.

Anthropology then becomes an empirical discipline[247], which aims to achieve a comprehensive knowledge of man based on experience, that is, on the observation of how man

---

[243] I. Kant, *To Marcus Herz* (toward the end of 1773), in Id., *Correspondence*; Eng. Trans. by Arnulf Zweig, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1999, p. 141.

[244] Ibid.

[245] Ibid.

[246] See V-Anth/Fried (1775/76), AA XXV 469-471; further occurrences are in V-Anth/Pill (1777/78), AA XXV 733; V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), 853-857; V-Anth/Mron (1784/85), AA XXV 1211.

[247] Concerning the Kantian conception of anthropology as *Beobachtungslehre*, that is, as an empirical discipline that studies man as the object of internal sense experience, see V-Anth/Fried (1775/76), AA XXV 472-473; V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 856-858, 864; V-Anth/Bus (1788/89), AA XXV 1435.

knows himself and the world, and how he acts in it. To put it in the terms of the later *Anthropology from the Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), it aims to determine not "what *nature* makes of the human being", but what the human being, "as a free-acting being makes of himself, or can and should make of himself"[248]. In this sense, already in the letter cited above, Kant writes that anthropological doctrine is "a preparatory exercise to skill, prudence and even wisdom"[249].

As far as its disciplinary characterization is concerned, Kantian anthropology is – beyond its empirical character – a science, that is, "a doctrine of knowledge of the human being, systematically formulated"[250]. Regarding the topic of representation, it demonstrates its own independence from critical philosophy, due essentially to its methodological peculiarity.

Indeed, anthropology is able to make up for the inherent deficiencies of critical philosophy, determined by the fact that the latter is by definition a 'pure' philosophy. It has the task of investigating the capacities of the soul at which pure philosophy cannot afford to stop: that is, it is able to offer an 'observational' description of those processes by means of which the subject normally achieves its representations.

Kant's anthropology – at least in its didactic section – thus draws from empirical psychology its fundamental intent: the systematic description of the natural laws that govern the subject's mental processes, that is, his way of representing the world. As for the theory of obscure representations, anthropology classes constitute, along with logic, a privileged field of elaboration, as we shall see later.

For the time being, we merely recall the passage that encapsulates this rich and complex elaboration, namely § 5 of the *Anthropology*, called by Michael Oberhausen the *Referenztext* of Kantian reflection on the unconscious:

> A contradiction appears to lie in the claim *to have representations and still not be conscious of them*; for how could we know that we have them if we are not conscious of them? [...]. However, we can still be *indirectly* conscious of having a representation, even if we are not directly

---

[248] *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht*, AA VII; *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Eng. Trans. By Robert Louden, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2006, p. 3 [Anth]. It is useful to point out, in this regard, that Kant was familiar with and interested in discussions of the physiological study of thought, as shown by Robert E. Butts, *Kant and the Double Government Methodology*, Reidel, Dordrecht 1987, pp. 282-318.

[249] I. Kant, *To Marcus Herz*, p. 141.

[250] Anth, p. 3.

conscious of it. – Such representations are then called *obscure*; the others are *clear*, and when their clarity also extends to the partial representations that make up a whole together with their connection, they are then called *distinct representations*.[251]

The theme of inference, as the *medium* of the becoming conscious of the presence in us of unconscious representations, refers back to the central problem of the development of obscure reflections, which we will deal with in the last section. Now, rather, we need to show how Kant comes to extend the field of activity of the obscure beyond the limits of the Wolffian paradigm.

5.2 The obscure between soul and cosmos

Whoever observes the starry sky on a clear night, catches sight of that bright strip of light which, owing to the exceptional multitude of stars thickened in it and to the fact that the possibility of distinguishing them dilutes at these immense distances, presents a uniform glimmer, for which it has been given the name of the Milky Way. Is it any wonder that for so long observers of the heavens were not induced by the nature of such a singular celestial zone, to ascribe to these fixed stars a determined arrangement.[252]

With these statements, Kant lays the groundwork for what can be considered one of his first important publications: the *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels*. A writing, moreover, destined to have no small impact on the astronomical debate of the time, especially with respect to the hypothesis, taken up a few decades later by the mathematician Laplace, of the generation of the Solar System from a primordial nebula.

According to Kant's conception, after all, the nebula should not be understood as "a single immense star," but rather as

a system of many stars, which because of their distance appear to be thickened in a very limited space, and *whose light, which would be imperceptible if each of them were considered in isolation, appears instead, because of their great quantity*, pale and uniform.[253]

---

[251] Anth, pp. 23-24.

[252] I. Kant, *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels* (1755), AA I; Eng. Trans. *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*, in *Kant: Natural Science*, ed. By E. Watkins, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2012, pp. 182-308: p. 197 [UNH].

[253] UNH, p. 198, italics are mine.

Therefore, he continues, the conformation of nebulae has an obvious structural analogy "with the solar system in which we find ourselves."[254]

Now, beyond the albeit fruitful analogy envisaged, to which is linked the intuition of an ordering of the forms of the universe, we would like to note here two interrelated elements, the value of which for the purposes of our work will result in what follows.

The first is related to Leibniz's influence in early Kantian production and, more specifically, in the first formulation of the theory of obscure representations. From this point of view, which first of all interests us, the quotation highlighted in italics certainly refers to the Leibnizian doctrine of *petites perceptions*, from which that theory directly descends. Kantian adherence to the psychological perspective of the Leibnizian-Wolffian school appears even more clearly in a passage from the *Nova Delucidatio*. In it we read, in fact, that:

> undoubtedly the infinite perception, though by no means obscure, of the whole universe always present within the soul, already contains within itself that much of reality which in any case must be present in thoughts, destined to be better clarified later.[255]

And yet, compared to the traditional Leibnizian paradigm, variously mediated by Baumgarten and Maier, the pre-critical Kant's position differs in one fundamental respect. For as Patrick Leland has observed, while it assumes the division of the *status animae* into the upper and lower parts, assigning unconscious representations to the latter, nevertheless, it "ascribes conscious representations *exclusively* to the upper part"[256].

Hence, a clear stance in the direction of one of the nodal assumptions of the critical perspective, namely, the link between the understanding (higher faculty *par excellence*) and transcendental consciousness.

Already at this stage, then, a figure of irreducible autonomy is announced in Kant's reflection. And this, despite the fact that the Leibnizian matrix of interest in the obscure is even openly declared. In the '63 paper on *negative quantities*, for istance, "Mr. von Leibniz" is credited with having thought of the soul as an entity "which embraces the whole universe by its

---

[254] Ibid.

[255] I. Kant, *Nova Dilucidatio* (1755), AA I 387-416: 410.

[256] Patrick Leland, *Unconscious Representations*, p. 267.

power of representation, although only an infinitely small part of these representations is clear."[257]

This formulation, moreover, announces one of the cardinal ideas of Kantian reworking of the theory of the unconscious: that most of the soul's activities take place in obscurity. "Obscurarum perceptionum campus est amplissimus"[258] , Kant writes again in an annotation of the same period, where certainly the reference to a *partition* of the complex of unconscious representations is an idea that Kant derives rather from Baumgarten. What should be pointed out, however, as Fernando Silva has remarked, is that in Baumgarten the domain of obscure representation is conceived as "included" in the *regnum lucis*[259].

In contrast, according to Kant "the field of *obscure* representations is the largest in the human being"[260]. The clear ones, on the other hand,

> contain only infinitely few points of this field which lie open to consciousness; so that as it were only a few places on the vast *map* of our mind are *illuminated*. This can inspire us with wonder over our own being (*über unser eigenes Wesen*).[261]

These important statements, taken from *Pragmatic Anthropology*, provide us with an opportunity to note the second element of great interest in the text cited above. To this end, we will make use of an insight from the aforementioned Silva, who has recently argued for the possibility of establishing in Kant's thought "an analogy between his view of the cosmos and his view of the map of representations of the soul"[262].

---

[257] Kant, *Versuch den Begriff der negativen Grössen in die Weltweisheit einzufüren* (1763), AA II; Eng. Trans. *Elucidation of the Concept of Negative Magnitudes in general* [NM], in Id., *Theoretical Philosophy*, pp. 211-217: p. 215; See also *Metaphysik L1* (c. 1790-91), AA XXVIII 167-350: 282.

[258] Refl 176, AA XV 64.

[259] Metaph, § 514, cited in F. Silva, *Um "secreto procedimento da alma dos homens": Kant sobre o problema das representações obscuras*, "CON-TEXTOS KANTIANOS. International Journal of Philosophy," 5 (2017), pp. 190-215: p. 199.

[260] Anth, p. 25. In the firmness with which this primacy is expressed Nuria Sánchez Madrid sees "the most important feature of the Kantian approach to the problem of obscure representations" (N. Sánchez Madrid, *A Linnaeus of Human Nature: The Pragmatic Deduction of Unconscious Thought in Kant's* Lectures on Anthropology, in P. Giordanetti, R. Pozzo, M. Sgarbi (eds.), *Kant's Philosophy*, p. 177).

[261] Anth, p. 24; The image recurs in several *Vorlesungen*: cf. V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 868; V-Anth/Bus (1788/89), AA XXV 1440. See also the aforementioned Refl. 176, 64-5. In the first Critique, moreover, Kant speaks of the "map of the territory (*Karte des Landes*)" of the pure understanding, acquired through the examination to which the same faculty was subjected in the Analytic (KrV, B 294-95).

[262] Silva, *Um "secreto procedimento da alma dos homens*", p. 200.

In other words, the observation of the sky, and in particular of the "cosmic map" in which Kant visualizes the stars of the Milky Way, would not be dissimilar to the investigation of the obscurity that pervades the human soul. Between the two realms would lie, conversely, a "secret connection"[263], the same one that unites in pragmatic anthropology science of the world and science of man. This connection, we shall immediately see, appears to be confirmed already by a few lines shortly after the passage on the *grösse Karte* just referred to.

In them, in fact, Kant refers to the images focused by a telescope or microscope, arguing that these instruments do not enhance the capacity of our eye to perceive them, but merely make us aware of them. Such a comparison, however scientifically unfounded, is nonetheless indicative of the idea that every man conceals within himself a wealth of buried or latent perceptions, waiting to be brought to light.

In the Lectures *Metaphysik L_1* Kant speaks in this regard of a hidden "treasure" in the soul, such that if we could have "immediate consciousness of all our obscure representations [...] we might wonder at ourselves."[264] And, a little further on, the parallel with astronomical observation returns:

> When by means of a telescope we go with our gaze to the remotest heavenly bodies, the telescope does nothing more than awaken in us the consciousness of countless heavenly bodies that we cannot see with the naked eye, but *which were already obscurely present in our soul*.[265]

As proof of the said relationship, one may also recall the accounts in *Lectures* on Logic and Anthropology, where the image of the Milky Way often figures in relation to unconscious representations.

To give just one example, in the *Anthropologie Mrongovius* the theme of the effects of those representations, to which we shall have occasion to return at length below, is followed by

---

[263] Ibid.

[264] *Metaphysik L_1*, p. 54.

[265] Ibid., my italics. In the V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 20 we read, to this effect, that "the philosopher of human nature endeavors, like the natural scientist, to sense [...] the forces that work in the obscurity (*die Kräfte die im dunkeln würcken*)" According to Refl. 5112, AA XVII 93, from the critical period, fundamental metaphysical questions "impose themselves even more on the astronomer. And at the first judgment he makes about them, here he is in the domain of metaphysics. Does he want to rely, without any guidance, on the suggestions that arise within him, even though he has no map of the field (*Karte des Feldes*) he intends to travel? Into this obscurity the critique of pure reason puts the torch not to illuminate the regions unknown to us beyond the world of the senses, but the obscure space of our own understanding (*den dunkeln Raum unseres eigenen Verstandes*)."

reference to the ancients, who, just as indirectly, "explained the glimmer of the Milky Way as the light of a set of stars [even] though they could not see them, not having telescopes"[266].

As for the theme of inference, moreover, as the medium of clarification of obscure contents, Kant would seem to simply borrow an idea from Wolff. And yet, as Paul Manganaro has noted, unlike Wolff's *Erklärung*, "the Kantian process of *Aufklärung* [...] does not simply go from the obscure to the clear, but from the clear to the obscure, that is, from what is given as a clear 'clue' to the reconstruction of the field of the obscure"[267]. And it is precisely in this attempt to reconstruct, or, as we shall see in the Lectures, to *develop* the non-conscious in order to unveil its deep dynamics, that one of Kant's greatest merits over his predecessors must be recognized. Attempt not only possible, but also necessary if it is true, as we have read, that unconscious representations have to do with the very essence of man.

Exploration of the field of the obscure, then, becomes "a great task of philosophers."[268] A task, one can assume, of no less magnitude than that which Kant himself, in his thirties, delivered to the astronomers of the time, when he wrote that " [Thanks to the new conception of the sky] a vast field for new discoveries opens up here, the key to which can only be provided by observation"[269].

5.3 Kant and Sulzer's *Erklärung*

Despite the strong Baumgartenian influence, however, to which must be added that of Meier[270], Kant's conception of the unconscious goes far beyond the theorization of the *fundus animae*, the positive determination of which is nonetheless still located in a limited sphere, the sensitive sphere, of the human soul. On the contrary, we shall see, for Kant obscure mental activity extends to *all levels* of the same, profoundly redefining its structure.

As we saw above, Sulzer firmly stated that "all other actions of the soul can be obscure." As already mentioned, Sulzer's statements cannot have escaped Kant's attention. This, at least, is

---

[266] V-Anth/Mron (1784/85), AA XXV 1221.

[267] Paolo Manganaro, *L'antropologia di Kant*, Guida, Napoli 1983, p. 105.

[268] V-Anth/Fried (1775/76), AA XXV 479.

[269] UNH, p. 196.

[270] To the Meierian *Vernunftlehre*, in fact, Kant constantly refers in his logic courses. For the Kant-Baumgarten relationship on obscure representations see Michael Oberhausen, *Dunkle Vorstellungen*, pp. 123-146.

the impression that prevails when reading, for example, *Reflexion 177* from the late 1960s, where Kant notes that "every *actus* of understanding and reason can take place in obscurity."[271] And again, in the transcript of the first anthropology course, "the obscure actions of our entire cognitive faculty constitute the greatest part of the state of the soul (*die dunckeln Handlungen unserer ganzen Erkentniß-Kraft machen den grösten Theil des Zustandes der Seele aus*)"[272].

It seems indeed difficult not to catch in these lines an echo of the quoted Sulzerian passage: a text that – in our opinion – pushes Kant in the direction of a radical broadening of the field of unconscious mental activity. In what follows, we will try to briefly explicate the sense of such a "push," with respect to two central elements of the *Erklärung*: *first*, the idea of obscure judgment, to which is linked in Kant the admission of unconscious intellectual activity; second, connected to the first, the Sulzerian conception of feeling as a vector of incoercible obscure forces, which drastically limit the freedom to act deliberately.

First, however, we must dwell on a very relevant passage from *Logik Philippi* an account of the logic lectures given in 1772, based on Meier's textbook[273]:

> Obscure cognitions are those of which we are not conscious. Wolf says: we are either conscious of cognitions, or / not conscious. How can Wolf say: we have cognitions and know that we do not have them. / Sulzer has written about obscure representations.[274]

Kant probably assumes here Meier's equivalence between *cognition* and *representation* [275]. Therefore, the two statements that follow reproduce Locke's famous objection to the existence of unconscious representations, which occurs in various places in Kant's work and usually comes before Kant's own opinion.

As for Wolff's name replacing Locke's, we endorse Michael Oberhausen's hypothesis that it is "an error on the part of the listener or transcriber"[276] of the lecture.

Immediately below is a sentence that in our opinion leaves little room for doubt about

---

[271] Refl. 177 (1769/1770), AA XV 65.

[272] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 20.

[273] Georg F. Meier, *Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre*, Gebauer, Halle 1752 [Henceforth AV].

[274] V-Lo/Phil (1772), AA XXIV 409.

[275] AV, § 11.

[276] Oberhausen, *Dunkle Vorstellungen*, p. 133n.

Sulzer's impact on Kant's thinking on the *dunkle Vorstellungen*. Not Baumgarten, nor Meier, but Johann Georg Sulzer, Kant would seem to admit, is the authority on the matter. And in particular – according to the transcriber's *Erläuterung* – his very essay of 1759.

Sulzer's announced extension into the field of the unconscious contributes to the Kantian transformation of the obscure phenomena, and in particular to the broadening of the field of the obscure to *every kind* of *action of the soul*, from feeling to memory, from moral action to – beyond Sulzer himself – intellectual reflection. We shall see this in the next section. But in what does this enlargement for Sulzer consist?

In the *Erklärung eines psychologischen paradoxen Satzes*, Sulzer sets out to explain "that man sometimes acts and judges not only without impulse and without visible reasons, but also against urgent impulses and compelling reasons." In other words, experience shows that many actions:

> occur not only without the participation of the will, but against both its sanction and all its efforts to hinder them. [...] Such irregularities can be observed in the case of judgments as well. People claim that it is impossible to deny anything when obvious grounds exist for affirming it. Yet the opposite occurs.[277]

As for the *dunkle Urtheile*, Sulzer moves from the consideration of those cases "in which the soul is not free to believe its own firm convictions," what happens, for example, to people who, while absolutely certain that death leads to annihilation, are afraid of ghosts. In such situations, he continues, it is not a simple change of opinion, "what would explain why [men] are inconsistent or contradictory in their judgments"; rather, the explanation is – we saw above – that "two diametrically opposed judgments can actually coexist."[278]

Indeed,

> You cannot fear a danger unless you think that it is real. Thus, as soon as we fear, we believe in the reality of danger. Given that fear overcomes us even though we are convinced of our safety, it is obvious that the two judgments exist side by side.[279]

Such a paradox of judgment, Sulzer adds, as well as that relating to willing, rests on the

---

[277] E, p. 291.

[278] E, p. 294.

[279] E, p. 295.

activity of obscure forces, which are accompanied by unconscious feelings or representations, sometimes long forgotten. While, therefore, a force "causes us to regard something as false or true, although we are convinced precisely that it is true or false," a similar force in us "surpasses every effort of the will and causes us to act against our own wishes."[280]

In the latter case, the representation shakes such a number of nerves that it becomes a feeling: the movement thus provoked is communicated from the brain to the chest, immediately determining action. The distinct ideas of the understanding are unable to prevent the rapid effect of the obscure ones, so that, Sulzer concludes, "emotions surprise reason"[281].

In the Kantian *Anthropologie Collins*, after all, we read that "obscure ideas have great power in us; they often give us a direction in feelings, which we cannot change even with clear ideas." And the example given is closely reminiscent of the Sulzerian one:

> This is the case, for example, with the horrors of death, which are seized upon even by those who seek their most important consolation in the brevity of life. Reason shows everyone that death is something worthy of desire, but sensibility makes it the king of terror.[282]

Fear, induced by unconscious representations, undermines seemingly established rational beliefs, generating contradiction in judgments and directing – as we shall see – the actions involuntarily.

In a passage from *Logik Blomberg*, in this regard, false persuasion is distinguished from true belief in these terms:

> [Some] persuasions arise from logical reasons, others from aesthetic reasons which [...] arise from a certain inclination. We are often not indifferent to finding a thing true or false, and so there is a great reason (*ein größer Grund*) why we are persuaded by knowledge. In general, man is subject to many illusions; they play with him as with a ball.[283]

On Sulzer's influence on the Kantian conception of man as a "game of the obscure," we will dwell in the next section. And again, in anthropology it is said that "we commonly call sensation what is a judgment in the obscure (*ein Urteil im Dunkeln*)," and many superficial philosophers

[280] Ibid.

[281] E, p. 300.

[282] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 21-22.

[283] V-Lo/Blom (1771), AA XXIV 227.

mistake a series of ideas or reflections for feelings:

> Actually [they] mean that they are unable to develop the reasons (*die Gründe*) why this or that action is illegal. The principles of morality and metaphysics already lie in obscurity within us, and the philosopher only makes them clear to us and develops them.[284]

It is important to note here that Sulzer also notes that "with judgments based on obscure ideas", since are not perceptible at the moment, one have "the wider impression that [they] are a kind of inner sense"[285]. And yet, with respect to what we shall see in a moment, the physiological framework of his argument – which sees obscurity as a correlate of the movement produced in the nerves, thus as connected to bodily sensation – precludes him from thinking of an unconscious activity *of the* understanding: obscure judgments, as well as prejudices, in this sense, result from the influence (and prevalence) on the understanding of representations related to the sphere of feeling.

Nevertheless, even if Kant will take a different path, the force of the Sulzerian suggestion remains in our view absolutely relevant. If it is the philosopher's task, after all, to develop unconscious reflections in order to shed light on the "determining grounds of masses of judgment that lie in the obscurity of the mind"[286], he must also strive, "like the natural scientist, to sense [...] the forces that work in the obscurity"[287], so as to determine the field of the unconscious.

Indeed, the nodal theme, in the *Erklärung*, is that science which searches for "*the physical origin of* the tyranny of the passions"[288], whereby, Sulzer writes, "the muscles we want to move evade our command," activating themselves "against our will and in such a way that no power of the soul is able to stop them."[289]. Again, then, the theme of the power of the dark, highlighting the fragile dimension of man as a powerless spectator, a victim of his unconscious representations.

Taking up these reflections, the Kant of *Anthropology* will add a sphere of freedom drespect

---

[284] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 22-23.

[285] E, p. 301.

[286] Anth, p. 28.

[287] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 20, italics ours.

[288] E, p. 292, italics mine.

[289] Ibid.

to those representations, in which he is master of them. Nevertheless, it is almost always the imagination as an "active capacity for involuntary images" that prevails[290] . So much so that:

> it is remarkable how at first we are able to voluntarily direct our imagination to an object and [how] it then proceeds on its own in its own play and then we no longer follow voluntarily but an inner force of the soul (*eine innere Kraft der Seele*) guides us, the images take their course and we ourselves do not know how we reach them.[291]

As can be seen, Kant again invokes Sulzerian motifs, yet placing them within the framework of his own original vision. The time has come to show the theoretical assumptions of this Kantian originality.

5.4 The transformation of the *campus obscuritatis* and the obscure understanding

According to Patrick Leland, an important leap forward in the understanding of unconscious mental contents is recorded in a note in *Dreams of a Visionary Clarified with the Dreams of Metaphysics*, 1766.

Intent on discussing around some metaphysical concepts, Kant gives the following clarification about their origin:

> many concepts arise from secret and obscure reasoning on the occasion of experiences (*durch geheime und dunkele Schlüsse bei Gelegenheit der Erfahrungen*), and propagate themselves to others, without even consciousness of the experience or reasoning that founded the concept on it. [...] They are many and in part are pure illusions of the imagination, in part they are also true, since even obscure reasonings do not always err.[292]

In these lines Kant, for the first time, explicitly alludes to the possibility of unconscious acts of judgment and inference, thus inherent in the higher cognitive faculty. We shall return later, incidentally, to the motif of the occasion of experience as the medium of the "return to mind" of obscure representations.

---

[290] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 87.

[291] V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 946.

[292] Kant, *Träume eines Geistersehers, erläutert durch Träume der Metaphysik* (1766), AA II: 317-377; Eng. Trans. *Dreams of a spirit-seer elucidated by dreams of metaphysics* [Dreams], in Id., *Theoretical Philosophy,* pp. 301-372: p. 308n.

What is important to note now is the progress and sharp discontinuity that the assumption of obscure reflection entails with respect to the Leibnizian-Wolffian tradition, within which the unconscious always afferent to a low level of the *status animae*. One of the decisive prerequisites of this progress is Kant's critique of the logico-continuistic conception of the cognitive faculties, according to which the clarity-consciousness of a representation depends only on the degree of logical distinction that connotes it.

In the *Inaugural Dissertation* of 1770[293], Kant declares, for istance, that:

> badly one explains the psychic with a *rather confusedly* known and the intellectual as something of which one has a *distinct* cognition. These are in fact only logical differences, which absolutely *do not touch the data*, presupposed by any logical comparison.[294]

Noteworthy, however, given Kant's disinclination to quote his interlocutors directly, is the explicit mention of "the illustrious Wolff" – by which he likely means his school – as responsible for holding "merely logical the distinction between sensible and intellectual facts." In this way, Kant continues, he fails to grasp – "to the great detriment of philosophy"[295] – the *genetic* difference, which alone can determine the sensitive or intellectual character of representations.

According to it, and this is Kant's great insight, the nature of *repraesentatio* (and of the respective object) is made to depend on its origin, respectively, in sensibility or in what, later, will be called the spontaneity of the understanding.

Another celebrated example is offered in the lectures *Metaphysik L1* (ca. 1775/80):

> Sensible knowledge is *not* sensible because it is confused, but by the fact that it takes place in the soul as long as it is affected by objects. And in turn intellectual knowledge is not intellectual because it is clear and distinct, but because it springs from ourselves. [...] Clarity and obscurity are [...] forms pertaining to both sensible and intellectual representations.[296]

---

[293] Kant, *De mundi sensibilis atque intelligibilis forma et principii* (1770), AA II; Eng. Trans. *On the form and principles of the sensible and the intelligible world* [De mundi], in *Theoretical Philosophy*, pp. 373-416.

[294] De mundi, II, § 7, p. 387. On this, see Matthieu Haumesser, *Distinction sensible et confusion intellectuelle*, in S. Grapotte, T. Prunnea-Bretonnet (éds), *Kant et Wolff. Héritage et Ruptures*, Vrin, Paris 2011, pp. 71-87.

[295] De mundi, § 7, p. 387.

[296] Kant, *Metaphysik L1* (ca. 1775/80), AA XXVIII: 229-230.

Even in the late *Anthropology from the Pragmatic Point of View*, Kant will return to point out "the grave error of the Leibnizian-Wolffian school," which led to "placing sensibility exclusively in a lack (lack of clarity of partial representations)"[297], ignoring its inherent positivity. And it is precisely in anthropology, as we shall see in a moment, that the Kantian redefinition of the *regnum tenebrarum* that we are trying to understand is expressed in all its revolutionary scope.

As Claudio La Rocca has convincingly shown, the negation of the equivalence between what is obscure-confused and what is sensible is not the only operation that contributes to the[298] Kantian "transformation" of the traditional way of understanding the unconscious. To it, in fact, must be conjoined the denial of the mutual correlation between clarity-consciousness of a representation and the possibility of distinguishing, in it, notes sufficient to recognize its object[299] .

Under this assumption, in fact, obscurity was conceived as a mere defect of cognition – think especially of Wolff and Meier –, a lack that relegated all unconscious thought or perception to a cognitively weak level of representation. For Kant, conversely, consciousness no longer depends on the notes of representation: which is why a representation can be unconscious *and still have its own notes*, elaborated in different ways.

As we have seen, Baumgarten also conceives of the possibility of obscure notes, but, as Claudio La Rocca again pointed out, these are notes *of the* represented *object* and thus not inherent in the *perceptio* itself[300]. For Meier, obscure knowledge is possible, but not an obscure note in the sense of a representational element. Where "obscure knowledge" (*dunkele Erkenntnis*) of notes is mentioned, the reference is to notes as elements of *things*, of represented objects[301]. Similar is the discussion in Baumgarten, where the *perceptio* of notes concerns in obscure representations the *cogitatum*[302].

---

[297] Anth, p. 29n.

[298] La Rocca, *L'intelletto oscuro*, 64.

[299] Refl 2275, AA XVI 296: "Beym Bewustseyn sind Merkmale, aber wo Merkmale vorgestellt werden, da ist nicht immer Bewustseyn".

[300] See La Rocca*, L'intelletto oscuro*, p. 78, note 48. La Rocca points out how the same argument applies to Meier (Ibid.).

[301] VL, § 153.

[302] Metaph, § 510; M, p. 199.

On the other hand, the "pre-Kantian" conception of the obscure entailed the configuration of the unconscious as the exclusive connotation of that which is sensible*, sensitivus*, confused, and therefore in need of being developed through the understanding. With this, he can justify the possibility of obscure intellectual activity and in general extend – we would say "sulzerianly" – the campus obscuritatis to all actions of the soul.

Breaking the link between consciousness and the sensibility-understanding contra-position[303], allows Kant to include in the field of the unconscious the many activities of the higher faculty of the soul. And first of all, as mentioned, the unconscious acts of the understanding, which express "the greatest part of the state of the soul," very few cognitions being "illuminated by consciousness"[304].

To cite a further example, let us quote this passage from *Pragmatic Anthropology*, where we find the idea that when one has to solve a question based on the rules of the understanding, it is convenient to

> deferring the decisive opinion to the principles of determining judgment that lie in the obscurity of the soul [...]: here reflection represents the object in the plurality of its aspects, and draws from it a correct result while not realizing the acts that thus follow one another within.[305]

[303] Cf. La Rocca*, L'intelletto oscuro*, pp. 77-78.

[304] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 20.

[305] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 24.

6. Kant's Lectures on Anthropology and Logic

6.1 Developing the obscure: "analytic philosophy" as anthropological science

As we have seen, Kant redefines the field of the obscure, breaking the embankments of the Baumgartenian scheme enlarging it to the entire state of the soul, and in particular legitimizing the unconscious activity of the understanding. Precisely in obscure representations indeed, he even goes so far as to claim, "the understanding acts with the greatest effectiveness" and "all clear representations are, for the most part, the result of long obscure reflections"[306].

This is a strong statement that evidently overturns the traditional conception of mental obscurity, understood as pertaining only to the realm of sensible knowledge. The following passage from the *Collins* Lectures on Anthropology transcript expresses this crisply:

> we are accustomed to take obscure representations for sensations; thus we think we feel the beauty of a poem, the humor of a joke, when here they are only reflections, which have nothing in common with sensations; for the principle of sensation is sensibility, the principle of reflection is the understanding. What must be an object of sensation must be able to be subjected to the senses, and we feel nothing that is not sensible.[307]

This error, which arises primarily from the structural reasons we have seen, is attributed by Kant to "superficial minds," that is, those who are unable to investigate where a given thought or judgment comes from, or who otherwise wish to avoid the trouble of doing so.

Tracing back to the reasons for our judgments and reflections, and with that to obscure representations, is indeed very difficult. And yet, given the relevance of what they contain, this "arduous development" is for Kant as necessary as ever, and will even be referred to as "the task of the philosopher (*das Geschäft des Philosophen*)"[308].

---

[306] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 20: "in dunckeln Vorstellungen ist der Verstand am würcksamsten und alle klare[n] Vorstellungen sind mehrentheils Resultate von langen dunklen Reflexionen".

[307] V-Anth/Coll, AA XXV 22.

[308] V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 871.

It opens up for him, in fact, "a vast field on which to work to develop these obscure reflections"[309], as Kant announces in the *Collins* transcript, thereby laying the groundwork, in our view, for building a specific "anthropological science": the analytic philosophy. This takes place, as we shall try to show below, through a vast rethinking of the function of *evolutio*, traditionally confined to the sphere of logic. The privileged polemical reference, therefore, can only be the Meierian conception, which it is therefore first of all a matter of recalling, at least schematically.

In § 131 of the *Auszug*, Meier argues that

> the act by which the obscurity of knowledge is reduced and the clarity of knowledge is produced and increased is called the unfolding or development of knowledge (*evolutio*, *explanatio cognitionis*), just as the opposite act is called the enfolding (*involutio cognitionis*) of it.[310]

He then lists the three operations of which development thus understood would be composed:

> (1) One must direct one's attention to the object one wants to know clearly; (2) one must compare it with other objects different from it, so that one can recognize its distinguishing features (§ 115); (3) one must abstract from all other things, that is, obscure them, paying attention to the object alone. The more often, intensely and for a long time one pays attention to a thing, the more intensely one compares it with more objects, the more intensely one abstracts from other things, the better and more easily one develops knowledge of it – even if at first one were to do this work several times in vain.[311]

As can be seen, according to Meier, developing obscure knowledge basically involves exercising the operations of attention, comparison and abstraction on the object of knowledge, so as to make it more recognizable.

It should first be noted that Meier understands this clarification of the obscure as part of the cognitive act itself. That is, he is concerned with how to diminish the obscurity of knowledge of a given object, because he wants to explain how knowledge works and its actual refinement.

---

[309] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 22. In the *Anthropologie Friedländer* (1775/76), Kant speaks of „a major occupation of the philosophers" (V-Anth/Fried, p. 479)

[310] AV, § 131.

[311] Ibid.

For Kant, on the other hand, according to a conception that will be central in the anthropological teaching, it is predominantly a matter of tracing back and illuminating what has been known before, and which now lies in obscurity, and yet produces effects and grounds our clear knowledge. This Kant emphasizes well already in the *Logik Blomberg* (1771), at the same § 131, where, among other things, he introduces another important element of his conception, consistently emphasized in the lectures: namely, the fact that "the doctrine of obscure knowledge is not at all logical, but only metaphysical"[312]. Indeed, logic "is not a science about the nature of the subject, of the human soul, to recognize what is hidden in it; it already presupposes clear concepts and deals with the use of our understanding and reason"[313].

Implicitly, Kant already suggests here that anthropology is the most suitable field for exploring obscure representations. Anthropology which, as we know, he will begin teaching from the following winter semester. And not surprisingly, below he evokes the thesis we alluded to, that "in our soul all knowledge is already really contained in latent form, and really all that is needed is to develop it and bring it into clearer light"[314].

Leaving the explanation of this crucial thesis in abeyance for now, it should be noted how for Meier the act of developing knowledge and the act of increasing its clarity are two contiguous logical operations. *Evolutio*, we might say, is simply the first degree of analysis, or decomposition. Not coincidentally, as we read above, the same operation of development serves to reduce the obscurity and increase the clarity of knowledge.

For Kant this is not the case. He comes by assigning a singular importance to the operation of developing the obscure into the clear, distinguishing it sharply from the logical operation of analysis. In the late *Logik Busolt* we read in this connection that:

> Logic has nothing to do with obscure representations; it must be provided with clear representations. The operation by which a concept becomes clear, if it was previously obscure, is called *evolutio conceptus*. Making a representation distinct is not an evolution (*evolutio*), but an *analysis*, or *decomposition* (*Zergliederung*). The analysis of a concept is the concept conducted

[312] V-Lo/Blom (1771), AA XXIV 123.

[313] V-Lo/Blom (1771), AA XXIV 123.

[314] V-Lo/Blom (1771), AA XXIV 123: „In unserer Seele liegen alle Erkenntniße schon wircklich vorborgen, und es ist eigentlich nichts mehr nöthig, als diese Erkenntniße nur zu entwickelen, und sie in ein helleres Licht zu bringen".

successively toward partial representations. With regard to the former, logic does not provide us with means; but with regard to the latter, it does.[315]

Here is the point. Insofar as logic deals with knowledge that is already clear, it cannot provide any means of tracing back to the obscure and shedding light on it. But then the question arises: where can we look for the means for this development?

There is a need, according to Kant, for an inquiry that is not limited to the logical realm, but that taps into the depths of the human soul. There is a need, we said, for a specific "anthropological science," which aims to reconstruct what the mind – and particularly the understanding – plays out in the obscure.

It seems useful to note, before moving forward, that an interest in the development of obscure ideas is already present in the Kant of the 1760s. This is illustrated, for istance, by a passage in the 1764 *Untersuchung über die Deutlichkeit*, in which Kant is discussing where one should start in order to make an obscure concept "distinct, complete and determinate"[316].

In attempting an answer, he refers to the concept of time, citing the classic Augustinian anecdote:

> *Augustine* said: „I know perfectly well what time is, but if someone asks me what it is I do not know". In such a case as this, many operations have to be performed in unfolding obscure ideas (*viel Handlungen der Entwicklung dunkler Ideen*), in comparing them with each other, in subordinating them to each other and in limiting them by each other. And I would go as far as to say that, although much that is true and much that is penetrating has been said about time, nonetheless no real definition has ever been given of time.[317]

Already in these lines, therefore, albeit within a different theoretical horizon, the need and urgency to deepen the question of the clarification of the obscure, to search for other ways, beyond the attempts and proposals of Wolffian philosophy, appears clear.

This strong aspiration, following the turn of the *Dissertatio*, becomes considerably precise and becomes – as we have mentioned – a problem closely related to the unconscious activity of the understanding. In this regard, we find it useful to start from an important passage in the

---

[315] V-Lo/Bus (1789/90), AA XXIV 635.

[316] Inquiry, p. 256.

[317] Ibid.

Logik Pölitz (1780), in which it is recognized that it is "remarkable that the understanding often works in obscurity"[318]. This, incidentally, seems to betray an awareness on Kant's part that he is asserting something innovative and poorly considered.

Of this obscure reflection, he adds, "one is not conscious, but [is] only conscious of its result: whether something is true or false. The latter case is called 'scruple': one is aware of a doubt towards something, but is unable to provide a reason for it"[319]. How, then, to arrive at this obscure ground?

> One must try to find out what reflections the understanding has made in the obscurity, thanks to which it has come to accept or reject something. For this purpose guidance is necessary, that is: one returns to the nearest known element and checks whether what is unknown is not related to it. This operation is called *evolution* and is often very difficult, both in ourselves and in others.[320]

It becomes clear, then, that here the developing operation has shifted from logic to the study of human beings, that is: to psychology and anthropology.

Here then is drawn a scheme that attempts to determine the "inferences" Kant so often speaks of, a method of working for the "great field" mentioned in the *Anthropologie Collins*. In the *Anthropologie Friedländer* Kant writes that "a large part of philosophical thoughts is already previously prepared in obscurity. The judgments that arise from obscure representations we must explain and trace"[321]. And in the *Menschenkunde* (winter semester 1781/82) we find this important definition:

> the development of the obscure representations in all our judgments is properly analytic philosophy (*die Entwickelung der dunklen Vorstellungen bei allen unsern Urtheilen ist eigentlich die analytische Philosophie*).[322]

This discipline, however, is already introduced in the *Friedländer* lectures themselves, where, moreover, we find, what is most interesting, the distinction highlighted above between the procedure of developing such judgments and that of analyzing representations. The latter is

---

[318] V-Lo/Pöl (1780), AA XXIV 536.

[319] V-Lo/Pöl (1780), AA XXIV 536.

[320] V-Lo/Pöl (1780), AA XXIV 536.

[321] V-Anth/Fried (1777/78), AA XXV 479.

[322] V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 870.

addressed first in the exposition, and described as the "analytic part of philosophy (*die analytische Theil der Philosophie*), where one analyzes one's own concepts, and observes oneself"[323].

Next, in the section on obscure representations, Kant states:

> One should not hold what is universally judged by the common understanding to be absurd because it has no foundation [...]. The foundation, however, is still in the obscure and one should try to show this foundation [...]. Why does one shake hands with a stranger with the right hand? Because it is our active hand, so we leave it free for him. Why do we place the person most distinctly in the middle among three? So that he can converse in both sides. All this is in reason, we just were not aware of it. Yes, such sciences exist, and this is analytic philosophy, in which light is shed through the development of obscure representations (*durch Auswickelung dunckle Vorstellungen*).[324]

It is interesting that Kant emphasizes here the *existence* of a means to shed light on the obscurity of the soul: as if to challenge a certain widespread skepticism on this matter.

A moderate optimism, one might say, which, however, as we shall see, tends to wane from the late 1980s onward. Through analytic philosophy, in any case, the philosopher helps to lead the human being to himself, to discover his own hidden thoughts, which underlie conscious judgments. And this is the case whether it is his own person or that of others, as in the case of Socrates, recalled here by Kant – as in many other places in the Lectures. It is necessary then to follow Socrates, who said that he was not the teacher but the midwife of the thoughts of his audience.

In this sense, Kant emphasizes that by illuminating and developing thoughts and judgments, analytic philosophy helps to "draw them out" from the obscure storehouse of memory, as the midwife brings forth the newborn.

This "remembrance" character of development is also emphasized in *Anthropologie Mrongovius* (winter 1784/85):

> In analytic philosophy, I simply make obscure representations in the soul clear. For all propositions of philosophy are known to everyone, although only in obscure representations that

[323] V-Anth/Fried (1777/78), AA XXV 478.

[324] V-Anth/Fried (1777/78), AA XXV 480.

> are made clear and distinct through philosophy [so] that he becomes conscious of them and so to speak remembers, as he feels that these are the same propositions of which he was also previously conscious, albeit indistinctly.[325]

At the same time, the difficulty of this procedure is again emphasized. The "ability to recall" these representations, in fact, "is so limited that they emerge only singularly and on certain occasions."

> When we remember something, we bring out the obscure representations related to that thing and make them clear; therefore, a man who has also seen and read a lot may not be able to tell anything. This is because in a person's soul there is such a quantity of obscure representations that he cannot immediately choose among them. It is as if he were standing in front of a forest and could not see the trees.[326]

In the *Menschenkunde* (winter semester 1781/82), we read that "the illumination of certain obscure representations through philosophy requires much acumen"[327], and the example of certain moral judgments, such as that concerning one's "personal worth," is brought up. However, precisely because of this and all the more so, "the moralist has nothing more to do than to search in the depths of the human understanding (*in den Tiefen des menschlichen Verstandes zu forschen*), in order to transform obscure representations into clear ones."

Let us then conclude this section with the following very nice passage, which seems to us to summarize well the meaning of our reconstruction and the importance Kant ascribes to analytic philosophy:

> To develop these obscure reasons is the task of the philosopher, and it is in that process that we often admire the excellence of the unfolded structure of the human being. The germs of our thoughts reside only within us, and this is the true treasure of the human soul; what has so far been developed is infinitely little compared to what could still be developed.[328]

---

[325] V-Anth/Mron (1784/85), AA XXV 1222.

[326] V-Anth/Mron (1784/85), AA XXV 1221.

[327] V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 870.

[328] V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 871.

6.2 The pragmatic turn: attention and abstraction in the 1798 *Anthropologie*

As we mentioned, and as we believe we have at least partially shown, there emerges from the Lectures held in the 1970s and in the 1980s a moderate confidence in the possibility of developing the obscure reasons that ground clear knowledge.

Without at all hiding the difficulties that this implies, Kant is confident in philosophy's ability to reconstruct, at least in part, the mental processes that the understanding carries out in the dark. It is from this firm conviction, in fact, that he reinvents the scholastic notion of development and provides the "philosopher of human nature"[329] with some working schemes, albeit fragmentary, to "throw a light into the obscure corner of our soul." However, this positive commitment to the exploration of the obscure seems to crack or. at least, transform in the late 1980s.

We now want to try to understand the nature and reasons for this supposed change in perspective, starting with the Busolt Lectures course. This will provide us with an opportunity to focus on the "Sulzerian" problematic of the power of the obscure over the conscious life of human beings, and its effects on their pragmatic experience.

In the *Anthropologie Busolt* (winter 1788/89), the discussion of *dunklen Vorstellungen* opens with the now well-known justification of their existence, against those who – in Locke's wake – deny it: "obscure representations are those of which we are not directly conscious; but [we are] through their effect"[330]. Below, however, the observation that "everything our memory contains is in the realm of obscure representations"[331] is followed by the admission of the severe limitations of our ability to recall them to mind. Indeed, this capacity is "so limited that they come to light only one at a time and occasionally."[332]

With such pessimistic emphasis it would seem, in fact, to conclude the discussion of the development of obscure thoughts. On the other hand, however, the reference to their "effect," as a clue from which to infer their existence, provides a possible key to understanding this change. For by virtue of the effect, not only do we know that the obscure representation lying

[329] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 20.

[330] V-Anth/Bus (1788/89), AA XXV 1441.

[331] V-Anth/Bus (1788/89), AA XXV 1441.

[332] V-Anth/Bus (1788/89), AA XXV 1441.

within us "really exists," but, Kant adds, also that it "plays an important role in people's lives."[333] Here is the key point.

What seems to come to the center of the inquiry now is not so much the obscure phenomena pertaining to man's interiority, but rather their incidence in his conscious, exterior life. In other words: pragmatic knowledge of man, as the study of what he, "as a freely acting being, does or can and should do with himself," takes center stage, putting more strictly psychological interests in the background.

In this framework, in which man's actions as a "citizen of the world" are at the center, it seems understandable that the topic of development no longer finds a place. Precisely for this reason, in our view, it hardly appears in the 1798 *Anthropologie* and, indeed, Kant explicitly states that the discussion of the obscure does not belong to the inquiry intended there. Indeed, certainly:

> the field of *obscure* representations is the largest in the human being. – But because this field can only be perceived in his passive side as a play of sensations, the theory of obscure representations belongs only to physiological anthropology, not to pragmatic anthropology, and so it is properly disregarded here.[334]

Having ousted the doctrine of obscure representations from the realm of logic, one might say, Kant also ousts it from anthropology, at least in the latter's commonly known form. This does not mean, however, that it is not present at all. As we said, it simply changes form, and, paradoxically, finds precisely in the dimension of "play (*Spiel*)" – variously understood – the most characterizing element.

We shall see this in the last section. It is interesting to note, now, and in confirmation of the shift in interest we are noting, that in the title of the paragraph devoted to them in the published work Kant chooses not to include "obscure representations," but rather "On the representations that we have without being conscious of them"[335]. The focus, then, now seems to shift from the plane of obscurity to that of clarity and consciousness.

---

[333] V-Anth/Bus (1788/89), AA XXV 1440.

[334] Anth, p. 25.

[335] Anth, p. 23.

Further confirmation of this appears to be the fact that, in addressing the problem of "the voluntary consciousness of one's representations" – that is the title of § 3 –, Kant merely invokes the traditional concepts – already seen in Meier – of attention and abstraction.

"The endeavor to become conscious of one's representations," he writes, is "either the *paying attention to* (*attentio*) or the *turning away from* an idea of which I am conscious (*abstractio*)"[336]. The first faculty, however, is practically not discussed here with reference to our topic, but only with respect to self-observation – in the next paragraph, which we will mention shortly. A brief but significant passage, however, presents it as the "*faculty of apprehending*" given representations "in order to produce *intuition* [of an object]"[337]. A faculty indispensable, then, to the cognitive process, as much as the faculty of abstraction itself, which is in charge of separating "what is common to several of these intuitions" in order to produce "*cognition* of the object"[338].

The latter operation, in § 3, is described as the act "of stopping a representation of which I am conscious from being in connection with other representations in one consciousness"[339], where it is emphasized that it is an act of separation *from* something, not *of* something. In this sense, it is no longer merely, as for Meier, and also for Baumgarten, the negative counterpart of attention: the ability to obscure what was previously clear. Instead, it becomes a positive operation, by which the individual partial, clear representations are composed within the complex representation. This composition takes place according to an order, which determines the distinction of the representation.

Indeed, Kant affirms:

> In every complex representation (*perceptio complexa*), and thus in every cognition (since intuition and concept are always required for it), distinctness rests on the *order* according to which the partial representations are combined, and this prompts either a *merely logical* division [...] into higher and subordinate representations (*perceptio primaria et secundaria*), or a *real* division into principal and accessory representations (*perceptio principalis et adhaerens*).[340]

---

[336] Anth, p. 19.

[337] Anth, p. 27.

[338] Anth, p. 27.

[339] Anth, p. 19.

[340] Anth, pp. 26-27.

Distinct knowledge, thus, no longer derives from making the notes of a representation clear, but from the order in which their manifold is structured, through a successive series of abstractions. This new conception of *abstractio*, Paola Rumore has argued, arises against the background of a precise theory of representation, which, reworking the Baumgartenian conception, makes the different logical degree of *perceptiones* – from obscurity to distinction – depend on the degree of their simplicity or complexity[341].

Whereas the transition from obscurity to clarity, Rumore summarizes, is the work of attention – in concert, we add, with the obscuring action of abstraction[342] –, that from clarity to distinction is the work of the latter in the sense just seen.

Regarding the faculty of abstraction, moreover, Kant adds a further element that proves crucial to our argument. He writes, indeed, that abstraction "is a far greater faculty" than that of paying attention, because "it demonstrates a freedom of the faculty of thought and the authority of the mind, *in having the object of one's representations under one's control* (*anima sui compos*)"[343]. From this point of view, he adds, the faculty of abstraction "is much more difficult than that of attention, but also more important, when it concerns sense representations"[344].

In the next section, we will address precisely the problem of man's difficulty in rationally mastering obscure representations and their influence, highlighting an inner conflictuality that closely resembles Sulzer's reflections seen above. In this sense, we aim to demonstrate the correctness of Brandt's intuition with respect to the Kantian idea of man as a "play" of the unconscious.

---

[341] Rumore, *L'ordine delle idee*, p. 248, note 41.

[342] According to the *Anthropologie Busolt*, attention is "the faculty of making clear, strengthening and expanding the consciousness of one's representations", while abstraction the "faculty of obscuring a representation within oneself" (Anth. Busolt (1788/89), AA XXV 1448).

[343] Anth, p. 20.

[344] Anth, p. 20.

6.2.1 Excursus: On the Sources of Kant's Involuntary Imagination

6.2.1.1. *Introductory note*

The faculty of imagination certainly represents one of the core problems of 18th-century German philosophy and artistic-literary criticism, as well as one of the most controversial.[345] The highly ambivalent nature of this concept – confirmed by the difficulty in distinguishing its various forms and functions on the semantic level[346] – fascinates and repels at the same time, arousing in the intellectuals of the *Aufklärung* the most heartfelt praise, along with the most scathing criticism. Indeed, on the one hand, it is recognized – for instance in Johann Georg Sulzer's *Lexikon* – as "one of the most excellent characteristics of the soul, the lack of which would bring the human being down to a rank even lower than that of animals". Not only that, but with respect to artistic production, Sulzers even refers to it as "the mother of all fine arts"[347].

Within a few lines, however, he hastens to point out that it is "in itself superficial, unrestrained and bizarre (*an sich leichtsinnig, ausschweifend und abentheuerlich*)" and as such must be accompanied "unceasingly" by a "delicate feeling of order and agreement", disciplined by a "penetrating faculty of judgment" and by sentiments "always grounded in truth"[348].

Toward the end of the century, in an essay significantly titled *Gefahren der Einbildungskraft*, the physician Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland would argue that it "has been given to us as our

---

[345] Götz Müller, *Die Einbildungskraft im Wechsel der Diskurse. Annotationen zu Adam Bernd, Karl Philipp Moritz und Jean Paul*, in H.-J. Schings (Hrsg.), *Der ganze Mensch: Anthropologie und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert*, DFG Symposium (Stuttgart 1992), Metzler, Weimar 1994, pp. 697-723: p. 710; Rudolf Meer, Giuseppe Motta, Gideon Stiening, *Vom „Poison de l'imagination" zur Essenz des Schematismus: Die Einbildungskraft in der Philosophie, den Wissenschaften und den Künsten des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, in Id., *Konzepte der Einbildungskraft in der Philosophie, den Wissenschaften und den Künsten des 18. Jahrhunderts*, de Gruyter, Berlin 2019, pp. 1-8: p. 2.

[346] In the main philosophical *Lexica* of the period the terms *Einbildung*, *Einbildungskraft* and *Phantasie* are still used as synonyms. See, in this regard, Gabriele Dürbeck, *Einbildungskraft und Aufklärung. Perspektiven der Philosophie, Anthropologie und Ästhetik um 1750*, Niemeyer, Tübingen 1998, pp. 17-21. For a reconstruction of the conceptual history, see Jochen Schulte-Sassen, *Einbildungskraft/Imagination*, in Barck Karlheinz, Martin Fontius, Friedrich Wolfzettel u.a. (Hrsg.), *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe. Bd. 2. Dekadent-Grotesk*, Stuttgart u.a. 2001 pp. 88-120; Id., *Phantasie*, in Barck Karlheinz, Martin Fontius, Friedrich Wolfzettel u.a. (Hg.), *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe. Bd. 4. Medien-Populär*, Stuttgart u.a. 2002, pp. 778-98; Hendrick Heimböckel, *Einleitung: Vom blinden Trieb zum Höchsten im Menschen. Tendenzen der Einbildungskraft in der Ideengeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, in Id., *Einbildungskraft um 1800. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf ihre Begriffe, Phänomene und Funktionen*, Fink, Paderborn 2022, pp. VI-XXVII.

[347] Johann G. Sulzer, *Einbildungskraft*, in Id., *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*, Weidemanns Erben und Reich, Leipzig 1771, Bd. 1, pp. 291-292.

[348] Johann G. Sulzer, *Einbildungskraft*, p. 292.

most beneficial friend in this earthly life", but only "as long as we know how to keep it within proper limits; as soon as it exceeds them, it can become our most terrible tyrant (*unser fürchterlichster Tyrann*)"[349].

The need to control the imagination so that it remains under the domain of the will is a theme that runs through all the treatises of the time[350]. Returning briefly to the Sulzerian *Lexikon*, under the heading "Künstler" we find another interesting element: here, in fact, the inadequacy of the psychological knowledge so far achieved on this faculty and its effects is openly denounced, and it is hoped that it will soon be overcome:

> In no part is psychology so incomplete as in this one. A wide and little-cultivated field is here open to philosophers for glorious work. Leibniz and Wolff paved the way for these fields. German philosophers! It is up to you to proceed and develop this path, in order to make the human being in general more closely acquainted with the most important characteristic of his soul, and the artist with the most excellent tool for understanding the dispositions![351]

In the very years in which Sulzer publishes these lines, Kant begins to investigate imagination, drawing moreover on a text from the Wolffian tradition: the section on "Empirical Psychology" in Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's *Metaphysica*. As part of this reflection, which Kant develops in the context of his anthropology lectures, special attention is paid to the question of the voluntary and involuntary use of imagination and its related effects.

6.2.1.2. *Wolff and Baumgarten: towards the* phantasia effraenis

In the *Deutsche Metaphysik* (1720), and later similarly in the *Psychologia empirica* (1732), Christian Wolff defines imagination as the faculty that produces representations of absent things[352]. Indeed, if *Empfindungs-Krafft* (or *sensus*) is the ability to perceive present sensation from the modifications of the sensory organs, *Einbildungs-Krafft* (or *imaginatio*) enables one to reproduce sensations of things perceived in the past, based on the "rule of images". According

---

[349] Christoph W. Hufeland, *Gefahren der Einbildungskraft*, in Id., *Gemeinnützige Aufsätze zur Beförderung der Gesundheit, des Wohlseyns und vernünftige medicinischer Aufklärung*, Göschen, Leipzig 1794, p. 209.

[350] In this regard, the psychologist Johann G.E. Maaß, in his *Versuch über die Einbildungskraft* (1792), Ruff, Halle-Leipzig 1797[2], advocates the development of a "theory on the discipline of the imagination" (ibid., p. 115)

[351] Johann G. Sulzer, *Künstler*, in Id., *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*, Weidemanns Erben und Reich, Leipzig 1774, Bd. 2, p. 629.

[352] DM, § 235; GM, p. 110. PE, § 92.

to this, every image (*Einbildung*, *phantasma*) arises in the soul by virtue of the similarity between a present and a previous sensation: thus, it is enough for them to share a part or a property for the latter to recur in its entirety[353].

In turn, the image thus revived may recall earlier perceptions, and so on. Moreover, insofar as they are inherent in the lower faculty of the soul, sensations and images are never perfectly clear, and the degree of clarity or obscurity constitutes one of the criteria of their differentiation in association. Images, notably, being mere reproductions of the related sensible ideas, are always "less clear" than those, and may even become latent – *phantasmata latentia*, "quorum tamen nobis minime consci sumus"[354] – if the imaginative acts are obscured by concurrent sensations.

In this framework, memory, which together with the inventive faculty completes the configuration of the *facultates inferiores*, has the task of recognizing reproduced ideas, assuring their reference to perceptions of real objects, and thus their truth. Indeed, true images arise from a series of ideas reflecting the order of perceived things, which always follow one another and change according to sufficient reason. Their alternation, however, does not always occur according to this order, as Wolff shows in discussing the dream.

Indeed, when we dream, the images we produce correspond to things that are not grounded in one another: they lack, therefore, sufficient reason to justify their reality and truth. It is worth noting, here, that the proper use of *imaginatio*, as well as the attribution to it of a claim or capacity for truth in its productions, are bound in Wolff to its subordination to the principles of rational logic: that is, to the aforementioned principle of sufficient reason and the principle of non-contradiction.

In the absence of these, as conditions of all knowledge as well as of the very reality of the world, we are lost in chains of disconnected and illusory images, whereby "we go in an instant, with a leap, from one place to another"[355], with no possibility of control. That is exactly what happens in the dream, where "absent things appear present to us"[356] and perceptions alternate and change in a confused way.

---

[353] DM, § 238.

[354] See PE, § 99: "Sensationes obscurant actus imaginationis, ita ut hos subinde prorsus non appercipiamus".

[355] DM, § 240.

This illusory situation, furthermore, can also occur in the waking state, when we completely forget the sensations from which the images originate. In this regard, Wolff advocates the need for a "connubium imaginationis cum ratione"[357]: imagination, therefore, must be "rectified" by the higher faculties, which in the Wolffian hierarchy play a dominant role.

This necessity for rational control is confirmed in the theory of *facultas fingendi*, which produces images of things that do not correspond to any sensation. It operates in two ways: on the one hand, as *Kraft zu erdichten*, it breaks down known images into parts, and combines them together generating forms of impossible, therefore false, things, called "empty images"[358] (*leere Einbildungen*).

In this case, as the title of § 243 states, "images are not completely in our power", so we often represent things to ourselves that are entirely different from what we desire[359]. The negative and error-bearing mode of inventing, to which only a few passages are devoted, is positively contrasted by the *Kunst zu erfinden*, the art of architects, which instead proceeds according to the principle of sufficient reason and produces true images. The works of architecture, in this sense, express for Wolff the perfect use of imagination, which is thus essentially a voluntary use.

The opposition between empty images and true fictions recurs in the same terms in Baumgarten, who, at first glance, seems to conceive of imagination in close continuity with Wolffian elaboration. Indeed, in § 571 of *Psychologia empirica* he argues that, "if *phantasia*" – the term by which he designates *facultas imaginandi* – "wholly represents the same things that I have sensed, then the imaginations are true and are not empty images (*vana phantasmata*)"[360].

---

[356] PE, § 127: "In somnio res absentes nobis videntur praesentes".

[357] PE, § 150.

[358] DM, § 242.

[359] DM, § 243. In the Latin work, this idea is followed by the scholium: "Apparet hinc, imaginationem non ita subesse arbitrio nostro, quin eidem sese nobis vel invitis subducat" (PE, §172).

[360] Metaph, § 571. For a comparison of Wolff's and Baumgarten's theories see at least Pietro Pimpinella, Imaginatio, phantasia *e* facultas fingendi *in Chr. Wolff e A.G. Baumgarten*, in Marta Fattori, Massimo Bianchi (eds.), *Phantasia – Imaginatio. Atti del V Colloquio Internazionale del Lessico Intellettuale Europeo* (Roma 1986), Edizioni dell'Ateneo, Roma 1988, pp. 379-414. On Baumgarten see also Hans Adler, *Utopie und Imagination: A.G. Baumgartens Fiktionstheorie am Rande der Aufklärung*, in J. Hermand (Hg.), *Positive Dialektik*, Peter Lang, Oxford u.a. 2007, pp. 17-28.

The marginal note translation of *vana phantasmata* with *leere Einbildungen* itself clearly refers to the *Deutsche Metaphysik*. And he adds: the habit of forming true images, that is, "imagining truly", "is a disciplined imagination (*phantasia subacta*)", translated as *wohl-geordnete Einbildungskraft*, while the habit of forming empty images "is an unbridled imagination (*phantasia effraenis*)"[361], or *ausschweifende Einbildungskraft*. *Phantasia*, then, understood in Wolffian terms as the faculty of reproducing perceptions of things no longer present, correctly performs its function insofar as it "wholly (totaliter)" represents the perceived object, and is thus capable of correctly unifying its sensible ideas into an image.

This operation, however, does not now require any direct intervention of the higher faculties: it refers, rather, to an internal logic of the lower faculty of the soul (*logica facultatis cognoscitivae inferioris*)[362], which Baumgarten undertakes to develop and determine as pertaining to an autonomous field of inquiry – that of sensible knowledge, or *cognitio sensitiva* –, the subject of a new scientific discipline, which he calls aesthetics.

This entails a profound reassessment of the set of lower faculties, which, first of all, is considerably expanded: in fact, *perspicacia*, *praevisio*, *iudicium*, *praesagitio* and *facultas characteristica* are added to the four Wolffian faculties. At the same time, it becomes capable of a series of specific cognitive performances, thus grounding a veritable *gnoseologia inferior*. In this new theoretical framework, marked by a radical "philosophical emancipation of the sensible"[363], imagination, together with and even more than sensing, takes on a peculiar weight, which is summed up – as we have mentioned – in its ability to "gather into one" the performances of the other faculties.

The importance of the unifying function of imagination is eloquently expressed in the specific rule that Baumgarten, unlike Wolff, ascribes to the *facultas fingendi*, according to which: "parts of images are perceived as one whole (*ut unum totum*)"[364]. The emphasis therefore falls, rather than on the subdivision of images, on their combination as a "representation of many things as one"[365].

---

[361] Metaph, § 571.

[362] Metaph, § 533.

[363] Panajotis Kondylis, *Die Aufklärung im Zeitalter des neuzeitlichen Rationalismus*, p. 559.

[364] Metaph, § 590.

[365] Metaph, § 589.

Perceptions that arise according to such a rule are "fictions (*fictiones*)" in the proper sense, and are endowed with truth, while false ones are called "chimeras (*chimerae*) or – again – empty images"[366]. An inventive faculty inclined to generate chimeras is called "exorbitant (*extravagans*, *rhapsodica*)" and corresponds to the undisciplined use of *phantasia*; one inclined to avoid them, on the other hand, in the vein of Wolffian terminology, is called "architectonic"[367].

It should be pointed out, with respect to our topic, that despite the important efforts to mitigate Wolff's rationalism, Baumgarten's interest in involuntary phenomena as such and, specifically, in those related to the imagination remains only marginal. Indeed, in the concluding paragraph of the section, he summarizes in few lines his discussion of the effects of the unregulated use of imagination and inventive faculty, beginning with the condition of sleep:

> The imagination of someone sleeping is more unbridled [*magis effraenis*], and the faculty of invention more exorbitant [*exorbitantior*], than of someone wide awake. Those asleep produce more lively imaginations and fictions not obscured by stronger sensations.[368]

Afterwards, some extraordinary or pathological conditions are mentioned, such as that of sleepwalkers (*noctambuli*), whose dreams are usually accompanied by the same easily noticeable external motions that are also associated with the corrisponding sensations in the waking state; fantasists (*phantastae*), those who in the waking state mistake certain images for sensations; and finally delirious (*deliriums*), those who confuse images and sensations in an absolute sense.

6.2.1.3. Kant's Phantasy between Ernst Platner and Georg Friedrich Meier

In the previous chapter, we have tried to point out how the focus in Wolff's and Baumgarten's theories on the involuntary or unrestrained activity of the imagination – conceived as deviation or transgression from what is considered its correct use – is altogether quite modest.

Baumgarten's idea of *phantasia effraenis*, in other words, although it may have inspired Kant's reflection on imagination in its most problematic aspects, does not seem sufficient to account for the relevance that Kant attaches to the distinction between one mode of imagining

---

[366] Metaph, § 590.

[367] Metaph, § 592.

[368] Metaph, § 594.

guided by the free will and another, which instead shirks it. In this sense, in line with the Wolffian tradition, Kant insistently warns against the latter, in the belief that "the greatest happiness in the world consists in the power of free will (*freye Willkühr*) to exercise and restrain all other acts of our faculty at pleasure"[369].

Moreover, from his earliest anthropology courses, Kant designates the involuntary component with the term fantasy *(Phantasie*), thereby dropping the traditional identification of *phantasia* and *facultas imaginandi* in the broad sense[370]. Alongside that meaning, however, the notion of *Phantasie* also takes on in an early phase that of the faculty of reproductive image formation (*Nachbildungsvermögen*).

It is this initial phase of Kant's investigation of empirical imagination that we will address below, to determine how he begins to distinguish between its voluntary and involuntary modalities. This clarification will enable us to recognize some important similarities between the Kantian conception and those of two authors well known to him, such as Platner and Meier.

As the anthropological *corpus* widely attests – both in the *Reflexionen* and in the transcripts of student lectures –, around the end of the 1760s Kant begins to think of imagination in terms of a generic "formative faculty" (*Bildungsvermögen*). With this concept, Kant seeks to unify the various activities that Baumgarten attributed to several lower faculties under the single aspect of the ability to form sensible representations. The latter, insofar as they are produced by the soul itself and not simply received by the senses, are called images.

This conception implies, according to later terminology, the distinction between productive and reproductive formative faculties, which, as we shall see, is in turn associated with the one between their voluntary and involuntary use. In the following, we list the main faculties of

---

[369] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 29; See also V-Anth/Fried (1775/76), AA XXV 488. As it is well known, within the general faculty of volition, Kant distinguishes, on the one hand, the pure, legislating will (*Wille*) as practical reason, which determines to action according to the representation of the moral law, independent of any inclination or interest; on the other hand, the human will (*Willkür*), as the faculty of free choice, which therefore *might* adhere to the command of reason, but might also be determined by other stimuli. In this essay, since at issue is always the concept of *Willkür* as the empirical faculty of volition, we have chosen to translate it simply with "will", rather than "choice" or "faculty for choice". See Andrea Esser, *Wille*, in Marcus Willaschek, Jürgen Stolzenberg, Georg Mohr, Stefano Bacin (Hrsg.), *Kant-Lexikon*, pp. 2650-53. For an extensive discussion of recent literature on the topic, see Julian Wuerth, *Sidgwick, Good Freedom, and the* Wille/Willkür *Distinction Before, In, and After the* Groundwork, in Id., *Kant on Mind, Action and Ethics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014, pp. 236-54.

[370] It is noteworthy, in this regard, that in *Elucidation 135* (end of 1769-1778), AA XV 57, Kant pins the adjectve "Unwillkürlich" alongside *Phantasia* in § 558 of Baumgarten's *Metaphysica*.

image formation, as they appear in the *Collins* transcript (1772/73). Next to each, the corresponding faculty in the scheme of *Psychologia empirica* is indicated[371]:

1. the faculty of direct image formation (Abbildungsvermögen | sensus);
2. the faculty of reproductive image formation (Nachbildungsvermögen | phantasia);
3. the faculty of anticipatory image formation (Vorbildungsvermögen | praevisio);
4. the faculty of imaginative formation (*Einbildungsvermögen* | *facultas fingendi*)[372].

Throughout the anthropological inquiry Kant divides the sensible faculty into a faculty of the senses, to which sensations are inherent, and "a faculty of making a phenomenon from sensations, of forming something corresponding to them from the order of sensations"[373], namely, an image. This formative faculty, thus, actively coordinates the material of the senses in various ways, according to space and time intended as "the form of all sensible intuitions"[374]. In particular, as *Abbildung*(*-svermögen*) it directly represents an object insofar as it is actually present; as *Nachbildung* and *Vorbildung* it represents objects that are actually absent, respectively having been present in the past or potentially becoming so in the future.

As for the *Einbildung*, it produces the image of an object of which we have had no sensation and is therefore "the foundation of all inventions"[375]; through it we can "create a completely new object"[376], yet this applies only to form: all formative faculties, indeed, derive their material from the senses. In this regard, in a reflection dating from 1769/70, Kant distinguishes the production of sensible representations into "active" or "passive", identifying the former precisely with the production of *Einbildungen*[377].

---

[371] For a comparison between Baumgarten's and Kant's positions regarding the concept of formative faculty, see Matthias Wunsch, *The Activity of Sensibility in Kant's Anthropology. A Developmental History of the Concept of the Formative Faculty*, "Kant Yearbook", 3 (2011), pp. 67-90.

[372] Anth. Collins (1772/73), AA XXV 76. In this list, we have omitted the faculty of completing formation (*Ausbildungsvermögen*), which does not correspond in Baumgarten to any faculty, and the *Gegenbildung*, or faculty of representing something by means of signs: not mentioned in any list in Lectures on Anthropology, it corresponds to Baumgarten's *facultas characteristica* (faculty of signs).

[373] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 45.

[374] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 44-45.

[375] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 46.

[376] V-Anth/Par (1772/73), AA XXV 269.

[377] Refl. 314 (1769?), AA XV 124.

Moreover, in a coeval reflection – on § 557 of Baumgarten's *Metaphysica*, dedicated to *phantasia* –, the production of images is distinguished into voluntary or involuntary in the following terms:

> The origin of some representations, or their production, is merely natural (*blos natürlich*) and independent of the will (*von der Willkühr unabhängig*), [that of some] others depends on the voluntary direction of our representational power (*hängt von der Willkührlichen direction unsrer Vorstellungskraft ab*). The former, since representations arise from one another, is either as they were otherwise connected, or in a manner in which in the previous condition they were not.[378]

We will return shortly to the terminology used here. After that, it is stated: "the former is the *Einbildung* or rather *Nachbildung* (phantasie), while the latter is the *Einbildung* (fictio)". *Nachbildung*, in other words, corresponds to the involuntary component of the reproductive faculty of imagination, by which "the actual [representation] reproduces the past one, and one of these representations reproduces the other; one is the cause of reproduction, the other of continuation, both according to the law of association"[379]. *Einbildung*, instead, is the faculty of the voluntary production of images.

It should be pointed out here, by contrast, that the voluntary use of the reproductive faculty of imagination is attributed by Kant to memory (*Gedächtnis*). The involuntary use of the productive faculty, on the other hand, is associated with fantasy (*Phantasie*), as a faculty that is not subject to free will. Fantasy, in this sense, is defined in the *Collins* transcript as the "active force of involuntary images (*eine thätige Krafft unwillkührlicher Bilder*)"[380].

In this regard, in an insightful paper, Claudio La Rocca has suggested that Kant derives this idea, and more generally the assumption of a subliminal and unintentional activity of imagination, from reading Platner's *Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise*[381], a work referred to in a passage in the same transcript, where he discusses the "physical aspect" (*das Physikalische*) of the formative faculties. It states that "Platner and other new philosophical

---

[378] Refl. 316 (1769? 1771?), AA XV 125.

[379] Refl. 316 (1769? 1771?), AA XV 125.

[380] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 87. On fantasy in Kant's anthropology, see Francey Russel, *Kant's Fantasy*, "Mind", 133, 531 (2024), pp. 714-741.

[381] Ernst Platner, *Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise* (1772) Reprint. with an afterword by Alexander Košenina, Olms, Hildesheim-Zürich-New York 1998. Cf. La Rocca, *Das Schöne und der Schatten*, pp. 19-64: p. 54.

physicians believe that each image leaves some traces (*Merckmahle*) within the brain and its nerves. The play of images proceeds in our brain just as involuntarily as blood flows in the body"[382]. La Rocca does not make explicit here the reference of these lines, this not being the main interest of his study. In what follows we shall attempt to identify it.

In the quoted passage, Kant seems to allude to the activity of reawakening memory ideas in the brain, which Platner considers the "task" of mechanical fantasy (*mechanische Phantasie*). Such brain activity, according to Platner, cooperates for the purposes of remembrance with an action of conscious recognition of previously held ideas inherent in the soul. In general, according to Platner's model, the idea of an object arises in the brain as an effect of the movement of vital spirits (*Lebensgeister*) aroused by external impression.

If this movement, which – as it is stated in the Kantian passage – corresponds to the movement of the blood, is strong enough, it generates an "internal impression", called the material idea. Should this, in turn, be lively enough to generate further internal movement of the vital spirits, then there arises in the soul "the consciousness and conviction of an object existing outside of it"[383], or what Platner calls a spiritual idea. The ideas thus obtained, in order to be retained in memory through remembrance, must first be retained as impressions in the brain and then, as mentioned, awakened.

This can happen in several ways, the first of which is attributed, precisely, to mechanical fantasy, which is "an accidental movement of the vital spirits"[384]. If such a movement – and this is the key point – "is stronger than the power of the soul, the ideas of memory impose themselves against its will"[385]. The influence of these assumptions by Platner, moreover, is not limited to that passage, but generally informs the entire discussion of *Bildungsvermögen* and memory in the early anthropological transcripts.

Now, regardless of whether Kant completely agrees or in part with this mechanical approach – which, as La Rocca states, "is not easy to say"[386] – and although, at the latest towards the end

---

[382] Anth. Collins (1772/73), AA XXV 85-6. Thomas Sturm has suggested instead that Kant may be alluding here to William Harvey's mechanical explanation of blood circulation and cardiac motion (see T. Sturm, *Kant und die Wissenschaften vom Menschen*, Mentis, Paderborn 2009, p. 288).

[383] Platner, *Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise*, p. 284.

[384] Platner, *Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise*, p. 427.

[385] Platner, *Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise*, p. 433.

[386] La Rocca, *Das Schöne und der Schatten*, p. 54.

of 1773, he begins to distance himself sharply from the "subtle and always vain" investigation of the relations connecting the organs of the body and thoughts[387], there is no doubt that the idea of an involuntary mode of imagining finds in the physiological model of explaining human beings a primary source of inspiration.

On the other hand, La Rocca also mentions that the same process is described by Kant as "subject to natural laws": therefore, he quotes a passage from the *Parow* transcript in which it is stated that poetic invention "occurs at times involuntarily, or out of physical necessity (*aus physikalischer Nothwendigkeit*), and at other times voluntarily within us"[388]. Elsewhere in the same text, moreover, the faculties are distinguished according to whether they are moved "by a physical necessity (*durch eine physikalische Nothwendigkeit*), and these are the lower faculties – this constitutes the baseness, the animality of the human being – or by the free will, and this is the higher faculty"[389].

After all, we have already noted above how Kant as early as the late 1760s contrasts the voluntary use of faculties with a mode that is *blos natürlich und von der Willkühr unabhängig*[390]. The hypothesis I intend to propose here, in light of the quoted passages and of others we will see, is that, at this stage, Kant may have had in mind the distinction introduced by Georg Friedrich Meier, in his *Anfangsgründe aller schönen Wissenschaften*, between a "natural (*natürlich*) " and a "voluntary (*willkürlich*) " use of the *sinnliche Erkenntnisvermögen*:

> The former does not depend on our freedom, but we are forced into it through a natural necessity (*durch eine natürliche Nothwendigkeit gezwungen*). Our soul is made in such a way that it must constantly produce representations. Our body necessarily has a position in the world, and representations necessarily arise from this. Consequently, there is a use of the sensitive cognitive faculty that is naturally necessary (*natürlicher Weise nothwendig*).[391]

---

[387] Immanuel Kant, *To Marcus Herz*, p. 141. On this issue, see Werner Euler, Commercium mentis et corporis? *Ernst Platners medizinische Anthropologie in der Kritik von Marcus Herz und Immanuel Kant*, "Aufklärung", 19 (2007), pp. 21-68: pp. 57-62.

[388] V-Anth/Par (1772/73) AA XXV 322.

[389] V-Anth/Par (1772/73), AA XXV 301.

[390] In the *Collins* transcript it is said, not surprisingly, that "some of our determinations proceed quite naturally from a natural connection, others we produce in ourselves voluntarily; here the will is the foundation of representations" (V-Anth/Coll, p. 85).

[391] Georg F. Meier, *Anfangsgründe aller schönen Wissenschaften* (1748-50), 3 Bde., Olms, Hildesheim-New York 1976, II, § 277, p. 38. On this Meierian distinction, cf. Dürbeck, *Einbildungskraft und Aufklärung*, pp. 285-307: pp. 287-290.

Moreover, under this general premise, Meier opposes a voluntary imagination with a natural imagination, that is "determined first and foremost by the position of the body"[392], within the framework of a theory of faculties that combines aesthetological consideration, linked above all to the concept of aesthetic perfection, with a strong physiological bearing, resulting from the influence of Halle's "rational physicians"[393].

Finally, it is noteworthy that none of the three volumes of the *Anfangsgründe* appear in the catalog of books owned by Kant, nor are they mentioned directly in any works. From these two circumstances, however, nothing can be concluded about Kant's lack of knowledge of them. Conversely, there are two good reasons to consider it likely that he not only knew them but also read or at least consulted them.

Firstly, the fact that Meier is one of Kant's reference authors. For almost forty years, in fact, he has been giving his lectures on logic based on the *Vernunftlehre* – in which, moreover, explicit reference is made to "my Aesthetics"[394] – and on his *Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre.* Secondly, the recognition and wide dissemination enjoyed by the Meierian work, which, as Dagmar Mirbach points out, is taken "as the first systematic textbook on the new discipline of aesthetics" and was "on the bookshelf of every educated family"[395].

According to Kant, "imagination is a faculty at the service of free will. When it is opposed to free will, it is called fantasy"[396]. Turning for a moment to the schema of the formative faculties, we need to emphasize how their division into productive and reproductive is now underlined and riconsidered in relation to a wider notion of *Einbildungskraft*, understood as the faculty of "the representation of objects that are not present"[397]. Within the same division, Kantcontinues to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary faculties.

---

[392] Meier, *Anfangsgrnde*, § 377, p. 268.

[393] See Carsten Zelle, *"Vernünftige Ärzte": Hallesche Psychomediziner und die Anfänge der Anthropologie in der deutschsprachigen Frühaufklärung*, Max Niemeyer, Berlin-Boston 2002. For a discussion of the influence of Halle's medical anthropology in the *Anfangsgründe*, see Dürbeck, *Einbildungskraft und Aufklärung*, pp. 287-294.

[394] See VL, § 36.

[395] D. Mirbach*, Einführung*, p. XXI.

[396] Refl. 337 (1776/1779), AA XV 133.

[397] V-Anth/Pill (1777/78) AA XXV 750.

On the former side, the pattern remains essentially unchanged, with memory understood as the "faculty of voluntarily making use of one's reproductive imagination"[398]. In contrast, on the productive side, the involuntary function, while remaining associated with *Phantasie*, nevertheless now takes on a more specific negative connotation, linked also to problematic mental states[399].

In light of all this, we are left to briefly outline some features of the Kantian conception, which represent an element of innovation with respect to the contemporary context. Firstly, in Kant's view, the activity of imagination finds a natural dimension in the obscurity of the soul. Indeed, he is convinced that "the imagination likes to wander in the darkness". In this sense, the activity of fantasy corresponds to the passive dimension of the "play" we voluntarily entertain with obscure images or representations.

If, on the one hand, "we play with imagination frequently and gladly", in turn "the imagination (as fantasy) plays just as frequently with us, and sometimes very inconveniently"[400]. This dynamic of play is investigated extensively, both with respect to the healthy condition, which corresponds to dreaming, and with respect to the diseased state. In this regard, Kant attaches great importance to the extraordinary or pathological effects of fantasy, such as dreaming, hypochondria, enthusiasm and madness, so much so that he reserves an entire section of his *Anthropology* for it.

The involuntary exercise of *Phantasie*, in other words, to the extent that it exceeds a certain degree of intensity, can cause a state of mental disorder, which is conceived in two ways. Specifically, when it escapes the control of the will, it is called unrestrained (*Zügellos*), as is the case in hypochondriacs or enthusiasts; when, on the other hand, it even comes into conflict with the intellect, which therefore cannot contain it, it is called unregulated (*Regellos*).

From what has just been said, it is evident that the involuntary imagination wields not little power over human beings, so much so that it even influences their actions. Within this framework, the Enlightenment condemnation of the unbridled power of fantasy finds in Kant a

---

[398] V-Anth/Mron (1784/85), AA XXV 1272.

[399] In this regard, according to Norbert Hinske, "Kant undertakes a sort of devaluation of fantasy" (see Norbert Hinske, *Einbildungskraft in Kants Logikvorlesungen*, in M. Fattori, M. Bianchi (eds.), *Phantasia – Imaginatio*, pp. 415-146: p. 426); see also Wunsch, *The Activity of Sensibility*, pp. 83-84.

[400] Anth, p. 26.

particularly tense moment: what is eloquently proved by his attention to the "noteworthy distinction" between voluntary and involuntary use of imagination.

These concluding remarks attest that although Kant identifies the *Einbildungskraft* as a mysterious and elusive force of the soul, he does not renounce at all the "scientific study of the "dark" side of imagination". Although this matter "may be inaccessible to investigation *a priori*, and hence beyond the reach of critique, still there is room for empirical study of these phenomena"[401].

6.3 "Man himself is a Play of Obscurity": the Power of the Unconscious

To introduce us to the heart of the question of the effects of the obscure on the will and thus on freedom of thought and action, let us recall some of Kant's brief remarks on self-observation, which he discusses in § 4 of *Anthropology from the pragmatic point of view*. They, in fact, lend themselves well to act, as it were, "as a bridge" between what we have just said about attention and the topic of *Spiel mit Menschen*.

In the first lines, Kant describes "attention to oneself" as far as the pragmatic dimension is concerned: that is, the one in which man is studied for the purpose of knowing the world.

Paying attention to oneself, he writes, "when dealing with human beings, is a necessary act"; provided, however, that it does not become too overt in the eyes of others. In the latter case, in fact, it may arouse discomfort or make one artificial. Rather, one should seek ease in the attitude, which presupposes self-confidence, and preserves one from fear of others' judgment. The other self-observational attitude described by Kant is that of solitary observation of one's inner self.

"Observing within myself the different acts of my representational capacity" is also potentially a positive practice. Not only that: it is necessary and useful "for logic and metaphysics." But only on one condition: that it takes place voluntarily. Indeed:

> to wish to eavesdrop on oneself when they come into the mind *unbidden* and on their own (this happens through the play of the power of imagination when it is unintentionally meditating) constitutes a reversal of the natural order in the faculty of knowledge, because then the principles of thought do not lead the way (as they should), but rather follow behind.[402]

---

[401] Jane Kneller, *Kant and the Power of Imagination*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2007, p. 25.

Kant's aim here – and in the paragraph in general – is to warn against an introspective attitude that "either already constitutes an illness of the soul (reverie) in itself, or at least leads to it and to the asylum"[403]. This is the attitude of mystics – Kant mentions Antoinette Bourignon in this regard – but also of certain spirituals such as Pascal, or of those authors who venture to write a diary of their inner states (among the latter, "that otherwise excellent head of Albrecht Haller" is mentioned[404]).

For Kant, in other words, inner observation must take place in the full voluntary control of our faculties. This control, however, is far from simple or obvious, as shown by the reference in the passage cited above to the involuntary course of the imagination. To designate it, Kant uses the term "play" (*Spiel*), which represents a key-concept in the anthropological corpus.

This was already noticed by Michel Foucault, who, in his famous 1964 "Introduction" to *Anthropology*, noted that "this notion of *Spielen* is singularly important: man is the game of nature; but this game he plays and plays at it." According to Foucault, moreover, "if it happens to him to be played, as in the illusions of the senses, it is because he has played himself to be the victim of this game, while the capacity to be master of the game belongs to him." As will become clear below, in reality man for Kant does not *choose* to be dominated by the obscure representations, but is forced into them against his will. Hence, in our view, Sulzer's influence is difficult to overestimate.

In the history of eighteenth-century reflection on the obscure and its effects, the Kantian notion of "play" constitutes an extremely interesting moment of elaboration, so much so that it "has finally made the charm of the *petites perceptions* disappear."[405] . Not least, moreover, this conception helps to reveal a Kant far less convinced of the overpowering power of reason – over sensible instances – than is still too often assumed.

---

[402] Anth., p. 22.

[403] Ibid. On the critique of self-observation see most recently J. Colin McQuillan, *Kant's warning about self-observation in Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, "Intellectual History Review," 35 (2025), 1, pp. 149-164. See also Rudolf A. Makkreel*, Self-cognition and self-assesment*, in A. Cohen, *Kant's Lectures on Anthropology. A Critical Guide*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014, pp. 18-37.

[404] Ibid. The work to which Kant refers is identified by Louden in *Tagebuch seiner Beobachtungen über Schriftsteller und über sich selbst*, edited by J.G. Heinzmann, Bern 1787.

[405] Sánchez Madrid, *A Linnaeus of Human Nature*, p. 199.

To account for this complexity, we must also and first of all recall that in anthropology, "game" knows many meanings, and is used in very different contexts[406]: from the "game of our mind"[407], to the card game in society, to the "harmonious game of understanding and sensibility"[408]. Here, we therefore limit ourselves to considering the particular expression of *Spielen* that concerns human beings and their unconscious representations. And it does so in a twofold way.

In the 1798 text, it is in fact said:

> We often play with obscure representations, and have an interest in overshadowing, in the presence of the imagination, objects pleasing or unwelcome; more often still, however, we ourselves are a plaything of obscure representations, and our understanding is unable to save itself from the absurdities to which their influence leads it, while recognizing them as illusory.[409]

This statement alone would be enough to shake the optimism of the Foucauldian reading seen above with respect to the ability of the free will to decide to surrender to the illusions of the senses. For as we can see, the passive dimension of the play of obscure representations not only severely compromises the capacity for rational restraint, but is also judged to be more frequent – "more often" – than the opposite condition.

The conception of this condition of man's helplessness and vulnerability, understood precisely as a "game" at the mercy of the power of the unconscious, is developed by Kant well before the publication of the 1798 manual. It first appears in the transcript of the Winter 1775/76 course, where Kant moreover introduces the concept of "pragmatic" anthropology. As in the example seen earlier, here Kant also prefaces the active part of the "game" with the obscure, declaring that

> any obscurity that suddenly clears is pleasant and very amusing, and therein lies an author's art of hiding his thoughts in such a way that the reader can directly solve them himself. To this belong the jokes and gimmicks.[410]

---

[406] Oberhausen, *Dunkle Vorstellungen*, p. 139.

[407] V-Anth/Par (1772/73), AA XXV 304.

[408] V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 759.

[409] Anth, p. 25.

[410] V-Anth/Fried (1773/75), AA XXV 480-481.

The interest in "overshadowing" something, seen above, here even constitutes an art for some writers, who play, precisely, with a certain obscurity of language in order to entertain the reader. They are well aware, in fact, that "the clear soon tires"[411]. So if, on the one hand, we happen to play with obscure representations, on the other hand "we ourselves are also a play of obscure representations"[412]. In another passage, Kant stresses the great importance of "the study of the mind, with regard to [understanding] the secret procedure of the human soul"[413], thereby implying the necessary condition previously noted in relation to self-observation: namely, that it must be voluntary.

Immediately afterwards, in fact, he adds, "on the other hand, we also note that man himself is a play of obscurity (*der Mensch selbst ein Spiel der Dunckelheit ist*)"[414]. The importance of the ability to keep one's representations under control, that is, to "abstract oneself from them," is expressed in the *Collins* transcript as follows:

> In the power of free will to exercise and restrain at will all other acts of our faculties lies the greatest happiness in the world. For, suppose the greatest evil befalls me: if I am able to abstract myself from my representations, if I have the power to banish, as it were, certain representations at will and to recall others, then I am armed against everything and invincible.[415]

Yet, Kant is not slow to recognize how absolutely rare the situation of full control is. Indeed, countless situations show that "obscure ideas have great power in us (*haben in uns große Macht*); they often give us a direction in our dispositions that we cannot change even with clear ideas."[416] When they take over the will, the rational faculties are completely insufficient. This is what we want to explore in the next section, with which we conclude this paper, focusing especially on the role of the affects and the involuntary imagination.

---

[411] V-Anth/Fried (1773/75), AA XXV 481.

[412] Ibid. Already in *Anthropologie Collins*, however, it is observed that: "we find in our soul, as it were, two sides, one according to which it suffers, and another according to which it is active. According to the first, I am a play of all the impressions that come to me from nature; according to the other, I am a free and self-acting *principium*" (V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 19).

[413] V-Anth/Fried (1773/75), AA XXV 481.

[414] V-Anth/Fried (1773/75), AA XXV 481.

[415] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 29-30.

[416] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 21.

6.4 Against the voice of reason: affect, fantasy and madness

In *Anthropology Parow*, also relating to the 1772/73 semester, it is explicitly said that very often "we have no power at all, through reason, to overcome the obscure representations that lie in sensibility."[417] . A statement that, once again, refers closely to the Sulzerian thesis that reason is often caught unprepared in the face of the power of the obscure.

To further confirm this, it is worth quoting the following passage, where Kant, in order to emphasize the inconsistency of reason in the face of the unleashing of the affections, goes so far as to call it an "unreliable guide of the human being."

> "Inclinations become affections when the soul pays more attention to a certain inclination than to all others. Let us not justify the affections by blaming them on nature, which would have placed in us the germs of such inclinations. Nature, in fact, could not entrust its main ends – the preservation of life and the propagation of the species – to reason, the unreliable guide of human beings (*unzuverläßigen Führer der Menschen*)."[418] .

Kant concludes from this, in terms once again singularly close to those used by Sulzer, that "in affection man is no longer master of himself"[419]. In the face of this, it should be remarked that while it is true – as we have shown above – that for Kant there is very little clear knowledge, the same is true of actions arising from our pure intention:

> Who knows how many of the best actions we perform arise from an incentive of chance (*Veranlassung des Ohngefehrs*), or are the consequence of temperament or games of luck; only very few, however, are the result of pure volition. We are, however, very prone to deceive ourselves and persuade ourselves that we always have the purest motives in good actions.[420]

In the *Menschekunde*, the concept is reiterated, "I am not always the master of obscure ideas," but with a relevant addition: "otherwise, every human invention should also have been accomplished through obscure representations, of which there was the foreboding and intuition in me"[421].

---

[417] V-Anth/Par (1772/73), AA XXV 251.

[418] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 213.

[419] Ibid, p. 215. See also V-Anth/Par (1772/73), AA XXV, pp. 248-49: "One is always safer when one confides in someone whose inclinations are already in accord with the principles of reason, rather than in someone who must always contest them, for how often do we not find ourselves surprised by a sensible thought before we are even fully aware of it."

[420] V-Anth/Coll (1772/73), AA XXV 24.

Kant is referring here to the activity of *Dichtungsvermögen* as a *voluntary* productive exercise of the imagination (*Einbildungskraft*). In case one had power over all my unconscious representations, he is saying, my inventions would have their source in them.

In *Anthropologie Mrongovius*, moreover, Kant makes a clear distinction between a voluntary *Einbildungskraft*, which he calls *Imagination* here, and an involuntary one, fantasy (*Phantasie*), and adds that "we often play with fantasy by intentionally directing it; but it also plays with us, dragging us involuntarily toward certain ideas."[422] Fantasy, in other words, "is our good genius, but also our evil demon"[423], in that it can be as much the source of our greatest joys as of our most terrible sorrows.

Imagination, after all, "likes to wander in obscurity", as Kant reminds us in *Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view*. But in this wandering it exposes itself to two kinds of transgressions. The first is that, already condemned by Baumgarten, of a *phantasia effrenis*, which consists in the unrestrained and involuntary production of absurd images; in the second case, the worst one, *phantasia* becomes instead *perverted*, that is, completely loose from any rule capable of disciplining it. In this condition, Kant concludes, phantasy not only puts the understanding out of action, but "comes close to raving, when it totally mocks the human being, who, unhappy, cannot dominate the course of his own representations"[424].

In this regard, a passage from *Menschenkunde* is very significant, in which we read that the "obscure representations are those that generate in some men more in others less folly (*Thorheiten*)" and that, more generally, "man is reasonable (*vernünftig*) as long as he can escape the influence of the obscure representations."[425]

Returning then to the theme of man as a game of the dark, also present in *Menschenkunde* itself, it is worth recalling the following passage from the *Mrongovius* transcript, where the irrationality of obscure representations is highlighted. The human being, then, often becomes a game of his representations,

---

[421] V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 780.

[422] V-Anth/Mron (1784/85), AA XXV 1258.

[423] V-Anth/Mron (1784/85), AA XXV 1261.

[424] Anth, p. 25.

[425] V-Anth/Mensch (1781/82), AA XXV 870.

insofar as he lets, against his own intention and against the voice of reason (*wieder seine Absicht und wieder die Stimme der Vernunft*), obscure representations cause him to do something or keep him from doing it. If, for example, I have to cross a somewhat dangerous place – for example, over water on which a board is placed – and I also see many people crossing, and my understanding also tells me that, with due caution, I can pass without danger, nevertheless some obscure representations are aroused in us that prevent us from crossing. In fact, many who have fallen in such dangerous places also had such obscure representations, as if they were already falling, and so they were eventually seized with vertigo and actually fell.[426]

We would like to conclude this work with the following note on pragmatic anthropology, which effectively summarizes the irreducible tension we have attempted to outline between Kant's powerful yearning to unveil the ultimate secrets of the soul and the insurmountable limits of human capacity to conquer them:

The play of forces in inanimate as well as in animate nature, in the soul as well as in the body, is based on the dissolution and union of the dissimilar. It is true that we arrive at cognition of the play of forces through experience of its effect; but we cannot reach the ultimate cause and the simple components into which its material can be analyzed [...] In what darkness does human reason lose itself when it tries to fathom the origin here, or even merely undertakes to make a guess at it! (*In welchem Dunkel verliert sich die menschliche Vernunft, wenn sie hier den Abstamm zu ergründen, ja auch nur zu erraten es unternehmen will!*).[427]

[426] V-Anth/Mron (1784/85), AA XXV 1222.

[427] Anth, p. 70n.

7. Conclusion

In concluding this historical-critical investigation, I find it appropriate to highlight its most significant stages, thereby attempting to shed more light on – or perhaps we should say to bring out of obscurity – the common thread that binds them together and which, ultimately, constitutes the motivation for my initial research.

First, however, I would like to add a clarification, however obvious it may be: the work condensed in this dissertation does not claim to be exhaustive. Rather, it is primarily a contribution aimed at stimulating new studies, an invitation to take a closer look at a chapter in the history of the unconscious that has been too neglected to date. Secondly, and at the same time, the ambition of these pages has also been to convey the complexity of the 17th- and 18th-century debate on obscure mental processes, together with the keen awareness of its protagonists of the relevance of the problem.

With regard to the wealth of themes and perspectives, we have sought to highlight how reflection on the unconscious, in the period between Leibniz and Kant, not only crosses numerous different 'disciplines' – from epistemology to anthropology, from theology to aesthetics – but is also closely intertwined with the intellectual and historical events surrounding the definition and autonomisation of some of them. I am thinking first and foremost of aesthetics, which Baumgarten 'invented' – as we have seen – starting from the observation that rational logic, the doctrine of reason, is insufficient when it comes to explaining the sensible. We must recognize that there is something in the sensible that has not been sufficiently considered, a 'je ne sais quoi', as Leibniz would say, from which not only all knowledge springs, but which expresses a type of knowledge in its own right: beautiful knowledge.

We must recognize, that is, the positive potential of the *analogon rationis*, of that set of faculties that have historically been mistreated as inferior, as considered in some way precognitive, where knowledge was defined – after Descartes – only by the degree of clarity and distinction of perceptions. Conversely, it is the obscure ground of the soul, says Baumgarten, that is the source of all knowledge. This thesis is also central to Kant, who, in his

anthropology, never tires of repeating – while commenting on Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* – that obscure representations are the basis and foundation of clear ones.

This brings us to the second discipline, which is taking on an increasingly defined form – to the point of becoming institutionalized – as the problem of shedding light on the depths of the mind becomes more important. Kant himself, after all, was one of the first in Germany to inaugurate courses on anthropology and even expressed the desire for it to become an academic discipline.

Kant is well aware that, despite the progress of Newtonian science in our knowledge of the heavens and nature, human beings remain an enigma to themselves. "What is man?" is the question that encompasses the other three, says the *Logik Jäsche* (1800). This brings us to the two central themes that form the backdrop to this work on Kant's anthropology. On the one hand, to show the growing awareness on the part of pre-Kantian philosophy that the soul is largely an unexplored territory, where it is very difficult to draw on its contents directly. On the other hand, however, to account for the differences in the assessment of this difficulty and, above all, to document some important attempts to trace the unconscious back to the conscious.

In this perspective, and with the aim of reconstructing the genesis of Kant's conception in anthropological texts, in the first of the three parts of the work we have reconstructed some significant moments in the "history of obscure representations." First of all, some anti-Cartesian reactions. We first showed the epistemological criticism of the criterion of clarity and distinctness as the foundation of truth by Leibniz and Wolff. While in the first case, the criticism leads to a positive evaluation of obscure perceptions on the metaphysical level, by virtue of the pre-established harmony of monads, in the second case, obscurity takes on a cognitively negative value. However, we have seen that this devaluation of the unconscious corresponds in Wolff to a decisive commitment to the knowledge of the soul and, in particular, to the rational study of its laws.

In this commitment, we have certainly emphasized his focus on clear knowledge and therefore on what we are conscious of, but also the decisive admission that what we are not conscious of can be deducted through inferences. This important idea, we have seen, recurs in another Wolffian author, Georg Friedrich Meier, on whose manual of logic Kant based his lectures for more than twenty years. In Meier, we highlighted the idea that among the ways in which we can realize that we have obscure representations within us, one of the most important

is through their effects. Once again, the emphasis falls on the indirect knowledge of obscure representations, a crucial theme for Kant as well.

Between the end of the first part and the beginning of the second, we documented Johann Georg Sulzer's influence on the construction of Kant's conception of obscure phenomena, starting with an examination of some pre-critical writings. In particular, we sought to show how Sulzer's work was first and foremost a powerful model of reaction to the Wolffian and Baumgartenian way of thinking about the unconscious. Sulzer's criticism in the Kurzer Begriff of Wolff's psychology – and, in our opinion, implicitly also of Baumgarten's – for not having devoted sufficient effort to investigating what happens in the obscure regions of the soul, led him to engage in this research himself.

The most decisive results of this reaction, for the purposes of this work, were essentially twofold. On the one hand, the extension of the field of the unconscious to a whole series of phenomena that had previously been little or not at all considered – think, above all, of the paradoxical cases in which two diametrically opposed judgments coexist at the same moment; on the other hand, the progressive questioning of Wolff's model of the soul, understood as the sole representative force and essentially endowed with autonomy of will and rationality.

For Sulzer, in fact, the power of intellect and reason is always potentially threatened by the sudden emergence of dark feelings, over which our ability to control is reduced to a minimum. This means that our actions and thoughts are often determined by irrational motives. One of the objectives of this research was to show how both of Sulzer's contributions had a decisive influence on Kant's treatment of the problem of dark representations. First, therefore, still in the second section, we showed how Kant's extension of the field of unconscious mental processes to all actions of the soul may have drawn decisive stimuli from Sulzer. Then, in the third part, we documented how Sulzer's theme of the weakness of reason in the face of irrational forces is a central motif in all of Kant's lessons in anthropology.

Finally, in the concluding paragraphs, we first provided a hypothesis for a diachronic reading of Kant's approach to the problem in question, showing above all the difference in treatment that occurs with the introduction of the pragmatic perspective. At the same time, and in line with the above, we documented Kant's effort to determine the field of the unconscious, despite all the difficulties that this entails. In this sense, in our opinion, the notion of development (*Entwicklung*) proves to be central, as an analytical operation, but in an anthropological sense

– and no longer strictly logical – through which to attempt to trace the obscure reason behind so many of our reflections, starting from their conscious result. In this, in our opinion, lies perhaps the most significant contribution of this work: having shown the emergence in Kant of a sort of psychoanalytic methodology *ante litteram*, on which, of course, we do not claim to have said the last word, but rather to have shed a small, but perhaps fruitful, light, awaiting further investigations.

8. Bibliography

The bibliography is not intended to be exhaustive. Listed here are the texts consulted and used during the research.

Primary Literature: Editions and Translations

Baumgarten, Alexander G., *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnulliis ad poema pertinentibus* (1735), Grunert, Halle.
- *Metaphysica* (1739), Reprograph. Nachdruck der 7. Auflage, Halle 1779, Olms, Hildesheim-New York 1969.
- *Ethica philosophica* (1740), Hemmerde, Halle 1751[2].
- *Aesthetica* (1750/58), Kleyb, Frankfurt an der Oder, 2 vols.; Olms, Hildesheim 1986[3].
- *Acroasis Logica in Christianum L.B de Wolff* (1761), Hemmerde, Halle, 1773, in: Ch. Wolff, *Gesammelte Weke*, III Abt., Bd. 5, Olms, Hildesheim-New York 1963.
- *Reflections on Poetry*, Ed. and Trans. with the Original Text by K. Aschenbrenner and W.B. Holther, Berkeley-Los Angeles 1954.
- *Aesthetica/Ästhetik. Lateinisch-Deutsch* (1750/58), Hrsg. und Übers. von D. Mirbach, 2. Bde, Meiner, Hamburg 2007.
- *Metaphysica*/*Metaphysik: Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*, Hrsg. und Übers. von G. Gawlick und L. Kreimendahl, frommann-holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 2011.
- *Metaphysics: A Critical Translation with Kant's Elucidations*, *Selected Notes, and Related Materials*, Ed. and Trans. by C. Fugate and J. Hymers, Bloomsbury, New York 2013.

Descartes, René, *Œuvres de Descartes*, éd. par Ch. Adam et P. Tannery, 12 vol., Vrin, Paris 1964-1976.
- *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Ed. and Trans. by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, D. Murdoch, and A. Kenny, 3 vols., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1985-91.

Foucault, Michel, *Introduction à l'Anthropologie de Kant. Dissertation* ("thèse complémentaire"), University of Paris, 1961 (unpublished and not to be published, according to Foucault's testament).
- *Introduction to Kant's Anthropology*, Ed. and Trans. by R. Negro and K. Briggs, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (MA) 2008.

Kant, Immanuel, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Hrsg. von der Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 29 Bde, de Gruyter, Berlin 1900-.
- *Theoretical Philosophy, 1755–1770*, Ed. and Trans. by D. Walford, in collab. with R. Meerbote, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 1992.
- *Practical Philosophy*, Ed. and Trans. by M.J. Gregor, with an Introduction by A.W. Wood, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 1996.
- *Lectures on Metaphysics*, Ed. and Trans. by K. Ameriks and S. Naragon, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 1997.

- *Critique of Pure Reason*, Ed. and Trans. by P. Guyer and A.W. Wood, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 1998.
- *Correspondence*, Ed. and Trans. by A. Zweig, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 1999.
- *Theoretical Philosophy after 1781*, Ed. and Trans. by H.E. Allison and P.L. Heath, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 2002.
- *Lectures on Logic*, Ed. and Trans. by J. Michael Young, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 2004.
- *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Ed. and Trans. by R.B. Louden, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 2006.
- *Anthropology, History and Education*, Ed. and Trans. by Günter Zöller and R.B. Louden, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 2007.
- *Lectures on Anthropology*, Ed. and Trans. by R.B. Louden and A.W. Wood, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 2012.
- *Natural Science*, Ed. and Trans. by E. Watkins, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 2012.

Hume, David, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. P. H. Nidditch, 2ª ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford 1978 (1739).

Leibniz, G. W. (1875–90) *Die Philosophischen Schriften*. Ed. C. I. Gerhardt. Berlin: Weidmann.
- (1923-) *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*. Ed. German Academy of Science. Darmstadt, Leipzig, and Berlin.
- (1969) *Philosophical Papers and Letters*. 2d ed.; Ed. and Trans. by L. E. Loemker. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- (1989) *Philosophical Essays*. Trans. and ed. Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- (1996) *New Essays on Human Understanding*. Trans. and ed. Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- *Meditationes de Cognitione, veritate et Ideis*, in C. I. Gerhardt (Hrsg.), *Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, Bd. 4, Weidmann, Berlin 1880 (1684).
- *Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain*, in C. I. Gerhardt (Hrsg.), *Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, Bd. 5, Weidmann, Berlin 1882 (1704).
- *Les Principes de la Philosophie ou la Monadologie*, in C. I. Gerhardt (Hrsg.), *Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, Bd. 6, Weidmann, Berlin 1858 (1714).
- *New Essays Concerning Human Understanding*, P. Remnant, J. Bennett (eds. & trans.), Cambridge University Press, New York 1996 (1765).
- *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, L. E. Loemker (ed. & trans.), 2ª ed., D. Reidel, Boston 1969.

Locke, Johnn, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), Ed. by A. Campbell Fraser, Dover, New York 1959.

Malebranche, Nicolas, *The Search after Truth. With Elucidations of the Search after Truth*, Ed. and Trans by T.M. Lennon and P.J. Olscamp, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1997.

Meier, Georg F., *Beweis: Daß keine Materie dencken können* (1742), Hemmerde, Halle
- *Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre* (1752), Gebauer, Halle.

- *Vernunftlehre* (1752), Gebauer, Halle; neue Ausgabe Hrsg. von Günter Schenk, Halle 1997 (Nachdruck: Olms, Hildesheim-New York 2009).
- *Anfangsgründe aller schönen Wissenschaften* (1754); Nachdruck Olms, Hildesheim-New York 1976.

Reimarus, Hermann S., *Die Vernunftlehre, als eine Anweisung zum richtigen Gebrauche der Vernunft in der Erkenntnis der Wahrheit aus zwoen ganz natürlichen Regeln der Einstimmung und des Wiederspruchs* (1756), Johann Carl Bohn, Hamburg.

Sulzer, Johann G., *Vermischte philosophische Schriften* (1773), Weidmann und Reich, Leipzig; Reprint: Olms, Hildesheim 1974.
- *Explanation of a Paradoxical Psychological Proposition: That We Sometimes Act Not Only Without Motive or a Visible Cause, But Even Against Compelling Motives and Despite Fully Convincing Reasons (1759)*"; Eng. Trans. by N. Rand, „American Imago", 61, 3 (2004), pp. 291-304.
- *Gesammelte Schriften*, Hrsg. von H. Adler und E. Décultot, Schwabe Verlag, Basel 2014-.
- *Kurzer Begriff aller Wissenschaften. Erste (1745) und zweite (1759) Auflage*, in Id., *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 1, Hrsg. von H. Adler und E. Décultot, Schwabe Verlag, Basel 2014.
- *Schriften zu Psychologie und Ästhetik*, in Id., *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. 2, Hrsg. von E. Décultot und A. Nannini, Schwabe Verlag, Basel 2023.

Tetens, Johann N., *Philosophische Versuche über die Menschliche Natur und ihre Entwicklung*, Erben & Reich, Leipzig 1777; Nachdruck: Olms, Hildesheim 1979.

Wolff, C., *Gesammelte Werke*, begründet von J. École und H.W. Arndt, hrsg. von R. Theis, Werner Schneiders und J.- P. Paccioni, Olms, Hildesheim 1962-.
- *Vernünfftige Gedancken von den Kräfften des menschlichen Verstandes und ihrem Richtigen Gebrauch in Erkäntniss der Wahrheit (Deutsche Logik)* (1713); Nachdruck in Id., *Gesammelte Werke*, I Abt., Bd. 1, Hrsg. von H.W. Arndt, Olms, Hildesheim 1965.
- *Vernünfftige Gedancken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen, auch allen Dingen überhaut* (*Deutsche Metaphysik*) (1720); Nachdruck in Id., *Gesammelte Werke*, I Abt., Bd. 2, Hrsg. von C.A. Corr, Olms, Hildesheim 1983.
- *Ausführliche Nachricht von seinen eigenen Schrifften* (1726), in Id., *Gesammelte Werke*, I Abt., Bd. 9, Hrsg. von H.W. Arndt, Olms, Hildesheim-New York 1965.
- *Philosophia rationalis sive Logica methodo scientifica pertractata* (1728), in Id., *Gesammelte Werke* (II Abt., Bd. 1), ed. by J. École, Olms, Hildesheim 1983.
- *Psychologia empirica, methodo scientifica pertractata* (1732), in Id., *Gesammelte Werke*, II Abt., Bd. 5, Hrsg. von J. École *et al.*, Olms, Hildesheim 1968.
- *Psychologia rationalis, methodo scientifica pertractata* (1734), Francoforte et Lipsiae 1736.
- *Briefwechsel zwischen Leibniz und Christian Wolff*, Hrsg. von C.I. Gerhardt, Schmidt, Halle 1860; Nachdruck: Hildesheim 1963.
- *Rational Thoughts concerning God, the World, and the Human Soul, and also All Things in General* (*German Metaphysics*), in C. Dyck (ed.), *Early Modern German Philosophy (1690-1750)*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2019, pp. 95- 134.

Secondary Literature:

Adler, Hans, *Fundus Animae – der Grund der Seele. Zur Gnoseologie des Dunklen in der Aufklärung*, „Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistgeschichte“, 62 (1988), pp. 197-220.

- *Totum confuse - Pars distincte. Die Entstehung der Ästhetik als Reduktionismus-Kritik*, in W.A. Koch (Hrsg.), *Das Ganze und seine Teile - The whole and ist parts*, Internationales und interdisziplinäres Symposium, Bochum 1989, pp. 1-20.
- *Die Prägnanz des Dunklen. Gnoseologie - Ästhethik - Geschichtsphilosophie bei Johann Gottfried Herder*, Meiner, Hamburg 1990.
- *Aisthesis, steinernes Herz und geschmeidige Sinne. Zur Bedeutung der Ästhetik-Diskussion in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, in H.-J. Schings (Hrsg.), *Der ganze Mensch. Anthropologie und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert*, DFG-Symposion 1992, Stuttgart-Weimar 1994, pp. 96-111.
- *Die Legitimität des Obskuren*, in M. Neugebauer-Wölk (Hrsg.), *Aufklärung und Esoterik. Rezeption – Integration - Konfrontation*, Max Niemeyer, Berlin-New York 2009, pp. 377-394.
- *Bodenlosigkeit als Grund – Erkenntnis und Anschauung als Kryptographie der Seele in der Aufklärung*, in G. Bohem, M. Burioni (Hrsg.) *Der Grund*. *Das Feld des Sichtbaren*, Brill, Leiden 2012, pp. 303-315.
- (and Campe, Rüdiger), *For a New Aufklärung/Enlightenment*, „The Germanic Review“, 95 (2020), pp. 157-161.

Allerkamp, Andrea, and Mirbach, Dagmar (Hrsg.), *Schönes Denken. A.G. Baumgarten im Spannungsfeld von Ästhetik, Metaphysik und Naturrecht*, Felix Meiner, Hamburg 2016**.**

Allesch, Christian, *Geschichte der psychologischen Ästhetik. Untersuchungen zur historischen Entwicklung eines psychologischen Verständnisses ästhetischer Probleme*, Hogrefe, Göttingen-Toronto-Zürich 1987.

Allison, Henry E., *Kant's Theory of Freedom*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge/New York 1990.

- *Kant's Transcendental Idealism. An Interpretation and Defense* (1983), rev. edition, Yale University Press, New Haven-London 2004.

Althans, Birgit, and Zirfas, Jörg, *Die unbewusste Karte des Gemüts: Immanuel Kants Projekt der Anthropologie*, in M.B. Buchholz, G. Gödde, (Hrsg.), *Das Unbewusste*, Psychosozial Verlag, Giessen 2005, pp. 69-94.

Ameriks, Karl, *Kant's Theory of Mind. An Analysis of the Paralogisms of Pure Reason*, Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York 1982 (new edition 2000).

- *The Critique of Metaphysics: Kant and Traditional Ontology*, in P. Guyer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 1992, pp. 249–279.

Amoroso, Leonardo, *Senso e consenso. Uno studio kantiano*, Guida, Napoli 1984.

Anderson, Georg, *Kants Metaphysik der Sitten – Ihre Idee und ihr Verhältnis zur Ethik der Wolffschen Schule*, “Kant-Studien”, 28 (1923), pp. 41–61.

Aquila, Richard E., *Matter and Mind: A Study of Kant's Transcendental Deduction*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1989.

Arndt, Hans W., *Einführung*, in Christian Wolff, *Vernünftige Gedanken von den Kräften des menschlichen Verstandes und ihrem richtigen Gebrauche in Erkenntnis der Wahrheit*, Olms, Hildesheim 1965, pp. 7–102.

Arnoldt, Emil, *Verhältnis von Kants physisch-geographischem Kolleg zu seinem anthropologischen*, in Id., *Gesammelte Schriften*, hrgs. von Otto Schöndörffer, vol. 4, Cassirer, Berlin 1908, pp. 400–420.
- *Möglichst vollständiges Verzeichnis aller von Kant gehaltenen oder auch nur angekündigten Vorlesungen nebst darauf bezüglichen Notizen und Bemerkungen*, in Id., *Gesammelte Schriften*, a cura di Otto Schöndörffer, vol. 5 (*Kritische Exkurse im Gebiete der Kantforschung – Teil 2*), Cassirer, Berlin 1909, pp. 173–344.

Baasner, Frank, *Der Begriff 'sensibilité' im 18. Jahrhundert. Aufstieg und Niedergang eines Ideals*, Heidelberg 1988.

Backmann-Medick, Doris, *Die ästhetische Ordnung des Handels. Moralphilosophie und Ästhetik in der Popularphilosophie des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Metzler, Stuttgart 1989.

Baeumler, Alfred, *Das Irrationalitätsproblem in der Ästhetik und Logik des 18. Jahrhunderts bis zur Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Reprograf. ND. d. 2., durchges. Aufl., Darmstadt 1981 (Tübingen 1967).

Bahr, Petra, *Darstellung des Undarstellbaren. Religionstheoretische Studien zum Darstellungsbegriff bei A.G. Baumgarten und I. Kant*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2004.

Barnouw, Jeffrey, *The beginnings of "aesthetics" and the Leibnizian conception of sensation*, in: P. Mattick, Jr. (ed.), *Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics and the Reconstruction of Art*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1993, pp. 52-95.
- *The Cognitive Value of Confusion and Obscurity in the German Enlightenment: Leibniz, Baumgarten, and Herder*, **"**Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture", 24 (1995), pp. 29-50.

Battaglia, Fiorella, *Il sistema antropologico. La posizione dell'uomo nella filosofia critica di Kant*, Plus, Pisa 2010.

Baum, Manfred, *Gefühl, Begehren und Wollen in Kants praktischer Philosophie*, "Jahrbuch für Recht und Ethik / Annual Review of Law and Ethics", 14 (2006), pp. 125-139.

Beck, Lewis W., *Early German Philosophy. Kant and His Predecessors*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) 1969.

Bender, Sebastian, *Von Menschen und Tieren. Leibniz über Apperzeption, Reflexion und* conscientia, "Zeitschrift für Philosophische Forschung", 67 (2013), pp. 214-241.
- *Leibniz and the 'petites réflexions'*, "Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie", 102, 4 (2020), pp. 619-645.

Bird, Graham H., *The Paralogism and Kant's Account of Psychology*, "Kant-Studien", 91 (2000), pp. 129–145.

Blackwell, Richard J., *Wolff's Doctrine of the Soul*, "Journal of the History of Ideas", 22, 3 (1961), pp. 339–354.

Blosser, Philip, *A Problem in Kant's Theory of Moral Feeling*, "Lyceum", 3 (1991), pp. 27–39.

Bojanowski, Jochen, *Kants Theorie der Freiheit*, De Gruyter, Berlin/Boston 2006.

Bona Meyer, Jürgen, *Kants Psychologie*, Wilhelm Hertz, Berlin 1870.

Borchers, Stefan, *Die Erzeugung des "ganzen Menschen". Zur Entstehung von Anthropologie und Ästhetik an der Universität Halle im 18. Jahrhundert*, De Gruyter, Berlin-New York 2011.

Boswell, Terry, *Quellenkritische Untersuchungen zum Kantischen Logikhandbuch*, Lang, Frankfurt a.M.-Bern-New York-Paris 1991.

Brandt, Reinhard; Stark, Werner, *Einleitung*, in *Kant's gesammelte Schriften*. Hrsg. von der Berlin Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Bd. 25 (Walter de Gruyter, Berlin 1997, pp. VII–CLI).
- *Kritischer Kommentar zu Kants "Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht" (1798)*, Meiner, Hamburg 1999.
- *D'Artagnan und die Urteilstafel. Über ein Ordnungsprinzip der Europäischen Kulturgeschichte 1, 2, 3/4*, neue durchges. Aufl., DTV, München 1998, pp. 195–196.
- *Beobachtungen zur Anthropologie bei Kant (und Hegel)*, in F. Hespe, B. Tuschling (Hrsg.), *Psychologie und Anthropologie oder Philosophie des Geistes. Beiträge zu einer Hegel-Tagung in Marburg 1989*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1991, pp. 75–106.
- *Kants pragmatische Anthropologie: Die Vorlesung*, "Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie", 19 (1994), pp. 41–49.
- *Kants 'Paradoxon der Methode'*, in R. W. Puster (Hrsg.), *Veritas filia temporis? Philosophiehistorie zwischen Wahrheit und Geschichte*, De Gruyter, Berlin/New York 1995, pp. 206–216.
- *Die Leitidee der Kantischen Anthropologie und die Bestimmung des Menschen*, in R. Enskat (Hrsg.), *Erfahrung und Urteilskraft*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2000, pp. 27–40.
- *Die Bestimmung des Menschen bei Kant*, Meiner, Hamburg 2007.

Brook, Andrew, *Kant and the Mind*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1994.
- *Kant and Cognitive Science*, in A. Brook (ed.), *The Prehistory of Cognitive Science*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2003, pp. 117–36.
- *Kant, cognitive science and contemporary neo-Kantianism*, "Journal of Consciousness Studies", 11, 10–11 (2004), pp. 1–25.
- *Kant's view of the mind and consciousness of self*, in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2008 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2008/entries/kant-mind/.

Buchholz, Michael B.; Gödde, Günter (Hrsg.), *Das Unbewusste*, Bd. 1: Macht und Dynamik des Unbewussten: Auseinandersetzungen in Philosophie, Medizin und Psychoanalyse, Psychosozial Verlag, Gießen 2005.

Burchardt, Kurt, *Kants Psychologie im Verhältnis zur transzendentalen Methode*, Dissertation, Bonn 1911.

Campe, Rüdiger; Menke, Christoph; Haverkamp, Anselm (Hrsg.), *Baumgarten Studien. Zur Genealogie der Ästhetik*, de Gruyter, Berlin 2014.

Carl, Wolfgang, *Die transzendentale Deduktion in der zweiten Auflage (B 129 - B 169)*, in G. Mohr, M. Willaschek (Hrsg.), *Immanuel Kant: Kritik der reinen Vernunft,* Akademie Verlag, Berlin 1998, pp. 189-216.
- *Kant and the Problem of Experience*, "Philosophical Topics", 34 (2006), pp. 59–106.

Casula, Mario, *La metafisica di A.G. Baumgarten*, Mursia, Milano 1973.
- *A.G. Baumgarten entre G. W. Leibniz et Chr. Wolff*, in "Archives de philosophie", 42/ 4 (1979), pp. 547-74.

Cataldi Madonna, Luigi, *Christian Wolff und das System des klassischen Rationalismus*, Georg Olms, Hildesheim 2001.

Centi, Beatrice, *Coscienza, etica e architettonica in Kant. Uno studio attraverso le Critiche*, Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali, Pisa-Roma 2002.

Cesa, Claudio, *Natura e mondo in Kant*, in L. Fonnesu (a cura di), *Etica e mondo in Kant*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2008, pp. 17–34.

Ciafardone, Raffaele, *Kraft und Vermögen bei Christian Wolff und Johann Nicolaus Tetens mit Beziehung auf Kant*, in J. Stolzenberg, O.-P. Rudolph (Hrsg.), *Christian Wolff und die europäische Aufklärung. Akten des 1. Internationalen Christian-Wolff-Kongresses, Halle (Saale), 4.–8. April 2004. Teil 2 (System der Metaphysik–Logik–Ontologie–Psychologie)*, (wolffiana II.2, Christian Wolff*, Gesammelte Werke*, III Abt., Materialien und Dokumente, Bd. 102), Olms, Hildesheim 2007, pp. 405–414.

Cohen, Alix, (ed.), *Kantian Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, special issue in "Studies in History and Philosophy of Science", 39, 4 (2008).
- *Kant and the Human Sciences: Biology, Anthropology and History*, Routledge, London 2009.
- (ed.), *Kant's Lectures on Anthropology: A Critical Guide*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014.

Corr, Charles, *Wolff's Distinction between Empirical and Rational Psychology*, "*Studia Leibnitiana Supplementa*", 14 (1975), pp. 195–215.

Cramer, Konrad, *Über Kants Satz: Das: Ich denke, muß alle meine Vorstellungen begleiten können*, in K. Cramer *et al.* (Hrsg.), *Theorie der Subjektivität*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 1987, pp. 167–202.

Décultot, Élisabeth, *Die Schattenseiten der Seele: Zu Johann Georg Sulzers Theorie der dunklen Vorstellungen*, in H. Adler, R. Godel (Hrsg.), *Formen des Nichtwissens der Aufklärung*, Fink, Paderborn 2010, pp. 263-78.

Deleuze, Gilles, *La philosophie critique de Kant. Doctrine des facultés*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 1963 (Eng. Trans. *Kant's Critical Philosophy. The Doctrine of the Faculties*, by H. Tomlinson and B. Habberjam, Athlone Press, London 1984).

Dessoir, Max, *Geschichte der neueren deutschen Psychologie*, Dunker, Berlin 1902.
- *Kant und die Psychologie*, "Kant-Studien", 29 (1924), pp. 98–120.

De Vleeschauwer, Herman J., *The Development of Kant's Thought*, Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York 1962.

Di Giandomenico, Mauro, *Kant, Soemmerring e il dibattito sulla 'sede dell'anima'*, in C. Esposito, P. Ponzio, P. Porro, V. Castellano (a cura di), *Verum et Certum. Studi di storiografica filosofica in onore di Ada Lamacchia*, Levante, Bari 1998, pp. 167–191.

Dolar, Mladen; Kobe, Zdravko (Hrsg.), *Kant und das Unbewusste*, Turia, Wien 1994.

Dumouchel, Daniel, *„Tiefen der Seele". Veränderte Zustände und psychologische Paradoxe. Die empirische Psychologie bei J. G. Sulzer*, in J. Kittelmann, P. Kampa, E. Décultot (Hrsg.), *Johann Georg Sulzer - Aufklärung Im Umbruch*, De Gruyter, Boston 2018, pp. 14-35.
- *The Philosophical Context of the 1773/1775 Preisfrage: Johann Georg Sulzer on Knowledge and Sensibility*, in T. Prunea-Bretonnet, C. Leduc (eds.), *Debates, Controversies, and Prizes. Philosophy in the German Enlightenment*, Bloomsbury, London 2024.

Duncan, Bruce, *Sturm und Drang Passions and Eighteenth-Century Psychology*, in D. Hill (ed.), *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, Boydell & Brewer, Rochester 2002, pp. 47–68.

Dyck, Corey, *A Wolff in Kant's clothing: Christian Wolff's influence on Kant's accounts of consciousness, self-consciousness, and psychology*, "Philosophy Compass", 6, 1 (2011), pp. 44–53.
- *Leibniz's wolffian psychology*, in W. Li (Hrsg.), *Vorträge des X. Internationalen Leibniz-Kongress, vol. 2*, Olms, Hildesheim 2016, pp. 223-35.
- *Between Wolffianism and Pietism: Baumgarten's Rational Psychology*, in C. Fugate, J. Hymers, *Metaphysics in Baumgarten and Kant*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018.

Eckardt, Georg; John, Matthias; Zantwijk, Temilo van; Ziche, Paul (Hrsg.), *Anthropologie und empirische Psychologie um 1800. Ansätze einer Entwicklung zur Wissenschaft*, Böhlau, Köln 2001.

École, Jean, *De la connaissance qu'avait Kant de la métaphysique wolffienne, ou Kant avait-il lu les ouvrages métaphysiques de Wolff?*, "Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie", 73 (1991), pp. 261–273.

Ehrenspeck, Yvonne, Aisthesis *und Aesthetik. Überlegungen zu einer problematischen Entdifferenzierung*, in K. Mollenhauer (Hrsg.), *Aisthesis/Ästhetik zwischen Wahrnehmung und Bewußtsein*, Weinheim 1996, pp. 201-230.

Eisler, Rudolf, *Wörterbuch der philosophischen Begriffe*, Mittler, Berlin 1899.
- *Kant-Lexikon – Nachschlagewerk zu Kants sämtlichen Schriften, Briefen und handschriftlichem Nachlass*, Mittler, Berlin 1930.

Engfer, Hans-Jürgen, *Philosophie als Analysis: Studien zur Entwicklung philosophischer Analysiskonzeptionen unter dem Einfluss mathematischer Methodenmodelle im 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhundert*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1982.
- *Konzeptionen des Psychischen und der Psychologie zwischen Leibniz und Wolff*, in G. Jüttemann (Hrsg.), *Wegbereiter der historischen Psychologie*, Weinheim, München 1988, pp. 23-27.
- *Von der Leibnizschen Monadologie zur Psychologie Wolffs*, in: Christian Wolff, *Gesammelte Werke*. Hg. v. Jean Ecole u.a., Abt. 3, Materialien und Dokumente, Bd. 31, Hildesheim u.a. 1992, pp. 193-215.
- *Empirismus versus Rationalismus? Kritik eines philosophiegeschichtlichen Schemas*, Schöningh, Paderborn 1996.

Engstrom, Stephen, *Reason, desire, and the will*, in L. Denis (ed.), *Kant's Metaphysics of Morals. A Critical Guide*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge/New York 2010, pp. 28–50.
- *The Triebfeder of Pure Practical Reason*, in A. Reath, J. Timmermann (eds.), *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason. A Critical Guide*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 2010.

Erdmann, Benno, *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Revision des Textes von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, G. Reimer, Berlin 1900.

Euler, Werner, *Die Suche nach dem 'Seelenorgan'. Kants philosophische Analyse einer anatomischen Entdeckung Soemmerrings*, "Kant-Studien", 93 (2002), pp. 453–480.
- *Bewußtsein - Seele - Geist. Untersuchungen zur Transformation des Cartesischen „Cogito" in der Psychologie Christian Wolffs*, in O.-P. Rudolph, J.-F. Goubet (Hrsg.), *Die Psychologie Christian Wolffs: Systematische und historische Untersuchungen*, Max Niemeyer, Berlin-Boston 2004, pp. 11-50.
- *Ernst Platners medizinische Anthropologie in der Kritik von Marcus Herz und Immanuel Kant*, "Aufklärung", 19 (2007), pp. 21–68.

Fabbri Bertoletti, Stefano, *Impulso, formazione e organismo. Per una storia del concetto di Bildungstrieb nella cultura tedesca*, Olschki, Firenze 1990.

Failla, Mariannina, *Verità e saggezza in Kant. Un contributo all'analisi della logica e dell'antropologia*, Mimesis, Milano 2000.

Falduto, Das Gefühl als Empfänglichkeit und die Bedeutung einer Ästhetik der Sitten. Anmerkungen zu Birgit Recki, in A. Falduto, C. Kolisanc, G. Rivero (eds.), *Metaphysik – Ästhetik – Ethik. Beiträge zur Interpretation der Philosophie Kants*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2012, pp. 137–153.
- *The Faculties of the Human Mind and the Case of Moral Feeling in Kant's Philosophy*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2014.

Favaretti Camposampiero, Matteo, *Anthropology from a Logical Point of View: The Role of Inner Sense from Jungius to Kant*, in G. Lorini, R. Louden (eds.), *Knowledge, Morals and Practice in Kant's Anthropology*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2018, pp. 43–61.

Ferrari, Jean (éd.). *L'Année 1798: Kant et la naissance de l'anthropologie au siècle des Lumières: actes du colloque de Dijon* (May 9–11, 1996), Vrin, Paris 1997.

Firla, Monika, *Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von Anthropologie und Moralphilosophie bei Kant*, Lang, Frankfurt a. M. 1981.

Fiori, Manuel (ed.), *Kant's Philosophy and Its Sources,* "dianoia. Rivista di filosofia", 29 (2024), 39; Stem Mucchi Editore, Modena 2024.
- *"Contro la nostra volontà". L'incidenza di Sulzer nella riflessione kantiana sulle rappresentazioni oscure*, in "Rivista di Filosofia Neo-scolastica", CXVI (2024), 3, pp. 671-689.

Fonnesu, Luca (ed.), *Etica e mondo in Kant*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2008.

Forgione, Luca, *I due volti della Critica della ragion pura: argomento analitico e psicologia trascendentale*, "Annali della Facoltà di Scienze della formazione dell'Università di Cagliari", XXVIII, 1 (2005), pp. 137–152.

Franke, Ursula, *Kunst als Erkenntnis. Die Rolle der Sinnlichkeit in der Ästhetik des Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten*, Steiner, Wiesbaden 1972 (Studia Leibnitiana Suppl. IX).
- *Von der Metaphysik zur Ästhetik. Der Schritt von Leibniz zu Baumgarten*, in A. Heinekamp (Hrgs.), *Akten des II. Internationalen Leibniz-Kongresses*, "*Studia leibnitiana*", Supplementa, vol. III, 1975, pp. 229–240.
- *„Analogon rationis"*, in J. Ritter (Hrsg.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Bd. 1., Basel-Stuttgart 1971, pp. 229-230.
- *Baumgarten's Invention of Aesthetics*, in J. Colin McQuillan (ed.), *Baumgarten's Aesthetics, Historical and Philosophical Perspectives*, Rowman & Littlefield, Boulder-New York-London 2021, pp. 27-70.

Frierson, Patrick R., *Freedom and Anthropology in Kant's Moral Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge–New York 2003.
- *Kant on the Causes of Human Actions: A Brief Sketch*, in V. Rohden – R. R. Terra – G. A. de Almeida – M. Ruffing (Hrsg.), *Recht und Frieden in der Philosophie Kants. Akten des X. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses*, de Gruyter, Berlin–New York 2008, Bd. 5, pp. 33–44.
- *Kant on mental disorder. Part I: An overview*, "History of Psychiatry", 20 (2009), pp. 2–23.
- *What is the Human Being?*, Routledge, Abingdon–New York 2013.
- *Kant's Empirical Psychology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014.

Fuhrmann, Manfred, *Obscuritas. Das Problem der Dunkelheit in der rhetorischen und literarästhetischen Theorie der Affekte*, in W. Iser (Hrgs.), *Immanente Ästhetik. Lyrik als Paradigma der Moderne*, München 1976, pp. 47–72.

Gale, George Jr., *Leibniz' Dynamical Metaphysics and the Origins of the Vis Viva Controversy*, "Systematics", 11 (1973), pp. 184–207.

Galle, Roland, *Entstehung der Psychologie*, in H.A. Glaser, G.M. Vajda (Hrsg.), *Die Wende von der Aufklärung zur Romantik 1760-1820. Epoche im Überblick*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam 2001, pp. 313-35.

Garbeis, Franz W., *Das Problem des Bewußtsein in der Philosophie Kants*, Braumüller, Wien 1924.

Gardner, Sebastian, *The unconscious*, in J. Neu (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Freud*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1991, pp. 136-60.
- *Schopenhauer, Will, and the Unconscious*, in C. Janaway (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1999, pp. 375-421.
- *Psychoanalytic Theory: A Historical Reconstruction*, "Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume", 86 (2012), pp. 41-60.
- *The unconscious: transcendental origins, Idealist metaphysics and psychoanalytic metapsychology*, in N. Boyle, L. Disley (eds.), *The Impact of Idealism: The Legacy of Post-Kantian German Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013, pp. 134-65.

Gawlick, Günther / Kreimendahl, Lothar, *Hume in der deutschen Aufklärung. Umrisse einer Rezeptionsgeschichte*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart/Bad Cannstatt 1987.

Geicer, Ido, *Rational Feelings and Moral Agency*, "Kantian Review", 16 (2011), pp. 283–308.

Gerhardt, Volker, *Handlung als Verhältnis von Ursache und Wirkung: Zur Entwicklung Handlungsbegriffs bei Kant*, in G. Prauss (Hrsg.), *Handlungstheorie und Transzendentalphilosophie*, V. Klostermann, Frankfurt a. M. 1986, pp. 98–131.
- *Immanuel Kant. Vernunft und Leben*, Reclam, Stuttgart 2002.

Gerlach, Hans-Martin, *Gefühl-Sinnlichkeit-Verstand. Bemerkungen zu einem erkenntnistheoretisch-psychologischen Problem in der Philosophie der Aufklärung*, "Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie", 32, 11 (1984), pp. 991–999.

Gigliotti, Gianna, *Naturale e artificiale: il problema del carattere in Kant*, "Rivista di filosofia", 92 (2001), pp. 411–433.
- *Il rispetto del tulipano. Riflessioni sul sistema kantiano delle facoltà*, "Rivista di storia della filosofia", 1 (2001), pp. 25–61.

Ginsborg, Hannah*, Kant on the Systematicity and Purposiveness of Nature*, draft ms., 1992.
- *Was Kant a Nonconceptualist?*, "Philosophical Studies", 137 (2008), pp. 65–77.

Giordanetti, Piero, *Dalla coscienza all'inconscio: implicazioni della lex continuitatis nella Critica della ragion pura*, in F. Viganò (a cura di), *La natura osservata e compresa: saggi in memoria di Francesco Moiso*, Guerini e Associati, Milano 2005, pp. 244-253.
- *Kant e la musica*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2005.
- (con Gori, Giambattista; Mazzocut-Mis, Maddalena) (a cura di), *Il secolo dei Lumi e l'oscuro*, Mimesis, Milano-Udine 2008.
- *La potenza dell'oscuro: Sulzer, Kant, Schiller*, in Id., *Il secolo dei Lumi e l'oscuro*, pp. 241-254.
- *Rivoluzione copernicano-newtoniana e sentimento in Kant*, Lang, Frankfurt a.M. 2012.

- (with Pozzo, Riccardo; Sgarbi, Marco) (eds.), *Kant's Philosophy of the Unconscious*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2012.

Gisi, Lucas Marco, *Einbildungskraft und Mythologie. Die Verschränkung von Anthropologie und Geschichte im 18. Jahrhundert*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 2007.

Gloy, Karen, *Die Kantische Differenz von Begriff und Anschauung und ihre Begründung*, "Kant-Studien", Vol. 75: Issue 1-4 (1984), pp. 1-37.

Gödde, Günter, *Traditionslinien des „Unbewußten": Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Freud*, Diskord, Tübingen 1999.

Godel, Rainer, „*Eine unendliche Menge dunkeler Vorstellungen". Zur Widerständigkeit von Empfindungen und Vorurteilen in der deutschen Spätaufklärung*, "DVfLG", 76, 4 (2002), pp. 542–576.

Goldenbaum, Ursula, *Eine gemeinsame Deskartes-Kritik von Spinoza und Leibniz*, in H.-M. Gerlach, R. Meyer (Hrsg.), *Descartes und das Problem der wissenschaftlichen Methode*, Halle 1989, pp. 46–51.
- *Die Karriere von Leibniz' idea clara et confusa bei Alexander Baumgarten und Moses Mendelssohn*, in F. Beiderbeck, S. Waldhoff (Hrgs.), *Pluralität der Perspektiven und Einheit der Wahrheit im Werk von G.W. Leibniz. Beiträge zu seinem philosophischen, theologischen und politischen Denken*, Berlin 2011, pp. 265–284.
- *Mendelssohn's Spinozistic Alternative to Baumgarten's Pietist Project of Aesthetics*, in R. Munk (ed.), *Moses Mendelssohn's Metaphysics and Aesthetics*, Dordrecht et al. 2011, pp. 299–327.

Goldmann, Lucien, *Mensch, Gemeinschaft und Welt in der Philosophie Immanuel Kants*, Dissertation, Universität Zürich 1945; nachdruck: Peter Lang, Frankfurt a. M. 1989.

Goubet, Jean-François, *In welchem Sinne ist die Wolffsche Psychologie als Fundament zu verstehen? Zum vermeintlichen Zirkel zwischen Psychologie und Logik*, in O.-P. Rudolph, J.-F. Goubet (Hrgs.), *Fondement, principes et utilité de la connaissance. Sur la notion wolffienne de système*, "Archives de Philosophie", 65 (2002), pp. 81–103.
- *Die Psychologie Christian Wolffs. Systematische und historische Untersuchungen*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2004, pp. 51–60.

Goy, Ina, *Immanuel Kant über das moralische Gefühl der Achtung*, "Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung", 61 (2007), pp. 337–360.

Gregor, Mary J., *Baumgarten's Aesthetica*, "The Review of Metaphysics", 37, 2 (1983), pp. 357–385.
- *Introduction*, in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague 1974.

Grenberg, Janine Marie, *Moral Feeling and Human Autonomy: A Kantian Account of Action*, Dissertation, Emory University 1996.
- *Anthropology from a Metaphysical Point of View*, "Journal of the History of Philosophy", 37, 1 (1999), pp. 91–115.

Gross, Steffen W., Felix Aestheticus*: die Aesthetik als Lehre vom Menschen. Zum 250. Jahrestag des Erscheinens von Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten „Aesthetica“*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2001.

Grove, Peter, *Johann August Eberhards Theorie des Gefühls*, in H.-J. Kertscher, E. Stöckmann (Hrsg.), *Ein Antipode Kants? Johann August Eberhard im Spannungsfeld von spätaufklärerischer Philosophie und Theologie*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2012, pp. 119–131.

Grüne, Stefanie, *Blinde Anschauung. Die Rolle von Begriffen in Kants Theorie sinnlicher Synthesis*, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 2009.

Guyer, Paul, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*, Cambridge University Press, New York 1987.
- *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 1997[2].

Haac, Johannes, *Erfahrung und Gegenstand. Das Verhältnis von Sinnlichkeit und Verstand*, Klostermann, Frankfurt a. M. 2007.

Halbfass, Wilhelm; Onnasch, Ernst-Otto, Art. “Vorstellung I”, in J. Ritter, K. Gründer, G. Gabriel (Hrgs.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, vol. XI, Schwabe, Basel 2001, pp. 1227–1228.

Hanna, Robert, *Kantian Non-conceptualism*, “Philosophical Studies”, 137 (2008), pp. 41–64. “International Journal of Philosophical Studies”, 19, 3 (2011), Special Issue *Kant and Nonconceptual Content*.

Harnack, Adolf, *Geschichte der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 2 voll., Berlin 1900.

Hartkopf, Werner, *Die Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaften: Ihre Mitglieder und Preisträger*, Berlin 1992.

Hartmann, Marek, *Die Lichtmetaphorik in der Aufklärung*, in Id., *Die Metaphorik des Immateriellen bei George Berkeley*, Brill, Leiden 2020.

Hatfield, Gary, *The Natural and the Normative: Theories of Spatial Perception from Kant to Helmholtz*, Cambridge (Mass.)-London, MIT Press 1990.
- *Empirical, Rational, and Transcendental Psychology. Psychology as Science and as Philosophy*, in P. Guyer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1992, pp. 200–227.
- *Kant and Empirical Psychology in the 18th Century*, “*Psychological Science*”, 9, 6 (1998), pp. 423–428.
- *The Cognitive Faculties*, in M. Ayers – D. Garber (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth Century Philosophy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1998, pp. 953–1002.

Heidemann, Dietmar H., *The ‘I Think’ Must Be Able To Accompany All My Representations. Unconscious Representations and Self-consciousness in Kant*, in P. Giordanetti, R. Pozzo, M. Sgarbi, *Kant’s Philosophy of the Unconscious*, pp. 37-60.
- *Kant Yearbook: Anthropology*, 3 (2011), De Gruyter, Berlin 2011.

Heinz, Marion, *Johann Georg Sulzer und die Anfänge der Dreivermögenslehre bei Kant*, in G. Stiening, F. Grunert (Hrsg.), *Johann Georg Sulzer (1720-1779): Aufklärung zwischen Christian Wolff und David Hume*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2011 pp. 83-100.
- *Moralpsychologie statt Metaphysik der Sitten. Untersuchungen zu Reinholds Konzeption von praktischer Vernunft*, in V. Stolz, M. Heinz, M. Bondeli (eds.), *Wille, Willkür, Freiheit. Reinholds Freiheitskonzeption im Kontext der Philosophie des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin-Boston, de Gruyter 2012, pp. 167–191.

Hendrix, John S., *Unconscious Thought in the Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*, in Id., *Unconscious Thought in Philosophy and Psychoanalysis*, Palgrave, London 2015, pp. 148-78.

Henrich, Dieter, Hutcheson und Kant, "*Kant-Studien*", 49 (1957/1958), pp. 49–69.
- *Kants früheste Ethik. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion*, "*Kant-Studien*", 54 (1963), pp. 404–431.
- *Über Kants Entwicklungsgeschichte*, "*Philosophische Rundschau*", 13 (1965), pp. 252–263.
- *The Proof-Structure of Kant's Transcendental Deduction*, "*The Review of Metaphysics*", 22, 4 (1969), pp. 640–659.

Heßbrücken-Walter, Stefan, *Die Seele und ihre Vermögen. Kants Metaphysik des Mentalen in der "Kritik der reinen Vernunft"*, Paderborn, Mentis 2004.

Hinderer, Walter, *Friedrich Schiller und die empirische Seelenlehre. Bemerkungen über die Funktion des Traumes und das, System der dunklen Ideen'*, "Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft", 47 (2003), pp. 187-213

Hinske, Norbert, *Kants Idee der Anthropologie*, in H. Rombach (Hrsg.), *Die Frage nach dem Menschen. Aufriß einer philosophischen Anthropologie. Festschrift für Max Müller zum 60. Geburtstag*, Alber, Freiburg i.Br.-München 1966, pp. 410–427.
- *Kants Weg zur Transzendentalphilosophie. Der dreißigjährige Kant*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart-Berlin 1970.
- *Kant als Herausforderung an die Gegenwart*, Alber, Freiburg-München 1980.
- *Transzendental, das Transzendentale, Transzendentalien, Transzendentalphilosophie, V. 18 Jh*., in J. Ritter, K. Gründer (eds.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, 10, Darmstadt 1998, pp. 1376–1388.
- *La psicologia empirica di Wolff e l'antropologia pragmatica di Kant. La fondazione di una nuova scienza empirica e le sue complicazioni*, in G. Cacciatore, V. Gessa-Kurotschka, H. Poser, M. Sanna (a cura di), *La filosofia pratica tra metafisica e antropologia nell'età di Wolff e Vico/Praktische Philosophie im Spannungsfeld von Metaphysik und Anthropologie bei Wolff und Vico*, Alfredo Guida Editore, Napoli 1999, pp. 207–224.
- *Ein unbeachtet gebliebener Kommentar zu Kants Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten aus dem Jahre 1784*, in S. Dietzsch, U. Tietz (eds.), *Transzendentalphilosophie und die Kultur der Gegenwart*, Leipzig 2012, pp. 107–112.
- *Die tragenden Grundideen der deutschen Aufklärung. Versuch einer Typologie*, in R. Ciafardone (Hrgs.), *Die Philosophie der deutschen Aufklärung. Texte und Darstellung*, Reclam, Stuttgart 1990, pp. 407–458.
- *Wolffs empirische Psychologie und Kants pragmatische Anthropologie. Zur Diskussion über die Anfänge der Anthropologie im 18. Jahrhundert*, "Aufklärung", 11/1 (1996), pp. 97–107.

Hoenecker, Hans-Michael, *Geist, mens, nous. Teleologia della filosofia e sistema teleologico delle facoltà in Kant*, in E. Canone (ed.), *Per una storia del concetto di mente*, vol. II, Olschki, Firenze 2007, pp. 327–368.

Höwinc, Thomas, *Praktische Lust. Kant über das Verhältnis von Fühlen, Begehren und praktischer Vernunft*, Berlin-Boston, de Gruyter 2013.

Hugueny, Eugène, *Le fond de l'âme, le mens et l'image de la sainte Trinité*, "La vie spirituelle", Supplément, 30 (1932), pp. 1–25.

Ivaldo, Marco, *Volontà e arbitrio nella Metafisica dei Costumi*, in *Kant e la morale. A duecento anni da "La metafisica dei costumi". Convegno della Società Italiana di Studi Kantiani presso la Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, Pisa-Roma 1999, pp. 41–67.

Jacobs, Brian; Kain, Patrick (eds.), *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2003.

Jansohn, Heinz, *Kants Lehre von der Subjektivität. Eine systematische Analyse des Verhältnisses von transzendentaler und empirischer Subjektivität in seiner theoretischen Philosophie*, Bonn, Bouvier 1969.

Jost, Lawrence; Wuerth, Julian (ed.), *Perfecting Virtue: New Essays on Kantian Ethics and Virtue Ethics*, Cambridge/New York, Cambridge University Press 2011.

Juchem, Hans-Georg, *Die Entwicklung des Begriffs des Schönen bei Kant unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Begriffs der verworrenen Erkenntnis*, Diss., Bonn 1970.

Kaiser-El-Safti, Margret, *Der Nachdenker: die Entstehung der Metapsychologie Freuds in ihrer Abhängigkeit von Schopenhauer und Nietzsche*, Bouvier, Bonn 1987.

Kaulbach, Friedrich, *Weltorientierung, Weltkenntnis und pragmatische Vernunft bei Kant*, in F. Kaulbach, J. Ritter (Hrsg.), *Kritik und Metaphysik. Studien. Heinz Heimsoeth zum achtzigsten Geburtstag*, Berlin, de Gruyter 1966, pp. 60–75.

Kertscher, Hans-Joachim; Stöckmann, Ernst (eds.), *Ein Antipode Kants? Johann August Eberhard im Spannungsfeld von spätaufklärerischer Philosophie und Theologie*, Berlin/Boston, de Gruyter 2012.

Kemp Smith, Norman, *A Commentary on Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason"*, Humanities Press, New York 1962 (1923).

Kim, Soo Bae, *Die Entstehung der Kantischen Anthropologie und ihre Beziehung zum empirischen Psychologie der Wolffschen Schule*, Frankfurt a. M., Lang 1994.

Kitcher, Patricia, Discovering the Forms of Intuition, "*The Philosophical Review*", 96, 2 (1987), pp. 205–248.

- *Kant's Dedicated Cognitivist System*, in J.-C. Smith (ed.), *Historical Foundations of Cognitive Science*, Dordrecht, Kluwer 1990, pp. 189–209.
- *Kant's Transcendental Psychology*, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York 1990.
- *Kant on Self-Consciousness*, "The Philosophical Review", vol. 108, 3 (1999), pp. 345-386.
- *Kant's Thinker*, Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press 2011.
- *Kant's Unconscious "Given"*, in P. Giordanetti, R. Pozzo, M. Sgarbi, *Kant's Philosophy of the Unconscious*, pp. 5-36.
-

Kitcher, Philip, *A Priori Knowledge*, "*The Philosophical Review*", 89 (1980), pp. 3–23.
- *Kant's Epistemological Problem and Its Coherent Solution*, "Philosophical Perspectives", 13 (1999), pp. 415–441.

Kleinfeld, Pauline, *Moral Consciousness and the 'Fact of Reason'*, in A. Reath, J. Timmermann (eds.), *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason. A Critical Guide*, Cambridge/New York, Cambridge University Press 2010, pp. 55–72.

Klemme, Heiner F., *Kants Philosophie des Subjekts: Systematische und entwicklungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von Selbstbewusstsein und Selbsterkenntnis*, Meiner, Hamburg 1996.
- *Immanuel Kant*, in Christian Thies, Eike Bohlken (Hrgs.), *Handbuch Anthropologie. Der Mensch zwischen Natur, Kultur und Technik*, Springer, Stuttgart 2009, pp. 11- 16.
- *Johann Georg Sulzers „vermischte Sittenlehre". Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte und Problemstellung von Kants Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, in F. Grunert, G. Stiening (Hrgs.), *Johann Georg Sulzer (1720-1779). Aufklärer zwischen Christian Wolff und David Hume*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2011, pp. 309-22.
- *The Origin and Aim of Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*, in A. Reath, B. Herman, C. M. Korsgaard (ed.), *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason. A Critical Guide*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010, pp. 11–30.
- *Die Freiheit der Willkür und die Herrschaft des Bösen. Kants Lehre vom radikalen Bösen zwischen Moral, Religion und Recht*, in H. F. Klemme, B. Ludwic, M. Pauen, W. Stark (eds.), *Aufklärung und Interpretation – Studien zu Kants Philosophie und ihrem Umkreis. Tagung aus Anlaß des 60. Geburtstags von Reinhard Brandt*, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann 1999, pp. 125–151.
- *Moralisches Sollen, Autonomie und Achtung. Kants Konzeption der 'libertas indifferentiae' zwischen Wolff und Crusius*, in V. Rohden, R. R. Terra, G. A. de Almeida, M. Ruffinc (eds.), *Recht und Frieden in der Philosophie Kants. Akten des X. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses*, Bd. 3: Sektionen III–IV, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 2008, pp. 215–228.
- *Necessità pratica e indifferenza del volere. Considerazioni sulla 'libertas indifferentiae'*, in L. Fonnesu (ed.), *Etica e mondo in Kant*, Bologna, Il Mulino 2008, pp. 57–73.
- *Immanuel Kant*, in E. Bohlken, C. Theis (Hrsg.), *Handbuch Anthropologie. Der Mensch zwischen Natur, Kultur und Technik*, Stuttgart-Weimar, J. B. Metzler 2009, pp. 11–16.
- *The Origin and Aim of Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*, in A. Reath, J. Timmermann (eds.), *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason. A Critical Guide*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 2010, pp. 11–30.
- *Die rationalistische Interpretation von Kants 'Paralogismen der reinen Vernunft'*, in J. Chotas, J. Karasek, J. Stolzenberc (eds.), *Metaphysik und Kritik. Interpretationen zur "Transzendentalen Dialektik" der Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann 2010, pp. 141–157.

- *Spontaneität und Selbsterkenntnis. Kant über die ursprüngliche Einheit von Natur und Freiheit im Aktus des Denkens (1785–1787/88)*, in M. Brandhorst, A. Hahmann, B. Ludwig (Hrsg.), *Sind wir Bürger zweier Welten? Freiheit und moralische Verantwortung im transzendentalen Idealismus*, Hamburg, Meiner 2012, pp. 195–222.

Kliche, Dietmar, *Ästhetik und Aisthesis. Zur Begriffs- und Problemgeschichte des Ästhetischen*, "Weimarer Beiträge", 44 (1998), pp. 485–505.
- *Ästhetische Pathologie. Ein Kapitel aus der Begriffsgeschichte der Ästhetik*, "Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte", 42 (2000), pp. 197–229.

Knox, Ronald A., *Enthusiasm. A Chapter in the History of Religion, with Special Reference to the XVII and XVIII Centuries*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1950.

Knüfer, Carl, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Begriffs Vorstellung von Wolff bis Kant*, Niemeyer, Halle 1911.

Kobe, Zdravko, *The Unconscious within Transcendental Apperception*, "American Journal of Semiotics", vol. 9, 2-3 (1992), pp. 33-50.

Koch, Erec R., *The Aesthetic Body. Passion, Sensibility and Corporeality in Seventeenth-Century France*, Associated University Presses, Cranbury 2008.

Köhler, Erich, *Je ne sais quoi. Ein Kapitel aus der Begriffsgeschichte des Unbegreiflichen*, "Romanistisches Jahrbuch", 6 (1953–1954), pp. 21–59.

Kreuzer, Johann, *"Petites perceptions". Über Hintergründe eines Theorems bei Leibniz*, in C. Hubig, H. Poser (Hrsg.), *Cognitio humana – Dynamik des Wissens und der Werte. XVII. Deutscher Kongreß für Philosophie, Leipzig 1996*, vol. 2, Meiner, Hamburg 1997, pp. 974–981.
- *Erinnern: Eckhart und Tauler über den Seelengrund*, in *Gestalten mittelalterlicher Philosophie*, Fink, München 2000, pp. 143–168.
- *Licht*, in R. Konersmann (Hrsg.), *Wörterbuch philosophischer Metaphern*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 2007, pp. 207–224.

Kuehn, Manfred, *The Reception of Hume in Germany*, in P. Jones (ed.), *The Reception of David Hume in Europe*, Continuum, London–New York 2005, pp. 98–138.

Kulenkampff, Jens, *Moralisches Gefühl oder moral sense – wie berechtigt ist Kants Kritik?*, "*Jahrbuch für Recht und Ethik / Annual Review of Law and Ethics*", 12 (2004), pp. 234–251.

Kulstad, Mark A., *Leibniz on Apperception, Consciousness and Reflection*, Philosophia, Munich 1990.

Lachin, Gabriella; Zambon, Federica (a cura di), *Obscuritas. Retorica e poetica dell'oscuro. Atti del XVIII Convegno interuniversitario di Bressanone*, Università degli Studi di Trento, Trento 2004.

Lanclois, Luc, *Du sentiment moral à la raison pratique. Kant disciple et critique de Hutcheson*, in R. Theis, L. K. Sosoe (éds.), *Le sources de la philosophie kantienne aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, Vrin, Paris 2005, pp. 203–211.

La Rocca, Claudio, *Das Schöne und der Schatten. Dunkle Vorstellungen und ästhetische Erfahrung zwischen Baumgarten und Kant*, in H. Klemme, M.L. Raters, M. Pauen (Hrsg.), *Im Schatten des Schönen. Die Aesthetik des Häßlichen in historischen Ansätzen und aktuellen Debatten*, Aisthesis, Bielefeld 2006, pp. 19-64.
- *L'intelletto oscuro. Inconscio e autocoscienza in Kant*, in Id., *Leggere Kant. Dimensioni della filosofia critica*, Edizioni ETS, Pisa 2007.
- *Der dunkle Verstand. Unbewusste Vorstellungen und Selbstbewusstsein bei Kant,* in V. Rohden, R. Terra, G. Almeida, M. Ruffing (Hrgs.), *Recht und Frieden in der Philosophie Kants*, De Gruyter, Berlin-New York 2008, pp. 457-68.
- *Unbewußtes und Bewußtsein bei Kant*, in M. Kugelstadt (Hrsg.), *Kant-Lektionen. Zur Philosophie Kants und zu Aspekten ihrer Wirkungsgeschichte*, Würzburg 2008, pp. 47-68.
- *Psicologia*, in S. Besoli, C. La Rocca, R. Martinelli (ed.), *L'universo kantiano. Filosofia, scienze, sapere*, Quodlibet, Macerata 2011, pp. 391-436.
- *Kant on Self-knowledge and Conscience*, in D. Hüning, S. Klingner, C. Olk (Hrgs.), *Das Leben der Vernunft. Beiträge zur Philosophie Kants*, De Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2013, pp. 364-385.

Langer, Otto, *Meister Eckharts Lehre vom Seelengrund*, in M. Schmidt, D.R. Bauer (Hrgs.), *Grundfragen christlicher Mystik*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart–Bad Cannstatt 1987, pp. 173–191.

Lauener, Henri, *Der systematische Stellenwert des Gefühls der Achtung in Kants Ethik*, "*Dialectica*", 35 (1981), pp. 243–264.

Leary, David E., *The Philosophical Development of the Conception of Psychology in Germany, 1780-1850*, "Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences", 14 (1978), pp. 113-21.
- *German Idealism and the Development of Psychology in the Nineteenth Century*, "Journal of the History of Philosophy", 18 (1980), pp. 299 – 317.

Leduc, Christian, *Les degrés conceptuels dans les logiques de Wolff et de Kant*, in T. Prunea, S. Grapotte (éd), *Kant et Wolff: héritages et ruptures*, Vrin, Paris 2011, pp. 41-53.
- *Les* Meditationes *de Leibniz dans la tradition wolffienne*, "Archives de Philosophie", 76/2 (2013), pp. 295-317.

Lee, Min-C-Huei, *Das Problem des moralischen Gefühls in der Entwicklung der Kantischen Ethik*, Dissertation, Bonn 1997.

Leland, Patrick, *Unconscious Representations in Kant's Early Writings*, "Kantian Review", 23 (2018), pp. 257-84.
- *Kant on Consciousness in Animals*, "Studi Kantiani", 31 (2018), pp. 75-107.
- *Wolff, Baumgarten, and the Technical Idiom of Post-Leibnizian Philosophy of Mind*, "History of Philosophy & Logical Analysis", 21 (2018), pp. 129-48.

Lenoir, Timothy, *Kant, Blumenbach and Vital Materialism in German Biology*, "Isis", 71,1 (1980), pp. 71–108.

Lersch, Philipp, *Aufbau der Person*, Barth, München 1951.

Lestition, Steven O., *Kant's Philosophical Anthropology: Texts and Historical Contexts, Continuity and Change*, PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago 1985.

Liang, Yibin, *Kant on Consciousness, Obscure Representations and Cognitive Availability*, "The Philosophical Forum", vol. 48, 4 (2017), pp. 345-68.
- *Bewusstsein und Selbstbewusstsein bei Kant. Eine neue Rekonstruktion*, De Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2021.

Linden, Mareta, *Untersuchungen zum Anthropologiebegriff des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Frankfurt a. M., Lang 1976.

Linn, Marianne-Luise, *A.G. Baumgartens Aesthetica und die antike Rhetorik*, "*Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*", 41 (1967), pp. 424–443.

Longuenesse, Béatrice, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the Transcendental Analytic of Critique of Pure Reason*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1998.
- *Kant on the Human Standpoint*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2005.
- *Kant on Consciousness and Its Limits*, "Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale", 117, 1 (2023), pp. 7-26.
- *Kant et le pouvoir de juger: Sensibilité et discursivité dans l'Analytique de la Critique de la raison pure*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France 1993; Trans. Eng. by C.T. Wolfe, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the Transcendental Analytic of the Critique of Pure Reason*, Princeton, Princeton University Press 1998.

Lorini, Gualtiero, *The Origins of the Transcendental Subjectivity: On Baumgarten's Psychology*, "Philosophica", 44 (2014), pp. 107-126.

Louden, Robert B., *Kant's Impure Ethics. From Rational Beings to Human Beings*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2000.
- *Applying Kant's Ethics: The Role of Anthropology*, in G. Bird (ed.), A Companion to Kant, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2006, pp. 350–363.
- *Kant's Human Being: Essays on His Theory of Human Nature*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2011.
- *'The Play of Nature': Human Beings in Kant's Geography*, in S. Elden, E. Mendieta (eds.), *Reading Kant's Geography*, SUNY Press, Albany 2011, pp. 139–160.
- *Kant's Anthropology: (Mostly) Empirical Not Transcendental*, in F. V. Tommasi (ed.), *Der Zyklop in der Wissenschaft: Kant und die transzendentale Anthropologie*, Felix Meiner, Hamburg 2018, pp. 19–34.
- *Anthropology from a Kantian Point of View*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2021.
- *The Last Frontier: The Importance of Kant's Geography*, "Society and Space", 32 (2014), pp. 450–66. Ristampato in R. R. Clewis (ed.), Reading Kant's Lectures, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin 2015, pp. 507–525.

Lunati, Giancarlo, *Il significato del 'sentimento' nel pensiero morale del Kant precritico*, "*Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore*", 32 (1954), pp. 237–256.

Lütkehaus, Ludger, (Hrgs.) *"Dieses wahre innere Afrika". Texte zur Entdeckung des Unbewußten vor Freud*, Psychosozial-Verlag, Giessen 2005.

MacBeath, A. Murray, *Kant on Moral Feeling*, "*Kant-Studien*", 64 (1973), pp. 283–314.

Makkreel, Rudolf, *Kant on the Scientific Status of Psychology, Anthropology, and History*, in E. Watkins (ed.), *Kant and the Sciences*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 2002, pp. 185–201.
- *Aesthetics*, in K. Haakonssen (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2006, pp. 516-556.
- *Kant and the Development of the Human and Cultural Sciences*, "Studies in History and Philosophy of Science", 39 (2008), pp. 546–553.

Manganaro, Paolo, *L'antropologia di Kant*, Guida, Napoli 1983.

Marquard, Odo, *Zur Geschichte des philosophischen Begriffs 'Anthropologie' seit dem Ende des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*, in *Collegium philosophicum. Studien Joachim Ritter zum 60. Geburtstag*, Schwabe, Basel-Stuttgart 1965, pp. 209–239.

Martinelli, Riccardo, *Ein 'so lange aufgenommener Fremdling'. Kant und die Entwicklung der Psychologie*, in C. Ferrini (ed.), *Eredità kantiane (1804–2004). Questioni emergenti e problemi irrisolti*, Bibliopolis, Napoli 2004, pp. 333–355.
- *Antropologia*, in S. Besoli – C. La Rocca – R. Martinelli (a cura di), *L'universo kantiano.*, pp. 13–52.

Matsuo, Hiroshi, *Baumgartens Begriff der "extensiven Klarheit" und die Rezeption desselben durch Kant*, "Bigaku", 10 (1985), pp. 51–66.

Mauser, W., *Georg Friedrich Meiers Apologie des geselligen Lachens*, in T. Verweyen, H.-J. Kertscher (Hrgs.), *Dichtungstheorien der deutschen Frühaufklärung*, Tübingen 1995, 120–132.

McCarty, Richard R., *Kantian Moral Motivation and the Feeling of Respect*, "*The Journal of the History of Philosophy*", 31 (1993), pp. 421–435.

McDowell, John, *Mind and World*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA) 1994.
- *Avoiding the Myth of the Given*, in J. Lingaard (ed.), *Experience, Norm and Nature*, Blackwell, Oxford 2008, pp. 1–15.

McLear, Colin, *Kant on animal consciousness*, "Philosophical Review", 11,15 (2011), 1–16.

McRae, Robert, *Leibniz: Perception, Apperception, and Thought*, Toronto, 1976.

Meerbote, Ralf, *Wille and Willkür in Kant's Theory of Action*, in M. S. Gram (ed.), *Interpreting Kant*, University of Iowa Press, Iowa City 1982, pp. 69–84.
- *Kant's Functionalism*, in J.-C. Smith (ed.), *Historical Foundations of Cognitive Science*, Kluwer, Dordrecht 1990, pp. 161–188.

Menzer, Paul, *Der Entwicklungsgang der Kantischen Ethik in den Jahren 1760 bis 1785*, "*Kant-Studien*", 2 (1898), pp. 290–322; 3 (1899), pp. 41–104.
- *Kants Lehre von der Entwicklung in Natur und Geschichte*, Berlin 1911.

Mei, Manuela, *L'intuizione dei pensieri. La pars inferior animae nella psicologia cognitiva di Christian Wolff*, Aracne, Roma 2011.

Menke, Christoph, *Das Wirken dunkler Kraft: Baumgarten und Herder*, in R. Campe, A. Haverkamp, C. Menke (Hrsg.), *Baumgarten-Studien*. *Zur Genealogie der Ästhetik*, August Verlag, Köln 2014, pp. 73–115.

Mercier, Désiré, *La psychologie de Descartes et l'anthropologie scolastique*, "Revue néo-scolastique", 16 (1897), pp. 386-407.

Merritt, Melissa, *Kant on Reflection and Virtue*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2018.

Mertens, Helca, *Kommentar zur Ersten Einleitung in Kants Kritik der Urteilskraft. Zur systematischen Funktion der Kritik der Urteilskraft für das System der Vernunftkritik*, Berchmans, München 1975.

Mijuskovic, Ben, *The Simplicity Argument and the Unconscious: Plotinus, Cudworth, Leibniz and Kant*, "Philosophy & Theology" 20, 1-2 (2008), pp. 53-83.
- *Kant's Reflections on the Unity of Consciousness, Time-Consciousness, and the Unconscious,* "Kritike", vol. 4, 2 (2010), pp. 105-132.

Micheletti, Giulio, *I pensieri sordi e l'inconscio*, "*Il Cannocchiale*" (1984), pp. 45–58.

Minter, Catherine J., *'Die Macht der dunklen Ideen': a Leibnizian theme in German Psychology and Fiction between the Late Enlightenment and Romanticism*, "German Life and Letters", 54, 2 (2001), pp. 114-36.

Mirbach, Dagmar, *Die Rezeption von Leibniz' Monadenlehre bei Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten*, in H-P Neumann (Hrsg.), *Der Monadenbegriff zwischen Spätrenaissance und Aufklärung*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2009, pp. 271–300.

Model, Anselm, *Zur Bedeutung und Ursprung von 'übersinnlich' bei Immanuel Kant*, "*Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte*", 30 (1986), pp. 182–191.
- *Anmerkungen zum Terminus 'übersinnlich' bei Jacob Böhme und Immanuel Kant*, in *Erkenntnis und Wissenschaft. Jacob Böhme (1575–1624). Internationales Jacob-Böhme-Symposium, Görlitz 2000. Neues Lausitzisches Magazin*, 2, Oettel, Görlitz (Zittau) 2001, pp. 158–163.

Mohr, Georg, *Das sinnliche Ich. Innerer Sinn und Bewusstsein bei Kant*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 1989.

Morrison, Iain, *Respect in Kant: How the Moral Feeling of Respect Acts As an Incentive to Moral Action*, "Southwest Philosophy Review", 20 (2004), pp. 1–26.

Müller, Hans-Heinrich, *Akademie und Wirtschaft im 18. Jahrhundert. Agrarökonomische Preisaufgaben und Preisschriften der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Versuch, Tendenzen und Überblick*, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin 1975.

Munzel, Felicitas G., *Kant's Conception of Moral Character. The "Critical" Link of Morality, Anthropology, and Reflective Judgment*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1999.

Nannini, Alessandro, *At the Bottom of the Soul: The Psychologization of the "Fundus Animae" between Leibniz and Sulzer*, „Journal of the History of Ideas", 82, 1 (2021), pp. 51-72.

Nakazawa, Takeschi, *Kants Begriff der Sinnlichkeit. Seine Unterscheidung zwischen apriorischen und aposteriorischen Elementen der sinnlichen Erkenntnis und deren lateinische Vorlagen*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 2009.

Neis, Cordula, *Anthropologie im Sprachdenken des 18. Jahrhunderts: Die Berliner Preisfrage nach dem Ursprung der Sprache (1771)*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 2003.

Nicholls, A.; Liebscher, M., *Introduction: thinking the unconscious*, in A. Nicholls, M. Liebscher (eds.), *Thinking the Unconscious: Nineteenth-Century German Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010.

Nobbe, Frank, *Kants Frage nach dem Menschen. Die Kritik der ästhetischen Urteilskraft als transzendentale Anthropologie*, Lang, Frankfurt a. M. 1995.

Nuzzo, Angelica, *Kant and Herder on Baumgarten's Aesthetica*, "*Journal of the History of Philosophy*", 44/4 (2006), pp. 577–597.
- *Kant and the Unity of Reason*, Purdue University Press, West Lafayette, Indiana 2008.
- *Ideal Embodiment. Kant's Theory of Sensibility*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington-Indianapolis 2008.

Oberdorfer, Bernd, *Sinnlichkeit und Moral. Zur Bedeutung der Erfahrungstheorie für die 'intellektuelle und moralische Bildung des Menschen' in Eberhards Allgemeiner Theorie des Denkens und Empfindens*, in H.-J. Kertscher, E. Stöckmann (Hrsg.), *Ein Antipode Kants? Johann August Eberhard im Spannungsfeld von spätaufklärerischer Philosophie und Theologie*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2012, pp. 109–118.

Oberhausen, Michael, *Dunkle Vorstellungen als Thema von Kants Anthropologie und A.G. Baumgartens Psychologie*, "Aufklärung", 14 (2002), pp. 123-146.

Oberthür, Johannes, *Verdrängte Dunkelheit des Denkens. Descartes, Leibniz und die Kehrseite des Rationalismus*, in G. Gödde, M. Buchholz (Hrsg.), *Das Unbewusste*, pp. 35-69.

Ortland, Eva, *Ästhetik als Wissenschaft der sinnlichen Erkenntnis. Ansätze zur Wiedergewinnung von Baumgartens uneingelöstem Projekt*, "*Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*", 49, 2 (2001), pp. 257–274.

Otabe, Tanehisa, *Der Begriff der „petites perceptions“ von Leibniz als Grundlage für die Entstehung der Aesthetik*, JTLA, vol. 35 (2010), pp. 41-53
- *Der “Grund der Seele”. Über Entstehung und Verlauf eines ästhetischen Diskurses im 18. Jahrhundert*, in J. Nida-Rümelin *et al.* (Hrsg.), *Welt der Gründe. XXII. Deutscher Kongress für Philosophie*, Felix Meiner, Hamburg 2012, pp. 763-74.
- *Das Unbewusste im letzten Viertel des 18. Jahrhunderts aus ästhetischer Sicht*, JTLA, vol.38 (2013), pp. 59-70.

Otte, Rainer, *Die Ordnungen des Leibes in der Aufklärung: Kants Anthropologie und ihre historischen Voraussetzungen*, Dissertation, Universität Tübingen 1986.

Panknin-Schappert, Helke, *Innerer Sinn und moralisches Gefühl – Zur Bedeutung eines Begriffspaares bei Shaftesbury und Hutcheson sowie in Kants vorkritischen Schriften*, Olms, Hildesheim–Zürich–New York 2007.

Park, Chan-Goo, *Das moralische Gefühl in der britischen moral-sense-Schule und bei Kant*, Dissertation, Tübingen 1995.

Parret, Herman (ed.), *Kants Ästhetik/Kant’s Aesthetics/L’esthétique de Kant*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 1998.

Paton, Herbert J., *Kant’s Metaphysics of Experience*, vol. 1., Allen & Unwin, London 1936.
- *The Categorical Imperative. A Study in Kant’s Moral Philosophy*, first edition London 1947; reprint: University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia (Penn.) 1971.

Pécharman, Martine, *Le problème de la distinction des idées*, in M. de Gaudemar, P. Hamou (éds.), *Locke et Leibniz: deux styles de rationalité*, Olms, Hildesheim – Zürich - New York 2011, pp. 13-46.

Philonenko, Alexis, *L’architectonique de la Critique de la faculté de juger*, in H. Parret (ed.), *Kants Ästhetik*, pp. 41–52.

Pimpinella, Piero, *Von der Dichtkunst Gottscheds zur Ästhetik Baumgartens. Zur sogenannten Emanzipation der Sinnlichkeit im 18. Jahrhundert*, in *Akten des Kongresses 'Tradition und Emanzipation', Vianden-Luxemburg,* 1991.

Pippin, Robert B., *Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind*, in R. Pippin (ed.), *Idealism as Modernism. Hegelian Variations*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1997, pp. 29-55.

Pirillo, Nicola, *Morale e civiltà. Studi su Kant e la condotta di vita*, Loffredo, Napoli 1995.
- *L'uomo di mondo tra morale e ceto. Kant e le trasformazioni del moderno*, Il Mulino, Bologna 1987.
- *La conoscenza del mondo e la prudenza nelle trascrizioni delle lezioni Kantiane di Antropologia*, in S. Ciurlia, E. De Bellis, G. Iaccarino et al. (a cura di), *Filosofia e storiografia*, Congedo, Lecce 2008, pp. 299–310.
- *La fantasticheria e il “tribunale dell’intelletto”. Rappresentazione e osservazione dell’io nelle lezioni Kantiane di Antropologia*, in Id. (a cura di), *Autobiografia e filosofia.*

Pollok, Anne, *Facetten des Menschen. Zur Anthropologie Moses Mendelssohns*, Meiner, Hamburg 2010.

Poser, Hans, *Zum Begriff der Monade bei Leibniz und Wolff*, in *Studia Leibnitiana Supplementa*, XIV (= *Akten des II. Internationalen Leibniz-Kongresses, Hannover, 17–22. Juli 1972*, Bd. 3), Steiner, Stuttgart 1975, pp. 383–395.

Potestà, Andrea, *La pragmática di Kant. Saperi al confine tra antropología e criticismo*, Mimesis, Milano 2004.

Powell, Thomas, *Kant's Theory of Self-Consciousness*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1990.

Pozzo, Riccardo, *Georg Friedrich Meiers 'Vernunftlehre': Eine historisch-systematische Untersuchung*, frommann-holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 2000.

Prauss, Gerold, *Kant und das Problem der Dinge an sich*, Bouvier, Bonn 1989 (1974).

Puryear, Stephen, *Was Leibniz Confused about Confusion?*, "Leibniz Review", 15 (2005), pp. 95-124.

Rand, Nicholas, *The Hidden Soul: The Growth of the Unconscious in Philosophy, Psychology, Medicine, and Literature, 1750–1900*, "American Imago", 61 (2004), pp. 257–89.

Reath, Andrews, *Kant's Theory of Moral Sensibility. Respect for the Moral Law and the Influence of Inclination*, "Kant-Studien", 80 (1989), pp. 284–302.

Recki, Birgit, *Ästhetik der Sitten. Die Affinität von ästhetischem Gefühl und praktischer Vernunft bei Kant*, V. Klostermann, Frankfurt a. M. 2001.
- *Achtung vor der zweckmäßigen Natur: die Erweiterung der Kantischen Ethik durch die dritte Kritik*, in V. Gerhardt, R.-P. Horstmann, R. Schumacher (eds.), *Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung. Akten des IX. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses*, de Gruyter, Berlin/New York 2001, Vol. 3 (Sections VI–X), pp. 296–304.
- *Wie fühlt man sich als vernünftiges Wesen? Immanuel Kant über ästhetische und moralische Gefühle*, in *Eadem*, *Die Vernunft, ihre Natur, ihr Gefühl und der Fortschritt*, Mentis, Paderborn 2006.
- *Kant: Vernunftgewirkte Gefühle*, in H. Landwehr, U. Renz (Hrsg.), *Klassische Emotionstheorien. Von Platon bis Wittgenstein*, de Gruyter, Berlin/New York 2008, pp. 457–477.
- *Kants 'Ästhetik der Sitten'. Ein Beitrag zum Problem der moralischen Motivation*, in A. Falduto, C. Kolisanc, G. Rivero (Hrsg.), *Metaphysik – Ästhetik – Ethik. Beiträge zur Interpretation der Philosophie Kants*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2012, pp. 121–135.
- *Kant über Achtung und Glauben. Leistung und Probleme seines motivationstheoretischen Beitrags*, in A. Tilkorn (ed.), *Motivationen für das Selbst. Kant und Spinoza im Vergleich*, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 2012, pp. 49–68.

Regenbogen, A.; Brandes, H., *Das Unbewußte*, in H.J. Sandkühler (Hrsg.), *Europäische Enzyklopädie zu Philosophie und Wissenschaften*, Bd. 4, Hamburg 1990, pp. 467-475.

Richards, Robert J., *Kant and Blumenbach on the Bildungstrieb: A Historical Misunderstanding*, "Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences", 31 (2000), pp. 11–32.

Riedel, Wolfgang *Erkennen und Empfinden. Anthropologische Achsendrehung und Wende zur Ästhetik bei Johann Georg Sulzer*, in H.-J. Schings (Hrsg.), *Der ganze Mensch. Anthropologie und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert*, DFG-Symposion (1992), Metzler, Stuttgart-Weimar 1994, pp. 410–439.
- *Erster Psychologismus. Umbau des Seelenbegriffs in der deutschen Spätaufklärung*, in J. Garber, H. Thoma (Hrsg.), *Zwischen Empirisierung und Konstitutionsleistung*, Niemeyer, Tübingen 2004, pp. 1-17.
- *Die Aufklärung und das Unbewusste. Die Inversion des Franz Moor*, in D. von Engelhardt, H. Wißkirchen (Hrsg.), *Von Schillers Räubern zu Shelleys Frankenstein- Wissenschaft und Literatur im Dialog um 1800*, Stuttgart 2006, pp. 18-40

Rivero, Gabriel, *Zur Entstehung der Anthropologie Kants. Die Anthropologie im Hinblick auf den kantischen Metaphysikbegriff der Phase κ*, "Methodus. Revista Internacional de Filosofía Moderna / An International Journal for Modern Philosophy", 6,2 (2011), pp. 179–204.

Rizo-Patrón, Rosemary; Vázquez Lobeiras, María Jesús (eds.), *La razón y sus fines. Elementos para una antropología filosófica en Kant, Husserl y Horkheimer*, Olms, Hildesheim 2013.

Roelcke, Thorsten, *Die Terminologie der Erkenntnisvermögen. Wörterbuch und lexikosemantische Untersuchung zu Kants 'Kritik der reinen Vernunft'*, Max Niemeyer, Tübingen 1989.

Rumore, Paola, *Die Bilder der Seele. Vorstellung und Einheit*, in L. Cataldi Madonna (Hrsg.), *Macht und Bescheidenheit der Vernunft. Beiträge zur Philosophie Christian Wolffs: Gedenkband für Hans Werner Arndt*, Olms, Hildesheim 2005, pp. 111-122.
- *Materiali per la prima ricezione e diffusione della psicologia empirica di Christian Wolff*, in F.L. Marcolungo (ed.), *Christian Wolff (1679-1754). Tra psicologia empirica e psicologia razionale. Atti del Congresso internazionale sulla psicologia di Ch. Wolff* (Verona, 13-14 maggio 2005), Olms, Hildesheim 2007.
- *L'ordine delle idee. La genesi del concetto di 'rappresentazione' in Kant attraverso le sue fonti wolffiane (1747-1787)*, Le Lettere, Firenze 2007.
- *La concezione kantiana della psicologia razionale*, in S. Bacin, A. Ferrarin, C. La Rocca, M. Ruffing (Hrsg.), *Kant and Philosophy in a Cosmopolitan Sense / Kant und die Philosophie in weltbürgerlicher Hinsicht, Akten des XI. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses*, de Gruyter, Boston–New York 2013, vol. 4, pp. 459–472.
- *Empirical Psychology*, in R. Theis, A. Aichele (Hrsg.), *Handbuch Christian Wolff*, Springer VS, Wiesbaden 2018, pp. 175-196.

Russell, Francey, *Obscure representations from a pragmatic point of view*, "European Journal of Philosophy", 32, 4 (2024), pp. 1068-1085.
- *Kant's Fantasy*, "Mind", 133, 531 (2024), pp. 714-741.
- *The Opacity of Human Action*, in C. Marshall, C. McLear (eds.), *Kant's Fundamental Assumptions* (forthcoming).

Ryle, Gilbert, *The Concept of the Mind*, Hutchinson, London 1949.

Saji, Motohide, *Three aspects of the self-opacity in the empirical subject in Kant*, "Philosophy & Social Criticism", 35, 3 (2009), pp. 315-37.
- *On the Division Between Reason and Unreason in Kant*, "Human Studies", 32, 2 (2009), pp. 201-23.

Sánchez Madrid, Nuria, *A Linnaeus of Human Nature: The Pragmatic Deduction of Unconscious Thought in Kant's Lectures on Anthropology*, in P. Giordanetti, R. Pozzo, M. Sgarbi, *Kant's Philosophy of the Unconscious*, pp. 177-232.

Satura, Vladimir, *Kants Erkenntnispsychologie in den Nachschriften seiner Vorlesungen über empirische Psychologie*, Bouvier, Köln 1971.

Schadow, Steffi, *Achtung für das Gesetz. Moral und Motivation bei Kant*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2013.

Schings, Hans-Jürgen (Hrsg.), *Der ganze Mensch. Anthropologie und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert*, DFG-Symposion 1992, Stuttgart-Weimar 1994.

Schlicht, Tobias; Newen, Albert, *Kant and Cognitive Science Revisited*, "History of Philosophy & Logical Analysis", 18, 1 (2015), pp. 87-113.

Schmidt, Claudia M., *The Anthropological Dimension of Kant's Metaphysics of Morals*, "Kant-Studien", 96 (2005), pp. 66–84.
- *Kant's Transcendental and Empirical Anthropology of Cognition. The Account of the Cognitive Faculties in the Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View and the Critique of Pure Reason*, Dissertation, University of Iowa, Iowa City 1999.
- *Kant's Transcendental, Empirical, Pragmatic, and Moral Anthropology*, "Kant-Studien", 98 (2007), pp. 156–182.

Schmitz, Walter; Zelle, Carsten (Hrsg.), *Innovation und Transfer. Naturwissenschaften, Anthropologie und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert*, Thelem, Dresden 2004.

Schmucker, Joseph, *Die Ursprünge der Ethik Kants in seinen vorkritischen Schriften und Reflektionen*, A. Hain, Meisenheim am Glan 1961.

Schneewind, Jerome B., *Toward enlightenment: Kant and the sources of darkness*, in D. Rutherford (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 328-351.

Schönecker, Dieter (with Alexander Cotter, Magdalena Eckes, Sebastian Maly), *Kant über Menschenliebe als moralische Gemütsanlage*, "*Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*", 92 (2010), pp. 133–175.

Schrader, George, *The Status of Feeling in Kant's Philosophy*, in P. Laberce, F. Duchesneau, B. E. Morrisey (eds.), *Actes du Congrès d'Ottawa sur Kant dans les Traditions Anglo-Américaine et Continentale*, University of Ottawa Press, Ottawa 1976, pp. 143–160.

Schwaiger, Clemens, *Kategorische und andere Imperative. Zur Entwicklung von Kants praktischer Philosophie bis 1785*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1999.
- *Denken des 'Übersinnlichen' bei Kant. Zu Herkunft und Verwendung einer Schlüsselkategorie seiner praktischen Metaphysik*, in N. Fischer (ed.), *Kants Metaphysik und Religionsphilosophie*, Meiner, Hamburg 2004, pp. 331–345.
- *Das Problem des Handelns wider besseres Wissen bei Wolff, Baumgarten und Meier*, in F.L. Marcolungo (ed.), *Christian Wolff tra psicologia empirica e psicologia razionale*, Olms, Hildesheim-Zürich-New York 2007, pp. 167-175.

Sensen, Oliver (ed.), *Kant on Moral Autonomy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge-New York 2012.
- *The Role of Feelings in Kant's Moral Philosophy*, "*Studi Kantiani*", 25 (2012), pp. 45–58.

Shell, Susan Meld, *The Embodiment of Reason: Kant on Spirit, Generation and Community*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1996.

Sherman, Nancy, *The Place of Emotions in Kantian Morality*, in O. Flanacan, A. Oksenberc Rorty (eds.), *Identity, Character, and Morality: Essays in Moral Psychology*, MIT Press, Cambridge (Mass.)-London 1990, pp. 149–170.

Sidgwick, Henry, *The Kantian Conception of Free Will*, "*Mind – A Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy*", 12/51 (1888), pp. 405–412.

Silva, Fernando, *"Como o fósforo (...), elas fazem grande figura na escuridão". Kant e o Papel das representações obscuras na consciência humana*, "Comprendre", 21, 1(2019), pp. 27-46.
- *Um "secreto procedimento da alma dos homens": Kant sobre o problema das representações obscuras*, "Con-Textos Kantianos. International Journal of Philosophy", 5 (2017), pp. 190-215.

Simmermacher, Volker, *Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft als Grundlegung einer Anthropologia transcendentalis*, Dissertation, Heidelberg 1951.

Simmons, Alison, *Changing the Cartesian Mind: Leibniz on Sensation, Representation and Consciousness*, "Philosophical Review", 101 (2001), pp. 31–75.

Slote, Michael, *Moral Sentimentalism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York 2010.

Sommer, Robert, *Grundzüge einer Geschichte der Deutschen Psychologie und Aesthetik von Wolff-Baumgarten bis Kant-Schiller*, Staehl, Würzburg 1892.

Stark, Werner, *Nachforschungen zu Briefen und Handschriften Immanuel Kants*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 1993.

Stöckmann, Ernst, *Phänomenologie der Empfindungen – Kultivierung des Gefühlsvermögens. Aspekte der anthropologischen Empfindungstheorie der deutschen Spätaufklärung am Beispiel von Platner und Irwing*, in W. Schmitz – C. Zelle (eds.), *Innovation und Transfer – Naturwissenschaften, Anthropologie und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert*, Thelem, Dresden 2004, pp. 75–96.

- *Anthropologische Ästhetik. Philosophie, Psychologie und ästhetische Theorie der Emotionen im Diskurs der Aufklärung*, Niemeyer, Tübingen 2009.

Stolzenberg, Jürgen, *Was jedermann notwendig interessiert. Kants Weltbegriff der Philosophie*, in H. Fecer (ed.), *The Fate of Reason. Contemporary Understanding of Enlightenment*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2013, pp. 171–179.

Strawson, Peter F., *The Bounds of Sense. An Essay on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Routledge, Abingdon–New York 1966.

Streubel, Thorsten, *Was ist der Mensch? – Das Gehirn-Geist-Problem aus kantischer Sicht. Plädoyer für eine transzendentale Anthropologie*, "*Kant-Studien*", 103/3 (2012), pp. 370–377.

Sturm, Thomas, *Kant und die Wissenschaften vom Menschen*, Mentis, Bielefeld 2009.
- *Kant on Empirical Psychology: How Not to Investigate the Human Mind*, in E. Watkins (ed.), *Kant and the Sciences*, Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York 2001, pp. 163–184.
- *Freedom and the Human Sciences: Hume's Science of Man versus Kant's Pragmatic Anthropology*, in *Kant Yearbook – Anthropology*, 3 (2011), pp. 23–42.
- (with Wunderlich, Falk), *Kant and the Scientific Study of Consciousness*, "History of the Human Sciences", 23 (2010), pp. 48-71.

Sturma, Dieter, *Kant über Selbstbewußtsein. Zum Zusammenhang von Erkenntniskritik und Theorie des Selbstbewußtseins*, Olms, Hildesheim–Zürich–New York 1985.
- *Philosophie der Person. Die Selbstverhältnisse von Subjektivität und Moralität*, Schöningh, Paderborn–München–Wien–Zürich 1997.
- *Was ist der Mensch? Kants vierte Frage und der Übergang von der philosophischen Anthropologie zur Philosophie der Person*, in D. H. Heidemann – K. Encelhard (eds.), *Warum Kant heute? Systematische Bedeutung und Rezeption seiner Philosophie in der Gegenwart*, de Gruyter, Berlin/New York 2004, pp. 264–285.

Sussman, David G. *The Idea of Humanity. Anthropology and Anthroponomy in Kant's Ethics*. New York, 2001.

Svare, Helce, *Body and Practice in Kant*, Springer, Dordrecht 2006.

Tedesco, Salvatore, *L'estetica di Baumgarten*, Aisthesis, Palermo 2000.

Teruel, Pedro Jesús, *Das Organ der Seele. Immanuel Kant y Samuel Thomas Sömmerring sobre el problema mente-cerebro*, "*Studi kantiani*", XXI (2008), pp. 59–76.
- *Significato, senso e ubicazione strutturale del termine Gemüt nella filosofia kantiana*, in S. Bacin, A. Ferrarin, C. La Rocca, M. Ruffinc (eds.), *Kant und die Philosophie in weltbürgerlicher Hinsicht. Akten des XI. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses*, de Gruyter, Boston–New York 2013, volume 4, pp. 507–518.

Thiel, Udo, *Cudworth and Seventeenth-Century Theories of Consciousness*, in S. Gaukroger (ed.), *The Uses of Antiquity*, Springer, Dordrecht 1991, pp. 79-99.

- *The Early Modern Subject*. *Self-Consciousness and Personal Identity from Descartes to Hume*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2011.

Thurnherr, Urs, *Die Ästhetik der Existenz. Über den Begriff der Maxime und die Bildung von Maximen bei Kant*, Francke, Tübingen 1994.

Timmons, Mark (eds.), *Kant's Metaphysics of Morals: Interpretative Essays*, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York 2002.

Tonelli, Giorgio, *Lumières, Aufklärung: A Note on semantics*, "International Studies in Philosophy", VI (1974), pp. 166-69.
- *Leibniz on Innate Ideas and the Early Reactions to the Publication of the* Nouveaux Essais *(1765)*. "Journal of the History of Philosophy", 12 (1974), pp. 437–54.
- *La formazione del testo della Kritik der Urteilskraft*, "Revue internationale de philosophie", 8 (1954), pp. 423–448.
- *Kant, dall'estetica metafisica all'estetica psicoempirica. Studi sulla genesi del criticismo (1754–1771) e sulle sue fonti*, V. Bona, Torino 1955.

Torra-Mattenklott, Caroline, *Die Seele als Zuschauerin. Zur Psychologie des* movere, in E. Fischer-Lichte, J. Schönert (Hrsg.), *Theater im Kulturwandel des 18. Jahrhunderts. Inszenierung und Wahrnehmung von Körper - Musik - Sprache*, Wallstein, Göttingen 1999, pp. 91-108.
- *Metaphorologie der Rührung. Ästhetische Theorie und Mechanik im 18. Jahrhundert*, Fink, München 2002.

Trampota, Andreas; Sensen, Oliver; Timmermann, Jens (Hrsg.), *Kant's "Tugendlehre". A Comprehensive Commentary*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2013.

Tuschling, Burkhard, *Begriffe, Dimensionen, Funktionen der Subjektivität: Leibniz versus Locke*, in D. Heidemann (Hrsg.), *Probleme der Subjektivität in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart 2002, pp. 57-84.

Van der Berc, Hein, *Kant on Vital Forces. Metaphysical Concerns versus Scientific Practice*, in E.-O. Onnasch (ed.), *Kants Philosophie der Natur. Ihre Entwicklung im Opus postumum und ihre Wirkung*, de Gruyter, Berlin/New York, pp. 115–135.

Van de Pitte, Frederick, *Kant as Philosophical Anthropologist*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague 1971.

Vidal, Fernando, *La psychologie empirique et son historicisation pendant l'Aufklärung*, "Revue d'Histoire des Sciences Humaines", 2 (2000), pp. 29–55.
- *The Sciences of the Soul. The Early Modern Origins of Psychology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2011.

Walsh, William H., *Philosophy and Psychology in Kant's Critique*, "Kant-Studien", 57 (1966), pp. 186-198.

Ward, Keith, *The Development of Kant's View of Ethics*, Blackwell, Oxford 1972.

Watson, John B., *Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It*, "Psychological Review", 20 (1913), pp. 158–177.

Waxman, Wayne, *Kant's Model of the Mind. A New Interpretation of Transcendental Idealism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York 1991.
- *Kant's Psychologism I.*, "Kantian Review", 3 (1999), pp. 41–63.
- *Kant and the Empiricists: Understanding Understanding*, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York 2005.

Wenzel, Uwe Justus, *Anthroponomie: Kants Archäologie der Autonomie*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 1992.

Whyte, Lancelot L., *The Unconscious before Freud*, Basic Books, New York 1960.

Wilson, Holly L., *Kant's Pragmatic Anthropology and its Relationship to Critical Philosophy*, Dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 1987.
- *Kant's Pragmatic Anthropology: Its Origin, Meaning, and Critical Significance*, State University of New York Press, New York 2006.

Wilson, Margaret D., *Ideas and Mechanism: Essays in Early Modern Philosophy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1999.

Witte, Eva, *Logik ohne Dornen. Die Rezeption von A.G. Baumgartens Ästhetik im Spannungsfeld von logischem Begriff und ästhetischer Anschauung*, Olms, Hildesheim 2000, pp. 13–69.

Wood, Allen W., *Kant's Ethical Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1999.
- *Kant and the Problem of Human Nature*, in B. Jacobs, P. Kain, *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, pp. 38-59.

Wunderlich, Falk, *Kant und die Bewußtseinstheorien des 18. Jahrhunderts*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2005.

Wundt, Max, *Die deutsche Schulmetaphysik im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Tübingen 1945), Nachdruck: Hildesheim 1992.

Wunsch, Matthias, *The Activity of Sensibility in Kant's Anthropology. A Developmental History of the Concept of the Formative Faculty*, in *Kant Yearbook – Anthropology*, 3 (2011), pp. 67–90.

Zammito, John H., *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgment*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1992.
- *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago-London 2002.

Zinkstok, Job, *Anthropology, empirical psychology, and applied logic*, "Kant Yearbook", 3 (2011), pp. 107-130.

Zöller, Günter, *Michel Foucaults Dissertation über Kants Anthropologie. Bericht und Beschreibung*, "Kant-Studien", 86 (1995), pp. 128–129.