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# Metaphysical Organs from Leibniz to Marx

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# Metaphysical Organs from Leibniz to Marx

## **Abstract**

Metaphysical Organs from Leibniz to Marx

Leif Weatherby

Catriona MacLeod, supervisor

This dissertation locates and treats the Early German Romantic project of finding or creating an "organ" for metaphysics. The Romantics derived their sense of Organ from a spectrum of meanings and etymological developments of the Greek organon, "instrument." Simultaneously physiological and metaphysical, what I call Romantic organology was meant to bridge the critical gap between thought and being, and to provide a transition from the speculative to the political. What resulted was a kind of technological imagination forming a major moment in modern metaphysics.

The term Organ had conceptual and metaphorical origins in German in the late 18th century--in biology, but also in the works of Leibniz, Kant, and Herder; it was always present but never semantically fixed. Indeed, its modern meaning ("functional part of a living being") was established in the German public sphere only in the 1790s. Aristotelian scholasticism had long described logic a set of tools for philosophy, an organon. The organon's etymological sibling, the organ, had a primarily physiological heritage ("sense-organ," "internal organ"). Intentionally conflating the medical and logical notions, the Romantics imagined their literary-philosophical efforts as the construction of an ideal yet concrete tool. This project has until now been missing from the intellectual historiography of the period (and especially from the important works of Hans Blumenberg and Michel Foucault).

HÄ¶lderlin, Schelling, and Novalis shared the project of determining what sort of knowledge can count as metaphysical in a world filled with antinomies created by the political and technological upheavals of the 18th century. A new metaphysics, they reasoned, would need a determinate means, and they exploited the term Organ's newness and attendant ambiguity to underpin their aesthetic and philosophical pretensions. HÄ¶lderlin used it to found a metaphysics of tragedy; Schelling to bridge gaps between epistemology, natural science, and theology; and Novalis to lend weight to his universal encyclopedia. Goethe and Marx, I argue, both inherited this project indirectly, revising the Romantic project for their own metaphysical and political programs. Organology is at the basis of a surprising metaphysical legacy of Romanticism, which the dissertation reconstructs both systematically and contextually.

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**Leif Weatherby**

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**Leif Weatherby**

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**ABSTRACT****Metaphysical Organs from Leibniz to Marx****Leif Weatherby****Catriona MacLeod**

This dissertation locates and treats the Early German Romantic project of finding or creating an “organ” for metaphysics. The Romantics derived their sense of *Organ* from a spectrum of meanings and etymological developments of the Greek *organon*, “instrument.” Simultaneously physiological and metaphysical, what I call Romantic organology was meant to bridge the critical gap between thought and being, and to provide a transition from the speculative to the political. What resulted was a kind of technological imagination forming a major moment in modern metaphysics.

The term *Organ* had conceptual and metaphorical origins in German in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century—in biology, but also in the works of Leibniz, Kant, and Herder, it was always present but never semantically fixed. Indeed, its modern meaning (“functional part of a living being”) was established in the German public sphere only in the 1790s. Aristotelian scholasticism had long described logic a set of tools for philosophy, an *organon*. The *organon*’s etymological sibling, the *organ*, had a primarily physiological heritage (“sense-organ,” “internal organ”). Intentionally conflating the medical and logical notions, the Romantics imagined their literary-philosophical efforts as the construction of an ideal yet concrete tool. This project has until now been missing from the intellectual historiography of the period (and especially from the important works of Hans Blumenberg and Michel Foucault).

Hölderlin, Schelling, and Novalis shared the project of determining what sort of knowledge can count as metaphysical in a world filled with antinomies created by the political and technological upheavals of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A new metaphysics, they reasoned, would need a determinate means, and they exploited the term *Organ*'s newness and attendant ambiguity to underpin their aesthetic and philosophical pretensions. Hölderlin used it to found a metaphysics of tragedy; Schelling to bridge gaps between epistemology, natural science, and theology; and Novalis to lend weight to his universal encyclopedia. Goethe and Marx, I argue, both inherited this project indirectly, revising the Romantic project for their own metaphysical and political programs. Organology is at the basis of a surprising metaphysical legacy of Romanticism, which the dissertation reconstructs both systematically and contextually.



**Metaphysical Organs from Leibniz to Marx**  
**Leif Weatherby**

**Table of contents:**

Introduction. Romantic Organology and Metaphysical Technology: Aristotle, Blumenberg, Foucault—1

Chapter I: Towards a Metaphorology of the Organ in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century German: Leibniz, Kant, Herder—32

Chapter II. Dialectical Organs and the Metaphysics of Tragedy: Hölderlin—112

Chapter III: Electric Organs and the Romantic Metaphysics of Morals: Schelling—187

Chapter IV: Universal Organs: Novalis' Romantic Organology—269

Chapter V: Organs after Organology: Goethe, Hegel, and Technologies of Nature and of History—331

Communist Organs and the Legacies of Organology: *statt eines Epilogs*—395

Bibliography—413

## **Introduction. Romantic Organology and Metaphysical Technology: Aristotle, Blumenberg, Foucault**

### **Prelude in (and out) of the University**

In 1917, Max Weber delivered his address, “Die Wissenschaft als Beruf.” Speaking to and about *die Jugend* (in a Munich bookstore in front of the *Freistudentischer Bund*), Weber defended a narrow definition of academic discipline that confined the professor to a carefully circumscribed pedagogical role. While she should not “teach” life as such, the professor could offer consistency to students’ contemplation of life-decisions—in short, the professor could require the student to have rationality in his tool-belt, even if he could not force him to be rational.<sup>1</sup> The felt discrepancy between life and discipline could be not redressed but addressed.

This conclusion came at the end of Weber’s sweeping account of the history of knowledge in European civilization. The first scientific means of grasping the world was the concept—Weber’s example is Plato’s cave-allegory. The second world-historical instrument of that science is the “rational experiment,” which Weber places in the Renaissance, with particular reference to Bacon’s interventions against the *idola* of the concept. The experiment provides the rationalizing force that separates the conceptual holism of life and science into the “controlled experience” which makes knowledge a

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<sup>1</sup> “Wir können so, wenn wir unsere Sache verstehen (was hier einmal vorausgesetzt werden muß) den Einzelnen nötigen, oder wenigstens ihm dabei helfen, sich selbst *Rechenschaft zu geben über den letzten Sinns eines eigenen Tuns*. Es scheint mir das nicht so sehr wenig zu sein, auch für das rein persönliche Leben.” (Max Weber, *Schriften: 1894-1922*, ed. Dirk Kaesler (Stuttgart: Kröner, 2002), p. 505.)

matter of discipline and the knower a practitioner of a specific field's experimental logic (and, in the best case, a consistent pedagogue).

The experiment was “das zweite große Werkzeug wissenschaftlicher Arbeit”<sup>2</sup>—and with this metaphor, Weber entered the terminological history that is the object of this study. Weber's address defended disciplinarity in the face of attempts by youth movements such as Expressionism and Dada to present a unified sense of life and knowledge in both their artistic and social productions. The debate between Heidegger and Cassirer in Davos in 1929 will have the same contours: “deep life” (which resonated with the emergent National Socialist movement) versus “symbolic” *Wissenschaft*.<sup>3</sup> And Husserl would step in, somewhere between Heidegger and Weber, defending *Geist* while calling for a careful approach to its re-orientation to the scientific endeavor.<sup>4</sup> Weber's metaphor—the “tool” of rational science—can help to orient us among these expressions of anxious modernity. This is because the use of “tool” points to a longer terminological history intimately tied to the problem of the specific logic of science and the general logic of life or the spirit. Indeed, to speak, as the tradition continuously did, of an instrument of Reason, is to invoke, however unintentionally, a quasi-conceptual layer of terminological history that runs from Aristotle to the present. This study, far from attempting to exhaust this field, concentrates on a shift in that history in the texts of German Romanticism. This shift was metaphysical and metaphorical all at once, and presents us with a figure that has too often gone missing in intellectual histories of modernity: a modern metaphysics

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<sup>2</sup> Weber, *Schriften*, p. 491.

<sup>3</sup> See Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways: Carnap, Cassirer, and Heidegger* (Peru, IL: Open Court, 2000), and Peter Gordon, *Continental Divide: Heidegger, Cassirer, Davos* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> See Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie: Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, ed. Elisabeth Ströker (Hamburg: Meiner, 1996).

rooted in a discourse of Reason's instruments. That metaphysics was intended to give speculation and life a central role without stealing the specificity of the (emergent) disciplinary order's individual fields of knowledge. And this metaphysics, as we shall see, also aimed at providing a dynamic transition to a politics of a sort, an attempt to produce dispositions in complex relation to that metaphysics. Uniting "instruments" and "Reason," "metaphysics" and "politics" terminologically meant producing a body of thought that I shall call *technologia transcendentalis* or Romantic organology. The story I will tell is that of the invention (in the rhetorical sense) of new tools of rational orientation in a world fragmented by disciplinarity and political upheaval. The pressures of those upheavals, as well as the increasing dependence of the natural sciences on literal instruments, led to a contemplative engagement with the problem of instrumentality itself, and this engagement resulted in a body of thought in productive and intentional tension with the increasing specificity and instrumentality of *Wissenschaft*. Between Romantic organology and the present stand many confrontations between these opposing forces of modernity (not least Weber's moment itself), and yet I think this study will be of more than genealogical interest. David Wellbery has written (in another context) that "[t]o evaluate Enlightenment aesthetics from a contemporary standpoint is not to look for those still valid truths the aestheticians discovered, but rather to determine those areas of contemporary thought that continue to operate with eighteenth-century instruments."<sup>5</sup> I will suggest that providing a terminological history of the term "organ" as tool and sense in German Romanticism can help us—as it did the Romantics themselves—not only to understand a part of the history of our conceptual apparatus, but to build upon that

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<sup>5</sup> David Wellbery, *Lessing's Laocoon: Semiotics and Aesthetics in the Age of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 239.

apparatus intentionally, to provide our thinking with an instrument—an *organon*—of concrete engagement with historical life. To be sure, the terminological history of the organ continues in the present, and this study will therefore also serve the genealogical purpose. But if we are confronted by contemporary political and technological antinomies in development, then *technological thought* could contribute a systematic outlook of enduring relevance.

### Romantic Organology: Aristotelian Terminological Problems

Friedrich Schlegel’s version of the Romantic demand for a “new mythology,” presented as a task for the Jena circle in his *Gespräch über die Poesie*, calls for poetry to function as the instrument of an “ideal realism”:

Auch ich trage schon lange das Ideal eines solchen Realismus in mir, und wenn es bisher nicht zur Mittheilung gekommen ist, so war es nur, weil ich das Organ noch dazu suche. Doch weiß ich, daß ichs nur in der Poesie finden kann, denn in Gestalt der Philosophie oder gar eines Systems wird der Realismus nie wieder auftreten können.<sup>6</sup>

This philosophy remains, in this text, largely a task, but one with specifications. Both “ideal” and “real,” the philosophical or rational mythology must present a cohering organism of sentences and verses, yet not appear in the form of a “system.”<sup>7</sup> Thus Spinoza, whose philosophical style is perhaps as far away from Schlegel’s notion of *Poesie* as any, and indeed was understood by contemporaries as purely systematic—of

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<sup>6</sup> Friedrich Schlegel, *Gespräch über die Poesie* in: Walter Jaeschke (ed.), *Früher Idealismus und Frühromantik: Der Streit um die Grundlagen der Ästhetik (1795-1805). Quellenband* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1995), p 117.

<sup>7</sup> The term “system,” as we shall see, is at least as complicated as that other celebrated Romantic term, “fragment.” Schlegel’s enthusiasm for Spinoza here already points us to that complication. On different types of “system”-notions, see Paul Franks, *All or Nothing: Systematicity, Transcendental Arguments and German Idealism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), especially pp. 84 ff., where “holistic monism” is differentiated from the “derivation monism” of Karl Leonard Reinhold—Kant’s first popularizer—and those in dialogue with him.

course, the subtitle of the *Ethics* does read: *more geometrica demonstrata*—is nevertheless the heart of the canon for any would-be poetic genius. Schlegel's proposal is, indeed, an impossible task, self-consciously contradictory in historical appeal and philosophical determination. Worse, its impossibility is meant nevertheless to become reality by means of a metaphor: an organ.

If we look to Schlegel's use of the word "organ," we can see that these impossibilities and their figurative solution nevertheless house a philosophical conception I will be calling Romantic organology. The term "organ" is first etymological: the Greek *organon* means "instrument" or "tool," and developed in German (as in English) to mean "bodily" or "sense" organ.<sup>8</sup> The Jena Romantics used the concreteness and functionality of the medical concept to make an analogy to the normativity and desired concreteness of a set of ideal or social circumstances.

This terminological conflation produced an impossible term, a logico-aesthetic, passive yet formal concept: the Romantic organ. "Organ" was meant to unite form with content, the general with the particular. As such, it was the central term of a new metaphysics, one open to real development and responsive to the historical conditions of

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<sup>8</sup> The Greek is in turn derived from an Indo-European root ("uerg") for *work, cause, effect* (German *wirken*). See Jörg Henning Wolf, *Der Begriff "Organ" in der Medizin* (Munich: Werner Fritsch, 1971), p. 9. Wolf carefully shows that its modern sense did not emerge until the 18<sup>th</sup> century—we can already see that its etymology continued to confuse and fascinate in two editions of Johann Heinrich Campe's *Wörterbuch zur Erklärung und Verdeutschung der unserer Sprache aufgedrungenen fremden Ausdrücke: Ein Ergänzungsband zu Adelung's und Campe's Wörterbüchern* (Braunschweig: Schulbuchhandlung, 1813), pp. 449-50 (cited in Wolf, *Der Begriff*, p. 14). The entry covers the sense-organ meaning of the term, going on to its etymological use specifically in language-functions in the body (the "liebliches Organ" as the voice of the actor or singer), and then uses the term to separate the organic from the inorganic (the latter definitionally does not have organs). Campe goes on: "In folgender Stelle eines unserer Schriftsteller: "Dieser Äther ist das Mittel=*organ*," könnte Zwischenmittel gesagt werden: Dieser Äther ist das Zwischenmittel..." In the earlier edition (Braunschweig: Schulbuchhandlung, 1801), p. 498, Campe had written: "Dieser Äther ist das Mittel=*organ*,' könnte Wirkmittel dafür gesagt werden: Dieser Äther ist das Wirkmittel u.s.w." As we shall see, this terminological/etymological richness is essential to the term's creative use. Both the separation of organic from inorganic and the wavering sense of the organ's "effectiveness" (*wirk-*) contribute to the semantic field of *Organ* around 1800.

knowledge and political life. The organ thus made ontological innovation in the historical world a possibility, bringing system and anti-system (Cassirer's two tendencies of the Enlightenment<sup>9</sup>) into an intentionally impossible identity.

The literal organ is both a physical location and a manner of operating, a set of rules: the location or part of the body performs a function with respect to the whole. By analogy, the "organ" is a set of rules for thinking and the concrete application of those ideal rules—the ideal "organ" thus makes thought real and makes thinking efficacious. The medical concept was intentionally conflated with the philosophical concept of an *organon*, the tools for philosophy itself. *Organon* was the name given in the tradition to Aristotle's logical corpus, and important echoes in the Early Modern period were to be found in Francis Bacon and Johann Lambert—as we shall see.

Since real and ideal, for Schlegel and his compatriots, are meant to be complements in an admixture of organic, developing reason, the concept "organ" operates on a continuum of materiality and ideality, and its metaphoric force attains its value along this continuum. Its distance from the one or the other pole makes it relatively figurative or literal, but its figurating activity is not primarily or finally at a (representative) "distance" from those poles. Rather, it is itself an agent of metaphysical change. The sense in which we mean "organ" as an operator with a determinate range of effects in a given system both comes from and is here applied to the traditional problems of metaphysics. As the active principle in a developmental monistic metaphysics, "organ" is both absolutely general and entirely particular. All possible rules must be real within an organ of their application, yet the real must be organological as much as the ideal. When

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<sup>9</sup> See Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, transl. Peter Gay (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 3-37.

we say that a publication is the “organ” of an ideology within party politics, we are only shifting this specific usage from metaphysics to sociology. But in doing so, we also deprive it of its organological pretension, the ability of the term (for and in Early German Romanticism) to undercut dualisms like “metaphoric/literal” and “real/ideal” by operating as the generator of such necessary antinomies. When we demote organs from their metaphysical status after organology, we re-metaphorize a term that once served to open out onto and bind speculation and pragmatics.

That binding served the purpose of achieving metaphysical cognition: the metaphorical but “real” ability to range over the sliding scale between real and ideal also is meant to afford us insight into and power over the reasons for our cognition of being and beings, being in beings.<sup>10</sup> Yet the link to the specificity of disciplinary knowledge, and even to the possibility of ethical action, is also retained. Organology develops an instrument for the mixing of speculation and observation even as it also crosses the divide into action, allowing for a systemic (but not deductive) relationship between metaphysics and politics.

I will be arguing here that this metaphysics, standing in the tradition of those systems, from Leibniz forward, that think of the scientific and democratic revolutions as the occasion for a new determination of the “queen of the disciplines” (rather than signs of its irrelevance), neither necessarily produces regressive social viewpoints nor determines in advance what sort of an empirical world we live in. My investigation treats

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<sup>10</sup> Because this insight is into the ground of our knowledge of being, it recognizes what Jacobi calls “das Sein in allem Dasein,” (F.H. Jacobi, *Werke*, eds. Klaus Hammacher und Wolfgang Jaeschke (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1998 ff.) 4/1, p. 87), while maintaining the critical focus on the manner of knowing that being. It also responds to the imperative that metaphysics should be directly related to problems of “orientation,” that is, that our knowledge of how things are should be informative of what we do. This link—preserved from Plato’s Cave to Marx’s Capital—is meant here to become plastic in the name of a developmental metaphysics.



the concept of the organ for metaphysical cognition and action as the foundation of an open system.<sup>11</sup>

Romantic organology is the figurating center of Romantic metaphysics.<sup>12</sup> In demanding an ideal yet concrete organ, Schlegel was drawing on and innovating in a terminological history that goes back, as I have briefly indicated above, to Aristotle. Indeed, both *organon* (the term used to classify the logical works in the Aristotelian corpus) and *organ* are ultimately of Aristotelian descent. The German *das Organ* (unlike its English and French—*organe*—counterparts), did not come to have its present meaning—“functional part” of a living being: internal or sense organ—until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>13</sup> We can mark out three distinct but interlocking semantic fields of the Greek *organon*’s heritage in Aristotle himself, in order then to see what the Romantics were doing by conflating the modern meanings of organ and *organon*.

The most general definition<sup>14</sup> given to the term reveals the *organon* as that which is potential with respect to a field of actuality on which it is concentrated. This technical definition fits well with the sense of a “tool”: the flint houses a possibility, the reality of which we call fire. We can note that this example wavers: flint is only an *organon* when it is used to make fire. And this is precisely the framework in which Aristotle develops his term *organon*. The comparison of nature (*physis*) to artifice (*techne*)—artifice is, in

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<sup>11</sup> I thus intentionally exclude some uses of the term that deserve their own studies—for example, the use of the term to discuss the voice in theatric and especially operatic settings (see note 8 above). I also generally leave out the sense given to periodicals and newspapers as the “organs” of certain governing bodies, etc.

<sup>12</sup> I engage in more detailed arguments below about whether the Romantics had a metaphysics below. For the moment, I refer the reader to Frederick Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle Against Subjectivism, 1781-1801* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), esp. pp. 349-465. This depiction of “romantic” or “absolute” idealism has received a more compact treatment from him in his *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 131-53.

<sup>13</sup> Jörg Henning Wolf, *Der Begriff "Organ" in der Medizin* (Munich: Werner Fritsch, 1971), esp. pp. 38-44.

<sup>14</sup> Wolf maintains, *Der Begriff*, pp. 17-18, that Aristotle never gives a definition of *organon*, although he often defines *meros/morion*, “part” (without the functional sense of the former term). But Aristotle uses the same conception of the term across a number of metaphorical applications, and thus provides us with something like a working or base definition. The *De partibus animalium* is, of course, *peri zoion morion*.

his terms, an “imitation of nature” or *mimesis*—provides the conceptual background on which to develop the notion of function, both for nature’s *teloi* and for human uses:

*Pos de pote hekaston gignetai, enteuthen dei labeiv, archen poiesamenous protow men hoti hosa phusei gignetai e technei, hup’ energeia ontos ginetai ek tou dunamei toioutou.*  
 Whatever is formed either by Nature or my human Art, say X, is formed by something which is X *in actuality* out of something which is X *potentially*.<sup>15</sup>

This analogy—which is sometimes called “technomorphism” or the “*techne-physis* analogy”<sup>16</sup>—allows for the passage, whether natural or technological, from potential to actual. And it does this by means of the *organon*—indeed, this is the latter’s most fundamental meaning. The “organ,” we can say, is that functional part—in any order, natural or human—which is so organized as to bring about a specific effect within a field of possibility its own specificity circumscribes. Human purposes mimic—indeed, are a *mimesis* of—cosmological *teloi*, and the concrete actualization-apparatus is called, in both cases, *organon*.

The concreteness of this functional part does not pre-determine it to physical existence (except in the sense of *physis* which corresponds to “nature”). So, in a first—and determinative—metaphorical application of the term, Aristotle defines the senses as the “instruments of perception.”<sup>17</sup> The “sensor” (*aistheterion*) is

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<sup>15</sup> Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, trans. A.L. Peck, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942/2000). Cited as: GA (734b22–23).

<sup>16</sup> Wolf collects Aristotle’s uses of this analogy, *Der Begriff*, pp. 16 ff. Because Aristotle develops the concept in parallel to a notion of common structures (like cells) and “differing” structures (*anhomoiomere*) in animals, Wolf, *Der Begriff*, p. 16, is able to show both his use of the concept of the organ and his non-application of the term to the concept. Nevertheless, *organon* is used precisely where the *anhomoiomere* take on functional or “practical” characteristics: “Wie sich vermuten läßt, ist dies die Einbruchsstelle für den Gedanken einer Analogie zwischen dem zweckgerichteten Naturvorgang einerseits und dem immanent und einheitlich zielgerichteten Naturvorgang andererseits [sic]. Mit anderen Worten: Das Feld dieser Analogie ist der geistige Ort, wo sich der neue Sinn von organon entfaltet und der Begriff eines organon der Natur herauskristallisiert. Die Teleologie als vorherrschende Anschauungsform für die Naturvorgänge schlechthin ist es, von der die Analyse des bei Aristoteles geprägten organon-Begriffs auszugehen hat.”

<sup>17</sup> The phrase is not used, but the definition is. The metaphorical use obviously gave way to a literal one in the modern sense, but we can still observe the metaphor’s predominance in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, from physiological to aesthetic treatises. Albrecht von Haller, in the author-overseen 1770 translation of his

*Hoste to poiouv hoion auto energiai, toioutovn ekeino poiei dunamei on.*  
That part which is potentially such as its object is actually.<sup>18</sup>

The concrete sense-“organ” (we can say, with terminological anachronism) is an *organon*, a functional part covering a field of potentiality—in this example, the tactile—and making perception possible through the characteristic transfer from possible to actual. Epistemologically, the point is that the senses cannot transfer the material they interact with to the mind, but instead only the formal elements of that field. We do not get an eyeful of wood when we look at a tree, but a representation of that tree. Aristotle continues:

*Katholou de peri pases aistheseos die labein hoti he men aisthesis esti to dektikon ton aisthetow eidown aneu tes hules, hoion ho keros tou daktuliou aneu tou siderou kai tou chrusou dechetai to semeion, lambanei de to chrusouv e to chalkouv semeion, all' ouch hei chrusos e chalkos... aistheterion de proton en joi he toiaute dunamis.*

By a “sense” is meant what has the power of receiving into itself the sensible forms of things without the matter. This must be conceived of as taking place in the way in which a piece of wax takes on the impress of signet-ring without the iron or gold... but it is indifferent what in each case the *substance* is; what alone matters is what *quality* it has, i.e. in what *ratio* its constituents are combined... By an *aestherion* is meant that in which ultimately such a power is seated.<sup>19</sup>

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physiology textbook, *Umriss der Geschäfte des körperlichen Lebens* (Berlin: Haude und Spener, 1770), p. 224: “Wir wollen also die Sinnen zuerst stückweis durchgehen, hernach dasjenige betrachten, was ihnen allen gemein ist, und was in der Seele auf die Veränderungen der *Werkzeuge der Empfindungen* folget.” The original, however, reads *mutationes sensorium* (translating *aistheterion*). (*Prima Lineae Physiologiae* (Göttingen: van Rossum 1758), p. 158; my emphases.) Johann Jakob Breitinger writes that “Die Natur hat dem Menschen ein allgemeineres und vor seine Natur bequemeres Ergetzen zugeordnet, dessen Genuß ihm nicht so schwer ankommen sollte, aus dieser Ursache hat sie ihn mit den Sinnen, als mit *Werkzeugen* begabet, mittelst deren die Schönheiten der Natur sich ihm durch einen blossen Eindruck ohne seine Mühe offenbareten...” Johann Jakob Bodmer, Johann Jakob Breitinger, *Schriften zur Literatur*, Volker Meid, ed. (Stuttgart: Phillip Reclam 1980), p. 102. And again: “Wie enge würde demnach unsere Erkenntniß eingeschräncket seyn, wenn wir keine andere haben könnten; als durch die Instrumente der Sinnen, welche uns allein Begriffe von solchen Dingen geben, die wirklich vor uns zugegen sind?” “Von dem Einfluß und Gebrauche der Einbildungs-Kraft” (1727), Bodmer/Breitinger, p. 31. And again, in Winckelmann: (*Winckelmanns Werke in einem Band* (Berlin/Weimar: Aufbau, 1969), p. 144, after Robert Jütte, *Geschichte der Sinne*, p. 164: “Das Werkzeug dieser Empfindung ist der äußere Sinn und der Sitz derselben der innere; jener muß richtig und dieser empfindlich und fein sein...” A wealth of other references can be found in Ludger Schwarte, “The Birth of Aesthetics form the Spirit of Experimentalism,” <http://proceedings.eurosa.org/1/schwarte.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> Aristotle, *On the Soul/Parva Naturalia/On Breath*, transl. W. S. Hett (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935). Present translation from J.A. Smith, in ed. McKeon, *Basic Works*. Cited as: *De anima* 424a.

<sup>19</sup> *De anima* 424a-b; translation modified: *aistheterion*, which is translated as “organ of sense,” which is correct according to contemporary usage, but insufficient for terminological-historical purposes.

The *aestheteria* is thus a dynamic formation in the natural world, and its position in the passage from potential to actual in representation singles it out—once it gains its metaphorical usage as “sense-organ”—as a concrete version of the definitional problem presented by the term *organon* itself. To speak of the “instruments of perception,” as authors of the 18<sup>th</sup> century so often did, was to invoke the very problem of the connection of mind and body, and in turn, the ontological problem of the structure of the universe. As the *techne-physis* analogy came into doubt with the crisis in metaphysics (and the end of the Aristotelian “schools”) at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the term “organ” was released into a metaphorical field where it eventually found its literal home in medicine. But there were some detours along the way.

Although it was not Aristotle himself who gave the name *organon* to the logical part of his works,<sup>20</sup> it is possible to see, in a third semantic field opened up for the term by the Philosopher, an overlap between the logical *organon* and the cosmological *organon*.

As we shall see below (Chapter I), the problem of an *organon* for metaphysics in particular would exercise the young Kant. He rejected what he saw as the rationalists’ continued adherence to a key Aristotelian dogma—that judgments could be unproblematically formal and material at the same time, that they could refer without further consideration to the world. He connected the problem of the instruments of perception to the grander problem of logic itself. Aristotle’s own repetition of the categories in the *organon*’s treatise of that name—*The Categories*—and in the *Metaphysics* (albeit in different form) was the paradigmatic error of this kind. And yet, it

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<sup>20</sup> A thorough compendium of works that use some version of this terminology to describe various parts of the arts curriculum in the early modern period can be found in Gorgio Tonelli, *Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason within the Tradition of Modern Logic: A Commentary on its History*, ed. David H. Chandler (New York: Olms 1994), pp. 133-58.

was an error that Aristotle had commented on even while committing it. The generality of knowing and the specificity of the known—and the means of knowing—had been treated in the *De anima*.

Amongst the views of his predecessors which come up for consideration and rejection in the *De Anima*, Aristotle singles out Anaxagoras’s assertion that mind (*nous*) must be completely distinct from that which it cognizes, its material. The Philosopher affirms this point alone among the earlier views: the mind must be pure “in order, as Anaxagoras says, to dominate, that is, to know.”<sup>21</sup> For Aristotle, the mind is in fact not real until it knows: cognition is the actualization (passage from potential) of *nous* itself. He concludes:

*ananke ara, epei panta noei, amige einai, hosper phesin Anaxagoras, hina krate, touto d' estin hina gnorizei: paremphinomenon gar koluei to allotrion kai antiphrattei, hoste med' autou einai phusin medemian all' e tauten, hoti dunatov. Ho ara kaloumenos tes psyches nous (lego de noun hoi danoeitai kai hupolambanei he psyche) ouden estin energeiai town onton prin noein. Dio oude memichthai eulogon auton toi somati: poios tis gar an vivnoito, psuchros e thermos, e kan organon ti eie, hosper toi aesthetikoi; nun d' outhen estin.*

Therefore, since everything is a possible object of thought, mind in order, as Anaxagoras says, to dominate, that is, to know, must be pure from all admixture; for the co-presence of what is alien to its nature is a hindrance and a block: it follows that it too, like the sensitive part, can have no nature of its own, other than that of having a certain capacity. Thus that in the soul which is called mind (by mind I mean that whereby the soul thinks and judges) is, before it thinks, not actually any real thing. For this reason it cannot reasonably be regarded as blended with the body: if so, it would acquire some quality, e.g. warmth or cold, or even have an **tool** like the sensitive faculty: as it is, it has none.<sup>22</sup>

*Nous* must be general, or its goal of general and certain knowledge cannot be secured.

Any “admixture” of specificity cannot be *nous* but that on which *nous* works. And so there can be no organ of reason, no circumscribed field of application of the mind. It must operate definitionally the way that the *organon* does—passing from potential to actual, and causing this passage—but it cannot be merely a tool. The paradox is given most

<sup>21</sup> *De Anima* 429a/19.

<sup>22</sup> *De anima* 429a; translation modified from “organ” to “tool.”

succinctly at *De anima* 431b: “In every case the mind which is actively thinking is the objects which it thinks.” [*holos de ho nous estin ho kat’ energeian ta pragmata nous.*]

The mind must have the organological function—it must perform the teleological “fitting” of things to representations. And yet it cannot be specific, since its field of function is purely general. This anticipates the problem of an *organon* for metaphysics in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a problem that could only arise when this epistemological passage from potential to actual was no longer hidden within the technomorphic image of the cosmos. As long as the mind was that analogy to nature’s purposes, its security rested in its imitation of nature. It could not have<sup>23</sup> or be an instrument, but its analogical resonance, even for these impossible areas, was clear. Thus Aristotle sums up his use of *organon* across all three problems with:

*hoste he psyche hosper he cheir estiv: kai gar he cheir organon estiv organon, kai ho nous eidos eidon kai he aisthesis eidos aestheton.*

It follows that the soul is analogous to the hand; for as the hand is a tool of tools, so the mind is the form of forms and sense the form of sensible things.<sup>24</sup>

The hand—as we shall see later in the present study (Chapter 5), a key figure in organology—characterizes the human as producer. His means are *organa*, and his hand is the condition of their use. This gesture towards a transcendental technology is then made analogous not only to the instruments of perception and their formal uptake of sensible things, but also to the mind: *nous* is almost an *organ* in the Romantic sense, a truly transcendental tool for the grasping of all things.<sup>25</sup> From animal-generation to

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<sup>23</sup> Analogically—and determinatively for the tradition—the *body* was the *soul’s organon*. So *De anima* 415b/18: “All natural bodies are organs of the soul.” [*panta gar ta phusika somata tes psuches organa.*] Wolf mentions this topos at *Der Begriff*, p. 20. Again, the analogy is allowed because it rests on the conceptual background of the *techne-physis* comparison. And the definition is retained: the form (*morphe*) must be actualized in matter (*hule*) by some means.

<sup>24</sup> *De anima* 432a.

<sup>25</sup> This reading differs somewhat from that presented by Reinhard Löw, *Philosophie des Lebendigen: Der Begriff des Organischen bei Kant, sein Grund und seine Aktualität* (Frankfurt/Main.: Suhrkamp, 1980). Löw suggests that Aristotle’s method is based in the organ as the unit of bodily-intellectual experience, and

metaphysical methodology, Aristotle laid the groundwork for the palette of problems the Romantics inherited. And yet, in order for them to do so, Aristotelianism would first have to perish on the emergent world-picture of the experimental natural sciences.

Organology sought precisely the means of actualization of cognition that Aristotle rejected. Following the late-17<sup>th</sup> century crisis in Aristotelianism, the dominance of Leibnizian metaphysics in Germany from the 1720s to at least the 1760s, and Kant's critique of all previous metaphysics, the Romantics sought to re-found the discipline, using the concept "organ" to move from rationalist metaphysics to organicist rationalist metaphysics. As we shall see, this move entailed rejecting a narrowly defined representationalism about thought. Aristotle's problem is binding so long as we remain in that model: cognition itself must be constituted as too general to have any particularizing means determining its object, as each sense does. Without relinquishing the notion of representation (*Vorstellung*) at large, the Romantics looked to the activity of cognition in general, and the result of this search was a model that included efficacy and development as features of thought. Organology was a "realism" in Schlegel's sense: a metaphorically grounded metaphysics bordering directly on both politics and history, derived from old problems and confronting a new world.

Hölderlin wrote the Romantic organ into the literary-historical record, borrowing the term from the physiologist Samuel Thomas Soemmerring and applying it across his readings of Kant and Fichte to genre-theory. The tragedy became an organ of cognition in his work, the organ's concreteness used to denote both non-absolute knowledge and its

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that therefore the identity of the known and knowledge is organ-based. The suggestion of an instrument of knowledge in this sense is tied to the possession of organs (see pp. 50-52). Even if this were true for Aristotle, he would still be confronted with the problem I am pointing to through his terminology here. His use of this terminology in these differing contexts seems to point to a grasp of the problem, if not a solution.

relation to a putative absolute knowledge presented in the tragic form itself. *Empedocles*, whose self-proclaimed apotheosis as nature's god led to his political ostracism and eventual suicide by volcano, was the figure of that cognitive tension. The narrative of his death presents us with a devolution into the *aorgic*—Hölderlin's term for the un-organized, which corresponds to "intellectual intuition" or cognition of the absolute. Yet when read against the genre-theoretical writings, the tragedy itself becomes the figure of non-absolute knowledge: the *organ*. The contradictory notion of an organ of intellectual intuition—a concrete cognition of the absolute—thus comes to light between philosophy and literature, in genre-theory. The organ perches lightly between its general, philosophical sense and its actuality as tragic writing.

The ubiquitous claim that aestheticization was Hölderlin's primary move—and that of the Romantic movement at large, especially in Jena—can here be refined. Literature was instrumentalized, but not in the senses given to us by the Enlightenment or its photo-negative in Critical Theory. Instead, the reality of literature was claimed—as Novalis put it, *die Poesie ist das ächt absolute Reelle*—with a subtle etymology of the "instrument" itself. This did not only aestheticize reality—it also made the literary real, ontologically relevant, concrete. Take the famous statement by Schelling of the primacy of the aesthetic:

Wenn die ästhetische Anschauung nur die objektiv gewordene transzendente ist, so versteht sich von selbst, daß die Kunst das einzige wahre und ewige Organon zugleich und Dokument der Philosophie sei, welches immer und fortwährend aufs neue bearkundet, was die Philosophie äußerlich nicht darstellen kann, nämlich das Bewußtlose im Handeln und Produzieren und seine ursprüngliche Identität mit dem Bewußten.<sup>26</sup>

There is no doubt that this statement runs counter to the Kantian division of judgmental cognition into intuition and concept, and thus no doubt that epistemology

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<sup>26</sup> F.J.W. Schelling, *Werke. Band 2 (System des transzendentalen Idealismus)*, ed. Otto Weiß (Leipzig: Eckhardt 1907), pp. 301-2.



finds a significant aid in the aesthetic. But Schelling's statement—which perhaps most clearly represents his break with Fichte, who thought that intellectual intuition must remain entirely unconscious—also suggests that there is a source for truly metaphysical cognition which we already possess. Because that possession is both cognitive and “unconscious” (which is identified with the “object” by Schelling), its source—its *organon*—suggests the possibility of an intervention in the “deed” or production of cognition. This possibility was adumbrated in the methodologically uncertain drafts of the *Naturphilosophie* in the 1790s, and then first suggested in *System des transcendentalen Idealismus* in 1800. There, the “organ” of philosophy was a self-intuiting *I*, and the *organon* of that philosophy was the experience of art in “aesthetic intuition.” The productive capacity of the latter was the “poetry of the world,” a world which fit imperfectly with the greater world it might mimetically reproduce. The organ became the point where metaphysics not only exists but gives way to a politics, or to a metapolitics where the absolute and the historical meet in the social, in what I term a “Romantic metaphysics of morals.” The revision of the role of aesthetics had the consequence of in turn revising metaphysical and political theory, not merely “aestheticizing” them.

Take, for example, the following passage from Novalis's *Notes Towards a Romantic Encyclopedia (das allgemeine Brouillon)*:

Höhere Physik, oder höhere Mathematik oder ein Gemisch von beyden wurde immer unter Phil[osophie] bisher verstanden. Man suchte durch Phil[osophie] immer etwas werckstellig zu machen – man suchte ein allvermögendes Organ in der Phil[osophie].<sup>27</sup>

The task assigned to the organ makes clear that both the Aristotelian sense of a logical instrument and the medical sense of a concrete function are in play. Novalis

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<sup>27</sup> HKA III, p. 385; AB 642.

comments on the history of philosophy's search for general knowledge (metaphysics) even as he insists in his own construction on the practical focus of philosophy itself. Indeed, we can see his text replacing the notion of an intellectual faculty—Kant's *Vermögen* (but see Chapter I of my study for Kant's rejection of precisely an “*allvermögendes Organ*”)—with that of an organ.

Novalis describes his unfortunately-named doctrine of “magical idealism” in nearly identical terms:

Der thätige Gebrauch der Organe ist nichts, als *magisches, wunderthätiges* Denken, oder *willkührlicher* Gebrauch der Körperwelt—denn Willen ist nichts, als magisches, *kräftiges* Denkvermög[en].<sup>28</sup>

Joining the chorus of critical continuation of the Kantian and Fichteian projects, Novalis wrote the most robust version of organology. By including a real contradiction in the literalized neologism “organ,” he universalized the possibility of principled but effective intervention into both nature and history. His *Notes Towards a Romantic Encyclopedia* sketch the enormity of organology's task. So far from the irrational optimism sometimes caricaturized as Romantic attempts to idealize the natural and historical objects around them, the task Novalis sets himself is the unification of the speculative and the literally disciplinary. *Fachwissen* is put into dialogue with the consideration of being itself, and of cognition's relation to will. It is precisely this relation that Kant had attacked in 1798 in *Der Streit der Facultäten*—a writing that attempted to bridge this gap was, for Kant, an *organon* where a *canon* was needed (more on this shortly). Novalis agreed, but saw every reason to create that tool. His eventual doctrine was based in a cosmology that constituted the universe as lacking or possessing a necessary hole. That doctrine was filled in by a revision of Kantian Criticism that made faculties into historical organs, and sought the

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<sup>28</sup> *HKA* III, p. 466; *AB* 1075.

active transformation of everything into organs and organs in turn into the vehicles of a better world. The transition to moral and political organs is clearest in Novalis, and makes his version of the doctrine the most complete.

Thus “organ” was made literary—or more strictly, genre-theoretical—in Hölderlin; metaphysical and moral in Schelling; and universal but also concrete in Novalis. Organology introduced the encounter of the absolute and the historical, and it held on that basis the possibility of systemic intervention in history in reserve. Reason’s transition to the absolute—and back—was meant to have a means. The philosophical discourse of metaphysical means around 1800 was rooted in the etymological field of the *organ(on)*.

I locate the aftermath of organology in an oblique dialogue between Goethe and Hegel in the 1820s. Goethe had witnessed the rise of the term organ—and indeed had contributed to it—but only came to test its etymological capacities after Hegel had accused him of operating without means in science. Goethe combined the classificatory drive of his classicism with the idealism he had gathered over decades in Weimar and Jena to produce a late response to the Romantics, a revised organology. He thought, on my reconstruction, that science itself should cut a middle path between the emergent positivism of Paris and the waning *Naturphilosophie* of Schellingian and Hegelian stripes. The social task of science would be to impress norms upon the world, to alter its constitution categorically but tenderly. This program reflects Goethe’s long struggle to come to terms with the political upheavals of his time.

The other reception of organology was among the Young Hegelians, whose characteristic attempts to join system and history were anticipated in Romantic

organology. This study concludes with a consideration of Marx's use of the term organ, especially in the 1844 *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte* and in chapter 13 of *Das Kapital*, as reflecting the other half of the dialectic: the principled attempt to intervene in history on the basis of a construal of its laws. The Romantics were by and large already political radicals, but that radicality was ambivalent—it could pass just as easily into the reactionary as into the utopian. The Young Hegelians tied radicality to social progressivism—to socialism—but still needed theoretical means for their interventions. Marx' thought about means, then, became a determinative moment—the founding of a discourse—for the passage of the problems of Romantic organology into the next centuries. It is my conviction that Romantic organology opens up a way of reading Marx' texts both rhetorically and politically. This is because the organ among the Romantics was supposed to bridge the gap between Critical knowledge—the means of knowing—and action. Marx' reception of the term was a locus of that consideration in his own writing—the moment where materialism confronts and includes its other in abstraction, and where analysis is called upon to submerge itself in the real.

### **Metaphor and Metaphysics: Blumenberg's Metaphorical Organ**

This study operates in the straits between philology and conceptuality, looking to relate moments of textual connection to systematic problems in philosophy, aesthetics, and the natural sciences. This method is demanded by the material: the term organ—as I have already shown—gathers these systems into a dynamic meaning, and, among the Romantics, is then put to use to create what I shall term a *technologia transcendentalis* or

organology, a sort of ideal or metaphysical technology. Rather than making the argument of the study here, however, I want to point to the intertwining of methodology and polemics in the historiography of *um 1800* to make clear the stakes of my intervention.

The period around 1800 is a sort of historiographical watershed. Cultural and intellectual histories from this period suffer from a justified tendency to claim that we still live in the paradigms founded around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>29</sup> Some version of this claim, the literature insists, must be true. I have already pointed to ways in which this study will be more—or less—than antiquarian, but I do not think that any version of this claim needs to be defended for work in the period to be relevant. And yet it is not incidental that the literature treating *um 1800* thus mixes polemics and science,<sup>30</sup> for the simple reason the struggle to come to terms with the legacy of *um 1800* was already present in the culture of the period. The metaphysical and political crises of the 18<sup>th</sup> century gave rise to a second-generational difficulty, that of the “completion of” or “rebellion against” what had come before. In this sense, these studies merely recognize that we, too, stand in the wake of something vague called “modernity” or “Enlightenment.” Empathy for the Romantics aside, we need more than a *Nachahmung der Romantik*, and by situating their metaphysics between word-usage and conceptual and disciplinary systems, I hope to provide a sympathetic but future-oriented reading of Romantic organology. The project is therefore restitutive: I want to recuperate this Romantic project neither because we still live with it nor because it can redeem the

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<sup>29</sup> So—in vastly different veins, each with its own brand of compelling sophistication—Reinhardt Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise: eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1973); Jean-Luc Nancy and Phillippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *The Literary Absolute: The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988); Alan Liu, *Local Transcendence: Essays on Postmodern Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), to give only a sampling.

<sup>30</sup> Pace Panajotis Kondylis, *Die Aufklärung im Rahmen des neuzeitlichen Rationalismus* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2002).

present, but because it makes an important dialogue-partner for presentist metaphysical and political concerns.

Hans Blumenberg's notion that we might approach intellectual and textual history metaphorologically both demonstrates the intertwining of method and polemic and comes closest to my approach here. And yet, I will offer an alternative to his account—and to Michel Foucault's—because the historical picture seems to me in both cases incomplete. The emergence of modern antinomies—as real, discursively but also pragmatically contradictory powers—like those between the “visible” and the “invisible” or the “metaphorical” and the “metaphysical,” was already a part of the reflexive legacy of Romanticism as it emerged. Its answer to some of these antinomies was contained in its organology, as we shall see.

Blumenberg's “metaphorology” amounts to the tracking of subterranean shifts in conceptuality, the functionalization of conceptual unities for differing human purposes over time.<sup>31</sup> It is based on Blumenberg's overall sense of European intellectual history, which centers on a putative major turn with the destruction of Aristotelian ontology. The broadly-painted Aristotelian world-view holds that Being is complete, and that, therefore, all human making is of the order of imitation.<sup>32</sup> Not restricted to aesthetics, this distinction is meant to apply all the way down—indeed, the first innovations with respect to it are noted by Blumenberg in the works of Nicholas of Cusa, and are references to

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<sup>31</sup> The treatment of “absolute” metaphors—metaphors resistant to dissolution into their conceptual counterparts is found in Hans Blumenberg, *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1998). Here we read that “der historische Wandel einer Metapher bringt die Metakinetik geschichtlicher Sinnhorizonte und Sichtweisen selbst zum Vorschein, innerhalb deren Begriffe ihre Modifikationen erfahren... die Metaphorologie such an die Substruktur des Denkens heranzukommen, an den Untergrund, die Nährlösung der systematischen Kristallisationen...” (p. 13).

<sup>32</sup> See especially “Nachahmung der Natur: Zur Vorgeschichte der Idee des “schöpferischen Menschen” in: Hans Blumenberg, *Wirklichkeiten in denen wir leben. Aufsätze und eine Rede* (Stuttgart: Phillip Reclam, 1981), pp. 55-103. The thesis is to be found in many of Blumenberg's works, including his magnum opus, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert Wallace (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999/1983).

craftsmen, not to “artists.” As this ordering system came to an end, according to Blumenberg, the emergence of the theoretically creative human became possible: the possibility of the radically new came into view.<sup>33</sup> The end of the *techne-physis* analogy meant the possibility of ontological innovation, but this innovation was unmoored from the dock of Being, and nested ultimately in antinomical orientation. With the end of Aristotle’s order of being, the metaphor itself could emerge.

Blumenberg himself is a practitioner of this metaphorization. In *Shipwreck with Spectator*, Blumenberg returned to Husserl, expanding the metaphor’s range to include and interaction with the *Lebenswelt*, understood as *das Universum der Selbstverständlichkeit*.<sup>34</sup> He writes:

To adopt Husserl’s terminology, metaphor is, first of all, “resistance to harmony.” This would be fatal for the consciousness whose existence depends on its concern for identity; it must be the constantly successful organ of self-restitution.<sup>35</sup>

This line of thinking was developed in notes posthumously published as *Zu den Sachen und zurück*.<sup>36</sup> Blumenberg is concerned to identify the “analyst” in both phenomenology and psychoanalysis, and to develop some point of resistance that these schools find in their attempts—practical and theoretical—to determine the nature of consciousness. Collecting his luminaries—Kant, Cassirer, and Husserl—Blumenberg starts from the notion that consciousness is both “selbstkonstitutiv und selbstrestitutiv.”<sup>37</sup> In its self-constitution, consciousness opens its own contents to itself. Blumenberg notes that Kant

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<sup>33</sup> Blumenberg locates this emergence in the *Literaturstreit* with Breitinger and Bodmer. Bodmer saw Milton as producing a “world” through a “metaphysische Handlung.” See Blumenberg, “Nachahmung der Natur,” p. 91.

<sup>34</sup> Blumenberg’s major treatment of this topic is: *Lebenszeit und Weltzeit* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1986).

<sup>35</sup> Hans Blumenberg, *Shipwreck with Spectator: Paradigm of a Metaphor for Existence*, trans. Stephen Rendall (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), p. 83.

<sup>36</sup> Hans Blumenberg, *Zu den Sachen und zurück*, ed. Manfred Sommer (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2002). The essay cited is called “Der Phänomenologe kann sich nur selbst berichtigen,” pp. 19-43.

<sup>37</sup> Blumenberg, *Zu den Sachen*, p. 19.

had already established this when he tied the table of categories (synthetic unity-producing forms of judgment) to the table of judgments (logical—mind-given—possibilities of that judgment). This makes—for all involved—consciousness *genetically available to itself*. Blumenberg strenuously objects to a possible charge of “idealism” here, since consciousness is taken by none of these figures to be an ontological parthenogenesis. It merely gives itself form. Phenomenology makes experience the source of this form instead of its product, and thus establishes a “world” in which self-correction, -repair, or *-restitution* is possible. This world is characterized by the dynamics of remembrance, formation, and reference to other humans and other things—all in the tension between *Anschaung* and judgment. What, then, *is* consciousness?

Das Bewußtsein ist ein zweckmäßiges “Organ” im Hinblick auf die wesentliche Typik seiner Inhalte, die—wenn sie es nicht schon sind—als “Gegenstände” das volle Maß ihrer Selbstdarbietung ausschöpfen.<sup>38</sup>

Resistance to the “impurities” of the empirical ego (Kant) or the psychological approach to philosophy (Husserl) or transference (Freud) is necessarily performed by consciousness. Consciousness is an instrument of that resistance, and it forms and repairs itself with that goal. Its objects appear in organological form—this is *transcendental “I,” intentionality*, and *Freudian ego* in one. Without hypostasizing itself, it serves the function of preservation—constitution and restitution—as bulwark against the interruptions proper to its dynamic openness. It is the “organ” of that very preservation.<sup>39</sup>

The approach taken by Blumenberg’s treated authors—and by Blumenberg—is not “idealistic,” but rather insists that consciousness itself idealizes life:

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<sup>38</sup> Blumenberg, *Zu den Sachen*, p. 19.

<sup>39</sup> Blumenberg, *Zu den Sachen*, p. 20.



Als sein letztes Produkt und “Organ” treibt es elementare Lebensleistungen auf die Spitze, zur Reindarstellung, “übertreibt” sie im auszuhaltenden Doppelsinn dieses Wortes. Insofern ist das Urteil... reine “Übertreibung...”<sup>40</sup>

Blumenberg here integrates transcendental philosophy—of Kantian and Husserlian stripes—with Freud’s metapsychological dynamism. The permanent frustration of the transcendental philosopher, his openness to the empiria without an explanation for that openness, is made the content of transcendental consciousness itself. Construed as a legitimate problem, this duality only resolves, and then tentatively, for Blumenberg with the notion of intermittence.<sup>41</sup> Blumenberg contributes to our terminological history even as he provides some orientation in the stakes of doing terminological history.

Blumenberg’s overall history is not only methodological, but narrates an emergent domain of the metaphor, placing the end of *metaphysics* and the critical emergence of the autonomous metaphor in the 18<sup>th</sup> century: “Metaphysik erwies sich uns oft al beim Wort genommene Metaphorik; der Schwund der Metaphysik ruft die Metaphorik wieder an ihren Platz.”<sup>42</sup> This is to say (correctly) that conceptual determinations (indeed, conceptual determinations of being itself) lie at the basis of metaphysics, and that doubt about that determination dominated 18<sup>th</sup>-century philosophy, culminating in Kant’s critical position.

His own use of “organ,” however, rejects the critical legacy of metaphysics in dialogue with metaphorology, a key trait of Romantic organology. Where his organ reifies the Aristotelian problems noted above, the Romantic counterpart was supposed to engage those problems directly. Indeed, while Blumenberg’s opening of phenomenology to psychology—without being psychologistic—shares the practical and concrete

<sup>40</sup> Blumenberg, *Zu den Sachen*, p. 20.

<sup>41</sup> Blumenberg, *Zu den Sachen*, p. 42-3.

<sup>42</sup> Blumenberg, *Paradigmen*, p. 193.

orientation of Romantic organology, the absence of this chapter in his historical itinerary allows his methodological contribution to maintain the antinomy metaphor/metaphysics uncritically.

I maintain that the loosening of the completeness of Being and the end of the *techne-physis* analogy also gave way to a new metaphysics—that of the organ, a “technological” metaphysics paradigmatic of modern concerns with the point at which speculation and politics, theory and praxis, can communicate. Romantic organology, as I will show, reveals an alternative to Blumenberg’s narrative: the relation between metaphor and concept was indeed re-evaluated after Kant, but not to the final detriment of the concept—rather to its instrumentalization, quite literally. The orientation provided by metaphorology is indispensable, but Romantic metaphysics already includes a kind of metaphorological awareness. Blumenberg’s “organ of consciousness” is a metaphor for an all-too-real metaphysics. His concept is suspended between methodology and historiography, and we need a fuller sense of that history.

A last note on Blumenberg: his notion of a *Geistesgeschichte der Technik*<sup>43</sup> provides a key intervention in the debate about technological thinking at the end of technomorphism. This late suggestion returns to earlier engagements with the late Husserl,<sup>44</sup> whose attempt to “re-start” within Reason a line of metaphysical thinking free of the conflation of method and being<sup>45</sup> proves essential for this new history. Blumenberg writes of twin dead-ends for the intellectual history of technology, one “chronicling” events (but ignoring the circumstances which gave rise to them), and another (Marxian)

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<sup>43</sup> See his posthumous *Geistesgeschichte der Technik: mit einem Radiovortrag auf CD* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2009).

<sup>44</sup> Hans Blumenberg, “Lebenswelt und Technisierung unter Aspekten der Phänomenologie,” *Wirklichkeiten*, pp. 7-55.

<sup>45</sup> See Husserl, *Krisis*.

explaining those circumstances, but powerless to connect them to the dispositions to which they putatively gave rise. The alternative, which draws on both Husserl and Heidegger<sup>46</sup> but seeks to re-fashion their “new starts” into responsible historiography, requires that

Geschichte der Technik wird auch und vor allem die Geschichte des Heraustretens der Technik *aus der Geschichte* sein müssen. Ob und wie aus einem bestimmten neuen Verständnis der Wirklichkeit und der Stellung des Menschen innerhalb dieser Wirklichkeit technischer Wille entsteht, wird Thema einer Geistesgeschichte der Technik sein müssen, die nicht nur Selbstdeutungen der technischen Tätigkeit und Urheberschaft sammelt und registriert, sondern die Motivationen eines auf Technik zielenden und von Technik getragenen Lebensstils faßbar werden läßt.<sup>47</sup>

This study will similarly ask how a *technological imagination*<sup>48</sup> stepped out of history, and how it asked concretely what technology in the broadest sense had to offer speculation. If metaphysical and metaphorical thought combined could respond concretely to the “technical will” of European modernity, it will have been in Romantic organology.

### **Who’s Afraid of Representation? Foucault’s Transcendental-Empirical Organs**

If metaphor and metaphysics share a home in Romantic organology, and if this home is in critical dialogue with especially the cultural effects of technologization, then the story about Romanticism’s relationship to representation will have to be revised.

Michel’s Foucault’s engagement with both of these themes has proven determinative for

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<sup>46</sup> See Martin Heidegger, “The Question Concerning Technology,” from *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings from “Being and Time” (1927) to “The Task of Thinking” (1964)*, rev. ed., edited by David Farrell Krell. Harper: San Francisco, pp. 283-319.

<sup>47</sup> Blumenberg, *Geistesgeschichte*, 13.

<sup>48</sup> The only monograph that treats this question, to my knowledge, is F. Scott Scribner’s *Matters of Spirit: J.G. Fichte and the Technological Imagination* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010).

the field. Indeed, he characterizes his investigation of the “microphysics of power” in just these terms:

Rather than seeing this soul as the reactivated remnants of an ideology, one would see it as the present correlative of a certain technology of power over the body... The soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body.<sup>49</sup>

In searching for the roots of “technologies” of power, Foucault introduced the technological problematic into historiography. Discursive and—as he came to call them—disciplinary means were investigated in their very genesis. And yet, this project had arisen from an earlier one, that of an intellectual history of the disciplines themselves. *The Order of Things* studies this problematic precisely in terms of representation. The breakdown of the mode of knowledge-production (*episteme*) called “classical”—the early Enlightenment, characterized by *mathesis universalis*, or the spatialization of beings in a transparently classifying order—entailed a crisis of representation. Representation, a sufficient instrument for analysis in the Classical episteme, was de-stabilized around 1800. This took place in three parallel forms, each providing a principle for an emergent science. The principle was withdrawn into the order of the invisible, but organized the visible itself. Thus: “labor” in economics; “organic structure” in the life sciences; and “inflection” in linguistics. These principles were “alien” to the parts of the domains (representations) which they organized.<sup>50</sup> The emergence of intellectual disciplines was based on the withdrawal of their object of investigation from the representative order—organic structure can be investigated, but life is no longer a subset of being, but instead

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<sup>49</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984), pp. 176-77.

<sup>50</sup> All references are to Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: an Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1970), pp. 217-50 and pp. 263-80.

an isolated ontological area, forming the unrepresented basis of a new discipline: biology.<sup>51</sup>

Foucault interprets Kantian criticism as paradigmatic for this move. Kant invented the “transcendental field,” dividing it from the “empirical”—Foucault refers to this as the *transcendental-empirical couplet*.<sup>52</sup> Although he recognizes that Kant intended the two to be united in consciousness, Foucault maintains that the division of the disciplines is underpinned by this philosophical intervention, because it allows for empirical fields to be divided from each other by local transcendental elements, like “life.” These “transcendentals” function beyond the realm of representation but are the object of representational investigation. Kant’s questioning of the legitimacy of representation forces the “the withdrawal of knowledge and thought outside the space of representation.”<sup>53</sup> The new metaphysics will be not about representation, but about the “source and origin of representation.”<sup>54</sup> Thus two types of conditions of possibility are identified: first, the conditions of experience itself, and second, the conditions of objects. While Foucault sees that the second governs the first for Kant,<sup>55</sup> he proposes that the emergence of *disciplinary transcendentals* was made possible by the misrecognition of or disagreement about that identity after Kant. Foucault concludes that “the criticism-positivism-metaphysics triangle of the object was constitutive of European thought from

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<sup>51</sup> Shirley Roe is critical about but ultimately welcoming to this line of thought in her “The Life Sciences,” in Roy Porter et al, eds., *The Cambridge History of Science: vol. 4: Eighteenth-Century Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 397-417.

<sup>52</sup> Foucault, *Order*, p. 347.

<sup>53</sup> Foucault, *Order*, p. 242.

<sup>54</sup> Foucault, *Order*, p. 243.

<sup>55</sup> As is clear from the section on *The System of the Principles of Pure Understanding*, B188/A148-B198/A158, especially at B197/A158: “The conditions of the **possibility of experience** in general are at the same time conditions of the **possibility of the objects of experience**, and on this account have objective validity in a synthetic judgment *a priori*.” (*Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 283)

the beginning of the nineteenth century to Bergson.”<sup>56</sup> Synthesis is split off from the field of representations, and transcendental subjectivity is divided from the mode of being of objects.<sup>57</sup>

This thesis has received some support from Azade Seyhan, whose *Representation and Its Discontents*<sup>58</sup> examines the critical attitude of Jena Romanticism with respect to problems of representation. She writes that:

The journal [*Athenaeum*] envisioned its intellectual task to be re-presenting representation, in other words, recasting narrative accounts of philosophy, history, literature, and art in terms of their present or modern configuration.<sup>59</sup>

This focus on something more than representation, and indeed the notion that the re-presenting of representation gives way to “critical praxis,” is salutary.<sup>60</sup> As we shall see, not only textually but also theoretically, the Jena Romantics sought literally to instrumentalize representation, to employ it for the speculative purposes of organology. And their re-casting of earlier metaphysics in this mold indeed engaged Kant’s critical legacy directly.

And yet, in Foucault’s description of the development of biology, which focuses on Cuvier’s functional anatomy, the Romantic legacy is missing. The “discontinuity” of

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<sup>56</sup> Foucault, *Order*, 245.

<sup>57</sup> Thus arise problems: “On the one hand, there arises the problem of the relations between the formal field and the transcendental field (and at this level all the empirical contents of knowledge are placed between parentheses and remain suspended from all validity); and, on the other hand, there arises the problem of the relations between the domain of empiricity and the transcendental foundation of knowledge (in which case the pure order of the formal is set apart as non-pertinent to any account of that region in which all experience, even that of the pure forms of thought, has its foundation).” (p. 247) Fichte and Hegel are the first attempts to unite these fields, and Husserl follows...

<sup>58</sup> Azade Seyhan, *Representation and Its Discontents: The Critical Legacy of German Romanticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

<sup>59</sup> Seyhan, *Representation*, 2. And again: “The figural or representational form is simultaneously the medium of reflection and of knowledge—which is constituted in reflection. Representation is clearly no longer an inadequate repetition of the concept but a way of empowering reflection. In this sense, representation institutes critical praxis.” (Seyhan, *Representation*, p. 8.)

<sup>60</sup> As Jocelyn Holland has recently written with respect to Novalis, “... Hardenberg’s appeal for man to be an instrument of the self can be interpreted as the next logical step: it completes the transition from a definition of man based on representation to one based on function.” (*German Romanticism and Science: the Procreative Politics of Goethe, Novalis and Ritter* (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 88)

the representational and ontological “spaces” which Foucault sketches with Cuvier is one in which organs disappear into functionality. They form series, which are hierarchized according to an unavailable (withdrawn) notion of life. A local metaphysics—that of the life sciences—opens up as a disciplinary space.<sup>61</sup> And indeed, Cuvier did break with an analogical tradition (still defended, in the famous *Akademistreit*, by Geoffroy de St.-Hilaire—more on this in Chapter 5, below) in favor of comparison by function. The *organization* of beings was no longer the methodological point: their comparative functions dictated classification.

What if, however, there had been a discourse about organs that saw them neither in terms of pure functionality nor in terms of analogy? And indeed, what if this discourse had been engaged—precisely through the lens of Kantian criticism—with the splitting of the disciplines and the philosophical stakes of that division of knowledge? What if that discourse had, in fact, been interested in the emergence of technicity and the disciplines at just that moment when the classical episteme fell? I will defend in this study the notion that just that discourse is at the heart of Early German Romantic metaphysics, and that this metaphysics, for that reason, meant to provide something like a technology of orientation, a technological metaphysics, concretely engaged with institutional and technological developments as they emerged, and attempting, using the organ of reason, to idealize them and with them life (cultural and biological). That legacy, which has gone untreated in the literature until now, is the object of the following study.

I mean to introduce this problematic with a sketch of a metaphorology of the term organ in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. I limit this investigation, for purposes of exposition, to three authors, describing the arc from Rationalist metaphysics (in Leibniz) to the anticipations

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<sup>61</sup> Foucault, *Order*, p. 264.

of Romantic ontology (in Kant and Herder). Each of these authors makes (increasingly) metaphorical use of the discourse of the life sciences—specifically, the debate about the generation of animals—to characterize his view of Reason. This borrowing of terms or conceptual migration—this metaphorology—positions us to understand the heritage of the term organ in a specifically philosophical but also metaphorical register, a register the Romantics will make central and methodologically primary. Indeed, this sketch will allow us to see, through the lens of the metaphorization of the organ, the preparation of that methodology in Kant’s and Herder’s work. It was by uniting metaphor with methodology that the Romantics generated their organicist, rationalist metaphysics, based in the technological concreteness of the *organon*. The description of the latter set of doctrines—organology—will show that so far from a replacement of being with metaphor, the emergence of a relevant and critical metaphysics is the mark of that (for Blumenberg) second post-Aristotelian generation.



## Chapter I. Towards a Metaphorology of the Organ in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century German: Leibniz, Kant, Herder

### Introduction

At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the world disappeared. It would be another century before Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi would coin the term *nihilism*, heightening a charge—originally made against Spinoza—and a philosophical worry about acosmism or lack of world. By that time, however, as Kant had put it in 1781, metaphysics had lost its status as “queen of the disciplines” and had become a mere “arena” (*Kampfplatz*) for speculative polemics.<sup>62</sup> The early-18<sup>th</sup>-century disappearance was of another sort: it was not the cosmos itself that was gone, but its contents. The richness of that world—its interlinking, lived reality, its creation, the knowledge of it—was reduced in the European theater to something else: regularities, laws. Isaac Newton’s claim to non-knowledge about the true nature of forces, complemented on the continent by Christian Wolff’s claim to generate the world’s content from the principle of non-contradiction, are only the antagonistic symptoms of the same felt disease, a simultaneously liberating and crippling doubt about the nature and the knowability of the world. Metaphysics had been legislated against in favor of lawfulness pure and simple: the world had disappeared into its own order.<sup>63</sup> The crisis of metaphysics—or the sense that the long 18<sup>th</sup> century was a series of

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<sup>62</sup> “[Durch Überschreitung der Erfahrungssphäre] stürzt [die menschliche Vernunft] sich in Dunkelheit und Widersprüche, aus welchen sie zwar abnehmen kann, daß irgendwo verborgene Irrtümer zum Grunde liegen müssen, die sie aber nicht entdecken kann, weil die Grundsätze, deren sich sie bedient, da sie über die Grenze aller Erfahrung hinausgehen, keinen Probestein der Erfahrung mehr anerkennen. Der Kampfplatz dieser endlosen Streitigkeiten heißt nun *Metaphysik*.” (*KdrV* Aviii)

<sup>63</sup> The depth of this crisis was reflected in waves, as early as Leibniz’s early writings and then in a new key in Wolff’s work. Wolff writes that “Vix aliud hodie contentius est nomen quam Ontologiae. Postquam

unfolding metaphysical crises—was complemented by the political crises that erupted in 1776 and 1789.

The Romantics inherited these problems together, and their attempt to suture them by combining and redressing them with a metaphysical sense of the term organ is the object of this study. First, however, we need a sense of where the *term* came from—in other words, we need a discursive story about what made Romantic organology possible.

That story goes by way of the disciplinary boundary between philosophy and the life sciences. The literal sense of the term organ—functional part, whether internal or sensory—emerged only slowly in Germany. The conceptual locus of its emergence was the debate about the development of life, the question of “preformation” (development from a tiny, pre-organized model) or “epigenesis” (gradual formation of the organism from unorganized matter). This debate was marked, however, by an absence of the term (at least in German). It was Immanuel Kant (in the *Kritik der Urteilkraft*—hereinafter *KU*) who gave epigenesis the term organ, naming the proper object of a very old research agenda.

That debate, however, was also metaphorized by philosophers throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Leibniz—who subscribed to preformationism—articulated a metaphysics of the organ, a world which was *organic* all the way down. Writing in French, he defended this

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enim sterilis Scholasticorum tractatio philosophiae partem utilissimam eamque fundamentalem in contemtionem adduxit; qui per praecipitantiam statuunt, eam prorsus rejecerunt non sine detrimento scientiarum. Nos eandem a contemtu quo laborat, vindicamus, sterili tractatione in foecundam conversa.” Christian Wolff, *Erste Philosophie oder Ontologie*, ed. Dirk Effertz (Hamburg: Meiner, 2005), § 1, 18. Here I agree with Max Wundt: “[D]as neue Denken richtet sich, wenigstens wo es sich zur vollen Klarheit seiner Eigentümlichkeit durchgebildet hat, zuerst und vor allem auf die Beziehungen und will diese in ihren gesetzlichen Regelmäßigkeiten erfassen. Das Seinsdenken wird durch Gesetzesdenken abgelöst.” *Die deutsche Schulphilosophie im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964), p. 14. See for elaboration my “Das Innere der Natur und das Organ: von Albrecht von Haller zu Goethe” (unpublished).

vision not only metaphysically but also for the human intellect. With that shift to epistemology, the first glimmer of a metaphorology of the organ came into existence.

Immanuel Kant's work is filled with the dual problematics of the *organon* (the tools for practicing a discipline) and the organ. From his earliest works, in which an *organon* for metaphysics is sought, to his critical system, in which that *organon* is replaced by a *canon* (a positive body of law) *of the understanding*, he brings the term organ to bear on similar problematics. By also characterizing the critical system as an "epigenesis of pure reason," Kant furthered the metaphorology in question, tying a critique of Leibniz to a shared—and borrowed—natural-scientific terminological apparatus. He thus came close to anticipating the Romantics' intentional conflation of the two terms. Ultimately, however, his contribution to the metaphorology of the organ is methodological. By thematizing the necessity of radical methodology in metaphysics as a response to its century-long crisis—and by placing the terms *organon* and organ front and center in that revisionary effort—he supplied a benchmark and a warning for any innovative use of the term. That warning, of course, extended to (any possible future) metaphysics itself.

Johann Gottfried Herder, who had studied with Kant in Königsberg in the 1760s, supplied the cosmology—the *Weltbild*—of organology. Herder came to reject the term epigenesis (generation "on top of"), favoring the notion of *genesis* pure and simple. Arguing for a cosmic plurality of fundamental, pullulating dynamic forces, Herder set the agenda in terms of content for the emergence of Romantic organology. His system, like Leibniz's, was entirely composed of corruptible organs expressing dynamic forces, but he added the possibility of the new, the emergence of genuinely new being in the order of

things. He extended the metaphorology of the organ to the mind, as Leibniz and Kant had done before him, but he did so using analogy as his tool. For him, the “grand analogy of nature” gave way to the encompassing perception (and ultimately love) of God in a *sensorium commune* of language, time and space. Reflecting this knowledge through the mid-point of nature *as analogy* were the human organs, on a scale from material to spiritual, and rooted finally in an “organ of language,” an autonomous ability—the ability to identify one’s proper species—reflecting the godly analogy but also affording freedom.

These four sources dovetailed to make the Romantic use of the term organ possible. Their investigation stands between conceptual history and metaphorology, and led ultimately—with Early German Romanticism—to a new conception of conceptuality itself.

## I. Life’s Origin: Preformation, Epigenesis and the Question of Force

Aristotle writes, in *De generatione animalium*,

... *he physis en toi arreni ton sperma proiemenon chretai toi spermati hos organoi kai echonti kinesin energeiai, hosper en tois kata technen ginomenois ta organa kineitai: en ekeinois gar pos he kinesis tes technes.*

... Nature acting in the male of semen-emitting animals uses the semen as a tool, as something that has movement in actuality; just as when objects are being produced by any art the tools are in movement, because the movement which belongs to the art is, in a way, situated in them.<sup>64</sup>

The *physis-techne* analogy is here applied to the moment of animal generation it, and Aristotle thereby left a terminological legacy within this problematic that was taken up

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<sup>64</sup> Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, A. L. Peck, transl. (Cambridge: Harvard, 1942/2000). Cited hereinafter as *De generatione* 730b.

again in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>65</sup> Aristotle's own application of hyloplasmism to the problem of generation (sperm is active form, ovary passive matter) formed the basis for a fierce ideological debate—again, precisely as scholastic Aristotelianism came to an end—about the origins of life. And in fact, the debate about life's origins—precipitating into preformationist and an epigenesist positions—was marked by the singular absence of the *term* organ, even as it prepared the systematic background for the metaphorical emergence of the term with which this chapter deals.

The debate about generation was, far from academic, a deep-structure confrontation between physics in its post-Newtonian ascendancy and the emergent life-sciences.<sup>66</sup> The formation of organic beings from seemingly inorganic matter took on urgency with the rise of the microscope<sup>67</sup> and the rise of Newton's mechanical model. The microscope allowed more precise observation of the fluids which went into reproduction—yet the debate transcended observable formations.<sup>68</sup> Newton's system had two relevant sides: on the one hand, it allowed no incalculable forces to be postulated, and this, on the other, resulted in a catholic mechanicism about nature. For Newtonians,

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<sup>65</sup> See Wolf, *Der Begriff*, pp. 19 ff., for an analysis of the role of movement in this complex. See also Justin E. Smith, ed., *The Problem of Animal Generation in Early Modern Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 1-21, for the framing of the philosophical problem of generation in terms of the dichotomy between being and becoming.

<sup>66</sup> Which would not receive the name "biology" until 1800.

<sup>67</sup> Which buttressed the fall of scholastic metaphysics, and simultaneously established a world "within" the phenomena as a new area of study. For a general history, see Catherine Wilson, *The Invisible World: Early Modern Philosophy and the Invention of the Microscope* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). For an examination of the implicit metaphysics which emerged with the advent of this instrument see Hartmut Boehme, "The Metaphysics of Phenomena: Telescope and Microscope in the Works of Goethe, Leeuwenhoek and Hooke," in *Collection, Laboratory, Theater: Scenes of Knowledge in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 355-394.

<sup>68</sup> See Blumenbach, *Bildungstrieb*, pp. 17-20, for a short history of *Samenthierchen*-theory. Indeed, the imperfection of the instrument allowed preformation a longer lifespan than it might otherwise have had. von Haller's arguments against Wolff's version of epigenesis came increasingly to rely on the "transparency" or invisibility of pre-formed organs, an argument that failed as the instrument gained in precision. See Shirley Roe, *Matter, Life, and Generation: Eighteenth-Century Embryology and the Haller-Wolff Debate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 83-4.

there was simply no way to explain the development of organic bodies—no force or principle could be feigned, since it could not be formalized mathematically. This led to the position called “preformationism,” essentially the doctrine that a small version of the body pre-existed either in the sperm (animalculism) or in the egg (ovism). (The most celebrated authors holding this view were Charles Bonnet and Albrecht von Haller, whose wavering on the issue led him into direct confrontation with Wolff.) As Peter Reill has pointed out, this position dovetailed nicely with theological presumptions (God created all organic bodies in a fixed number at the Creation), and supported absolutistic politics.<sup>69</sup> Attempts to find these pre-existing *Keime* (seeds) failed, but the microscope’s limited capacity left their possibility open.

The limitation of hypotheses brought the question of the nature of force into focus. Without turning their back on Newton’s methodological modesty, it was possible to maintain that force was not merely quantitative, but instead also qualitative.

Blumenbach understood himself explicitly in precisely this way:

Hoffentlich ist für die mehresten Leser die Erinnerung sehr überflüssig, dass *das Wort* Bildungstrieb, so gut, wie *die Worte* Attraction, Schwere etc. zu nichts mehr und nichts weniger dienen soll, al seine Kraft zu bezeichnen, deren constante Wirkung aus der erfahrung anerkannt worden, deren *Ursache* aber so gut wie die Ursache der genannten, noch so allgemein anerkannten Naturkräfte, für uns *qualitas occulta* ist. Es gilt von allen diesen Kräften was Ovid sagt: —*caussa latet, vis est notissima*. Das Verdienst bey dem Studium dieser Kräfte ist nur das, ihre Wirkungen näher zu bestimmen und auf allgemeinere Gesetze zurück zu bringen.<sup>70</sup>

Appended to the obvious reference to Newton is a footnoted quote from the *Opticks*, including “I use that word [attraction] here to signify only in general any *force* by which bodies tend towards each other, whatsoever be the *cause*.”<sup>71</sup> Blumenbach’s

<sup>69</sup> See Peter Hans Reill, *Vitalizing Nature in the Enlightenment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 56-71.

<sup>70</sup> Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *Über den Bildungstrieb* (Göttingen: Dieterich 1791), pp. 32-34; emphasis in original.

<sup>71</sup> Blumenbach, *Bildungstrieb*, p. 32-33.

points of comparison are contractibility, irritability, and “sensility.”<sup>72</sup> These forces were not physical, formalizable in the manner of dynamics. Yet their postulation was a matter of method, indeed, the modest method of Newton. The cause was not speculated upon, while the expression of the force became the object of investigation.<sup>73</sup>

This view thus developed into the competing notion, *epi-genesis* (generation “on” or “above”) to articulate a non-miraculous, qualitative, force-based generation. Various versions of the force molding the produced being were articulated and defended in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, from the Comte de Buffon’s *moule intérieure* to Wolff’s *vis essentialis* to Blumenbach’s *nisus formativus* or *Bildungstrieb* itself. Each of these attempted to infer from the forms of organic beings form-producing dispositions or *habitus*. Yet the discourse is marked by the absence of a significant use of the term *organ*.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Blumenbach, *Bildungstrieb*, p. 32.

<sup>73</sup> James Larson puts the point particularly clearly: “Blumenbach intended the term force to introduce the idea of a causality acting with design in certain vital processes. The term was not explanatory but a designation for an observed effect, a projected unity. The additional connection of phenomena according to purpose related them and made them intelligible to the observer in a way that mechanical causality did not. Adoption of such a principle was, according to Blumenbach, justified by its simplicity and its consonance with observed vital processes.” (“Vital Forces: Regulative Principles or Constitutive Agents? A Strategy in German Physiology, 1786-1802,” *Isis* 70 (2), 1979, pp. 235-249, here p. 241.

<sup>74</sup> As Löw has pointed out, *Philosophie*, p. 95, Haller himself could use the word without coming down on the mechanism/organicism debate. And yet, even his use is quite rare, as I have pointed out above. I find only 7 uses in the *Primeae Lineae* (pp. 78, 108, 145, 169, 166, 177, and 187), none of which requires construal as *organ* (“instrument” tends to suffice). Informatively, Haller *does* use the term (for the heart) when writing in *French* (which is true of Leibniz, too): “que les changements de ce principale **organe** ne sont que superficiels...” *Sur la formation du Coeur dan le Poulet* (Lausanne: Bousquet, 1758), p. 173, cited by Roe, *Matter*, p. 68. This trend seems to hold: France had the word in its modern sense (*l’organe*) by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century *post quem*, while Germany developed its modern sense (*das Organ*) beginning primarily in the 1780s. See section IV below. This conclusion runs directly counter to that made by Andrew Cunningham for the British world, *The Anatomist Anatomis’d: An Experimental Discipline in Enlightened Europe* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010). Cunningham is surely correct that the notion of the soul conditioned early uses of the term to indicate the *instrumentality* of the body and its functions: “... it was the existence of the soul that created the role of *organ* for the various working parts of the body. The relation of the soul to its *organs* was a bit like that of master to servant: each is defined in relation to the other. This sense of *organ* and of its associated terms such as “organic” and “organized,” continued to be the primary ones right through to almost the end of the eighteenth century, but then they were discarded, and the terms were all given new meanings...” (p. 383) This line of thinking seems to conflate two different discourses, the *organic* notion of organs (French, and then German) and the *instrumental* (Latin) conception of the body. In any case, the term was in varying states of conflation throughout the eighteenth century, and it is certainly possible that instances of precisely this conflation exist (although Cunningham does not point to

The debate was largely settled by Johann Friedrich Blumenbach in 1781, with his *Über den Bildungstrieb*. His description of the positions runs as follows:

Entweder nemlich man nimm an, dass der reife, übrigens aber rohe ungeformte Zeugungsstoff der Erltern, wenn er zu seiner Zeit und unter den erforderlichen Umständen an den Ort seiner Bestimmung gelangt, dann zum neuen Geschöpfe allmählig ausgebildet werde. Diess lehrt die Epigenese.

Oder aber man verwirft alle Zeugung in der Welt, und glaubt dagegen, dass zu allen Menschen und Thieren und Pflanzen, die je gelebt ahben und noch leben werden, *die Keime* gleich bey der ersten Schöpfung erschaffen worden, so dass sich nun eine Generation nach der andern blos zu *entwickeln* brauch Deshalb heist diess die Lehre der Evolution.<sup>75</sup>

The debate thus centered on the problem of the nature of matter, or rather matters. Indeed, the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw a fierce debate in the British, French, and German worlds (and between them) on the nature of force, a concept Newton had made urgent with his investigations into gravity. The question of how force could be properly treated in science and in philosophy caused a debate about the nature of matter which dovetailed with the more intimate knowledge of that matter afforded by the microscope.

If the epigenesists adopted Newton's conception of force, however, they did not adopt his suggestive use of the term organ. In Query 31 of the *Opticks*, Newton had written (in keeping with British physiological usage) of the "organs of sense and motion" (eyes, ears, but also arms, bladders, etc.) in humans. The passage is famous both for its defense of the metaphysics of force and for its presentation of the "method of analysis." God formed the organs of animals, but had none. The origins of our mediators was to be

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them). Christopher Young and Thomas Gloning, *A History of the German Language Through Texts* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 248-9, suggest that *organ* would still have appeared as a *Lehnwort* in 1790 in Goethe's *Versuch, die Metamorphose der Pflanzen zu erklären*. See chapter V of the current study.

<sup>75</sup> Blumenbach, *Bildungstrieb*, pp. 13-14. Blumenbach's predecessor in defending epigenesis, Caspar Friedrich Wolff, describes the division in this way: "Whether organic bodies of nature are evolved from an invisible state to a visible one, or are truly produced..." (Wolff to Haller, 6 October 1766, in Roe, *Matter*, p. 166)



found, the passage suggests, in the unmediated but universal mediator (more on Newton's conception of God's *sensorium* in the section on Herder in the current chapter below).<sup>76</sup>

The problem of the emergence of organic beings from seemingly “dead” matter thus drove scientific debate squarely into a philosophical register, one in which Leibniz participated from the 1690s onwards, arguing that vital force was a metaphysical principle that had to be included, although only partially, in physics for its results to sync up with that of philosophical investigation. Kant's first publication was a consideration of this question too. And when Herder entered the public sphere in the 1770s, the word *Kraft* was never lacking—nor was *Organ*. Thus, the confrontation of the life sciences and physics—and the emergence of biology as a discipline around 1800—involved both substantive and methodological debate offering central material for argumentation in an uncertain period for first philosophy. The borrowings of the terms *preformation*, *epigenesis* and *organ* in Leibniz, Kant and Herder all center around questions of force and our knowledge of it. Indeed, in each case, what is at stake is the mirror-question to that posed by the biological debate: not “what is the nature of matter?” but “what is the nature of reason?” Or, in other words, with uncertainty reigning about the nature of the known, the nature of knowing became a methodological problem, indeed, a metaphysical problem.

It is not, however, a merely analogical process by which the metaphorization of the epigenesis-debate played out. That debate was always a question, at heart, of organicity.

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<sup>76</sup> Isaac Newton, *Opticks, or, a Treatise of the Reflections, Refractions, Inflections and Colours of Light* (London: Innys, 1730), pp. 376 ff.

In §64 and §65 of the *KU*, Kant separates between mechanical and organic causalities. The first is a necessary link between two phenomena which is unidirectional: cause results necessarily in effect. This had been a generative explicandum of the *KdrV*: when the concept “cause” is judgmentally linked to a concrete set of phenomena, its necessity cannot be derived from that phenomena, *pace* Hume. This problematic led Kant to the invention of the “understanding” (*Verstand*) as that faculty which establishes and bears the weight of “objective validity”, or “legislates nature”—a faculty supplying the necessity lacking in raw sensation, constituting nature by contributing elements like necessity to our phenomenal experience of it. For various reasons (to which we will return), Kant’s “understanding” only functions according to this unidirectional necessity in the establishment of causes. In the *KU* (§65), he calls the causal link *nexus effectivus*—the effective link, with obvious reference to the Aristotelian concept of the “efficient cause,” in Early Modern terms: billiard-ball upon billiard-ball. Here, however, Kant allows for another type of causality thinkable by reason: mutual causality, where effect is cause and vice versa. This type of causality can be thought<sup>77</sup> but makes no contribution to the understanding’s legislation of nature. It is a candidate (a good one, it turns out) for regulative judgments, the types of judgments we must make to function practically (and, in this case, scientifically). The causal link here is called *nexus finalis*—Aristotle’s “final cause” or *telos*. Indeed, Kant thinks we must use the concept of an “end” to interpret organic beings. And we encounter the type of judgment described here daily, for example, whenever we make judgments about human artefacts. Kant’s example is that of

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<sup>77</sup> The capacity for “mere thought” is essential to Kant’s notion of Reason. Because the understanding synthetically integrates intuitions with concepts—thereby guaranteeing our constitutive knowledge of nature—but does not *generate* the one from the other (which is dogmatism), Reason is free to *think* things which are not thereby constituted as phenomena. This essential characteristic is described at the beginning of the “Transcendental Dialectic” in the *KdrV*, starting at A293/B249.

a house which is both cause of the income that comes to its renter, while possibility of that income was also the cause of the construction of the house. Here the “end” is easily placed in the reason of the maker. The concept (house or income) has to determine the mutually causal relations *a priori*: the one is for the other in the reasoned representation (*Vorstellung*) of the renter/builder.

This example applies safely to all artificial objects (indeed, this is why the *KU* juxtaposes *aesthetic* and organic objects): the final cause is in the mind of the maker. In the case of the organic object, however, the appearance of organization cannot be explained by immediate reference to a concept determining the object (that is, without introducing a *Deus ex machina*). Ultimately, Kant argues for a regulative conclusion to God’s moral universe on the basis of our encounters with organic beings. Here, however, we only need see that his model of the organic itself picks out the problem at the heart of 18<sup>th</sup>-century debate about life.

Kant defines the organic object as follows:

In einem solchen Producte der Natur wird ein jeder Theil so, wie er nur durch alle übrige da ist, auch als um der andern und des ganzen Willen existirend, d.i. als Werkzeug (Organ) gedacht: welches aber nicht genug ist (denn er könnte auch Werkzeug der Kunst sein und so nur als Zweck überhaupt möglich vorgestellt werden); sondern als ein die anderen Theile (folgich jeder den anderen wechselseitig) hervorbringendes Organ, dergleichen kein Werkzeug der Kunst, sondern nur der allen Stoff zu Werkzeugen (selbst denen der Kunst) liefernden Natur sein kann: und nur dann und darum wird ein solches Product, als organisirtes und sich selbst organisirendes Wesen, ein Naturzweck genannt werden können.<sup>78</sup>

Even as Kant reaches for the Greek origin to determine the concept of the “part” in a non-mechanical sense (he goes on to point out that a watch can have no true organs), he makes a structural analogy (and this is all we are, in fact, supposed to be able to make, in the life sciences) from the judgmental *nexus* (that which relates part to whole and vice

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<sup>78</sup> AA V, pp. 373-4.

versa in the reasoned judgment) to organic “part”: that which establishes the mutual mereological relation is, at its root, simply a tool. But this tool cannot be one of mere “art”; instead, it must belong to that nature which “delivers all material up to tools.” Organization occurs by making organs which contain the traces of the force that builds them: nature itself.

The question of which force is using the tool was always at the heart of the whole debate. Indeed, the organ’s correlative force is what Blumenbach sought in explicitly Newtonian (albeit qualitative) terms. The literal use of the term in biological debate, Kant shows us here, is already a matter of how we judge, and the central ontological problematic is analogically mirrored by differing faculties (*Verstand/Vernunft*). This is a central problematic for the next generation.

Here, however, we need merely see that the debate was always about this problem: the functionality of the literal organ (say, the heart) is exactly what Newtonians lacked an explanation for, what had to be pushed back into the mystery of God’s creation. Microscopic explorations of the part-whole relation, as they increasingly tended to be the investigations of unobservable but organic forces (eventually called *Bildungstrieb* by Blumenbach), became investigations of the formations of organs as the immediate bearers of those forces. Looking to the Haller-Wolff debate, for example, we find that the bulk of their correspondence is taken up with questions of the formation of organs from blood-flow. As Wolff struggles to make his epigenetic point to the physiological master, he focuses his microscope on pulsations in the first hours of gestation, hoping that the formation of the functional animal will become not only visible, but also

communicable.<sup>79</sup> His hesitating tone does not prevent him from insinuating that a guiding force is forming the organs in the earliest stages of life—his *vis essentialis* accruing matter to the form of the animal.<sup>80</sup>

As Müller-Sievers has argued, Blumenbach's intervention did not come as the "hard" result of an experiment (he calls it a "purely textual event"<sup>81</sup>). Rather than seeing this development as merely "ideological" (as subject to a possible revisionist "critique"), I think this ideational shift should also be seen as productive,<sup>82</sup> specifically of a terminological field in which the borrowing of the term organ became increasingly likely. And indeed, in this sense, we can see Kant less as a philosophical commentator on

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<sup>79</sup> See Roe, *Matter*, pp. 158-173.

<sup>80</sup> See *ibid.*, 167-8 for Wolff's response to Haller's theological arguments. That God should have set the program for development on organic lines that appear as emergent in the natural order seems relatively harmless to Wolff, yet the argument cuts two ways: on the one hand, epigenesis was taken as a threat to the role of theological argument in natural philosophy (and it was), while on the other hand, Wolff's argument correctly points out that God's role is untouched by biological investigation—after all, if God set the mechanical rules of the universe, what prevents him from having set the organic ones?

<sup>81</sup> Helmut Müller-Sievers, *Self-Generation: Philosophy, Biology and Literature around 1800* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 26-48, here p. 5. John Zammito objects to this view, calling it "methodologically perverse," (John Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002, p. 472.) But it is surely true (if not unique) that, rather than an "experiment," Blumenbach's considerations of polyps are primarily the result of ratiocination, as we shall see. Note also that Haller, in the middle of the most experimentally-based part of the controversy, wrote to Bonnet that "I see all of this [in a manner] similar to what the illustrious Wolff has seen; we differ in our conclusions." And again Wolff: "But it is clear that he, not I, has concluded correctly from the appearances that are the same overall for him and for me." (Quoted in Roe, *Matter*, pp. 63 and 64.) Roe herself comments: "Thus, even though the observational dual [sic] between Haller and Wolff [on the formation of the heart] was something of a draw, Wolff's logical arguments would seem to have tipped the balance in his favor." (Roe, *Matter*, p. 79) Roe's conclusion is still valuable: "It is on the level of explanation that one must seek the roots of the inconclusive nature of the debate, and even the source of the controversy itself... it was not the observations that were truly under contention, but rather their ties to this nonobservational plane of controversy." (Roe, *Matter*, p. 87)

<sup>82</sup> Müller-Sievers's account of the ties between epigenesis and gender-ideology are convincing, but I think he fits into the Foucauldian consensus I identified as insufficient in my Introduction above. Roe writes that "Epigenesis was as compatible with the new progressivist view of human history and natural phenomena as preformation had been with the religious and mechanistic beliefs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries." (Roe, *Matter*, p. 156) My approach is neither ideology-critique nor correlation—instead, it is cross-disciplinary construction.

natural science and more as a producer of importance discourse about the organic. He set the terms of the debate going forward, if not the experimental program.<sup>83</sup>

But while the term came late, the philosophy did not. The major fault line between Wolff and Blumenbach is in the nature of the force inferred from the observation of formation: as Blumenbach points out, the *vis essentialis* is an almost mechanical force, merely “gathering” the necessary material for formation. The *Bildungstrieb*, on the other hand, actually does the organizing itself—it *is* the form of that organization.

Blumenbach’s *aperçu* came from the regeneration of parts in polyps. As he noted, that regeneration occurred in a miniaturized form: the new limb was formally similar but smaller than the original. Rather than merely collecting matter for an already (but inexplicably) organic being, the *Bildungstrieb* actively formed whatever matter was available to it, and this matter, while not itself organic, had “traces” of that forming activity in it:

Man kann nicht inniger von etwas überzeugt sein, als ich es von der mächtigen Kluft bin, die die Natur zwischen der belebten und unbelebten Schöpfung, zwischen den organisirten und unorganischen Geschöpfen befestigt hat; und ich sehe bey aller meiner Hochachtung für den Scharfsinn, womit die Verfechter der Stufenfolge oder Continuität der Natur ihre Leitern angelegt haben, nicht ab, wie sie beym Uebergange von den

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<sup>83</sup> This setting of a discursive program which goes beyond experimentation but is in dialogue with it is also the position of Herder in this debate (although not Leibniz, who was professionally engaged in experimentation). Wolf’s (*Der Begriff*) conclusion that Kant set this organicist program suffers from a lack of Herder, who—see section IV—seems to have been instrumental in importing the term from French *Histoires naturelles*. But the open texture of the debate also explains why Kant’s intervention could be read in different ways—and still is. Timothy Lenoir (*The Strategy of Life: Teleology and Mechanics in Nineteenth-Century German Biology* (Chicago: University of Chicago 1989)) sees Kant at the beginning of a functionalist biology that seeks *as much as possible* to approach life by way of its mechanical function. Robert Richards (*The Romantic Conception of Life: Science and Philosophy in the Age of Goethe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002)) takes direct issue with Lenoir, and pleads against Kant’s case as contributing to biology whatsoever, since he makes it a “non-constitutive” science. In a sense, *both things are true*: Kant contributes significantly to the debate about function and teleology—and to the growing use of the term organ in Germany—while subordinating biology to mechanics for scientific investigations. And yet, the regulative picture established in the passages adduced here is nonetheless an inspiration for *Romantic biology*. Richards’s account thus leaves out any possible oblique Kantian influence, even on disciplinary scientists—and generally insists on such a strong definition of life as essential to biology that it is hard to see why anyone—except the Romantics—would support him in his polemic against Kant.

organisirten Reichen zum unorganischen ohne einen wirklich etwas gewagten Sprung durchkommen wollen. Allein diess hindert nicht, dass man darum nicht Erscheinungen im einen dieser beiden Haupttheile der Schöpfung zur Erläuterung von Erscheinungen im anderen benutzen dürfte: und so sehe ich es für keins der geringsten Argumente zum Erweis des Bildungstriebes in den organisirten Reichen an, dass auch im unorganischen die Spuren von bildenden Kräften so unverkennbar und so allgemein sind.<sup>84</sup>

The question of organicity is here brought to its literal apex: although different types of matter—with differently investigateable forces—exist, they interact, and the traces of that interaction are the very moments of unification establishing the organic order.

Blumenbach makes no special use of the term: Kant combined its literal meaning with its etymology to give conceptual articulation to the problem.<sup>85</sup> The question is, in fact, rooted in the organ, as the immediate expression of the interaction of forces. The mutual causality of “part” and whole—that is, the unified phenomenon—is rooted in the conceptual problematic of that union itself. Kant brought his perennial concerns with synthesis to bear on a problem with deep theological and scientific charge, opening up the term organ to philosophical and metaphorical use. The analogy between the predicative *nexus* in judgment and the causal *nexus* in scientific reasoning opened the field of natural philosophy to critical or transcendental investigation—this investigation would come to be called organology. Before that naming, however, came a metaphorization of the terms of the debate about life for the debate about cognition.

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<sup>84</sup> Blumenbach, *Bildungstrieb*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>85</sup> Reinhard Löw, *Philosophie*, pp. 175-80. Löw shows that Kant may indeed have read Wolff, so that his notion of epigenesis was at least current before Blumenbach’s publications. Kant seems to have thought that Blumenbach’s *Bildungstrieb* was a good name but not an explanation for the phenomenon of the organic. Indeed, Löw confirms that Kant is right to think that the *vis essentialis* is only a mechanical explanation: its organization of materials leaves the question of a telic being completely unanswered (this is Blumenbach’s own point, too). AA XIII, p. 400 asks if the *Bildungstrieb* is not “die Erklärung eines obscurum per aequae obscurum” (here p. 178). This is similar to the terminology of the Herder-*Rezension* (see *infra*). Kant calls the theory “generische Präformation... Der Bildungstrieb ist unter diesem Aspekt nur ein Name für einen unerklärlichen Grund, den wir voraussetzen müssen, wenn wir überhaupt über die Individualentwicklung organischer Wesen sprechen wollen.” (p. 179) On the one hand, Kant still rejects the “formation” of the soul—this “pre-exists” (not really) and can certainly still take up no physical space. On the other hand, this solution for Kant allows him to get rid of “hyperphysics” by assigning this phenomenon to the faculty of judgment.

## II. The Divine Preformation of the Mind: Leibniz's Metaphysical Organ

The beginnings of this metaphorization are with Leibniz. Indeed, he runs the categories of force and organ—in the larger debate about generation—through each other in a manner not meant to be metaphorical, but instead metaphysical. Adopting the discourse of preformation, he contains it in a larger static order, a world in which simple substances are in a harmony *pre-established* by God. Nevertheless, he uses the term in a quasi-metaphorical way to describe the mind, and it is this use we can track forward to Kant, and to Herder.

The *New System of the Communication of Substances, and of the Union of Body and Soul* of 1695 was the first public statement of a new emphasis in Leibniz's thought.<sup>86</sup> This was the doctrine of “pre-established harmony,” meant to respond to a simultaneously scholastic and Cartesian problem about the interaction of substances.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> There is some debate about Leibniz's early and late metaphysics. The early work is marked by commitment to the so-called “complete concept” doctrine, which emphasizes that substances and accidents are like subjects and predicates, and holds that each individual being has a “complete concept” (including its past and future) which could be known—and is known by God. The later metaphysics shifts focus to the force-dynamics within substances, and ends with the articulation of the monadology. The elements of Leibniz I am discussing here do not change sufficiently, I think, to need such an analysis. Donald Rutherford sums up the change as follows: “What we can surmise is that as the focus of Leibniz's interests began to shift away from the more traditional logical and metaphysical concerns of the 1680s to the project of dynamics, an opportunity arose for him to rethink his treatment of substance. All of the essential features of substance remained in place. What emerged, however, was his explicit recognition that if the nature of substance in general is to be an entelechy or principle of action, then the most appropriate device for representing the individual nature of a substance is not a complete concept, but rather the law of the series of its operations.” (Donald Rutherford, “Metaphysics: The late period” in: Nicholas Jolley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Leibniz*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.124-175, here p. 128.)

<sup>87</sup> The best overview of topics in this field is: Steven Nadler (ed.), *Causation in Early Modern Philosophy: Cartesianism, Occasionalism and Pre-established Harmony* (University Park: Penn State Press, 1993). Eileen O'Neill's historical overview “*Influxus physicus*” (pp. 27-57) especially helpful with respect to the scholastic problem of the interaction of substances. Rainer Specht's *Commercium mentis et corporis. Über*



The larger problem was that of the interaction of substances in general: given that substances are simple and have accidents, how are they to interact? Descartes tied this question to the sciences, defending a strict mechanicism that allowed for efficient causality (billiard ball on billiard ball) to be the exclusive model of physical interactions. This generated, however, another problem, that of *commercium mentis et corporis*: how could the two heterogeneous substances, mind and matter, interact? The answer developed in its classical form by Malebranche was that of “occasionalism”: God’s touch intervenes at each moment of such interaction, ensuring that representations are correct and that physical actions correspond to them.

Leibniz agreed that substances do not interact. In fact, the final statement of his metaphysics, the monadology, is absolutely isolationist in this respect: even physical substances do not actually interact. What establishes the appearance of interaction—and the correctness of common language about it—is a harmony pre-established by God.<sup>88</sup> There is no need, as he would emphasize against the Newtonian Clarke, for God to intervene again and again: God has not made the motion which decays over time (empirical interactions) but the force which is conserved.<sup>89</sup> The laws of the universe are overseen by this harmony between substances, including the body and the soul, mind and matter. Substances reflect each other harmonically, pre-ordained by God—no interaction

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*Kausalvorstellungen im Cartesianismus* (Stuttgart-Bad: Cannstatt Frommann-Holzboog, 1966) is the locus classicus for the Cartesian discourse on this problem in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>88</sup> This doctrine was primarily influential in the Germanies. An overview of the national politics of the mind-body problem (*commercium mentis et corporis*) is given in John W. Yolton, “The Three Hypotheses,” *Locke and French Materialism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), pp. 10-38.

<sup>89</sup> The “*vis viva*” debate surrounded the Cartesian principle of the conservation of motion. Leibniz was able to show that this was false and held that “force” was conserved. The thought-experiment in §17 of the *Discourse* is meant ultimately to show that motion, conserved, would simply peter out. See Roberto Torretti, *The Philosophy of Physics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 33-6.

is necessary. At one important place, Leibniz describes this doctrine as “an agreement produced by divine pre-formation,”<sup>90</sup> putting a point on the analogy.

In an important passage in the *Theodicy*, Leibniz echoes Aristotle’s rejection of organs for the mind, taking issue with Cartesian attempts to show that the mind can “guide” the body,

à peu près comme un cavalier, quoiqu'il ne donne point de force au cheval qu'il monte, ne laisse pas de le gouverner en dirigeant cette force du côté que bon lui semble. Mais comme cela se fait par le moyen du frein, du mors, des éperons, et d'autres aides matérielles, on conçoit comment cela se peut ; mais il n'y a point d'instruments dont l'âme se puisse servir pour cet effet, rien enfin ni dans l'âme, ni dans le corps, c'est-à-dire ni dans la pensée, ni dans la masse, qui puisse servir à expliquer ce changement de l'un par l'autre. En un mot, que l'âme change la quantité de la force, et qu'elle change la ligne de la direction, ce sont deux choses également inexplicables.<sup>91</sup>

The conservation of force leads, in this case, to the pre-established harmony: no change in the quantity of force is possible, and so humans are restricted to the re-arrangement of forces already present in the natural order. Further, the interaction of mind and body cannot be clarified by removing this element of putative spontaneous generation of force: any possible instrument for such an interaction would have to be *either* material or ideal, precluding the very possibility of interaction. And no

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<sup>90</sup> Leibniz, *Philosophical Texts*, transl. R.S. Woolhouse and Richard Franks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 216.

<sup>91</sup> Gottsched’s translation of 1763 reads: “... wie etwan ein Reiter, ob er wohl dem Pferde, darauf er reitet, keine Kräfte giebt, dennoch dasselbe regieret, indem er die Kräfte des Pferdes dahin richtet, wohin es ihm gefällt. Allein gleich wie dieses vermittelst [sic] des Zaumes und Gebisses, der Spornen, und andrer materialischen Hülfsmittel geschieht: so begreift man, wie es zugeht, Die Seele aber kann sich hiezu **keines Werkzeuges** bedienen; ja es ist gar nichts, weder in der Seele, noch in dem Leibe, das ist, weder in den Gedanken, noch in der Materie, wodurch man diese Veränderung des einen durch das andere erklären könnte. Mit einem Worte, daß die Seele die Größe der Kraft verändern könne, und daß sie die Richtungslinie zu ändern vermögend sey, das sind zwey Dinge, davon sich eines so wenig als das andere erklären läßt.” (Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Theodicee, das ist, Versuch von der Güte Gottes, Freyheit des Menschen, und vom Ursprung des Bösen*, Johann Christoph Gottsched (ed.), (Hannover/Leipzig: Verlag der fürsterischen Erben, 1763), pp. 192-3.) As Eric Watkins has pointed out, Gottsched proposed a similar force-guidance model: in his dissertation, *Vindiciarum systematis influxus physici* (1727-29), Gottsched defends physical influx for two reasons. On the one hand, clear and distinct ideas of body and soul are needed before we can judge, and we lack these. On the other, it is possible that the soul is like an archer: the taught string of the bow does not possess the motion but only the *force* and/or the direction of the arrow. Leibniz disallows even this possibility in the passage above (although he was dead long before it was written).

minimalization of that interaction makes it more probable: “guiding” the force would require some means of guidance, some point of interactive possibility, some instrument. The metaphorical use of “instrument” is here precisely used as a rejection of an “organ” of material knowledge or action. It is God’s world we know, by God’s harmony of bodies and souls. The metaphor of the instrument is put under erasure: no philosophy of technology in the reflective, organic order of forces.<sup>92</sup>

Leibniz’s increasing emphasis on the metaphysical nature of force can help us to see the connection of his system to the metaphorology he instigated. The category “substance” is both that which corresponds to the subject of a judgment<sup>93</sup> and that which is held together by a force. He writes in the *New System* that, considering the nature of a “true unity,” he was led back to the substantial forms<sup>94</sup> of the scholastics: “I found then that their nature consists in force... ”<sup>95</sup> Indeed, an “original *activity*”<sup>96</sup> must be postulated to explain real unity at large. Force, it seems, is that which binds actively into a unity (we

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<sup>92</sup> Frederick Beiser has showed that one possible philosophy of the *techne* was developed by Christian Wolff in Leibniz’s footsteps. Beiser write that “Wolff conceives of the arts as means not only of *producing* things but of *knowing* them.” Frederick Beiser, *Diotima’s Children: German Aesthetic Rationalism from Leibniz to Lessing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 53-4. This Baconian impulse is meant to show that in our making objects of knowledge are also produced (which overcomes the antinomy)—yet it is clear that nothing new is produced or known here. Wolff is merely exploiting the analogical indifference to body and soul in substance-metaphysics, without, as far as I can see, opening the door to innovative possibility on the order of being or the knowledge of it, i.e. in metaphysics.

<sup>93</sup> This is included in the “complete concept” doctrine, and we will investigate it below together with Kant’s objections to it. It is classically stated in §8 ff. of the *Discourse on Metaphysics*, in Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, trans. Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1989), pp. 35-69.

<sup>94</sup> Lewis White Beck, *Early German Philosophy: Kant and His Predecessors* (Cambridge: Bellknap, 1969), p. 213: “By “substantial form,” the scholastics originally meant the essence of an individual thing; it was one of the terms also used among the natural philosophers as a specification of what they meant by “nature.” It was not the universal Platonic idea which defined the genus of a thing, but the Aristotelian form embodied in matter and thus individuated by its matter (Thomas Aquinas), or individuated by its own nature whether embodied in matter or not (Duns Scotus).”

Occamists denied any such thing, but German Scholasticism stood under the influence of Suarez. the term was equivalent to ‘occult quality’ after Descartes’s rejection and the Port Royal’s rejection. “Descartes and the moderns opposed substantial forms as principles of explanation, declaring that all natural phenomena are explicable by the magnitude, figure, and motion of matter, whose essence, which can be clearly and distinctly perceived, is extension.”

<sup>95</sup> Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, p. 139.

<sup>96</sup> Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, p. 139.

shall see Kant exploiting this notion in the next section). While the instruments of force can arise and decay, however, original activity cannot begin or end (as Herder would also maintain). The substances bound by force cannot, therefore, originate or be annihilated. Leibniz reaches to the model of preformation, expanding its sense from a narrow, biological principle to a metaphysical doctrine, indifferently referring to bodies and souls.

The *New System* holds that true substances have always existed, a doctrine that forced Leibniz to confront the problem of the transmigration of souls. If the soul always exists, could it be that it is attached to different bodies at different times? Rejecting this possibility, Leibniz develops the notion of a substantial unity he calls an “organic machine”: the pre-formed and always-existing animal. This machine is testament to God’s infinite power, compared to human *techne*, which operates or seems to operate in an entropic world.<sup>97</sup>

Rather than transmigration, so Leibniz, “transformation” is the appropriate term.<sup>98</sup> Referencing the experiments of Swammerdam and Malpighi (17<sup>th</sup>-century preformationists), Leibniz offers a reason for the doctrine of preformation: since simple substances cannot be generated—since their force is original—they must instead be preformed. Rejecting “atoms of matter,” he suggests that there are “atoms of substance” or metaphysical “points,” held together by this original activity. This force-bound unification extends—but only by God’s power—to the attachment of one soul to one

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<sup>97</sup> There is some question about whether Leibniz is a dualist in the 1690s (matter is excluded from substantial unity, and exists as aggregate apart from it) or a phenomenalist (matter is simply a confused perception, and substantial unities are all that really exists). The latter is certainly his mature position—see the *Monadology* or the *Principles of Nature and Grace*. I am not committed to either interpretation here. The conditional consideration of the entropic world of motion is enough for a metaphorology.

<sup>98</sup> One of the great ironies of the larger biological debate is that the pre-formationists used the term “evolution” to describe their non-generative viewpoint, halting its use for the epigenetic line that led to Darwin. See Richards, *Romantic Conception*, pp. 211-12. Richards points out that Schelling may have been the first to apply the term evolution to species alteration (p. 145).

body. Indeed, the body and the soul are always attached—as the *New Essays* read: “... death can only be a sleep, and not a lasting one at that...”<sup>99</sup> In the *New System*, Leibniz expands: “Consequently, instead of the *transmigration* of souls, there is only a *transformation* of the same animal, according to whether its organs are differently enfolded and more or less developed.”<sup>100</sup>

The organs in this passage are simply the organic parts, their distribution changing in transformation, their existence contemporaneous with the whole. *Organ* is, then, a medical concept. The metaphorical sheen of the passage is merely an empirical prejudice we (or perhaps Hume) might hold: *organ* seems like a metaphor because the metaphysics in which it occurs is deeply unfamiliar—for Leibniz, literal organs occur in all substance, corporeal or rational.

Indeed, the nature generated by God is full of organs, is an infinite intension of organs.<sup>101</sup> Leibniz here anticipates the arguments he would make against the Newtonians in his famous correspondence with Clarke: arguing against occasionalism broadly and mere mechanism locally, he there would state that God’s creation is not a “watch” which loses time—if God is a craftsman, his machines have *perpetuum mobile*. In the *New System* the “moderns” come up for criticism on precisely this point: they lack a distinction between natural and artificial things, a difference “not simply... of degree, but a difference of kind.”<sup>102</sup> The natural machines “have a truly infinite number of organs... [and] remains a machine in its least parts... being merely transformed through the

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<sup>99</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 55.

<sup>100</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 141.

<sup>101</sup> In 1698, in *De natura ipse*, the point is repeated: “... every natural machine (and this is a true but rarely recognized *distinction between nature and art*) is made up of an infinite number of other organs...” (Leibniz, *Philosophical Texts*, transl. R.S. Woolhouse and Richard Franks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 210, translation modified).

<sup>102</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 142.

different enfolding it undergoes...”<sup>103</sup> The functionality of the organic is machinic all the way down: each part down to infinity is a pre-formed recapitulation of the whole, bound by an original activity supplied ultimately by God.<sup>104</sup> What in the late work would be called “monads” are here imagined—at least for nature’s beings—in infinite unities with each other, not substantially interacting but reflecting each other.

Human making, on the other hand, merely unites aggregates that can decay. Its organs are merely instruments, expressive of perfections of the whole when enough artistry is involved, but nevertheless parts capable of disintegrating from the unity established.<sup>105</sup> Leibniz’s assumptions here are nevertheless not purely Aristotelian, and he has indeed established a more general positive sense of the term organ by using it indifferently for bodies and for souls (for substances in general, that is). Yet the technologies of God and of humans differ essentially—any possible philosophy of *techne* is suppressed in the fullness of being pre-established and pre-formed. The quasi-metaphorical organ is the sign of perfection, the expression of force’s regular unity, but in the hands of the human, a mere point of possible decay. The “fullness of nature” denies the possibility of innovation. In Blumenberg’s terms, metaphoricity has not yet escaped metaphysics. As we shall see, the problem is that an organological metaphysics has not yet appropriated the efficacy of metaphoricity for itself.

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<sup>103</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 142.

<sup>104</sup> *Discours de métaphysique* 2, on modern, “mechanical” authors and their explanations of the world: “Leurs belles manières d’expliquer la nature mécaniquement me charmèrent, et je méprisais avec raison la méthode de ceux qui n’emploient que des formes ou des facultés dont on n’apprend rien.”

<sup>105</sup> “But when corporeal substances are contracted, all their organs together constitute only a *physical point* relative to us.” (Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 142)

This indifference with respect to bodies and souls (in favor of a substantial metaphysics), combined with the static system in which force is active, is reflected in Leibniz's epistemology—and this model survived into rationalism at large.

Where nothing radically new could be created by humans, Leibniz's epistemology and its formalization in the various *Logics* in the rationalist school look very much like a toolbox, a set of instruments for knowing that larger Being in all its forced-based dynamics—and this despite the refrain that the soul can have no instruments.

Leibniz's epistemology is a matter of how clearly and distinctly we represent: revising the criteria for Descartes' "clear and distinct ideas,"<sup>106</sup> he established a framework for making distinct that which is already clear. The Leibnizian cognition-tree runs as follows: what is confused is representation without objects. The ability to identify an object makes knowledge clear. Clear knowledge can become distinct when we can identify the properties that allow for recognition of the object over multiple instances. (Leibniz's favored example here is that of an assayer recognizing gold by its yellowness combined with a certain density, etc.) Distinct knowledge can become adequate when the primitive qualities of the object are included in the representation (so, for example, the atomic makeup of gold). Even adequate knowledge, however, can be bettered, if the elements of that primitive makeup can be included in a single representation of the object: Leibniz calls this type of presentational knowledge intuitive as opposed to symbolic. The latter uses signs as markers or reminders of elements not presented; the combination of synthesis (into a single representation) and analysis (from constituted

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<sup>106</sup> Where Descartes had held that what we conceive clearly and distinctly *is* true, Leibniz holds that by an increasing process of distinctivization we arrive at the truth. See Robert Mcrae "The theory of knowledge" in: Nicholas Jolley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Leibniz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 176-98, here pp. 177-8.

object all the way to primitive property) is called “intuitive adequate knowledge.”<sup>107</sup> The logical treatises of Wolff, Baumgarten, and Meier all take up this model, offering refinements and explanations of these means of arriving at true knowledge. Kant was weaned on them, and taught them to Herder. This search for a means of betterment of knowledge is where the creative historical energy of the rationalist movement is to be found—and it is the field that Kant intentionally entered with his early methodological considerations, as we shall see.

What is established by this system is both the notion of epistemological means (not yet metaphorically “organs”) and a static order known by them. David Wellbery has labeled this model “progressive semiosis”:

Sign-use is situated, then, between two types of intuition, the sensate intuition [the basis of confused “knowledge] of our perceptual experience and the intellectual intuition of divine knowledge. The Enlightenment myth of the sign localizes sign use between two experiences of plenitude and presence—an original perceptual experience in which the world reveals itself directly, the *arché* which grounds man’s subsequent symbolic representations, and the *telos* of divine cognition in which the world is again experienced intuitively, but with total distinctness. The movement from one pole to the other, the advancement of culture itself, is a process of progressive semiosis.<sup>108</sup>

Wellbery focuses on the representationalism of this system, but points to its cultural ramifications: critical development of that system meant “advancement” in the direction

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<sup>107</sup> It seems clear that Leibniz is invoking Spinoza’s *Ethics* Book II, proposition 42, scholium here: the discursive knowledge of a system of relations (within an object for Leibniz, in the law of proportions for Spinoza) is bettered by seeing the elements as instances of the relations which make up the whole. I will come back to this type of knowledge when passing from Kant and Herder to the Romantics. Ultimately, only God’s knowledge is both adequate (including the primitives of its object) and intuitive (grasped all at once, as in a picture), but the rationalist schema always divides between those objects of cognition which are immediately based on the principles of contradiction and identity (logical truths), and those mediately based on these, falling under the provenance of the principle of sufficient reason (see Leibniz, “Meditations on Knowledge, Truth, and Ideas,” in *Philosophical Essays*, pp. 23-28).

<sup>107</sup> Wellbery, *Lessing’s Laocoon*, p. 232.

<sup>108</sup> Wellbery, *Lessing’s Laocoon*, p. 232.



of critical reflection, although the represented system remained the unalterable substratum.<sup>109</sup>

There is a deep structural analogy between the force-model of substances in their pre-established harmony and our cognition of beings or progressive semiosis: each of these models posits a fundamental dynamism contained in a static order. And indeed, they touch at the point of God's knowledge. This analogical presentation makes the organ—whether of an organic machine or the ladder of knowledge—a candidate for reflection. Methodology—*how we know*—comes into view, albeit encapsulated, pre-formed, in the order of things. As the *Discourse on Metaphysics* assures us: "... it is evident that all true predication has some basis in the nature of things..."<sup>110</sup> The exploration of means has not yet undermined faith in the representational principle—by a literal analogical structure, we can know the enfolded and unfolding, pre-established world.<sup>111</sup>

It is this substance-based structural analogy—the world of Leibnizian metaphysics—that provided the basis for Leibniz's initiation of the metaphorology of the

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<sup>109</sup> "A tendency to idealize aesthetic representations and signs emerges into view: the Enlightenment attributes to art the capacity to renew the life of the culture by reactivating its most archaic mechanism as well as to anticipate the goal of cultural progress by virtue of its transparent form of signification. If, as the first chapter argues, the *telos* of Enlightenment culture is a system of natural signs, then art becomes the locus where this *telos* is proleptically achieved." (Wellbery, *Lessing's Laocoon*, pp. 6-7)

<sup>110</sup> Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, p. 41.

<sup>111</sup> Beck's description of Leibniz's program in this regard as like a "fugue" is certainly appropriate, and the following statement may serve to clarify the elusive relation between logical inherence and metaphysical encapsulation in Leibniz: "This is the metaphysical correlate of the logical doctrine that every predicate is analytically contained in the concept of the subject: every state and action is a state and action of a substance which produces them according to the law of sufficient reason, sufficient and adequate to the complete determination of this individual substance. Even states or modifications that seem to be passions, or passive effects of modifications in other substances, are included among the actions of the substance in question... Hence monads are internally determined even in that which Leibniz calls their matter, or primitive passive power [Loemker p. 607, no date]... They also are consequences of its nature, though they seem to be caused by the actions of other substances. Just as logical accidents are really properties whose sufficient reason we do not find because we cannot completely analyze the concept of the subject, what seems to befall the substance is really an action in it which reflects the state of some other substance." (Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, p. 222)

organ. In that metaphysical world, with those methodological means, the question of mind had to be treated too.

Leibniz's doctrine of the intellect was articulated *in nuce* in a single comment. Responding to the Aristotelian claim that "nothing is in the intellect which was not first in the senses" (*nihil est in intellectu quod non prius in sense fuerit*), Leibniz appended: *nisi ipse intellectus* ("except the intellect itself").<sup>112</sup> With this statement, Leibniz entered a controversy about whether there were "innate" ideas. Locke, in particular, defended an empiricist sensationalism in which the mind was *tabula rasa*, and all representation arose from physiological interaction. Leibniz thus took direct issue with Locke in order to elaborate his statement into a doctrine of the mind.

The *New Essays on Human Understanding*<sup>113</sup> take the form of a dialogue between a defender of Locke and a mouthpiece for Leibniz. The dialogue is a running commentary on the chapter of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). The preface immediately invokes the central difference: the constitution of the human intellect. Reviewing several doctrines of "innate" ideas (the *prolepses* of the Stoics, for example, and the *zopyra* or "little sparks" of Julius Scaliger), Leibniz announces that he will oppose Locke's view that the mind is *tabula rasa*. The establishment of the reasons for things, and the universal necessities observed in mathematics, metaphysics, and

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<sup>112</sup> For the textually complicated history of this claim see Giorgio Tonelli, "Leibniz on Innate Ideas and the Early Reactions to the Publication of the *Nouveaux Essais* (1765)," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (12: 4, October), 1974, pp. 437-454. "In the excerpts and notes (probably of 1669) by Leibniz to the Appendix Practica (1669) of the pansophic philosopher J. J. Becher we find the first documentation of Leibniz' innatism. Leibniz transcribes from Becher: "In anima connatae paucae notitiae et fundamenta, hae velut literae. Ex his hypotheses sive axiomata scientiarum velut syllabae . . . --Axioma insertum est: nihil est in intellectu, quod prius non fuerit in sensu." To this Leibniz remarks: "limitandum hoc modo: nihil est in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu. Nisi ipse intellectus." It is improbable that this was an original Leibnizian formula: Leibniz probably reproduced a current scholastic dictum." (p. 441)

<sup>113</sup> Written in 1704, withheld because of Locke's death, then only published in 1765, and then quickly translated into German.

ethics, Leibniz tells us, may well only occur to us when the senses awaken our attention—but they cannot come from the senses.<sup>114</sup> Instead, Leibniz asks, “why could we not provide ourselves with objects of thought from our own depths, if we take the trouble to dig there?”<sup>115</sup> Ultimately, the entire universe is reflected in each monad, and Leibniz here expresses this in terms of the doctrine of unconscious perceptions, *petites perceptions*, which go unnoticed as individual waves are not heard in the roar of the ocean, though we know that they constitute the latter. This indifferent ocean, perceptive and perceived, *organic* to infinite smallness, establishes the appearance of equilibrium but is in constant activity, productive of our knowledge and even our actions by pushing us in certain, pre-formed directions, by producing tendencies.<sup>116</sup>

Book I then begins with an account of the “new system,”<sup>117</sup> repeating the arguments about preformation and metempsychosis we saw in the *New System*. Responding to Philalethes’ (Locke’s) assertion that there are “no innate ideas,” Theophilus (Leibniz) states that “the new system takes me even further and... I believe indeed that all the thoughts and actions of our soul come from its own depths and could not be given to it by the senses.”<sup>118</sup> For Locke has failed to distinguish “the origin of necessary truths, whose source is in the understanding, from truths of fact, which are

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<sup>114</sup> As he also notes, however, it is not entirely clear whether Locke thinks there are any ideas not originating in sense, since he “admits... that ideas which do not originate in sensation come from reflection.” (Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 51) At any rate, that Leibniz wants to steer a middle-path here between *tabula rasa* and some preformed *set* of concepts is clear.

<sup>115</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 53.

<sup>116</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, pp. 54-7. Even the pre-established harmony is meant to be clarified at the level of exposition by these perceptions (p. 56). Because they make for the “confused” matter of perception, their clarification or *distinctivization* puts us on the road to intuitive adequate knowledge—properly God’s, for us an ideal.

<sup>117</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 72.

<sup>118</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 74.

drawn from sense-experience and even from confused perceptions within us.”<sup>119</sup>

Philalethes objects that for there to be innate thoughts, there must be a (necessarily obscure) faculty for such thoughts. Theophilus rejects two premises in this argument: on the one hand, no such faculty is needed, only rather a potential; on the other, there are no innate thoughts, rather only innate general principles, rules which we do not always consider but function like muscles or tendons for walking.<sup>120</sup> Certain truths—those of necessity—form an affinity with the human mind:

... that is what makes us call them innate. So it is not a bare faculty, consisting in a mere possibility of understanding those truths: it is rather a disposition, an aptitude, a **preformation**, which determines our soul and brings it about that they are derivable from it.<sup>121</sup>

The disposition of the mind, from which it internally draws necessary truths—those of metaphysics, arithmetic, geometry, and ethics—is thus cast metaphorically in the terminology of the biological debate. The mind is imagined as a slab of marble, which, far from being indifferent to the sculptor, is instead veined. The sculptor has sought *this* piece of marble—as God has preformed *this* type of mind—because he sees that its form is amenable to its intended function: to represent Hercules, or to represent and act upon the enfolded but unfolding truth. Unlike “vulgar” forms of innatism, Leibniz’s doctrine is founded in a sort of preformation of the mind,<sup>122</sup> which has metaphorical veins as principles of application, an established field for the investigation of truth. The mind is not generated but created, given in shape but appearing only slowly, as our attention to its

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<sup>119</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 75.

<sup>120</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 84.

<sup>121</sup> Leibniz, *New Essays*, p. 80.

<sup>122</sup> To point out how precisely analogous the preformationism in metaphysics is, we can call to mind the statement, from *De natura ipse*, that “things have been given a certain ability, a form or force (such as we usually call a ‘nature’), from which the series of phenomena follows in accordance with the dictates of the original command.” (Leibniz, *Philosophical Texts*, p. 213) Spoken here against occasionalism with its discrete interventions by God, the doctrine amounts to the produced “tendency” or disposition at the level of force and substance. Again, however, it is not metaphorical in the metaphysical context. A “nature” is both its own property and a gift (from God).

given affinities is applied. The means for knowledge might remain obscure to us, but our process of self-discovery is just that: the exploration of an order formed in advance, dynamic in its confused and even apparently chaotic development, but complete and finally known in the intuition of God. Organs are implied in this preformationist metaphor—its use in this context would not emerge until Kant, and then Herder, entered this discourse given by Leibniz.

### **I. Reason’s Awakening: Kant’s “Epigenesis of Reason” and the Methodological Organ**

Ins Innere der Natur dringt Beobachtung und Zergliederung der Erscheinungen, und man kann nicht wissen, wie weit dieses mit der Zeit gehen werde. Jene transzendente Fragen aber, die ueber die Natur hinausgehen, wuerden wir bei allem dem doch niemals beantworten koennen, wenn uns auch die ganze Natur aufgedeckt waere, da es uns nicht einmal gegeben ist, unser eigenes Gemuet mit einer andern Anschauung, als der unseres inneren Sinnes, zu beobachten. Denn in dem selben liegt das Geheimnis des Ursprungs unserer Sinnlichkeit. Ihre Beziehung auf ein Objekt, und was der transzendente Grund dieser Einheit sei, liegt ohne Zweigel zu tief verborgen, als dass wir, die wir so gar uns selbst nur durch innern Sinn, mithin als Erscheinung, kennen, ein so unschickliches Werkzeug unserer Nachforschung dazu brauchen koenntten, etwas anderes, als immer wiederum Erscheinungen, aufzufinden, deren nichtsinnliche Ursache wir doch gern erforschen wollten.<sup>123</sup>

Kant’s contribution to this metaphorology—and indeed, his contribution to Enlightenment philosophy at large—was driven, in my reading, by a single question: how is it that we are rational in a world whose proper rationality we must remain agnostic about? From the 1760s onwards, when the Academy forced the issue of metaphysical certainty with its prize competition of 1760-3, Kant pursued this question. Developing a critique of rationalist and eclectic<sup>124</sup> metaphysics simultaneously, Kant noted that they

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<sup>123</sup> *KdrV* B334/A278.

<sup>124</sup> The “eclectic” school—starting with Thomasius, finding its great proponent in Kant’s favored Crusius—included also such figures as Lange, Rüdiger, and Hoffmann. They formed the principle, pietistic opposition to the rationalists. See Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, and Wundt, *Die Schulphilosophie*. On

shared a lack of an articulated means by which cognition was to fit with being. By prying open that question—by bracketing, if not completely, the world—Kant opened a field of methodology in metaphysics of which, I shall claim here, his own articulation of the critical philosophy was but one possible result. At the opening of that field, the *organon* for metaphysics was a possibility. The critical standpoint, however, rejected such an *organon* in favor of a canon (of the understanding), and a discipline based on that canon. Our rationality, whatever the status of the world, was self-guiding and developing, its law capable of explicit statement. But the reason for its laws—what an instrument of Reason was meant to provide—remained necessarily obscure. Kant cast this problematic in terms of biological debate, writing that the understanding’s contribution to the world of its cognition was an “epigenesis of pure Reason.” The metaphor of the rational organ emerges, then, with Kant, but remains an unexplored possibility. Leibniz had supplied the metaphorological field; Kant would offer the critical methodology.

At the methodological apex of the *KdrV*, Kant writes that the result of his “transcendental deduction” of the categories is a sort of “system of *epigenesis* of pure reason.”<sup>125</sup> The Leibnizian problematic of the origin of necessary truths was always central to Kant too. Indeed, he begins the introduction to the B edition of the *KdrV* with a translation of Leibniz’s revision of Aristotle: “Wenn aber gleich alle unsere Erkenntnis *mit* der Erfahrung anhebt, so entspringt sie darum nicht eben alle *aus* der Erfahrung.”<sup>126</sup> The paradigmatic case is causality: the necessity inherent to the causal judgment cannot accrue slowly in experience, as Hume had had it. Experience is necessary for empirical

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the Lange-Wolff controversy, see Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 541-63.

<sup>125</sup> *KdrV* B167.

<sup>126</sup> *Kdrv* B1.

causal judgments, of course, but the element of necessity cannot be derived from that experience: order does not come from phenomenal presentation but from intentional representation. This problematic reveals why Kant uses the metaphor from the life sciences: as he reasons at §27, either experience makes necessary ideas possible, or those ideas make experience possible. The first alternative is characterized as *generatio aequivoca*, the inexplicable generation of one kind of substance from another. The second alternative is embraced: the system of pure reason is epigenesist because there is a genuine formation-process between intuitions and concepts, and this mixing process actually constitutes experience. Guiding the process is the “system” of that epigenesis, its own origins obscure but its rules organized around the categories and beyond doubt for us humans, like an “animal body, the growth of which adds no member but which, without changing its proportion, makes each member stronger and better suited to its purposes.”<sup>127</sup> Kant embraces epigenesis as a metaphor—how completely, we will see below—to characterize the constitution of experience, the “legislation of nature” which the understanding performs. Yet in the elaboration of the “architectonic” of pure reason, his metaphor ambivalently reaches to the preformationist model, which dictates the persistent proportion and pre-existence of the parts. No plastic organ is entertained, then, in the final account, and Kant even speaks of the elaboration of a science of pure reason as an “idea” which “lies like a *seed* in reason, in which all the parts, still quite wrapped up and hardly recognizable under microscopic investigation, lie hidden.”<sup>128</sup> The elaboration of the science of pure reason, the justification of which is the transcendental

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<sup>127</sup> *KdrV* B861/A833.

<sup>128</sup> *KdrV* B862/A834.

deduction, is the transformationist model of preformation.<sup>129</sup> The deduction itself defends an epigenetic model for reason, then, while its elaboration has an invisible but original model to follow. Like the epigenetic models of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century in general, Kant starts *medias in res*: the form of reason (or of the organic being) is the given object of investigation. Our lack of insight into its ultimate origin cannot speak against our investigation. We cannot determinately know the world to be rational; our system of judgments, however, is a rational architectonic. Insofar as those judgments make synthetic contributions to our experience of that world, metaphysical rationality is both called into skeptical question and made genuinely possible. Kant's de-rationalization of the world and intended full rationalization of human cognition and action proceeded by way the metaphorology of the organ. It would take the disintegrative and systemic textual efforts of the Romantics to observe that metaphorological possibility after Kant nevertheless rejected its speculative possibilities.

The transcendental logic is based on principles for empirical cognition,<sup>130</sup> rules for judgment regardless of content. Kant describes this logic as a canon, excluding the term *organon* intentionally:

Der größte und vielleicht einzige Nutzen der reinen Vernunft ist also wohl nur negativ; da sie nämlich nicht, als **Organon, zur Erweiterung**, sondern, als Disziplin, zur Grenzbestimmung dient...<sup>131</sup>

Terminologically, criticism is based on a turn from a synthesizing (actually metaphysical) *organon* to the positive law indicated by the term canon. The canon of the

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<sup>129</sup> This is even more explicit in the foreword to the B-edition: "In den Sätzen selbst und ihren Beweisgründen, imgleichen der Form sowohl als der Vollständigkeit des Plans, habe ich nichts zu ändern gefunden; welches teils der langen Prüfung, der ich sie unterworfen hatte, ehe ich es dem Publikum vorlegte, teils der Beschaffenheit der Sache selbst, nämlich der Natur einer reinen spekulativen Vernunft, beizumessen ist, die einen wahren *Gliederbau* enthält, *worin alles Organ ist*, nämlich alles um eines willen und ein jedes einzelne um aller willen, mithin jede noch so kleine Gebrechlichkeit... sic him Gebrauche unausbleichlich verraten muß." (*KdrV* B xvii-xxxviii; my emphasis.)

<sup>130</sup> *KdrV* B200/A161, the "table of principles."

<sup>131</sup> *KdrV* B823/A795.



understanding—as opposed to the *organon* of pure reason (see the section on Lambert *infra*)—is the „Inbegriff der Grundsätze a priori des richtigen Gebrauchs gewisser Erkenntnisvermögen überhaupt.“<sup>132</sup> “Canon” serves as shorthand for the principled non-knowledge about the ultimate source of our cognition’s activity. We can produce legitimate knowledge through self-generated rules of the understanding, but we cannot go further than that—for that, we have “ein zu unschickliches Werkzeug.”<sup>133</sup>

The canon allows us to determine our knowledge of objects fully, while not determining those objects qualitatively at all. It thus responds to Kant’s imperative of rationality in a world lacking its own indices (for us) of rationality. If an *organon*—in this conception, necessarily metaphysical and dogmatic—had once been in Kant’s program, by 1781 it was gone. *organon* was now

der Inbegriff derjenigen Prinzipien..., nach denen alle reine Erkenntnisse a priori können erworben und wirklich zu Stande gebracht werden...<sup>134</sup>  
Um deswillen ist [die reine Logik] auch weder ein Kanon des Verstandes überhaupt, noch ein Organon besonderer Wissenschaften, sondern lediglich ein Kathartikon des gemeinen Verstandes.<sup>135</sup>

Pure logic’s role is made purely negative, while transcendental logic bases itself on a syntheses fixed in the derivation of the table of categories from the table of principles. Judgment gives itself form, but this form is pre-determined by the possibilities of judgment. The examination of judgment’s forms reveals a complete table of categories—and indeed, justifies their use—but the transcendental cause of their unifying activity (their production of objects) lies hidden within their very genesis, invisible to us.

The systematic location of the two terms reveals that the biological metaphor complements the rejection of the *organon*: we cannot know the genesis of the forms of

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<sup>132</sup> *KdrV* B824/A796.

<sup>133</sup> *KdrV* B824/A796.

<sup>134</sup> *KdrV* B25/A11.

<sup>135</sup> *KdrV* B77-8/A53.

judgment—we must start with them as a totality (or a table), and ask only such questions as they themselves legitimate. The epigenesis of pure reason is also a kind of generic preformation. Whatever methodological restrictions are placed on investigation here, Kant’s metaphors bring reason very close to the organic, indeed to possessing organs.

### The “Pre”-Critical Field of Methodology

Already in the 1760s, Kant had established the contour of his philosophical program: the search among cognitive and especially judgmental forms for the ultimate sources of our experience.<sup>136</sup> A number of documents (published texts, fragments, and also Herder’s lecture notes) bear witness to this turn of mind. By examining this period (up to 1770) with respect to the term *organon*, we can better understand the double valence of Kant’s metaphorology, opening up the methodological field to organicist metaphor on the one hand, and continuing in the Critical system as a version—albeit a canonical one—of that field’s potential.

The question, for Kant, was whether there could be an internally justified means for carrying out the work of metaphysical speculation. He called this means an *organon*, writing in his *Announcement* for his lectures in Winter Semester 1765/6:

Auf solche Weise füge ich zu Ende der Metaphysik eine Betrachtung über die eigentümliche Methode derselben bei, als ein Organon dieser Wissenschaft... Der Lehrer muß freilich das Organon vorher inne haben, ehe er die Wissenschaft vorträgt, damit er sich selbst darnach richte, aber dem Zuhörer muß er es niemals anders als zuletzt vortragen. Die Kritik und Vorschrift der gesamten Weltweisheit, als eines

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<sup>136</sup> Ernst Cassirer, *Kant’s Life and Thought*, transl. James Haden (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 43: “One should not look to this period for fundamental and ultimate philosophical judgments, for everything it contains shows it to belong to the process of intellectual *orientation* which Kant had first to work through for himself.” He continues, p. 55: “The essential novelty [after 1763] lies in the fact that now whenever Kant attends to a given subject, he is never occupied with it alone, but requires a justification of the essence of the *type of cognition* through which we are aware of it and which makes it knowable.”

Ganzen, diese vollständige Logik, kann also ihren Platz bei der Unterweisung nur am Ende der gesamten Philosophie haben, da die schon erworbene Kenntnisse derselben und die Geschichte der menschlichen Meinungen es einzig und allein möglich machen, Betrachtungen über den Ursprung ihrer Einsichten sowohl, als ihrer Irrtümer anzustellen, und den genauen Grundriß zu entwerfen, nach welchen ein solches Gebäude der Vernunft dauerhaft und regelmäßig soll aufgeführt werden.<sup>137</sup>

As we shall see, Kant would come to reject the concept of an *organon* entirely.

Here, he not only entertains it, but employs it in his pedagogical vision in a demoncratic manner, suggesting that a new metaphysics may come into being on its basis. As Giorgio Tonelli has made exhaustively clear, this usage of the *terminus technicus* “organon” is among the first distinctive mentions in Kant’s corpus.<sup>138</sup> In the preceding passage, Kant divides between “general logic” or a *catharticon*, a “purifier” of the understanding, and local logics or *organa*—tools for the investigation of specific slices of the phenomenal (the logics of “disciplines”).<sup>139</sup> Tonelli notes that this particular *organon*—for metaphysics—can only come at the end of philosophy, but there is more to the story than this. For it belongs to the nature of this particular *organon* to be not simply a purifier of the understanding but its fulfillment. Since metaphysics is the study of the “most general predicates of being,” its specific logic is not merely also the most general—it is the meeting point *of the specific and the general*. It is the “manner of application” of the two classes to each other. The desired *organon* would be what the philosophies Kant was weaned on failed to investigate: where method and being could be one. In addition to having the formal characteristics necessary for metaphysical warrant, the *organon*

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<sup>137</sup> M. Immanuel Kants Nachricht von der Einrichtung seiner Vorlesungen in dem Winterhalbenjahre, von 1765-1766,” in Immanuel Kant, *Vorkritische Schriften bis 1768/2 (Werkausgabe Band I/II). Band II*, ed. Wilhelm Weischedel (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1960), pp. 905-917, here 912-13.

<sup>138</sup> Giorgio Tonelli, *Critique/Logic*, see pp. 37 ff.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

imagined here is also synthetic.<sup>140</sup> This key term will play a role throughout Kant's career (and throughout our investigation here). Indeed, in this passage, the *organon* comes close to the formal definition of "organ": a special logic is meant not only to inform us of the nature of the discipline over which it has jurisdiction, but is also supposed to supply the synthetic principle by which we move from representation to action (in the sciences, the pragmatic "action" is usually judgment). Thus, Kant separates between the type of logic we mean when we say that P and Not-P cannot obtain simultaneously, and that type of logic we mean when we say that there is a "logic" to, for example, sartorial selection or "modernity." While the first type of logic serves as adjudicator of judgments and nothing more (has only a negative use), the second type, which Kant thinks is operative in each discipline, serves as the fulcrum from which we pass to reflection on the method of a discipline to its performance. Thus the conceptual proximity of the *organ* and the *organon*: each is a function, both organizing or synthesizing material and containing rules for that organization. Liminality, even the pre-critical Kant contributed to the metaphorology of the organ.

In the 1760s, Kant never explicitly brought these two terms together.<sup>141</sup> But in establishing this terminological basis on which to consider the question of metaphysical methodology, Kant opened what I will call a "methodological field" or a distinct genre of philosophy to which Romantic metaphysics bears a familial resemblance.<sup>142</sup> Metaphysical

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<sup>140</sup> Paul Guyer points to synthesis as one of Kant's perennial concerns, even before the development of the Critical philosophy. See Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 1-25.

<sup>141</sup> As we shall see, he never truly considered them side by side. But in the critical period, they were brought into an unmistakable methodological proximity, the broader contour of which is visible in the early work.

<sup>142</sup> Thus, in a debate focused on whether the movement from *Criticism* to *German Idealism* was "internal" (Robert Pippin) or "external" (Paul Guyer), I turn to the early Kant to show that possibilities were opened up in the buildup to the Critical system which were capitalized on by the next generation.

investigation needed an *organon*, one it lacked. This *organon* would be synthetic and specific to metaphysics, meaning it would provide the means to see the general in the particular. Kant was increasingly led to the problem of judgment to fill out the formal characterization he had offered of the desired instrument.

It is characteristic of the pre-critical Kant to maintain that judgment is the paradigmatic form of cognition.<sup>143</sup> Kant's targets were Crusius and Wolff<sup>144</sup>; and in spite of the wide differences between them on metaphysical and theological grounds, Kant managed, as he would later do with Hume and Leibniz, to critique them on a common, deep-seated methodological point. While Crusius held that some sentences were true but indemonstrable, and Wolff held that all truths were derivable from the proper highest premise, Kant pointed to their common failing to investigate the means by which they claimed to know. Neither had an elaborated argumentative doctrine of judgment, or rather, of judgment in operation. What warrant was there for judgmental claims? How did judgments interact with their putative objects? The investigation of the forms of judgment

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<sup>143</sup> I am not hereby saying that the full consequences of the "methodological clue" (that the "I think" is potentially precedent to any cognition we can have) of the First Critique were clear to Kant in the 1760s. Quite the contrary: I think that the clue's ramifications were *never* fully exploited, as we shall see. *Falsche Spitzfindigkeit* makes the general point clear: Kant is focused on the middle term between inferences and concepts: judgments, or the capacity to judge: the complete concept requires no *other* "Grundkraft der Seele" than the distinct does, and "eben so leicht fällt es auch in die Augen, daß *Verstand* und *Vernunft*, d.i. das Vermögen, deutlich zu erkennen, und dasjenige, Vernunftschlüsse zu machen, keine verschiedene *Grundfähigkeiten* sein. Beide bestehen im Vermögen zu urteilen; wenn man aber mittelbar urteilt, so schließt man." (Kant, *Vorkritische Schriften II*, p. 612) And so, similarly, "daß die obere Erkenntniskraft schlechterdings nur auf dem Vermögen zu urteilen beruhe. Demnach wenn ein Wesen urteilen kann, so hat es die obere Erkenntnisfähigkeit." This is used to deny that animals can have distinct concepts, because their distinctness is not merely an external quality. A32: "Nicht darin besteht die Deutlichkeit des Begriffs, daß dasjenige, was ein Merkmal vom Dinge ist, klar vorgestellt werde, sondern daß es *als* ein Merkmal des Dinges erkannt werde." "Ich gehe noch weiter und sage: es ist ganz was anders, Dinge von einander *unterscheiden*, und den *Unterschied* der Dinge *erkennen*. Das letztere ist nur durch Urteilen möglich..." Kant, *Vorkritische Schriften II*, pp. 612-13)

<sup>144</sup> AA XXVIII, p. 5. Kant holds that some propositions are unprovable (Crusius), but they are few. Wolff wants to prove the unprovable, and Crusius makes too many propositions into unprovable ones.

alongside the search for an *organon*: these elements, albeit the latter a failure, accompanied Kant throughout his career.<sup>145</sup>

This program is clear in *Der einzig mögliche Beweis* (1763),<sup>146</sup> where Kant frames his debate in the terms of rationalism and eclecticism. Kant here confronts the Wolffian doctrine that being is the complement or completion (*Ergänzung*) of possibility, asking what determining factors complement possibility in order to make its object real. Baumgarten, according to Kant, had filled this in with predicates: the possible differs from the real by an “inner determination” in which predicates are superadded to the possible, increasing it. Kant responds that this is vague: the addition of predicates is precisely what occurs in the possible (that is, in our judgmental consideration), and offers no proof whatsoever of being.<sup>147</sup> Crusius has fared no better, however, in proposing that every existing object must have a time and a place: Kant brushes this off by pointing out that this is true of possibles as well: the “eternal Jew Ahasverus” is “without a doubt a

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<sup>145</sup> This problematic has been treated by Dieter Henrich, “Kants Denken 1762/3” in *Studien zu Kants Philosophischer Entwicklung* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1967), pp. 9-39. He writes summarily that “Alle Urteile stehen unter dem Formalprinzip der Identität. Die Beziehung der Ursache zur Wirkung kann aber aus diesem Prinzip nicht verstanden werden. Sätze über Realgründe können also nicht solche Sätze sein, in denen einem Subjekt mit dem Charakter der Ursache ein Prädikat mit dem Charakter der Wirkung beigelegt wird. Sie sind vielmehr Sätze, in denen einem Subjekt, das noch gar nicht als Ursache gedacht werden darf, das Prädikat zugesprochen wird, Ursache einer gewissen Wirkung zu sein. In dieser Interpretation ist die Relation des Realgrundes kein spezieller Fall unter der Grundbedingung der formalen Relation in jedem Urteil. Sie ist nur ein Begriff, ein Prädikat, das gewissen Sachverhalten zugesprochen werden kann. Ihnen dies Prädikat zusprechen heißt behaupten, daß sie in der Relation des Realgrundes zu anderen Gegenständen stehen.” (p. 32) Henrich thus shows that Kant was already aware, in the 1760s, of the necessary contribution of judgments to truth-claims. When we claim that one thing causes another, we are *applying a universal concept* (causality itself) to a predicate. The location of this internally judgmental activity as a problem for philosophy is the contribution of the early Kant to rationalism—and an early sign of his impending successful attack on that system.

<sup>146</sup> This essay, which deals with proofs of God, contains a prologue on judgment to which I will restrict myself here. For the scope and argumentation of the larger essay see Martin Schönfeld, *The Philosophy of the Young Kant: The Precritical Project* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 219 ff.

<sup>147</sup> Kant, *Vorkritische Schriften II*, pp. 635-6.

possible human.”<sup>148</sup> None of these marks (*Merkmale*) is sufficient to show that an object is, and is not merely in potential.

These polemics are meant to justify the thesis of *Der einzig mögliche Beweis*: “Das Dasein ist gar kein Prädikat oder Determination von irgend einem Dinge.”<sup>149</sup> All of the properties of a being, even ones like position and time, can be thought together and of a single being without deciding if it exists or not. Thus it cannot be merely the addition of a predicate that makes something exist.

On the one hand, this raises a serious question about the nature of being, and if Kant had been prepared to try questions of ontology on the terms set by his predecessors, perhaps he would have given a definition. But on the other, this is precisely what he did not do—instead, he focused his ontological investigation on a different problem: *what is being in judgment?*<sup>150</sup> With this question, Kant has shifted the grounds of ontological debate: rather than defining or describing being, ontology must now include a reflectively judgmental assessment of its own justification. This methodological requirement is the most general version of what is often called Kant’s reduction of metaphysics to epistemology. What is important to see is that he is not merely taking up the position that we do not know what being is: he is encapsulating the question of the knowledge of things in the question of the means of that knowledge. Thus, the first question to be answered is the one about judgment, and Kant answers it as follows:

Das Dasein ist die absolute Position eines Dinges und unterscheidet sich dadurch auch von jeglichem Prädikate, welches als ein solches jederzeit bloss beziehungsweise auf ein ander Ding gesetzt wird. Der Begriff der Position oder Setzung ist völlig einfach, und mit dem vom Sein überhaupt einerlei. Nun kann etwas als bloß beziehungsweise gesetzt, oder

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<sup>148</sup> Kant, *Vorkritische Schriften II*, p. 636.

<sup>149</sup> Kant, *Vorkritische Schriften II*, p. 630.

<sup>150</sup> Kant, *Vorkritische Schriften II*, p. 631: “Es ist aber das Dasein in denen Fällen, da es im gemeinen Redegebrauch als ein Prädikat vorkömmt, nicht so wohl ein Prädikat von dem Dinge selbst, als vielmehr von dem Gedanken, den man davon hat.”

besser bloß die Beziehung (respectus logicus) von etwas als einem Merkmal zu einem Dinge gedacht werden, und denn ist das Sein, das ist die Position dieser Beziehung nichts als der Verbindungsbegriff in einem Urteile. Wird nicht bloß diese Beziehung, sondern die Sache an und vor sich selbst gesetzt betrachtet, so ist dieses Sein so viel als Dasein.<sup>151</sup>

Reality as a judgmental category is “thesis,” and in this respect is not comparable to any other predicate (which can be attached to the posited object). Being (*Sein*) is general positing, while the local positing of a characteristic or a predicate makes the original being into the background against which the synthetic activity of reality-positing works its limited effect. When this relation is established and considered as a whole, the result is *Dasein*.<sup>152</sup> The positing, limiting, and resultant reality-effect in judgment is thus the analysis by which we must get at ontological questions. There is no ontology except in the form of judgment, and thus the search for a scientific ontology must go by way of judgment.

Yet he has not determined precisely what conditions count as canonical for that judgment’s validity. The question of synthesis still includes the possibility of an *organon* for metaphysics, one functionally similar to the organ. In Blumenberg’s terms, Kant has not yet given up on metaphysics in favor of metaphors.<sup>153</sup> Criticism was only one possible narrowing of the methodological field of the pre-critical vision, one favoring a metaphors of the *organ(on)* to the exclusion of its potential metaphysics.

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<sup>151</sup> Kant, *Vorkritische Schriften II*, p. 632.

<sup>152</sup> This process is reflected in the *KdrV* in the categories of quality: the logical functions of quality (“affirming,” “negating,” and “infinite”)—at B95/A70—become, in transcendental logic, reality, negation, and limitation, the third of which is a combination of the first two— B106/A80.

<sup>153</sup> Note such hopeful statements as the following, from *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, usually taken to be the most “critical” of the “pre”-critical works: “Wir müssen also warten, bis wir vielleicht in der künftigen Welt durch neue Erfahrungen neue Begriffe von denen uns noch verborgenen Kräften in unserm denkenden Selbst werden belehrt werden... dass es wohl am ratsamsten sei, wenn sie sich zu gedulden beliebten, bis sie werden dahin kommen.” (AA II 373). The work speaks, of course, of metaphysics as the science of the “limits” of human cognition—“In so fern ist die Metaphysik eine Wissenschaft von den Grenzen der menschlichen Vernunft...” (AA II, p. 368)—but it is not yet clear what limits, and whether that limiting is final for our cognition.



## A New *Organon*? Lambert's Material Principles and the End of the *Organon* for Metaphysics

In 1764, Johann Heinrich Lambert published his *Neues Organon*, defining:

Die Natur eines Organons bringt es an sich mit, daß es in jeden Theilen der menschlichen Erkenntniß, und daher in jeden Wissenschaften angewandt werden könne, und daß man in dem Gebrauche desselben eine Fertigkeit erlangen müsse, wenn man nicht zurücke bleiben will.... Diese Voraussetzung ist um desto natürlicher, weil ein Organon, so weit man es auch in den Wissenschaften bringt, immer aufs neue anwendbar ist.<sup>154</sup>

An *organon*—the tool for a discipline—is essentially a matter of application, indeed of invention, proceeding always synthetically to the new. It is a necessity for the practitioner because it bridges the gap between theoretical and pragmatic knowledge.

In the case of Lambert, the *organon* should help us to bridge the gap Kant was struggling with: we should arrive at a genetic picture of the categories of human understanding, including our knowledge of the material world, and that picture should put our knowledge on sure speculative footing.<sup>155</sup> Indeed, in doing so, Lambert included a class of judgments that would become paramount for Kant, a class he too had been probing in the 1760s with relatively little progress: “material” judgments, or those judgments which did not stand under the principle of contradiction.

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<sup>154</sup> Johann Heinrich Lambert, *Neues Organon*, “Vorrede,” (pages unnumbered).

<sup>155</sup> Beck notes (*Early German Philosophy*, p. 404) that Lambert had described the addition of intuition and construction to philosophical method in a letter to Kant of 3 February 1766 (X, 64, *Kants ges. Schriften*). Lambert had read Euclid and realized that his method differed from Wolff's precisely with respect to the initial inclusion of intuitive *materials* in his constructions. He thus meant to combine genetic method (Locke) and analysis (Leibniz/Wolff), thinking he would arrive either way at simple concepts. Beck writes of Crusius, Lambert, and Tetens collectively: “Perhaps their most important contribution, therefore, was to use openly a kind of connection between concepts which Wolff had used surreptitiously but which Hume seemed to show to be impossible.” (p. 412) Crusius and Lambert realized there was a class of necessary judgments not based on the principle of non-contradiction. They could “not be thought otherwise.” “But neither Crusius nor Lambert nor the young Kant knew how to establish necessary judgments which were not logically grounded in the laws of identity and contradiction, how they could be systematically discovered, or how to justify their application to reality.” (p. 421)

Kant had already very early separated between “logical” and “material” truths, and indeed sought a principle to unite them.<sup>156,157</sup> He thus recognized that Lambert’s efforts were connected to his, for Lambert had sought a manner—or better, a tool—for understanding the application of judgments and concepts and intuitions to their putative objects. He called this tool an *organon*. Lambert began a short correspondence with Kant, one which, while not producing the intended collaboration between the authors, bears the traces of a sharpening of Kant’s notion of the “material” of judgments, and shows us the historical reason for his rejection of the term *organon* in the *KdrV*.

On 13 November 1765 Lambert wrote to Kant, acknowledging the overlap between their methodological projects. Having read Kant’s *Der einzige mögliche Beweis* (and having clearly focused on the material I have presented above), Lambert addressed the issue of the application and origin or the non-logical elements of our judgments: we must indeed seek amongst the first principles of human cognition, and

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<sup>156</sup> Crusius’s had been found lacking, although his virtue was at least to have addressed the issue. Crusius uses the measure, “was ist nicht anders als wahr denken kann, das ist wahr.” Kant agrees with him that many “material” conditions of truth have been passed over by the Wolffians, but points out that this is not a Grund but only a rule for determining what is true. See Kant, *Vorkritische Schriften II*, pp. 765-7.

<sup>157</sup> Already in the *Nova Dilucidatio* (1755), Kant had marked out this problematic: “Vires certe spirituum et earum ad ultiores perfectiones perennatura progressio hac lege exemptae esse videntur. Sed, quod mihi quidem persuasum est, eidam adstrictae sunt. Procul dbio infinita, quae semper animae interne praesto est, quanquam obscura admodum totius universi perceptio, quicquid cogitationibus postmodum maiore luce perfundendis inesse debet realitatis, iam in se continet, et mens attentionem tantummodo postmodum quibusdam advertendo, dum aliquibus parem detrahit gradum, illas intensiori lumine collustrans, maiori in dies potitur cognitione, non ambitum quidem realitatis absolutae extendens, (quippe materiale idearum omnium e nexu cum universo profectum manet idem), sed formale, quod consistit in notione combinatione earum vel diversitati vel conenientiae applicata attentione, varie certe permutatur.”

[“Gewiß scheinen die Kräfte der Geister und ihre andauernde Steigerung zu weiteren Vollkommenheiten von diesem Gesetz ausgenommen zu sein. Aber, nach meiner Überzeugung wenigstens, sind sie daran gebunden. Zweifellos enthält der unendliche Begriff des ganzen Alls, der der Seele immer innerlich, wengleich nur dunkel gegenwärtig ist, schon alles in sich, was den Gedanken, auf die später ein größeres Licht fallen soll, an Realität innewohnen muß, und die Erkenntniskraft gewinnt, indem sie später die Aufmerksamkeit lediglich einigen zuwendet und, während sie anderen den gleichen Grad entzieht, sie mit einem stärkeren Licht beleuchte, eine täglich größere Erkenntnis, wobei sie zwar nicht den Umfang der unbedingten Realität ausdehnt (denn das Materiale aller Vorstellungen, das aus der Verknüpfung mit dem All hervorgegangen ist, bleibt dasselbe), aber das Formale, das in der Vereinigung der Begriffe und der auf ihre Verschiedenheit oder Übereinstimmung gerichteten Aufmerksamkeit besteht, gewiß mannigfach verändert wird.”] (*Vorkritische Schriften I*, pp. 478/80//479/81.)

... zwar nicht nur die *Principia*, welches von der Form hergenommene Gründe sind, sondern auch die *Axiomata*, die von der Materie selbst hergenommen werden müssen, und eigentlich nur bey den einfachen Begriffen, als die für sich nicht widersprechend und für sich gedenkbar sind, vorkommen, und die Postulata, welche allgemeine und unbedingte Möglichkeiten der Zusammensetzung und Verbindung der einfachen Begriffe angeben. Von der Form allein kommt man zu keener Materie, und man bleibt im idealen, und in bloßen Terminologien stecken, wenn man sich nicht um das erste und für sich Gedenkbare der Materie oder des obiectiuen Stoffes der Erkenntnis umsieht.<sup>158</sup>

Lambert's attempt to agree with Kant reveals two terminological faultlines with methodological consequences, pointing up both the true openness of Kant's early systematic writings and his departure from Lambert's approach. On the one hand, the problem of the "material" in judgments is a matter of true agreement between the two thinkers: it is not obvious which principles can legitimately be used in such judgments. The obvious need to exclude the principles of logic was already in the rationalist tradition—but what other principle (or *axioms*) could be used?<sup>159</sup> Lambert suggested the answer should be sought in judgmental syntax<sup>160</sup>: the way we produce and synthesize "simple concepts" (imagined, with Locke, as immediate *qualia*, like extension, duration, existence, motion, etc) is our true source—our true instrument—for legitimizing cognitive claims.

On the one hand, this system or *organon* addressed a problem Kant had identified as unaddressed across the spectrum of contemporary philosophy: the problem of the forms of judgment insofar as they were applied to "material" and not merely other judgments or concepts. Indeed, it seems Kant was prepared to pursue this path a great

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<sup>158</sup> AA X 52.

<sup>159</sup> For a general account of the particular categories in the pre-critical period, see Heinz Heimsoeth, "Zur Herkunft und Entwicklung von Kants Kategorientafel," *Kant-Studien Ergänzungsheft* 100 (1970), 109-32.

<sup>160</sup> He uses this term in the same letter (AA X 64-66), where he puts the problem in the following words: "Wenn auch die Form schlechthin keine Materie bestimmt, so bestimmt sie doch die Anordnung derselben." Proceeding from "simple concepts," Lambert claims that the possibility of their connection must be included within them. Thus, the genetic investigation of these simples and the manners of their connection will be the *Organon* itself, determining what is true (alethiology), separating truths and falsehoods in perception (phenomenology), determining word-use and the rules for symbolic cognition (semiotics), and (chronologically first, and closest to Kant's concerns), establishing the general rules of thought (dianoiology).

distance. Yet he perceived something else, yet another hidden assumption—in fact, the same assumption merely transferred to the area both men thought might hold the solution. This hidden assumption was that somehow this judgmental syntax also could justify the isomorphism it claimed between the concepts it dealt in and their real-world referents. While Lambert had gone to great trouble to analyze just that piece of the rationalist puzzle Kant thought undertreated, he had simply put the assumption Kant wanted addressed into that syntax: the *organon* synthesized, producing real metaphysical knowledge, but it did so—as Kant would later put it—dogmatically.

This dogmatism is the reason for Kant’s rejection of the very term *organon* in the *KdrV*. And indeed, by the time Kant came to name this problem left unaddressed by Lambert (the problem, that is, of the legitimate application of judgment to the material of experience), he had a new term for it, under which a new concept of the “material” was housed. The term was “transcendental logic,” and the conception of the “material” had been reduced to the “material of sensation” as it was received by the cognizer and (pre)organized into *intuitions* (*Anschauungen*).

What Kant calls “transcendental logic”<sup>161</sup> is that specific logic for which the canon of the understanding (which we are about to explore) replaces the *organon* of reason (Lambert’s dogmatic judgmentalism), and thus the point at which the metaphysical reduction of Criticism is performed—as Kant puts it, where “the proud name of ontology giving way to a mere analytic of the understanding.”<sup>162</sup> But this moment of grandiose theoretical creation—a confluence of efforts with effects almost

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<sup>161</sup> Defined in the *Notes*: “Transcendental logic deals with cognitions of the understanding with respect to their content, but without determination with regard to the way in which objects are given.” (This is from the Duisburg Nachlass, note 4675, 20 May 1775 (10:182). Immanuel Kant, *Notes and Fragments*, trans. Paul Guyer et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 163.

<sup>162</sup> *KdrV* B303/A247.

literally unparalleled in the history of philosophy—really included two innovations which, for the next generation, did not seem necessarily linked. On the one hand, the efforts to produce criticism had shown that attention to the dynamic interactions between concepts and judgments were a condition of serious metaphysical efforts. And indeed, as the conversation with Lambert had shown, analysis was not enough: some warrant was needed for the ontological security of these investigations. On the other hand, the Critical system included a specific source for that security: the intuition, modeled on the space and time of the geometers and astronomers, but formed in fact as a primitive element of our own cognition.<sup>163</sup> Thus, when Kant came to reject Lambert’s *organon* of reason for his own “canon of the understanding,” he was combining a generic philosophical creation (the pre-critical analysis of concepts and judgments combined with a sense of the need for warrant) with a determinate version of that genre—one we might call “intuitionism.” Although the pre-critical writings were unavailable to them, it is a strange achievement of the Romantics to have separated out these two elements and to have pursued the original project on different terms. They thus expanded the genre of “Criticism” without agreeing with Kant’s own version of it.

### **The Canon of the Understanding**

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<sup>163</sup> This doctrine is what Kant calls “transcendental idealism,” the notion that time and space are the *a priori* or *necessary* forms of our intuitions, but have no (certain) claim on whatever the “material” of sensation is, i.e. cannot be said by us to be a necessary element of things-in-themselves. I have found Michael Friedman most helpful on this issue: *Kant and the Exact Sciences* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 1-55.

According to Paul Guyer, the signal contribution of the *KdrV* is the “invention of the understanding,” *der Verstand*.<sup>164</sup> What then *is* then understanding, and why does Kant attach to it a *canon* rather than an *organon*? As we have seen, the *organon* was historically articulated as a dumb instrument, a tool to which the problems of method in metaphysics had been merely transferred. Kant’s own attempt to solve this problem went, after 1769, by way of the elaboration of a fundamentally different kind of knowing he came to call intuition (*Anschauung*).

The separation of two “roots” of our cognition<sup>165</sup> was, in fact, a response to rationalism, for which, as we have seen, knowing exists in a continuum rising from obscurity to adequacy. Starting in 1770, however, with his *Inaugural Dissertation*, Kant disagreed: presentational knowledge of concrete phenomena was a different basic source (*Grundquelle*) for knowledge than the concepts and judgments he had been so focused on in the 60s. It is important to see that this is a specification of the search for “material principles” in judgments. Indeed, the *Dissertation* is famous for just this, the first statement of “transcendental idealism,” the doctrine that the forms of intuition (space and time) are necessary but ultimately cognizer-based elements of phenomena, not of “things” as they “are” or *noumena*. In one sense, Kant is saying to Lambert (obliquely) “yes, *basic concepts*, unanalyzables: but why are we calling these “concepts” at all?”<sup>166</sup> This is a moment in which Kant departs from his rationalist tendencies and training,

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<sup>164</sup> See Guyer, *Claims*, pp. 18 ff.

<sup>165</sup> The “transcendental logic” opens with: “Unsre Erkenntnis entspringt aus zwei Grundquellen des Gemüts, deren die erste ist, die Vorstellungen zu empfangen (die Rezeptivität der Eindrücke), die zweite das Vermögen, durch diese Vorstellungen einen Gegenstand zu erkennen (Spontaneität der Begriffe); durch die erstere wird uns ein Gegenstand *gegeben*, durch die zweite wird dieser im Verhältnis auf jene Vorstellung (also bloße Bestimmung des Gemüts) *gedacht*. Anschauung und Begriffe machen also die Elemente aller unsrer Erkenntnis aus, so daß weder Begriffe, ohne ihnen auf einige Art korrespondierende Anschauung, noch Anschauung ohne Begriffe, ein Erkenntnis abgeben *können*.” (*KdrV* B74/A50)

<sup>166</sup> Recall that amongst Lambert’s concepts, “duration” and “extension” figure—as they would continue to for Herder, following this middle-phase rationalism.

permanently giving up on the putative rationality of things (while not abandoning our potential rationality). As Giorgio Tonelli has put it, the realization of 1769 was that of the “separation of sensibility from the understanding.”<sup>167</sup> As Tonelli recognizes, Kant is asking a question about the legitimacy of “non-rational” judgments, or judgments not deriving their truth from logical statements. The result is that, in addition to the “syntax” offered by Lambert, there is a “parataxis” offered by another source: the intuition. The intuition functions to offer us the singularity and particularity of the object-world, not, as Tonelli puts it, “well-founded phenomenon” (Leibniz’s *phaenomena bene fundata*) but a “phenomenal *generality*.”<sup>168</sup>

This doctrine of intuition does not solve the problem Kant was asking with Lambert, but it does specify what kind of combinative effort is taking place in “material” judgments. What Kant calls “transcendental logic” or the “canon of the understanding,” is the manner of syntactic judgmental application of concepts to the “material” of intuition. Thus, defining that discipline, Kant writes (much as he had in the *Announcement* of 1765) that there is pure logic—a “catharticon” [*sic*] of the common understanding abstracting from all content in favor of the purely formal—and “applied logic,” the specific logics of different disciplines. Further, there is that mixed breed we identified above as the specific logic of generality itself. That logic is called “transcendental” because it neither deals in mere empirical experiences nor in relations of ideas: it treats the possibility of the

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<sup>167</sup> Giorgio Tonelli, “Die Umwälzung von 1769 bei Kant,” *Kant-Studien* (54) 1963, pp. 369-75, here p. 369. Tonelli’s article is deservedly a classic in the field, but tends to treat the progression from “material principles” to “intuitions” as an analytical achievement rather than a limiting specification, as I think here.

<sup>168</sup> Tonelli, “Umwälzung,” pp. 371-2. In the *Inaugural Dissertation*, Kant completes the intuitionist insight, the concrete condition of possibility of knowledge for which he had been searching. And yet this condition is never the instrument for which he had been searching. The *organon* becomes the *canon* in the *KdrV*, where in the *Inaugural Dissertation* pure intellectual knowledge is still entertained precisely in this function: “Mathesis itaque pura, omnis nostrae sensitivae cognitionis formam exponens, est cuiuslibet intuitivae et distinctae cognitionis organon...” (AA II, pp. 397-8)

application of the latter to the former.<sup>169</sup> There will ultimately be twelve functions allowing this application, and they are dubbed “the categories.”

Transcendental logic is the name for the discipline of the understanding itself, and its content is the “canon” of that understanding. Kant takes the word “canon” in its traditional sense—“body of positive law”—and thereby restricts what he had found in Lambert to be a synthetic rational *organon*. This reduction is at stake in the metaphorology of epigenesis. That metaphor is, in fact, a characterization of the status of the canon: autonomously truthful, fully legitimate, and given in its form without rational insight into its origin. Judgments gain validity through the canon, the means by which categories functionally unify concepts and judgments. And this sort of activity is the only kind which counts as cognition: we are, in fact, capable of many other types of intellectual and volitional activities (indeed, we are capable in this way because our truly cognitive, or constitutive, activity is limited thus)—but they not make up the world we experience, they do not “give nature the law,” in the famous formulation. That work is done by the epigenetically metaphorized bearer of “being” itself: the understanding. As we saw above, that understanding is autonomous and self-formed, yet its form, being given, is “generically pre-formed.” Where, in the *KU* Kant approvingly reproaches Blumenbach for giving a name to problem without analyzing that problem—thereby shifting a charge to Blumenbach that Blumenbach himself had leveled against Wolff—Kant seems to reproduce the problem in the intertwined realm of epistemology and ontology here. The understanding’s form—the categories ruled by the unity of the “I

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<sup>169</sup> That is, it treats not the content of intuitions (immanent) nor the potentially transcendent “ideas” of reason, but the way in which concepts play a role in the establishment of experience itself, that is: “nur die Erkenntnis, daß diese Vorstellungen gar nicht empirischen Ursprungs sind, und die Möglichkeit, wie sie sich gleichwohl a priori auf Gegenstände der Erfahrung beziehen können.” (*KdrV* B81/A56)



think” and in exclusive application to intuitions—is the law of cognition, but its origin remains obscure.

### **Canonical Cognition: The Deduction Between the Void and Brute Fact**

The canon-law of the understanding provided legitimacy but relinquished the principled search for reason’s grounding at precisely that moment where it touched upon the real: neither at the pole of the “thing in itself” nor at the ultimate origin of the intellect could determinate grounds be given for or by the intellect. The human cognizer, as the anthropological discourse of the 18<sup>th</sup> century had it, was a “middle-being,” caught between the twin unrationalizable extremes of the noumenal “world” and the noumenal “soul.” This, in fact, was the message of the Transcendental Deduction itself: between the sempiternal fact of judgment (the “I think” with its capacity to accompany any cognition) and the synthetic unity<sup>170</sup> of intuitions as they are received contingently by us cognizers, the understanding does its legitimate unifying work. This is the realm of the properly human judgment about the world—the answer to the problem of “material” judgments, written as a judgmental capacity, indeed, *the* judgmental human capacity.<sup>171</sup> That

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<sup>170</sup> The “I think” establishes “analytic unity”—that the whole of my perception is included under the mark of that apperceptive judgment—while the intuited matter presents a “synthetic” unity, unified amongst itself and genuinely informative for the apperceptive being (I). As Paul Guyer puts it: “He then argues that the “I think” of pure apperception “must be able to accompany all my representations,” and that it too must be the product of an “act of spontaneity,” or more specifically express not merely an analytic unity among my representations – that is, that they each severally belong to me – but a synthetic unity among them, that they each belong to me because of some substantive connection among all of them, which is itself the product of an act of synthesis on the part of my understanding (§16, B131–3).” (Paul Guyer, “The Deduction of the Categories: The Metaphysical and Transcendental Deductions,” in ed. Paul Guyer, *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 118-51), here p. 140.

<sup>171</sup> The reading that emphasizes this element of Kant’s doctrine most is Béatrice Longuenesse’s in her *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the Transcendental Analytic in the Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. Charles T. Wolfe (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). Her focus is based

capacity, whatever its origin, is characterized as the “epigenesis of pure reason,” a designation of the fundamental spontaneity of the capacity to judge (the understanding) as the type-basis on which experience (combinations of concept and intuition) would “develop.” This term thus places experience foremost in the methodological register—at least one of Kant’s lines of thinking is simply devoted to the analysis of experience—and curbs investigation into the ends that form this experiential middle. In biology, the ultimate source of type is not knowable—in epistemology, the same is true of the ultimate source of our sensibility (in particular) and our categories. Critical procedure must start *medias in res*, taking the formative middle as its most basic object of investigation.

That fundamentally middle status was curiously formed as an inheritance from the 17<sup>th</sup>-century’s logical tradition. When we attend to Kant’s final table of capacities (*Vermögen*), we find that, after “intuition” (the independence of which had been championed by Baumgarten, but the specific constitution of which was original to Criticism), the “understanding” and “reason” are written in accord with a discourse stretching back to the *Port Royal Logic*. Here we find—as we do with Kant—that the “understanding” consists in simple propositions, essentially the predication of concepts one to the other, while “reason” deals in syllogisms, in the reflective action of judgments on judgments. As in the course of the *KdrV* we leave the realm of the simple, constitutive judgments making up the understanding, we enter a realm of complex syllogistic judgmental stylings fundamentally connected to that simpler realm but also removed

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on Kant’s definition of the understanding as *das Vermögen zu urteilen*. I share her sense that the epigenesis metaphor reflects this inscrutable combinative capacity, but I think the Romantics were less than satisfied with what she calls the “human standpoint.” They were fascinated by the judgmentalism, but thought that it was in direct conflict with the doctrine of intuition. See also Longuenesse’s *Kant on the Human Standpoint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), esp. pp. 17-81.

from it by the absence of that element, intuition, which had conferred secure status on the former. Kant calls this unintuitable realm that of the “ideas”—a basically “dialectical” or truthless place which can only be regulated, not known. This was his name for those disciplines—rational psychology, cosmology, and rational theology—which were known, in the Wolffian system, as “special metaphysics.”

But it is the transition to that realm of ideas that interests us here, for it is at that moment, where the possibility of intuition falls away and the formal similarity of judgments, whether those of the understanding or those of reason, comes to light.

The *KdrV* is a notoriously difficult book, but there is one confused issue that derives, I think, from the “specification”-thesis I have offered above. The Transcendental Deduction is plagued by a central difficulty: it is meant to provide information about how we legitimately separate between “objectively valid” and other types of judgments. Having stated in the lead-up to the argument that the understanding is itself the “capacity for judging,” and that the categories are the functions of unification within that judgmental sphere, Kant has circumscribed his argument with a focus on judgment that, as we have seen, goes back to the 1760s. The unifying functions (Kant groups twelve categories under four headings: quantity, quality, relation, and modality) must be seen, in the course of the argument, to apply to *any and all experience* we might have. Because the “I think” is attachable to any cognitive content, Kant is at pains to describe the relationship of the categories to the “I think” (which is termed the “transcendental unity of apperception”—which means, in English, the unity of consciousness which is a condition for our awareness of anything at all). As Paul Guyer has observed, the different versions of the Deduction follow different strategies. The B edition of 1787, however,

attempts to prove that this link between the functions of unity and the sempiternality of the unity of apperception conditions all our experience, intuitive or not (although non-intuitive experience doesn't count as constitutive knowledge of the world).<sup>172</sup> Here the argument hits a kind of snag, however: if that link operates (and operates legitimately) outside the intuitive sphere, then the "objective validity" of its claims seems to derive ultimately from judgment itself, in its connection to consciousness (in its judgmental, apperceptive form). This leaves us, to use contemporary language, "spinning in a void," unsure on the question of to what our judgments might apply. Kant never goes the full way towards this argument, as, for example, the "Refutation of Idealism" shows, arguing for the necessity of the presented object-world for the very syntax of judgment we are otherwise exploring in itself.<sup>173</sup> On the other hand, if this presentation-in-intuition, and

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<sup>172</sup> As Paul Guyer explains: "But Kant's language throughout the Transcendental Deduction, even if not in these initial programmatic statements, makes it clear that the goal of the argument is to establish more than that the pure concepts of the understanding that are discovered through reflection on the logical structure of judgments have "objective reality" in the sense of having some legitimate application, which could easily be demonstrated by showing that we have at least some knowledge of objects somewhere in our experience; in fact, what Kant wants to demonstrate is that these concepts necessarily apply to any and all experience that we might have, which is what he actually means by saying that he wants to demonstrate the "objective validity" or "lawfulness" of these concepts... The strategy of the Transcendental Deduction is then to demonstrate that the use of the categories is the necessary condition of transcendental apperception, of the ascription of any of one's representations to the one and the same self that is the subject of all of one's representations. The obscurity of both of Kant's versions of the Deduction, however, arises from the fact that in neither version does Kant execute this strategy very clearly: he does not successfully exploit the "clue" to the discovery of the categories by clearly expounding the connection between apperception and judgment. More precisely, in the first-edition version of the Deduction, Kant omits any explicit account of the connection between apperception and judgment, while in the second edition, clearly having become aware of this problem in the interval, Kant burdens his argument with a problematic conception of judgment itself and an account of the connection between apperception and judgment that undercuts the original premise of the ubiquity of apperception itself." (Guyer, "Transcendental Deduction," pp. 121, 123)

<sup>173</sup> Guyer: "Whatever the details, the Refutation is clearly supposed to work by showing that empirical self-consciousness actually consists in judgments about the relations of one's own experiences in time that in turn depend upon judgments about the temporal relations of external objects distinct from one's own representations of them, and if – following the clue suggested by the relation of the two halves of the second-edition Transcendental Deduction – the empirical self-consciousness of the Refutation is taken to be the empirical realization of the abstract concept of transcendental apperception, then the result of the Refutation would be to demonstrate that apperception ultimately consists in judgments about the self that use the categories and that in turn depend upon judgments about objects outside the self that use the categories. On this account, the difference between transcendental and empirical apperception would not be

not the link between the categories and apperception, is the measure of validity, then the stated argument of the Deduction fails, since its conclusion will only be valid in and because of the nature of our intuitionism. Kant, then, is here forced to make a decision between *judgmentalism* and *intuitionism*—just at the moment when the two are supposed to be epigenetically combined,<sup>174</sup> the absence of a principled knowledge of the origins of the form of the understanding—that is, the absence of a genetic account of the categories themselves—undermines the argument at its apex. If we go the intuitionist route, we get the so-called “schematism” of the next section of the *Analytic*, in which the arguments of the *Aesthetic* cash out: the categories, as they are combined with the conditions of time especially, give rise to fundamental “schemata” which are used to make sense of the world’s lawfulness. The conceptual contribution to experience is secured, but only for a world in which we are finally beings of intuition.

The attractiveness of this argument notwithstanding, it does not respond to the stated intent of the Deduction. It is not trivial that the latter is meant to prove that the

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a distinction between two numerically distinct forms of self-consciousness, but rather the difference between an abstract characterization of the unity of self-consciousness and its concrete realization.” (Guyer, “Transcendental Deduction,” p. 149)

<sup>174</sup> Longuenesse, *Human Standpoint*, p. 29, argues that it is this combinative ability that “generates” the categories from the mixture of intuition’s empirical constraints and the ability to judge spontaneously as such: “What makes the generation of the categories unique is that although they are generated (both as rules for synthesis and as discursive concepts) only under empirical conditions, their content is determined independently of these empirical conditions and, indeed, is an a priori condition for the generation of any representation of empirical objects at all.” This reading seems correct to me—both its metaphorological and systematic consequences were matters of dissatisfaction in the next generation. In *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, she had written: “Where the categories are concerned, I understand this model in the following manner: the categories are the “germ” which is present from the outset in experience, but which only discursive reflection can transform into a “developed organism”—namely, universal concepts governing a system of cognitions according to principles. I have extended the model of epigenesis to the forms of intuition, although Kant does not explicitly use the term in this case. Here, the “germ” is what I have called the “potentiality of form” contained in receptivity and thus in the manifold that it “gives.” The developed organism is the form of sensible intuition or of appearances, “developed” under the influence of both outer affection (impressions) and the affection of spontaneity (the figurative synthesis).” (Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, pp. 221-22, footnote 17.) I think that what is “developed” epigenetically is the judgment’s result: experience. To the extent that Longuenesse is detailing the features of that experience as *a priori* forms that develop from the germ, I am in agreement.

categories apply to all experience of any kind—in fact, this argument grounds the separation between the understanding and reason, since they are on its basis a single capacity applied to different material (intuitions, on the one hand, and judgments themselves on the other). This formal similarity would be undermined if the categories were only valid under the conditions of intuition (and this would also arise the suspicion that the categories are empirically derived, which is clearly unallowable). Thus Kant's opposing argument, the one which comes closest to judgmentalism: that even the synthetic unity of intuitions is ultimately grounded in the transcendental unity of apperception. This argument, running as it does the other way, is a re-statement of the early concern that, whatever the content and rules of material judgment (that is, whatever kind of world passes before us and whatever categories we have to apply to it), ultimately, our paradigmatically rational minds control cognition. When we see that our capacity in this respect is essentially a matter of judgment, we see that judgment itself must play the role of truth-warrant if the understanding is to remain autonomous (according to the epigenesis-metaphor). Again, however, this leaves us in danger of “spinning in a void,” a void that cannot be filled out with some source of factual warrant without, as Kant had observed from the beginning, stripping us of our autonomous truth-perceiving faculty, the understanding itself.

Since it is clear that the Romantics approached this problem with judgment and intellect in mind most centrally, I will treat the potential judgmentalism of the *KdrV* here. I realize that I break from Kant in doing so<sup>175</sup>: his *Critique* is literally meant to hang in suspension, as it were, between the organic autonomy of the metaphor of epigenesis and the fixed forms of the categories. The balance is meant to provide a rational system to

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<sup>175</sup> Although Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, might have it otherwise.

explore the empirical world, and to orient ourselves in the non-empirical. Its focus on judgment as the central authority in methodology, however, bore different fruit in the next generation. Thus we can say that, running against the textual grain of Kantian history, the Romantics actually analyzed out the impulse towards judgment-based idealism from the *KdrV*, and abandoned the finalism of intuitionism. In Kantian terms of, this represents a return not to one of the sources of cognition (concepts and intuitions) but to the methodological impulse which treats primarily their unification in judgment. It meant reaching backwards to the impulse that resulted in the specific form of the Critical system, to mine this impulse for new theoretical and pragmatic insights. It meant finding, in the methodological version of the metaphorology of the organ, a metaphysics of organological judgment. The Romantics de-specified the Critical system and located the methodological motivator which had instigated Kant's life-work. And in elaborating a generically related but systematically different philosophy, they drew not only on their own insights, but also on hints, in both Kant and Herder, of the possibility of an organology.

### **The Organ of Judgment: On the Split between the Understanding and Reason**

We have now explored the metaphorology of the organ in two respects, both of which restrict the possibility of organology. In Leibniz, we saw a metaphysical use opening to a metaphor, both of which keep the technological term in the boundaries of a pre-established order, a mere instrument. In Kant, we saw a methodological flirtation with the term *organon*, combining in its very rejection in the *KdrV* with the metaphor of

epigenesis to describe the intellect itself. In its restriction to intuitive experience and its autonomous yet fixedly formed categorical apparatus, this understanding was awarded only a canon, not, as Lambert had wanted, an *organon*. Being was proscribed from judgment, literally written out of cognition itself.

Or was it? On the one hand, Kant had thrown out the traditional category of being as the “thing in itself” as a mere putative assertion, the essence, in fact, of dogmatism.<sup>176</sup> The world in its materiality was unrationalizeable, while our cognition was, up to the generic limitation of the epigenetic understanding, fully rational. On the other hand, the very categories that made up that rationality had to include at least the assertion of being. Kant brought this element into his system under the heading of the categories of “modality,” and they were treated as a special case from the very beginning.

Recall that the categories are not concepts (as in the somewhat misleading phrase, “pure concepts of the understanding”), but rather functions of unification (of concepts and intuitions) in judgment. The categories are literally the instruments of that judgmental apparatus which Kant had found so woefully undertreated in the philosophies he had been weaned on. In the Introduction’s famous distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments, judgment itself is first characterized. Analytic judgments merely analyze their concepts—Kant calls them “explicative.” Synthetic judgments deserve their name because they add information to their components, furthering our knowledge. (Thus the famous formulation of the metaphysical judgment: *synthetic a priori*, or *both*

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<sup>176</sup> It was Jacobi who first drew attention to this problematic, stating famously that he could not enter the Critical system with the thing-in-itself, but could not remain in it without it. See “Über den transzendentalen Idealismus,” appended to *David Hume über den Glauben oder Idealismus und Realismus* (Breslau: Loewe, 1787), pp. 209-30.



informative and necessary.) Here, a surprising formulation occurs: describing the synthetic judgment *a posteriori* that “bodies are heavy,” Kant points out that

Es is also die Erfahrung, worauf sich die Möglichkeit der Synthesis des Prädikats der Schwere mit dem Begriffe des Körpers gründet, **weil beide Begriffe, ob zwar einer nicht in dem andern enthalten ist, dennoch als Teile eines Ganzen, nämlich der Erfahrung, die selbst eine synthetische Verbindung der Anschauungen ist, zu einander, wiewohl nur zufälliger Weise, gehören.**<sup>177</sup>

If we abstract momentarily from the doctrinal point Kant is making (that the *tertium comparationis* of *a posteriori* predication is experience itself), we can notice that the concept of experience in this passage is 1) a matter of judgment and 2) that that judgment operates as a synthetic whole. A *synthetic* whole, however, is no mere “aggregate”: it does not operate according to the mechanical laws of juxtaposition or mere parataxis. Instead, this synthetic whole itself shares a quality with the concept of the organic whole we above saw treated in Kant’s analysis in the *CPJ* of the epigenesis-debate: true synthetic holism attaches to both concepts. A characteristic of internal equilibrium, of necessary connection obtains in both cases. And while the causal model projected within constitutive judgments about the world is paradigmatically mechanical, the relation of parts to wholes within the judgment cannot be. If it were, no synthesis would take place: our “knowledge” of the world would have to be pre-implanted, as it was for Leibniz (so Kant) and for Crusius. That this is not so gives us the hint of a methodology immanent to judgment.

This turn of phrase—it is little more—becomes something like an undercurrent in the argument of the text when Kant approaches the problem of judgment-internal assertion of being, or the categories grouped under the heading “modality.” We saw the

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<sup>177</sup> *KdrV* B12/A8; my emphasis.

roots of this approach in *Der einzig mögliche Beweis*, but here the argument is put in quasi-metaphorical terms that point up a possible *organicity* of judgment itself.

The categories of modality are “problematic, assertoric, apodictic.”<sup>178</sup> Kant immediately marks them as separate:

Die Modalität der Urteile ist eine ganz besondere Funktion derselben, die das Unterscheidende an sich hat, daß sie nichts zum Inhalte der Urteile beiträgt... sondern nur den **Wert der Kopula in Beziehung auf das Denken überhaupt**.<sup>179</sup>

Judgments as to the possibility, existence, or necessity of those things asserted in judgment are both circumscribed as to their dogmatic contents (things-in-themselves are not determined by such judgments) and also express a relationship to the whole of thought. This is (yet) another way of expressing the basic reduction of metaphysical claims that the *Critiques* are meant to systematize: while “being” cannot be determined in any way by cognition, cognition’s rules determine, at some level, the manner of assertion of being itself. Two mereologies, then: that of the synthesis of judgments themselves, and that of the relation of a set of their unifying functions (categories) to the totality of human cognitive activity.

This line of thinking continues when Kant comes to apply the categories to empirical experience in the section on “schematism.” The notion here is that each category generates a set of “schemata” in combination with the strictures of the *a priori* form of intuition for the inner sense (time). These schemata are transcendental: without this overlay of pictures, recognition of individual objects (and judgmental subsumption of the same under concepts—“this is a plate”) could not occur. With respect to modality, the schemata are: 1) possibility as “the agreement of the synthesis of differing representations

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<sup>178</sup> *KdrV* B95/A70.

<sup>179</sup> *KdrV* B99-100/A74; my emphasis.

with the overall conditions of time”; 2) existence as “being in a determinate time”; and 3) necessity as “being (of an object) at all times.”<sup>180</sup> These schemata are meant to determine the *Zeitbegriff* (roughly, the “essence of time-content”<sup>181</sup>) of all possible objects. They express the determining and determinate set of possible relations of judgmental assertion to the whole of cognition (here restricted to intuitive cognition).

Recall that we are, for judgmentalist purposes, abstracting from the content of “time” that here takes the lead in determining the form of the categories. As Kant’s argument continues, he deepens this relationship, establishing a “system of principles” on the basis of the transcendental schematism. These principles (of judgment) fall into “mathematical” (or intuitively determinative)—the categories of quantity and quality—and “dynamic”—the categories of relation and modality. The latter are dynamic because they do not determine the form of our experience but are applied according to rules (regulatively) as the flow of our experience demands. They go, as Kant puts it, to the existence (*das Dasein*) of the objects of experience. The categories of modality are, in this context, the basis for the “postulates of empirical thinking in general.” That is to say, we assert, more or less in a void, the possibility, reality, and necessity of the objects of experience according to the rules of the *a priori* form of time.<sup>182,183</sup> In this context again, Kant writes that:

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<sup>180</sup> *KdrV* B184/A144-5.

<sup>181</sup> *KdrV* B185/A145. Guyer translates “sum total of time” (Kant, *Critique*, p. 276).

<sup>182</sup> Which latter element is supposed to take us out of the void: but as Kant himself puts it, the point of calling them “postulates” is to indicate their independence from empirical experience: “Die Grundsätze der Modalität sind aber nicht objektiv-synthetisch, weil die Prädikate der Möglichkeit, Wirklichkeit und Notwendigkeit den Begriff, von dem sie gesagt werden, nicht im mindesten vermerhen, dadurch daß sie der Vorstellung des Gegenstandes noch etwas hinzusetzen. Da sie aber bleichwohl doch immer synthetisch sind, so sind sie es nur subjektiv, d.i. sie fügen zu dem Begriffe eines Dinges (Realen), von dem sie sonst nichts sagen, die Erkenntniskraft hinzu, worin er entspringt und seinen Sitz hat, so, daß, wenn er bloß im Verstande mit den formalen Bedingungen der Erfahrung in Verknüpfung ist, sein Gegenstand möglich heißt; ist er mit der Wahrnehmung (Empfindung, als Materie der Sinne) im Zusammenhange, und durch

Die Kategorien der Modalität haben das besondere an sich: daß sie den Begriff, dem sie als Prädikate beigefügt werden, als Bestimmung des Objekts nicht im mindesten vermehren, sondern nur das Verhältnis zum Erkenntnisvermögen ausdrücken.<sup>184</sup>

Even in the most intuitionist portion of the *KdrV*, then, Kant continues at the level of his text to assert the doubly mereological nature of judgment and its cognizing agent (its “faculty”), asserting thereby the liminal organicity of his synthetic model of judgment itself.

This argument—or discursive strategy—cashes out only in the opening of the *Transcendental Dialectic*, where Kant explores the transition of cognitive function from constitutive, world-based, intuitively secure judgments to those of a more reflexive nature, judgments about the non-intuitable “absolute wholes” of special metaphysics: the soul, the cosmos, and God.

Where the understanding was defined as the faculty of “rules,” reason is defined as the unifying faculty of “principles.” And indeed, the unity it imposes is not on nature (the understanding has already done this), but on the understanding itself. Its action is to unify and systematize, and its form of knowledge is always proposed as a “cognition

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diesebebe vermittelt des Verstandes bestimmt, so ist das Objekt wirklich; ist er durch den Zusammenhang der Wahrnehmungen nach Begriffen bestimmt, so heißt der Gegenstand notwendig. Die Grundsätze der Modalität also sagen von einem Begriffe nichts anders, als die Handlung des Erkenntnisvermögens, dadurch er erzeugt wird. [Postulat ist bloß die Verfahrensweise des Verstandes in der Setzung eines Begriffes, in der Mathematik.]... So können wir demnach mit eben demselben Rechte die Grundsätze der Modalität postulieren, weil sie ihren Begriff von Dingen überhaupt nicht vermehren, sondern nur die Art anzeigen, wie er überhaupt mit der Erkenntniskraft verbunden wird.” (*KdrV* B286-7/A233-5)

<sup>183</sup> Time is emphasized here because the modalities express the relationship to the “inner sense,” which is characterized by time as transcendental form (where “outer sense” includes space as well). The relation to “cognition in general” can clearly not include space, although that cognition obviously does. In the *Anthropology*, Kant points out that “inner sense” is not, as the outer senses are, characterized by multiple *organs*, but that instead “die Seele ist das Organ des inneren Sinnes.” (AA VII, p. 161). This secularizing gloss points again to the liminally organological character of Kant’s texts. The phrase does not re-occur, and cognitive uses of *organ* in the *Anthropology* are otherwise limited to the literal sense-organs. Cultural uses, especially pertaining to the Bible, are investigated in their relation to Novalis in chapter IV of the present study.

<sup>184</sup> *KdrV* B 266/A219.

from principles... because I here know the particular in the general through concepts.”<sup>185</sup>

This faculty is the metaphysical faculty, then, but it is fundamentally severed from the content it nevertheless works upon in its object (simple judgments of the understanding). Its always failing function is to propose the known (or conceptual) encounter between the particular and the general—which would have been the function of the *organon*, had it not been restricted by intuition. Kant nevertheless proposes that what replaces this desired synthesis of reason (that is, “dialectical” or illusory knowing) retains the form of metaphysical knowledge, applying itself epiphenomenally to the understanding and thinking *in* the understanding (and not beyond it) to the general in the particular. This is possible, indeed, because it is the action of judgment upon judgment: so far as we do not propose the noumenal truth of these second-level judgments, we remain within the “discipline of pure reason.” It is precisely the limited extension of judgments of reason to judgments of the understanding that allows for this curtailed form of “metaphysical” knowledge.<sup>186</sup> Concepts of reason thereby become what Kant dubs “ideas”—necessary unities reason imposes on the rules of the understanding, without any experiential component. Without intuition and the possibility of synthesis, these ideas follow strictly from the form of reason as it is (correctly) disciplined to act upon the understanding, not producing cognition but acting formally metaphysically within that cognition, unifying it and pushing it towards the absolute. In this manner—which opens onto the practical,

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<sup>185</sup> *KdrV* B357/A300.

<sup>186</sup> “Der Verstand mag ein Vermögen der Einheit der Erscheinungen vermittelt der Regeln sein, so ist die Vernunft das Vermögen der Einheit der Verstandesregeln unter Prinzipien. Sie geht also niemals zunächst auf Erfahrung, oder auf irgend einen Gegenstand, sondern auf den Verstand, um den mannigfaltigen Erkenntnissen desselben Einheit a priori durch Begriffe zu geben, welche Vernunftseinheit heißen mag, und von ganz anderer Art ist, als sie von dem Verstande geleistet werden kann.” (*KdrV* B359/A302)

since it connects intentional, rule-based, and potentially free volition with quasi-cognitive acts—reason serves the understanding, in an expanded sense, as a canon:

Ob wir nun gleich von den transzendentalen Vernunftbegriffen sagen müssen: *sie sind nur Ideen*, so warden wir sie doch keinesweges für überflüssig und nichtig anzusehen haben. Denn, wenn schon dadurch kein Objekt bestimmt werden kann, so können sie doch ihm Grunde und unbemerkt dem Verstande **zum Kanon seines ausgebreiteten und einhelligen Gebrauchs dienen**, dadurch er zwar keinen Gegenstand mehr erkennt, als er nach seinen Begriffen erkennen würde, aber doch in dieser Erkenntnis besser und weiter geleitet wird. Zu geschweigen, daß sie vielleicht von den Naturbegriffen zu den praktischen einen Übergang möglich machen, und den moralischen Ideen selbst auf solche Art Haltung und Zusammenhang mit den spekulativen Erkenntnissen der Vernunft verschaffen können.<sup>187</sup>

The promised “transition” occurs first in the “doctrine of method” of the *KdrV* (and then in the *Critique of Practical Reason—KpV*). Here, however, I am interested in the transition proposed from “concept” to “idea,” both occurring in judgmental form (as proposition and syllogism). That there is an expanded *canon of orientation within cognition* already shows us what the critique of general metaphysics (canon of the understanding) implies for special metaphysics: relegation to orienting but necessary unities we must reflectively impose upon our empirical experience. This is the transition to the “practical,” which will be partially re-written in the *KU* (as we shall see in the following chapters, with Hölderlin and Schelling).

Kant here states that the form of reason’s judgment is the syllogism, which imposes a kind of logic on propositions. These can proceed towards the particular (*ensyllogisms*) or towards the conditions of the ensyllogism (*prosyllogisms*). Kant proposes that reason strives to find, in all cases, the “totality of conditions,” or the final

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<sup>187</sup> *KdrV* B385-6/A329.

prosyllogism.<sup>188</sup> Reason thus formally unifies the understanding in the direction of an “absolute whole.”<sup>189</sup>

The non-synthetic action of reason on the understanding—its imposition of unity—is nevertheless not the mere “juxtaposition” of connection. Recall that a preformationist metaphor is used to characterize the “system of pure reason.” Indeed, *at all levels and in spite of the projected constitutivity of the causal nexus effectivus, judgment follows a mereological model of metaphorically organic heritage.* The *nexus effectivus* is the world-picture belonging to an organized reason guided by the *nexus finalis* in its very form and self-relation. The Romantics, sensitive to potentially organic metaphorical models for reason itself, will not have missed this. They did not have to reach forward exclusively to the *KU* for their notion of an *organ*. They found, in the very rejection of the *organon*, the desired etymological and metaphorological *basis in one thread of Kant’s metaphysical methodology itself.* Wholes and parts, and their mutual interaction, formed a judgmentalist research program in the next generation. That this was so, of course, implied a need for 1) an organic and developmental model of metaphysics, and 2) a notion of perception (what Kant dubbed intuition) that was not finally separate from conceptuality. They thus returned to the rationalist unity of knowledge. But this unity was attended by historicity and the possibility of categorial innovation, and those elements could be supplied only by the last and most dedicated metaphorizer of the organ: Johann Gottfried Herder.

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<sup>188</sup> *KdrV* B379/A322 ff.

<sup>189</sup> And indeed, the three absolute wholes are those of propositions in respect to the *self* (rational psychology), *objects* (cosmology), and *all things* (the phrase is taken from Wolff’s *Deutsche Metaphysik*, but here implies the *Urwesen*: God, or rational theology). See *KdrV* B391/A334 ff.

#### IV. Genesis of and by Organs: Herder's Analogies of Nature and Reason

If Leibniz contributed the metaphysical sense of the word organ, and Kant supplied a methodological critique of that metaphysics that nevertheless retained and developed its key metaphorical terminology, it was Johann Gottfried Herder who supplied its metaphorical content. He did this by globalizing the term's use throughout his writings, speaking of organs analogically in metaphysical, epistemological, and cultural spheres indifferently.<sup>190</sup>

Leibniz and Kant contributed to the metaphorology of the word, but Herder did far more: he seems to have introduced the word into the German-speaking public sphere.<sup>191</sup> But not, as we might expect, into the French public sphere, from which Herder himself seems to have borrowed the term.

The entry in Diderot's *Encyclopédie* for *organe* is of unknown authorship.<sup>192</sup> It covers, however, the etymological background, but then opens the term up to a recognizably modern use: *l'usage ordinaire* is that of a functional part of the body, any part that carries out an operation. The article goes on to divide them between primary

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<sup>190</sup> The centrality of the term for Herder is the more striking for the lack of attention it has received in the literature. The study which comes closest to seeing its fundamental importance is Hermann Timm's *Gott und die Freiheit: Studien zur Religionsphilosophie der Goethezeit* (Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 1974). I will take issue with Timm's interpretation below.

<sup>191</sup> This conclusion is quite tentative at this point. The only relevant literature on the topic, however, is Wolf, *Der Begriff*, pp. 38-43, who points to Kant's determinative contribution. Since—as he correctly notes—the word's organicist use flourished first during the 1780s and 1790s in the discourse about *Lebenskraft* (for more on which, see Chapter 2 below), Kant's influence should not be neglected. But Herder's use—which can obviously not be discounted as an influence on the *Lebenskraft* movement—predates Kant's. Indeed, since the *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* contains—as we will now see—a robust doctrine centered on the word, and since Kant's critical review of that work in 1785 critiques the *method* but not all elements of the *Weltbild* of that work, we might even think that Kant's use is conditioned by Herder's. I will not argue this philologically here, and—to be clear—this does not mean that I endorse Zammito's argument that the *KU* is largely a reaction to Herder. That is not implied by the possibility that there is a terminological borrowing.

<sup>192</sup> This entry plays an unfortunately negligible role in Wolf's history. Even its unknown authorship seems to point to the generality of the term in the French world (especially *Histoires naturelles*).



organs (built for a single function of similar materials—the veins, arteries, and nerves) and secondary organs composed of the primary—the hand, the fingers, etc.<sup>193</sup> A further entry on “organe des sens” clarifies that these are the parts of the animal “au moyen de laquelle il est affecté par les objets extérieurs.”<sup>194</sup> These are sometimes divided into an “internal” organ (the brain) and “external” organs—the ears, eyes, etc.

Thus a recognizably literal sense of the term was given as early as 1765 in the French world. Yet this common usage had not passed into Germany—for that, the young Herder would need Kant’s gentle push—also in the mid-60s—to internationalize his reading habits. And it was indeed, it seems, in some back-alleys of his French itinerary that Herder culled the word for his own use.

Herder’s *Ideen*, which he wrote in the early 1780s and began to publish in 1784, is a revision of precisely the genre of writing from which he took the term *Organ*—*Histoire naturelle*, *Naturgeschichte*, the Enlightenment genre of narrating nature’s whole course of development. The Comte de Buffon’s monumental *Histoire naturelle* (1749 ff.) was a European best-seller and paradigm for the genre for more than a century.<sup>195</sup> Herder’s entry into this scene<sup>196</sup> was marked by his fascination with the problems of force and structure in nature’s development. If Herder’s signal contribution was the historicization of nature and culture,<sup>197</sup> it will have been in the productive tension

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<sup>193</sup> *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, etc.*, eds. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond D’Alembert. University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project (Spring 2011 Edition), Robert Morrissey (ed), <http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>, visited 6 October 2011.

<sup>194</sup> *Encyclopédie*.

<sup>195</sup> See Reill, *Vitalizing*, pp. 33-71.

<sup>196</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 186-99.

<sup>197</sup> This is a general conclusion of much scholarship on Herder, but see, for its origins, Friedrich Meinecke’s *Historism: The Rise of a New Historical Outlook* (London: Routledge and Kegan & Paul, 1972), p. lv: “it must be said that historism is nothing else but the application to the historical world of the new life-governing principles achieved by the great German movement extending from Leibniz to the death of Goethe.”

between force's developmental self-expression and the structure that force took on and imposed that this conception was developed.<sup>198</sup>

It was in the interstices between these two concepts—static structure and dynamic force—that Herder also placed his half-borrowed, half-invented *Organ*. The *Ideen*'s narration of *formation*—*Bildung* as the combination of structure and force—begins with matter itself, and ends with the plurality of particular human cultures. This all-embracing monism, however, needed a way for the apparent contradiction of the static and the dynamic to be put into motion, literally to develop mutually. The system needed to allow for the concrete to emerge from an apparently unsynthesizable duality. The instrument of synthesis was given the name *das Organ*. Thus, at the end of the first volume (1784), Herder inserted a general chapter on natural form and natural-historical method, giving it the name *Kraft und Organ*.

Summarizing his doctrine with respect to the debate on preformation and epigenesis, Herder wrote

Siehet man diese Wandlungen, diese lebendigen Wirkungen sowohl im Ei des Vogels als im Mutterleibe des tiers das Lebendige gebäret: so, dünkt mich, spricht man uneigentlich, wenn man von Keimen, die nur entwickelt würden, oder von einer *Epigenesis* redet, nach der die Glieder von außen zuwüchsen. *Bildung (genesis)* ists, eine Wirkung innerer Kräfte, denen die Natur eine Masse vorbereitet hatte, die sie sich zubilden, in der sie sich sichtbar machen sollten. Dies ist die Erfahrung der Natur: dies bestätigen die Perioden der Bildung in den verschiedenen Gattungen von mehr oder minder organischer Vielartigkeit und Fülle von Lebenskräften: nur hieraus lassen sich die Mißbildungen der Geschöpfe durch Krankheit, Zufall oder durch die Vermischung verschiedener Gattungen erklären und es ist dieser Weg der Einzige, den uns in allen ihren Werken die Kraft- und Lebenreiche Natur durch eine fortgehende Analogie gleichsam aufdringt.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Herder's earliest engagements with the issue of force come from his time in Königsberg under Kant's tutelage. Kant's lectures of that period—indeed, those extant in Herder's hand—are filled with considerations of force, especially as that concept plays a role in mind-body-relation problems. See Herder's earliest-known philosophical fragment, the *Versuch über das Sein*, which places the *intensive feeling* of force at the center of speculation. This consideration remained determinative throughout Herder's career, as has been convincingly argued in a careful reading of that fragment by Marion Heinz, *Sensualistischer Idealismus: Untersuchungen zur Erkenntnistheorie des jungen Herder (1763-1778)* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1994).

<sup>199</sup> Johann Gottfried Herder, *Werke in zehn Bänden, Band 6: Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, Martin Bollacher, ed. (Frankfurt/Main: Klassiker 1989).

This passage contains the kernel of Herder's ontological teaching. With concrete reference to the empirical details of the epigenesis debate, he makes clear the philosophical stakes of that debate. Force is at issue, and the debate—as the historiography also confirms—goes to the philosophical issue of the constitution of force itself, and therefore of matter. Up to Herder, epigeneticists had tended to defend the division between dead and living matter. As Herder notes here, this conception is etymologically proper to *epi-genesis*, formation “on top of.” So Blumenbach's determination, but not Herder's.<sup>200</sup> Herder's doctrine should be called “geneticism” or “generationism,” and must be philosophically separated from its natural-scientific counterparts in Wolff and Blumenbach. As Herder would go on to make clear in his *Gott* (1787), apparently lifeless matter was just a particularly durable structure in a fundamentally organic universe. And “organic” always meant *filled with organs*.

This concept, developed both in the *Ideen* and in *Gott*, was that of a self-expressive universe, an organic Being in constant unfolding, always in motion and always taking on form, continuous and perfectible. The human stood at the crossroads between its natural and spiritual expressions—for Herder, the problem of *commercium mentis et corporis* was resolved analogically. Chapter 5 of the *Ideen* is both ontological and methodological, and this cross-disciplinary simultaneity can be seen at the end of the

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<sup>200</sup> The literature on this issue is not subtle enough, in my opinion. The two dominant positions about animal formation are complemented by all manner of possible conceptions of the universe, matter, and organs. Zammito and Reill, for example, want to see Herder on the epigenetic side of the debate. This assertion is not wrong, but too simple. Herder is an organicist, not merely a “vitalist.” Indeed, it was just this conception that led to the organicism of the next generation, which Reill emphatically deplores. See Reill, *Vitalizing*, pp. 1-17 and 199-237.

passage above: the “only way” nature shows herself to us is through this penetrating analogy which forces itself upon us in all her works.<sup>201</sup>

If analogy was the answer to the problem with which Kant had confronted the young Herder, it was simultaneously the answer to the difficulty of nature’s structure and nature’s history. Herder had received this problem from his French reading, perhaps most decisively from Jean-Baptiste Robinet. In his *De la nature*, volume 4 (*De l’animal*) (1766), the third book is entitled *De l’organisme universel*. Chapter I is poignantly called: *De l’organisation: ce que c’est qu’un organe*. This chapter is a polemic against the notion of lifeless matter—its title’s qualifier is to be taken literally. The atomists conceive a brute nature which cannot possibly exist: “Rien n’est simple, tout est composé dans un monde matériel; un atôme de matière simple, répugne comme une étendue sans étendue.”<sup>202</sup> The monism here cuts against the atomists and the spiritualists at the same time: extension without extension reads like a gloss on the contradictions attaching to the soul-body question.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Herder’s term, “die Analogie der Natur” (see *Ideen*, p. 176: “Doch die Metaphysik bleibe bei Seite; wir wollen Analogien der Natur betrachten”) makes clear this overlapping of ontology and methodology. Since humans stand in the center of this analogy, our view of being and our methods for investigating it coincide in the *organ* of thought. This term is used throughout the *Ideen*, although its full force is not often recognized. Heinz also argues that Herder tries to draw this analogy through the human, thereby anticipating *Naturphilosophie*’s attempt to spiritualize nature and naturalize spirit. See also John Zammito, “Herder, Kant, Spinoza und die Ursprünge des deutschen Idealismus” in: ed. Marion Heinz, *Herder und die Philosophie des deutschen Idealismus* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), pp. 107-145. I cannot, however, agree with his tendency to oppose Kant and Herder as sharply as in the following: “Die Analogie deutet für Herder zugleich auf die Aussichtslosigkeit einer apriorischen Gewißheit und auf die Kreativität aller menschlichen Erkenntnis hin. Dies schärft seine Skepsis gegenüber dem Versuch Kants, eine rigorose Trennung zwischen dem philosophischen und dem poetischen Denken vorzunehmen.” (p. 141)

<sup>202</sup> Jean-Baptiste-René Robinet, *De la nature (IV)* (Amsterdam: van Harrevelt, 1761), p. 78

<sup>203</sup> Indeed, this is how Kant frames his intervention in this debate in his *Träume eines Geistersehers*, published the same year.

But in a world which is therefore “organic” (in the sense of being *organs* all the way down<sup>204</sup>), what is then the constitutive part which receives the *name* organ?

Robinet’s contribution—which has earned him much ridicule in the scholarship<sup>205</sup>—is that the organ is the prototype of all being, and that scattered organs constitute the anthropomorphic universe. And Robinet does not shy away from supplying a concrete vision of this essential part:

Un organe est un trou allongé, un cylindre creux, naturellement actif: l’organisation la plus compliquée se réduit à cette idée simple. Le corps humain, le chef-d’oeuvre de l’organisation, n’est qu’un système de tubes pliés, entrelacés, doués d’une force intrinsèque qui résulte de leur structure.<sup>206</sup>

With the human body as its finest production, organization is literally simply the universal existence of organs—hollow cylindrical tubes which are fundamentally active. Intertwined and endowed with intrinsic force, they proliferate through the plenum of being and are its basic type.

Herder’s own fascination with the problem of type may have been partially inspired by his early reading of Robinet.<sup>207,208</sup> Yet the organ both held the universe together and progressively broke it down. The term’s meaning came to stretch not only

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<sup>204</sup> Yolton correctly emphasizes that the pre-established harmony was not well-received outside of Germany, but we have here a clear case of terminological influence. For Leibniz’s general impact in France see W. H. Barger, *Leibniz in France, from Arnauld to Voltaire; a study in French reactions to Leibnizianism, 1670-1760* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955).

<sup>205</sup> See, for example, Arthur Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936/1964), pp. 277-83.

<sup>206</sup> Robinet, *De la nature*, p. 78.

<sup>207</sup> See H. B. Nisbet, “Herder, Goethe, and the Natural “Type”” in *Publications of the English Goethe Society vol. XXXVII: Papers Read Before the Society 1966-67*, eds. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson et al (Leeds: W.S. Maney and Son, 1967), pp. 81-119. Nisbet is careful in his philology. Herder mentions Robinet only once, and then in 1776 (*SW* VII 75, cited in Nisbet). Earlier scholarly comparisons of their work were based on a passage in the *Ideen* which may be of different intellectual heritage. Herder’s use of the term *organ* in the sense we are about to explore provides, however, suggestive evidence that he was familiar with Robinet. In any case, Robinet’s use is by far the most interesting in the ontologies of *Histoire naturelle*, and Herder’s is, by parallel, the most interesting in the German context prior to the 1780s.

<sup>208</sup> As we shall see, Herder’s adoptions of both *organ* and *organon* come from readings around 1766 (Robinet and Lambert, in addition to Kant and Baumgarten from a few years earlier). The readings seem to have born first fruit in the early 1770s—for example, the *fourth Kritisches Wäldchen* is the first of the *Wäldchen* to contain the word *organ*—and then only become a programmatic term in the 1780s with the return to ontology.

analogically across the matter-spirit divide, but also temporally beyond the limits of Leibnizian figure of progress within ultimate stasis.<sup>209</sup>

Herder's first sketch of this problematic<sup>210</sup> takes its cue primarily from the animal. Basic principles are set forth: any effect in nature must be accompanied by force; where there is *Reiz* (impulse), this must be felt "internally." Should these two principles not obtain, "so hört ... alle Analogie der Natur auf."<sup>211</sup> Where there is artifice, there must be an artificer—this gloss on the *techne-phusis* analogy is rooted in the ontological premise of analogy itself. Where any creature shows intention in its movement, there must be an "internal sense, an *organ*, a medium of this anticipation..."<sup>212</sup> There may be more media than we have organs,<sup>213</sup> and thus the world of invisible forces is stranger than our organological sensibility. Nevertheless,

Die ganze Schöpfung sollte durchgenossen, durchgeföhlt, durcharbeitet werden; auf jedem neuen Punkt also mußten Geschöpfe sein, sie zu genießen, Organe, sie zu empfinden, Kräfte, sie dieser Stell gemäß zu beleben. Kein Punkt der Schöpfung ist ohne Genuß, ohne Organ, ohne Bewohner: *jedes Geschöpf hat also seine eigne, eine neue Welt.*<sup>214</sup>

A world of force is analogized—the sense is ontological—into an "internal" resonance of that force through the creature and its organ. This complex of organs determines the *milieu* of the creature, its own world, fundamentally new because immersed in an expansive force always differently concentrated in its particularizing organs.

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<sup>209</sup> Herder receives only *one* mention (p. 280) in Lovejoy's chapter on "The Temporalizing of the Great Chain of Being," *The Great Chain*, pp. 242-288. To be sure, some notion of non-static time was introduced by figures like Robinet (and the early Kant, as Lovejoy emphasizes), but Herder's concept of the *fundamentally new* (as it was conditioned by the proliferation of organs in the force-field of the world) seems to me a determinative moment in this history.

<sup>210</sup> And if not the first, then certainly a major step in the late-18<sup>th</sup>-century borrowing of the term for German use. The epistemological and linguistic senses of the word—presented below—were adumbrated in writings of the 1770s, but this ontological sense seems to be original to the *Ideen*.

<sup>211</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, pp. 87-8.

<sup>212</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, p. 88.

<sup>213</sup> This idea is anticipated in a late fragment by Lessing called "Daß mehr als fünf Sinne für den Menschen sein können..." Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Werke. Band 8* (Munich: Hanser, 1970 ff.), pp. 557-560.

<sup>214</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, pp. 88-9.

This sense of the term is broadened in the 5<sup>th</sup> book. Force is incorruptible, and only its instrument can degenerate. Here *Organ* and *Werkzeug* are equated etymologically: life cannot pass out of existence, although a flower or a tree (life's organs) can. Herder echoes the tradition in which the body is the soul's organ: soul is force, incorruptible.<sup>215</sup> The general point is drawn:

Wo wir eine Kraft wirken sehen, wirkt sie allerdings in einem Organ und diesem harmonisch; ohne dasselbe wird sie unseren Sinnen wenigstens nicht sichtbar: mit ihm aber ist sie zugleich da und wenn wir der durchgehenden Analogie der Natur glauben dürfen, so hat sich sich dasselbe *zugebildet*. Präformierte Keime, die seit der Schöpfung bereit lagen, hat kein Auge gesehen; was wir vom ersten Augenblick des Werdens eines Geschöpfes bemerken, sind wirkende *organische Kräfte*.<sup>216</sup>

The harmony between force and organ is thus not static—whatever necessity obtains in nature must be united with a dynamic field of organic forces. Herder uses the term in the sense it had in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century: “having organs.”<sup>217</sup> Force is essentially *organic*, or, as we might say, organological.<sup>218</sup> And yet, organ is not force—a duality obtains between

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<sup>215</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, p.167-70. Herder uses this doctrine to anticipate the *linguistic sense* he will give to *organ*: “Nur ein Sinnloser kann Schall und Wort für einerlei nehmen; und wie diese beiden verschieden sind, ist **Körper und Seele, Organ und Kraft**. Das Wort erinnert an die Idee, und bringt sie aus einem anderen Geist zu uns herüber; aber es ist sie nicht selbst, und eben so wenig ist das materielle Organ Gedanke.” (*Ideen*, p. 182)

<sup>216</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, p. 171.

<sup>217</sup> This sense is used, for example, by Caspar Friedrich Wolff in his *Theorie von der Generation* (see *supra*), pp. 131-2 and 210. Especially the latter citation makes clear that, for Wolff, the progressive inclusion of non-organic parts (read: *moria*) into the organism's functional complex is what makes up “organic” being itself. Herder activates the term *organ* for a thoroughly ideological organicism. The term arrives in Germany under the auspices of *genetic organicism*, not those of epigenesis. My thanks to Sarah Eldridge of the Princeton German department for pointing out these passages to me.

<sup>218</sup> One of the few uses of the term “organological” which comes close to mine is that of Hermann Timm, whose *Gott und die Freiheit* emphasizes the proto-dialectical element of Herder's ontological thought. Because force is fundamentally expressive, it always stands in a simultaneously unified and divided state to its own substance. And this occurs in real development, in time. This reading shows us perhaps most nearly what the next generation took from Herder, along with the term organ. Yet it misses the ontologico-methodological overlap of analogy, and by doing so, gives a sense to the organ-doctrine which cannot fully anticipate the Romantic attitude. By seeing analogy as central, we can see why Herder's was *not* an organology in the Romantic sense. Timm describes Herder's God as having “eine instrumentierende Offenbarung seiner inneren Kraft...” (p. 325) This instrument, which particularizes as it reveals, founds an analogical discipline of speculation which is rooted in unity and treats duality as corruptible. This line of thinking was to be radicalized using Kant's “dualisms” and Herder's ontological terminology in Early German Romanticism.

them which makes their harmony possible. In the basis of nature are light, ether, and heat, a welter of organs in genesis. Herder calls this a “divine current of fire” which pours its forces down to us through a *Vehikulum*. This word—taken from physiological descriptions of the nerves and their electricity—recalls Robinet: concrete form is resisting the chaos of expansive forces. Indeed, their self-restriction is indicated by their name: *organic*. The human body is the result of this organological restriction, this essentially dual force which is yet more essentially *one*. As the organization becomes more complex, its media and organs become finer, eventually resulting in *Geistesempfindung*. Finally, the organs complete an internalization or reversal, establishing sensibility.<sup>219</sup>

Entweder hat die Wirkung meiner Seele kein Analogon hienieden; und sodenn ist weder zu begreifen, wie sie auf den Körper wirke? noch wie andre Gegenstände auf sie zu wirken vermögen? oder es ister dieser unsichtbare himmlische Leicht- und Feuergeist, der alles Lebendige durchfließt und alle Kräfte der Natur vereinigt. In der menschlichen Organisation hat er die Feinheit erreicht, die ihm ein Erdenbau gewähren konnte: vermittelt seiner wirkt die Seele in ihren Organen beinah allmächtig und strahlte in sich selbst zurück mit einem Bewußtsein, das ihr Innerstes reget.<sup>220</sup>

Again, the analogical nature of the organic universe is seen in its genesis of its highest (physical) form: the human body in its relation to spirit. Consciousness itself is *organic*, and this organicity responds to the problem of body-soul interaction. In the crucible of living forces, the soul meets its organs through an *analogon*. Reason is organic, literally without reason (*ana-logon* means “upon” reason, but could easily be taken to mean “without” reason) at the moment of its genesis, and yet determinative of its counterparts (*organa*) as it both is informed by them and returns to itself. This dual gesture stands on

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<sup>219</sup> The language here is taken from Albrecht von Haller, whose separation of the “irritable” (contractile) and “sensible” (representative) nerve-excitations Herder had re-written in his *Vom Erkennen und Empfinden der menschlichen Seele*. That essay runs roughshod over Haller’s science, but builds the sense of *unification* (*In-Eins-Bildung*, *Einbildung*) that became *organic* in the *Ideen*. For Herder’s use of Haller see Simon Richter, “Medizinischer und ästhetischer Diskurs im 18. Jahrhundert: Herder und Haller über Reiz,” in *Lessing-Yearbook* (25) 1993, pp. 83-97. The earlier essay also emphasizes the reversal which results in consciousness, but is not rooted in the discourse of the organ.

<sup>220</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, p. 174.



the brink of Romantic organology, yet founds, instead of a metaphysics, an anthropology, even an anthropomorphic metaphysics. The organ is not the method: it is ontological, sensible, and spiritual, but its very being and our very knowing are rooted in *analogon*, the unified point where all manner of force meets, underpinned by God.

God, for Herder, may well be *Urkraft*, expressive force, but he also has organs and the true center of the analogy of nature is the inner human as the final natural organ built (through love) into the divine organ. This is the final sense of “analogy” in Herder’s work, the theological end of his naturalistic game. In this vision, God and man share an organ—indeed, the human becomes the analogical organ of the godhead. This unification has been the reality and the goal of history.

Any dynamic force in nature “wirkte als ein Organ der göttlichen Macht, als eine tätig gewordne Idee seines ewigdaurenden Entwurfs der Schöpfung.”<sup>221</sup> This passing mention of a divine organ recalls Herder’s radical assertion in his *Vom Erkennen und Empfinden der Menschlichen Seele* that the human and his world are God’s *sensorium* (the traditional Latin translation of Greek *aistheterion*, the seat of the sense we have come to call “organ”), expressed through a love described well by John the Evangelist yet better by the “even more divine” Spinoza.<sup>222</sup> Herder here takes the terms of the Leibniz-

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<sup>221</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, p. 175.

<sup>222</sup> Herder, *Vom Erkennen*, p. 363. This assertion shows us that the human *analogy* is based on the biblical version of the *physis-techne* analogy, God’s making the human in his *image*: “Nur er ist *Bild Gottes*, ein Auszug und Verwalter der Schöpfung: also schlafen in ihm *tausend* Kräfte, Reize und Gefühle; es muß also in ihnen *Ordnung* herrschen, daß *Alle* aufwachen und angewandt werden können, daß er *Sensorium* seines Gottes *in allem Lebenden* der Schöpfung, *nach dem Maße* es ihm verwandt ist, werde.” (*Vom Erkennen und Empfinden der menschlichen Seele*, in Johann Gottfried Herder, *Werke in zehn Bänden, Band 4: Schriften zu Philosophie, Literatur, Kunst und Altertum* eds. Jürgen Brummack and Martin Bollacher (Frankfurt/Main: Klassiker 1994), p. 361.) An early use of the term in the treatise: “Auch die Verschiedenheit der Menschen sowie aller Produkte der Erdkugel muß sich also nach der spezifischen Verschiedenheit des Mediums richten, in dem **wir wie im Organ der Gottheit** leben. Hier kommt es nicht bloß auf Einteilung der Zonen nach Hitze und Kälte, nicht bloß auf Leichtigkeit und Schwere des drückenden Luftkörpers, sondern unendlich mehr auf die mancherlei wirksamen geistigen Kräfte an, die in

Clarke debate and inserts them into pre-organological development of his ontology. When Leibniz had attacked Newton through his proxy Clarke, he had objected that Newton's God was like a watchmaker who needed to intervene periodically to re-set the watch. He based this assertion on Newton's claim that (absolute) space and time were God's *sensorium*.<sup>223</sup> That debate—which embittered relations between already hostile camps—stood at the beginning of the confrontation about forces in natural science and philosophy which has accompanied us through this chapter. Herder, by referring to this debate and activating the Newtonian phrase for a Leibnizian force-conception, presents us with the metaphorology of the organ in its highest instance. God's image is his very organ: the human exists in a divine *milieu* which is in constant progress towards the *new*, his experience fundamentally a matter of analogy within an analogical welter of organs across a single substance—God in his expression—which is love. The human is perfectible: his inversion into spirit continues until a full “*innerer geistiger Mensch*” is formed, “der seiner eignen Natur ist und den Körper nur als Werkzeug gebraucht, ja der seiner eignen Natur zufolge, auch bei den ärgsten Zerrüttungen der Organe handelt.”<sup>224</sup> The organs are corruptible, yet formed in organic necessity. The human forms himself slowly into the essence which is the divine organ, the godly analogy of nature. The human becomes *humanity*.<sup>225</sup>

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ihr treiben, ja deren Inbegriff eben vielleicht alle ihre Eigenschaften und Phänomene ausmacht.” (Herder, *Ideen*, p. 38)

<sup>223</sup> It appears that Leibniz had an edition without the metaphorical *tanquam* preceding the phrase. See Alexandre Koyre and I. Bernard Cohen, “The Case of the Missing *Tanquam*: Leibniz, Newton & Clarke” *Isis*, (52: 4) 1961, pp. 555-566. See also Hans Blumenberg, *Legitimacy*, pp. 80-2.

<sup>224</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, p. 183.

<sup>225</sup> “Das hellere *Bewußtsein*, dieser große Vorzug der menschlichen Seele, ist derselben *auf eine geistige Weise und zwar durch die Humanität allmählich erst zugebildet worden*.” (Herder, *Ideen*, p.183) I deal with the significant uses of *organ* in the *Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität* in chapter 3, where they anticipate Schelling's ethical use of the term. This depiction of God is also clearly a precedent for Schelling's ontology.

It is from this point—the self-genesis of the human as godly organ and analogy—that Herder’s cultural analysis takes off. Cultures themselves becomes organic in this literal sense: they are complexes of organs, traditions of individual organological formation.<sup>226</sup> Herder’s historicism was not merely organic, but (proto-)organological.<sup>227</sup>

In this quasi-organological conception of everything—*von allen Dingen überhaupt*, to put a Wolffian metaphysical point on the reach of Herder’s *Histoire naturelle*—the analogy also provides the basis for the final step in Herder’s terminological innovation: the rational and linguistic senses of the organ. That there should be an *organ of reason* is already a matter of controversy. That Herder should have thought seriously about one seems implausible. And yet he did; and his thinking on this issue, based in his theory of language, displays the same methodology as his ontological speculation. Reason has an *organ*—language—which provides for its self-genesis through inversion and a resulting consciousness. This genesis reveals the location of reason’s encounter with the non-rational—in an *ana-logon*, without or around reason—and makes that encounter productive and innovative for reason itself. And yet the notion

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<sup>226</sup> “Hätte auch nur ein einziger Mensch die Erde betreten, so wäre an ihm der Zweck des menschlichen Daseins erfüllt gewesen, wie man ihn bei so manchen einzelnen Menschen und Nationen für erfüllt achten muß, die durch Ort- und Zeitbestimmungen von der Kette des ganzen Geschlechts getrennet wurden. Da aber alles, was auf der Erde leben kann, solange sie selbst in ihrem Beharrungsstande bleibt, fortdauret, so hatte auch das Menschengeschlecht, wie alle Geschlechter der Lebenden, Kräfte der Fortpflanzung in sich, die dem Ganzen gemäß ihre Proportion und Ordnung finden konnten und gefunden haben. Mithin vererbte sich das Wesen der Menschheit, **die Vernunft und ihr Organ, die Tradition**, auf eine Reihe von Geschlechtern hinunter. Allmählich ward die Erde erfüllt, und der Mensch ward alles, was er in solchem und keinem andern Zeitraum auf der Erde werden konnte.” (Herder, *Ideen*, p. 667) It is clear that two major lines of thinking were based on passages such as this one. First, the hermeneutics of culture after Dilthey and especially after Gadamer’s re-application of Heidegger’s hermeneutics of Being to cultural studies. And second, historicism itself. The political stakes of this conception are not univocal. See, for example, Hannah Arendt’s claim that the particularization of cultures is salutary for the thinking of tolerance. “Aufklärung und Judenfrage” in *Die verborgene Tradition: Acht Essays* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1976), pp. 108-127.

<sup>227</sup> Friedrich Meinecke set the tone for that particularization early: “The essence of historicism is the substitution of a process of *individualising* observation for a *generalizing* view of human forces in history” (Meinecke, *Historism*, p. lv). I am thus here able to show the terminological basis on which the organization of history took place.

of real contradiction, actual duality—so important to the Romantics—is never included in this sliding analogical scale. Herder contributed not only the term and the picture of the universe, not only the ontology and the theology—he also gave the Romantics a picture of reason as itself organic, rooted in a dynamic or organological relation of language and reason. But he did not supply the methodology, for he rejected the Kantian problematic in favor of his analogical overlap between knowing and being.

In his *Metakritik*, Herder definitively rejected his former teacher's *KdrV*. The sprawling text takes issue, among other things, with the fixity of Kant's categories. Recall that Kant's conception of judgment was an important anticipation of Romantic organology: the mereology of the judgment, split between constitutive and regulative use by the intuition, is the instrument of the canon of the understanding. This canon is the categories themselves, and Herder's sense that experience provides ontological innovation runs counter to this legalization of our cognition. Thus, when Herder writes that language is the *Organon* of reason,<sup>228</sup> he means to organicize experience itself, to give the human a *milieu* that is nevertheless characterized by generality. He is rejecting

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<sup>228</sup> Johann Gottfried Herder, *Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 8: Schriften zu Literature und Philosophie, 1792-1800*, ed. Dietrich Irmscher (Frankfurt/Main: Klassiker, 1998), p. 321. The phrase occurs in Hamann's own *Metakritik* (1784): "... language, the only, first, and last organon and criterion of reason, with no credentials, but tradition and usage." Johann Georg Hamann, *Writings on Philosophy and Language*, Kenneth Haynes, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 208. Herder seems to be drawing on this passage in the quotation in note [135—*die Vernunft und ihr Organ, die Tradition*] *supra*. Hamann cites Herder's *Essay*—the passage which I cite next—at p. 121, and his citation is from Fall 1772. Since Hamann's *Metakritik* was written in 1784, the order of events seems to be as follows. Herder first uses the concept of language as the *organ of reason*, which Hamann cites and then includes in his objections to the *KdrV*. These objections, which give us the important notion that the meeting of the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* meet in *language*, are then used again by Herder in his own *Metakritik* (1799), now uniting his own phrase with his friend's linguistic objection to Kant. *Tradition* is given a different sense in Herder's *Ideen* (1785)—not merely what is handed down, but the organic unities of nations. The phrase was picked up by Wilhelm von Humboldt and used in his language-theoretical writings. See Siegfried J. Schmidt, *Sprache und Denken als sprachphilosophisches Problem: von Locke bis Wittgenstein* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969).

Kant's division between the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*. And in doing so, he makes the special mark of the human its ability to name especially itself. He writes that

Es wird so nach die Sprache ein *natürliches Organ des Verstandes*, ein solcher *Sinn der menschlichen Seele*, wie sich die Sehekraft jener sensitiven Seele der Alten das Auge, und der Instinkt der Biene seine Zelle bauet.<sup>229</sup>

Objecting to Süßmilch's notion of a divine origin of languages and to the empiricist derivation of language from noise simultaneously, Herder asserts the self-genesis of reason through human language as a "natural organ." Yet this organ only obtains for humans. Indeed, Herder's concern here for the autonomous validity of meaning is parallel to Kant's concern about truth in the passage on the *epigenesis* of reason. Locke serves as the empiricist foil for both—he imagines a parthenogenetic origin of consciousness and of language. For Kant, representation itself would be undercut in this picture, while for Herder, language would simply not exist—*Schall und Wort* are separated by the *organic* development of the human species *as speaking*. Süßmilch's divine gift of language, on the other hand, is like Crusius's (or Leibniz's) pre-establishment of truth for Kant. If truth, or language, were given, we would no way to determine their correctness. In the same passage, Herder notes that *logos* means word and reason, concept and word, and language and cause, all at once. *Alogos* means dumb just as much as non-rational. The human is *homo loquens*: as speaker he is able to *name himself speaker*, to see into his species-essence because he possesses an organ which, inverting the ontological proliferation of organic forces, serves as the instrument of reason.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache*, Johann Gottfried Herder: Werke in zehn Bänden: Band 1: Frühe Schriften 1764 – 1772, ed. Ulrich Gaier (Frankfurt a.M.: Klassiker, 1985), p. 733.

<sup>230</sup> I agree with the basic sense of Charles Taylor's argument that, for Herder, language possesses "irreducible rightness." See "The Importance of Herder," in Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 79-100. Perhaps the dissent from this essay in Michael Forster's *After Herder: Philosophy of Language in the German Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) can be resolved by noting the Hamannian point that *a priori* and *a posteriori* are mixed in

In the *Ideen*, Herder went on to make this notion work for *psychology*, describing the psyche's laws as *organic*:

Daß [die Verbindung von Begriffen] jedesmal ihrem Organ gemäß und demselben harmonisch geschehe, daß wenn das Werkzeug nicht taugt, auch die Künstlerin nichts tun könne u. f.; das alles leidet keinen Zweifel, ändert aber auch nicht im Begriff der Sache. Die *Art*, mit der die Seele wirkt, das *Wesen ihrer Begriffe* kommt hier in Betrachtung.<sup>231</sup>

Herder puns on “kind” (*Art* as “manner” but also as “species”) to characterize the self-knowing human organ. The essence of the soul’s operations—and the essence of its concepts—actually is the *Merkmal* of the human (where bleating, so far from mere noise, is the essence of the sheep for the human). The species which can name itself performs this separation—literally passes from animality to spirituality—by way of its organ. That origin of that organ—language—is therefore the moment at which the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* are first, and genetically always—separated. Our hope for knowledge is in this always available separating origin. And that origin is a matter of universal narration, or *organic* natural history. The human *analogy*, nested in the divine *sensorium* and emerging from first a concretizing proliferation and then an inversion of organs which gives rise to the self-naming organ, is the basis of human history. Herder fulfills his promise to offer a *philosophy* of the history of humanity. This history finds its necessary home in the overlap between ontology and methodology, in the “grand analogy of nature.”

It was in fact Herder’s reliance on analogy that Kant attacked in his *Rezension* of the *Ideen* in 1785. As pointed out above, Kant had asked if the *Bildungstrieb* was not merely a name for a problem rather than an explanation: was this name not “die

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language. Taylor correctly notes that language establishes an index of the feeling of truth, while Forster points to the tradition after Herder (Schleiermacher et al) that instead emphasized its plasticity.

<sup>231</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, p. 181.

Erklärung eines *obscurum per aequum obscurum*“?<sup>232</sup> He pushed back against Herder, translating his Latin into German and accusing his former student of confusing preformation and epigenesis<sup>233</sup> and ultimately resting his doctrine on unexperienceable forces

... wie bloße, weiter nicht erklärliche Einschränkungen eines sich selbst bildenden Vermögens, welches letztere wir so wenig erklären oder begreiflich machen können.<sup>234</sup>

In this key confrontation, Kant slips back into his terminology: Herder's *Organ* becomes a self-generating *Vermögen*. The organ's delimiting role in being is just as obscure as the *Kraft* which makes use of it.

To bring his polemic to its methodological point, Kant writes that

Der vernünftige Gebrauch der Erfahrung hat auch seine Grenzen... auch kann keine Analogie die unermessliche Kluft zwischen dem Zufälligen und Nothwendigen ausfüllen.<sup>235</sup>

The human, who would *be* that analogy, cannot reconcile being's structure with history's development. For us, contingency attaches to the flow of phenomena while the canonical rules of their presentation are absolutely necessary. The necessity of history is in no way graspable—indeed, whether there is necessity is the object of the insoluble Third Antinomy (solved in the “other order of things,” practical reason, by postulate). Rejecting both Herder's method (analogy) and his terms (above all “organ”), Kant effectively

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<sup>232</sup> AA XIII 400.

<sup>233</sup> “Er will einerseits das Evolutionssystem, andererseits aber auch den bloß mechanischen Einfluß äußerer Ursachen als untaugliche Erläuterungsgründe abweisen und nimmt ein innerlich nach Verschiedenheit der äußeren Umstände sich selbst diesen angemessen modificirendes Lebenprincip als die Ursache derselben an, worin ihm recensent völlig beitriff, nur mit dem Vorbehalt, daß, wenn die von innen organisirende Ursache durch ihre Natur etwa nur auf eine gewisse Zahl und Grad von Verschiedenheiten der Ausbildung ihres Geschöpfes eingeschränkt wäre (nach deren Ausrichtung sie nicht weiter frei wäre, um bei veränderten Umständen nach einem anderen Typus zu bilden), man diese Naturbestimmung der bildenden Natur auch wohl Keime oder ursprüngliche Anlagen nennen könnte, ohne darum die erstern als urangänglich eingelegt und sich nur gelegentlich auseinander faltende Maschinen und Knospen (wie im Evolutionssystem) anzusehen...” (AA VIII, p. 61.)

<sup>234</sup> AA VIII, pp. 61-2.

<sup>235</sup> AA VIII, p. 57.

silenced Herder's philosophical voice, which increasingly took the form of what seemed an outdated polemic against his former teacher. And yet, Herder's contribution to the thought of the next generation was not only oblique, it was also terminological. He donated the decisive chapter of our metaphorology, supplying the content if not the method of Romantic organology. The ontological sense already covered the basic semantic field—in human exploration of Being, the question of force's development in the space between the general or structural and the concrete or developmental was concentrated in the Greek and French borrowing. But Herder also started the trend of engaging physiology contemplatively, and indeed spoke of an “organ of reason,” language, by which the human made itself into humanity by giving itself a species-name. When Kant attacked Herder—and Herder responded—the full palette of the philosophical and natural-scientific stakes of the imminent organological debate were given. In a *metaphysical* context first established by Leibniz, the question of methodology was brought philosophical center by Kant in conversation with Newton. Finally, the richness of the empirical and its potential organic newness—the becoming of the world and of reason—were put in place by Herder analogically. Romanticism inherited the term organ from 18<sup>th</sup>-century natural-scientific and metaphysical crises which dovetailed in their production of antinomies with the political upheaval following the Republican revolutions. As they saw the fragmentation of the political world reflected in the increasing isolation of the disciplines, they turned to this terminological context to respond.



## Chapter II: Dialectical Organs the Metaphysics of Tragedy: Hölderlin

Hölderlin is the inaugural thinker of Romantic organology.<sup>236</sup> The story of his intellectual development has been told in rich detail, with twin focuses on his reaction to Kant and Fichte, on the one hand, and the emergence of his poetic theology—starting with faith, proceeding through a pantheism, and emerging with both Christ and Dionysos, devotion to nature’s whole and mythology—on the other. The history I construct here unites these diverse elements. Indeed, in a neglected chapter of Hölderlin’s development—his reception of the term organ from Samuel Thomas Soemmerring’s controversial 1796 *Über das Seelenorgan*—I find the origins of that historiographical dualism. Hölderlin is and has often been shown to be a thinker of contradictions. But his innovative use of the term *organ* shows that he is this in a far deeper sense than is often recognized. Organs become dialectical in his thought,<sup>237</sup> in precisely the technical sense later conferred upon that term. They are at once structure and development, at once sensual and rational, at once form and content. Precisely because they are this unity of opposites—as Hölderlin puts it, *das Eine in sich selber Unterschiedene*<sup>238</sup>—they are also

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<sup>236</sup> I do not mean here to take sides in the debate about whether Hölderlin or Novalis (or indeed Friedrich Schlegel) was first to the Romantic philosophical insight. This issue—which indeed hinges significantly on the interpretation of that insight—has been hotly debated by Dieter Henrich (whose researches into Hölderlin’s context set the stage in the historiography), Manfred Frank (who argues for Novalis’s precedence), and more recently Frederick Beiser (who argues that the first *systematic* expression of Romantic philosophy was in Schlegel’s *Vorlesungen über die Transzendentalphilosophie* in 1800). Indeed, I place Hölderlin first because his use of the term *organ* is more limited than that of Schelling or Novalis. As we will see, it is restricted to a cluster of writings from the late 1790s, later than the first Romantic *uses* of the term (in Schlegel and Novalis), but coming to programmatic form earlier than the others.

<sup>237</sup> Here I share a conviction with Panajotis Kondylis, that it was in Hölderlin’s context that the modern classical form of the dialectic itself emerged. I do not necessarily therefore affirm his strong thesis about dialectic as *Vereinigungsphilosophie* proceeding from Enlightenment monisms and religious concerns in the Germanies—more work to assess his thesis directly is needed. See Panajotis Kondylis, *Die Entstehung der Dialektik: Eine Analyse der geistigen Entwicklung von Hölderlin, Schelling und Hegel bis 1802* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1979), and *ipsus, Aufklärung*.

<sup>238</sup> GSA III, p. 81, with reference to Heraclitus.

the instruments of structural dissolution and reunification. They are temporal, to be sure, but they are more than that. Where time traditionally resolves the logical issue of the coincidence of opposites,<sup>239</sup> organs confer real contradictions on the world, and also resolve those contradictions. They are antinomial and univocal both simultaneously and in succession. For this reason, they offer a particular kind of answer to the Kantian deadlock about the understanding. Where Kant had rhetorically asked the tradition to justify its application of logical judgments to real states of affairs, Hölderlin responded—unexpectedly—with the notion of an *Organ des Geistes*,<sup>240</sup> explicitly in contradiction to its unified pairing *Seyn*, which Hölderlin came to call *das Aorgische* in order to underscore its logical opposition to the organ. By expanding the range of contradictions in our cognition and then focusing those contradictions in the flexible lexeme organ, he pointed the way towards a metaphysics of judgment, a post-Kantian approach to the problems Kant had left behind when he shifted from a possible *organon* to his canon of the understanding. Hölderlin saw in the form-content unity of judgment a unified frame, a locus of investigation. The structure of the world opened in its very development in that frame—what Kant had called “intellectual intuition” found an organ, again unexpectedly, in the tragedy. The tragedy became the genre of presentation of the totalizing opposition between “organ” and *das Aorgische* in historical form. Tragic writing was an invitation to new forms of absolute cognition. Hölderlin broke the deadlock of post-Kantian theorizing

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<sup>239</sup> A classical formulation of this dictum is in Herder’s notes on Kant’s metaphysics lectures: “Das *post* in der definition ist inexplicabel: oder man könnte die *Succeßio* so erklären: contradictorie opposita si existunt succedunt – Denn die praedicata contradictorie opposita können nicht bei einem Ente simultaneo wohl aber succeßivo seyn.” (*Herder Metaphysik*, pp. 18-19) This passage in turn relies on Baumgarten (whose *Metaphysica* Kant used for his lectures on metaphysics throughout his career): “*Succedunt* sibi, (successiua sibi sunt) quorum vnum post aliud existit. Determinatio entium, qua sibi successiua sunt, est eorum *successio*.” (*Baumgarten Metaphysica*, §124) Hölderlin would have read the formulation in the *KdrV*: “Veraenderung ist Verbindung kontradiktorisch entgegengesetzter Bestimmungen im Dasein eines und desselben Dinges.” (B291-92)

<sup>240</sup> GSA IV: 1, p. 249

in Jena in two gestures: first, with the notion of a dialectical organ; second, with the turn from pure philosophy to genre-theory.<sup>241</sup> This latter move made tragedy a privileged organ of absolute knowledge in concrete and historical form. Literature was instrumentalized, and metaphysics renewed: the first form of Romantic organology took shape between the speculative organ and that instrument of literary expression, genre. Tragedy was both philosophically classical and epistemologically actual—it was meant to provoke a new (organological) form of consciousness into existence. The figure of an *organ of intellectual intuition* addressed and attempted to resolve three real contradictions: the critical opposition of judgment and being; the biological deadlock between the mechanical and the organic; and an emergent struggle between nature and art, *physis* and *techne*.

### **Disciplinary Organs: Kant after the Inauguration of Criticism**

To understand Hölderlin's moves, we must return to our narrative (from chapter I above) about philosophical organs, and observe their passage into a literal register. When Hölderlin began to write of an organ, the literal term was new, and not intellectually

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<sup>241</sup> The refrain in the Hölderlin literature to the effect that poetry inherited the task of philosophy—a claim that is also widespread for the Jena movement and the *Goethezeit* more generally—is one that needs differentiation on just this basis. Take, for example, Charles Larmore's statement that: "Hölderlin saw in the limits of philosophy reason to believe that poetry fares better in expressing the full reality of the human condition. The superiority of poetry was one of his deepest convictions..." See Charles Larmore, "Hölderlin and Novalis," in ed. Karl Ameriks, *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 141-161, here p. 149. Rather than a wholesale shift from philosophy to poetry, I see the emergence of a mutual instrumentality between these discursive options, which results in the privileging of genre-theory as the connection between the two. Here I am closer to Kondylis, who writes that "Wenn Hölderlin überhaupt dazu gekommen ist, eine Theorie der Töne und der Dichtarten zu entwickeln, dann nur deswegen, weil er den metaphysisch fundierten Gluaben an die Existenz harmonischer Strukturen hegte bzw. den Wirkungen und Abzweigungen des im höchsten ontologischen Prinzip verwurzelten Geistes auf die Spur kommen wollte. Den Philosophen gegen den Dichter oder umgekehrt auszuspielen, ist in Hölderlins Fall sinnlos, und außerdem hinder e suns, den tieferen Charakter des nachkantischen Idealismus zu erfassen." (Kondylis, *Entstehung*, p. 261)

distant from the metaphorology I have detailed above. This prepared the stage for the term's eccentric use: caught between metaphor and concept, its power was wide-ranging. Hölderlin was the first to exploit that semantic power fully. Hölderlin's efforts can be better specified against a large-scale backdrop, one which I will now describe, before coming to Hölderlin's organology.

The metaphorical, philosophical and natural-scientific groundwork for organology had been laid by 1790 at the latest. Herder's *Gott* had supplied a cosmology of organs, while Kant had supplied the methodological uses of the terms organ and *organon*. The concretizing effect of the *organ* on force in Herder was complemented by the concretizing rhetorical choice of *canon* in Kant's notion of the understanding. Meanwhile, Blumenbach's argument for epigenesis in *Über den Bildungstrieb* had won the upper hand. By the mid-1790s, however, the organ's strange absence from or eccentricity to biological debate in Germany gave way to a sudden proliferation: "organ" was now on everyone's lips. Herder was central to this shift.<sup>242</sup> Recall that it was in fact Herder who introduced the "generationist" position into the debate on preformation and epigenesis. Herder advocated, in an influential and yet (still) neglected way, giving up the notion of simple mechanical force altogether. A "generationist" was someone who took a position on the implicit debate between Newtonian mechanicians and quasi-Newtonian vitalists.<sup>243</sup> This position never denied the phenomenon of mechanical causality, but

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<sup>242</sup> As I pointed out in chapter I, Jörg Wolf Henning unfortunately neglects Herder's influence in his otherwise excellent *Der Begriff „Organ“*, an absence the more remarkable as it was likely Kant, as well as Platner and French naturalists, who impressed the importance of the term upon the young Herder.

<sup>243</sup> In the terms established by Peter Hanns Reil, Herder foreshadows the move from "vitalism" (which remains within the Newtonian paradigm) to "organicism," which reverses the prejudice in favor of the fundamental nature of mechanical matter (this also proceeds from Newton, since for him forces must be *calculable* to be manifest). Thus Herder's introduction of the category "generationist" pushed the debate about the formation of organic being *backwards* into the debate—which was always metaphysical—about the nature of force itself. This conjuncture goes a long way to explaining the re-emergence of metaphysical

rather denied it fundamental status. Herder introduced a differentiated Spinozan Being into the debate, a being that pullulated forces and their specifying organs. “Organ” came into its own as a scientific term in Germany—in the writings of Carl Friedrich Kielmeyer, Joachim Dietrich Brandis, Johann Christian Reil, Alexander von Humboldt, Johann Wilhelm Ritter, and Samuel Thomas Soemmerring—on the basis of a renewal of the debate about the nature of force that Newtonians (mechanicist or vitalist) felt had been put to rest. At just the moment Kant’s system seemed to foreclose on any future metaphysics (excepting the special metaphysics of the critical system), the struggle between epigenesis and preformation gave way to a struggle for the soul of the life sciences, a debate between the epigenetic model and a “generationist” or organicist model of being itself.<sup>244</sup>

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speculation after Kant, and that for two reasons. First, the renewed debate about force addressed a perceived primary weakness in Kant’s philosophy: its reliance upon the Newtonian cosmological model (broadly speaking), or its prejudice in favor of determinative judgments over “reflecting judgments.” Second, the re-awakened interest in the metaphysics of force provides circumstantial evidence for why the Spinoza-renaissance was more than the literary scandal Jacobi forced among *die Freunde Lessings*. Interest in Spinoza as well as Leibniz is deeply connected to this post-Kantian debate on the knowability and nature of force.

<sup>244</sup> Indeed, this conflict over the soul of the emergent discipline is still present in the historiography. Timothy Lenoir, following a division between Kantian, Schellingian, and Hegelian *Naturphilosophien* originally proposed by Dietrich von Engelhardt, focused his *Strategy of Life: Teleology and Mechanics in Nineteenth-Century German Biology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) on figures like Blumenbach and Kielmeyer (see also his ground-breaking “The Göttingen School and the Development of Transcendental Naturphilosophie in the Romantic Era,” *Studies in the History of Biology* 5 (1981), 111-205). Lenoir proposes that a “vital mechanist” research agenda was created in German at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which—at the distance of several developments—eventually led to the classical discoveries of 19<sup>th</sup>-century biology. This reading is based on the notion that what unites Blumenbach and Kant is their Newtonian reticence about the knowledge of forces: the vital mechanist can search for more and more specific manifest mechanics in living beings, but does not hope to clarify vitality itself. That there can be “no Newton for a blade of grass,” as Kant put it, does not prevent serious work in biological explanation. It is easy to see how this program anticipates the mechanical developments in biology of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the genetic code is only the deepest mechanism yet found, and thus represents another temptation to fall behind the Newtonian *docta ignorantia* about forces. More recently, Richards, *Romantic Conception* has proposed that the “Kantian” branch of this proto-biological movement actually *foreclosed* on the possibility of a real biology. Because the *KU* makes judgments about organic beings regulative—i.e. not constitutive of the canonical world of the understanding—there can be, so Richards, no true science of life. Richards therefore recuperates a similar cast of figures (Kielmeyer, Reill, etc.) in the name of *Schellingian* (and even Goethean) “biology.” This revised history then also leads to the development of Darwinian evolution. What strikes us here about this historiography is that it *repeats the terms* of the debate which occurred in the

“Organ” came, in the mid-1790s, to its full range of literal expression in the German language. The metaphorical uses I examined in chapter I were largely borrowed from French, English, and Latin sources. But as the word came to have its now intuitive meaning in German—“functional part,” an element in a complex system both existing in mutual determination with the system as a whole—its metaphorical range broadened. And it was in the interplay between an emergent, broad literal sense and a new field of potential metaphor that Romantic organology made its home. As metaphysics entered a new crisis—one determined by the disciplinization of the very knowledge it sought in a profoundly uncertain political Europe—“organ” would come to have a sliding scale of literal values. Hölderlin, Schelling, and Novalis entered the terminological fray, intentionally shifting the open fields of literal and metaphorical meanings of *organ* in order to build a modern metaphysics.

“Organ” came quickly to be associated, in proto-biological discourse, with the developmental aspect of life.<sup>245</sup> Thus Johann Christian Reil could write, in 1795, that

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1790s: should the life sciences be considered their own discipline, or should the also emergent university discipline physics do much the work to understand organic phenomena?

<sup>245</sup> The key texts in this development (the list is not meant to be exhaustive) are: Carl Friedrich Kielmeyer, *Ueber die Verhältnisse der organischen Kräfte unter einander in der Reihe der verschiedenen Organisationen, die Geseze und Folgen dieser Verhältniße*, eingeführt von Kai Torsten Kanz (Basiliken-Press: Marburg an der Lahn 1993); Johann Dietrich Brandis, *Versuch über die Lebenskraft* (Hannover: Verlag der Hahn’schen Buchhandlung, 1795); Johann Christian Reil, *Von der Lebenskraft* (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1910); Alexander von Humboldt, *Aphorismen aus der Physiologie der Pflanzen*, transl. Gotthelf Fischer (Voß und Compagnie: Weimar, 1794), a translation of Alexander von Humboldt, *Florae Fribergensis specimen plantas cryptogamicas praesertim subterraneas exhibens / Accedunt aphorismi ex doctrina physiologiae chemicae plantarum. Cum tabulis aeneis* (Rottmann: Berlin, 1793); Johann Wilhelm Ritter, *Beweis, dass ein beständiger Galvanismus den Lebensprozess in dem Thierreich begleite. Neben neuen Versuchen über den Galvanismus* (Verlag des Industrie-Comptoirs: Weimar, 1798); Samuel Thomas Soemmerring, *Über das Organ der Seele* (Königsberg: Friedrich Nicolovius, 1796). I pass over two contexts here. First, Schiller’s training under Abel at the Hohe Karlsschule in Stuttgart led to early uses of *organ* in his medical dissertations. These dissertations went long unread, however, and the likelihood that the word arrived in Stuttgart by way of Platner’s anthropology also overlaps with Herder’s early uses. See for the context Wolfgang Riedel, *Die Anthropologie des jungen Schiller: Zur Ideengeschichte der medizinischen Schriften und der „Philosophischen Briefe“* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1985). Second, I pass over the very important contributions of Karl Phillip Moritz and Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Their uses of *organ*—proceeding, as I show in chapter V, from the so-called

“Organ und Organisation ist also Bildung und Struktur belebter Körper.”<sup>246</sup> Reil returns in this moment to the Aristotelian question of the homogeneous parts and heterogeneous parts—and we can recall that Haller’s physiology had also addressed this issue, without using the term organ. Here even homogenous parts (like “Faser”—the fibers of the body) are named “organs,” insofar as they are complex. Thus Reil establishes an organic system—as a living combination of “matter and form”—in which we have organs all the way down to the divide with “dead” matter. It is as though Leibniz’s system has been tempered, included in it a purely homogeneous substance which cannot be organ-filled.<sup>247</sup> Live matter is purely organic, even where it homogeneous, since it already there involves structured development. Organs, then, interact with substances outside the live body on a scale from *grob* to *fein*. With the introduction of the interactive *feines Organ*, we can see

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“Spinoza summit” in Weimar—overlap to a significant extent with, and probably derive from, Herder’s uses. I will point out Goethe’s uses peripherally where they seem determinative, and reserve the fuller history for the final chapter, where this discourse had the most influence.

<sup>246</sup> Reil, *Lebenskraft*, p. 21. I argue in chapter V that Goethe unites both structure and development in the term organ in his 1790 essay, *Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen*.

<sup>247</sup> Much of the debate about Reil’s affinities (Lenoir classes him as a Kantian, while Richards sees an organicist) comes from the way in which he approaches the problem of matter. This approach, it seems to me, is indeed Kantian, but in a sense emphasized by neither Lenoir nor Richards. Reil tries to include the Newtonian attempt not to define forces with Kant’s agnosticism about “supersensible substrates.” The problem—which is a properly Kantian problem, as the *KU* reveals—is that we definitely know that we are dealing with two unknowables in dead and living matter—a *contradictio in adiecto* which Reil, to my reading, does not resolve. He writes: “Vorstellungen sind der Erfahrung nach nicht anders, als in Verbindung mit Organen möglich. Von einer unmittelbaren und von Organen unabhängigen Wirkung einer Seele haben wir keine Erfahrung, also auch keinen reellen Begriff. Und von dieser Art müßte die Fähigkeit einer Seele sein, die sich Organe bildete, ehe Organe vorhanden sind. Materie, sagt man zwar, sei, soweit wir sie aus Erfahrung kennen, ein totes Wesen, von welchem wir kein Leben ableiten können. Allein belehrt uns nicht die tägliche Erfahrung, daß es eine Materie (die tierische) gibt, die Leben hat? Warum wollen wir nicht auch in der belebten, sowie in der toten natur, die Erscheinungen derselben der Materie zuschreiben? Etwa weil wir den absoluten Grund der Erscheinungen belebter Wesen nicht aus ihrer Materie erkennen können? Das können wir aber bei den toten Körpern auch nicht.” (Reil, *Lebenskraft*, p. 4) He then flips this argument on its head, emphasizing the complexity of “dead” matter—its formal qualities (crystals, magnets, etc.). The primary representable quality of live matter is, so Reil, that it is “plastic.” That plasticity, as the passage above intimates, is a matter of the development and contribution to further development of organs. This somewhat confused passage is an excellent example of the metaphysics which, after Kant and Herder, became unavoidable even amongst the most sober practitioners of the life sciences.

Herder's influence—but here there is no shift into talk of cognitive organs.<sup>248</sup> “Organ” has become the point where structure and development meet: organ is *Bildung*, but structure is also *organization*. The term has entered a field of meaning from which it will not again be withdrawn, but which supplies the basis on which the analogy between organic processes and rational forms could become more than metaphorical. In all the talk of *Bildung*, *Trieb*, and *Kraft*—which has been so much (and so deservedly) discussed in the literature—a term came into the German public discourse (philosophical, natural-scientific, and literary) to name simultaneously several conceptual pressure-points. Gathered around the local problem of structure and development—which itself refers back to the larger problem of generation—were, suddenly, problems of force and expression, cognition and its object, mechanics and organics, *physis* and *techne*.<sup>249</sup>

The crises in school metaphysics from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (see the Introduction above) seemed, therefore, to haunt its end. The Romantics came of intellectual age in this reiterated crisis-atmosphere, in which the speculative stakes of individual and seemingly isolated areas of knowledge (disciplines) were the explicit topic of debate. Hölderlin would be interested to rehabilitate metaphysics, and to do that, he

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<sup>248</sup> Here Reil also relies heavily on Brandis's 1794 writing of nearly the same name—*Versuch über die Lebenskraft*. Soemmerring, as we will see below, will also make use of Brandis, as he will of Platner's 1772 *Anthropologie*, which Reil also cites here. Perhaps the most interesting citation here is from Gotthelf Fischer's translation of Humboldt's plant-physiological aphorisms. In the notes to this edition, Fischer writes: “Die Grundlage derjenigen Körper, welche durch die Zeugung das Leben bekommen, ist durchgängig äusserst klein gegen der zu ihrer Vollkommenheit gediehenen Grösse derselben. Alle diese Zunahme und Vervollkommung [sic] muss das Leben aus dem Körper selbst, von auswärts in ihn gelangten Dingen, durch alle seiner Art zukommende Stufen bewirken. Zur Bewirkung dieser fremden in ihn gelangten Dinge, um sie für ihn schicklich zuzurichten, gehören Werkstätte und Werkzeuge, die je nach der verschiedenen und mannigfaltigen Bestimmung und Bedürfnissen, verschieden und mannigfaltig sind. Diese werden besonders Organe genant [sic].” (Humboldt, *Aphorismen*, p. 135.) Thus the entire spectrum of processes and parts discussed so widely without a name in the epigenesis/preformation debate became *organs*.

<sup>249</sup> Reil himself continues to speak of the “machine of nature,” which has organs. See e.g. *Lebenskraft*, p. 21.



would have to reject Kant's notion of *Disziplin* as applied and extended to the university in the *Streit der Facultäten*.

If there is any doubt that this struggle over the general and the particular—this crisis about emergent institutions playing out in metaphysical discourse—was also felt to be political, we need look no further than Kant's 1798 *Streit der Facultäten*. Originally written in 1794 and withheld due to the Prussian censors (whom Kant had crossed in 1793 with his *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*), the two halves of this writing tie university reform to the notion of republican government after the French Revolution. Arguing that the regulative, moral teleology of the human race must ultimately recognize its progress in the republicanism, Kant defends—as he had more generally in 1784 in *Was heißt Aufklärung?*—the notion of a “philosophical faculty” which represents *public reason* and the interest of the truth alone. This traditionally “lower” faculty—which would replace the theological faculty at the academic helm of the university<sup>250</sup>—necessarily occupies a privileged position in a university appropriate to republican government. Its privilege results from its distance from the state's interests, and that very autonomy comes from its relationship to truth. Here Kant returns to the terms I investigated in Chapter I of this study: the “laws” which are set forward as a canon of each faculty with respect to government—one thinks of the modern use of the Hippocratic oath—are distinguished from the rules which bodies of professors give themselves for the practice of their individual disciplines. Although these self-regulatory

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<sup>250</sup> Kant's proposal is to divide the medieval “higher faculties” (theology, law, and medicine) according to the object of their social role in producing human happiness. The theological faculty aims at general happiness; the juridical at bourgeois welfare; and the medicinal at the well-being of the body. I characterize the philosophical faculty as “public” (in keeping with Kant's famous definition from 1784) because it is the furthest from being instrumentalized by the state, and thus forms the autonomous center of the university. See AA VII, pp. 20-23. The parallel with the *Enlightenment*-essay is clear, as has also been noted by Paul Guyer (*Kant* (New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 291-93).

statutes seem to be essential to the concept of each faculty, they have no governmental authority. Indeed, writes Kant, each can serve merely as an *organon*—an aid—for the present state of each faculty’s practice.<sup>251</sup> This division is then used again to distinguish within the theological faculty between *reine Religionslehre* (the philosophical canon) and *Kirchenlehre* (the theological organon).<sup>252</sup> Autonomous, public reason is identified with the canon, which should produce disciplinary *organa* according to the heteronomous functions of each faculty. The philosophical faculty’s antagonism to the others lies in its ability to make this distinction: it *disciplines the disciplines* by referring them always to the most general human interest. Looking back to the *KdrV*, we can see that “canon” is used univocally across these texts: a body of positive law establishing the legitimate use of judgment for the constitution of our world here finds its social expression in application to the practice of the socially embedded faculties.

The *Streit* thus takes pride of place in a particular genre of writing Kant engages in after establishing Criticism. I would propose the term “disciplinary” for this Kantian genre. The review of Herder’s *Ideen* is only among the more polemical of these writings.<sup>253</sup> They take their cue from the last sentence of the *KdrV* (“Der kritische Weg steht allein noch offen...”), and they rigorously apply the notion of *Disziplin* worked out

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<sup>251</sup> “Von dem Gesetzbuch, als dem Kanon, sind diejenigen Bücher, welche als (vermeintlich) vollständiger Auszug des Geistes des Gesetzbuchs zum faßlicheren Begriff und sicherern Gebrauch des gemeinen Wesens (der Gelehrten und Ungelehrten) von den Fakultäten abgefaßt werden, wie etwa die symbolischen Bücher, gänzlich unterschieden. Sie können nur verlangen als Organon, um den Zugang zu jenem zu erleichtern, angesehen zu werden und haben gar keine Autorität; selbst dadurch nicht, daß sich etwa die vornehmsten Gelehrten von einem gewissen Fache darüber geeinigt haben, ein solches Buch statt Norm für ihre Fakultät gelten zu lassen, wozu sie gar nicht befugt sind, sondern sie einstweilen als Lehrmethode einzuführen, die aber nach Zeitumständen veränderlich bleibt und überhaupt auch nur das Formale des Vortrags betreffen kann, im Materialen der Gesetzgebung aber schlechterdings nichts ausmacht.” (AA VII, pp. 22-23)

<sup>252</sup> AA VII, pp. 36-37.

<sup>253</sup> We might include *Von einem neuerdings erhobenen vornehmen Ton in der Philosophie* (AA: VIII, pp. 387-423), and *Über eine Entdeckung, nach der alle neue Kritik der Vernunft durch eine ältere entbehrlich gemacht werden soll* (AA: VIII, pp. 185-253), to name only the most obvious. Volume VIII of the academy edition contains most of these writings.

in the *Methodenlehre*, the final section of the Critique. Those uses of reason which lead away from the canon of the understanding—in fact, that uses which allow *organa* to become statements about truth rather than about disciplinary practice (constitutive rather than regulative)—are to be excluded from philosophy. Indeed, they are to be excluded from the university, and ultimately from the public sphere altogether.<sup>254</sup> After all, the inaugural disciplinary writing had been directed at Herder, and its point of contention had been a metaphysical problem (that of force). Hölderlin came of intellectual age in the very resurgence of the force-debate in metaphysical terms, which “conflicted”—and not accidentally—with Kant’s program in the 1790s

The word *organon*, then, is demoted to its non-metaphysical use in this context. Kant has now dismissed the problem had exercised him for several decades, that of an *organon* for metaphysics, or formal rules for general cognition. Simultaneously, however, the very problem which articulated for him the heart of a conflict of the faculties—the problem of the cognition of force—came into natural-scientific prominence and brought the word *organ* to the fore. In this context, the word was literal, but its meaning was not yet fully determined. For that determination, some settling of accounts in the metaphysical debate would be necessary. *Der Streit der Facultäten* painstakingly socialized Criticism even as it intentionally left out the metaphysical conflict associated with Kant’s own earlier use of the term *organon*. But between the essay’s composition (1794) and its publication (1798), the issue would be forced into public view by the

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<sup>254</sup> John Zammito’s writings about Kant are perhaps closest to this depiction. There are two points of difference, however, between his notion and mine. First, I would not include the *KU* in this genre, and his *Genesis of Kant’s Critique of Judgment* does not compel us, I think, to do so. Second, his depiction is polemical. Kant was, according to him, in some sense wrong to do this, at least insofar as he obscured other approaches to the problems he investigated (especially Herder’s—see *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology*). My remarks are not intended in this way. I am merely pointing out that Kant saw fit to put his philosophical program into social action at the university and state levels, and that this required a certain generic shift in his writing.

Göttingen physiologist Samuel Thomas Soemmerring with his 1796 *Über das Seelenorgan*. This literary-scientific event—reactions to his writing, mostly negative, came from all sectors and faculties—effectively brought organ and *organon* into the same discourse, quite without any intention on the part of Soemmerring or the writer of the afterword to his study: Immanuel Kant.

### **Towards a New Metaphysics: From the Soul's *Organ* to Organology**

Soemmerring's *Über das Seelenorgan* was published under these disciplinary conditions, which dovetailed with the renaissance of metaphysical problems described above. This conjuncture set the stage for Hölderlin's combination of monism and dialectical thought—the work was pressed upon him by his self-designated literary father, Wilhelm Heinse (see note 271 below)—which found final expression in his theory of tragedy. Amongst the seemingly *passé* problems that found renewed interest was that of the location of the spirit in the body. The three systems of body-soul commerce—*influxus physicus*, Leibniz's pre-established harmony, and the post-Cartesian occasionalist system—had driven this discourse from the collapse of scholastic Aristotelianism in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century through the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup>.<sup>255</sup> The question had not gone away—nor has it—but the circulating answers in German public discourse had shifted significantly by 1790.<sup>256</sup> Scholastic frameworks had fallen away, and the question of locality—

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<sup>255</sup> See chapter I above for rejections of force-interactions between body and soul couched in *organ*-terms.

<sup>256</sup> There were primarily two kinds of responses in Germany as the 19<sup>th</sup> century approached. First, there was an anthropological answer, one emphasized by writers like Ernst Platner and Herder. Second, there was a critical answer, emphasized by Kant and his followers, especially Reinhold and then Fichte. In a sense, this latter discourse was *not* an answer, since it took its departure from the logical deadlock the terms of the question. John Zammito has described the emergence of criticism as a deviation from a more general anthropological discourse which the early Kant had participated in. He writes: "German anthropological discourse crystallized in three distinct manifestations around the year 1772: first, Ernst Platner's publication of *Anthropologie fuer Aerzte und Weltweise*; second, Kant's inaugural course in anthropology

especially with respect to the brain—had gained traction as the physiological enterprise became both technologically and analytically more complex.<sup>257</sup> This shift meant that the terms *Werkzeug* and *Organ* could now be used to describe functional locations in the body, and especially in the brain. If the body was the soul’s organ, this meant something immediately material and functional. And the soul’s organ could now be investigated for information about that functioning—if only there could be agreement about what that organ was.

Kant had addressed the locality question in his *Träume eines Geistersehers* in 1766, arguing that the soul cannot be conceived in the same terms as the body.<sup>258</sup> It was, however, Ernst Platner who spearheaded the re-awakening of the question of the “soul’s organ,” which his 1790 *Neue Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise*.<sup>259</sup> This re-worked

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at the University of Königsberg; and third, the publication of Herder’s prize-winning *Essay on the Origins of Language*. Herder was among the earliest and most radical advocates of supplanting philosophy with anthropology, and he devoted his life’s work to that endeavor, with all its promise and perils.” (Zammito, *Origins*, p. 3) The increasingly bitter relations between the founders of these discourses—especially as Kant became more polemical in his writings in the 1790s, and Herder began to attack his former teacher—gave way to more reconciliatory gestures with Fichte’s 1794 lecture-courses on Platner’s aphorisms, which Hölderlin attended.

<sup>257</sup> Among the famous attempts to understand the brain’s role in cognition in the 18<sup>th</sup> century are Haller’s, Soemmerring’s and Franz Josef Gall’s doctrines, which were characterized as “phrenology.” The period between the metaphysical discourse which focused on the soul and the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century positivism which discovered localization of brain-functions is characterized by a striking openness, and it is in this indeterminate atmosphere that the *organ* emerged as the term for the instrumentalization of the body by the soul. See Michael Hagner, *Homo cerebialis: Der Wandel vom Seelenorgan zum Gehirn* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2008), and Jan Verplaetse, *Localizing the Moral Sense: Neuroscience and the Search for the Cerebral Seat of Morality, 1800-1930* (New York: Springer, 2009).

<sup>258</sup> Kant already uses Platner’s later term *Nervengeist* to describe the transmission of Cartesian *ideas materiales* in the *Träume eines Geistersehers, erläutert durch Träume der Metaphysik* (AA II, p. 345). Kant also talks about organs of the brain (p. 339), distinguishing them from sense-organs (in an early use of “organ” for the senses in German) and naming the central organ a *Sensorium der Seele*, which, as we have seen, may have influenced Herder. The term *Seelenorgan* does not occur, and would have a very different context—precisely that of Wolffian metaphysics—if it had. His consideration leads to the fundamentally insoluble relation of body and soul—an anticipation of the notion of an antinomy—but also the “inclination” to make the soul an immaterial spirit. See pp. 325-7 for Kant’s rejection of the soul’s general presence in the body and in the brain in particular.

<sup>259</sup> His 1772 *Anthropologie* had used the term *organ*—as we have seen—and even *Seelenorgan*, but the renewed effort devotes some 50 paragraphs to the problem of the *Seelenorgan*, compared with only a handful in the earlier edition. See Ernst Platner, *Neue Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Physiologie, Pathologie, Moralphilosophie und Aesthetik* (Crusius: Leipzig,

and amplified version of the 1772 *Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise* introduced the term *Seelenorgan* firmly into the public sphere.<sup>260</sup> The *Seelenorgan* is two-fold in two separate senses, folding an animal and a spiritual nature into the essence of the human, which is itself both recognitive and active.<sup>261</sup> The body—even its organic parts—cannot be counted as the seat of the soul, and Platner polemicizes against those who misrecognize the nerves themselves as this locus.<sup>262</sup> This presents the reader with a strange dualism: Platner, who insists for holistic reasons on the unity both of the *Seelenorgan* and the human more generally, also points to competing and even seemingly contradictory structures in the body, in the soul, and in their relation.<sup>263</sup> Thus Platner—especially through his continued use of the term *influxus physicus*—introduces not the general “organ” but the *organ of the soul* in a metaphysically discursive manner. And it is precisely the problematic of the dual and the unified that Hölderlin would take up and radicalize. If “organ” had been literalized, it had also been, in a parallel discourse,

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1790), pp. 58-91. Note that Reil, too, had made an uncommonly direct claim that the brain itself was the the *Seelenorgan*. See Reil, p. 48: “Daß das Seelenorgan (das Gehirn) und nicht die Nerven das eigentümliche Werkzeug der Vorstellungen sei, ist wohl unleugbar.” The preceding pages have an account of nerve’s action in relay to the brain and the muscles, which are the reactors that allow for sensation and voluntary motion after initial excitation.

<sup>260</sup> The 1772 edition contains a discussion of the sense-organs, and even a discussion of the *Sitz der Seele*, but does not emphasize the term *Seelenorgan*. The organs work in both versions by mediating their formal impressions to the *Nervengeist*, which communicates directly to the brain. The *Gehirnmark* (1772) or the *Nervengeist* (1790) is the *sensorium*, the basis of all perception and indeed the soul’s point of communication with the body and the world. But it is not an *organ*, at least not yet in 1772.

<sup>261</sup> “Der Mensch ist sofern die Seele allein, wiefern die Seele allein fähig ist des geistigen Lebens und Bewußtseyns, und der Körper ihr bloß dient zum Werkzeug ihrer leidentlichen [sic], und selbstthätigen Wirkungen.” (Platner, *Neue Anthropologie* §175, p. 58)

<sup>262</sup> §83 involves a complex reception of the British moral philosophical discourse which speaks of empathies in particular as resonances like those of the strings of musical instruments. The seat of the soul must be “invisible,” according to Platner. See, on the soul as string, Riedel, *Schillers Antropologie*. Platner concludes that talk of the *body* as the organ of the soul makes loose sense nevertheless, because of the mediated relation of the *Nervengeist* to the body and its felt world: “so ist es, in dieser Rücksicht, zuläßig, Gehirn und Nervensystem, ja überhaupt den ganzen Körper, das Organ der Seele zu nennen.” (Platner, *Neue Anthropologie* §186, p. 61)

<sup>263</sup> Platner, *Neue Anthropologie*, §200 ff. defends *influxus physicus* (or rather assumes it, referencing his *Aphorisms*), and attacks Kant’s critical system explicitly for complicating this seemingly straightforward point.

metaphysicized again. Where the conflict between physics and biology had gained obliquely metaphysical proportions, the traditional problem of *commercium mentis et corporis*, had been re-metaphysicized just as Kant sought polemically to force a different (canonical, disciplinary) solution.

Platner set the tone for the entire interaction Hölderlin would have later in the decade primarily with Soemmerring (and the latter's friend Heinse) and Kant (through Fichte):

Weil die menschliche Seele, so wie wahrscheinlicher Weise alle endliche Geister [sic], den Stoff der ihrer Art des Daseyns angemessenen und von der Gottheit bestimmten Vorstellungen weder aus sich selbst hervorbringen, noch auch unmittelbar aus der vorliegenden Welt nehmen, vielweniger unmittelbar in die vorliegende Welt einwirken konnte: so bedurfte sie eines Mittelwerkzeuges, durch welches sie theils ihrem Verhältniß gemäß sich die Welt vorstellen, theils gemäß diesen Vorstellungen in die Welt einwirken könnte. *Seelenorgan*.<sup>264</sup>

Not only the structure of Hölderlin's dialectical metaphysics, and in fact not only its terms were given here, but in fact the definitional task of the Romantic organ was described by Platner, perhaps for the first time. For we can see here, in an argumentative style that attracted neither Fichte nor the Romantics, both the metaphysical and the political or ethical dimensions of the interventionary tool of Romantic organology. The *Mittelwerkzeug*, which both cognizes and acts and is the principle of any possible unity between these two human activities, is also defined as the possibility of human cognition of the world itself. The division in cognition which prevented this unified instrument in Kant's criticism is here itself criticized. The *Seelenorgan* was, as we shall see, the predecessor of the Romantic attempt to systematize the absolute knowledge that Kant had called "intellectual intuition."

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<sup>264</sup> Platner, *Neue Anthropologie* §177, p. 59.

Soemmerring was not exactly alone, then, when he proposed that the “fluid” in the nervous system was the *sensorium* Descartes had once located in the pineal gland. Soemmerring did, as Hagner has pointed out, recall the literal terms of the Cartesian debate, by citing liberally from authors from Descartes himself to the novelist (and his friend) Wilhelm Heinse. If it seemed that the question of the seat of the senses could be separated from that of the location of the soul, Soemmerring incautiously equated the two.<sup>265</sup> He thus broke the discursive rules of the resurgent metaphysics, making its terms explicit and violating Kant’s warnings about the separation of the faculties. As we have seen, he was not alone in continuing to ask about their connection. Yet his literary archive, a kind of panorama of “old” metaphysics, provoked vehement rejections of his proposal from perhaps the two most dominant cultural figures at the time: Goethe and Kant. It took Hölderlin’s eye to recognize, through the prism of Soemmerring’s citations of Heinse—as we shall see—the connection between post-Kantian philosophical concerns and post-Spinozan theological anxiety (especially in the wake of the Lessing controversy). Hölderlin’s most central philosophical gesture—the dialectical figure of real, developmental contradiction captured in a greater unity—emerged not from his reading of Fichte, but from his realization that Fichte (or Kant) and Spinoza (or Lessing) could be united only by a metaphysics of contradiction: organology. The cosmic picture that emerged as the necessary correlate of this complex thought is what is usually referred to as Hölderlin’s classicism, for it was only the Greek tragedy that reflected the one pole of his contradictory picture of developmental ontology. And it was only the possibility of a contemporary tragedy that could fulfill the organological promise, the

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<sup>265</sup> See Hagner, *Homo cerebrialis*, and also, on the separation of the two problems, Werner Euler, “Die Suche nach dem „Seelenorgan.“ Kants philosophische Analyse einer anatomischen Entdeckung Soemmerrings,” *Kant-Studien* 93 (2002), pp. 453-80.



promise of mutual interpenetration of the absolute and the particular which had eluded him in *Hyperion*.<sup>266</sup>

Dividing the nerves into twelve pairs, Soemmerring focuses on the interface of the “fluid” in the “cavities” of the nerves (*Nervenhöhlen*) with the ends of those nerves in the brain. Detailed drawings and descriptions of especially the sensory nerve-pairs lead to the larger question: how can sensation arise from hard matter? Soemmerring’s answer is that it is precisely a soft kind of matter that allows this: water. Citing widely from Descartes to Kant to Wilhelm Heine (on which more in a moment), Soemmerring asks after a *medium uniens* that connects soul to matter in perception. His answer is the dynamic fluid in the nerves. Where Platner had rejected a “visible” locale of this interaction, Soemmerring incautiously proposed a point where physiology and metaphysics could meet.<sup>267</sup> In doing so, he prepared not only the term organ for a more complex use, but also gathered a citational web which Hölderlin went on to exploit. Important among his sources are not only Descartes and Kant, but also Platner, Brandis and Herder. The argument culminates in a rhetorical question (“Warum soll also nachher noch eine dem Anscheine nach homogene Feuchtigkeit unseres Geist nicht enthalten, ihm nicht als Organ dienen können?”<sup>268</sup>), which is then followed by a citation of Herder (“keine Kraft der Natur ist ohne Organ...”<sup>269</sup>) Herder’s use of the term, as the passage suggests, was the most present for the shift that occurred in the 1790s. And yet, as

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<sup>266</sup> I follow most of the literature in this claim, but *Hyperion*’s closing words (*nächstens mehr...*) make very clear that systemic closure is far from achieved in the novel. See *Sämtliche Werke (Große Stuttgarter Ausgabe), dritter Band. Hyperion*, ed. Friedrich Beißner (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1957), p. 227. Cited hereinafter as GSA III, p. 160.

<sup>267</sup> Soemmerring was aware of this discursive transgression, as is clear from Soemmerring, *Seelenorgan*, p. 38, where he cites Kant’s rejection of any crossing of the boundary between the physiological and the transcendental.

<sup>268</sup> Soemmerring, *Seelenorgan*, p. 43.

<sup>269</sup> Soemmerring, *Seelenorgan*, p. 44.

Soemmerring makes clear, he is not addressing the question about force directly: he is interested to show where it is appropriate to talk of the soul's instrumentalization of the body. That interface—the location of the *sensorium commune*, the *proton aistheterion*, and the *sedes animae*—is in the literal waters of the nerves.

Soemmerring's predominant interest in the physiological question about the soul—its organs, not its status as or as interacting with force—did not prevent his treatise from bearing on the debate about the unity of nature and the plurality of forces. Indeed, his writing is singular amongst those I have identified as shifting the discursive use of “organ” in the 1790s. This is because he thematizes the mediation of the complex physical organ (rather than the question of the organ's relation to force). He emphasizes the *organ* itself, the medium of communication, rather than the Newtonian problem of force. And the very choice of water as that medium was textually charged. Recalling the pre-Socratic teachings on the elements, Soemmerring cites not Thales himself but Wilhelm Heine's *Ardinghello* (1787), which novel's fourth and penultimate part consists of a canonical and ideological debate about philosophy between the protagonist and a certain Demetri, who commands much attention as a marketplace philosopher in Rome. Soemmerring's citation is from Demetri's explanation of his complex pantheism, which relies on a long history of natural philosophy. Thales, according to Demetri, found the divine in water, in the moistness of the earth, which in itself lacked life and spirit. The emergence of order from chaos was correctly thought by the Greeks to come from elemental organizations, from animated fluids—and modern philosophers lack understanding of this basic truth.<sup>270</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Soemmerring, *Seelenorgan*, pp. 39-40. The absence of Empedocles is the more remarkable because of the focus on the doctrine of the elements, of which the former was and is taken to be the founder.

*Empedocles*—who would come to be the subject of Hölderlin’s own, modern tragedy—receives no mention in *Ardinghello*. And yet his distinctive doctrines, as they came down to Hölderlin (and to us) through Aristotle and Diogenes Laertius’s *Lives of the Philosophers*, are clearly recognizable in the text.<sup>271</sup> Demetri’s argument is that the elements are explanatory of the tension in all naturalist holism or pantheism: if all is one and one all, then where does movement and tension come from? This problem—which was also Herder’s question confronting Spinoza through Jacobi’s and Lessing’s incitement—receives a solution, not merely a report, from Demetri himself. *Ardinghello* takes the novelistic position, as it were, that the development of form (and this includes the problem of epigenesis<sup>272</sup>) is an intra-divine necessity. The universe takes form in order to *enjoy* itself, which it can only do as discrete entities endowed, ultimately, with

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Hölderlin’s association of the Heinse passage’s philosophical content with Empedocles was, as we shall see, no great leap.

<sup>271</sup> Indeed, a key passage explores the various “single-element” doctrines of the pre-Socratics, without mentioning Empedocles, who was, according to Aristotle, the founder of the “four elements” doctrine. The protagonist soliloquizes: ““Die großen Dichter dieser hohen Zeiten für die Menschheit,” fiel ich ein, “hatten um eine Stufe natürlichere Metaphysik und nahmen das Sinnliche und Nähere. Sie meinten, wir schöpften die bewegende Kraft mit dem Atem, und sie sei in der Luft befindlich, und nannten sie *Zeus*, nach dem wörtlichen Sinn, *wodurch sie lebten*; und einige Philosophen schlugen sich zu ihrer Partei. *Sophokles* sagt: “Zeus, der alles faßt, in alles dringt, uns näher verwandt ist als Vater, Mutter, Bruder, Schwester.” Und an einem andern Orte: “Welcher Menschen Übermut, o Zeus, hemmt deine Macht, die der uralte Schlaf nicht ergreift und die unermüdlichen Monden! Unalternd durch der Jahre Wechsel nimmst du Herrscher den strahlenden Glanz vom Olymp ein; dir ist der Augenblick, die Zukunft und Vergangenheit untertan.” Und *Euripides* sagt geradezu: “Siehst du über und um uns den unermeßlichen Äther, der die Erde mit frischen Armen rund umfängt? Das ist Gott!” Und *Aristophanes*, sein Antagonist, ruft ebenso aus: “Unser Vater Äther, heiligster, aller Lebengeber!” Und *Pindar* ging schon vorher noch weiter und singt stolz in lyrischer Begeisterung: “Eins das Geschlecht der Menschen! Eins das der Götter! Alle beide atmen von *einer* Mutter.” Wilhelm Heinse, *Ardinghello und die glückseligen Inseln* (Leipzig: Insel, 1961), pp. 248-49. This passage was clearly very important to the young Hölderlin, as his frequent use of the *Aether* and *Vater Aether* as glosses on *Zeus* as a natural force and god make clear. This issue has received an excellent treatment from Max Baeumer in his “Hölderlin und das *hen kai pan*,” *Monatshefte* 59: 2 (1967), pp. 131-47, which also provides valuable assessments of Hölderlin’s relationship to Jacobi and Lessing, and a remarkable history of the topos *one and all*. Demetri reports this topos in the following way (with clear reference to the Lessing-controversy): Andre suchten in der Folge den Widerspruch wenigstens im Ausdrucke zu vermeiden und setzten für irgendein Element überhaupt: *Eins ist Alles und Alles Eins*.” (Heinse, *Ardinghello*, pp. 262-63.)

<sup>272</sup> See Heinse, *Ardinghello*, pp. 269 ff.

freedom.<sup>273</sup> Thus a certain metaphysics is given, a pantheism in which a mundane God gives rise to free forms as the elaboration of his enjoyment of himself.<sup>274</sup> Demetri's argument hardly supplies any argumentative force to the assertion that the one differentiates itself—Heinse thus omits the factor which Herder had called “organ”—but one passage clearly addresses the problem of organicity.

Discussing the understanding in this pantheistic framework, Demetri reports that the cognitive faculty must have its “own material” according to Plato and Aristotle, relying on Anaxagoras.<sup>275</sup> The mind must be the *place of forms*, and in its thinking, judging, perception, the creator of those forms. Insofar as it does this work, it is its own material. Its application to bodily substance makes part of its activity, however, corruptible—memory, perception, thought about the world, are not the essence of this mind. Demetri draws the conclusion: “Folglich ist die Seele, als Verstand betrachtet, nur unsterblich, insofern sie nichts denkt.”<sup>276</sup> This notion would receive a strange echo in the Fichtean/Schellingian doctrine that the fullness of cognition—intellectual intuition—could only be unconscious (see the next section of the present chapter). The free-standing mind, however, is not fully identical with the soul. Indeed, soul becomes, in this passage, the functional interface between mind and body, between part and whole:

Die Seele des Auges ist das Sehen, die Seele des Ohrs das Hören und so die des Gefühls das Fühlen. Die Seele des Baums ist, daß er wächst und seine Nahrung mit den Wurzeln

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<sup>273</sup> With respect to God, and with clear reliance on Spinoza, Demetri says: “Wenn Eins Alles ist, so ist jede Form desselben ursprünglich freie Handlung; denn es läßt sich kein Grund denken als seine Lust, warum es aus sich so mancherlei wird. Und Allgenuß seiner Kraft ist die höchste Freiheit.” (Heinse, *Ardinghello*, p. 287)

<sup>274</sup> For the development of Heinse's controversial religious views, see Max Baeumer, “Wilhelm Heinse. Zur Frage seiner Konversion und religiösen Anschauung,” *PMLA* 78: 3 (1963), pp. 214-24.

<sup>275</sup> Heinse, *Ardinghello*, p. 265. Demetri makes sense of the *De anima* on his own terms: “... dessen [Aristoteles'] Meinung ich freilich nach meinem eignen Begriff erklärte.” See the Introduction above for Aristotle's agreement with Anaxagoras and consequent rejection of an organ for the mind.

<sup>276</sup> Heinse, *Ardinghello*, p. 266.

einsaugt. Sie ist in allem Lebendigen dieselbe. Kraft in Ausübung ist ihm Seele, und kein Körper, kein Element ohne Seele.<sup>277</sup>

This passage, had it been written ten years later (than 1787), would almost certainly have used the term organ where *Seele* appears. Indeed, Herder's *Ideen* uses the example of the tree (as an organ of life), and perhaps also lies at the basis of the claim that soul is force in application. Placed in the discursive context I have established, the passage begs for the concept organ to make its gloss on Aristotle clearer. Where the confusion for Demetri—as it had for Aristotle himself—lies in the relation of the mind to the soul, the name for this problem, and the beginning of its solution, would come hardly a decade later to be called “organ.” The question of function, applied to the one and the all, the mind and the body, became the center of the new metaphysics.

Soemmerring's reliance on Heinse is thus important for Hölderlin for two reasons. First, it makes clear that the organ and especially the epistemological question attached to it was part of the debate about the nature of being which had polarized the German literary public since Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi's 1785 *Briefe über die Lehre des Spinoza*.<sup>278</sup> Jacobi claimed that Lessing had confessed to having turned away from a

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<sup>277</sup> Heinse, *Ardinghello*, p. 266.

<sup>278</sup> Hölderlin's notes on Jacobi's text are at GSA IV, 1, pp. 207-10, but are mostly excerpts. Manfred Frank, *Philosophical Foundations*, has tried to show that the reading of Jacobi helped Hölderlin to the insight that “the actual precedes the possible” (see note 303 below). Jacobi's notion that a “ground” for the chain of logical causes is needed is clearly present in Hölderlin's thinking in the 1790s, but I cannot agree that this justifies the dictum about precedence, nor that this makes Hölderlin into an “anti-foundationalist.” Perhaps the most convincing assessment of Hölderlin's complex relationship to pantheism is Wolfgang Riedl, “Deus seu Natura. Wissensgeschichtliche Motive einer religionsgeschichtlichen Wende – im Blick auf Hölderlin,” *Hölderlin-Jahrbuch* 31 (1998/9), pp. 171-207. Note that Hölderlin's famous citation of Phillipians 4:7, *ein Frieden, der höher ist denn alle Vernunft*, in the introduction to the penultimate edition of *Hyperion* is likely taken from the only occurrence of the *organ* (except for quotations from Leibniz) in the *Spinoza-Büchlein*. Jacobi writes that “Geist meiner Religion ist also das: der Mensch wird durch ein göttliches Leben Gottes inne; und es gibt einen Frieden Gottes, welcher höher ist denn alle Vernunft, in ihm wohnt der Genuss und das Anschauen einer unbegreiflichen Liebe.” (Fritz Mauthner, ed., *Jacobi's Spinoza-Büchlein nebst Replik und Duplik* (Munich: Müller, 1912), p. 167.) In a footnote he continues, citing Aquinas: “Wie Gott in allem ist, so ist hinwiederum alles in ihm. Denn das Göttliche in uns bewegt alles. Nicht die Vernunft selbst ist das Prinzip der Vernunft, sondern etwas Höheres: was ist aber, ausser Gott, das Erkenntnis überträte? Tugend ist das Organ der Seele. Daher haben die Alten den Namen der

personal notion of God and embraced a pantheism rooted in the motto *hen kai pan* (one and all). Jacobi used this putative confession to attack systems of “reason” which could not, according to him, do other than cannibalize all being into their categories, erasing independent being and especially any reverence for God.<sup>279</sup> The resulting debate—Herder’s *Gott* was a reaction to Jacobi’s work—came to focus on what made the unity of being dynamic, what started the cosmic motor. Indeed, Herder replaced Spinoza’s notion of power with that of force for just this purpose: force is always in expression, always concretized in an organ, and its centrality in Herder’s cosmology thus names the desired dynamism. As we have seen, the question of how this dynamism operates—and indeed, the continuing question of its justification philosophically—drove the debate in the 1790s. What we need to see here is merely that Soemmerring’s citation of Heinsie (*Ardinghello* was composed at the height of the initial controversy, and published as Herder and Jacobi had become increasingly embittered in 1787) reaches into the Greek origins of a contemporary debate in order to raise the philosophical stakes of a physiological project. The question arising from the relation of these texts becomes, what parts of the natural world are capable of true functionality in the rational soul? And this epistemological question overlapped with the ontological question of the generation of activity, the differentiation of Being into forces and complementary organs. Soemmerring collected these problems in a web of citations around the term organ and in the substance

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Glücklichen denen beigelegt, welche, ohne durch ihre Vernunft und ihren Willen bestimmt worden zu sein, richtig zu Werke gegangen waren; denn sie hatten in sich ein höheres Prinzip, als Verstand und Willen.” Aristot. *Opp. Omn.* Tom. II. *Ethic. ad Eudemum.* Lib. VII. Cap. 14.” I will return to the morality of the soul’s organ in both chapters III and IV of the present study.

<sup>279</sup> The classical treatments of the “pantheism controversy” are Timm, *Gott und die Freiheit*, and Frederick Beiser *Fate of Reason*. Timm’s focus on the theological stakes is complemented by Beiser’s insistence on the secular elements of an emergent reason. Both thematize the great desideratum of late Enlightenment metaphysical thought: dynamic unity in being. The latter is perhaps most comprehensively treated by Kondylis, *Aufklärung*.

water, and Hölderlin (who had also read *Ardinghello*) could see that web as a glimmer of hope for a new metaphysics.

The responses to Soemmerring were largely negative.<sup>280</sup> Goethe wrote to his erstwhile friend<sup>281</sup> on 28 August 1796, complaining that he had mixed up his duties as physiologist and philosopher. He would have done better to “leave the philosophers completely out of the game” and to have ended with §26, the last “empirical” section of the writing. Ideas about nature were mere instruments for research, organs for appropriating from nature an understanding which might never demonstrably correspond to the reality it attempts to encompass. This organ—an early Goethean metaphorical use—is quite clearly the limited *organon* which Kant had envisioned for practice in and out of the university disciplines. Organs of the soul stood in stark and public contradiction to the use-value of concepts as metaphorical instruments in empirical research.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> The best sources on Soemmerring are in eds. Gunter Mann et al, *Samuel Thomas Soemmerring und die Gelehrten der Goethezeit* (New York: Fischer, 1985). See on the reviews in particular Peter McLaughlin, “Soemmerring und Kant: Über das Organ der Seele und den Streit der Facultäten,” pp. 191-203, esp. pp. 192-94. On the more general and biographical relation between Soemmerring and Heinse, see Manfred Dick, “Der Dichter und der Naturforscher: Samuel Thomas Soemmerring und Wilhelm Heinse,” pp. 203-229.

<sup>281</sup> For the complexities of the relationship Goethe/Soemmerring, see Manfred Wenzel, “Johann Wolfgang von Goethe und Samuel Thomas Soemmerring: Morphologie und Farbenlehre,” in ed. Mann, *Gelehrten der Goethezeit*, pp. 11-35, *Seelenorgan* discussed briefly at p. 28.

<sup>282</sup> “Eine Idee über Gegenstände der Erfahrung ist gleichsam ein Organ, dessen ich mich bediene, um diese zu fassen, um sie mir eigen zu machen. Die Idee kann mir bequem sein, ich kann Andern zeigen, daß sie es ihnen auch sein werde: aber es läßt sich nach meiner Vorstellungsart nur sehr schwer, und vielleicht gar nicht beweisen, daß sie wirklich mit den Objecten übereinkomme und mit ihnen zusammentreffen müsse.” (WA IV 11, p. 175.) Goethe’s skepticism about the metaphysical possibilities of science wavered throughout his life. As the phrase “mir eigen machen” makes clear, Goethe neither rejects the usefulness of ideas nor has any certainty about their general communicative value. Chapter V of the current study undertakes to show that the organ became increasingly essential to Goethe’s theory of science, and indeed, that his eventual position recognizes a kind of social necessity in the organological enterprise.

Soemmerring had used his connections in Göttingen to procure an afterword for his study by “our Kant,” to whom he dedicated the *Seelenorgan*.<sup>283</sup> Kant’s assessment of the work is divided into two points: a rejection of the metaphysical pretensions of the physiological enterprise, and a welcoming of the possibility of discovering where sensation occurs.<sup>284</sup> Relying on his earlier position in the *Dreams* and its development in the *Paralogisms* of the *KdrV*,<sup>285</sup> Kant rejects the notion of a locale for the soul, but finds the notion of an organ comparatively interesting. The notion of water as the element which makes sensation possible is intriguing, according to Kant, because the fluid dynamics of the medium indeed suggest the alternately binding and separating factor that is required for such sensation to arise.<sup>286</sup> Here “organ” gains its literal meaning, intentionally reduced to its material element (from its Aristotelian ambivalence—see the Introduction above) and regarded as the dynamic source of empirical perception. The rejection of the locality of the soul is, however, not as straightforward as it seems. It relies on two notions, which together present a clarifying conjuncture of the disciplinary and theoretical programs of the late Kant. First, the notion of the locality of the soul is said to be an “error of subreption”<sup>287</sup> in which a confusion of faculties (*Vermögen*) occurs. What the *Träume* had discussed as *eingeschlichene Begriffe* had been revealed in the *KdrV* as moments of the failure of critique, moments where a concept (such as “soul”)

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<sup>283</sup> See McLaughlin, “Soemmerring und Kant,” 194 ff. For Kant’s more general contacts with the scientists in Göttingen, see Timothy Lenoir, “Göttingen School,” pp. 111-205.

<sup>284</sup> As McLaughlin notes, this puts Kant in the interesting position of exercising facultative power from within his own discipline, but then freely speaking as a layman in the area of physiology. See McLaughlin, “Soemmerring und Kant,” pp. 198-99.

<sup>285</sup> On the development of these doctrines, the tone-setting work has been Karl Ameriks’s *Kant’s Theory of Mind: An Analysis of the Paralogisms of Pure Reason* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982/2000), esp. pp. 27 ff.

<sup>286</sup> Soemmerring, *Seelenorgan* 82. For the quasi-*naturphilosophisch* speculations of the late Kant, see Eckart Förster, *Kant’s Final Synthesis: Essays on the Opus Postumum* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

<sup>287</sup> Soemmerring, *Seelenorgan*, p. 82. Kant’s afterword is printed in the text of the *Seelenorgan*; see also the various letters between the two in AA XII.



is combined in a judgment with an intuition (such as “locale”) in such a way that there is a genuine conflict between them.<sup>288</sup> What is here called “subreption” is simply a hurried combination of judgments which, when their origins in their relative faculties are properly revealed, can be shown to conflict so basically that the judgment must be relinquished. This theoretical objection is reflected at the level of university politics: Soemmerring’s proposal pushes the medical and philosophical faculties into *Streit* through the attempt at a coalition where none is possible. The second half of the afterword becomes more interesting precisely through this lens, since Kant speaks there not merely as a layman, but as the voice of the philosophical faculty and its public reason. The philosophical and medical faculties are divided by their relative positions of autonomy with respect to the state—and by their internal rules for practice—but also has the right to organize the results of the other faculties in keeping with truth itself. The task of philosophy, which is founded on an essential separation from the other disciplines, reflects its metaphysical pretensions on the social level.<sup>289</sup> If there was any Kantian conclusion which the Romantics wanted to move beyond, it was this one.

I return now to Hölderlin, on the basis of this preparatory analysis of discourses. Hölderlin made this pretension clear in his reaction to Soemmerring—perhaps the only positive response to Soemmerring’s metaphysical suggestion. He composed two poems

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<sup>288</sup> This is clearest in the addendum to the *Analytic of the Understanding*, the *Amphibolies of the Concepts of Reflection*.

<sup>289</sup> This is one way to describe the disciplinary genre itself. After dividing the faculties and singling out the understanding as the world-constituting canon in the *KdrV*, Kant moves from the notion of “regulative ideas”—areas where we can have *orientation* but no *determination*—to the regulating of just those ideas. But in regulation comes a different sort of determination—social prescription—which in turn requires such regulative beliefs as the progress of society, the amenability of nature to human aesthetic and scientific purposes, etc. Thus Kant’s later works present us with a kind of social mirror of the former metaphysical enterprise.

and sent them to Soemmerring,<sup>290</sup> expressing discontent with the German public's response to Soemmerring's efforts:

*SÖMMERINGS SEELENORGAN UND DAS PUBLIKUM*  
 Gerne durchschaun sie mit ihm das herrliche Körpergebäude,  
 Doch zur Zinne hinauf werden die Treppen zu steil.

*SÖMMERINGS SEELENORGAN UND DIE DEUTSCHEN*  
 Viele gesellten sich ihm, da der Priester wandelt' im Vorhof,  
 Aber ins Heiligtum wagten sich wenige nach.<sup>291</sup>

Hölderlin aimed at a metaphysics.<sup>292</sup> Indeed, this metaphysics was both the pinnacle (*Zinne*) and the sanctuary (*Heiligtum*) of cognition. These two poems, as instrumental as they are, bring the major themes of organology together in a first step. Both the progressive investigation of nature towards its metaphysical grasping in the question of the Seelenorgan and the holy site of being itself (as the point of overlap between traditional metaphysics and theology) come into view for Hölderlin through Soemmerring's writing. Kant and Heine are suddenly brought into a single frame. The theoretical and political separations of the understanding from reason—indeed, the entire doctrine of the antinomies—are re-focused on the traditional problem of the nature of being as being. And those problems are immediate German political problems in a space

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<sup>290</sup> They were found in Soemmerring's own copy of *Über das Seelenorgan*. See Hölderlin, GSA I: 2, p. 227.

<sup>291</sup> GSA I: 1, p. 227. The second of these recalls the polemical characterization from *An die Deutschen*: "thatenarm und gedankenreich." (GSA I: 1, p. 256) Hölderlin later reports to his brother that "Heinze, der Verf. des Ardinghello, hat bei Dr. Sömmering sich sehr aufmunternd über Hyperion geäußert." (Hölderlin to his brother, 2.11.1797; GSA VI: 1, p. 255)

<sup>292</sup> This controversial claim will be defended against much secondary literature on Hölderlin in what follows. Here I would simply like to draw attention to a basic agreement with Frederick Beiser on this score, one which I think is confirmed by the context I have established for the two poems Hölderlin sent to Soemmerring. Beiser writes that "... Hölderlin's general intent in "Urtheil und Seyn" is to provide something on par with a transcendental deduction of Spinoza's concept of substance, and so to avoid any charge that he is simply relapsing into metaphysical dogmatism." (Beiser, *German Idealism*, p. 391) Beiser has marked out the patent contradiction of a Spinozan but also Kantian (or Fichtean) metaphysics as the essence of the Early German Romantic project. See Frederick Beiser, *Romantic Imperative*, pp. 131-153. Violetta Waibel stands, as far as I can see, more or less alone in her claim that Hölderlin sketched a metaphysics. See Violetta Waibel, *Hölderlin und Fichte. 1794-1800* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000), pp. 199-230.

opened by the French Revolution<sup>293</sup>—indeed, Hölderlin had met Heinse, and through him Soemmerring, while fleeing the revolutionary wars.<sup>294</sup> Metaphysics was needed, politically as well as theoretically. Hölderlin saw, through this web of texts and the crises in metaphysics and politics around him, that a new kind of knowledge must be created, one which could allow reason both to grasp and determine the world without having first created it. Metaphysics and politics needed to be brought together for social and theoretical reasons simultaneously. Reason needed instruments of cognition and action.

### **Intellectual Intuition: Judgment, Being and the Beginnings of Hölderlin's Metaphysics**

Recall that Platner had set the stage for an organ of the soul that would unite real cognition (for him, the passive capacity of the organ) with action (the ability to influence the organ-mediated world). Hölderlin set his sights on just such an epistemological figure, which he found in the Kantian/Fichtean notion of “intellectual intuition.” He wrote to the Jena philosopher Niethammer on 24 February 1796:

In den philosophischen Briefen [Schiller's recently-published *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*] will ich das Prinzip finden, das mir die Trennungen, in denen wir denken und existieren, erklärt, das aber auch vermögend ist, den Widerstreit verschwinden zu machen, den Widerstreit zwischen dem Subject und dem Object, zwischen unserem Selbst und der Welt, ja auch zwischen Vernunft und Offenbarung, — theoretisch, in intellektueller Anschauung, ohne daß unsere praktische Vernunft zu Hilfe kommen müßte. Wir bedürfen dafür ästhetischen Sinn, und ich werde meine philosophischen Briefe »Neue Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen«

<sup>293</sup> Amongst the literature on Hölderlin's political views, I would single out Theo Stammen's “Die Revolution des Geistes” – 1789 in der deutschen Literatur,” in Theo Stammen, *Goethe und die politische Welt. Studien* (Würzburg: Ergon, 1999), 107-143, Hölderlin at pp. 131-32: “... es geht [Hölderlin] sichtlich darum, in der Auflösung oder dem Untergang des Vaterlandes eine Hoffnung auf eine mögliche *neue Ordnung festzumachen* – nicht *als Zufall*, sondern als *geschichtliche Notwendigkeit* und daher als so [sic] sicher zu *Erwartendes*. Die Funktion der geschichtsphilosophischen Konzeption wird somit deutlich: sie hat die Funktion der Überwindung der Krise der Gegenwart durch die Konzeption eines Geschichtsbildes, in dem auch das Vergehen in sich ein Werden statuiert, das sich zukünftig entfaltet und den Grund einer neuen politischen (vaterländischen) Ordnung gibt.”

<sup>294</sup> See Gottfried Borrmann, “Der Anatom und der Dichter,” in *Freunde der Universität Mainz* 23/24 (1974/75), pp. 73-79.

nennen. Auch werde ich darin von der Philosophie auf Poesie und Religion kommen.<sup>295</sup>

The *New Letters* never came to be, but Hölderlin pursued the project laid out here throughout the years leading up to 1800. Hölderlin makes clear that Schiller has laid out the “principle” for resolution of contradictions between subject and object, self and world, theory (philosophy) and practice (poetry and religion)—but Schiller has not elaborated the doctrine which this principle makes possible.<sup>296</sup>

Writing to Schiller five months before his letter to Niethammer, Hölderlin seems to agree:

Das Mißfallen an mir selbst und dem was mich umgiebt hat mich in die Abstraction hineingetrieben; ich suche mir die Idee eines unendlichen Progresses der Philosophie zu entwikeln, ich suche zu zeigen, daß die unnachläßliche Forderung, die an jedes System gemacht werden muß, die Vereinigung des Subjects und Objects in einem absoluten — Ich oder wie man es nennen will — zwar ästhetisch, in der intellectualen Anschauung, theoretisch aber nur durch eine unendliche Annäherung möglich ist, wie die Annäherung des Quadrats zum Zirkel, und daß, vim ein System des Denkens zu realisiren, eine Unsterblichkeit eben so nothwendig ist, als sie es ist für ein System des Handelns. Ich glaube, dadurch beweisen zu können, in wie ferne die Skeptiker recht haben, und in wie ferne nicht.<sup>297</sup>

Note, however, that Hölderlin shifts the tone out of the anthropological register (*Mensch, Anschauung der ganzen Menschheit*) and cleaves closely to Fichte’s vocabulary. In the letter to Niethammer, he has changed his mind: Fichte’s “practical” reason should have pride of place over a theoretical intellectual intuition, and Schiller’s representational and

<sup>295</sup> Hölderlin to Niethammer, 24.2.1796; GSA VI: 1, p. 203.

<sup>296</sup> The sense that Schiller has not filled in this doctrine is likely attached to passages like the following. Schiller argues famously that two “drives” (the intellectual and the sensual) must be put into a *Wechselverhältnis* (with explicit reference to Fichte’s notion of *Wechselbestimmung* through the *Spieltrieb*). The parallax between the self and the world as points of human focus, however, means that this reconciliation is always a corruptible presentation. Art—which is the highest form of that reconciliation—provides a regulative picture of the cognitive peace Schiller aims at, but resolves nothing at the level of reality: “Gäbe es aber Fälle, wo er diese doppelte Erfahrung [of self and world in reconciliation] *zugleich* machte, wo er sich zugleich seiner Freiheit bewußt würde und sein Dasein empfände, wo er sich zugleich als Materie fühlte und als Geist kennenlernte, so hätte er in diesen Fällen, und schlechterdings nur in diesen, eine vollständige Anschauung seiner Menschheit, und der Gegenstand, der diese Anschauung ihm verschaffte, würde ihm zu einem Symbol seiner *ausgeführten Bestimmung*, folglich (weil diese nur in der Allheit der Zeit zu erreichen ist) zu einer Darstellung des Unendlichen dienen.” (Friedrich Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke. Band 5* (München: Hanser, 1962), p. 612; emphasis in original.)

<sup>297</sup> Hölderlin to Schiller, 4.9.1795; GSA VI: 1, p. 181.

corruptible reconciliations are not enough. What is needed is a metaphysics to ground artistic practice, and an artistic practice with synthetic (literally, antinomy-resolving) materials to offer that philosophy. Perhaps, I note in passing (and in anticipation of the exception at the end of the current chapter), the most striking element of this exchange is the lack of organ in Schiller's vocabulary. Trained as a physiologist and by anthropologists, his adopted vocabulary does not seem to have contained this term in the 1790s.<sup>298</sup>

Hölderlin, however, wanted to push beyond both Fichte (who rejected absolute knowledge in intellectual intuition) and Schiller, towards the resolution of real contradictions in both thought and in existence. This would require actual intellectual intuition—an instrument with which to resolve real contradictions in both spheres—and “aesthetic sense.” The interaction of these two figures—which Hölderlin would come to call “organs”—anchors the remainder of Hölderlin's theoretical efforts.

The *locus classicus* for consideration of Hölderlin's notion of “intellectual intuition” is a short fragment entitled *Urtheil und Seyn*.<sup>299</sup> Here Hölderlin—who had been attending Fichte's lectures in Jena—draws a false etymology of the word *Urteil* as *Ur-Teilung*, original separation.<sup>300</sup> Judgment relies on pre-judgmental unity, but is itself

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<sup>298</sup> Again, see below in the current chapter. For Schiller's early use of the term organ, and for his anthropological discourse more generally, see Riedel, *Anthropologie des jungen Schiller*.

<sup>299</sup> For the involved publication history of this fragment, for which the *terminus ante quem* is 20 April, 1795, according to statistical analyses of Hölderlin's orthography, see Dieter Henrich, “Hölderlin über Urteil und Sein. Eine Studie zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Idealismus,” *Hölderlin-Jahrbuch* 14 (1965-66), pp. 73-96, translated as “Hölderlin on Judgment and Being: A Study in the History of the Origins of Idealism,” in Dieter Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*, ed. Eckart Förster (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 71-90. This study serves to place the writing of the fragment quite early, and forms the basis for the “primacy” argument between Hölderlin and Novalis, historiographically. For the Novalis standpoint, see Manfred Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, transl. Elizabeth Millàn-Zaibert (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), pp. 151-77.

<sup>300</sup> The Fichtean background—which ultimately goes back to Platner—of this suggestive etymology has been examined by Waibel, *Hölderlin*, pp. 140-63.

(first) separative. It is only possible to judge on the basis of an original separation: elements of judgment must be given, and for that, they must not be unified.<sup>301</sup> Their unity pre-exists the judgment, and is based on the ur-separation “des in der intellectualen Anschauung innigst vereinigten Subjects und Objects.”<sup>302</sup> Judgment’s hidden capacity is to create the separated environment of subjectivity itself, on the basis of which original separation other factors for judgment can be offered to analysis and synthesis.

The counterpoint to the ur-separation is Being. As Hölderlin stresses, “identity” (even that of  $A=A$ , the first judgment derived from *self*-identity in Fichte’s *WL*) is *not* the intrinsic unity which exists only in intellectual intuition. The latter is a figure of absolute identity, one which forms a true contradiction with the original separation at the basis of human consciousness, judgment. The opposition, we can note, is a really existing contradiction—it occurs at the basis of whatever we might name reality, and it is not a circumstantial opposition, but rather a necessary one (or a contradiction). The structure of self-consciousness—the awareness of the self, where the self is both subject and object of that awareness—directly contradicts the notion of pure unity. Judgment—which Kant had made the universal medium of our cognition—encountered real opposition.<sup>303</sup> And where

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<sup>301</sup> Of course, judgment is also *unifying*, since its structure is such that it brings together two separate factors (subject and predicate) in various possible categorical ways. Kant’s definition of judgment as the unification of concept and intuition provides the general context for this determination. Fichte’s notion of judgment as *interaction* between concept and intuition was, as we shall see, also key for Hölderlin’s elaboration of the notion presented in *Urtheil und Seyn*.

<sup>302</sup> GSA VI: 1, p. 216.

<sup>303</sup> I stress this contradiction here because I want to avoid emphasizing either judgment or being to the detriment of the other for Hölderlin’s method. *Urtheil und Seyn* is so short and conceptually unelaborated as to have been a strange choice for the amount of attention it has received. Readers agree that the fragment contains a critique of Fichte—which is clear—and a gesture towards ontology singular in the post-Kantian atmosphere. Manfred Frank has contextualized the fragment amongst the anti-foundationalist efforts of Niethammer in particular in Jena—see *Philosophical Foundations*, p. 125: “This is the initial idea that, in my opinion, expresses the basic conviction common to the early German Romantics. It consists in the supposition that Being—as the simple seamless sameness (*Einerleiheit*), in contrast to the identity of the Kantian-Fichtean *cogito*—cannot be understood on the basis of the relations of judgment and reflection, all of which are occupied with reuniting original divisions and can always merely presuppose an original

Kant had called that contradiction “generic preformation” or “epigenesis of pure reason,” constituting but unavailable to the understanding itself, Hölderlin shifted the burden of metaphysical inquiry to that contradiction, the interface between judgment and being. “Intellectual intuition” was to become the figure of this mysterious interface.

The term “intellectual intuition” was coined by Kant, and is a terminological key to his revision of rationalism. Rationalist epistemologies have corresponding figures of absolute (or absolutely certain) knowledge. So, for example, Spinoza’s *scientia intuitiva*, in which the rational order of being is reflected in an intuitive leap or immediate presentation of the logical chain of events. The logical conclusion is not arrived at rationally—instead, the rational is immediately presented as truthful.<sup>304</sup> As we saw in chapter I, Leibniz used a version of this logic to cap his epistemological tree, calling it “intuitive adequate knowledge,” or knowledge of the ultimate ingredients and full

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simple unity... there can in principle be no consciousness of the absolute unity that is at work only mediately in the play of reflection.” He draws the conclusion that “... one could speak of the primacy of Being over thinking: the light in which consciousness subsists does not arise from itself, but from a (non-causally conceptualized) ground, which consciousness itself can never entirely illuminate. It can be portrayed as such—as reflexively *unrepresentable*—by the darkness (semantical inexhaustibility of aesthetic representation; therein consists the superiority of the artistic over the speculative mode of expression.” (*Philosophical Foundations*, 126) Frank also draws the conclusion that Hölderlin disagrees with Kant and supports the Aristotelian maxim that “actuality precedes possibility.” Frederick Beiser has argued against any absolute primacy of Being over thinking in the fragment, calling Hölderlin’s work an attempt at a “transcendental deduction” of something like Spinoza’s substance. The recognition of the definitional cognitive status of intellectual intuition is important, and yet Beiser’s conclusion is still that, on the basis of the identification of beauty and unity in *Hyperion*, “[t]he priority of being over the ego—its more basic role as the fundamental condition of experience—is then tantamount to the primacy of the aesthetic itself.” (Beiser, *German Idealism*, p. 391) I do not think that *Urtheil und Seyn* can really bear the weight of these interpretations. As we shall see, I disagree with that Hölderlin holds to the following primacies: being over judgment; actuality over possibility; aesthetic representation over speculative thought. *Urtheil und Seyn* can easily be read without these assumptions, while still acknowledging its critique of Fichte and its implicit move beyond Kant. By placing a real contradiction between judgment and being, Hölderlin puts them both—including their own complex structures—in a single frame. It is that frame which interests me here, and which is, I think, the lightest way of treading on this over-interpreted page-and-a-half.

<sup>304</sup> Spinoza’s famous example is of a trader intuitively understanding the law of proportions, “seeing” that 2:3 as 4:6. The number 6 is arrived at not by the logical steps (4 is twice 2; twice three is...), but by “intuition” or immediate presentation. Spinoza ultimately argues that this kind of knowledge is reflective of the love which binds the unity of nature or god together. See *Ethica* I prop. 42 scholium, and V more generally. *Intuere* is Latin for “observe, look at, admire”—thus the presentational element of this form of knowledge, and thus Kant’s translation in his German works, *anschauen*.

composition of complex objects. The stakes of this epistemological figure were high. What *God* could know was always part of the question, making the figure of absolute knowledge a theoretical parallel to the *physis-techne* analogy (which is based on the difference between divine and profane making). God’s knowledge—the figure of total synthesis and analysis simultaneously—differed, for the rationalists, in extent but not in kind from ours.

Kant’s term—intellectual intuition—is based precisely on a rejection of that parallelism. Our knowledge is not merely different in kind from a putative divine or absolute knowledge—our analysis of our own faculties leads to the conclusion that the figure of such knowledge can only serve as a negative example, as something we can positively see that we do not possess. The canon of the understanding excludes precisely the figure that an organon of reason would have given us: metaphysically certain knowledge.<sup>305</sup> This separation of our cognitive capacity from traditional figures of absolute knowledge was based on a specific reaction to rationalism after Leibniz. Kant rejected the notion that clarity and distinctness existed on the same progressive plane—for him, there were two separate roots of cognition, intuitions and concepts. The separation of these two justified the mysterious characterization of pure reason as “epigenetic”—a passage between two fundamentally different orders had to occur

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<sup>305</sup> This is perhaps clearest in the chapter of the *KdrV* on the division between phenomena and noumena, e.g.: “Der Begriff eines Noumeni, bloß problematisch genommen, bleibt demungeachtet nicht allein zulässig, sondern, auch als ein die Sinnlichkeit in Schranken setzender Begriff, unvermeidlich. Aber alsdann ist das nicht ein besonderer *intelligibler Gegenstand* für unseren Verstand, sondern ein Verstand, für den es gehörte, ist selbst ein Problema, nämlich, nicht diskursiv durch Kategorien, sondern intuitiv in einer nichtsinnlichen Anschauung seinen Gegenstand zu erkennen, als von welchem wir uns nicht die geringste Vorstellung seiner Möglichkeit machen können. Unser Verstand bekommt nun auf diese Weise eine negative Erweiterung, d.i. er wird nicht durch die Sinnlichkeit eingeschränkt, sondern schränkt vielmehr dieselbe ein, dadurch, daß er Dinge an sich selbst (nicht als Erscheinung betrachtet) Noumena nennt. Aber er setzt sich auch sofort selbst Grenzen, sie durch kein Kategorien zu erkennen, mithin sie nur unter dem Namen eines unbekanntes Etwas zu denken.” (*KdrV* B 311 ff.)



(mechanical and organic matter, literally; the forms of intuition and the pure concepts, metaphorically). The limiting possibility of an “intellectual intuition”—the presentation of an object in the absence of an externally grounded perception—implied a violation of the theoretical *physis-techne* differentiation. If we could intellectual intuit the world, it is hard to see how we would not be then also implicated in its production.<sup>306</sup>

If the stakes were as large as the possibility of human ontological production and the question of the cosmos’s proper rules (divine or not), there were two other problems which confronted Hölderlin in his adopted term. The first was that of the quasi-antinomy between mechanical and organic nature. The second he had managed to identify and include in his earliest mention of the term: the relation of subject to object *as a function of the relation of judgment to being*. The first was given in Kant’s reverse-coinage of “intuitive understanding” in the *KU*; the second by Fichte’s early flirtations with the term as a gloss on self-consciousness.

In the *KU*, Kant laid the framework for a philosophical approach to judgment itself. As essential as the doctrine of judgment had been to the *KdrV*, his focus there had been on the twin roots of judgment’s cognitive work, intuition and concept. The *KU*, then, takes its start from a refinement of the model of judgment. The judgment as defined in the *KdrV* had been a matter of “subsumption,” literally the subordination of an intuitive complex to a conceptual determination with the aid of over-arching forms of that unity (categories). In the *KU*, Kant calls this subsumptive activity “determinative judgment” (*bestimmende Urteile*), and names a new kind of judgmental activity, “reflecting judgments” (*reflektierende Urteile*). This type of judgment operates in the

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<sup>306</sup> Kant speaks in this vein often in the *KdrV*. See, for example, B 305-07. A helpful taxonomy of the term is given by Moltke S. Gram, “Intellectual Intuition: the Continuity Thesis,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 42: 2 1981, pp. 287-384.

temporary absence of the correct determinative unifier. While a unity is produced in the judgment and given to the mind (for reflection), its proper status as determined (with respect to our faculties) is not yet included in the judgment. This allows space for reflective activity, for the pursuit of higher unities among complexes of judgments. Indeed, Kant singles out three areas in which reflective judgment is necessary: the progressive determination of scientific laws in general, the judgment of taste (including natural and artistic beauty), and the special case of the organic. It is the last of these that causes the *KU* to re-address the issue of simultaneously intuitive and conceptual cognition. Hölderlin, while using the term *intellectuale Anschauung*, would make use of both conceptual formulations in his notion of an *organ of intellectual intuition*.

Subsumptive judgment, Kant reasons, is good enough for most natural determinations. Even where reflecting judgments are needed, they are often temporary—we need to reflect so long as the higher unity for subsumption is not discovered, but only just that long. The discovery allows the constitutive determination of the natural world to progress. This model encounters an obstacle, however, when it comes to judgments about organized beings. The difficulty stems from the model of judgment in the *KdrV*, which holds to effective causality as paradigmatic. We understand and constitute the world where cause and effect are unilinear—indeed, that effective causality is one of the essential conceptual ingredients we supply to nature. When we observe organized beings, however, we notice that their parts—as we have seen above—seem to have a causal feedback loop into their wholes. The form of our understanding does not allow for that type of judgment to constitute our world, however: as Kant claimed, there can be no

Newton for even a tiny blade of grass.<sup>307</sup> Reserving subsumption, we can easily produce a reflecting judgment about organic beings, but this is not enough. There must be some analysis of what unity in judgment is appropriate to these mutually causal beings.

Intuition for Kant is the representation of particulars without anything “general.” It is therefore always of the senses, because the general can only be contributed to knowledge by the concept. On this basis, Kant polemicizes against any possible “intellectual intuition,”<sup>308</sup> that is, representation of noumena. But Kant makes a famous regulative exception in the name of biology in *KdU* §§76 und 77. Here, Kant describes a mode of knowledge which does not (*a*) conclude to a whole from its particular parts, but (*b*) for which the whole is first *given*, and which can therefore derive the particulars from this whole. Kant calls (*a*) “analytic-general,” and it is our type of knowing: we understand the whole from its parts, and we can therefore analyze the conceptual/general infinitely, without being able to clarify the connection in the other direction. We can take the whole apart, but we cannot deduce the parts from the whole—the whole that would determine its parts is not an object for us. And yet, such a determination is precisely what we observe in organic beings: the whole appears to influence and even determine the parts according to some greater concept. Kant calls this parallel mode of knowledge “synthetic-general.” Were we able (*b*) to know the whole as determinative of the parts, then we could construe (even “construct,” in the specific sense that Kant excludes) the conceptual-general in its synthetic connecting of the parts. Our knowledge would be “synthetic” in precisely this metaphysical sense, reproducing the actual order of connection we observe in the organic world. We have to assume this mode of knowledge

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<sup>307</sup> See AA: V, p. 400.

<sup>308</sup> *Locus classicus*: *KdrV* B176/A137-B187/A147.

for the sake of understanding living beings—but the connection of the “goal” (of life itself, its “concept”) of the whole to its parts (in e.g. the phenomenon of growth) is not in our constitutive ken. Our type of (synthetic) knowledge subsumes particulars (intuitions) under a general concept. This constitutes (a) a whole that can be analyzed, but no insight that would (b) allow for the synthetic construction of the individual (the connection of the parts according to a rule, or better, a concept). Such a synthetic “construction” would make possible a kind of intuition within the conceptual, an intuition of the parts of the concept-representation as parts of the concept. Kant thus calls this mode of knowledge “intuitive understanding.” The problem with intellectual intuition from a critical standpoint—the possibility of our (co-)production of the world—is thus different from the problem with intuitive understanding. The latter would give us something else we do not have: a world-constituting form of mutually causal cognition. Recall that the form of *reason* is indeed organic in Kant, but through its separation from the understanding fails to constitute our experience of the world. That constitution, which dovetails but is not identical with the problem of intellectually intuiting and thereby producing the world’s content, would give us something very like what Leibniz had thought as “intuitive adequate knowledge”: truthful cognition of the mutuality of the organ-world. We might, in this case, still “make” the world, raising concerns about the *physis-techne* analogy. We would definitely, however, have insight into our own manner of synthesizing knowledge—Kant’s primary critical exclusion. The point at which judgmental forms find rational grounding thus runs into two distinct contradictions: the difference between the order of being and the order of representing, and the line between mechanical and organic matter.

But hidden in these two contradictions is a third, more basic, opposition: that between judgment as already internally contradictory structure and being, as Hölderlin had described in *Urtheil und Seyn*. That the latter fragment is a critique of Fichte is as well historiographically witnessed as it is textually clear: Fichte does not use the figure “intellectual intuition” even once in the *WL*.<sup>309</sup> He had, however, considered using it both before and after the canonical 1794/5 *WL*.<sup>310</sup> Fichte’s texts invited Hölderlin into this conceptual problematic, and Hölderlin seems to have tarried there at least until about 1800.

The popularization and development of Kantianism was fast.<sup>311</sup> Fichte, publishing in 1794, was already reviewing efforts to refute the second generation of Kantians. Reviewing a skeptical work directed against Kant’s popularizer Karl Leonard Reinhold, Fichte defended the possibility of “closing” Kant’s system by supplying a common root for intuition and concept. Reinhold had proposed *Vorstellung* as a generic category binding the two,<sup>312</sup> but Fichte rejected this solution as a mere description, with no binding

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<sup>309</sup> His use of the term “Wechselwirkung” (and sometimes “Wechselverhältnis”) for various oppositional relationships within the generative *Ich* is not irrelevant, of course. See Violetta Waibel’s “Wechselbestimmung. Zum Verhältnis von Hölderlin, Schiller und Fichte in Jena,” in ed. Wolfgang Schrader, *Fichte und die Romantik. Hölderlin, Schelling Hegel und späte Wissenschaftslehre* (Amsterdam: Rodolpi, 1997), pp. 43-71. The sole passage which relates interaction to *Anschauung* in the *WL* is the following: “Wechselwirkung der Selbstaffection des anschauenden, und einer Affection von aussen ist die Bedingung, unter der das anschauende ein anschauendes ist.”

Johann Gottlieb *Fichtes sämtliche Werke. Band 1*, Berlin 1845/1846, pp. 227-246, here p. 239. This passage applies the recursive logic of judgment to intuitions in a larger deduction of representation itself, but makes no gesture towards a foundational intellectual intuition.

<sup>310</sup> The later use of the term is in his 1797 *Versuch einer neuen Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre*, by which time Hölderlin, Schelling and Novalis were all using the term independently. (Fichte, Johann Gottlieb. *Neue Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre*, in Johann Gottlieb Fichte. *Schriften zur Wissenschaftslehre. Werke I*, ed. Wilhelm G. Jacobs. (Frankfurt/Main: Klassiker Verlag), pp. 205-17. Here Fichte proposed a thought experiment meant to prove that intellectual intuition must be the basis of discursive subjectivity, which I examine in more detail in chapter III with respect to Schelling below.

<sup>311</sup> Reinhold’s popularizing letters on the critical philosophy were published just as the pantheism controversy began to pick up steam in 1786. The classic history is given by Dieter Henrich, *Between Kant and Hegel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

<sup>312</sup> Reinhold’s doctrinal sentence reads: “Im Bewußtseyn wird die Vorstellung durch das Subjekt vom Subjekt und Objekt unterschieden und auf beyde bezogen.” (Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Rezension*

argument. Simultaneously rejecting the outright skepticism of the work he was reviewing (Schulze's *Aenesidemus*), he wrote of a different solution:

wir [realisiren] [diese transcendente Idee] durch intellektuelle Anschauung, durch das *Ich bin*, und zwar: *ich bin schlechthin weil ich bin...*<sup>313</sup>

This hermetic combination of the self's putative necessity and intellectual intuition was informed by an insight that had a great impact on the next generation, even if it was not this writing that carried it there. Fichte's move was simple: true criticism was actually "negative dogmatism," the radical bracketing of all "things-in-themselves." In that methodologically thingless space, the possibility of intellectual intuition could not be excluded. Instead, forms of judgment needed to be investigated without the assumption of the source of those forms. The *I* was to be the focus of Fichte's formal investigation, and this investigation re-opened the question of an *organon* for metaphysics—because Fichte allowed no elements of the *Nicht-Ich* to be determinative methodological factors, the possibility that there was a general tool for knowledge in the *WL* was all too real. In the *Aenesidemus*-review, Fichte went on to state a principle that would survive the discontinued use of the term "intellectual intuition" in the *WL*: "Das Ich ist, *was es ist*, und *weil es ist, für das Ich.*"<sup>314</sup> The formal investigation of this structure is contained in the first three paragraphs (the *Grundlage*) of the *WL*. Here we need only see that the entire structure is *für das Ich*. By connecting the *I*'s consciousness of itself *as I* to the notion of an intellectual intuition, Fichte thought to solve Kant's problem. All knowledge would have to go by way of this recursive and self-supporting structure, and the

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*Aenesidemus*, in: *Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Band 2. Werke 1793-95*, eds. Reinhard Lauth et al (Stuttgart/Bad Canstatt: frommann-holzboog, 1965), p. 43, footnote 12. Hereinafter as: *RezAen* 43 (n.12).

<sup>313</sup> Indeed, most of the above reading comes from the key passage from *RezAen*, pp. 49-60, esp. pp. 56-57, here p. 57.

<sup>314</sup> P. 57.

methodological exclusion of “things” meant that finite knowledge was underpinned by the self’s giving of itself—and its actual knowledge—to itself. To be clear, even here Fichte did not go so far as to suggest that we could know intuitively in this sense. That activity was unconscious, reflected in finite knowledge.<sup>315</sup> By creating a sphere of self-justifying knowledge—consciousness *for itself*, as Hegel would later dub this structure—and excluding “things” from its purview, Fichte offered Hölderlin an opening to wade into the cascade of contradictions surrounding the term “intellectual intuition.”

In a first step, then, Hölderlin returned the term to its objective provenance: absolute being. But he did so by way of logical contradiction, making the judgment’s recursive structure antinomic to that of being itself. He thus placed himself between Kant and Fichte. Returning to the question of being meant regressing behind Fichte’s “negative dogmatism,” while re-introducing the question of being and judgment meant asking whether there were not other critical answers to Kant’s system-question (how can we judge rationally about things?). Hölderlin thus approached metaphysics with a framework both real and contradictory, addressed not only to the Critical question, but also to the opposition between *physis* and *techne*, and that between mechanics and organics. Such was the anticipatory step taken in *Urtheil und Seyn*—its elaboration would have to wait for Hölderlin’s genre-theoretical writings from the late 1790s.

The danger Kant wanted to avoid—and which Fichte had seemed to embrace—was two-sided. Excluding “intellectual intuition” served simultaneously to ward off charges of nihilism (the absolute as knowledge would lead to the lack of a concrete

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<sup>315</sup> Thus the divide between theoretical and practical cognitions, which strive “endlessly” in opposite directions, never arriving at the metaphysical indifference-point of their coincidence consciously. Eventually, the *Anstoß* (a social push into consciousness) would take over the “self-giving” character of the *I*. For more on the conscious/unconscious debate about intellectual intuition, see Chapter III on Schelling.

world) and to prevent the possibility of ideal determination of that world.<sup>316</sup> For Kant, the latter concern was determinative: we set the conditions for experience of the object-world, but we do not determine the flow of phenomena out of which we condition those objects.

Hölderlin, by placing himself between Kant and Fichte, managed to inaugurate organology by maintaining both the rationality of the “for itself” in judgment and the open flow of phenomena in its real contradiction, being. By including a cascade of antinomical structures in this single framework, Hölderlin re-opened the question of metaphysics in a context where “organ” could suggest itself as the bearer of such structures. Dialectical organs were to come from the confrontation of these post-Kantian concerns with problems about the unity of nature, stemming ultimately from Spinoza and the Greeks but mediated by Heinse and Soemmerring.

## **Tragic Organs: The Genre-Theoretical Metaphysics of Judgment**

### **I. The Procedures of Spirit: Judgment and Being**

The highest contradiction remains that between judgment and being. But if this contradiction is to be more than a permanent antinomy,<sup>317</sup> then figures of its resolution

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<sup>316</sup> Both efforts ran aground on Jacobi’s generalized attack on reason-based systems. Indeed, Jacobi coined the term nihilism during the “atheism controversy” which led to Fichte’s dismissal from the university in Jena in 1800. See ed. Werner Röhr, *Appellation an das Publikum. Dokumente zum Atheismusstreit, Jena 1798/99* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1991). See also Waibel, *Hölderlin*, pp. 233-87, on the intersubjectivity of the *I* in Fichte, and Hölderlin’s response to it.

<sup>317</sup> Violetta Waibel’s essay, ““With respect to the antinomies, Fichte has a remarkable idea.” Three Answers to Kant and Fichte: Hardenberg, Hölderlin, Hegel,” in eds. Daniel Breazeale and Tom Rockmore, *Fichte, German Idealism and Early Romanticism* (Amsterdam: Rodolpi, 2010), pp. 301-27, is extremely helpful in this regard. Fichte showed that the categories might be generated in the activity of the *I*, and that this generation’s synthetic quality required true contradictions to exist in that process, but then also to be resolved. Waibel also notes that tragedy is one locus of this antinomic idea in Hölderlin (p. 322). See also



must exist. In Hölderlin's aesthetic and genre-theoretical writings, these figures are "intellectual intuition," the "pure," and "organ."

The essay *Die Verfahrungsweise des poetischen Geistes* starts from the premise that poetic activity is deeply ontological. Hölderlin marks out a series of basic insights that the poetic spirit must possess before it succeeds in its production. The spirit itself idealizes and generalizes the material it works on, and yet the particularity of that material is itself ideal. The reversal of predicates seems to follow on the derivative nature of the aesthetic task: material is ideal because it is already *in* the spirit of the poet when it first is worked on. Likewise, the activity of the poet is concrete, although his cognitive capacity is discursive, *ur-teilen*. What becomes clear over the course of the essay, however, is that this first impression is incorrect. The activity of the poet is rather placed in the order of being itself. This placement does not resolve the central contradiction already outlined in *Urtheil und Seyn*, however. Indeed, the problem outline here is precisely the problem associated with intellectual intuition in general. In Hölderlin's terms, the difficulty is that, while the spirit both splits being and unites it—and while being itself is both one and differentiated—the means of true interaction between these analogous forms (*das harmoniscentgegengesetzte Eine*) is not only uncertain, but quite apparently impossible. The problem is that the oneness of the conscious apparatus cannot be presented to itself, since presentation is discursive, is based on *ur-teilen*. Representations of all kinds of structures are possible, but access to the original unity—intellectual intuition—seems impossible. This impasse had been noted by Kant, of

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Waibel, *Hölderlin*, pp. 205-31. A particularly clear explanation of Fichte's treatment of Kant's categories can be found in Müller-Sievers, *Self-Generation*, pp. 65-90.

course—it is at the basis of the “paralogisms” in the *KdrV*—and subsequently by Fichte.<sup>318</sup> Hölderlin puts it this way:

[die unendliche Einheit] ist also nie bloß Entgegensezung des Einigen, auch nie bloß Beziehung Vereinigung des Entgegengesetzten und Wechselnden, Entgegengesetztes und Einiges ist in ihr unzertrennlich. Wenn diß ist, so kann sie in ihrer Reinheit und subjectiven Ganzheit, als ursprünglicher Sinn, zwar in den Acten des Entgegensezens und Vereinigens, womit sie in harmoniscentgegengesetztem Leben wirksam ist, passiv seyn, aber in ihrem letzten Act, wo das Harmoniscentgegengesetzte als Harmonisches entgegengesetztes, das Einige als Wechselwirkung in ihr als Eines begriffen ist, in diesem Acte kann und darf sie schlechterdings nicht durch sich selbst begriffen, sich selber zum Objecte werden, wenn sie nicht statt einer unendlich einigen und lebendigen Einheit, eine todte und tödtende Einheit ein unendlich positives gewordenes seyn soll.<sup>319</sup>

The activity of the poet is infinite unification, a process underlying both judgment and being. And yet this unification is not merely the synthesis of judgment, the joining of juxtaposed elements, however deeply. Its infinite quality makes it positive in a strong sense, one we should call dialectical. For its unity includes both a contradictory duality and a further unity. Infinite unity swallows the negative in a further positivity. And yet, as it occurs in the procedure of the poet, this unity is an impossibility. This is because the object of consciousness—any consciousness—is precisely that: an object. The fixity of the object’s unity contradicts, however, the harmony of opposites in the greater, infinite unity. Lest this talk of infinite unity sound too mystical, we should say that the problem is not that some asserted “higher unity” is at stake. Instead, the problem is that the structure of the harmoniously opposed *one* is not merely taken as the structure of both consciousness and for being. The separative-yet-unifying unity, which is indeed valid for both judgment and being, is, at the moment of the poet’s reproduction of the order of being, *reproduced* (not merely represented). Thus we have something like a contradictory unity uniting two separate contradictory unities. *Mimesis* is the technical reproduction of

<sup>318</sup> This has a parallel also in *Ardinghello*, where the soul is only immortal insofar as it thinks nothing. See page 131 *supra*.

<sup>319</sup> GSA IV: 1, pp. 251-52.

unity-in-duality such that this structure reflects itself literally infinitely. The task of the poet is a reproduction of the real contradiction between judgment and being which is at the root of all cognition. To complete that task, he must objectify in representation the simple yet infinite interface between judgment and being. The objectification of that process is contradictory—it is an impossible task, or an infinite approximation<sup>320</sup>—because the limited unity which can only be its result cannot contain the infinite unity from which it will be torn. The object of the aesthetic unification of opposites is not a simulacrum of human freedom, *pace* Schiller, but the affirmation of absolute cognition. It is only that affirmation which can confirm the desired freedom.

In that actual freedom, Hölderlin finds the metaphysical determination he had confirmed as early as his poems to Soemmerring. Hölderlin's imperative for the poet reads:

Seze dich mit freier Wahl in harmonische Entgegensetzung mit einer äußeren Sphäre, so wie du in dir selber in harmonischer Entgegensetzung bist, von Natur, aber unerkennbarer weise so lange du in dir selbst bleibst.<sup>321</sup>

The actuality of the infinite reflection between judgment and being—the dialectical determination that unity-in-duality is reproduced as an infinite unity, or a higher contradiction—can only be realized in the cognitive act of the reproduction of that infinite unity. In other words, *mimesis* is the moment where reproduction and representation are identical. And as long as they are not in that unity—as long as representation is merely a reflection of one or the other of these unities—an infinitely discursive oscillation is the basically human property. Thus the product of objectification

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<sup>320</sup> The famous words of the penultimate preface to *Hyperion* run: “Aber weder unser Wissen noch unser Handeln gelangt in irgend einer Periode des Daseyns dahin, wo aller Widerstreit aufhört, wo Alles Eins ist; die bestimmte Linie vereinigt sich mit der unbestimmten nur in unendlicher Annäherung.” (GSA III, p. 236) This notion remains a part—but as I am showing, not the goal—of Hölderlin's later theoretical efforts.

<sup>321</sup> GSA IV: 1, pp. 255-56.

does not count as the poet's essential task, since this product is merely an indeterminate admixture of these two perspectives. Instead, the procedure—*das Verfahren*—of that objectification reacts on the objectifying consciousness. The choice to produce an aesthetic object thus passes through the contradictory structure of being itself—its ideal particularity and its real generality—in order not merely to produce but to capture its own process as reproduction of the infinite task of aesthetic production. Freedom emerges in this process, and points simultaneously to its theoretical solution—in an *organ of intellectual intuition*—and to its genre-theoretical home in the tragedy.

“Organ”'s appears suddenly in the *Verfahrungsweise*. Hölderlin states that the poetic effort to grasp life is characterized by an immediate conflict (*Widerstreit*) between the individual (or material), the general (or the formal), and the “pure.” He continues:

Das Reine in jeder besondern Stimmung begriffenes widerstreitet dem Organ in dem es begriffen, es widerstreitet dem Reinen des andern Organs, es widerstreitet dem Wechsel. Das Allgemeine widerstreitet als besonderes Organ (Form), als charakteristische Stimmung dem Reinen, welches es in dieser Stimmung begreift, es widerstreitet als Fortstreben im Ganzen dem Reinen, welches in ihm begriffen ist, es widerstreitet als charakteristische Stimmung der zunächst liegenden. Das Individuelle widerstreitet dem Reinen welches es begreift, es widerstreitet der zunächst liegenden Form, es widerstreitet als Individuelles dem Allgemeinen des Wechsels.<sup>322</sup>

This triple conflict is “life,” which Hölderlin equates here with both the object of poetic representation and being insofar as it is organized. The problem arises not from the conflict within that order of being, but in the poet's attempt to work on his subject, on life. The first opposition is that between the “pure” and the organ, which, in the next clause, gains its own “pure” element. Then the general is also named “organ,”'s such that the antinomic conflict between the general and the particular—the expected opposition, metaphysically—is shifted into a conflict between grasping or conceptualizing organs (*begreifende Organe*) and change (*Wechsel*). The various ontological determinations—

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<sup>322</sup> GSA IV: 1, p. 248.

pure, general, individual—are shifted into a struggle between *organs* as forms and the development from one form to the other, living change. Reil’s determination that organs were developmental and organization structural is here reversed—the organ is the formal structure, and is caught in a contradiction with change. Since the result of change is new organs, the organ’s struggle as it grasps the various categorical levels of being and represents them is a struggle with more organs. The poet is caught between organs and more organs.

This is, however, far from the end of the poet’s task. Indeed, his task will be the presentation—in fact, reproduction—of intellectual intuition.

Hölderlin now sets a condition on the organ. The organ is “directly opposed to spirit,” but is also the container of that spirit, and that which makes all opposition (*Entgegensetzung*) possible.<sup>323</sup> This organ must now be grasped as having several opposed functions. First, it is definitionally that which allows formal opposition to be introduced into harmonies. This is an organological gloss on the doctrine of the *ur-theil*: the organ is assigned the judgment’s function of analyzing or separating within larger connected wholes. The obverse of this function also belongs to judgment: it binds this second, representational whole together formally. Having analyzed, it synthesizes; from the *ur-theil* comes the *Urteil*.

Hölderlin now adds new conditions. The organ must also be grasped as materially opposing disharmonious moods (*Stimmungen*) while formally binding them together.

This function seems to mirror the notion of synthetic judgments *a posteriori* in Kant—

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<sup>323</sup> “Wenn nun das dem Geiste direct entgegengesetzte, das Organ, worinn er enthalten und wodurch alle Entgegensetzung möglich ist...” (GSA IV: 1, pp. 248-49; I will chop up sentences as necessary, since Hölderlin’s syntax here disallows full-sentence quotation.)

taking arbitrarily occurring phenomena and binding them through a disjunctive judgment (corresponding to the negative of the category of interaction). The organ sets up a frame in which various elements are opposed materially, dissociating them in terms of content but joining them in the judgment—in the organ—itsself. The obverse of this capability is in turn added to the organ’s definition: the organ also materially binds these moods while formally opposing them. This is, then, the true metaphysical organ in a post-Kantian mood: the *organ* synthesizes the very material of its object while introducing formal opposition within it. The totality of the synthesis is the object of analysis, and at the basis of its activity is a generalized but concrete—*organological*—synthetic judgment *a priori*, the production of cognition itself. The organ becomes the basis of what we can call a metaphysics of judgment, or organology. Hölderlin places the frame of philosophical inquiry in the forms of judgment, rejecting the premise that the “material” elements of that judgment should be treated as external to those forms. This is, to be sure, an idealism—indeed, it is the beginning of *German* idealism—but it does not commit the sin Kant wanted to avoid. The organ of judgment does not determine the world it perceives, but exists in a dialectical co-determination out of which autonomous and truthful cognition can emerge. The task of the poet is fundamentally connected to this larger metaphysical task: the concrete production of consciousness through the *organ*’s conceptualizing (*begreifende*) objectification, which is freedom.<sup>324</sup>

As a binding element in cognition, the organ thus produces “formal life,” while as a separative element it cognizes that production. This leads Hölderlin to the most general requirement for the organ:

...wenn das *Organ des Geistes* könnte betrachtet werden als dasjenige, welches, um das

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<sup>324</sup> The preceding paragraph is based on GSA IV: 1, pp. 248-49.

harmoniscentgegengesetzte möglich zu machen, **receptiv** seyn muß so wohl für das eine, wie für das andre harmoniscentgegengesetzte, daß es also, insofern es für das rein poetische Leben formale Entgegensezung ist, auch formale Verbindung seyn muß, daß es, insofern es für das bestimmte poetische Leben und seine Stimmungen material entgegensezend ist, auch material verbindend seyn muß, daß das begränzende und bestimmende nicht blos negativ, daß es auch positiv ist, daß es zwar bei harmonisch verbundenem abgesondert betrachtet dem einen wie dem andern entgegensezt ist, aber beide zusammen gedacht die Vereinigung von beiden ist, dann wird derjenige Act des Geistes, welcher in Rücksicht auf die Bedeutung nur einen durchgängigen Widerstreit zur Folge hatte, ein *ebenso* vereinigender seyn als er entgegensezend war.<sup>325</sup>

The organ, that which had been “directly opposed to the spirit,” is that very spirit’s property. *Das Organ des Geistes*—the inauguration of Romantic organology, rejecting centuries of opposition to this conceptual possibility (see chapter I of the present study)—must be receptive, and this even as it is formal. This dual quality is the basic dialectical property of the organ. As a cognitive function, it binds the opposed notions given as “organ” and “organization” in the life sciences, problematizing development within itself. The term serves as a contradictory conceptual unity, but this literal *contradictio in adiecto* is cast as philosophically salutary. But it is not merely biological development that is problematized. Instead, it is the representation of being—poetic and cognitive activity—which reflects the problem of change. “Poetic life” is determined, both generally and concretely, as this chiasm of separation and synthesis both formally and materially. The *organ* of spirit captures the problem of the location of the soul in terms of judgment’s forms and activity. Like Kant, Hölderlin can point here to contradictions arising from the forms of judgment. Intellectual intuition, as we saw above, is for example a seeming impossibility because of the way in which objects are presented in judgments, with reference to an infinite unity not included in their determination in representation. Yet Hölderlin transforms the *disciplinary organ* into a *dialectical organ*. This transformation needed only the recognition that the conflict between the

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<sup>325</sup> GSA IV: 1, p. 249; emphasis in original.

philosophical and medical faculties—the determination of the nature of body and soul—is a real contradiction which is represented and reproduced in the organ, in judgment. This is why Hölderlin goes on to characterize the limiting activity of organ of spirit as “positive.” The passage from organ to organ goes by way of the positive production of limitation—of represented objects or events.<sup>326</sup> This act of the spirit is thus the point of coincidence of synthetic and analytic cognitive activities. That point is called *organ*.

*Point* is indeed Hölderlin’s gloss on this formal yet receptive possibility of absolute knowledge. Proceeding from the conditions of the organ to its concrete elaboration, he writes that:

Wie wird er aber in dieser Qualität begriffen? als möglich und als Nothwendig? Nicht bloß durch das Leben überhaupt, denn so ist er es, in so fern er bloß als material entgegensezend und formal verbindend, das Leben direkt bestimmend, betrachtet wird. Auch nicht bloß durch die Einigkeit überhaupt, denn so ist er es, insofern er bloß als formal entgegensezend betrachtet wird, aber im Begriffe der Einheit des Einigen, so daß von harmonischverbundenem eines wie das andere im Punkte der Entgegensezung und Vereinigung vorhanden ist, und daß **in diesem Punkte der Geist in seiner Unendlichkeit fühlbar** ist,<sup>327</sup> der durch die Entgegensezung als Endliches erschien, daß das Reine, das dem Organ an sich widerstritt, in eben diesem Organ sich selber gegenwärtig und so erst ein Lebendiges ist, daß, wo es in verschiedenen Stimmungen vorhanden ist, die unmittelbar auf die Grundstimmung folgende nur der verlängerte Punkt ist, der dahin, nemlich zum Mittelpunkte führt, wo sich die harmonisch entgegengesetzten Stimmungen begegnen, daß also gerade im stärksten Gegensatz, im Gegensatz der ersten idealischen und zweiten künstlich reflectirten Stimmung, in der materiellsten Entgegensezung (die zwischen harmonisch verbundenem im Mittelpunkte zusammentreffendem, im Mittelpunkte gegenwärtigem Geist und Leben liegt), daß

<sup>326</sup> This possibility has been shown by Violetta Waibel—her description is facultative, focusing on the understanding and reason, and the priority of the latter—in *Hölderlin*, pp. 220-28.

<sup>327</sup> The connection between *organ* and intellectual intuition is implicitly given here, as we can see by juxtaposing the following passage: “Denn diß ist allein in schöner heiliger, göttlicher Empfindung möglich, in einer Empfindung, welche darum schön ist, weil sie weder bloß angenehm und glücklich, noch bloß erhaben und stark, noch bloß einig und ruhig, sondern alles zugleich ist, und allein sein kann, in einer Empfindung, welche darum heilig ist, weil sie weder bloß uneigennützig ihrem Objecte hingegeben, noch bloß uneigennützig auf ihrem innern Grunde ruhend, noch bloß uneigennützig zwischen ihrem innern Grunde und ihrem Objecte schwebend sondern alles zugleich ist und allein seyn kan, in einer Empfindung, welche darum göttlich ist, weil sie weder bloßes Bewußtseyn, bloße Reflexion (subjective, oder objective,) mit Verlust des innern und äußern Lebens noch bloßes Streben (subjectiv oder objectiv bestimmtes) mit Verlust der innern und äußern Harmonie, noch bloße Harmonie, wie die intellectuale Anschauung und ihr mythisches bildliches Subject, Object, mit Verlust des Bewußtseyns, und der Einheit, sondern weil sie alles diß zugleich ist, und allein seyn kan, in einer Empfindung, welche darum transcendental ist und diß allein seyn kan, weil sie in Vereinigung und Wechselwirkung der genannten Eigenschaften weder zu angenehm und sinnlich...” (GSA IV: 1, p. 259) The point, here as above, is that intellectual intuition must be objectified in a paradoxical cognitive/mimetic activity for which an *organ of spirit* is necessary.



gerade in dieser materiellsten Entgegensetzung welche sich selbst entgegengesetzt ist (in Beziehung auf den Vereinigungspunct wohin sie strebt), in den widerstreitenden fortstrebenden Acten des Geistes, wenn sie nur aus dem wechselseitigen Charakter der harmoniscentgegengesetzten Stimmungen entstehen, daß gerade da das Unendlichste sich am fühlbarsten, am negativpositivsten und hyperbolisch darstellt, daß durch diesen Gegensatz der Darstellung des Unendlichen im widerstreitenden Fortstreben zum Punct, und seines Zusammentreffens im Punct die simultane Innigkeit und Unterscheidung der harmoniscentgegengesetzten lebendigen zum Grunde liegenden Empfindung ersetzt und zugleich klarer von dem freien Bewußtseyn und gebildeter, allgemeiner, als eigene Welt der Form nach, als Welt in der Welt, und so als Stimme des Ewigen zum Ewigen dargestellt wird.<sup>328</sup>

The goal is clear: the contradiction between the “pure” and the organ should be unified in a feeling of spirit’s own infinity. This can only be achieved organologically—the realization of the human task is only possibly through tools which are not incidental to that human. The organ is the essence of the antinomy between judgment and being. Every rhetorical turn, each reversal of terms in this passage is merely one more fold in the organ’s capacity to know and to produce knowledge. And it is through the acts of the spirit, occurring in its organs, that “mere life” is exceeded, the mirror of the contradiction of organic developing forming a hyperbola, occurring on opposite sides of the *y*- and *x*-axes simultaneously, and each containing two infinite approximations or asymptotes. This figure includes an “extended midpoint,” where finally spirit and life coincide. But this coincidence is itself strictly identical with the moment where the unifying and separating activities of the organ are also identical, and only where these identical activities are most material. Finally, this “simultaneous inwardness and differentiation” is felt as the development of the spirit itself in its chosen material—its freedom. The poetic spirit’s activity is, then, not only mimetic reproduction of the rules of an order, of a world. This activity literally redounds onto the spirit itself, making it a *world within the world*. In other words, as material (both ideal and material) is given poetic form (both concrete and abstract), the organs that make up consciousness become active in both of

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<sup>328</sup> GSA IV: 1, 249-50; emphasis in original.

their contradictory activities—synthesis and analysis—simultaneously. Organology’s first notion of *mimesis* comes into view. This is a notion of the production of an order of things, the invention of rules. Let us bracket the issue of the origin of those rules, and focus only on the point that is made here for organology as a metaphysics of judgment.

The metaphysics of judgment does not exclude other capacities, just as Kant’s critical focus on the understanding did not exclude other faculties. In Kant, we see the priority of the faculty of the understanding providing a set of rules for the use of the other faculties (which a partial exception for the forms of intuition—see chapter I above). If I am right to point to organology as a metaphysics of judgment in Hölderlin, then it is not a matter of excluding, for example, sensation. In the passage above, it is a certain sensation or feeling (*Empfindung*) at which the poet aims, and it is this production which results in the religious feeling described, *die Stimme des Ewigen zum Ewigen*. The point is not to take away from that goal—ultimately the new mythology—but to see that it is rooted in an overlap between speculative and aesthetic tasks which alters both discourses. This approach is distinctively organological: organs provide the conceptual basis on which to make use of generically different discourses (metaphysics, aesthetics, poetic form, genre-theory) and the “facultative” (really organological) bridges between them.

On the metaphysical side of this question, Hölderlin certainly aims at a knowledge which Kant had rejected (but not before he had defined and suggested it). The overlap between aesthetic and metaphysical activity is the moment where representation becomes (re-)production. The whole procedure of the poetic spirit is the re-production of the infinite interactive capacity of the spirit in its organs. Rather than a representation,

one gets a reproduction in the sense that a world is constructed, a world in the world.<sup>329</sup>

In a sense, we should call this metaphysics of judgment *technological*, since it defends the notion of work on being—on the “most material”—both metaphysically and aesthetically.<sup>330</sup> Organology has something akin to metaphysical *bricolage*, using historically-prepared tools and developmentally formed beings to form new unities with new generalities. It makes the cognizer and the poet equally participants in the dialectic of history, which is dialectical precisely because of that participation, because of those human organs.

Yet the metaphysical problem remains. The greatest concern for Kant—as for Kantians—must be that this type of participation lacks a legitimation, an argumentation for its connection of judgment and being—in short, a deduction. The focus on judgment as form and content allows this argument; its operational term is “organ.” The worry remains, however, that in such a system judgment determines its phenomena, that the world is simply now dependent on the spirit, with all the attendant problems attaching to idealism. Let us take just the problem of determination, leaving the problems of organic judgment and world-production for the following sections of the current chapter.

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<sup>329</sup> See Waibel, *Hölderlin*, pp. 278-85, for Hölderlin’s “constructionism” with respect to Kant and Fichte. It seems to me that Hölderlin’s discussion here is not too far from Kant’s notion of the genius’s “aesthetic idea” in the *KU*, but again, my point is that the re-centering of the metaphysical system on judgment allows this idea to take on ontological significance. See also Ulrich Gaiier, *Krumme Regel: Novalis’s “Konstruktionslehre des schaffenden Geistes”* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1970), for the more general stakes.

<sup>330</sup> The Heideggerian notion of *poiesis* suggests itself, especially given the phrase “Welt in der Welt.” Yet I think we should avoid reading too quickly forward to Heidegger’s attempts to stand in the “clearing” of being, to produce or manifest beings’ Being through alteration of our subjectivity. It is precisely Hölderlin whom Heidegger uses to point to what little hope there is, in the technological world-age, for such a project. See Martin Heidegger, “The Question Concerning Technology,” from *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings from “Being and Time” (1927) to “The Task of Thinking” (1964)*, rev. ed., edited by David Farrell Krell. Harper: San Francisco), pp. 307-43, esp. pp. 340 ff. And yet, as I am showing, Hölderlin’s organology seems to run in a different direction. Rather than revealing a world within the world, it constructs and builds an order within a greater order, and suggests with that gesture the possibility of intervening in the greater order—something which is entirely excluded in Heidegger from start to finish. Thus, something like a *technological metaphysics*, and not a *worlding*, is at stake.

Kant defends a robust conditioning contribution of conceptuality to experience, as we have seen, but is careful to disallow the determination of the dynamic of experience by that conceptuality. Indeed, this is what the phrase “transcendental idealism and empirical realism” is meant to capture. Any metaphysics lacking the external conditioning provided, in Kant’s case, by the material of sensation combined with the forms of and then actual intuitions, runs the risk of just such a determination. In the case of organology, the fear must be that, by placing the ontological and epistemological burdens simultaneously in a single term, we speculatively free the human to determine a world in which he then lives wrongly. We produce the illusion of control.

The organ, however, should do precisely the opposite of this. Its cognitive and representational abilities are traced back, in the *Verfahrungsweise*, to a productive ability which can only exist because of its simultaneous implication in two systems of contradiction-in-development. Ultimately, however, the highest contradiction is that of judgment and being. And yet judgments have content—they aim at or allude to being, however partially they fulfill their task. What Hölderlin claims to discover is that the feared “determination” is mutual—thus his reliance on Fichte’s *Wechsel*-philosopheme. But rather than simply conflating two orders of being (or of judgment), Hölderlin is making a deeper claim. He is claiming that the relation established in the overlap between cognition and being is not representational, but instead on the order of ideal production. The production of a world within a world is the signal of this deep-seated capacity, and it cannot occur without the organological structure, without judgment’s basic contradiction. In the moment of representation, the organ separates and binds simultaneously, producing a cognitive object. In that very production is contained the infinity of the organ itself, its

own self-knowledge as knowing or forming itself in the material it chooses to produce. It is as though Hölderlin has taken the formula for the differentiated monism of the 1780s—Jacobi's *Seyn in allem Daseyn*—and transferred it into epistemology. *Das Wissen in allem So-Wissen* would be the formulation of a critical monism. Judgment does not but can determine its phenomena, but only insofar as it exposes its categorical apparatus to that external sphere—the sphere of its own contradiction, and thus exposes itself to the possibility of development. And that development is a matter of passage—from organ to organ.

## II. Organization and its Discontents: Genre-Theory and Intuitive Understanding

An intellectual intuition must lie at the root of every tragedy, according to Hölderlin.<sup>331</sup> This means that the highest contradiction—that between judgment and being—must be presented in the tragic form. And yet, in the late 1790s, the concept *Seyn* came to have a further, specifically tragic, term: *das Aorgische*. With this etymological invention, Hölderlin both introduced yet another real contradiction and specified its sphere of application in the tragic form. *Das Aorgische* is logically opposed to any organization—the problems of intellectual intuition and intuitive understanding, as they had been given by Kant, thus appear as different versions of the same problem. On the one hand, the contradiction between judgment and being needed the judgmental organ as its frame of developmental and dialectical resolution. On the other hand, the specific contradiction between the mechanical and the organic was already a matter of the forms

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<sup>331</sup> “Das tragische, dem Schein nach heroische Gedicht ist in seiner Bedeutung idealisch. Es ist die Metapher einer intellectualen Anschauung.” (GSA IV: 1, p. 266)

of judgment for Kant. For Hölderlin with his metaphysics of judgment, it was a matter of sharpening this contradiction—in a first gesture, by making it a *logical* contradiction—and then finding its resolution in the theory of tragedy. And this shift into the genre-theoretical had its stakes in 18<sup>th</sup>-century theory of tragedy.

Classical tragedy theory emerged from mid-century metaphysical debates. Lessing's famous break with Gottsched and the French School was prepared by his collaborations with Moses Mendelssohn in the 1750s. In 1755, Lessing and Mendelssohn had collaborated on a number of writings, prominently the essay *Pope ein Metaphysiker!* There the general question of poetic form and speculative reason had been broached, with the argument that poems cannot be treatises (and thus that Pope was not a "Leibnizian"). Meanwhile, Mendelssohn had published his own *Philosophische Schriften* in the same year, which included a consideration of "mixed sentiments" to address the problem of the enjoyment of tragedy. The collaboration reflected a deep intellectual affinity and friendship. When Friedrich Nicolai raised the parallel problem of the morality or pedagogy of poetry—claiming that the intent to teach should be removed from tragic writings in particular—this provoked a disagreement between Mendelssohn and Lessing. Nicolai collected their letters debating the topic, and published them as *Briefwechsel über das Trauerspiel*. The disagreement came down to metaphysics.

The important point for the present context is a difference of task assigned to the tragic form. Mendelssohn held a strictly rationalist line.<sup>332</sup> Tragedy—as all art—is finite

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<sup>332</sup> As noted in chapter I above, Mendelssohn's *Evidenz-Schrift* (1763) has been characterized by Beck as a paradigm of Leibnizianism. That Mendelssohn was able to use that system to address such apparently "lower" capacities as *Empfindungen* merely reflects the rationalists' drive to include problems of an apparently non-logical nature in their systems. I am not taking a position on Mendelssohn's contribution to secular aesthetics here. See Beiser, *Diotima's Children*, pp. 196-244, and Wellbery, *Lessing's "Laocoon,"* for differing treatments of the development of rationalism in Mendelssohn.

imitation of the *perfectiones* (*Vollkommenheiten*) of God's universe. We are presented in the poetic form with human attempts at adequate intuition, pointing towards *Urbilder* which underlie the phenomenal world. These images of perfection contain the morality which Nicolai had sought to remove, and thus must play a role in producing what he calls *Bewunderung*, the uniting of lower and higher sensations in the tragic presentation (*Darstellung*). Thus tragedy occupies a relatively high rung on the "progressively semiotic" ladder, offering a taste in the finite, human order of the adequate intuition that is proper ultimately only to God. United in that intuition would be *Tugenden* and the reciprocal, organ-based<sup>333</sup> perfections of the metaphysical universe. The picture is thoroughly Leibnizian, down to the metaphorology investigated in chapter I above. Mendelssohn writes of intuition grasping the *Vollkommenheiten* of the world in its own reciprocal gesture, mimicking the *organicism* of the metaphysical universe. This metaphor establishes the organico-rational stakes of the metaphysical debate about tragedy.

Lessing objects by shifting the ground of the debate to tragedy, first removing the metaphysical assumptions. Rather than *Bewunderung*, tragedy's task is to awaken *Mitleid*. Both men had agreed to the proposition that "der best Mensch ist der mitleidigste Mensch," and Lessing accordingly makes his theory depend on the technics of producing sympathy. He thus re-introduces pedagogy into tragedy without the Leibnizian background. Indeed, what he advocates could be called *moral technologies*, attempts to intervene in the moral sensibility through poetic representation. Removing the moral-metaphysical *Urbild* or *perfectio*, he argues that the end—the tragedy should produce the

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<sup>333</sup> I have yet to find a use of "organ" in Mendelssohn's writings. I use the word in its Leibnizian provenance here.

most sympathetic human—must not be conflated with the means. Mendelssohn, it follows from Lessing’s presentation, has done just this: the goal is moral perfection, and the example of moral perfection must therefore be contained in the tragedy. Lessing objects: where we have the end, we have no necessary connection to the means. In knowing the goal, we do not know how to get there. If we grasp the means, on the other hand, the possibility that the end will emerge is a real one.<sup>334</sup> This points to the technology of producing morality, to the possible future synthesis of moral capacities.

Lessing writes:

Wenn es also wahr ist, daß die ganze Kunst des tragischen Dichters auf die sichere Erregung und Dauer des einzigen Mitleidens geht, so sage ich nunmehr, die Bestimmung der Tragödie ist diese: sie soll *unsre Fähigkeit, Mitleid zu fühlen*, erweitern. Sie soll uns nicht bloß lehren, gegen diesen oder jenen Unglücklichen Mitleid zu fühlen, sondern sie soll uns weit fühlbar machen, daß uns der Unglückliche zu allen Zeiten, und unter allen Gestalten, rühren und für sich einnehmen muß.<sup>335</sup>

For Lessing, then, the human has a future, and this future is in a moral synthesis that must still be produced by art (tragedy) and reason, without a representational model towards which we could work. If we follow the metaphorical stakes in Mendelssohn, we find that Lessing’s text suggests a developmental organic model for the pedagogy of tragedy. Rejecting representationalism between means and ends, Lessing makes the task of tragedy open-ended progress: it is literally for moral purposes, and it is obliquely grounded in the metaphorical organicism of Mendelssohn’s arguments.

At the risk of anachronizing, we could say that *eine Fähigkeit erweitern* anticipates the Kantian notion of a synthetic judgment—it extends, gains, wins more unto

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<sup>334</sup> This is a very early expression of the dynamism which makes Lessing so relevant for the next generation, in such writings as *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*, where a progression in the forms of reason is defended. As we saw above, Jacobi’s questionable presentation of Lessing’s pantheism strengthened this impression. See also Wulf Koepke, “Der späte Lessing und die junge Generation,” *Humanität und Dialog. Beiheft zum Lessing-Jahrbuch* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1982), pp. 211-22.

<sup>335</sup> Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Werke. Band 4*, ed. Herbert G. Göpfert (Munich: Hanser, 1973), p. 163; emphasis in original.



itself as it progresses. Of course, sympathy will not have been *a priori*, neither for Kant nor for Lessing. But Hölderlin—and I am not claiming that he knew this passage—would find a way to unite this moral technology with absolute knowledge. For that, he would need to characterize the tragedy as a very particular organ: an organ of intellectual intuition. Combining Kant’s two prohibited forms of metaphysical knowledge—intellectual intuition and intuitive understanding—in an organ of judgment, Hölderlin could descend from the contradiction of judgment and being to the contradiction between the organic and the mechanical, and from there begin to suggest the way towards a tragic metapolitics.

Hölderlin divides poetry into its classical triad—lyric, epic, and dramatic (which he reduces to tragic). Each has an appearance in productive tension with its “meaning.”<sup>336</sup> Tragedy’s meaning is rooted in a “metaphor of intellectual intuition,” while its appearance is heroic. Thus the narrative aspect of tragic form combines the apparent ideal mood of the lyric poem with the naïve appearance of the epic tale. Underlying this combination, however, is our familiar figure of absolute knowledge. In the elaboration which follows, we can see that Hölderlin is in fact dealing with the alternative figure of the intuitive understanding, the regulative “synthetic-general” judgment of beings with organs (and thus reciprocal causality) described in the *KU*. Hölderlin writes:

Das tragische, in seinem äußeren Scheine heroische Gedicht ist, seinem Grundtone nach, idealisch, und allen Werken dieser Art muß Eine intellectuale Anschauung zum Grunde liegen, welche keine andere seyn kann, als jene Einigkeit mit allem, was lebt, die zwar von dem beschränkteren Gemüthe nicht gefühlt, die in seinen höchsten Bestrebungen nur geahndet, aber vom Geiste erkannt werden kann...<sup>337</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> “Das lyrische, dem Schein nach idealische Gedicht ist in seiner Bedeutung naiv. Es ist eine fortgehende Metapher eines Gefühls. Das epische, dem Schein nach naive Gedicht ist in seiner Bedeutung heroisch. Es ist die Metapher großer Bestrebungen. Das tragische, dem Schein nach heroische Gedicht ist in seiner Bedeutung idealisch. Es ist die Metapher einer intellektuellen Anschauung.” (GSA IV: 1, p. 266)

<sup>337</sup> GSA IV: 1, p. 267.

We can recognize the shift from intellectual intuition to intuitive understanding both in the mereological characterization and in the immediate reference to *das Lebendige*. Further, the genre—the specific manner of uniting form and content—of tragedy demands that this knowledge be a unity only cognizable by *Geist*. As we have seen above—the language follows that of the *Verfahrungsweise* quite exactly—*Geist* must perform its dialectical task with the aid of its organs to arrive at the cognitive production that unites judgment and being. Here, the poet is given the further, specifically tragic task of uniting his presentation with the totality of life.

If it is right to think of Hölderlin as moving to the figure of intuitive understanding in this passage (while retaining the gloss “intellectual intuition”), then we must note a shift from Kantian doctrine. As Hölderlin continues, his description of the task of tragedy retains the characteristic explored above more generally, that of contradiction. He will etymologize this distinction in the *Grund zum Empedokles*, opposing *das Organische* to its privative opposite, *das Aorganische*. Here we can see this move at the level of tragic form. If the content of the tragedy has to do with elemental organization and disorganization, its form must reflect this in the organs of the poetic spirit. No pause is possible, Hölderlin writes, in the tragedy, because it must be always engaged in material synthesis and separation in order to operate effectively. If the first task—one common to the forms of poetry—is the unification of parts into a greater whole, this whole must, in the tragedy, gain the same concreteness that the individual parts possess. The whole thus gains content while the parts gain *Innigkeit*. This process is the literal opposite of the tragic plot. The hero’s apparent fall is, in fact, a devolvement into chaos—the parts of his life must be pushed into the greatest possible disarray and

tension. The less organized the parts in this sense, the grander the synthesis at the level of the whole. The mood of the lyrical individual—apparently ideal, but based on sensuous suffering—is then felt in the whole. The disorganization is thus guided by an eventually-felt whole which produces the tragic effect. Hölderlin points to his conclusion from the *Verfahrungsweise*: intellectual intuition can only exist as the extreme of absolute knowledge *in an organ*, or “insofar as it goes out of itself,” because its unity, which must be infinite, cannot brook the contradiction of a limitation, even where it is in fact limited. That process—the general dialectical process of cognition—has a privileged place in the tragedy, which thus takes metaphysical cognition as its hidden ground:

Und hier, im Übermaaß des Geistes in der Einigkeit, und seinem Streben nach Materialität, im Streben des Theilbaren Unendlichem Aorgischern, in welchem alles organischere enthalten seyn muß, weil alles bestimmter und nothwendiger vorhandene ein Unbestimmteres, unnothwendiger Vorhandenes nothwendig macht, in diesem Streben des Theilbaren Unendlichem nach Trennung, welches sich im Zustande der höchsten Einigkeit alles organischen allen in dieser enthaltenen Theilen mittheilt, in dieser nothwendigen *Willkür des Zevs* liegt eigentlich der ideale Anfang der wirklichen Trennung.<sup>338</sup>

The tragedy as genre—as poetic form, as *meaning*—presents us with the attempt of spirit to concretize itself, just as we saw above. Now, however, it is confronted with the specifics of its nature as organized and organizing, even as the absolute knowledge contained in its efforts to objectify the world push it towards the *an-organic*, to the indeterminate.<sup>339</sup> As Hölderlin continues, he makes clear that the tragedy’s form must present continuing separations reaching towards the apex where intellectual intuition—*Seyn, das Aorgische*—originally becomes organized even as it becomes as poem a higher unity. It thus presents dialectical unity in its privileged human or organological form.

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<sup>338</sup> The foregoing paragraph is taken from GSA IV: 1, pp. 267-69, present quotation from p. 269.

<sup>339</sup> That Hölderlin glosses separation-in-unity as *Willkür des Zeus* is no accident. Zeus is the figure of the aether (which is at a low level of organization) mentioned in connection with Heinse above. There may also be an allusion to Aristophanes’s speech in the *Symposium*, where Zeus separated the gender, originally united in dual-sexed ball-figures, with his word and his will.

This presentation makes clear reference to Kant's passages on intuitive understanding. The problem that makes intuitive understanding a regulative necessity is that of organized beings, literally beings which seem to possess reciprocal causality between their parts and their whole. For Hölderlin, the contradiction between organization and non-organization plays out in the tragedy. And yet it does so slightly differently than it could for Kant. In the *KU*, the pair mechanical/organic makes a candidate for an antinomy, a contradiction which occurs because its object is made of parts from different faculties which cannot interact according to the canon of the understanding. Kant's examples—freedom, the infinity of the world, etc.—are generated by reason's drive to the absolute as applied incorrectly to objects of intuition. So for example, the "world" can have an intuitive sense, but its determination as the totality of phenomena stems from the faculty of reason. When reason tries to answer the question of the size of that world, it should be disciplined by the canon to perceive that this question has two mutually facultative roots. Quantity cannot be applied both infinitely and intuitively at the same time.

The same does not hold, however, for the distinction between the mechanical and the organic. The judgment, which can be applied subsumptively (constitutively, in keeping with the canon) or reflectingly (anticipatorily), cannot produce an antinomy because it does not by itself produce real ontological determinations. The opposition between mechanics and life is thus given at the judgmental level, but made—by the designation of intuitive understanding as regulative—merely oppositional, not truly contradictory. Indeed, the *KU* is built on this delicate balance between two forms of judgment and their respective sphere of application. The supersensible substrate, and the

regulative conclusion to God's existence—Kant's teleology—are founded on that non-lethal divide.<sup>340</sup>

In a founding gesture of Romantic organology, Hölderlin first shifts the critical focus to judgment, bracketing the question of the ontological status of its contents in favor of an exploration of its forms (organs). He thus makes the judgmental opposition mechanical/organic into a contradiction, but one based in the forms of judgment itself. This means that the question of organization is opened up to a new kind of investigation, one which uses the formal-receptive organs of spirit to ask after the point of differentiation of the two orders. The “antinomy”<sup>341</sup> thus becomes resolvable, but can also be generated. Contradiction gains a history; in other words, dialectics come into being.<sup>342</sup> And it is immediately concretized in genre-theory, addressing the Kantian problem of judgments of reciprocal causality—of organic beings—in the tragic form. Tragedy becomes the organ of an investigation into the origins of organization out of contradiction, of dialectical determination. Genre-theory is, then, given pride of place in this second part of Hölderlin's metaphysics.<sup>343</sup>

### **Epochal Twists: *Empedocles* and the Romantic Ethics of Tragedy**

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<sup>340</sup> For the disciplinary and historiographical stakes, see notes 243 and 244 above.

<sup>341</sup> Which is no longer an antinomy in Kant's sense. See, for the background, Waibel's ““With respect to the antinomies, Fichte has a remarkable idea.” Three Answers to Kant and Fichte: Hardenberg, Hölderlin, Hegel.”

<sup>342</sup> Hölderlin thus anticipates Hegel's generalization of the antinomies in the *Encyclopedia*: “Die Hauptsache... ist, dass nicht nur in den vier besonderen, aus der Kosmologie genommenen Gegenständen die Antinomie sich befindet, sondern vielmehr in *allen* Gegenständen aller Gattungen, in *allen* Vorstellungen, Begriffen und Ideen... diese Eigenschaft macht das aus, was weiterhin sich als das *dialektische* Moment des Logischen bestimmt.” (W: 8, pp. 127-8)

<sup>343</sup> Without wanting to emphasize this point too much, one could point to the analogous nature of genre and organ. Both are formal but also in development, and so in some sense receptive of the new. The genre-theoretical is thus itself theorized, as the genre becomes an organ.

Hölderlin chose the philosopher Empedocles as the subject of his own attempt at tragedy. Empedocles was, then as now, a figure of philosophical legend, perhaps most famous for his putative suicide in the active volcano Mt. Aetna. His doctrines, such as Hölderlin could reconstruct them,<sup>344</sup> ran closely parallel to the ancient monism Hölderlin had encountered in Heinse's *Ardinghello*. Empedocles wrote a cosmology<sup>345</sup> based on the four elements (indeed, he is usually considered the founder of the latter doctrine). Separating these elements is one of two basic forces—conflict—while love binds them. The welter of the world is thus what Hölderlin would call *harmonischer Widerstreit*, a productive conflict in the elements.

The fragments of *Der Tod des Empedokles*—the tragedy remained incomplete—do not focus on the doctrines, preferring the biography. Not only the suicide, but also the putative self-proclaimed apotheosis and subsequent banishment from Agrigentum are thematized. The hero Empedocles is biographically suited to Hölderlin's definition of tragedy. His self-identification as nature's god leads earns him the descriptor "unbeschränkter Sinn," an echo of the genre-theoretical descriptions of the poet. The plot occurs—in all three versions—between his self-apotheosis and his suicide, in the period of greatest political tension in Agrigentum. The people are taken with his personality, but the leaders and priests of the city fear he will undermine all urban order. He takes his disciple Pausanias into exile with him and prepares for his re-unification with nature in the volcano. The suicide itself is never depicted (although plans for its depiction are

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<sup>344</sup> Uvo Hölscher's groundbreaking work in this area showed that Hölderlin had access to most of what is now gathered in the Diels/Kranz source. See Uvo Hölscher, *Empedokles und Hölderlin*, ed. Gerhard Kurz (Eggingen: Edition Isele, 2001), pp. 11-22.

<sup>345</sup> Hölscher's claim that the debate about *cosmogonie* (generation of the universe) was actually a *cosmology* (presentation of the lawful universe) remains important in Hölderlin's context. See Hölscher, *Empedokles*, p. 36. The strong biological and medicinal focus of Hölscher's interpretation syncs well with the material I have presented in the current chapter.

extant).

The project is an attempt at a modern tragedy.<sup>346</sup> Hölderlin was translating Sophocles (the *Antigone* and the *Oedipus* cycle) as well, and Empedocles is thus chosen as a paradoxically modernizing figure.<sup>347</sup> Where *Antigone*'s struggle with law and custom reflects a Greek necessity, and where Oedipus' tragedy circles around problems of knowing,<sup>348</sup> Empedocles is singled out for actual tragic production as the representative of Western (non-Greek) modernity.

Or is he? As much as the logic of classicism<sup>349</sup> seems to drive the choice, within the organological framework we can detect a complex mechanism of that classicism which makes the tragedy formally effective for modern and metaphysical purposes. The *Empedocles* became, as I will now show, the organ of a metaphysical metapolitics based on a break with the *physis-techné* analogy. With modern metaphysical tragedy, the radically new came into view.

The material presented in the tragedy—the “heroic” narrative—is focused on the

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<sup>346</sup> In a famous letter to Böhlendorff of 4 December 1801, Hölderlin describes the addressee's tragic work in the following way: “Das hat Dein guter Genius Dir eingegeben, wie mir dünkt, daß Du das Drama epischer behandelt hast. Es ist, im Ganzen, eine ächte moderne Tragödie. Denn das ist das tragische bei uns, daß wir ganz stille in irgend einem Behälter eingepakt vom Reiche der Lebendigen hinweggehn, nicht daß wir in Flammen verzehrt die Flamme büßen, die wir nicht zu bändigen vermochten.” (GSA VI: 1, p. 426) This obvious reference to his own efforts makes clear that a modern tragedy must depict precisely the devolvement into the *Aorgische* described above, for which Empedocles was particular appropriate.

<sup>347</sup> Dennis Schmidt writes about this choice that “... the modern experience out of which art arises, and that to which it is directed and which it thus seeks to express, is the reverse of that which one finds in ancient Greece. Thus one must say that what is natural to Greece is foreign to us, and consequently our struggles to represent ourselves to ourselves are the photographic negative of the struggles that animate Greek art. This means that Greek art is not to be understood according to a model that takes antiquity as the childhood of our present where we find a sort of naive and innocent form of the art of the present; rather, it is to be understood as the realm in which what is most our own appears in the guise of something foreign, almost according to a model which regards Greek art as having transposed what for us is conscious and unconscious.” (Dennis J. Schmidt, *German and Other Greeks: Tragedy and Ethical Life* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), p. 140.)

<sup>348</sup> See Schmidt's excellent depiction, *Germans*, p. 144 ff.

<sup>349</sup> Think of Winckelmann's paradigmatic statement that “imitation” of the Greeks is the only way to a truly national culture: “Der einzige Weg für uns, groß, ja, wenn es möglich ist, unnachahmlich zu werden, ist die Nachahmung der Alten...” (*Winckelmanns Werke in einem Band* (Berlin/Weimar: Aufbau, 1969), p. 2.)

highest point of possible contradictory tension in human life, presented in Empedocles' decision to politicize his total identification with nature as elemental power. The decision is antediegetic, such that the plot is driven by both the theoretical tension of the identification itself and the political consequence. Thus Hölderlin politicizes the description given in the *Grund zum Empedokles*:

...wo dann das aorgisch gewordene organische sich selber wieder zu finden und zu sich selber zurückzukehren scheint, indem es an die Individualität des Aorgischen sich hält, und das Object, das Aorgische sich selbst zu finden scheint, indem es in demselben Moment, wo es Individualität annimmt, auch zugleich das Organische auf dem höchsten Extreme des Aorgischen findet, so daß in diesem Moment, **in dieser Geburt der höchsten Feindseeligkeit die höchste Versöhnung wirklich zu seyn scheint.**<sup>350</sup>

We can see here what the *New Letters on Aesthetic Education* would have contained. By allowing the contradiction to emerge in the tragedy and to find its resolution in that organ, Hölderlin demonstrates how theoretical and practical philosophy can be combined in intellectual intuition. The unification of theory and praxis occurs in the cascade of produced real contradictions—starting with that between judgment and being, proceeding to that between the organic and the mechanical (here concretized in Empedocles' self-identification with *physis* itself as the *an-organized*), and ultimately finding its meta-political point in the production of a contradiction between *physis* and *techne*.

Hölderlin writes in the *Grund* that “Natur und Kunst sind sich im reinen Leben nur harmonisch entgegengesetzt.”<sup>351</sup> This opposition is the particular basis of the depiction of Empedocles, and it is this opposition in particular that makes him into the figure of his nation:

So ist Empedokles ein Sohn seines Himmels und seiner Periode, seines Vaterlandes, ein Sohn der gewaltigen Entgegensetzungen von Natur und Kunst in denen die Welt vor seinen Augen erschien... ein solcher Mensch kann nur aus der höchsten Entgegensetzung von Natur und Kunst erwachsen ... So ist Empedokles, wie gesagt, das Resultat seiner Periode, und sein Charakter weist auf diese zurück, so wie er aus dieser hervorgieng. Sein

<sup>350</sup> GSA IV: 1, pp. 153-54.

<sup>351</sup> GSA IV: 1, p. 152.



Schicksaal stellt sich in ihm dar, als in einer augenblicklichen Vereinigung, die aber sich auflösen muß, um mehr zu werden.<sup>352</sup>

As has often been recognized, Empedocles has a national and epochal task in his theoretical and political contradictions.<sup>353</sup> His destiny, however, is defined by a given contradiction between nature and art, as Hölderlin repeats here. As I have elaborated in the Introduction of the present study, nature and art were often analogized, the latter contained within the former's rules. Why, then, do they emerge here—in the epochal tragedy of modern destiny—in opposition?

If Empedocles' "unbeschränkter Sinn" can be read as a gloss on intellectual intuition, then we can see the emergence of a third contradiction essential to that figure. As I showed above, intellectual intuition both carries with it the danger of an ideal determination of the phenomena and also makes a theoretical parallel to the *physis-techné* analogy. If we possessed intellectual intuition, this would suggest something like an ability to make the world. As we have also seen, however, the first contradiction—between judgment and being—addressed in Hölderlin's philosophical writings shifted from a representational model to a reproductive model of cognition and aesthetic production. In that shift, the possibility of a contradiction between *physis* and *techné* becomes possible. When the poet establishes a *world within a world*, there is no

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<sup>352</sup> GSA IV: 1, pp. 154-55.

<sup>353</sup> See Schmidt, *Germans*, pp. 154 ff. See also Véronique M. Foti, *Epochal Discordance: Hölderlin's Philosophy of Tragedy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006), who writes (p. 46): "In 'Concerning the Tragic,' the hybridic moment is no longer a personal transgression, but rather an individual's destinally provoked attempt to reconcile the opposed principles of Nature and Art in his or her sheer singularity. The tragedy now revolves upon the destinal role and sacrifice of the singular in the face of the antagonistic principles that are hostile to singularity. The aorgic principle effaces singularity by indifferent unification and the organic by a subsumptive ordering which recognizes only the particular. In the Empedocles complex, Hölderlin is not... hostile to singularity; rather, the singular individual becomes, for him, a sacrificial and tragic figure insofar as he or she seeks heroically to resolve a given historical modality of the conflict at the core of manifestation by reconciling the warring principles in his or her own person." While I do not agree that the focus here is on "singularity," the focus on question of destiny, and its particular application to Hölderlin's contemporary world, is salutary. It is perhaps clearest in the third attempts, in Empedocles's conversation with Manes.

guarantee that the laws of the two worlds will coincide. Indeed, one could argue that they must not, if development—from organ to organ—is to occur.

The epochal destiny of Empedocles is, then, defined by a third contradiction produced by the figure of intellectual intuition, that between nature and art. This firmly confers metaphysical relevance to the poet's project: if nature and art are opposed, and thus exposed to the cycle of separation and unification of dialectical organs, then the possibility of metaphysical innovation is present in the tragic form.

Empedocles—at the level of heroic narrative—must be destroyed by these contradictions, as the *Grund* makes clear. Recall, however, that the heroic narrative of tragedy is its appearance. Its “meaning”—tragedy as organ—must be sought in intellectual intuition. And yet, in *Der Tod des Empedokles*, the heroic narrative (the content) coincides with the designated meaning of any tragedy (the underlying intellectual intuition). This is captured in the formula of the contradiction between nature and art. What is a given contradiction for Empedocles must be reproduced for Hölderlin's present. Art must be raised into opposition with nature, precisely through the narration of their coincidence—Empedocles' intellectual intuition, replete with political consequences. The tragedy's task is to produce this contradiction, and it can do this only by becoming the means of cognition in the present of intellectual intuition proper, epochally, to ancient Greece. The tragedy, as the finite bearer of the dialectical process of ancient cognition, becomes the desired organ of intellectual intuition. Tragedy literally objectifies the infinite, and in doing so presents the present (*um 1800*) with its destiny. More than merely the immanence of absolute knowledge in every objectification is thus presented. The *Empedocles* becomes the chosen sphere of self-objectification of

intellectual intuition itself. It raises the possibility of the application of metaphysical knowledge to concrete situations. And it does this formally yet with openness to any possible arising phenomena: it does this organologically. The *Empedocles* presents us with the possibility of the intentional, systemic yet aesthetic intervention into the order of beings, the production of new categories. These are conjured by the figures in the play who seek to understand Empedocles. It is their limited sensibilities, and that of the chorus, that present the audience with the clarion call for dialectical thinking—as we shall see. Furthermore, the *Empedokles* crosses, as it were, from a metaphysics into a metapolitics, maintaining a theoretical space for necessary contradictory encounters between spirit's highest knowledge and history's most concrete contingencies.<sup>354</sup> It marks out the tragedy as the beginning of Romantic organology.

Before leaving Hölderlin and turning to Schelling, let me point to a technique Hölderlin uses to realize the epochal significance of his *Empedocles*. This technique involves the concrete presentation of the contradiction between organs and intellectual intuition—the epochal struggle of the tragedy—in the figures surrounding Empedocles. I read this technique as a final reaction to Schiller, one which takes the latter's own theory of tragedy into account.

If Empedocles has an *unbeschränkten Sinn*, those around him do not. Even those sympathetic to him—his disciple Pausanias and the devoted youths Delia and Panthea—are presented as severely limited in their understanding of his internal process. Especially Delia and Panthea, who never actually speak with Empedocles, emphasize this limited relation, and thus the status of the contemporary observer of the *Empedocles* as

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<sup>354</sup> The political and epochal relevance of the doctrine is also clear in the fragment *das Werden im Vergehen*.

distantiated from the narrative hero. These middle figures, these sympathetic spectators, are the aesthetic means by which the underlying organological message of the play comes to view. This message, I contend, runs directly counter to that narrative witnessed by the spectator, and thus makes a concrete contradiction with epochal significance the very fabric of the play.

Schiller's theory of tragedy is, like his more general aesthetic theory, in deep dialogue with Kantian categories. In tragedy, Schiller finds a path to the socialization of Kant's theories of freedom,<sup>355</sup> both at the level of narrative and at the level of reception. The narrative contradiction—the suffering of the good—in the tragedy is reflected in our mixed pleasure in that which is not *zweckmäßig*, in *das Zweckwidrige*. Following Kant, Schiller claims that the presentation of natural teleology confirms our sense of the true moral teleology.<sup>356</sup> Tragedy does this by allowing pleasure to emerge from the presentation of the non-natural.<sup>357</sup> Schiller addressed one technique of this presentation of contradiction (with the goal of the presentation, as always, of our freedom as humans in

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<sup>355</sup> For example: “Für die Würdigung der Kunst ist es aber vollkommen einerlei, ob ihr Zweck ein moralischer sei, oder ob sie ihren Zweck nur durch moralische Mittel erreichen könne, denn in beiden Fällen hat sie es mit der Sittlichkeit zu tun und muß mit dem sittlichen Gefühl im engsten Einverständnis handeln; aber für die Vollkommenheit der Kunst ist es nichts weniger als einerlei, welches von beiden ihr Zweck und welches das Mittel ist. Ist der Zweck selbst moralisch, so verliert sie das, wodurch sie allein mächtig ist, ihre Freiheit, und das, wodurch sie so allgemein wirksam ist, den Reiz des Vergnügens. Das Spiel verwandelt sich in ein ernsthaftes Geschäft; und doch ist es gerade das Spiel, wodurch sie das Geschäft am besten vollführen kann. Nur indem sie ihre *höchste*ästhetische Wirkung erfüllt, wird sie einen wohlthätigen Einfluß auf die Sittlichkeit haben; aber nur indem sie ihre völlige Freiheit ausübt, kann sie ihre höchste ästhetische Wirkung erfüllen.” (Friedrich Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke, Band 5: Philosophische und vermischte Schriften*, (München: Hanser, 1962 ff.), p. 360) See also Frederick Beiser, *Schiller as Philosopher: A Re-examination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>356</sup> “Die Naturzweckmäßigkeit könnte noch immer problematisch sein, die moralische ist uns erwiesen. Sie allein gründet sich auf unsre vernünftige Natur und auf innre Notwendigkeit. Sie ist uns die nächste, die wichtigste und zugleich die erkennbarste, weil sie durch nichts von außen, sondern durch ein innres Prinzip unsrer Vernunft bestimmt wird. Sie ist das Palladium unsrer Freiheit.” (Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke 5*, p. 364)

<sup>357</sup> And thus contains an element of the sublime: “Das Rührende und Erhabene kommen darin über ein, daß sie Lust durch Unlust hervorbringen, daß sie uns also (da die Lust aus Zweckmäßigkeit, der Schmerz aber aus dem Gegenteil entspringt) eine Zweckmäßigkeit zu empfinden geben, die eine Zweckwidrigkeit voraussetzt.” (Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke 5*, p. 362)

reason) in the preface to his *Die Braut von Messina, Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie*.<sup>358</sup>

The chorus of ancient tragedy is the means by which the poet finds the proper balance between sense and reason, between *telos* and chaos. Schiller writes:

Die alte Tragödie, welche sich ursprünglich nur mit Göttern, Helden und Königen abgab, brauchte den Chor als eine notwendige Begleitung, sie fand ihn in der Natur und brauchte ihn, weil sie ihn fand. Die Handlungen und Schicksale der Helden und Könige sind schon an sich selbst öffentlich und waren es in der einfachen Urzeit noch mehr. Der Chor war folglich in der alten Tragödie mehr ein natürliches Organ, er folgte schon aus der poetischen Gestalt des wirklichen Lebens. In der neuen Tragödie wird er zu einem Kunstorgan; er hilft die Poesie *hervorbringen*.<sup>359</sup>

The chorus as natural organ existed in the ancient tragedy to balance the violent effects of the plot. Schiller suggests that this organ was given by the social form of the *polis*, itself a representative of that aesthetico-political balance. In the modern tragedy the poet (one imagines the *sentimental* poet, in his terms) must create this organ, which, by providing the means to the desired balance, helps the poet in turn create his poem. The distance created by the chorus is one of framing. As a quasi-spectator—but one in possession of full knowledge of the tragedy—the chorus rescues the spectator from any possible excess of violence, guiding him towards his realization of his own freedom. From a production angle, this device ensures the poet a first distantiated balance.

It is possible for the poet to misplace this balancing device, however:

Die Abschaffung des Chors und die Zusammenziehung dieses sinnlich mächtigen Organs in die charakterlose langweilig wiederkehrende Figur eines ärmlichen Vertrauten war also keine so große Verbesserung der Tragödie, als die Franzosen und ihre Nachbeter sich eingebildet haben.<sup>360</sup>

The figure of the confidant—also a kind of ersatz-spectator—is a poor replacement, for Schiller, for the chorus. Perhaps this is because of the chorus' expected bird's-eye view

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<sup>358</sup> This piece appeared in 1803, thus after Hölderlin's major efforts on the *Empedocles*. I use it here because it makes the stakes of the tragedy-theory Hölderlin *did* know particularly clear.

<sup>359</sup> Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke* 2, p. 819; emphasis in original.

<sup>360</sup> Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke* 2, p. 819.

of the plot and the fate of the hero. However that may be, Hölderlin was unsure about which organ to use.

Only the third version of the tragedy contains hints about how Hölderlin might have used an actual chorus. In a plan for the continuation of the third version, we find *Chor* written throughout, always accompanied by an enigmatic question mark, and once with the laconic “Zukunft.”<sup>361</sup>

In the third version itself, a sketch of the chorus’ role follows the discussion between Empedocles and Manes. Indeed, the third version has only three scenes. First, Empedocles soliloquizes. Next, he confides in Pausanias, rejecting his confidant’s desire to follow him into death.<sup>362</sup> Finally, the conversation with Manes determines Empedocles’ epochal destiny, justifying his suicide.<sup>363</sup> Only at this point does the chorus enter—and Hölderlin wrote only a sketch of their contribution. Their words run:

und es hängt, ein ehern Gewölbe  
der Himmel über uns, es lähmt Fluch  
die Glieder den Menschen, und die stärkenden, die erfreuenden  
Gaaben der Erde sind, wie Spreu, es  
spottet unser, mit ihren Geschenken, die Mutter  
und alles ist Schein -  
O wann, wann  
    schon öffnet sie sich  
    die Fluth über die Dürre.  
Aber wo ist er?  
    Daß er beschwöre den lebendigen Geist<sup>364</sup>

The chorus fills the role later ascribed by Schiller. It sings the generality of Empedocles’ destiny, helping the spectator to the tragic insight. So far from the aesthetic realization of

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<sup>361</sup> GSA IV: 1, pp. 167-68.

<sup>362</sup> The *Plan* speaks of “das geheime Band, das ihn und Empedokles bindet, das Gefühl der ursprünglichen ungewöhnlichen Anlage, und einer beiderseitigen tragischen Bestimmung” (GSA IV: 1, p. 164)

<sup>363</sup> “Manes, der Allerfährne, der Seher erstaunt über den Reden des Empedokles, und seinem Geiste, sagt, er sei der Berufene, der tödte und 15 belebe, in dem und durch den eine Welt sich zugleich auflöse und erneue. Auch der Mensch, der seines Landes Untergang so tödtlich fühlte, könnte so sein neues Leben ahnen. Des Tags darauf, am Saturnusfeste, will er ihnen verkünden, was der letzte Wille des Empedokles war.” (GSA IV: 1, p. 168)

<sup>364</sup> GSA IV: 1, p. 141.

Kantian freedom, however, the chorus as organ here offers the epochal destiny of Empedocles as the unification of the general and the particular. The mockery of the world lies in light of Empedocles like chaff before us, and the world disappears into illusion. An aching for the fullness of time is present in the metaphor of the flood washing away aridity, and the chorus finishes with the subjunctive command that Empedocles (?) conjure the figure of dialectical unity, neither mere life nor mere consciousness, but the living spirit.

The passage is prefaced by the words “Neue Welt.” It is unclear whether we should read this as an impossible stage-direction or as a note for earlier lines from the chorus. What is clear, however, is that the highest unity or reconciliation is here given in the organ of the tragedy, itself an organ of intellectual intuition. Here the higher contradictions of that problematic are encapsulated: if the intuitive understanding achieves its conjuring of living spirit in the resolution of the contradiction between the *an-organic* and the organized, and if the condition of that resolution is the metaphysical production of the *Verfahrungsweise*, then the *world within the world* here produced is fundamentally new. The chorus points up the tragedy’s task in metaphysical innovation. It suggests—barely—that co-operation in the production of a new order of things is the intellectual intuition at the basis of the attempted modern tragedy. It suggests that the produced contradiction between *physis* and *techne* can be resolved only by the reproduction and alteration of both orders. The world within the world alters the former, framing world.

This alteration and intervention is not Empedocles’ destiny, but ours, for Hölderlin. The *Bedeutung* of the modern tragedy is its contribution to the ability to

change the world systemically. Tragedy is the organ of a radical metapolitics. This becomes even clearer in Hölderlin's proleptic violation of Schiller's rule about the chorus, in the formal presentation of the tragedy's meaning in the sympathetic character Panthea.

Panthea is the daughter of Agrigentum's leading politician, Kritias, whose hostility towards Empedocles is barely tempered by the latter's antediegetic medical treatment of his daughter.<sup>365</sup>

In the opening scene, Panthea describes Empedocles, whom she worships, to Delia, the daughter of the visiting priest Hermokrates. The two find themselves in Empedocles' garden, but in his absence. Panthea opines about the unlimited sensibility of the prophet, describing his spirit in very much the terms of the genre-theoretical works. He binds the organic world together and to himself, and his potion has awakened a similar feeling in Panthea herself:

Der Ton aus seiner Brust! in jede Sylbe  
klangen alle Melodien! und der  
Geist in seinem Wort! - zu seinen Füßen  
möcht' ich sitzen, stundenlang, als seine Schülerin,  
sein Kind, in seinen Aether schaun, und  
zu ihm auf frohlokken, bis in seines Himmels  
Höhe sich mein Sinn verirrt.<sup>366</sup>

In the course of the scene, Delia expresses reservation at Panthea's apparent desire to imitate Empedocles<sup>367</sup>—the impending suicide strikes the reader or spectator immediately. Panthea distances herself<sup>368</sup> from this danger with heavily philosophical,

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<sup>365</sup> GSA IV: 1, pp. 4-5, 11.

<sup>366</sup> GSA IV: 1, p. 5.

<sup>367</sup> "Du opferst dich - ich glaub es wohl, er ist  
Zu übergroß, um ruhig dich zu lassen,  
Den unbegrenzten liebst du unbegrenzt..." (GSA IV: 1, p. 7)

<sup>368</sup> "O mache mich  
Nicht stolz, und fürchte wie für ihn, für mich nicht!  
Ich bin nicht er, und wenn er untergeht.



indeed organological, consequences. Panthea's distance from Empedocles is the distance from *mimesis* to representation.

Empedocles, as should be clear by now, is involved in the productive devolvement into the *an-organized*. His destiny is the heroic dissolution of himself through identification with the elements, ostracization from his society, and physical disintegration in lava. Read with the genre-theoretical writings, this highest, heroic reconciliation is a regression into the common root of consciousness, into the intellectual intuition that allows cognitive activity to be more than representational. Empedocles reaches into the depths of consciousness to find the productive root of mimetic activity itself.

Not so Panthea, who is caught in the organs of finite consciousness. She expresses the deadlock as follows:

O ewiges Geheimniß, was wir sind  
Und suchen, können wir nicht finden; was  
Wir finden, sind wir nicht.<sup>369</sup>

Her finite attempt to grasp the unlimited sensibility which has partially lit her consciousness meets an impasse, the impasse of self-cognition in intellectual intuition.

We find only that which we are not, while we strive for that which we cannot find.

Indeed, this creates a contradiction in the finite organs of consciousness:

Ich sinn ihm nach - wie viel ist über ihn  
Mir noch zu sinnen? ach und hab ich ihn

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So kann sein Untergang der meinige  
Nicht seyn, denn groß ist auch der Tod der Großen  
was diesem Manne widerfährt,  
Das, glaube mir, das widerfährt nur ihm,  
Und hätt' er gegen alle Götter sich  
Versündigt und ihren Zorn auf sich  
Geladen, und ich wollte sündigen,  
Wie er, um gleiches Loos mit ihm zu leiden,  
So wärs, wie wenn ein Fremder in den Streit Der Liebenden sich mischt." (GSA IV: 1, pp. 7-8)

<sup>369</sup> GSA IV: 1, pp. 8-9.

Gefaßt; was ists? Er selbst zu seyn, das ist  
Das Leben und wir andern sind der Traum davon.<sup>370</sup>

*Nachahmung* here becomes *Nachsinnen*—mimetic reproduction and its organological possibilities are reduced by the spectator-consciousness of the adoring Panthea to reflection. She thinks him in every way possible, but even if she grasps him, she says, it does not matter. The figure she represents gives only the feeling of not existing, of being an illusion derivative of Empedocles. There can be no representation of intellectual intuition.

Panthea's predicament is the organological key to the *Empedocles*. For it is in her speech that the contradiction between organs and absolute knowledge is generated for the spectator. The sympathetic figure—precisely the organ which does not, like the chorus, guide the audience through the narrative—reflectively pursuing but failing to grasp the infinity of Empedocles' as destiny becomes the epochal signifier in the modern tragedy. The contradiction produced, that of an organ of intellectual intuition, is the desideratum of the organological tragedy. The play opens with the generation of this contradiction (in the first version). If it also closes (in the third version) with the choral reassurance of the newness of the world, then we can see the tragedy's *meaning* (in Hölderlin's terms) as the creation of an organ for the third task of intellectual intuition: metaphysical innovation.

The mission of Platner's *Seelenorgan* had been simultaneous receptivity and external influence at the same time. This dual task is conferred, after detours through Heinse and Soemmering's interventions in late 18<sup>th</sup>-century pantheism and (post-)Kantian epistemology, onto the Romantic organ. That concept here comes into its transcendental, literal own: it makes possible an absolute knowledge as a tool of historical change. It

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<sup>370</sup> GSA IV: 1, p. 7.

introduces the notion of transcendental technology into the European theater. The metaphysics of judgment, or organology, thus created a new genre of post-Kantian metaphysics. This metaphysics was based in the notion of a *dialectical organ*, the ability to generate and resolve real contradiction. In philosophy, this meant tracing cognition to its reproductive roots. In genre-theory, this meant finding a home in tragedy for the unification of mechanical and organic orders of being. And in the tragedy itself, this meant actually generating new contradictions pointing towards a fundamentally new world. Organology was inaugurated as the metaphysics of judgment in passage to a radical metapolitics.

## Chapter III: Electric Organs and the Romantic Metaphysics of Morals:

### Schelling

"Was ist denn nun jenes geheime Band, das unsern Geist mit der Natur verknüpft, oder jenes verborgene Organ, durch welches die Natur zu unserm Geiste oder unser Geist zur Natur spricht?"<sup>371</sup>

#### Introduction

If Romantic organology was inaugurated by Hölderlin, it was brought into its classical form by his roommate from the *Tübinger Stift*, Schelling. The full confrontation between metaphysics, science, and disciplinarity would have to wait, however for Novalis' version (see chapter IV below). But where Hölderlin had drawn his term from physiological and metaphysical debates (and applied it to genre-theory and to the meaning of tragedy), Schelling found himself an essential part in shaping those debates. The debate recognized and recuperated the return of metaphysics in the re-iterated confrontation between biology and physics. Schelling's dialectics of nature, derived from his early readings of Kant and Fichte, came to be the basis of a European *Naturphilosophie*<sup>372</sup>—a dedicated mixture of speculation and empiricism—which died out in Europe only in the 1830s and 1840s (for more on which, see chapter V of this study). Taking the logic of the instrument to its transcendental limit, Schelling's organ offers a different take on his series of early systems than has otherwise been possible. By returning to Kant's rejection of the *organon* for metaphysics, Schelling's texts reveal an etymological "indifference point" (*Indifferenzpunkt*) between knowledge and being

<sup>371</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Schellings Werke. Auswahl in drei Bänden. Band 1*, ed. Otto Weiß (Leipzig: Eckardt, 1907), p. 151. Cited as Schelling, *Ideen*, p. 151.

<sup>372</sup> For an introductory overview of the many scientists influenced by Schelling's doctrines, see Thomas Bach and Olaf Breidbach, *Naturphilosophie nach Schelling* (Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt: frommann holzboog, 2005).

(Nature), one which ultimately allows metaphysical action in two senses: metaphysical construction and metapolitical deed.

With Schelling, the instrumentalization that organology made possible applies itself across three separate fields—science (and electricity specifically), metaphysics (the explicit re-introduction of an *organon* now in interaction with ideal *organs*), and theology (reaching into the metaphorical register of the body as mind’s *organ* and the world and its humans as *organs* of the divine). “Organ” becomes an analytical tool capable of synthetic intervention in its field of potential. The concept of the organ—by this time fixed in a relatively stable sense in biology—is thus returned to its not-so-distant etymological past. The metaphorology of the organ (see chapter I above) becomes organology by way of transcendentalization and simultaneous application.

Schelling’s organology makes use of science for the re-establishment of metaphysics. The organ as Schelling makes use of it allows us to see that his *Naturphilosophie*, his metaphysics, and his theology result in, but do not presume, the metaphysical picture he re-awakens.<sup>373</sup> In the first step of Schelling’s organology, a dialectical picture of nature itself (Nature) is developed.<sup>374</sup> This picture is meant to serve as a “proof of idealism”<sup>375</sup>—Schelling’s conviction is that truly scientific natural science should arrive at reason as the result of its activity. Idealism, or the real inclusion of reason in Nature, is the result of doing science. That is because true natural science is rooted in a general *organ* (that which makes the organism organic, mereologically), but plays out in the constructed natural world in a specific organ (actual organs as bearers of electrical

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<sup>373</sup> In this claim, I mean to make good on a constant refrain of the Schelling literature, to the effect that he does not “regress” into pre-Kantian or dogmatic metaphysics.

<sup>374</sup> Here I follow Kondylis, *Entstehung*, pp. 558 ff.

<sup>375</sup> This is emphasized repeatedly by Beiser, *German Idealism*. See, for example, pp. 480, 497-98, 501, 506, and 556.

qualities). Schelling thus reconstructs Leibniz' physics across the Kantian divide and in a post-Herderian context (especially in dialogue with Kierkegaard). By doubling organs, making them internally oppositional, and by reducing the logic of organic judgment and re-doubling its representational activity, Schelling re-develops the Leibnizian fundamental, metaphysical organ on the other side of Criticism. This is only possible in the post-Herderian context because histories of organs come into view, not in a general sense but as the resolutions of rolling sequences of oppositions and resolutions. This picture does not, as is so often suggested, result in some sort of "emergence-theory" of mind,<sup>376</sup> but analogizes and opposes mind to nature.

The second step—*ideal organs*—submerges the mind in nature by analogizing nature's most general and most specific reciprocal cause (*Organ*, or, as in the epigraph above, *Band*) with the tools of philosophy. This analogical reasoning, which is meant to recuperate and include all of Fichte's achievements in a new metaphysics, results in a system (the *System of transcendental Idealism—StI*) that seeks to objectify consciousness, producing itself as aesthetic product. That process—intellectual intuition—can certainly never come to an end, and thus a fundamental agreement between Schelling and Hölderlin underscores their differences from the 1790s.<sup>377</sup> Where Hölderlin had turned to the figures of absolute knowledge in their tense but productive

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<sup>376</sup> This is suggested quite often, even by subtle interpreters of Schelling. I mean to apply reverse pressure to the claim. Where Schelling's attempt to derive Nature and Self from each other is—and certainly can be—read as a sort of mutual emergence-theory resulting in the absolute reason of the identity philosophy, this readings stands in tension with Schelling's own claims to be critical in this sense. My reading is based on the conviction that the neglected word *organ* is where that critical claim cashes out.

<sup>377</sup> Accounts of that conflict—based on Schelling's comparatively longer attachment to Fichte's basic derivation of the Not-I from the I—can be found in Dieter Henrich, *Der Grund im Bewußtsein: Untersuchungen zu Hölderlins Denken (1794-1795)* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992), pp. 127-35, and Kondylis, *Entstehung*, pp. 540-51. The latter account maintains—and I agree—that the conflict between them cannot lie in their respective attitudes towards intellectual intuition or reflexive thinking, nor in their lavish re-formulations of the concept "nature." See Kondylis, *Entstehung*, p. 549, footnote, for the possibility that the misunderstanding arose because of differing paces of familiarization with Fichte's (then very new) philosophy.

relation to finite literary form, Schelling turned to the finite products of scientific knowledge, and ultimately to aesthetics as well. The theoretical punch of his speculation moves in the same direction that Hölderlin's had: towards the possibility of intervention in the mutual and analogical rules that support the increasingly dialectical double-system of *Naturphilosophie* and transcendental idealism. Aesthetic intuition becomes ontologically relevant because it points towards metaphysical innovation. Indeed, the admixture of organ and *organon* in a productively aesthetic intuition was the discursive moment that allowed organology to emerge as a doctrine.

Organology starts with the theoretical deadlock of intellectual intuition, conceives of it in strict judgmentalist terms, produces a world-picture within that judgment, and then proposes the possibility of its alteration. This will be as true, in different contexts, for Schelling as it had been for Hölderlin. The final step—towards “practical philosophy”—does not occur in the early work,<sup>378</sup> but in the first “late” work, the *Abhandlung über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit (Freedom essay)*. If we freeze Schelling's development in 1809, we can see the remnants of organology in tension with what later became his positive theological philosophy. The meta-politics of organology emerges against the background of hermetic theology, which, in its first phase, defends a stillborn “Romantic Metaphysics of Morals.” This strand of the *Freedom essay* is derived from Schelling's Munich readings in Christian theology, not least those inspired by Franz von Baader. The stakes of the debate, however, lie with Hegel, whose rejection of his former friend's system in 1807 left its mark on the rest of Schelling's career both

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<sup>378</sup> Pace Michael Rudolphi, *Produktion und Konstruktion: Zur Genese der Naturphilosophie in Schellings Frühwerk* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: frommann holzboog, 2001).

internally and externally.<sup>379</sup> Where Hegel rejects any innovative use of *organ*, Schelling's last idealist breath points to a doctrine of the metaphysical act based in quasi-theological organicity. Organology assimilated to itself a metapolitics—not a positive doctrine of government, but a theoretico-practical substrate for the establishment of a systemic position toward the realm of the political. Schelling came to think that the rational deed itself could be the locus for the interface between reason and non-reason. The structure of that deed would allow persons to become organs of the play between the general and the particular metaphysically, but also with respect to the will. No positive political program emerged (yet), but instead a doctrine of the conditions for politics, or an organological metapolitics.

### **The Organs of Organization: Intuitive Understanding**

Hölderlin hoped to found a humanistic journal that would span the various parts of his project in a scholarly commons. He wrote to Schelling in 1799 in the hopes of bringing his friend in to the philosophical side of the publication:

Dir, der mit dieser nur zu seltenen Vollständigkeit und Gewandtheit die Natur des Menschen und seiner Elemente durchschaut und umfasst, wird es ein Leichtes seyn, Dich auf meinen beschränkteren Gesichtspunct zu stellen und durch Deinen Nahmen und Deine Theilnahme ein Geschäft zu sanctioniren, das dienen soll, die Menschen, ohne Leichtsinne und Synkretismus, einander zu nähern, indem es zwar die einzelnen Kräfte und Richtungen und Beziehungen fasslich und fühlbar zu machen sucht, wie sie innig und nothwendig verbunden sind, und wie jede einzelne derselben nur in ihrer Vortrefflichkeit und Reinheit betrachtet werden darf, um einzusehen, dass sie einer andern, wenn die nur auch rein ist, nichts weniger als widerspricht, sondern dass jede schon in sich die freie Forderung zu gegenseitiger Wirksamkeit und zu harmonischem Bau, die allen Gliedern gemein und jedem eigen ist, kein einziges allein seyn lässt, dass auch die Seele nicht ohne die Organe und die Organe nicht ohne die Seele bestehen

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<sup>379</sup> Not only is the *Freedom essay* itself in part a reply to Hegel, and not only are the later, unpublished systems of “positive philosophy” obviously responses to Hegel’s doctrines on negativity—the call to Berlin in 1841 included among Schelling’s university duties the eradication of “the dragon-seed of Hegelian pantheism.” See Dale Snow, *Schelling and the End of Idealism* (State Univ. of New York: Albany 1996), p. 3.



können, und dass sie beide, wenn sie abgeondert und hiermit beide aorgisch vorhanden sind, sich zu organisieren streben müssen und den Bildungstrieb in sich voraussetzen. Als Metapher durfte ich wohl dieß sagen.<sup>380</sup>

The passage anticipates the now colloquial sense of organ given to journals and periodicals (organs of the regime, organs of critique, etc.). Juxtaposing *Seele* and *organ*—and thus drawing on the metaphorical complex he had discovered in Heinse’s *Ardinghello* (see pp. 131 ff. in chapter II above)—Hölderlin uses this “metaphor” to describe the elements of admixture that go into all organization, separating it from the *aorgic*. The words will have fallen into a context already in development in the young Schelling’s *Naturphilosophie*.

If the disagreement between the *Stifler* had been about Schelling’s attachments with Fichte, by 1799 the textual record could have brushed those concerns aside. Schelling had, by that time, written no fewer than three systems of speculative nature-philosophy, the *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur* (1797), *Von der Weltseele* (1798), and *Erster Entwurf einer Philosophie der Natur* (1799, still in progress at the time of the letter). These efforts constituted a singular systemic move in the rapid development of German Idealism. Inspired by Kant, Fichte, and the immediate natural-scientific context (especially the work of Kiehmeyer and Alexander von Humboldt), Schelling was attempting to fill in perceived gaps on both sides: Idealism needed a stronger doctrine of nature, and science needed idealist underpinnings if it was to be called science at all. In elaborating these interventions, Schelling makes organs general—the most literal terms in his “organic” system, returned to their Leibnizian metaphysical provenance—and particular, coagulations of electrical qualities in the developing world. In both uses, he

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<sup>380</sup> Hölderlin to Schelling, July 1799, GSA VI, I 347.

emphasized dialectical structures of duality and triplicity, preparing the analogical and isomorphic way for his eventual combination of organs and *organon*.

In the *Erster Entwurf*, Schelling throws his lot in with the epigenesis movement: “*Alle Bildung geschieht durch Epigenesis.*”<sup>381</sup> The developmentalist perspective<sup>382</sup> should allow, for Schelling, a comparative physiology.<sup>383</sup> Comparative *anatomy* merely attends to the structures of various organs, not to their role in the formative process (*Bildung*).<sup>384</sup> The new science would be based on the specifics of the organ, defined once as the general relation of the universe to itself (*Natur*), and again as the functional part caught in the larger force-field of that Nature. The conceptual basis of this program is captured as follows:

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<sup>381</sup> Friedrich Schelling, *Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie zum Behuf seiner Vorlesungen* (Jena/Leipzig: Gäbler, 1799), p. 58. Indeed, although through Reil and others (see chapter 2 above), *organ* seems to have come to into general use in the now generally agreed-upon epigenetic system, Schelling’s systems make this development patent. Statements such as the following, from the *Weltseele*, make this clear: “Ja sehen wir nicht, wie in einer und derselben Organisation die Stärke der Reproduktionskraft abnimmt, wie die Individualität und Festigkeit der Organe allmählich zunimmt? Daß (nach *Blumenbach*) die Stärke des Bildungstriebes im umgekehrten Verhältnis mit dem Alter abnimmt, läßt sich nicht anders erklären, als weil mit dem *Alter* zugleich jedes Organ immer mehr individualisiert wird; denn erfolgt nicht der Tod vor Alter allein wegen der zunehmenden *Starrheit* der Organe, welche die Kontinuität der Lebensfunktionen unterbricht, und indem sie das Leben *vereinzelt*, das Leben des *Ganzen* unmöglich macht?” Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Schellings Werke. Auswahl in drei Bänden. Band 1*, ed. Otto Weiß (Leipzig: Eckardt, 1907), pp. 627-28; emphasis in original. Cited as Schelling, *Weltseele*, pp. 627-28. In the *Entwurf*, this is modified: “Die organische Gestalt und Structur z.B. wohin auch die Mannichfaltigkeit einzelner Organe gehört, deren jedes sich seine besondere Funktion nimmt, ist die einzige Form, unter welcher die inner Thätigkeit gegen die äussre sich behaupten kann. Die Bildung derselben ist also selbst schon eine Wirkung jener allgemeinen organischen Eigenschaft der *Reizbarkeit* (der Erregbarkeit durch äussre Einflüsse), womit auch die Erfahrung übereinstimmend befunden wird. Umgekehrt auch wird das äussre durch organische Reaction zu einer höhern Wirkungsart gleichsam gesteigert, und so allein erhebt sich das Organische über das Todte.” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 87.) In this very specific sense, Schelling is not a “generationist” on Herder’s model—he reformulates the epigenetic tradition’s insistence on the difference between the living and the dead (see chapter 1 above). Perhaps the best way to make clear why he can do this is to point to his concept of *Potenz*, orders of organization at different “powers.” Because Schelling separates *Potenzreihen* from each other, he can claim that there is qualitative generation *between* them, or *out of* each other. This re-spatializes and de-hierarchizes the sense of *epi* in *epigenesis*. We might call that doctrine “morphogenesis.”

<sup>382</sup> Richards argues that Schelling maintained a “dynamic evolution” that saw general ideal types in optimal but real development. See Richards, *Romantic Conception*, pp. 289-307. See also chapter II above, and chapter V below. For the elaboration of Richards’s argument about *Naturphilosophie* and evolutionary science in Goethe, see Richards, *Romantic Conception*, pp. 407-503.

<sup>383</sup> See chapter V below for a discussion of the end of *Naturphilosophie* in the context of Cuvier’s establishment of comparative *anatomy*.

<sup>384</sup> Schelling, *Entwurf*, pp. 60-61.

[Einzelne Teile] würden sich also zur ganzen Organisation zugleich wie Ursache und Wirkung ihrer Thätigkeit verhalten. Was aber zur Organisation (als einem Ganzen sich so verhält, heisst *Organ*. Es müssten also, wo in *einer* Organisation entgegengesetzte Funktionen vereinigt sind, diese Funktionen an verschiedene *Organe* vertheilt seyn. Je mehr daher im organischen Naturreich die Mannichfaltigkeit der Funktionen zunimmt, desto mannichfaltiger müsste das System der Organe ... sich entwickeln – insofern diese Organe jedes seine eigenthümliche Function, ausübte, käme ihnen ein *eignes Leben* (*vita propria*) – insofern aber die Ausübung dieser Function doch nur innerhalb jenes ganzes Organismus möglich wäre, nur gleichsam ein *gebergtes Leben* zu, und so muss es dem Begriff der Organisation nach seyn. Wenn also die möglichen mannichfaltigen Proportionen der organischen Funktionen a priori abgeleitet werden könnten, so würde, weil von dieser Proportion selbst die organische Struktur abhängt, damit zugleich die ganze Mannichfaltigkeit möglicher Organisationen abgeleitet seyn.<sup>385</sup>

This passage not only lays out the fundamentals of Schelling's system of nature, but also clarifies his relationship to Kant in that context, and that on three separate levels. Moving backwards through the quotation, we can see that the first point is that Schelling opens the possibility here that life-science could be constitutive, that is, that the prospective comparative physiology could proceed *a priori*, making up an essential cognitive condition for humans. That is, of course, precisely what Kant had rejected in premise and tried to recuperate in the *Critique of Teleological Judgment*, as we have seen.<sup>386</sup> He does this for reasons profoundly in keeping with Hölderlin's establishment of a metaphysics of judgment. Comparative physiology would be based on the notion that the world in organic development (development of and through organs) could be known *a priori*, where this *a priori* takes on an adverbial sense to the productive judgment of the scientist/philosopher. This would only be possible with the eventual correct sense of the

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<sup>385</sup> Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 64.

<sup>386</sup> There is a vast literature on Schelling's general relationship with Kant. In this context it is perhaps most helpful to point to Schelling's correct grasp of *a priori* as having not to do with the content of propositions but with the manner of our judgment. See Beiser, *German Idealism*, 524 ff. and especially p. 527: "ut the a priori or a posteriori status of a proposition attaches not to the propositions themselves but simply to our mode of knowledge of them. Hence a proposition that we first know a posteriori through experience can later become a priori by its role within the system itself." Schelling's statement of the philosophical relationship to experiment makes this—and its connection to what I have called the metaphysics of judgment clear: "Jedes Experiment ist eine Frage an die Natur, auf welche zu antworten sie gezwungen wird. Aber jede Frage enthält ein verstecktes Urtheil a priori; jedes Experiment, das Experiment ist, ist *Prophezeiung*; das Experimentiren selbst eine Hervorbringung der Erscheinungen." Schelling, *Entwurf (Einleitung)*, p. 9. The manipulation of nature through experiment is simultaneously a manipulation of knowledge, one which can, in principle, *result* in the a priori, rather than merely deriving from it.

*organ* itself, which Schelling sketches here. The second point, then, is that the *organ* is dual—its has its own life insofar as it has its own functional unity, but also a “borrowed” life, insofar as that unity *is* the direction of a force’s contribution to the great organismal unity.<sup>387</sup> If we return to Kant’s definition of the *organ*, we can see the full impact of this point:

In einem solchen Producte der Natur wird ein jeder Theil so, wie er nur durch alle übrige da ist, auch als um der andern und des ganzen Willen existirend, d.i. als Werkzeug (Organ) gedacht: welches aber nicht genug ist (denn er könnte auch Werkzeug der Kunst sein und so nur als Zweck überhaupt möglich vorgestellt werden); sondern als ein die anderen Theile (folgich jeder den anderen wechselseitig) hervorbringendes Organ, dergleichen kein Werkzeug der Kunst, sondern nur der allen Stoff zu Werkzeugen (selbst denen der Kunst) liefernden Natur sein kann: und nur dann und darum wird ein solches Product, als organisirtes und sich selbst organisirendes Wesen, ein Naturzweck genannt werden können.<sup>388</sup>

Kant’s interest, here in the *KdU*, is in objects in which an idea (*Begriff*) appears to precede or determine the order of the parts (thus the juxtaposition of art and organisms). Schelling’s first step was to challenge the notion that these objects are somehow second-order. In a framework of judgments as basic elements of investigation, what could lead us to assume that status? Bracketing that question,<sup>389</sup> Schelling develops the picture of organicity from Kant. Where Kant’s focus falls on the problem of mereological precedence, Schelling starts *medias in res*. Given a reciprocally acting whole, the name for the agent of that reciprocity is organ. And it follows from that slight definitional shift that the organ must be dual, that is, it must be both a unity (functioning and in itself) and

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<sup>387</sup> Schelling insists on this determination in various places, most commonly when discussing the *Bildungstrieb*. Organs are nothing other than the orientation or directionality of (that) force, and yet, without them, there would be no manifestation of the various forces. That picture is profoundly Herderian, as we shall see in a moment. See Schelling, *Entwurf*, pp. 43 ff.

<sup>388</sup> AA V, pp. 373-4, see chapter I, p. 44, note 74 above.

<sup>389</sup> Of course, Schelling did not always or ultimately bracket that question. There is some scholarly agreement that, while the *Ideen*, the *Weltseele*, and even the *Entwurf* are undecided on the point, the *Einleitung* to the *Entwurf* (composed in autumn 1799) finally systematizes a constitutive science of life. See Beiser, *German Idealism*, pp. 486 ff, and Dalia Nassar, “From a Philosophy of Self to a Philosophy of Nature: Goethe and the Development of Schelling’s Naturphilosophie,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 92 (3), 2010, pp. 304-321.

a difference (from the greater whole for which it serves that purpose). The third point thus emerges from the second and the first: if there is the possibility of making judgments *a priori* through experimentation and experience, and if further there is no reason to assume the cognitive status of the organism as secondary to begin with, then the organ becomes the object of investigation. Its process, which we encounter in a divided form, as a duality in development, follows from its definition. And beyond this mere conceptual conclusion, the organ also serves as a first analogue to judgment itself. After all, judgment is precisely that function in cognition which produces ambivalent unities, by Kant' own lights. That these unities then come to be analyzed into regulative and constitutive is the result of Kant's version of Criticism. Judgment's function with respect to the fourth modality makes up a rather large part of the organ-metaphorical strain of the *KdrV* (see chapter I above). Schelling is merely drawing a consequence from a different set of assumptions within a generically identical methodology. The preliminary result—and I emphasize *result*, where this is often taken to be the premise of Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*—is that the reciprocal causality of the organism mirrors the form of judgment insofar as it is abstracted from the other faculties. This conclusion set Schelling up to break with the Critical system in a critical manner, a topic I shall consider below (section 2 of the current chapter).

The beginnings of this break are clear in a section of the *Weltseele* that treats the cognitive status of the organism. The stated intention of the section to investigate the origin of the concept of organization, and Schelling proceeds according to Kant's initial findings in the *KdU*. Kant had written that the notion of an "end" (*Zweck*) is "der Gegenstand eines Begriffs, sofern dieser als die Ursache von jenem (der reale Grund

seiner Möglichkeit) angesehen wird... Wo also nicht etwa bloß die Erkenntniß von einem Gegenstand, sondern der Gegenstand selbst (die Form oder Existenz desselben) also Wirkung nur durch einen Begriff von der letzteren möglich gedacht wird, da denkt man sich einen Zweck.”<sup>390</sup> The notion is that, in the encounter with phenomena that seem to display objective autonomy or formal independence, the end suggested by the encounter is merely a concept which appears to exist and determine the object. This concept—*thought* to be existing—differs from the concepts at work in the canon of the understanding, in which the faculty provides and never asserts the reality of the concept (except as a condition of possible experience). The encounter with such phenomena receives the name *Zweckmäßigkeit*, a term that implies the extra work that judgment does in this case. The spontaneous ascription of reality to the concept—which Kant, as we have seen, goes on to regulate and discipline—is a case-study in the separation of subsumptive judgment from reflecting judgment, and grounds the separation of the life sciences from physics. Yet it also is a necessary part of the judgmental apparatus, without which we would have no recourse to analyze aesthetic and organismal objects.

Schelling writes that, in the mechanisms of nature, we never perceive anything which constitutes its own world (“eine eigne Welt bildete”<sup>391</sup>). Where we encounter what must eventually be called an organic being, we note the reciprocal causality in our judgment and its tendency to assert the reality of causality. Schelling literalizes the mereological element of this thought: for a whole which appears to subsist independently, the concept which appears to guide it is like a sphere in which the parts interact. The

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<sup>390</sup> AA V, p. 220.

<sup>391</sup> Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 611.

sphere is perennial (at least locally): it forms a kind of substrate of the phenomenon.<sup>392</sup> In keeping with Kant's analysis, Schelling then asserts that this sphere cannot itself appear. This is because the sphere is not the intuited part of the phenomenon—it is the concept, “das *Monument* vorüberschwindenden Erscheinungen.”<sup>393</sup> What Schelling does with this gloss on Kant's conception of cognition of organisms anticipates his future work with the term “intellectual intuition.” He reduces the framework for investigation of this phenomenon to its judgmental basis, that is, he attends to both the intuition and the concept at work without making an assumption about their respective ontological statuses:

Da der Begriff dieses Produkts nichts *Wirkliches* ausdrückt, als insofern er der Begriff zusammenwirkender *Erscheinungen* ist, und da umgekehrt diese Erscheinungen nichts *Bleibendes* (Fixiertes) sind, als insofern sie innerhalb dieses *Begriffs* wirken, so muß in jenem Produkt *Erscheinung* und *Begriff* unzertrennlich vereinigt sein.<sup>394</sup>

The concept, the substrate, the monument of appearances, is not actual, but makes up a real cognitive condition for the play of those appearances. Only within that concept can these appearances be such as they are, unified as a field of intuitions. The conclusion—that in the organic product, appearance and concept are inseparable—slides subtly out of the Kantian conclusion it appears to mirror. Kant agrees—for regulative reasons—that intuitions and concepts are united at a higher level in the cognition of the organism. But for Schelling, it is not intuition (*Anschauung*) but appearance (*Erscheinung*) which unites with the concept. The concept's status as non-actual is partially contradicted by its necessity in not merely unifying appearance (that is what intuition does), but in providing

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<sup>392</sup> The term substrate seems to derive here less from Kant (for whom the “substrate” is the supersensible ground, which we must consider regulatively) than from Aristotle, whom Schelling quotes to describe the substrate-concept as “in se teres et rotundum.” (“in itself smooth and rounded”), *Weltseele*, p. 612. The citation appears to be from *De generatione*, beginning of section 4, and has clear resonances in Schelling's gloss (“in sich selbst *Ganzes* und *Beschlossenes*”) with classical aesthetic theory.

<sup>393</sup> Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 612; emphasis in original.

<sup>394</sup> Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 612; emphasis in original.

a field of possible play for those appearances, a substrate. This first conclusion leads Schelling to differentiate types of matter. Matter—the proposed substrate—must be of different kinds if it is to support different sorts of appearance-fields (different *Potenzen*, as he will come to say). But the concept of matter requires it to be permanent and divisible. Schelling’s investigation thus leads to a conception of different matters divisible infinitely in themselves but qualitatively whole and distinct from one another:

Sie muß teilbar sein, wie jede andere Materie, ins Unendliche, unteilbar, als diese bestimmte Materie, gleichfalls ins Unendliche, d. h. so, daß durch unendliche Teilung kein Teil in ihr angetroffen werde, der nicht noch das Ganze vorstellte, auf das Ganze zurückwiese. Der unterscheidende Charakter dieses Produkts (das, was es aus der Spare bloßer Erscheinungen hinweg nimmt) ist sonach seine absolute Individualität.<sup>395</sup>

The point for Schelling, at one level, is that matter itself must be organized in order to be valuable for natural-scientific investigation. The concept of matter must be differentiated according to its quality, which he here calls absolute individuality (see below for more on quality). But the passage also has indirect implications for the picture of cognition of organisms. The judgment which applies must be capable of switching between conceptions of matter, that is, between concepts which determine the field of play for appearances. This means that the non-actual status of the concept is not attached to a subordination to another type of judgment, but instead to the framework of unity necessitated by experience. Schelling will now immediately refer to the *KdU* and ensure that “at least” a regulative use of this conception of matter is necessary. And yet the concept itself, changing as it must in the reflective process of investigation, undergoes a process of re-doubling which allows for alteration—just the condition that obtains for all organisms. Schelling concludes:

Daher folgt denn auch aus dem Begriff der Individualität die doppelte Ansicht jeder Organisation, die als *idealisches* Ganzes die Ursache aller *Teile* (d.h. ihrer selbst

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<sup>395</sup> Schelling, *Weltseele*, pp. 613-14; emphasis in original.



als *realen* Ganzen), und als *reales Ganzes* (insofern sie Teile hat) die *Ursache ihrer selbst als idealischen* Ganzen ist, worin man dann ohne Mühe die oben aufgestellte absolute Vereinigung des *Begriffs* und der *Erscheinung* (des Idealen und Realen) in jedem Naturprodukt erkennt, und auf die endliche Bestimmung kommt, *daß jedes wahrhaft individuelle Wesen von sich selbst zugleich Wirkung und Ursache sei.*<sup>396</sup>

*Intuitive understanding*—since that is clearly what Schelling is analyzing—is not only a higher unity of concept and intuition, but also a duality within that higher unity that allows for the reflective process of concept-determination to occur in any experiential context. The reciprocal causality of the organism is literally taken up into the relation between concept and intuition in the intuitive judgment. The unity of the real and the ideal in any cognition of nature is both absolute and iterable. It is both determinative of the appearances and alterable in the face of experience. It unites, in a way that Schelling did not see in 1798, empirical realism and transcendental idealism in a single judgmental style, one that paradoxically determines the phenomena and remains open to their contingent flow. At this point in Schelling’s career, this implicit revision of Kant’s doctrine of the intuitive understanding is little more than a promise, on which he first makes good in 1800 (see below).

Before leaving Schelling’s dialogue with Kant and turning to Herder and Kiehmeyer, I want to point to another way in which Schelling makes good on the Romantic program of reading Kant. As I have argued, this reading constituted an abstraction from the specific program laid out especially in the *KdrV*, and a rediscovery of some pre-critical problems. Much ink has been spilled on Schelling’s revision of Kant’s dynamic system of physics in the *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft* (1786). There, Kant develops physics on the basis of the categories, arguing that the single non-empirical assumption of attractive and repulsive force in

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<sup>396</sup> Schelling, *Weltseele*, pp. 615-16; emphasis in original.

interaction is enough to ground the science.<sup>397</sup> Schelling's position on this possibility shifts from whole-hearted agreement to all-out organicist revision.<sup>398</sup> I will not re-analyze this very interesting confrontation about physics here, but point to a methodological basis for the disagreement which demonstrates both Schelling's contribution to this generically new Criticism and shows a point of genesis of Romantic organology from the metaphorology investigated in chapter I above.

Schelling writes, as we saw above:

Es müssten also, wo in *einer* Organisation entgegengesetzte Funktionen vereinigt sind, diese Funktionen an verschiedene *Organe* vertheilt seyn.<sup>399</sup>

The sentence ensures that organology is not limited to organicism. Opposed functions contributing to organization are nowhere missing in dynamic physics, neither for Kant nor for Schelling. The dialectical notion of the unification of opposing quantities, and the notion that *organs* are responsible for that unification, could hardly seem less Kantian, in one sense. And yet the larger Kantian corpus (on which I am not claiming Schelling is drawing here) reveals that the picture Schelling is developing has affinities with the questions that generated the Critical program in the first place. To see why something like a Critical metaphysics to come into existence in Romanticism, we must return to the pre-Critical work, where anticipations of Criticism were mixed with an open-ended search for metaphysical methodology.

Two points of reference in the pre-critical work point up the result I am seeking here. In a sense, they are merely two sides of the same question. Kant's dissatisfaction

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<sup>397</sup> On Kant and Schelling in this context, see Beiser, *German Idealism*, pp. 525 ff., and Benjamin Specht, *Physik als Kunst: die Poetisierung der Elektrizität um 1800* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), pp. 91-104.

<sup>398</sup> By 1801, we find him claiming that "die unorganische Natur als solche existirt nicht..." (*Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling sämtliche Werke*. I. Abt., Bd. 4, Stuttgart/Augsburg 1859, pp. 105-212, here p. 206.

<sup>399</sup> Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 64.

with both rationalism and eclecticism led him to experiment with Newtonian methodology in philosophy. From that general problematic emerged the parallel problems of force and causality. Kant took both as methodological problems in his writings from the 1760s, and Schelling repeats some of its basic gestures in his appropriation of the Critical system.

In his important *Versuch, den Begriff der negative Größen in die Weltweisheit einzuführen*, Kant applied the mathematical logic of the positive and the negative to real relations. Proceeding carefully, he invited his readers to imagine a ship making its way through a morning sea. Its movement forward on its path is necessarily retarded by wind, rain, etc. Assuming its movement in its intended direction can be quantified, Kant argues, its hindrances can then also be quantified as *real negatives* (and the sea's current a *real positive*). The reality of the wind is not in question, of course, but its reality *qua negative* is not intuitive. And indeed, that reality is contextual. The assignation of + and – is relative to the real system of opposition that occurs local to the ship's movement. Forces can be calculated as real and oppositional, without forcing the metaphysical question of their absolute values.<sup>400</sup> He concludes, in one of his more significant anticipations of dialectical thinking:

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<sup>400</sup> Kant writes that there are two basic rules in this system. First: "Die Realrepugnanz findet nur statt, in so ferne zwei Dinge als *positive Gründe* eins die Folge des andere [sic] aufhebt. Es sei Bewegkraft ein positiver Grund: so kann ein realer Widerstreit nur statt finden, in so ferne eine andere Bewegkraft mit ihr in Verknüpfung sich gegenseitig die Folge aufheben." Immanuel Kant, "Versuch, den Begriff der negativen Größen in die Weltweisheit einzuführen," *Vorkritische Schriften bis 1768/2 (Werkausgabe Band I/II)*, Hrsg. Wilhelm Weischedel (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1960), pp. 777-820, here p. 788. The conflicting forces must be in the same subject and cannot be *logically* contradictory. This allows the system to be based on an imaginary zero-point: "Demnach müssen in jeder Realentgegensetzung die Prädikate alle beide positiv sein, doch so, daß in der Verknüpfung sich die Folgen in demselben Subjekte gegenseitig aufheben. Auf solche Weise sind Dinge, deren eins als die Negative des anderen betrachtet wird, beide vor sich betrachtet positiv, allein, in einem Subjekte verbunden, ist die Folge davon das Zero." Kant, "Versuch," p. 789. The ship example is in the second rule: "Allenthalben, wo ein positiver Grund ist und die Folge ist gleichwohl Zero, da ist eine Realentgegensetzung, d.i. dieser Grund ist mit einem andern positiven Grunde in Verknüpfung, welcher die Negative des ersteren ist. Wenn ein Schiff im freien Meer wirklich durch

Ich sage demnach: *ein jedes Vergehen ist ein negatives Entstehen*, d.i. es wird, um etwas Positives was da ist aufzuheben, eben so wohl ein wahrer Realgrund erfordert, als um es hervorzubringen wenn es nicht ist.<sup>401</sup>

Generation and corruption stand in a mutual relationship to each on the background of a zero-value. When such a zero is calculable, the interchangeable reality of positive and negative ascriptions can be claimed.

Note, however, that Kant here brushes on another topic essential to his early work, that of the *Realgrund*. It was the difference between such real reasons (causes) and “ideal reasons” (*Idealgründe* or “reasons”) that separated Crusius and his followers from the Leibnizians. Kant thought neither school had even seen the real problem with causality in this sense. It was in this problematic, as I have noted above, that Kant developed his critique of judgment in the largest sense. As Dieter Henrich has shown,<sup>402</sup> it was the reduction of causality to a non-logical relation—to the content of a predicate, rather than the relation of subject to predicate—that helped Kant to articulate his objection to both systems. But the relations of subject to predicate and cause to effect are—at least in judgments—both termed *nexus*, as Kant adopts the term from Baumgarten.<sup>403</sup> The causal *nexus* was originally also defined by the rationalists as the *relation* of objects to each other in causal relations and of the object to itself (of substance

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Morgenwind getrieben wird, und es kommt nicht von der Stelle, wenigstens nicht so viel, als der Wind dazu Grund enthält, so muß ein Seestrom ihm entgegenstreichen. Dieses will im allgemeinen Verstande so viel sagen: daß die Aufhebung der Folge eines positiven Grundes jederzeit auch einen positiven Grund erheische.” Kant, “Versuch,” p. 790

<sup>401</sup> Kant, “Versuch,” p. 803. Emphasis in original.

<sup>402</sup> See note 145 in chapter I above.

<sup>403</sup> Using the following definition from Baumgarten’s *Metaphysica*, §210-16: “respectus rationis realis erga accidens est *vis*.” (*Metaphysik Herder*, pp. 26-27.) And continuing: “216. respectus substantiae erga accidens quatenus rationem interne sufficientem ejus in se continet, est *vis*. Deßwegen wird das accidens aber noch nicht gleich wirklich wenn diese da ist. Der Grund in der Kraft, kann quoad interna, nicht aber quoad externa zureichend seyn. // Diese *unzureichende Kraft* heißt das Vermögen. *Eine Substanz* hat *Vermögen*, in so fern sie den Grund von der Möglichkeit eines Accidens in sich hält. / E. bei einem Menschen das Vermögen gelehrt zu werden. *Receptivitas* (Fähigkeit) hat den Grund von der Möglichkeit zu leiden, in sich. Da alle leidende Substanzen selbst sehr thätig seyn müßen, so schließt die Fähigkeit also auch das Vermögen leidend zu handeln ein, ohne das es nicht seyn kan. z.E. wenn ein Stein verbrennt.”

to accident).<sup>404</sup> Kant's intervention was to make the forces that relate objects to each other and to themselves a non-logical but still cognitive problem for metaphysics. That problem was distinct from that of propositions' relations to each other (dialectical logic) and to themselves (categorical relations).<sup>405</sup>

These two problems (namely, formal and applied or "transcendental" logic), in combination, reinforce the argument I made in chapter I above to the effect that a genre of philosophy exists in the pre-critical work which the Romantics rediscover by de-specifying the Critical system as a textual complex. Schelling was able, in a sense, to reconstruct the problematic that faced the early Kant and to see in it a thread of argument that, for him, surpassed the Kant of the Critical system. Thus, when he writes of *entgegengesetzte Funktionen*, he can imagine these to be really contradictory. And by reducing the logic of the understanding to the open texture of the judgment (bracketed, for the time being, from the other faculties), he can consider the human mind as actually

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<sup>404</sup> Kant follows Baumgarten here too: "Nexus: der Respectus eines Dinges als eines Grundes gegen das andre als Folge." (*Metaphysik Herder*, p. 12.)

<sup>405</sup> This is the central passage: "197. Die *Existenz der Accidenzen* ist ein *Rationatum*. Sie fodern einen Real Grund zur Definition und dies ist der Grund der Inhaerenz. // Der Respectus eines logischen Grundes zur logischen Folge nach der Regel der Identität wird durch ein Urteil ausgedrückt. z.E. die Folge der Nothwendigkeit Gottes ist die Unveränderlichkeit: von solchen logischen Urteilen ist die ganze Mathesis voll. // Eine jede Bestimmung der Dinge aber, die einen Realgrund heischt, wird durch was anders gesetzt, und der nexus eines Realgrundes mit der Realfolge wird also nicht aus der Regel der Identität eingesehen, kan auch nicht durch ein Urteil ausgedrückt werden, / sonder ist ein simpler Begriff. z.E. der Wille Gottes ist der real Grund vom Daseyn der Welt, ist nicht logisches Urteil aus der Regel der Identität. Denn die Welt ist nicht mit Gott einerlei sondern ein simpler Begriff. Dieser Begriff heißt **Kraft** [sic] z.E. Körper stoßen sich: unsere Einbildungskraft bringt ehedem gehabte deutliche Begriffe wieder hervor. Scheint dies gleich ein logischer Satz zu seyn: so ist ers doch nicht: sondern das praedicat ist selbst hier der respectus des real Grundes etc. Blos durch Erfahrungen, nicht logisch können wir den nexum des real Grundes einsehen (z.E. daß ein Waßer flüßig ist nicht a priori durchs Gesicht, sondern a posteriori durchs Gefühl. = = Wie? Der Mensch kann ja aber ohne Urteile nicht vernünftig denken? = Von den Kräften denken wir blos vernünftig, wenn wir einen Real Grund einem andern bekanten nach der Regel der Identität unterzuordnen suchen: bis man auf die *Grundkraft* kommt, den nexum der *aus keinem andern herzuleiten ist*. Dies ist des Philosophen Pflicht, und wo er nicht bis auf die Grundkraft kommen kann, doch so wenig Realgründe anzunehmen.) // Des Autors Definition von der *Kraft* ist falsch: nicht was den Grund enthält sondern der nexus des Grundes. folglich [sic] ist die Substanz (§.199) keine Kraft, sondern *hat* eine Kraft." (*Metaphysik Herder*, pp. 24-25.) Through the chaos of Herder's apparent confusion at Kant's lecture, one can see the separation of logical grounds from existential causes. *Kraft*—the later bone of contention between the two authors—is clearly ascribed to the realm of possible predicates of existence, and thus separated out from propositional logic-structures.

constituted by the isomorphic and unbridgeable distance between causes and reasons.<sup>406</sup>

This point will apply to the methodological element of Schelling's organology in the *Naturphilosophie* which follows. Organs, as they were for Hölderlin, are dialectical things, objects of developmental scrutiny. But they also—and this was the point of my detour on Kant—provide the first reason to think that a Critical metaphysics might glimmer into existence. For that, something other than an assertion of mind's interaction with being would be needed. But precisely that assertion is lacking in the early Schelling—instead, tentative analogues, representations and analyses of Critically differing spheres are produced.

### **General and Particular Organs: Comparative Physiology and the System of Forces**

In the *Entwurf*, Schelling gives a “general schematic of the sequence of stages” in his system of Nature:

Organische	Allgemeine <sup>407</sup>	Anorganische Natur
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<sup>406</sup> The discourse on *Gründe* in German had be re-activated by Jacobi in the Spinoza controversy, who had gone so far as to accuse *Kant* of making the error that motivated the development of Criticism. Schelling, who refers often enough to Jacobi, has, in the time marked out for investigation here, a much more complex notion of causes and reasons than Jacobi did. For an account of Schelling that gives Jacobi a fair shake, see Andrew Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy: An Introduction* (Routledge: New York, 1993), pp. 15-30. See also Dale Snow, “F. H. Jacobi and the Development of German Idealism,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 25 (3), 1987, pp. 397-415. On the basis of my argument here, I would suggest that the pre-Kantian context is more important for interpreting Schelling than is generally assumed. See, for some exceptions, Edward Booth, O.P., “Leibniz and Schelling,” *Studia Leibnitiana* 32 (1), 2000, pp. 86-104, and Manfred Frank, *Unendliche Annäherung: die Anfänge der philosophischen Frühromantik* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), pp. 662-690.

<sup>407</sup> The universal unifying force is, of course, the *Weltseele* in the earlier writing of that name. Schelling leaves its determination open in all of these writings, positing only that one must conclude to it from the investigations. In the *Weltseele*: “Da nun dieses Prinzip die Kontinuität der anorgischen und der organischen Welt unterhält und die ganze Natur zu einem allgemeinen Organismus verknüpft, so erkennen wir aufs neue in ihm jenes Wesen, das die älteste Philosophie als die *gemeinschaftliche Seele der Natur* ahndend begrüßte, und das einige Physiker jener Zeit mit dem formenden und bildenden Äther (dem Anteil der edelsten Naturen) für Eines hielten.” Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 665. In the *Entwurf*, as a harbinger of the next year's breakthrough: “Es wurd evorausgesetzt, die Natur sey Entwicklung aus Einer ursprünglichen Involution. Diese Involution kann aber nach dem Obigen nichts Reelles seyn: sie kann also nur als *Act* vorgestellt werden, als *absolute Synthesis*, welche nur ideal ist, und gleichsam den wendepunkt

Bildungstrieb	Licht	Chemischer Process
Irritabilität	Electrizität	Electrischer Process
Sensibilität	Ursache des Magnetismus?	Magnetismus? <sup>408</sup>

The task of the *Entwurf* is to deduce this system, in which, as noted above, includes separate but interconnected orders, here specified as *anorganic*, *organic*, and *universal* (Nature). In each order, quantitative and qualitative balances of forces interact, even as the whole interacts with the other orders. As we can now see, at each level, the points of interaction are called “organs,” which are the *referenda* both in general and in particular. Schelling invented neither the system of forces nor the use of “organ” within that system, but his contribution to both helped him to develop *Naturphilosophie* as a branch of Romantic organology. The system of forces had to be bound by a general concept of the organ, and complemented by the particularity of the electrical organ. Force had to be made dialectical, and the organ had to be transcendentalized. The result was that organology could instrumentalize natural science, as a preface to its intention of intervening in nature itself.

The notion of the system of forces was always bound, for Schelling, to the possibility of a comparative physiology. And he explicitly recognized his forebears in both projects.<sup>409</sup> The system of forces had been given first by Herder, and then been expanded and altered by Blumenbach and Kiehmeyer.

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der Transcendental- und der Naturphilosophie bezeichnet.” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 321; emphasis in original.)

<sup>408</sup> Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. viii.

<sup>409</sup> “Die Idee einer vergleichenden Physiologie findet man schon in *Blumenbachs Specimen physiologiae comparatae inter animalia calidid et frigidid sanguinis*, weiter ausgeführt in der Rede über die Verhältnisse der organischen Kräfte von Hrn. *Kiehmeyer* deren Hauptgedanken dass nämlich in der Reihe der Organisationen Sensibilität durch Irritabilität und wie *Blumenbach* und *Sömmering* bewiesen haben, zuletzt von der Reproductionskraft verdrängt werde, aus *Herders* Ideen zur Philos. der Gesch. der Menschheit... genommen ist. *Wie* indess Sensibilität durch Irritabilität und beide endlich durch das Ueber gewicht der Reproductionskraft verdrängt werden ist noch durch keinen dieser Verusche erklärt worden.” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 220; emphasis in original.)

Herder's *Ideen* had been the *locus classicus* for the systems of forces that emerged in the vitalist natural-scientific scene in the 1790s. The third book of that work had proposed, in keeping with the general cosmology analyzed in chapter I of the present study, a comparative physiology<sup>410</sup> on the basis of the interaction of basic forces in the animal. For Herder, the formative drive (*Bildungstrieb*) included, as it had for Blumenbach, both nutritive drive and reproductive drive (the three elements ultimately united in Wolff's *vis essentialis*). In addition to these, Herder included Haller's irritability and sensibility. As in his earlier work, *Vom Erkennen und Empfinden der menschlichen Seele* (see chapter I above), irritability and sensibility were made into progressively concrete versions of a single force. Indeed, in the *Ideen*, all of these forces were made part of a single organic force-complex:

Nur ein Principium des Lebens scheint in der Natur zu herrschen: dies ist der *ätherische* oder *elektrische Strom*, der in den Röhren der Pflanze, in den Adern und Muskeln des Tiers, endlich gar im Nervengebäude immer feiner und feiner verarbeitet wird und zuletzt alle die wunderbaren Triebe und Seelenkräfte anfacht, über deren Wirkung wir bei Tieren und Menschen staunen.<sup>411</sup>

The relation of forces was, for the monist Herder, a proliferation more than a combination. A single, ultimately divine force, held the cosmos together and displayed itself in the animal individual and species. As we shall see, the suggestion that aether or electricity was the basic characteristic of this internally differentiated force reached both back to the aether-tradition (see chapter II above) and forward to Schelling's instrumentalization of electricity. As Herder continued his speculation, he tied the system of forces and the promise of a comparative physiology to his cosmology. The effects of

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<sup>410</sup> "Wer würde sich nicht freuen, wenn ein philosophischer Zergliederer es übernehme, eine vergleichende Physiologie mehrerer, insonderheit dem Menschen naher Tiere nach diesen durch Erfahrungen unterschiednen und festgestellten Kräften im Verhältnis der ganzen Organisation des Geschöpfs zu geben?" Herder, *Ideen*, p. 94.

<sup>411</sup> Herder, *Ideen*, p. 82; emphasis in original.



the force visible in the external world were bound to their ability to find organs of mediation. Without those organs, the various media of the qualitatively different force-fields could find no external expression.<sup>412</sup> Individual animals, including the human, might not have the right organs for the perception of a given medium, but in principle, the cosmos is self-perceiving (it is, indeed, God's self-perception), and thus suffers no discreet breaks in its force-organ relationship. The cosmos is thus made up of force-organ relations, built (in this respect) as complex units of animal experience or *worlds*.<sup>413</sup> The physiology which prospectively follows on this system of forces differentiates animals by the complex of their organs,<sup>414</sup> with the endgame of the human standing erect, open to sensing, cognizing, and speaking of his world.<sup>415</sup> The basis of this system was in the differentiation of force and organ, in the moment of encounter of the general and the

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<sup>412</sup> “*Wo Wirkung in der Natur ist, muß wirkende Kraft sein; wo Reiz sich in Bestrebungen oder gar in Krämpfen zeigt, da muß auch Reiz von innen gefühlt werden. Sollten diese Sätze nicht gelten, so hört aller Zusammenhang der Bemerkungen, alle Analogie der Natur auf.*“ (Herder, *Ideen*, pp. 87-88; emphasis in original) Given the importance of the “analogy of nature” for Herder, the statement implies that, without organs, the cosmos could not subsist.

<sup>413</sup> “Die ganze Schöpfung sollte durchgenossen, durchgeföhlt, durcharbeitet werden; auf jedem neuen Punkt also mußten Geschöpfe sein, sie zu genießen, Organe, sie zu empfinden, Kräfte, sie dieser Stelle gemäß zu beleben. Der Kaiman und der Kolibri, der Kondor und die Pipa: was haben sie miteinander gemein? Und jedes ist für sein Element organisiert, jedes lebt und webt in seinem Elemente. Kein Punkt der Schöpfung ist ohne Genuß, ohne Organ, ohne Bewohner: *jedes Geschöpf hat also seine eigene, eine neue Welt.*” (Herder, *Ideen*, pp. 88-89; emphasis in original) This conception significantly anticipates the notion of animal *milieux*. I note here, also, that the universe is necessarily a *cosmos* for Herder, and its completeness, which is not in question in Schelling, will come apart in Schleiermacher and Novalis, for which see chapter IV below.

<sup>414</sup> Important in this respect is that Herder ties *organs* as the determinant factor in identification of species to the “directionality” of the instinct of the animal, something we will see in the subsequent discourse again. “Es erhellet, wohin der Begriff einer Tierseele und eines Tierinstinkts zu setzen sei, wenn wir der Physiologie und Erfahrung folgen. Jene nämlich ist die *Summe* und das *Resultat aller in einer Organisation wirkenden lebendigen Kräfte*. Dieser ist die *Richtung, die die Natur jenen sämtlichen Kräften dadurch gab, daß sie sie in eine solche und keine andre Temperatur stellte, daß sie sie zu diesem und keinem andern Bau organisierte.*” (Herder, *Ideen*, p. 99; emphasis in original)

<sup>415</sup> This is put in organological terms: “Was ihm an Intensität des Triebes abgeht, hat es durch Ausbreitung und feinere Zusammenstimmung ersetzt bekommen, es ist eines feinem Selbstgenusses, eines freieren und vielfachern Gebrauchs seiner Kräfte und Glieder fähig worden, und alle dies, weil, wenn ich so sagen darf, seine organische Seele in ihren Werkzeugen vielfacher und feiner auseinandergelegt ist.” (Herder, *Ideen*, p. 104-05)

particular, which, Herder noted, first created the difference between *inner* and *outer*.<sup>416</sup>

This designation, too, would bear fruit in the 1790s, and in particular in Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*.

Schelling marked out another significant predecessor to both projects in the Stuttgart biologist Carl Friedrich Kielmeyer's *Über die Verhältnisse der organischen Kräfte untereinander in der Reihe der verschiedenen Organisationen*.<sup>417</sup> Kielmeyer had given this speech on the occasion of the Duke's birthday at the Hohe Karlsschule in Stuttgart in 1793.<sup>418</sup> Kielmeyer marked out five different forces that were distributed for interaction amongst animal *organs*: sensibility, irritability, and forces of reproduction, secretion, and propulsion. He treats these and their relations, trying to derive general laws of their interactions. Indeed, as Schelling noted, these were laws of compensation<sup>419</sup>: where one force preponderated, another was repressed partially. The basis of that effect was the differing qualities of the forces, but the resulting relations were at least vaguely quantitative. Ultimately, an inverse proportion between the force of reproduction and that of sensibility was the result of Kielmeyer's investigation: where sensibility is afforded the

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<sup>416</sup> Where a medium established by a force is felt in an *organ*, Herder glosses this *organ* as "inner[er] Sinn," (Herder, *Ideen*, p. 88). The organ is thus the moment of differentiation between inner and outer.

<sup>417</sup> In the *Weltseele*, Schelling had given this speech iconic status: "Besonders bestätigt sie sich durch Betrachtung der fortschreitenden Entwicklung der organischen Kräfte in der Reihe der Organisationen, worüber ich den Leser auf die schon im Jahr 1793 erschienene Rede des Hrn. Professor Kielmeyer über diesen Gegenstand verweise, eine Rede, von welcher an das künftige Zeitalter ohne Zweifel die Epoche einer ganz neuen Naturgeschichte rechnen wird." (Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 661; emphasis in original)

<sup>418</sup> For the circumstances of the speech, see Kielmeyer, *Über die Verhältnisse*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>419</sup> "Kielmeyer called this dynamic correlation compensation and argued that the differentiation of forces was not, in itself, a source of inequality, since a predominant force in one form balanced a different force in another, and all forms tended equally toward preservation and destruction. As these remarks indicate, Kielmeyer's essay is best read as a physiological version of the economy of nature." (Larson, "Vital Forces," p. 242.)

organism, fewer offspring are possible, and where dozens of offspring are possible, less force is devoted to the organs of reproduction.<sup>420</sup>

Blumenbach follows Kant in making organisms reciprocally causal, and dubs this causality a “system of *organs*.”<sup>421</sup> The organs are the locus of the relations between forces, which are divided up and conferred upon (*verteilt an*) these organs. The physiological struggle between irritability and sensibility noted by Schelling<sup>422</sup> plays a role in the very formation of those organs: “... und was zuvor Irritabilität war, entwickelt [sic] sich am Ende zur Vorstellungsfähigkeit, oder wenigstens ihrem unsichtbaren unmittelbarsten materiellen Organ.”<sup>423</sup> Organs were not merely passive receptors of their forces, but actually formed by them. Where Herder had seen a single force differentiating itself, Kiemeyer saw unified organs differentiated according to a series of forces. And this enabled him to anticipate another key element of organology: the possible voluntarism of any organ. Writing of humans, Kiemeyer states that “[m]it der Vernunft, die sich in seiner Organisation einfand, erhielt [der Mensch] das Vermögen, das Verhältnis der andern Kräfte, die ihm mit den übrigen Thieren gemein sind, innerhalb gewisser Gränzen nach Belieben abzuändern.”<sup>424</sup> This capacity or faculty (*Vermögen*)

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<sup>420</sup> See Kiemeyer, *Über die Verhältnisse*, pp. 33-35. The force of reproduction is also more *concentrated* in those creatures with sensibility, allowing for their more complex structure (which will include sensibility) to be reproduced. Thus compensation occurs at the level of the species as well as phylogenetically. See pp. 63-67 of the introduction, and pp. 35-37 in the text for Kiemeyer’s (possibly first) formulation of the biogenetic law (“ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny”) in terms of force-relations.

<sup>421</sup> See Kiemeyer, *Über die Verhältnisse*, p. 4. That Kant is an influence here, as has often been emphasized, is not in question. See Lenoir, *Strategy of Life*, pp. 37-35, and Larson, “Vital Forces,” pp. 241-43. Especially Lenoir points to the greater system of *organs* as Kiemeyer continued to develop it in his later work. I focus on this single text since it is Schelling’s source. See Kiemeyer, *Über die Verhältnisse*, introduction pp. 35-41, for an attempt to re-insert Herder’s influence into the historiographical picture. Schelling seems to have anticipated this corrective.

<sup>422</sup> And anticipated by Herder: “Je mehr die Muskelkräfte in das Gebiet der Nerven treten, desto mehr werden auch sie in dieser Organisation gefangen und zu *Zwecken der Empfindung* überwältigt.” (Herder, *Ideen*, p. 94; emphasis in original)

<sup>423</sup> Kiemeyer, *Über die Verhältnisse*, p. 37.

<sup>424</sup> Kiemeyer, *Über die Verhältnisse*, p. 42.

gave humans the ability to instrumentalize other species to make room for themselves: “... daß [der Mensch] mehrere [Gattungen] vom Schauplatz völlig abzutreten noch zwingen werde, um ihm, als einem auf der andern Seite wieder ersezenden Organ in der großen Maschine, Platz zu machen, ist mehr als bloß wahrscheinlich.”<sup>425</sup> Thus the human became the organ of a violent but rational evolution, one which would sweep away entire species to make room for the faculties and organs of reason. The ability identified here would become an essential part of organology, as we shall see with Schelling, and then again in chapters IV (Novalis) and V (Goethe) below.

The division of forces to different organs had been a problem in physiology at least since Haller, but it exercised Schelling especially strongly. Indeed, it was in this problematic that he saw the positive need to go beyond eclectic observations of nature and proceed to a systematic philosophy, a metaphysics, of that nature. The mission-statement of Schelling’s still-prospective comparative physiology (as quoted above) had read, in part:

... insofern diese Organe jedes seine eigenthümliche Funktion, ausübte, käme ihnen ein *eignes Leben (vita propria)* – insofern aber die Ausübung dieser Funktion doch nur innerhalb jenes ganzen Organismus möglich wäre, nur gleichsam ein *gebergtes Leben* zu, und so muss es dem Begriff der Organisation nach seyn.<sup>426</sup>

He would go on to call this division a duality of all organs, and it was the spur to his dialectical organology. Its source, however, was in the third of his named predecessors in the system of forces and comparative physiology: Blumenbach.<sup>427</sup> Blumenbach’s *Institutiones Physiologicae* (1786, translation as *Anfangsgründe der Physiologie*, 1789) had separated between five forces at work in formation and preservation of organisms:

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<sup>425</sup> Kiehmeyer, *Über die Verhältnisse*, p. 43.

<sup>426</sup> Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 64.

<sup>427</sup> I treat Blumenbach here consciously out of chronological order, since his contribution is philologically exemplary for Schelling’s emergent conception of the particular (electrical) organ.

*Bildungstrieb* (*vis formativus*), “contractility” (as a property of cells in general, *vis cellulosa*), irritability (*vis muscularis*), a proper function of individual *organ*-formations (*vita propria*), and sensibility (*vis nervea*).<sup>428</sup> The standout here is the *vita propria*, under which Blumenbach amasses functions which cannot be attributed to simple contraction, excitation, or sensing (like the womb’s efforts during labor, the excitability of the nipples, and the dropping of the testicles). The problematic he raises is precisely that which fascinated Schelling, and indeed, Schelling appears to be very close to Blumenbach’s formulation:

At enim vero praeter has quarta adhuc excitanda venit, *vita* scil. *propria*; sub qua denominatione eas intelligo vires, quae singularibus quibusdam corporis partibus, peculiaribus functionibus destinatis, conueniunt, neque ad ullam priorum virium communium classem referri possunt.<sup>429</sup>

But if Schelling took the term *vita propria* from Blumenbach, he followed the 1789 translation by Eyerel in using the term organ:

Aber außer diesen kommt noch eine vierte Lebenskraft in Betrachtung, nämlich das besondere Leben, worunter ich diejenigen Kräfte befasse, die man an einzelnen, zu einzelnen Verrichtungen bestimmten Organen wahrnimmt, und nicht wohl unter die vorhergehenden Klassen gebracht werden können.<sup>430</sup>

*Einzelnen Organen* here translates *singularibus partibus corporis*, and the extended modifier in the German (*zu einzelnen Verrichtungen bestimmten*) translates the Latin needed to define “organ” (*peculiaribus functionibus destinatis*). This lends support to my thesis that “organ” was still in the process of translation and domestication in German in the 1780s (see chapter I above), but it also collates the problematic of that organ as it presented itself to Schelling.

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<sup>428</sup> See Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *Institutiones Physiologicae* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1786), pp. 31-38, and Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *Anfangsgründe der Physiologie*, transl./ed. Joseph Eyerel (Wappler: Vienna, 1789), pp. 26-31. Larson notes that “the order of enumeration is also the order of successive formation.” See “Vital Forces,” p. 238.

<sup>429</sup> Blumenbach, *Institutiones*, §47, p. 34.

<sup>430</sup> Blumenbach, §47, p. 28.

Caught up in a system of forces, the organ was the site of concretion of those forces, a flexible receptor of a various fields of potentiality referring to those forces. Further, organ was the *referendum* and *relatum* of the organized being as such. Its general determination was in that relation between forces in their concrete effects,<sup>431</sup> and its particularity would have to be discovered by finding a consistent quality through which those effects were related to each other and to the larger system. The organ had a dual task, and a dual structure—but it would quickly come to have a triple task and structure in Schelling’s work. For that, its electricity had to be taken into account.

*Qualität*,<sup>432</sup> for Schelling in the 1790s, was increasingly electric.<sup>433</sup> His turn to electricity followed developments in experiments especially with “animal electricity.” In 1791, Luigi Galvani published the results of his experimentation with severed frogs’ legs, believing he had discovered electrical energy—cast in general at the time as “fluid”—in the tissue of the animal. His discovery had an effect on the lettered spheres in Germany that can only be described in the metaphorical terms given to his name because of that very effect: the young generation was galvanized. The galvanic result, however—that is,

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<sup>431</sup> In the *Weltseele*, Schelling expresses this as follows: “In demselben Verhältnis, in welchem das Band aufgeschlossen wird, fängt das Verbundene an unwesentlich zu werden, und wird einem immer größeren Wechsel unterworfen. Das Verbundene, als solches (die bloße Materie), soll nichts für sich sein; sie ist nur etwas als Ausdruck des Bandes, daher diese beständig wechselt, indes das Organ, d.h. eben das Band, die lebendige Kopula, die Idea selbst, wie durch göttliche Bekräftigung, besteht und immer dasselbe bleibt.” (Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 470.) See also the epigraph to this chapter.

<sup>432</sup> The problem of quality is one of Schelling’s principle reasons for rejecting purely mechanistic physics, already in the *Ideen* (1797). If this purely quantitative science is the basis for all the others, how can the emergence of qualities be explained? See Beiser, *German Idealism*, pp. 525 ff., and Kondylis, *Entstehung*, p. 565: “In den “Ideen” bleibt Schelling im großen ganzen bei der Auffassung der Natur als eines harmonischen Gleichgewichts stehen; die Natur nicht als bloßes Gleichgewicht, sondern als dialektische Synthese erscheint erst in seinen späteren naturphilosophischen Schriften, und nur diese fortgeschrittene Form des *hen kai pan* bewirkt die Loslösung von Kant.”

<sup>433</sup> By 1799, we find Schelling claiming that “the absolute relativity of all quality may be shown from the electric relation of bodies, inasmuch as the same body that is positive with one is negative with another, and conversely.” (Schelling, *Entwurf (Einleitung)*, p. 39. See also Specht, *Poetisierung*, p. 103.

the very existence of what is now called bioelectricity—remained a topic of scientific debate until the 1840s.<sup>434</sup> Alessandro Volta attacked the results of Galvani’s experiments, claiming that the various metals used to produce the reaction were the source of the electrical impulse—“animal electricity” was a non-starter, produced only as a result of the production of “heterogeneity” in metals. As Karl Rothschuh has shown, the reason for the confusion was partly an inability to produce a strong enough electric field to demonstrate the internal electrical current in the muscle-nerve complex. Particularly in the experiments undertaken by Alexander von Humboldt, however, both purely metal electricities and internally “animal” electricity were present.<sup>435</sup> Volta invented the battery on the basis of the former; Romanticism dug its heels into its scientific interests, trying to unite metaphysics with physics, biology, and now chemistry, on the basis of the latter.<sup>436</sup>

Schelling had used the system of forces and the problem of their expression to re-configure the notion of an organ. As we have seen, this organ was, in a first step, entirely general, following Herder’s and Blumenbach’s uses. It was the universal *referendum*, applicable to any situation of mereological closure. Those situations were, of course, legion for Schelling’s concept of Nature. In fact, “Nature” itself was, as I have been arguing, only legible through the organological cipher. Organs—as they had for Leibniz—went all the way down. They were the ontological crux of a Critical

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<sup>434</sup> For the background, and the claim that Galvani discovered but did not prove the existence of bioelectricity, see K. E. Rothschuh, “Von der Idee bis zum Nachweis der tierischen Elektrizität,” *Sudhoffs Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin und der Naturwissenschaften* 44 (1), 1960, pp. 25-44. A helpful graph of relations of influence between experimentalists with electricity can be found at p. 40.

<sup>435</sup> For a summary of the events, see K. E. Rothschuh, “Alexander von Humboldt und die Physiologie seiner Zeit,” *Sudhoffs Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin und der Naturwissenschaften* 43 (2), pp. 97-113, especially pp. 101-02.

<sup>436</sup> As noted above in chapter II, the term organ is used by the galvanic philosophers, especially Humboldt (see note 248 in chapter II above), primarily as “irritable” and “irritated” (*reizbare und gereizte Organe*). Ritter’s use, which becomes organological after his interactions with Novalis, is treated below in chapter IV. Schelling’s use expand beyond this now-literal use, as we are about to see.

*Naturphilosophie*, one which focuses on judgment in the absence of the assumption of other fundamental faculties. Schelling's move here required them to be dual (and eventually triple), dialectical doctrines he developed out of the textual complexes I have laid out so far in this chapter. *As he particularized these organs, he electrified them. In doing so, he refined the notion of the natural organ* and allowed for a mutual instrumentalization between philosophy and science.

In the *Weltseele*, Schelling re-poses the problem of force. The system is dynamic, but where should the force reside? Is it inside the organized body, or outside? Those who believe in the pure immanence of force in bodies are physiological materialists (the main object of polemic seems to me to be Reil), and for Schelling, they cannot answer the key question of the emergence of quality, or of the differentiation of forces from each other. Those who hold that force is entirely outside of bodies are chemical immaterialists, and their permanently dualist position cannot explain the interactions of forces and bodies.<sup>437</sup> For Schelling, neither position is acceptable, and only one which insists on both conditions—a simultaneous inner and outer relation of forces to bodies—can form the correct beginning for investigation. He moves immediately to the organ, which is the locus of that simultaneity. And his source combined with contemporary discourse puts it in turn immediately in the context of electricity, since Haller's notion of irritability was now being investigated in the terms of the debate on galvanism.<sup>438</sup>

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<sup>437</sup> See Beiser, *German Idealism*, pp. 544-48 for an overview.

<sup>438</sup> So Schelling: "Mag es sein, daß *Hallers* Prinzip in der Physiologie eine *Qualitas occulta* vorstellt, er hat doch durch diesen Ausdruck schon die künftige Erklärung des Phänomens selbst gleichsam vorausgesehen, und stillschweigend vorausgesagt, daß der Begriff des Lebens nur als absolute Vereinigung der Aktivität und Passivität in jedem Naturindividuum konstruierbar ist." (Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 600; emphasis in original)



In the *Weltseele*, the particular and electrical organ is dual and bound to the question of irritability:

Hätte Haller an eine Konstruktion des Begriffs von *Reizbarkeit* gedacht, so hätte er ohne Zweifel eingesehen, daß sie ohne *einen Dualismus entgegengesetzter Prinzipien*, und also auch ohne einen *Dualismus der Organe des Lebens*, nicht denkbar ist...<sup>439</sup>

The organ<sup>440</sup> is the point of differentiation between inner and outer,<sup>441</sup> the point of manifestation of force. Without it, no Nature—and no experience. The *a priori* construction Schelling is seeking finds a terminological basis in the duality of the organ.

In the *Weltseele*, “organ” is associated primarily with irritability (as we shall see in a moment, the term is transferred to *sensibility* in the *Entwurf*). The two forces are opposed to each other in a quasi-compensation system, as in Herder and Kielmeyer. The two are active and passive relations respectively to the dual (positive and negative) action of the world soul itself:

Auf welche Organe die *positive, erste Ursache des Lebens* kontinuierlich und *unmittelbar* einwirkt, dieselben Organe werden als *aktive*, diejenigen aber, auf welche sie nur *mittelbar* (durch die erstern) einwirkt, als *passive* Organe vorgestellt werden müssen (Nerven und Muskeln).<sup>442</sup>

<sup>439</sup> Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 600; emphasis in original.

<sup>440</sup> Haller’s definition uses *pars*: “Irritabilem partem corporis humani dico, quae ab externo aliquo contactu brevior sit; valde irritabilem, quae a levi contactu, parum quae a Valente demum causa in brevitatem cietur. Sensibilem partem corporis humani apello, cujus contactus animae representatur...” *Commentarii Societatis Regiae Scientiarum Gottingensis, volume 2* (Göttingen, 1753), p. 116. PDF obtained from <http://gdz.sub.uni-goettingen.de/dms/load/pdf/>, 2 April, 2012.

<sup>441</sup> “Das ganze Geheimniss beruht auf jenem Gegensatz zwischen *Innrem* und *Äusserm* den man zugeben muss, wenn man in der Natur überhaupt etwas Individuelles zugiebt. Denn nun wird gegen jede *innere* Thätigkeit, d.h. gegen jede Thätigkeit, die *sich selbst* zum Mittelpunkt constituirt, die äussre Natur ankämpfen. Durch diesen Antagonismus wird die inner Thätigkeit selbst zu produciren genöthigt werden, was sie ohne denselben nicht producirt hätte. Die organische Gestalt und Structur z. B. wohin auch die Mannichfaltigkeit einzelner Organe gehört, deren jedes sich seine besondere Funktion nimmt, ist die einzige Form, unter welcher die innre Thätigkeit gegen die äussre sich behaupten can.” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 87)

<sup>442</sup> Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 601; emphasis in original. Schelling is exploiting an ambiguity in the literature. As Larson puts it: “Unfortunately, Haller’s terminology was ambiguous. In defining irritability he stressed the capacity to respond to a stimulus with a contraction; irritability, then, included both the capacity to receive and to respond. Sensibility, too, covered two very different kinds of phenomena: it was both the psychic experience of sensation and an unconscious physiological excitability of nerves.” (Larson, “Vital Forces,” p. 238.) Larson shows that this ambiguity persisted well into the 1790s.

The internally divided first principle expresses itself in a particular order in the excitable and sensible organs, which, dual in themselves in order to receive the dual impulses which delimit their functions, together form a unity-in-duality. That dialectical unity obtains only for animals, and most particularly for humans. In a fundamental sense, the organs here are those that relate the most particular (and most complex) products of Nature to Nature's original organization. They are metaphysical organs in the most literal sense.

But they are also transcendental organs. Schelling makes this clear by explaining what he thinks Haller missed:

*Erregbarkeit ist ein synthetischer Begriff, er drückt ein Mannigfaltiges negativer Prinzipien aus...*<sup>443</sup>

The organs which bear the weight of relating Nature to itself at the general and particular levels are implicated by a synthetic judgment which is a condition of that system. Schelling is concerned here to derive that system *a priori*, or rather, in keeping with my conclusion from above, to *make that judgment a priori*. The passage in which Schelling confronts and alters the Kantian notion of intellectual intuition (see above in the current chapter) in fact follows this confrontation with Haller. The internally dual *organs* of irritability lie at the basis of the conception of organicism, and not *vice versa*. By starting with those judgmental and electrical organs, Schelling can conclude to his dialectical organicism:

... so liegt doch ein solcher Dualismus in den ersten Prinzipien der Naturphilosophie; denn daß nur Wesen, welche zu *Einer physischen Gattung* gehören, miteinander fruchtbar sind, und umgekehrt, welcher Grundsatz das oberste Prinzip aller Naturgeschichte ist ... folgt nur aus dem allgemeinen Grundsatz des Dualismus (der in der organischen wie in der anorganischen Natur sich bestätigt), daß nur zwischen Prinzipien *Einer Art reelle Entgegensetzung* ist. Wo keine *Einheit der Art* ist, ist auch

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<sup>443</sup> Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 602; emphasis in original.

keine *reelle Entgegensetzung*, und wo keine *reelle Entgegensetzung* ist, keine *zeugende Kraft*.<sup>444</sup>

As in the generation of animals, so in the most general and most particular *organs*: a dualism based on real repugnance, on the actuality of opposing forces expressed only in those organs, is the principle of Nature. The unity that runs through this passage, and the conception of Nature in the *Naturphilosophie* more generally, must itself ultimately be differentiated into specific unities that make a *third* for each such duality. That third is the capstone on the dialectic of Nature, and emerges in the *Entwurf*.<sup>445</sup>

In the most general sense, that third is already the unity proposed as *aether* in the *Ideen*, and metaphorically dubbed the *Weltseele* in the work by that name. In order for the truly dialectical picture to emerge, however, it must be specified at different levels of organization. So, in the most general sense:

Also setzte die anorganische Aussenwelt selbst wieder eine andre Ausserwelt voraus, in Bezug auf welche *sie* ein *Innres* wäre. Da nun die Thätigkeit des ursprünglich Organischen allein durch die entgegenstrebende Thätigkeit seiner Aussenwelt erregt wird, diese selbst aber wiederum durch eine (in Bezug auf sie) äussre Thätigkeit unterhalten wird, so wäre das ursprünglich Organische zusammt der Aussenwelt, welcher es sich unmittelbar entgegengesetzt, wieder gemeinschaftlich entgegengesetzt einem dritten, d.h. wieder *gemeinschaftlich* ein *Innres*, in Bezug auf ein drittes Aeusseres.<sup>446</sup>

Schelling does not name the *organ* here, but its presence is clear: the liminal space between inner and outer is always organ, and this is no exception. Organs are

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<sup>444</sup> Schelling, *Weltseele*, p. 633.

<sup>445</sup> In a general sense, I agree with Kondylis, *Entstehung*, that there is a progression from unity/harmony in the *Ideen*, to a duality in the *Weltseele*, and on to a triplicity (which is patent) in the *Entwurf*. See Kondylis, *Entstehung*, pp. 558-96. In drawing attention to the force-system, comparative physiology, and to the *organ*'s altering affinities with irritability and sensibility, I am lending deeper contextual support to Kondylis's overall thesis: "Es muß also als von einer gegebenen Tatsach davon ausgegangen werden, daß Schelling die Naturphänomene als den Bereich wählte, auf dem er die dialektische Spekulation des *hen kai pan* an Hand konkreten Materials und konkreter Fragestellungen übte und *zum ersten Mal* in eine fortgeschrittene dialektische *Methode* weiterentwickelte..." (Kondylis, *Entstehung*, p. 552) I am also going beyond this thesis in pointing to the way in which the organ as the central term of that method allows for mutual discursive instrumentalization between philosophy and natural science.

<sup>446</sup> Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 93; emphasis in original.

simultaneously the separative and binding elements of natural systems. They form the (general and particular) third, the legitimation of *Naturphilosophie*<sup>447</sup>:

Die Zusammensetzung der organischen Materie geht in's Unendliche, weil jedes Organ in's Unendliche wieder organisirt, wieder auf eigenthümliche Art gemischt und gebildet ist, jedes vom andern durch besondere Qualitäten sich unterscheidet. – Was ist aber Qualität selbst?<sup>448</sup>

Quality, as we have seen, is electricity. We can now add that it is electricity in organological expression. General electrical quality exists only through the mediation of the specified third between inner and outer, between force and product: the organ. And the locus of that organ's operation is now shifted from the excitable formation<sup>449</sup> to the realm of sensibility.

Sensibility and the reproductive force are opposed to each other, as they were germinally in Herder, and doctrinally in Kiehmeyer. Sensibility marks the freeing of the organs of the animal for the purposes of perception of the environment, and must be compensated by re-direction of the productive force. It also opens up the animal to the other realms or orders—and it is from that openness that reason should emerge, on the basis of organs of sensibility. Because sensibility and the reproductive force form an opposition mediated by the already-dual irritability, it is easy to see why triplicity becomes Schelling's focus.<sup>450</sup> The triple structure emerges from dualities in single points

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<sup>447</sup> In this sense, “organ” is the key term in a kind of transcendental deduction in Kant's sense of a legitimation of a field of knowledge. The organ is not, however, the highest point in a chain of inferences (pro- and ensyllogisms, as in the transcendental dialectic), or an attempt à la Reinhold to derive forms of knowledge from a highest point. It is equally not an abandonment of systematicity, by Schelling's own statement. It is something like a rational point of entry for what Paul Franks has called an “organic system.” See Franks, *All or Nothing*, pp. 84 pp.. But then, *organic* system does little more, in this context, than beg the question.

<sup>448</sup> Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 77.

<sup>449</sup> Which retains, if not the term, the sense of *organ*: “Kurz: *der Organismus* (als Ganzes genommen) *muss sich selbst das Medium seyn, wodurch äussre Einflüsse auf ihn wirken.*” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 159; emphasis in original)

<sup>450</sup> “Aber jene Kraft, deren einzige Bedingung Duplicität, ist wirksam, wo nur ihre Bedingungen gegeben sind. Ihre Bedingungen aber sind gegeben. Sie wird also fortfahren zu wirken. Was ihr Object war, wird Bedingung ihrer Möglichkeit, oder Ihr Instrument; diess sind die entgegengesetzten Geschlechter.”

of contact. Reproduction and sensibility both rely on triplicity, while irritability, which is dual, ties the two together into a larger triad. If we focus on sensibility (which is where organs occur in the text), we can see why Schelling's particular organs are paradigmatically those of (animal) electricity or galvanism.

For Schelling, there are three levels of interaction: the organ, the field of differentiated forces, and the single organic force itself.<sup>451</sup> The single force and the differences are simply the material fields of inter-level interaction according to the schema of the universe given above. The contemporary status of natural-scientific investigation allows only some certainty about these interactions. The organ, however is the relay between the levels, and between any whole and any part: it makes the system work. And indeed, the electrical or more properly galvanic organ clarifies the relation of general to particular in this dialectical Nature.<sup>452</sup> This is because the establishment of qualities requires, in a sense, the interaction of general organs with particular organs. Nature as a whole—which ultimately includes human reason and allows that reason to operate successfully—must display, for the *Naturphilosoph*, the very connections that make *Naturphilosophie* possible. Schelling thus shifts the term organ from its physical meaning in previous writings on electricity to one in keeping with his view of Nature.

The organ becomes the central third that makes natural development, but also cognition

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(Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 216.)

<sup>451</sup> “Sensibilität ist da, ehe ihr Organ sich gebildet hat, Gehirn und Nerven anstatt Ursachen der Sensibilität zu seyn, sind vielmehr selbst schon ihr Product. – Die entgegengesetzten System (das irritable und das sensible), in welche der Organismus zerfällt, sind nur das *Gerüste* jener organischen Kraft, nicht die Kraft selbst.” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 170; emphasis in original.)

<sup>452</sup> On the basis of this claim, reasons for which I will be arguing for presently: “Nun ist un saber Sensibilität, obgleich wir alle äussre Ursachen nur durch sie zum Organismus gelangen lassen, doch etwas nicht minder in Naturursachen gegründetes, obgleich wir bekennen, dass weil wir Sensibilität nur als *Quell* aller organischen Thätigkeit kennen, und weil durch sie als *gemeinschaftliches Medium* alle Kräfte wirken, sie für uns in die letzten Bedingungen der Natur überhaupt sich verliert, woraus man zum Voraus einsehen kann, dass *Sensibilität* wohl *allgemeiner* Thätigkeitsquell in der Natur, und sonach eine Eigenschaft nicht der einzelnen Organisation, sonder der *ganzen Natur* ist.” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, pp. 212-13; emphasis in original.)

of Nature, possible.

The local organ of animal electricity is, then, triple, or it is the third in a triadic structure. The debate between Galvani and Volta had been on just this problem. Volta had proposed a dual structure or “principle of heterogeneity” for electrical phenomena, which he limited to metals. However, that principle could only operate with three bodies (two differently charged metals in a conducting medium).<sup>453</sup> The operation of this triadic excitation-system is clear for irritability, which reacts according to its dual nature. In the *Entwurf*, irritability is no longer the bearer of the problematic of life, of organs. This is because Schelling has now located the problematic of life in sensibility and its multiply triadic structure.

Sensibility exists in the triad of the animal order,<sup>454</sup> as we have seen, and it is expressed in one way through the triadic structure of the galvanic reaction. Yet it is also the third (*das Dritte*) between the general and the specific organs: it is that which relates those two organs to each other. It is the organ of organs in the system of Nature.

Sensibility, for Schelling, disappears behind its appearance. It can only truly be

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<sup>453</sup> Schelling puts this point this way: “Dadurch also ware die nothwendige Triplicität im Galvanismus abgeleitet. *Der dritte Körper in der galvanischen kette ist nämlich nur darum nothwendig, damit der Gegensatz zwischen den beyden andern erhalten werde.*” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 177 ; emphasis in original) He then goes on to dispute Humboldt’s reduction of the structure to a duality, while strongly agreeing with Humboldt’s result (that there is an inhering animal electricity): “It is a basic law of galvanism that all galvanic activity occurs only in a chain of three different bodies. This Voltaic law has indeed been brought into doubt by Humboldt through a few experiments where only two bodies seem to be in the galvanic chain. This is the case, e.g., where only homogeneous metals close the chain. Humboldt did not consider that the final ground of galvanic phenomena lies in the heterogeneity of the organism itself, by no means to be left out of consideration. Between nerve and muscle there is an opposition.” (I take this citation from the English translation, which includes later revisions. Schelling, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, transl Keith Peterson (Albany: SUNY, 2004), p. 119.)

<sup>454</sup> “Aber Sensibilität ist nicht selbst Thätigkeit, sondern *Thätigkeitsquell*, d.h. *Sensibilität* nur *Bedingung* aller *Irritabilität*. Aber Sensibilität ist *an sich* nicht, ist nur in ihrem Objekt, (der Irritabilität) erkennbar, und darum freylich, muss, wo diese ist, auch jene seyn, obgleich, wo sie unmittelbar in diese übergeht, eigentlich auch nur diese erkennbar ist. – ... aber ebenso wie Sensibilität Bedingung der Irritabilität, so hinwiederum Irritabilität Bedingung der Sensibilität, denn ohne Thätigkeit nach aussen auch keine in ihr Subject zurückgehendse Thätigkeit.” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, pp. 184-85.)

known internally. The sensitive part of the reaction to galvanic excitation can in no way be observed but only inferred in another being. The irritable reaction makes both reproduction (eventually) and sensibility possible, by providing initial movement and “protection” respectively.<sup>455</sup> Sensibility is thus an internally oppositional field of potential within certain irritable beings.<sup>456</sup> Sensibility—this final stage of the organ before its ideality emerges from the “proof of idealism”—provides the final natural relay, the final organ of nature. It produces Nature—and as Schelling is thus done constructing that Nature, it produces the need for an organ of reflection on that construction, one which can ensure the initial identity of the production and the construction. Construction would have to rely on a mirror-organ (or more accurately, a system of *organa* and organs for philosophy), which Schelling came to articulate only in 1800.

### **Ideal Organs: Intellectual Intuition and the Organ-World**

Where Schelling had literalized the philosophico-biological organ of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century philosophical metaphorology (see chapter I of the current study), he transcendentalized the metaphor as it applied to human reason. His talk of a “spiritual *organ*” began as early as the *Ideen* (1797), and he developed it into a complex condition

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<sup>455</sup> “Ist Irritabilität oder ihr Product vielmehr, ein homogener Zustand, negative Bedingung der Sensibilität, und jenen nur dem niedern Organismus eigen, so ist erklärt, wie der Organismus sich selbst das Medium äusserer Einflüsse wird... und der Galvanismus endlich macht es augenscheinlich, den in ihm erscheint das irritable System nur als die Bewaffnung des sensiblen, als das Mittelglied, wodurch dieses allein mit seiner Aussenwelt zusammenhängt.” (Schelling, *Entwurf*, p. 187.)

<sup>456</sup> That such a thing is possible is included in the definition of the *specific organ* Schellings gives: “Under the *specificity* of the excitability of an organ I think nothing more than that the receptivity of this organ for a stimulus is determined by the dynamical quality of factors out of which the organ is constructed.” (Schelling, *First Outline*, p. 127.) Thus if sensibility is involved, the field of potential is established as sensible, and the organ is the embodied locus of that potential, following the physical/mental ambivalence in the term given already by Aristotle (see the Introduction to the present study).

of human cognition in general. This transcendental use of the term allowed Schelling to revise his early commitment to Kant's canon of criticism, and to expand Idealism into a metaphysics based on an *organon* of reason (the philosophy of art) with the organs of philosophy (the I) and of that very philosophy of art (the genius). By 1800, Schelling articulated this program in the *System des transzendentalen Idealismus (StI)* as a Critical, historical metaphysics. The Idealism that the *Naturphilosophie* was supposed to prove was complemented by the self-objectifying intellectual intuition of the transcendental philosopher, in whose possession Schelling found a tool that needed realization: the figure of the third, the *Band*, copula, or organ of simultaneous knowledge of the self and of the world. The question was only in what cognitive activity this ground could be brought to consciousness. Schelling answered this question with the notion that "aesthetic intuition" was the conscious version of the spiritual organ, and made the philosophy of art into the core of organological metaphysics. As it had for Hölderlin, art as a mode of cognition offered Schelling a way of conceiving a world within a world—and it was from the flexibility of the organ that he first conceived of a non-fit between an encapsulated world (and art object) and its encapsulating world (the universe). If the laws of the one did not correspond to those of the other, this could suggest the possibility of theoretical alteration of the given.

For Kant, the question of synthetic judgments *a priori* had been about a "third" (*Drittes*) which could perform the synthesis. In the case of empirical judgments for Kant, the third is simply empirical intuition: predication to a subject occurs in a verifiable sphere that can be checked (*is that jacket blue?*) at will. Where judgments both extend our knowledge and do not derive from empirically intuited contents, we need a reliable



source of synthesis. As we saw in chapter I above, for Kant the two sources of such synthesis are the *a priori* forms of intuition (space and time) and the categories. By the time Schelling's publishing career had hit its stride in the late 1790s, the possibility that a *single third*, a generalized basis of real cognition, could be found, had become the theme of a movement we now call German Idealism.

Schelling calls that third thing in cognition "organ":

Was ist denn nun jenes geheime Band, das unsern Geist mit der Natur verknüpft, oder jenes verborgene Organ, durch welches die Natur zu unserm Geiste oder unser Geist zur Natur spricht?<sup>457</sup>

This was indeed precisely the possibility that Kant had come to reject in the *KdrV*. In the *Amphibolies of Reflexive Concepts*, an appendix to the *Analytic of the Understanding*, Kant had attacked Leibnizian metaphysical concepts on the basis that they conflate the two sources of cognition. The dogmatism of the Leibniz school is here formulated as lack of attention to the boundaries between the sources of judgments. The attribution of intensive magnitude to monads (with, for example, the consequence that they are absolutely isolated), is a confusion of extension (based on the *a priori* form of space, thus an intuition) with pure intension (which is conferred on objects by the categories, and is thus ultimately a conceptual quality). Giving his architectonic one more Aristotelian name, Kant showed how Criticism could operate to elucidate the errors of former systems by securing conditionals for different types of assertions. This might be the first application of what Kant would call *Disziplin* in the *Methodenlehre* (and which I have discussed in chapters I and II above).

Indeed, even the self, as Kant would go on to argue in the *Paralogisms*, is not both source and object of a single kind of knowledge. Nature (our nature) does not offer

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<sup>457</sup> Schelling, *Ideen*, p. 151.

us even the traditional security of the Cartesian *ergo sum* (see chapter I above for some rationalist re-formulations of this basic principle). The self and nature both belong to the single plane of judgment, composed of categorically formed concept-intuition unities.

The possibility of knowing either root of cognition non-judgmentally is denied us. Kant writes:

Ins Innere der Natur dringt Beobachtung und Zergliederung der Erscheinungen, und man kann nicht wissen, wie weit dieses mit der Zeit gehen werde. Jene transzendente Fragen aber, die ueber die Natur hinausgehen, wuerden wir bei allem dem doch niemals beantworten koennen, wenn uns auch die ganze Natur aufgedeckt waere, da es uns nicht einmal gegeben ist, unser eigenes Gemuet mit einer andern Anschauung, als der unseres inneren Sinnes, zu beobachten. Denn in dem selben liegt das Geheimnis des Ursprungs unserer Sinnlichkeit. Ihre Beziehung auf ein Objekt, und was der transzendente Grund dieser Einheit sei, liegt ohne Zweifel zu tief verborgen, als dass wir, die wir so gar uns selbst nur durch innern Sinn, mithin als Erscheinung, kennen, ein so unschickliches Werkzeug unserer Nachforschung dazu brauchen koennten, etwas anderes, als immer wiederum Erscheinungen, aufzufinden, deren nichtsinnliche Ursache wir doch gern erforschen wollten.<sup>458</sup>

Schelling's *verborgenes Organ* is a direct answer to Kant's anthropological charge that the ultimate ground of sensibility's reference to objects is *zu tief verborgen* for our *unschickliches Werkzeug*. "Organ" is thus the (at least) definitional locus of a principled insight into the common root of cognition. A rather stringent definition of Criticism is at the basis of this hope. For Schelling, any notion of Nature external to our mind is simply non-explanatory. We can posit natures and substances arbitrarily, but the emergence of the idea of such in consciousness is either left unexplained or simply dogmatically asserted, no matter how complex or sensitive the investigation into the apparatuses of that uptake. The possibility that we simply ideally confer Nature onto nature is similarly excluded. It is not the contingency of the assertion of determinate existence that we are after, Schelling tells us; rather, it is the necessary expression and even realization of the

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<sup>458</sup> *KdrV* B334/A278.

laws of our spirit *in nature* that we are seeking.<sup>459</sup> The transcendental sources of cognition—its conditions of possibility—remain, for Schelling, contingent just so long as we cannot know their necessity as the expression of laws emanating from their source. This source can be neither mere willful positing nor a world imprinting a ready-made consciousness. In one sense, this line of argument extends Kant’s epigenesis metaphor. Knowing that there is a guiding form that emerges from the real combination of heterogeneous substances (kinds of cognition) is not enough. In the absence of lawful cognition of the organizing principle of that combination and subsequent development, any unity we can confer on that development is always arbitrary.<sup>460</sup> That principle, as we shall see, is an expanded sense of *intuition* as the non-conceptual contribution to cognition. Intuition is divided for Schelling into different stages (or “epochs”) of knowledge and its construction.<sup>461</sup> The substrate of cognition is thus a flexible organ

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<sup>459</sup> “... denn wir verlangen zu wissen, nicht, wie eine solche Natur außer uns entstanden, sondern, wie auch nur die *Idee* einer solchen Natur *in uns* gekommen sei; nicht etwa mir, wie wir sie willkürlich erzeugt haben, sondern wie und warum sie ursprünglich und *notwendig* allem, was unser Geschlecht über Natur von jeher gedacht hat, zugrunde liegt. Denn die Existenz einer solchen Natur *außer mir* erklärt noch lange nicht die Existenz einer solchen Natur *in mir*: denn wenn ihr annehmt, daß zwischen beiden eine vorherbestimmte Harmonie stattfindet, so ist ja ebendas der Gegenstand unserer Frage. Oder wenn ihr behauptet, daß wir eine solche Idee auf die Natur nur *übertragen*, so ist nie eine Ahnung von dem, was uns Natur ist und sein soll, in eure Seele gekommen. Denn wir wollen, nicht daß die Natur mit den Gesetzen unsers Geistes *zufällig* (etwa durch Vermittelung eines *Dritten*) zusammentreffe, sondern daß *sie selbst* notwendig und ursprünglich die Gesetze unsers Geistes nicht nur *ausdrücke*, sondern *selbst realisiere*, und daß sie nur insofern Natur sei und Natur heiße, als sie dies tut.” (Schelling, *Ideen*, pp. 151-52; emphasis in original)

<sup>460</sup> Later in the *Ideen*, Schelling will reiterate the same point in organological terms: “Der letzte Endzweck aller Betrachtung und Wissenschaft der Natur kann einzig *die Erkenntnis der absoluten Einheit* sein, welche das Ganze umfaßt, und die sich in der Natur nur von ihrer einen Seite zu erkennen gibt. Diese ist *gleichsam ihr Werkzeug*, wodurch sie auf ewige Weise das im absoluten Verstande Vorgebildete zur Ausführung und Wirklichkeit bringt. In der Natur ist daher das ganze Absolute erkennbar, obgleich die erscheinende Natur nur sukzessiv und in (für uns) endlosen Entwicklungen gebiert, was in der wahren zumal und auf ewige Weise ist.” (Schelling, *Ideen*, p. 438; my emphasis)

<sup>461</sup> “Dies bestätigt die gemeinste Aufmerksamkeit auf das, was beim Anschauen vorgeht. – Was man beim Anblick von Gebirgen, die in die Wolken sich verlieren, beim donnernden Sturz einer Katarakte, überhaupt bei allem, was groß und herrlich ist in der Natur, empfindet – jenes Anziehen und Zurückstoßen zwischen dem Gegenstand und dem betrachtenden Geist, jenen Streit entgegengesetzter Richtungen, den erst die Anschauung endet – alles das geht, nur transzendental und bewußtlos, bei der Anschauung überhaupt vor. – Diejenigen, die so etwas nicht begreifen, haben gewöhnlich nichts vor sich, als ihre kleinen Gegenstände – ihre Bücher, ihre Papiere und ihren Staub. Wer wollte aber auch Menschen, deren Einbildungskraft durch

which defines human being, knowing, making: intuition on a scale from intellectual to most sensible.<sup>462</sup>

This organ became, I am going to argue here, the emblem of Schelling's specific version of a Critical metaphysics or organology, a series of systems marked by perhaps the greatest sympathy with the risk of dogmatism. We can see this already in the dictum that Nature should be conceived as realizing the necessary laws of cognition. Schelling's position within the development of Idealism—the *problem* of Schelling—is simply this, that he is the most insistent that the Critical philosophy cannot be completed scientifically until it offers metaphysical knowledge as knowledge of being qua Nature. His willingness to confront the categorial systems of Kant and Fichte with that Nature in philosophical experiment is unparalleled amongst his contemporaries.<sup>463</sup> That risk is expressed as early as 1795, in the *Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kriticismus*. This work considers both systems valuable, but ultimately leaves no doubt about which possesses the more salutary methodology:

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Gedächtniskram, tote Spekulation, oder Analyse abstrakter Begriffe ertötet ist – wer, wissenschaftlich – oder gesellschaftlich – verdorbene Menschen – der *menschlichen Natur* (so reich, so tief, so kraftvoll in sich selbst) zum Maßstab aufdringen? Jenes Vermögen der *Anschauung* zu üben, muß der erste Zweck jeder Erziehung sein. Denn sie ist das, was den Menschen zum Menschen macht. Keinem Menschen, die Blinden ausgenommen, kann man absprechen, *daß er sieht*. Aber daß er mit Bewußtsein *anschaut*, dazu gehört ein freier Sinn und ein geistiges Organ, das so vielen versagt ist." (Schelling, *Ideen*, p. 121; emphasis in original.) As Schelling goes on to point out, *intuition* is for him only possible on the basis of real opposition within cognition, on the basis of an original contradiction in self-consciousness. Because self-consciousness has an intuitive register, its deepest form provides the *hidden organ* Schelling posits to answer Kant.

<sup>462</sup> This will, of course, be the basis of Hegel's charge of *indifferentiability* in Schelling's system. Difference is the result of negativity, and negativity, for Hegel, is only in the concept. Schelling clearly *posits* negativity in the differentiation of types of intuition. Hegel's charge thus looks like a repetition of Herder's against Spinoza, Schelling's against Herder, and what will ultimately be Marx's against Feuerbach: what *legitimizes* our conception of differentiation in any monist system? In one sense, Hegel's concept-dialectic is simply an answer to this question.

<sup>463</sup> This is perhaps most clearly expressed in the famous introduction to the *Entwurf* (written after the completion of the text, and with Goethe's collaboration): "Jedes Experiment ist eine Frage an die Natur, auf welche zu antworten sie gezwungen wird. Aber jede Frage enthält ein verstecktes Urteil a priori; jedes Experiment, das Experiment ist, ist *Prophezeiung*; das Experimentieren selbst eine Hervorbringung der Erscheinungen." (Schelling, *Entwurf (Einleitung)*, p. 9.) This characterization of scientific experiment is reflexively true of Schelling's philosophical style.

Nichts scheint mir auffallender zu beweisen, wie wenig der größere Theil bis jetzt den *Geist* der Kritik der reinen Vernunft gefaßt hat, als jener beinahe allgemeine Glaube, daß die Kritik der reinen Vernunft nur Einem Systeme angehöre, da doch gerade das Eigenthümliche einer Vernunftkritik *das* sein muß, *sein* System ausschliesend zu begünstigen, sondern vielmehr den Kanon für sie *alle* entweder wirklich aufzustellen, oder wenigstens vorzubereiten. Zu einem Kanon *aller* Systeme aber gehört nun freilich als nothwendiger Theil auch die allgemeine Methodologie: aber trauriger kann einem solchem [sic] Werk wohl nichts wiederfahren, als wenn man die Methodologie, die es für *alle* Systeme aufstellt, selbst für das System nimmt.<sup>464</sup>

This notion of canonicity for the system of Critique re-names *not* the canon of the understanding, but the *Disziplin* that Kant attributed to his methodology. As we have seen, Kant turned that discipline into a canonical pedagogy, “disciplining” systems after 1785 that did not respect the central Critical insight. Here Schelling imagines something similar, but marks a certain space for less polemical interactions between systems. Criticism provides the measure of (all) other systems, but only methodologically. The process of amalgamating the various systems with the Critical methodology would be more than merely identification and exclusion. Indeed, what we have seen in the *Naturphilosophie*—the careful reading for philosophical content of a broad spectrum of natural scientists, including Kiehmeyer and Blumenbach prominently—is something like an elaboration of this program.<sup>465</sup>

If, in the passage quoted above, there is nevertheless some commitment to the “canon of the understanding” argument in Kant—the delimitation of claims to correspondence not with putative objects but with the faculties which first make those objects possible—this Kantian strain in Schelling is shifted backwards, as it were, into

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<sup>464</sup> Schelling, *Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kritik*, ed. Otto Braun (Leipzig: Meiner, 1914), p. 31; emphasis in original.

<sup>465</sup> In one sense, this is of course true of Kant, too. But Schelling seems prepared to re-formulate his methodology on the basis of encounters with differing systems, something I think Kant did not do during the Critical period. The weakest way of reading this problematic is that we find the young Schelling in the 1790s in similar situation, in terms of systematic exposition, as we find Kant in the 1760s: still gathering both scientific knowledge and in the middle of elaborating a method. Even if that is so, the two thinkers will have looked different on the score of systemic openness as the 19<sup>th</sup> century approached.

the metaphorological register of the *organon* by 1800, in the *StI*. And that recuperation of the *organon* in a canonical post-Kantian context combined with the organs of the *Naturphilosophie* to allow for a second articulation, after Hölderlin's, of organology. Organology made retroactive use of natural science in the service of a new metaphysics. Through an exploration of intellectual intuition and the non-fit between world and micro-world of the artwork, that metaphysics opened onto a doctrine of subtle intervention in Nature, and ultimately onto a metapolitics of the pure deed.

The introduction to the *StI* informs us that Schelling is looking for an *organ* of transcendental philosophy. The task of the *StI* (on which more in a moment) is in need of an instrument. In the final account, Schelling will state clearly that this *organ* is also itself in need of an *organon*, a word he might well have used in the introductory materials to any system. Instead, however, he allows the biological overtone to hover over his considerations of consciousness—we will see that this is hardly an accident. What, then, is this organ, and what is its *organon*?

The *System* begins from the premise that knowledge is the combination of a subjective and an objective element. Knowledge (*Wissen*) must be *of* something (its object); knowledge implies a knower (its subject). The mechanism that causes the correspondence—or sometimes “combination”—between the two elements is the famous *third* (as I indicated above) which, in its various systemic formulations, had been the leading theoretical question after Kant. Reinhold and Fichte had reduced this *third* to a single apparatus (representation; absolute self-identity), trying to solve the Kantian epigenesis-problem by deducing experience from a single principle. As Manfred Frank has shown, by the time Fichte had arrived in Jena in 1794, a critique of this single-

principle deductive form for philosophy was already well underway.<sup>466</sup> Schelling's contribution—on view in various ways and emerging piecemeal through his systems—was a combination of this foundational effort with a profound respect for the open texture of Criticism (the *KdrV*'s subordinate motto is “empirical realism”).

If there was to be a “single third,” it would have to be available in some cognitive form. Schelling agreed with Fichte that this principle could not be a mere element of empirical consciousness, but also adhered to Kant's distinction between the “transcendent” (exceeding the bounds of cognition) and the “transcendental” (providing the conditions of that cognition). He thus writes that “... Philosophie [ist eine] fortgehende Geschichte des Selbstbewußtseins, für welche das in der Erfahrung Niedergelegte nur gleichsam als Dokument und Denkmal dient...”<sup>467</sup> The latter point is emphasized as a re-formulation of Kant's search for that within experience which does not stem from experience.<sup>468</sup> The former point—that the system of idealism is a history of self-consciousness—opens already a distinctive Schellingian starting-point in this constellation. True, Fichte had tried to provide a genetic account of self-consciousness, one which narrates the emergence of logic from the ground of the ability to identify the self (“A=A” is derived from “I=I”). And as we shall see, the figure of that ground was anything but simple identity. Yet Schelling's suggestion that a “running history” of self-consciousness is the generic basis of transcendental philosophy suggests both that the structure of self-identification is at least partly alterable or in development, and that the *System* itself will be the fulcrum of that alteration. Self-consciousness might take

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<sup>466</sup> Frank, *Philosophical Foundations*, pp. 23-39.

<sup>467</sup> I cite F. W. J. Schelling, *System des transzendentalen Idealismus* (Meiner: Hamburg, 2000), with the pages of the *Originalausgabe* given there, here p. VIII.

<sup>468</sup> *KdrV* B1.

different forms, and its true determination might be given first in the activity of the philosopher (or of his reader). This conceptual attitude (which differs, I think, from Fichte's, at least up to 1800<sup>469</sup>) is textually spread over a series of organs.

A single but historical third, as the mechanism for producing correspondence between subjective and objective, is needed. The duality (subject and object) in each judgment allows, however, for two approaches to every cognitive act. If we start with the object—as we have seen above—we have *Naturphilosophie*, the goal of which is to prove idealism, to demonstrate consciousness in Nature. The perspective that starts with the subjective element of the judgment is that of *Transzendentalphilosophie*. Its task will have to be the proof of the reality of consciousness. But since all knowledge—including self-knowledge—is divided into subject and object, transcendental philosophy will be that knowledge where the subject becomes its own object. Thus the proper realm of transcendental philosophy is only the space between judgments and our reflection on those judgments. All content must be considered only from within this perspective—for transcendental philosophy, the *I* is methodologically absolute. Following an invitation from Fichte, Schelling brackets any possible contribution from the objects of knowledge

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<sup>469</sup> The break between Schelling and Fichte is difficult to pinpoint. See Beiser, *German Idealism*, pp. 491-506. By 1801, Schelling would claim the parity of subject and object in the absolute, something Fichte could not abide. There may also be a difference—perhaps unnoticed by the two thinkers—in the points about history and reflexive activity. By 1797/98, Fichte was interested in philosophical activity's pedagogical action on the subject. Yet it seems doubtful he could have accepted the risk Schelling proposed, the philosophical pedagogy of the object (Nature). After his move from Jena in 1800, Fichte seems to have gone a different path, far deeper into the hermetic subjective pedagogy of philosophy, holding salons in Berlin as experiences for the philosophically interested among the university and social elites. In his *Bestimmung des Menschen*, he introduces the Romantic usage: “D[er] G[eist] Du hast sonach gleichsam ein Organ, das Bewusstseyn selbst, womit du deine Affection fassest? Ich. Ja.” (Johann Gottlieb Fichtes sämtliche Werke. Band 2, Berlin 1845/1846, p. 214) Perhaps, then, *organ* is the locus of an expanding methodological difference between Schelling and Fichte, one which persists beyond Fichte's adoption of the term from his younger colleague. Fichte's earlier use of the distinction “higher/lower” *organ*, in his *Grundlage des Naturrechts* (1797), will be treated in chapter IV of the present study, as part of the lexical background of Novalis's organology. For Hölderlin's reception of the *Grundlage* (which is not intimately tied to his organology, so far as I can tell), see Violetta Waibel, “Hölderlins Rezeption von Fichtes ‘Grundlage des Naturrechts,’” *Hölderlin-Jarhbuch* 30 (1996/97), pp. 146-72.



to inquire, initially, into knowledge as object.<sup>470</sup> For this investigation, there can be no question of “external” objects. There can be only the conscious activity of object-oriented reflection (whether the object is a “thing” or consciousness itself) and, Schelling now continues, an unconscious activity that constructs and construes the object-world. Since, within the frame of judgmental knowledge, there is only the subject and the object—and since these are merely the representing and the represented—the two activities cannot be attributed to an “outside” and an “inside,” but only to differing levels of awareness. Thus the apparent externality of the object-world is, for transcendental philosophy, merely the unconscious content of the represented. Two activities are postulated, corresponding to two apparent worlds—the conscious and the unconscious, the subject and the object. The *StI*'s perspective is absolutely subjective, but is open to its own completion in the absolutely objective response from *Naturphilosophie*. The object of the system is thus the subject, and its organ “der innere Sinn.” For Kant, the inner sense is merely that which occurs only in time, not in both time and space. It is the locus of self-reflection, but is not otherwise privileged. The empirical self is presented there to the understanding, but this makes no difference to the latter's rules (its canon). For Schelling, following Fichte, there is more to it than that. The inner sense is the locus of coincidence of subject and object. There are still two selves, or more precisely, there is the self-intuiting-itself (subject) and the self-intuited-as-itself (subject as object). This structure is called *I* or self-consciousness, and its re-production (and ultimately objectification) is the task of the *StI*.

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<sup>470</sup> This is an excellent example of the Romantic approach to Kant. Where Kant had *also* sought for internally valid forms of Reason (as the faculty that reflects on and unifies the judgments of the understanding)—and even derived the branches of special metaphysics from them—Schelling treats the mereological complex of judgment as continuous with Reason, bracketing Kant's commitment to content-problems in the *Transcendental Aesthetic* (division of outer and inner sense) and the *Transcendental Analytic* (causation and object-formation). See pp. 86 ff. in chapter I above for my analysis of Kant's doctrine of judgment with respect to the organological metaphor.

Schelling compares the inner sense—as the organ of philosophy—to the inner sense of Kant’s mathematician. For Kant, mathematical objects are constructed fully (but according to the rules of the *a priori* forms of intuition)—we make, but not arbitrarily, the triangle with which we will perform our geometrical proofs. As the *Methodenlehre* in the *KdrV* had had it, we cannot construct the object-world (we can only make it possible in its form). Schelling points in the opposite direction: the object of the transcendental philosopher (the subject) is already the constructive activity itself. How far down that construction goes is left an open question for philosophy, but absolute for the *StI*. The unconscious construction of phenomenal objects is in turn the object of the *StI*—the *organ* of philosophy is the intuited activity, on a scale of consciousness from zero (object) to complete (self-consciousness). Schelling can thus write (and what follows in the present section will be devoted to an analysis of this central statement):

Die objective Welt ist nur die ursprüngliche, noch bewußtlose Poesie des Geistes; das allgemeine Organon der Philosophie ... *die Philosophie der Kunst*.<sup>471</sup>

The statement is very precise, despite its poeticizing sheen. I will summarize the argument that Schelling will make over the course of his exposition, and then treat it in detail. What produces the *organon* is a specific approach to the philosophy of art that houses deep consequences for the metaphysics suggested by the very phrase “general *organon* of philosophy.” Philosophy itself will turn out to need an *organ*, one which, in its operation, is the very “poetry of the spirit” in turn serving as the *organon*. The organ of philosophy—which will shortly be named “intellectual intuition”—is thus made concrete only in the exposition of the system. The organ can serve as *organon* only in the

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<sup>471</sup> Schelling, *System*, p. 19; emphasis in original. And again, p. 21, emphasis in original: “Der eigentliche Sinn, mit dem diese Art der Philosophie aufgefaßt werden muß, ist also der *ästhetische*, und eben darum die Philosophie der Kunts das wahre Organon der Philosophie.”

guise of self-objectification in an aesthetic product. Art is, for Schelling, the objectification of infinitely productive rules. In one sense, these rules must be reproduced (mimesis). In another, they focus our attention on the moment where there can be no mimesis (the absolute contradiction of the subject as conscious and as unconscious). The reality of the poetry of the spirit must be proven in aesthetic cognition, crystallized in an art object, and exhibited as an invitation to the experience of another subject's internal cognitive contradiction. This exhibition then serves as the *organon* for all philosophy, as a general and unique way of operationalizing its organ (intellectual intuition). It also suggests, as we will now see, that the self-objectification offers a flexibility in the mimetic order that must border on ontological freedom, or the ability to alter the world metaphysically.

The complex self-intuiting-itself/self-as-intuited circumscribes the entirety of transcendental idealism. This is why Schelling writes that “die intellektuelle Anschauung ist das Organ allen transcendentalen Denkens.”<sup>472</sup> The self's self-grasping cannot be of the order of an empirical judgment—it does not combine an empirical intuition and a concept. In fact, one of the activities it self-perceives is just that: judgment. The ability to attend to the emergence of judgments cannot itself be simply one more judgment. This line of thought, which is taken from Fichte, is explained particularly clearly by the latter. For every object of consciousness, there must be a subject. If this holds, however, for self-consciousness, we confront an infinite regress of self-subjects and self-objects, none of which can be called *I* in the sense of self-identification as both conscious and self-conscious. Because this requirement—that object-reference and subject-reflection should occur simultaneously in order to make the notion of *I* legible at all—cannot be grounded

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<sup>472</sup> Schelling, *System*, p. 51.

by the endless separations of subjects from subject-objects, it must take on recursive immediacy. The self must know itself to know objects and itself simultaneously,<sup>473</sup> and it must do that in an immediate sense.<sup>474</sup> Immediate knowledge, Fichte tells us, is called “intuition.” Since this intuition is clearly not sensible, it must be intellectual intuition (a decision clearly not as innocent as its terminological derivation).

This structure remains essentially unchanged for the Schelling of the *StI*. Indeed, as he dubs this structure the organ of philosophy, he re-iterates the analogy to Kant’s geometer. Intellectual intuition is the condition of possibility for transcendental philosophy, as the *a priori* forms of intuition are for the mathematician.<sup>475</sup> And just as the coordinates of ideal space are a postulate for the Euclidean geometer, intellectual intuition is a postulate for transcendental philosophy. It fulfills the condition—Schelling is simply interpreting Fichte—that the point of origin of speculation must be the point of indifference or co-emergence of form and content, of logic and object.<sup>476</sup>

If Schelling differs from Fichte here, then it is in subtle textual inflections that allow his conclusion to raise this intellectual intuition to consciousness—Fichte nowhere implies that this is really possible—in aesthetic intuition. Those inflections are terminological borrowings from the *Naturphilosophie* (especially *Produkt*, *Produzieren*, and even the apparently Fichtean *Tätigkeit*). Thus, when Schelling writes that “das Ich ist

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<sup>473</sup> Recursive immediacy is my gloss on Fichte’s statement that “das Ich setzt sich als setzend.” The point is that knowledge of objects and knowledge of the self must be not only combined but also immediately identified as the self. The minimum requirement for self-consciousness thus looks something like “I know that I am the one thinking of that object and producing the thought of that object.”

<sup>474</sup> This summary is taken from a few comparable passages in Fichte’s writings in 1797/98. See Fichte, *Versuch einer neuen Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre (1797/98)*, ed. Peter Baumanns (Hamburg: Meiner, 1984), and the *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo 1798/99*, ed. Erich Fuchs (Hamburg: Meiner, 1994). Schelling makes reference (*System*, p. 52) to the “second introduction” in the former volume, which I have also made use of here, but which is generally less clear than the other expositions.

<sup>475</sup> Schelling, *System*, p. 52.

<sup>476</sup> “... jene Anschauung ist es, was im transzendentalen Denken an die Stelle der objektiven Welt tritt und gleichsam den Flug der Spekulation trägt.” (Schelling, *System*, p. 51.)

nichts anderes als *ein sich selbst zum Objekt werdendes Produzieren*, d.h. ein intellectuelles Anschauen,” the stakes of the terminological choices are very high. For Schelling, the activity implied by *werdend*—self-objectification through systematic philosophizing—is just as essential as the recursive immediacy at the basis of the conception. That immediacy is anything but certain on the basis of Fichte’s argument. The organ of philosophy must be operationalized, it must be recognized as a *Produzieren*. All that remains is to find the proper cognitive medium for the realization of that recursive immediacy, or of the conscious intuition of the self.

That medium is, of course, the philosophy of art. It is of the utmost importance not to confuse art and the philosophy of art. Just as with Hölderlin, we had to be careful to distinguish theoretical and generic discourses from the activities of artistic production and reception, so with Schelling we must be careful not to commit the error of making “art” the organ of philosophy *tout court*. Not every human must be a genius in order to be human, for Schelling; but every human must and can participate in the ontological self-realization of the *Poesie des Geistes*.

Intellectual intuition is the organ of philosophy; aesthetic intuition is intellectual intuition become objective; and the philosophy of art is therefore “das einzig wahre und ewige Organon zugleich und Dokument der Philosophie...”<sup>477</sup> This famous statement does more than make aesthetic judgments constitutive. As Dieter Jähnig has shown, it makes aesthetics constitutive for philosophy.<sup>478</sup> It makes beauty a factor—or rather a keystone—in system-building. We should not hurry to conclude that this is an

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<sup>477</sup> Schelling, *System*, p. 475.

<sup>478</sup> While other philosophies treat art as an object (aesthetics), “als “Organon” jedoch, als Mittel ihrer Ausübung, wäre die Kunst nicht nur ein Gegenstand, sondern ein Bestandteil der Philosophie.” (Dieter Jähnig, *Schelling. Die Kunst in der Philosophie; erster Band: Schellings Begründung von Natur und Geschichte* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1966), p. 11.)

“aestheticization” of philosophy—it certainly is not that in terms of exposition, as any reader of the *StI* can attest. It is not that systematically, either: the *philosophy* of art—the reflective medium of art-reception—is the *organon*, not artworks or art-production. Art is the object of that *organon*, that is, it is the source of the rule-book for metaphysics, not the book itself. Artistic production and artworks allow the *StI* to link self-consciousness and object-consciousness into fully conscious, recursively immediate self-recognition in the philosophy of art. The *organon* operationalizes the organ—art makes the structure of the *I* manifest, objective, in short: cognitively available.

If we return to the claim that the history of self-consciousness (the *StI*) makes use of the precipitate of experience as a document, we can see, in a first step, why Schelling adds the mysterious ellipsis *zugleich und Dokument* to the famous phrase above. The philosophy of art will be the *organon* of metaphysics, concretizing (because making operate) the self’s intellectual intuition. In doing this, it will serve not merely as the most general rule for philosophy, but also—as it had been for the pre-critical Kant—as the singular, objective evidence, the documentation *a posteriori* (but only for the *I*) of that very foundation. The *organon*—art *for the I*, or philosophy as reflective of art as cognitive and material process—is the rule; the document is the preserved material evidence. Once the human makes art (really, once *techne* is introduced into the order of things), the world is fundamentally human—organological.

The organ is intellectual intuition, but is not concrete until it is objectivized (the goal of the entire system) in aesthetic intuition. Schelling re-iterates his judgment that an absolute identity of subject and object is an intellectual intuition, and the “Organ aller

Philosophie.”<sup>479</sup> This organ is the means by which the first four parts of the *System* (principle and deduction of idealism, system of theoretical philosophy, system of practical philosophy, and teleology) are established. The conscious and unconscious activities of the *I* are first deduced from the principle of self-consciousness, and then opposed in theory (which examines the unconscious activity as its explicit content) and practice (which takes the conscious activity as its infinite task). Repeating the framework of the *KdU* in the space of about thirty pages, Schelling turns to teleology as the first possibility of their conscious unification. The opposing tendencies—unconscious, object-constituting activity as the establishment of brute externality, and conscious, meaning-making activity as conferring conceptual *teloi* on that matter—combine to imply an awareness of the unity of the two activities. The production of Nature can be shown to be the result of unity the *I*'s opposed activities. But it can only be *shown* to be this—it cannot be immediately so known, or intuited.<sup>480</sup>

For that we must have recourse to art. The desideratum is “*Identität des Bewußten und Bewußtlosen im Ich, und Bewußtsein dieser Identität.*”<sup>481</sup> The world—*das Bewußtlose*—had been the poetry of spirit. Schelling now separates out *Poesie* from *Kunst*. The general activity of material production does not always contain the regulated blending of form and content that specifies art. Indeed, not any such combination can count for Schelling as art. Art must depict an infinite conflict (real opposition) finitely. The character of the work of art is the finite presentation of infinite contradiction. *Poesie* is the formation of a (micro-) world, an integration of the general and the particular revelatory of the rule of their harmony (which here is infinite conflict or real opposition).

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<sup>479</sup> Schelling, *System*, p. 472.

<sup>480</sup> Schelling, *System*, pp. 445-51.

<sup>481</sup> Schelling, *System*, p. 452. This, it seems to me, is where Schelling departs from Fichte.

The most basic contradiction, however, is that between conscious and unconscious activity in the *I*. Thus, art is the objectification of the self at its most primitive. It is the possibility of consciousness of the unity of consciousness and unconsciousness. The world is populated—haunted—by infinite reconciliation, spiritual satisfaction in material form. This makes the genius for aesthetics what the *I* is for philosophy.<sup>482</sup> That means nothing less, of course, than that the genius is the organ of the philosophy of art, itself the *organon* of philosophy. The micro-world—seemingly mimetic—that the genius fashions poetically is actually revelatory of the infinite contradictory unity of the *I*. But it is so revelatory *only through the organon*. The instruments of philosophy—the *I* and the genius, constituting the world and the micro-world qua work of art—are united only *for the I*, that is, in the mutual support of transcendental philosophy and aesthetics. The *organon* for metaphysics unites the general world-activity of the *I* with the particular world freely created by the genius. The *organon* is the link not merely between general and particular, but between general and particular organs. Because those organs make worlds, the *organon* is a candidate for the metaphysical task as such: the insight into the relation between encapsulated orders of rules and their things.

Let us return to the problem of the *physis-techne* analogy: is it certain that, for Schelling, there is a fit between those general and particular worlds? I will argue that there is not, but that this consequence is left partly unexplained in the *StI*. (I will go on to argue below that the first steps towards a philosophy of freedom are then marked by this unresolved question, and transition his organology into an ontologically innovative register.)

Schelling rejects the notion of a *Nachahmung der Natur* in the following terms:

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<sup>482</sup> Schelling, *System*, p. 463.



Es erhellt daraus von selbst, was von der Nachahmung der natur als Prinzip der Kunst zu halten sei, da, weit entfernt, daß die bloß zufällig schöne Natur der Kunst die Regel gebe, vielmehr, was die Kunst in ihrer Vollkommenheit hervorbringt, Prinzip und Norm für die Beurteilung der Naturschönheit ist.<sup>483</sup>

The unities of Nature—so perfect as they were in the *Naturphilosophie*—cannot serve, for the transcendental philosopher in collusion with the philosopher of art, as the rule for artistic beauty. That beauty must make the infinite conflict not between Nature and its organs but that between self and world, between conscious and unconscious, explicit. That beauty is thus not a reflection of the rules of any nature. No order of things legislates art. Indeed, it is even suggested that the observation of nature (at least from an aesthetic standpoint) is ruled over by the all-too-human definition of beauty given here.<sup>484</sup> It is not far from that determination to the possibility that the micro-world of the work of art could have ontologically innovative capabilities. But Schelling does not go the same path as Hölderlin, who had developed a theory of tragedy to develop this capability. Here, he leaves this question pregnantly open—he will answer it in the third and final phase of his organology.

Before I leave the *StI* behind, let me simply note that one of the more hermetic strains in the text points us in the indicated direction. Schelling writes of the genius's activity as being under the mark of a *dunkle Gewalt*, a *Schicksal*. The verb *zurückstrahlen* occurs several times.<sup>485</sup> Recall Blumenberg's tracing of the collapse of the *phusis-techne*

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<sup>483</sup> Schelling, *System*, p. 467.

<sup>484</sup> Hegel would systematize this point in his *Lectures on Aesthetics*.

<sup>485</sup> e.g.: “Dieses *Unbekannte* aber, was hier die objective und die bewußte Thätigkeit in unerwartete Harmonie setzt, ist nichts anders, als jenes *Absolute*, welches den allgemeinen *Grund* der prästabilierten Harmonie zwischen dem Bewußten und dem Bewußtlosen enthält. Wird also jenes Absolute reflectirt aus dem Product, so wird es der Intelligenz erscheinen, als *Etwas*, das über ihr ist, un was selbst entgegen der Freiheit zu dem, was mit Bewußtseyn und Absicht begonnen war, das *Absichtslose* hinzubringt. Dieses *unveränderlich Identische*, was zu keinem Bewußtseyn gelangen kann, und nur aus dem Product *widerstrahlt*, ist für das Producirende eben das, was für das Handelnde das *Schicksal* ist, d.h. *Eine dunkle unbekante Gewalt*, die zu dem Stückwerk der Freyheit das *Vollendete*, oder das *Objective* hinzubringt, und wie jene *Macht*, welche durch unser freyes Handeln ohne unser Wissen, und

analogy. With reference to Kant—but here it looks like the hidden citation may be to Schelling—Blumenberg writes that, when *phusis-techne* is finally swept aside:

Während der Mensch ganz dem hingegeben scheint, sich in der *metaphysischen Tätigkeit* der Kunst seiner originären Potenz zu vergewissern, stellt sich unvermutet im geschaffenen eine Ahnung des Immer-schon-da-Seienden ein, *al ob es ein Produkt der bloßen Natur sei*.<sup>486</sup>

The presentiment (*Ahnung*) intimated here—the return of being in the advanced artificial systems of *techne* and *Kunst*—points to Schelling (*Potenz*) but misses the mark. What flows back phenomenally is not a being suspected of atavism, but the intuition of a whole now greater than being, because in dialectical tension with an *I* with which it now forms an organological (and literally beautiful) whole. In Blumenberg’s terms, we might call that the totality of the lifeworld. For Schelling, it is the *I* in developmental *agon* with its worlds. It is the flexible metaphysics that conflates the *organon* of metaphysics with a multitude of developing *organs*. The constructed world’s possible non-fit with the putative “real” world is no longer the point of this metaphysics, which passes from construction into the technological metaphysics of alteration—intervention into reality in its historical unfolding. The suggestion that we could make the world entirely anew using philosophical tools was an invitation to find or, if necessary, invent those tools. The attraction of that result of post-Kantian metaphysical efforts defined the task for Schelling—as it did for his compatriots—as the discovery of an indifference-point

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selbst wider unsern Willen nichtvorgestellte Zwecke realisirt, *Schicksal* genannt wird, so wird das *Unbegreifliche*, was ohne Zuthun der Freyheit, und gewissermaaßen der Freyheit entgegen, in welcher ewig sich flieht, was in jener Production vereinigt ist, zu dem Bewußten das *Objective* hinzubringt, mit dem dunklen Begriff des *Genies* bezeichnet.” (Schelling, *System*, pp. 457-58, my emphases excepting *Genie* in original)

<sup>486</sup> Quoted from ed. Ralph Konersman, *Kulturphilosophie* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2009), p. 232. See also Hans Blumenberg, “Nachahmung der Natur. Zur Vorgeschichte des schöpferischen Menschen” in *Wirklichkeiten in denen wir leben* (Ditzingen: Phillip Reclam, 1986). The citation (italics, in original) is from Kant, *KdU* I, 1, 2 §45, where the point is that the artwork’s integration of general and particular according to its idea must make it look like a product of nature in order to be successful. Schelling’s point is, of course, the opposite.

between metaphysics and politics. Schelling came to the second part of that task only years later, in Munich in 1809, and with Hegel's recent betrayal a pressing concern.

### **The Romantic Metaphysics of Morals, or Schelling vs. Hegel, a View from Organology**

By the time Schelling had moved to Munich in 1806, a significant new discourse of the organ had emerged. This was the so-called "organology" of Franz Joseph Gall, popularly known (then as now) under the name phrenology. The famous break between Schelling and Hegel, with Hegel's charge in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that Schelling's absolute (which had also been his own) was a "night in which all cows are black," can be profitably read in this discursive light. From the position the young friends had held together (the absolute idealism of the "identity system"), and in common reaction to the esotericization of *Naturphilosophie*, the bitter rivalry between the "negative" and "positive" philosophies became a matter of the organ's extensive applicability. And where Hegel adumbrated his avoidance of organology (for which see chapter V of the present study), Schelling articulated in the *Freedom essay* of 1809 a final organological position that united the electric and ideal, particular and general organs of his earlier career. I call his final organological synthesis the "Romantic metaphysics of morals."

Even as Schelling was producing his *Naturphilosophie*, however, Gall was inventing phrenology.<sup>487</sup> In 1798, he published a mission-statement of the program he would exhibit and demonstrate across Europe (especially in Vienna and Paris) in the

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<sup>487</sup> See Hagner, *Homo cerebrealis*, p. 89/306 for a differentiation of Gall's doctrine from the popular image of phrenology. The term "phrenology" certainly occurs earlier than 1815, however, for example in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

coming decades. This writing was published in Wieland's *Neuer deutscher Merkur*.<sup>488</sup> In a sense, Gall's "organology"<sup>489</sup> is everything but mythologizing—it is opposed to Romantic scientific efforts in their very roots. It rejects all metaphysics in science, and makes only apologetic efforts to respond to ethical concerns. If organs are the purely material loci of various capacities (*Fähigkeiten*) and tendencies (*Neigungen*), then the essay's title makes clear its interest: *Verrichtungen*. But where Schelling and the force-system-theorists had been interested in *Verrichtung* as a quasi-philosophical term, Gall employs it in a literal sense restricted to "execution." As Hagner points out, it is no longer the "soul" that has its seat in the brain—it is behavior. Organs are the material basis of observable capacities and tendencies. In the attempt to reduce the problem of the organ to brain-functions, Gall nevertheless has to pay conceptual tribute to the Aristotelian complex. He writes that the eye does not see, the ear does not hear: the brain's organs and the brain as organ execute those functions:

Man irrt, wenn man glaubt, das Auge sieht, das Ohr hört u.s.w. Jedes äußerliche Sinnenwerkzeug steht durch seine Nerven in Verbindung mit dem Hirn, wo beim Anfange des Nerven eine angemessene Hirnmasse das eigentliche innerliche Organ dieser Sinnesverrichtung ausmacht. Sey das Ohr das Auge selbst noch so gesund, sey sogar der Sehnerv unverletzt; wenn das innerliche Organ krank oder zerstört ist, so nützen Auge und Sehnerv nichts mehr. Folglich haben auch die äußerlichen Sinnenwerkzeuge ihre Organ im Hirn, und diese äußern Werkzeuge sind nur das Mittel, wodurch ihre innerlichen Organe mit den äußerlichen Gegenständen in Verbindung oder in Gegenwirkung gesetzt

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<sup>488</sup> Franz Joseph Gall, *Schreiben über seinen bereits geendigten Prodrömus über die Verrichtungen des Gehirns der Menschen und der Thier, an Herrn Jos. Fr. Von Retzer Neuer deutscher Merkur* 1798 (3), pp. 311-332.

<sup>489</sup> Hagner uses this term because Gall conceives of the brain (for the first time) as a complex series of *organs*, thus anticipating both localization-theory and the "cerebralization" of the human: "Erst die Verabschiedung des *homme sensible* in Galls Ansatz macht den Platz für eine Cerebralisierung frei. Die Sinnesqualitäten spielen bei Gall nicht mehr die notwendigerweise dominierende Rolle bei der psychischen Formierung des Menschen. Damit wird das wissenschaftliche Interesse an der Funktion der Sinnesorgane -- ursprünglich durch den Sensualismus erheblich befördert -- zwar nicht eingeschränkt, erhält jedoch durch den unabhängigen Blick auf das Gehirn ein Komplement, das als Vehikel für die Neuordnung des Wissen vom Menschen dient. Das Gehirn ist jetzt zum ersten Mal nicht mehr bloß das Medium zwischen Seele und Sinnesorganen, sondern ein Organ, das aus unterschiedlichen und gleichwertigen Elementen besteht." (Hagner, *Homo cereбрalis*, pp. 93-94) Hagner's implicit argument that Gall and the Romantic physiologists were bitterly opposed to each other in method points to the difference between Gall's *organ*-doctrine and what I am calling Romantic organology.

werden.<sup>490</sup>

Organs, for the localization theory that leads to phrenology, are internal to the brain, itself an organ. *Werkzeug* denotes a mere instrument—the eye, the ear, the vehicle of transmission. The organs of the brain, as material as they are meant to be, must be internal and separated from the mere instruments of phenomenal collection. They thus perch in a sphere of potentiality, in true Aristotelian style, mediating between brute perception (capacity) and behavior (tendency). Indeed, *Fähigkeit* and *Neigung* describe just the potentialities the organs serve to communicate for any possible actuality. The system is less materialized—though it certainly includes a material moment, as do the other organological systems—than it is *behavioralized*, socialized.

The materialist moment of phrenology lay not in its organ-doctrine but in its inference from brain's *organs* to skull's form.<sup>491</sup> Organs might make up the potential spheres of perception as of action, but the social program of Gall's doctrine was not mistaken in developing a social and criminological hermeneutics from the skull. The identification of organs as possibilities of behavior does not imply, as Gall pleaded with the public to understand, the necessity of those behaviors.<sup>492</sup> Yet the doctrine of the skull's determination by the brain's organs—the skull as expression—was, for Hegel as for Schelling, philosophically unfounded. Their reactions to Gall—placed in the context of their own mythologizing efforts and those of their contemporaries—present us with a first separation of organology and experimental science. Gall's silence on philosophy is discursively different from the varying positions surrounding Kant on the conflict of the faculties. Silence can emerge only from a position of power, in Gall's case not the power

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<sup>490</sup> Gall, *Verrichtungen*, pp. 320-21.

<sup>491</sup> Gall, *Verrichtungen*, pp. 322-23.

<sup>492</sup> See Hagner, *Homo cerebrialis*, pp. 99 ff.

of institutional and ideological backing, but that of a sense of methodological superiority. Organology and science began to miscommunicate when their premises are taken for granted. Success would be the result, not the philosophical grounding, of this science.

Gall visited Munich in 1807 to give a lecture at the Bavarian Academy of the Sciences.<sup>493</sup> Schelling responded with a short article, “Einiges über die Schädellehre,” where he questions the skull’s meaning as fixed: “Welche babylonische Verwirrung könnte z.B. entstehn, wenn das Organ des Dichters zuerst an *Alringer* aufgefunden ware, oder das Feldherrn-Organ bei General Mack, und dann etwa bei *Schiller* und *Massena* darnach aufgesucht würde; da müsste man sich doch nach ganz andern Schädelhöhen umsehen.”<sup>494</sup> The objection is not ethical, but epistemological: the Babel of *organs* which would result from their fixity would not merely contradict human freedom, but behaviors and identities would either lose connection to the system, or the skull would have to transform in real time with the vicissitudes of human behavior. By 1807, Schelling had little even polemical ink to spill on the systems he took himself to have so thoroughly refuted in the 1790s.

Not so Hegel. Hegel used the platform of the *Phenomenology of Spirit (PhdG)* to attack and categorize systems of spirit-matter expression in his chapter on “observing reason” (*beobachtende Vernunft*). Consciousness (*Bewusstsein*) has constituted objects, and self-consciousness (*Selbstbewusstsein*) has emerged through the famous lordship-bondage relation. Reason has emerged as the recursive immediacy of object- and self-consciousnesses. Reason, for Hegel, will have to come to realize itself, but proceeds first along a detour of re-determining objects in the social world of self-consciousnesses.

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<sup>493</sup> See Hagner, *Homo cerebrialis*, p. 122.

<sup>494</sup> F.W. J. Schelling, *Sämmtliche Werke* 1: 7 (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1860), p. 543; emphasis in original.

Science exists only in this complex, does its observational work at a specific level of self-realization of spirit, an uneven attempt to determine the world lawfully from the standpoint of reason's constitutive attempt to satisfy the foundational dissatisfaction of self-consciousness. Could there be an organ of reason for Hegel?

*Beobachtende Vernunft* conceives of an organ which does not occur elsewhere in the system. This organ is clearly borrowed from Gall, and yet Hegel contributes a systematic determination of it that anticipates his later objections to organology (see chapter V of this study, on Goethe and Hegel). Hegel considers two doctrines of expression in the *PhdG*: Lavater's physiognomy and Gall's phrenology. Organ serves in the latter system to name the mechanism which potentializes a sphere of behavior, but Hegel correctly observes that organ should also be the term for the mechanism of expression itself. That which makes the skull's rises and valleys an expression of the brain's functions *should* be the organ. Hegel's use, borrowed as it is from Gall, thus relies textually on Romantic organology, using the latter to interrupt the flow of phrenological argument. Organs are here taken not merely as mechanism—this would reintroduce the Aristotelian problem which Gall already has—but are projections from the specific standpoint of observing reason. Indeed, they are quasi-categorical—they are bastard categories.

The mistakes of physiognomy are apparent. Hegel applies “organ” (from Gall and Schelling) to Lavater's discipline, but then strips its use from his discussion of phrenology.<sup>495</sup> “Expression” is the wrong category to determine the relation between the material and the spiritual in both cases, but facial formation is potentially organ-based,

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<sup>495</sup> “Der Schädelknochen ist kein Organ der Tätigkeit, noch auch eine sprechende Bewegung.” (G. F. W. Hegel, *Werke in 20 Bänden. Band 3. Die Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1986). I cite as: Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 251.)

while phrenology emphasizes the dead thing, the “bone” identified with spirit. Hegel does not reject “expression” because he adheres to a doctrine of pre-established harmony<sup>496</sup> (“expression” is, after all, a version of the *influxus*-claim), but because the *PhdG* tracks the self-constitution of spirit through stages of negativity. In the *Introduction*, Hegel writes his version of the “stringent Criticism” of Fichte and Schelling: thought can be taken as a medium or an instrument, but is correctly assessed to be in progressive mutual constitution with its putative objects. The problem with “expression” is that it takes two elements of representation and unifies them categorically, without including categorialization (synthetic conceptual unification) as part of the process. It is certainly possible to unite representations according to more or less rhetorically convincing strategies, but that possibility is arbitrary. It is opposed to the true possibilities of the concept as progressive synthetic constitution of objects.<sup>497</sup> Indeed, “observing reason” is the point in the narrative at which true categories begin to play a role:

Das unglückliche Selbstbewußtsein entäußerte sich seiner Selbständigkeit und rang sein *Fürsichsein* zum *Dinge* heraus. Es kehrte dadurch aus dem Selbstbewußtsein in das Bewußtsein zurück, d. h. in das Bewußtsein, für welches der Gegenstand ein *Sein*, ein *Ding* ist; - aber dies, was *Ding* ist, ist das Selbstbewußtsein; es ist also die Einheit des Ich und des Seins, die *Kategorie*. Indem der Gegenstand für das Bewußtsein so bestimmt ist, *hat es Vernunft*. Das Bewußtsein sowie das Selbstbewußtsein *ist an sich* eigentlich Vernunft, aber nur von dem Bewußtsein, dem der Gegenstand als die Kategorie sich bestimmt hat, kann gesagt werden, daß es Vernunft habe; - hiervon aber ist noch das

<sup>496</sup> Although, in one sense, observing reason can properly be said to leave pre-established harmony as the only option from its perspective: “Es bleibt, wenn denn die Beziehung doch stattfinden soll, eine *begrifflose* freie prästabilisierte Harmonie der entsprechenden Bestimmung beider Seiten übrig und notwendig; denn die eine *soll geistlose Wirklichkeit, bloßes Ding* sein.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 252.)

<sup>497</sup> “Wird aber die *Möglichkeit* nicht im Sinne der *Möglichkeit* des *Vorstellens*, sondern der *inneren* *Möglichkeit* oder des *Begriffs* genommen, so ist der Gegenstand eine solche Wirklichkeit, welche reines *Ding* und ohne dergleichen Bedeutung ist und sein soll und sie also nur in der *Vorstellung* haben kann.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 254.) Or, in a literary vein: “Man kann sich wohl auch bei einem Schädel, wie Hamlet bei Yoricks, vielerlei einfallen lassen, aber der Schädelknochen für sich ist ein so gleichgültiges, unbefangenes *Ding*, daß an ihm unmittelbar nichts anderes zu sehen und zu meinen ist als nur er selbst; er erinnert wohl an das Gehirn und seine Bestimmtheit, an Schädel von anderer Formation, aber nicht an eine bewußte Bewegung, indem er weder Miene und Gebär- de noch etwas an ihm eingedrückt hat, das [als] von einem bewußten Tun herkommend sich ankündigte; denn er ist diejenige Wirklichkeit, welche an der Individualität eine solche andere Seite darstellen sollte, die nicht mehr sich in sich reflektierendes *Sein*, sondern rein *unmittelbares Sein* wäre.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 251.)



Wissen, was Vernunft ist, unterschieden. - Die Kategorie, welche die *unmittelbare* Einheit des *Seins* und des *Seinen* ist, muß beide Formen durchlaufen, und das beobachtende Bewußtsein ist eben dieses, dem sie sich in der Form des *Seins* darstellt.<sup>498</sup>

The true goal of observing reason is itself as categorizing. This means that the true (conceptual) object of reason's observance is its activity—the object of this subject is the categorizing subject itself.<sup>499</sup> Category-work is synthetic in itself for Hegel, because it discovers lawfulness in an assuredly conceptual sphere. In order to recognize that this sphere is finally conceptual, the object will have to determine itself *as category*—as the immediate self-differentiating synthesis of I and being (the concept)—for reason. In fact, this is how reason will realize itself (in both senses). At the level of observation, the representation remains categorically underdetermined. This underdetermination means that observation grasps its objects—and in the case of physiognomy, itself as subject—as being. This asserted being can be juxtaposed with other asserted beings, but judgments that unify these beings remain arbitrarily possible. For conceptual possibility (real possibility) to come into view, reason must realize itself as self-realizing. But to do this, it will have to reach a nadir of self-objectifying assertion. It does this in phrenology.

The organ is that which makes the inner outer, the invisible visible, the *für sich* the *an sich*. It is essentially activity:

Dies Äußere macht zuerst nur als *Organ* das Innere sichtbar oder überhaupt zu einem Sein für Anderes; denn das Innere, insofern es in dem Organe ist, ist es die *Tätigkeit* selbst. Der sprechende Mund, die arbeitende Hand, wenn man will auch noch die Beine dazu, sind die verwirklichenden und vollbringenden Organe, welche das Tun *als Tun* oder das Innere als solches an ihnen haben; die Äußerlichkeit aber, welche es durch sie

<sup>498</sup> Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 260; emphasis in original.

<sup>499</sup> “Die *reine* Kategorie, welche in der Form des *Seins* oder der *Unmittelbarkeit* für das Bewußtsein ist, ist der noch *unvermittelte*, nur *vorhandene* Gegenstand, und das Bewußtsein ein ebenso unvermitteltes Verhalten. Das Moment jenes unendlichen Urteils ist der Übergang der *Unmittelbarkeit* in die Vermittlung oder *Negativität*. Der vorhandene Gegenstand ist daher als ein negativer bestimmt, das Bewußtsein aber als *Selbstbewußtsein* gegen ihn, oder die Kategorie, welche die Form des *Seins* im Beobachten durchlaufen hat, ist jetzt in der Form des Fürsichseins gesetzt; das Bewußtsein will sich nicht mehr *unmittelbar finden*, sondern durch seine Tätigkeit sich selbst hervorbringen. *Es selbst* ist sich der Zweck seines Tuns, wie es ihm im Beobachten nur um die Dinge zu tun war.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 261.)

gewinnt, ist die Tat als eine von dem Individuum abgetrennte Wirklichkeit. Sprache und Arbeit sind Äußerungen, worin das Individuum nicht mehr an ihm selbst sich behält und besitzt, sondern das Innere ganz außer sich kommen läßt und dasselbe Anderem preisgibt.<sup>500</sup>

The term organ falls away, therefore, as Hegel follows first the physiognomist and then the phrenologist into a kind of navel-gazing observation. The activity suggested in the quoted passage is, for Hegel, the first hint of self-materializing observation, of the grasp of the inner in its passage to the outer, of the body possessed by reason. Thus, the term disappears in Hegel for two reasons. First, as we descend from organic physiognomy to the dead bone-matter of phrenology, observing reason stops using “organic” terminology.<sup>501</sup> Second, even imported into physiognomy, the organ is literal for the mind construing its own body, but operates for that very mind as a locus of materialized reflection.<sup>502</sup> Insofar as that organ is objectified subjective activity, it remains tinged with the representational assertion Hegel is objecting to. This is why the term’s use dwindles as the chapter progresses, and is not re-introduced later in the work.<sup>503</sup>

Phrenology lowers the already faulty conceptual content of physiognomy, judging

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<sup>500</sup> Hegel, *PhdG*, p. p. 234.

<sup>501</sup> The middle stage is suggested by physiology: “Das *Nervensystem* hingegen ist die unmittelbare Ruhe des Organischen in seiner Bewegung. Die *Nerven* selbst sind zwar wieder die Organe des schon in seine Richtung nach außen versenkten Bewußtseins; Gehirn und Rückenmark aber dürfen als die in sich bleibende - die nicht gegenständliche, die auch nicht hinausgehende - unmittelbare Gegenwart des Selbstbewußtseins betrachtet werden. Insofern das Moment des Seins, welches dies Organ hat, ein *Sein für Anderes*, Dasein ist, ist es totes Sein, nicht mehr Gegenwart des Selbstbewußtseins.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 246.) This seems to me to be the only literal use of organ in the *PhdG*.

<sup>502</sup> “Hier aber ist ein Organ verstanden, worin das selbstbewußte Individuum als Extrem gegen seine eigene, ihm entgegengesetzte Wirklichkeit sich *für sich* erhält, nicht zugleich nach außen gekehrtes, sondern in seiner Handlung reflektiertes, und woran die Seite des *Seins* nicht ein *Sein für Anderes* ist. In der physiognomischen Beziehung wird das Organ zwar auch als in sich reflektiertes und das Tun besprechendes Dasein betrachtet; aber dies Sein ist ein gegenständliches, und das Resultat der physiognomischen Beobachtung ist dieses, daß das Selbstbewußtsein gegen eben diese seine Wirklichkeit als gegen etwas Gleichgültiges gegenübertritt.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 245.)

<sup>503</sup> That is, in one sense, the goal: “Die Beobachtung ist damit dazu gekommen, es auszusprechen, was unser Begriff von ihr war, daß nämlich die Gewißheit der Vernunft sich selbst als gegenständliche Wirklichkeit sucht.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 259.) But this goal is meant to be surpassed, and when it is, “organ” is simply no longer needed.

spirit to be a bone.<sup>504</sup> Hegel calls this judgment “infinite”—it is a pure unification of opposites, and the most extreme form of judgment immanent to the perspective of representation. It is the ultimate false categorial assertion, because it takes the two sides of representational assertion (the subject and the object) and identifies them.<sup>505</sup> It is a pure, unreflected category. It forces reason to grasp its own activity as such, because it points into categorial emptiness. For Hegel, the infinite judgment “spirit is a bone” is simply nothing other than reason’s categorial assertion in itself. This is what makes it the entry into reason’s self-realization<sup>506</sup>:

Die beobachtende Vernunft wendet sich also an diese, an den Geist, den als Allgemeinheit existierenden Begriff oder als Zweck existierenden Zweck; und ihr eigenes Wesen ist ihr nunmehr der Gegenstand.<sup>507</sup>

As observing reason prepares to become self-realizing reason, organ becomes a terminological artifact of the disappearing stage.<sup>508</sup> It was a terminological instrument of

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<sup>504</sup> And it is here that Hegel brushes the *organ* finally aside: “Die Rückenwirbelsäule fällt also, wenn man will, *mit Recht* hinweg; und es ist so gut als viele andere naturphilosophische Lehren *konstruiert*, daß der Schädel allein zwar nicht die *Organe* des Geistes enthalte.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 247.)

<sup>505</sup> “Der Begriff dieser Vorstellung ist, daß die Vernunft sich *alle Dingheit*, auch die *rein gegenständliche, selbst* ist; sie ist aber dies *im Begriffe*, oder der Begriff nur ist ihre Wahrheit, und je reiner der Begriff selbst ist, zu einer desto alberneren Vorstellung sinkt er herab, wenn sein Inhalt nicht als Begriff, sondern als Vorstellung ist, - wenn das sich selbst aufhebende Urteil nicht mit dem Bewußtsein dieser seiner Unendlichkeit genommen wird, sondern als ein bleibender Satz, und dessen Subjekt und Prädikat jedes für sich gelten, das Selbst als Selbst, das Ding als Ding fixiert und doch eins das andere sein soll. - Die Vernunft, wesentlich der Begriff, ist unmittelbar in sich selbst und ihr Gegenteil entzweit, ein Gegensatz, der eben darum ebenso unmittelbar aufgehoben ist.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 263.)

<sup>506</sup> Hegel follows his usual dialectical logic, in which a lack leads to the emergence of a new form of self-consciousness. He employs Biblical typology in an infantilizing gesture towards Judaism to make his point by analogy: “Damit scheint aber auch die beobachtende Vernunft in der Tat ihre Spitze erreicht zu haben, von welcher sie sich selbst verlassen und sich überschlagen muß; denn erst das ganz Schlechte hat die unmittelbare Notwendigkeit an sich, sich zu verkehren. - Wie von dem jüdischen Volke gesagt werden kann, daß es gerade darum, weil es unmittelbar vor der Pforte des Heils stehe, das verworfenste sei und gewesen sei; was es an und für sich sein sollte, diese Selbstwesenheit ist es sich nicht, sondern verlegt sie jenseits seiner; es macht sich durch diese Entäußerung ein höheres Dasein *möglich*, wenn es seinen Gegenstand wieder in sich zurücknehmen könnte, als wenn es innerhalb der Unmittelbarkeit des Seins stehengeblieben [wäre], weil der Geist um so größer ist, aus je größerem Gegensatze er in sich zurückkehrt; diesen Gegensatz aber macht er sich in dem Aufheben seiner unmittelbaren Einheit und in der Entäußerung seines Fürsichseins.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 257.)

<sup>507</sup> Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 258.

<sup>508</sup> For example: “Von dieser wandelbaren Sprache geht darum die Beobachtung endlich zum *festen Sein* zurück und spricht ihrem Begriffe nach aus, daß die Äußerlichkeit nicht als Organ, auch nicht als Sprache und Zeichen, sondern als *totes Ding* die äußere und unmittelbare Wirklichkeit des Geistes sei.” And even

observing reason, and nothing more. Other than a dismissive—and intentionally vulgar—joke, Hegel has no more use for organology, Gall’s or Schelling’s:

“Das *Tiefe*, das der Geist von innen heraus, aber nur bis in sein *vorstellendes Bewußtsein* treibt und es in diesem stehenläßt, - und die *Unwissenheit* dieses Bewußtseins, was das ist, was es sagt, ist dieselbe Verknüpfung des Hohen und Niedrigen, welche an dem Lebendigen die Natur in der Verknüpfung des Organs seiner höchsten Vollendung, des Organs der Zeugung, und des Organs des Pissens naiv ausdrückt. - Das unendliche Urteil als unendliches wäre die Vollendung des sich selbst erfassenden Lebens; das in der Vorstellung bleibende Bewußtsein desselben aber verhält sich als Pissen.<sup>509</sup>

Reason will realize itself in a play of immediacy and mediation that decreasingly requires materializing terminology. *Naturphilosophie* is itself brushed aside here, as the hermeneutics of spirit’s self-becoming. Infinite judgment has a pale reflection in the contradictory coincidence of the organ of secretion and reproduction—nothing more.

If there is a critique of Romantic organology at work here, then it must dovetail with Hegel’s critique of Schelling. That is a critique of the formerly-shared “identity philosophy,” perhaps Schelling’s least organ-laced system.<sup>510</sup> As I reconstruct Hegel’s objection, it runs along parallel terminological and conceptual tracks. The terminological track is retroactively irrelevant, given the Schellingian objection to Gall’s materialization arguments. The transcendentalization of the term *organ* in Hölderlin as in Schelling shows that organology does not limit itself to the use legitimated for observing but not other reasons. If there is a conceptual objection, then it must be that Romantic organology is itself an example of the categorial emptiness of observing reason. This in fact dovetails

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more explicitly: “Es verbirgt sich vielmehr aus einem tiefer liegenden Selbstbewußtsein des Geistes, das hier als eine natürliche Honettetät erscheint, die Schmählichkeit des begrifflosen nackten Gedankens, für die Wirklichkeit des Selbstbewußtseins einen Knochen zu nehmen, und übertüncht ihn durch die Gedankenlosigkeit selbst, mancherlei Verhältnisse von Ursache und Wirkung, von Zeichen, Organ usw., die hier keinen Sinn haben, einzumischen und durch Unterscheidungen, die von ihnen hergenommen sind, das Grelle des Satzes zu verstecken.” (Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 259.)

<sup>509</sup> Hegel, *PhdG*, p. 262.

<sup>510</sup> I will come back to the identity philosophy at the beginning of chapter V of the present study, under the rubric “mythological organology.” Exceptions to the lack of organs in the identity-system will be identified there.

nicely with Hegel's basic critique of Schelling, to the effect that no principle of differentiability effectively links the real absolute with its emanating particulars. It is my contention that Schelling, if he is to have a response to this objection, will have had it only in the 1809 *Freedom essay*, in a last but important formulation of organology that unites organological Nature with organological I (the two poles of reason's observation) in what I call a "Romantic metaphysics of morals."

The *Freedom essay* is notoriously difficult, and represents Schelling's turn against Hegel and towards a "positive philosophy" in which a theological, irrational kernel resists the totalizing reason of his earlier systems. And yet, the essay explicitly unites *Naturphilosophie* with idealism by way of a reading of Kant's moral philosophy. Organology's final formulation in Schelling was tasked, from the beginning, with responding to Hegel. And although Schelling reached deep into the Christian tradition, orthodox as well as hermetic, to achieve his end, in a sense, theology becomes an *organ* here, before the late Schelling would return philosophy to its ancillary position with respect to theology. Because the problem was that of the activity of reason, it was natural that the context for such reflection should have been Kant's "practical reason," reason possessed of a rational will. Schelling adopted the project of Kant's rationalization of the will, but altered its source, making it a deed which, in the end, rationalized Nature too.

It is common to think of Kant as pursuing his incomplete marriage of concept and intuition—and excluding "things in themselves"—in the name of "making room for faith"<sup>511</sup>—rational faith. And yet his defense of rational "spontaneity" on the one hand, and of reason's reflexivity on the other (specifically, its self-restriction to application always with respect to the understanding—or what Kant calls *Kritik*) also makes room for

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<sup>511</sup> *KdrV* Bxxx.

the intentionally flexible elements of his understanding of our knowledge. For example, the break between the understanding's and reason's manner of judgment ensures that, while the understanding can only produce validities through reference to the concreteness of particular intuitions, our power to think is not merely representational. And as soon as it is not, it is also practical—that is, our judgments leave the realm of evaluating representational “matching” and enter into that of evaluation.<sup>512</sup> It is on this transition to evaluation with respect to action that Kant bases his constitutive metaphysics “of morals,” based merely on the (for us) necessary “standpoint” of our own freedom. The ability to represent rules for action to ourselves, and then to evaluate the relationship between those rules (maxims) and possible actual actions, presumes, for Kant, the standpoint of freedom. To be free is nothing other than to possess, in just this sense, a “rational will.”

And yet, this evaluative comparison we perform remains empirical—Kant calls its imperatives “hypothetical”—so long as there is no necessary relation between the deed and the rule. This obtains whenever we act “pathologically”—out of external necessity or drive. But we must believe, according to Kant, that we are rationally willful in order to make these evaluations at all. Indeed, following the same procedure he had for the metaphysics of nature—the analysis of *a priori* elements in everyday judgments of truth—Kant here isolates an internally necessary belief in the possibility of rational will which excludes the hypothetical and thereby the empirical. He thus calls his “categorical imperative” “*ein synthetisch-praktischer Satz a priori*.”<sup>513</sup> The evaluative judgment

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<sup>512</sup> It is above all Susan Neiman who has emphasized this side of Kant in her *The Unity of Reason: Rereading Kant* (Oxford: Oxford 1997).

<sup>513</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* in Immanuel Kant, *Werke in zwölf Bänden. Band 7* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1977), pp. 11-102, here p. 50. I cite as: *GMS*, p. 50.

provides its own content—it both extends our reason and is necessary from the standpoint of practical reason. The form of metaphysics is retained, but its content is shifted into what he repeatedly calls “another order of things.” Out of the restrictions that allow for validity in the sciences emerges the malleable kingdom of metaphysical morals, grounding both a philosophy of freedom and a teleological approach to society’s progress in social and political matters.

This depiction of Reason, of its desire and operation, was determinative. Yet Kant restricted its use severely, calling its “pure” version a matter for “discipline.” Where no measure of experience can aid us in separating true from false, no referential claims should be made. That there *is* such a space, however, is a constant point of insistence in Kant. We have entered, he writes in the *Groundwork*, the space where “die Beispiele uns verlassen.”<sup>514</sup>

Lacking orientation in such a world of Reason, we must, minimally, be able to determine ways of acting. Kant's line of thought begins with a phenomenal observation about humans: we are the sort of beings that act in accordance with universal rules which we represent to ourselves. For Kant, this is simply what it *is* to have a human will. The capacity to represent rule-based reasons for action to oneself is, then, at the heart of Kant's moral rationalism. The reasons we give ourselves for action are dubbed “maxims” (internal determining grounds for action) and are contrasted to “pathological” (external, playing on the Greek *pathein*, “to suffer”) determining grounds for action (like our physical inclinations). To begin with, Kant brackets the metaphysical question of the freedom of the will in favor of this phenomenal exploration. But the question of metaphysics arises again when Kant sorts out types of imperatives to action.

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<sup>514</sup> *GMS*, p. 41.

At the outset of the essay, Kant had defined metaphysics as “reine Philosophie... auf bestimmte Gegenstände des Verstandes eingeschränkt...”<sup>515</sup> In the realm of theoretical philosophy, as we have seen, this limitation misfires: posited entities can never be known to be like the positing we perform. In the realm of practical reason, this restriction does not hold. This is because no external measure is needed in the case of philosophical exploration of practical Reason (having to do with the will). Our intentions and our actions, minimally, may be the determinate objects of our assertions without an external measure of truth for such assertion: we know that we give and take Reasons, that we represent rules for our own actions. Kant continues: where a hypothetical imperative only gives us possible actions aimed at some determinate goal outside us, the categorical imperative “würde der sein, welcher eine Handlung als für sich selbst, ohne Beziehung auf einen andern Zweck, als objektiv-notwendig vorstellte.”<sup>516</sup> The categorical imperative—should one exist—is therefore universally valid for all creatures possessing Reason, and indeed is based on an internal *telos* of practical Reason itself. The reason the doctrine is called “metaphysical” begins to become clear: where the hypothetical imperative falls out into the “possible” and “actual” intentions of an act, the categorical imperative is an apodictic principle.<sup>517</sup> If we gloss “apodictic” as *a priori*, we see what Kant has in mind. He has written that the moral doctrine has as its source the “Idee, die die Vernunft a priori von sittlicher Vollkommenheit entwirft.”<sup>518</sup> Reason's “idea” of moral perfection is itself a practical source of synthesis a priori. And indeed, while imperatives having external ends cause intentions to be merely analytical (executions of

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<sup>515</sup> *GMS*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>516</sup> *GMS*, p. 43.

<sup>517</sup> *GMS*, p. 44.

<sup>518</sup> *GMS*, p. 36.



an entirely self-possessed concept of myself acting in the service of a conceptualized goal), the truly moral imperative is a “synthetisch-praktischer Satz a priori...”<sup>519</sup>, and the source of this synthesis does not stand under the restrictions of theoretical cognition's rational discipline. This source, however, would appear mysterious to thinkers like Schelling.

When Kant formulates the categorical imperative—“*handle nur nach derjenigen Maxime, durch die du zugleich wollen kannst, dass sie ein allgemeines Gesetz werde*”<sup>520</sup>—he takes himself to have formulated a metaphysical principle. This is because the imperative to universalizable intention does not follow from our representation of the law, but furthers it. The affirmation is subjective, and its content is objectively universal, binding for all. For our purposes, it suffices to understand that this convergence is 1) synthetic (because the representation of the law does not contain this imperative in itself) and 2) a priori (since no experience can teach us universal truth). Practically, this means that we are neither coerced (non-affirming of the maxim) nor acting from a contingent recognition (as would be the case with a hypothetical imperative). Our actions, should we follow the categorical imperative, will be unexemplified yet metaphysical in nature. Beyond example, we will draw from the source of metaphysico-practical truth made up by morality itself, or what Kant will come to characterize as the “*das Reich der Zwecke*.”<sup>521</sup>

And indeed, the latter formulation is not accidental. Ultimately, Kant finds in the *Groundwork* that the only possible source for a metaphysics of morals is the concept of a creature which contains an absolute measure of value in itself—the notion of an internal

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<sup>519</sup> *GMS*, p. 50.

<sup>520</sup> *GMS*, p. 51.

<sup>521</sup> *GMS*, p. 66.

end. Thus the second formulation of the categorical imperative: “*handle so, als ob die Maxime deiner Handlung durch deinen Willen zum allgemeinen Naturgesetze werden sollte.*”<sup>522</sup> The metaphysics defended here, then, is a regulative one (“als ob”) meant to produce a future in free acts. The will of the individual is to become, through the categorical imperative, the very possibility of a transformative metaphysics also of nature—counterfactually, for the purpose of guiding our actions.

Paul Guyer writes that “... throughout his works of the 1790s... Kant now emphasizes that we are sensuous as well as rational creatures, and therefore need sensuous as well as rational presentation and confirmation of the conditions of the possibility of morality.”<sup>523</sup> The kernel of this transition—not without its difficulties, even within Kant's works—was already given with the *Grundlegung*. The concept of categorical, metaphysical (regulative) freedom is not visible, not exemplified in acts, but (already) positively requires these acts for the fulfillment of its task. Thus, when Schelling writes in the *Freedom essay* that idealism has only produced the “formal” concept of freedom, and that Kant has failed precisely in not conferring “real” freedom upon “things,” his claim must be read against the backdrop of Kant's all-too-practical project of a this-worldly metaphysics of morals. Indeed, we shall see how Schelling adopts this project and alters its source.<sup>524</sup>

The task of the *Freedom essay* consists in a revision of Kant which sounds very much like the job of naturephilosophy:

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<sup>522</sup> *GMS*, p. 51.

<sup>523</sup> Guyer, *Kant*, p. 310.

<sup>524</sup> What the source is for Kant himself is not easy to determine. It seems to be Reason itself—but then the Idealist/Romantic question about Reason's ontological status becomes necessary. Schiller's aesthetic writings of the 1790s are probably the most pronounced attempt to answer this sort of question outside of Kant's writings—until, I am claiming, the *FS*. See especially letter 14 of *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen*.

Es wird aber immer merkwürdig bleiben, dass Kant, nachdem er zuerst Dinge an sich von Erscheinungen nur negativ, durch die Unabhängigkeit von der Zeit, unterschieden, nachher in den metaphysischen Erörterungen seiner Kritik der praktischen Vernunft Unabhängigkeit von der Zeit und Freiheit wirklich als korrele Begriffe behandelt hatte, nicht zu dem Gedanken fortging, diesen einzig möglichen positiven Begriff des An-sich auch auf die Dinge überzutragen, wodurch er sich unmittelbar zu einem höhern Standpunkt der Betrachtung und über die Negativität erhoben hätte, die der Charakter seiner theoretischen Philosophie ist.<sup>525</sup>

Andrew Bowie comments that “this is... actually another version of *Naturphilosophie*.”<sup>526</sup>

And indeed, the *FS* seems to take both projects into its purview: to raise things to consciousness, now by conferring freedom upon them, and to objectify consciousness itself, by knowing—and ultimately by acting—it.

Schelling follows the passage cited above with the remark that “mere idealism” will not take him the step Kant did not go. In this context, however, it would be wrong to think that Schelling means “idealism” in general; rather, he means Kant's specific version, replete with its agnosticism about things-in-themselves and its (apparently sourceless) notion of freedom. Schelling goes on to call this concept of freedom “merely formal,” and tries to replace it with “real” freedom. As we have seen, Kant thinks himself to be establishing a metaphysical doctrine of freedom based in morality—the synthetic *practical* judgment a priori (the categorical imperative) is, for Kant, a constitutive practical truth for us. Nothing supervenes the rule of this law, and the project of “transition” consists largely in “creating the kingdom of ends,” as Christine Korsgaard has put it.<sup>527</sup> Key uncertainties remain within the Kantian model, especially what sort of

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<sup>525</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände*, ed. Thomas Buchheim (Hamburg: Meiner 1997), p. 24. I cite as *FS*, p. 24.

<sup>526</sup> Andrew Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge 1993), p. 94.

<sup>527</sup> Christine Korsgaard, *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge: Cambridge 1996).

role aesthetic, but crucially also ontology itself in the form of teleological judgments, can play in “helping” us to act freely.<sup>528</sup>

The *Freedom essay* is notoriously hermetic in language, in outline, and in sources (the mystical tradition and above all Jakob Böhme<sup>529</sup>). Yet it is governed by a single figure—the relation between ground and consequent—interpreted according to the special concept of Reason Schelling was developing.<sup>530</sup> Indeed, the *Freedom essay* begins with a re-interpretation of pantheism that proceeds by investigating this figure. Schelling rejects the possibility that “sameness” is intended in the pantheistic doctrine *Deus sive Natura*, defending his belief that judgments are characterized rather by active and differentiating synthesis than simple identity. Although the *Freedom essay* quickly moves into a defense of the “real” concept of freedom, we should not underestimate the importance of this early distinction. Schelling here grounds his concept of the “indifference” of Reason: we have insight into the process we carry out, and we thus act and know simultaneously. Remarking on the dialectical movement between “A” and “A” in the judgment “A=A,” Schelling writes that

Spinozas härtester Ausdruck ist wohl der: das einzelne Wesen sei die Substanz selbst, in einer ihrer Modifikationen, d.h. Folgen, betrachtet. Setzen wir nun die unendliche Substanz=A, dieselbe in einer ihrer Folgen betrachtet=A/a: so ist das Positive in A/a allerdings A; aber es folgt nicht, dass deswegen A/a=A, d.h. dass die unendliche Substanz

<sup>528</sup> Treatments of these problems may be found in Guyer, *Kant*, p. 307-360.

<sup>529</sup> For reasons of space, I intend to leave the Behmenist element—indeed the whole hermetic vision—untreated here. I do not therefore consider it unimportant, but I believe that Schelling found an ally in Böhme as he perused the tradition in the spring months of 1809. See his readings, which included Augustine, Boethius, and Luther documented in ed. Hans Jörg Sandkühler et al 2004. Documentation of Schelling's reading of “JB” (Böhme) is at p. 11. Thorough and balanced treatments of the issue are: Robert Brown, *The Later Philosophy of Schelling: the Influence of Boehme in the Works of 1809-1815* (Lewisburg: Bucknell 1977), esp. pp. 114-151; and Paola Mayer, *Jena Romanticism and Its Appropriation of Jakob Böhme: Theosophy, Hagiography, Literature* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's 1999), pp. 179-222. See also the helpful summary of Böhme's work at *Ibid.*, pp. 18-26.

<sup>530</sup> See the recent work by Christopher Lauer, *The Suspension of Reason in Hegel and Schelling* (New York: Continuum 2010). See also the targeted study of the figure “ground-consequent” by Thomas Buchheim, “Das Prinzip des Grundes und Schellings Weg zur *Freiheitsschrift*” in eds. Hans Michael Baumgartner and Wilhelm G. Jacobs, *Schellings Weg zur Freiheitsschrift: Legende und Wirklichkeit* (Stuttgart—Bad Canstatt: frommann-holboog 1996), pp. 223-240.

in ihrer Folge betrachtet mit der unendlichen Substanz betrachtet *einerlei* sei; oder, mit anderen Worten, es folgt nicht dass A/a nicht eine eigne besondere Substanz (wenn gleich Folge von A) ist... Wenn daher auch die Substanz in ihren andern Folgen A/b, A/c... nur vorübergehend wohnte, so würde sie doch in jener Folge, der menschlichen Seele=a, ewig wohnen, und daher als A/a auf eine ewige und unvergängliche Weise von sich selbst als A geschieden sein.<sup>531</sup>

This declared borrowing from Spinoza forms the main implement of the *Freedom essay*, the strategy of which is to combine this tool with a Kantian metaphysical framework to generate a new Reason. Much of the above statement would, of course, not be accepted by Spinoza.<sup>532</sup> Nevertheless, Schelling is dealing with a genuinely “Spinozan” problem, and it seems doubtful that, in the last account, this problem of predication was not also a question for Spinozism.<sup>533</sup> In any case, Herder had laid the ground for such a reading of Spinoza by carefully raising the problem of different types of infinities in his *Gott: einige Gespräche*.<sup>534</sup> The second of the *Gespräche* is largely devoted to proving that Spinoza is not a pantheist after all, and this takes the form of denying the strict, predicative identity of things and God. Schelling's procedure is a different one: he re-interprets the sense of the copula, leaving Spinoza's identification intact but altered.<sup>535</sup> Nevertheless, as Manfred Durner writes, Herder and Schelling “betonen die innere Einheit von Natur und

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<sup>531</sup> *FS*, p. 17.

<sup>532</sup> The most obvious element is, of course, the privileged status of the human soul. This is attached, as I have just pointed out, to the Romantic sense of basic conscious alienation. It is also questionable whether Spinoza would have taken the “problem” Schelling is talking about (in what way  $A=A/a$ ) at all seriously. The problem is nevertheless active in the *Ethics* from the definitions of the first book on. Vaught writes instructively that “Spinoza represents both the system to which Schelling most oppose [sic] his “system of freedom” and an interlocutor with whom his thought may ultimately coincide.” (Vaught 2008, pp. 213-14.)

<sup>533</sup> For an appropriative reading of Spinoza on predication, see Robert Brandom, *Tales of the Mighty Dead: Historical Essays in the Metaphysics of Intentionality* (Cambridge: Harvard, 2002), pp. 121-143.

<sup>534</sup> In the second of the *Gespräche*, at Herder 1987 p. 764, Herder separates between force and ur-force, thus denying the infinity of God identity with that of the attributes: “Er, der Selbstständige, er ist im höchsten, einzigen Verstande des Worts, *Kraft*, d.i. die Urkraft aller Kräfte...” To be sure, the difference between these infinities is already in Spinoza (substance is clearly infinite in a different, more comprehensive sense than any single attribute), but Herder's conclusion to a minimally transcendental God *in which* everything is (panentheism) would have been unacceptable to Spinoza.

<sup>535</sup> A basic overview of Herder's possible contribution to Schelling's overall project of *Naturphilosophie* is given in the helpful article by Manfred Durner, “Die Naturphilosophie im 18. Jahrhundert und der naturwissenschaftliche Unterricht in Tübingen: zu den Quellen von Schellings Naturphilosophie,” in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 73 (1999), pp. 71-103; Herder is treated at pp. 83-84.

Geschichte.”<sup>536</sup> The particularity of the seemingly contingent historical flow of things is tied, for both thinkers (and for both thinkers through Spinoza) to Nature itself. Rather than hedging however slightly on this unity, Schelling re-casts the sense of unity as such along Romantic organological lines.

We are now in a position to see Schelling’s unique adoption of the project of a metaphysics of morals. The moral action, for Schelling, is metaphysical, not because it meets requirements set up for another, constitutive metaphysics whose task it does not fulfill, but because the act here binds and opens to cognition in itself. Outside of time, it produces the ground of synthesis even as it occurs—and thus produces Reason. Reason is thus situated constitutively in the dynamic moment poised to become the future. It is as though Schelling’s romantic metaphysics of morals is simply Kant’s embodied—constituting as it produces the temporal order it oversees. Freedom is simply the necessary engagement with this moving metaphysical ground. And freedom means making the self an organ.<sup>537</sup>

The most radical move of the *Freedom essay* is, without a doubt, the identification of Will with Being (*Ursein*): the combination of Spinozism and idealism literalizes and ontologizes the language of *Handlung* and *Tat* in Fichte and Hegel. The process of elevation towards the real “system of reason” involved an ontological will tied to and ultimately instrumentalizing the individual human will:

In dieser [Erhebung] (der Freiheit) wurde behauptet, finde sich der letzte potenzierende Akt, wodurch sich die ganze Natur in Empfindung, in Intelligenz, endlich in Willen

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<sup>536</sup> Durner, “Naturphilosophie,” p. 84.

<sup>537</sup> Schelling had written in similar terms as the identity system gave way to his theological interests. So, for example: “When the absolute knows itself it does so through us, so that we are the organs of its self-knowledge.” *System der gesamten Philosophie* §§1, 4, Werke, VI, 140, 143, as cited in Beiser, *German Idealism*, p. 594. For commentary on Schelling’s development between 1801 and 1809, most helpful is the collection eds. Christian Danz and Jörg Jantzen, *Gott, Natur, Kunst und Geschichte: Schelling zwischen Identitätsphilosophie und Freiheitsschrift* (Göttingen: Vienna University Press, 2011).

verkläre.—Es gibt in der letzten und höchsten Instanz gar kein anderes Sein als Wollen. Wollen ist Ursein, und auf dieses allein passen alle Prädikate desselben: Grundlosigkeit, Ewigkeit, Unabhängigkeit von der Zeit, Selbstbejahung. Die ganze Philosophie strebt nur dahin, diesen höchsten Ausdruck zu finden.<sup>538</sup>

What sort of doctrine results from the combination of the ground-consequent doctrine of predication and the metaphysical determination, Will is *Ursein*?<sup>539</sup>

The passage is often read alongside Nietzsche, for obvious reasons. And yet, Schelling does *not* equate being with *Wille* (Schopenhauer's term, which Nietzsche borrowed). Schelling instead tells us that *Ursein* is *Wollen*—desire, want, even intent. And if we turn back to Kant's *GMS*, we find the repeated formula (with respect to the categorical imperative) “dieses Sollen ist ein Wollen.”<sup>540</sup> Indeed, it is just this modal shift that makes the imperative categorical, that makes up the metaphysics defended here. If the *Sollen* were not fully internalized—and this means autonomously produced—it could not be *a priori*. Its necessity comes from the will's rationality.

*Wollen ist Ursein*—this metaphysics unites Idealism with *Naturphilosophie*, making will the source of theoretical insight.<sup>541</sup> But for idealism as a Schellingian project, this sentence places a potentially rational will in the position of providing the source of extension of reason, a “truly rational insight.” Just as Schelling ultimately rejected Kant's restriction of metaphysical knowledge to the regularities of conceptual reasoning, so in

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<sup>538</sup> *FS*, p. 23.

<sup>539</sup> Here I emphatically avoid a Nietzschean framework. See, for treatment of the problem, Judith Norman's “Schelling and Nietzsche: Willing and Time” in Judith Norman and Alistair Welchman, eds., *The New Schelling* (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 90-106. I avoid this framework in discussing Schelling (the latter's influence on the young Nietzsche via Eduard von Hartmann is, of course, important for Nietzsche studies) because I do not believe that the (post-)Kantian vision of metaphysics falls prey to Nietzsche's otherwise withering critique of the tradition.

<sup>540</sup> “Dieses Sollen ist eigentlich ein Wollen.” *KdpV* BA103, then also: “Das moralische Sollen ist also eigenes notwendiges Wollen als Gliedes einer intelligibelen Welt...” (*KdpV* BA113.)

<sup>541</sup> Rudolphi, *Produktion und Konstruktion*, claims that a move to practical philosophy as the basis of *Naturphilosophie* in the 1790s. In one sense, I am placing this move much later. In another, even here I cannot agree. Schelling is making the will, at the edge between reason and the irrational, an admittedly practico-philosophical source also of theoretical philosophy.

ethics he rejected Kant's constitution of the experience of the act. The line between "hypothetical" and "categorical" in Kant is simply too cleanly cut for Schelling. Where Kant's system restricts the rational *Wollen* to that which proceeds from the "standpoint" of constitutively practical reason, Schelling imagines a will that can categorialize the external or the merely hypothetical. This will cannot simply be "argued" for—it literally gets its (necessarily historical) information from its actions. Schelling was proposing a synthesis of deed with the possibility of moving intentionally but not arbitrarily into the future.

The act, for Schelling, binds as the judgment does for Kant. The act thus fills the copula, opening onto a future as yet undetermined but unfolding synthetically with our attention and intention. Reason therefore is not the ground but stands in a privileged, active relation to the ground, its movement being that of the ground in expression. We can say that Reason does not constitute the ground but is privileged to be constituted by it; and thus knowledge, paradigmatically of the act (since the ground is will) is conceived in Spinozan terms as immediate insight (*scientia intuitiva*) into the ground of Reason—knowledge of the cause literally through its effect (the vehicle of that knowledge itself). We can call this epistemological pantheism and a dynamically constitutive metaphysics of morals.<sup>542</sup> The moment of Reason we call the "future"—the movement in which synthesis occurs—is thus opened by Schelling in a plastic re-casting of the Christian

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<sup>542</sup> This leads me to reject the otherwise sympathetic result of the study by Wilhelm Jacobs, "Vom Ursprung des Bösen zum Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit oder Transzendentalphilosophie und Metaphysik" in eds. Baumgartner and Jacobs, *Schellings Weg zur Freiheitsschrift: Legende und Wirklichkeit* (Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt: frommann-holzboog, 1996), pp. 11-28. His premise (that the *FS* is "eine die Transzendentalphilosophie voraussetzende metaphysische Lösung," p. 22) seems unimpeachable to me. Yet his conclusion that "somit geht die Wirklichkeit der sittlichen Freiheit ihrer Reflexion voraus... [deswegen] ist diese Reflexion Metaphysik und nicht Transzendentalphilosophie" (pp. 25-6), seems to me to miss the synthetic point. Rather than opposing these traditionally un-combinable disciplines and choosing a side (however subtly), Schelling has found the resources in the synthetic a priori act itself to unite the disciplines at a deeper level, where metaphysics is producible and produced.



metaphysical tradition, and a synthesis of Kantian and Spinozan elements. The history of Reason, history *qua* Reason, serves as the torque to pry open this new dimension of active predication, to *extend Reason* and extend its task. The interface between the rational will and its non-rational ground makes a theological organ for a metaphysical (organological) approach to politics. That interface tells us not how to act, but what an act *is*.

That act is the very difference between self and world (including social world), the point of indifference between intellectual intuition and Nature. Its organ—the agent in the act, the person—makes the hypothetical into the categorical. Schelling founded the possibility of introducing and transforming non-contingent norms into the garden-variety judgments and actions. That legacy has more than antiquarian value: it suggests a progressive constitution of the social (and natural) worlds with constant reference to the not-yet-included. The Romantic Metaphysics of Morals remains, in this sense, to be written. Schelling gave it a mere foundation: an *organon*. It is in this special sense that I think Schelling contributed to the formation of organological metapolitics.<sup>543</sup> Rather than a positive program of political action, this ontology was meant to make good on the promise of the organ's dual capacity to grasp and to act. Not the body of positive law, the canon of a particular politics, but the *organon* of a politics, its source. That source was the mutual instrumentalization of general and individual will.

The above quotation makes clear that Schelling is attempting a different sort of synthesis from his earlier attempts. The players remain the same: Kant's idealism (now rather than just his criticism) is to be combined with Spinoza's view of Nature (his

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<sup>543</sup> Thus a different sense from the ontological one given by Manfred Frank in his *Der unendliche Mangel an Sein: Schellings Hegel-Kritik und die Anfänge der Marxschen Dialektik* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1988).

monism). For this purpose, Schelling chooses a profoundly non-Spinozan figure, the Will, and grants it ontological status (a move Kant would reject out of hand). Yet his reason for doing this may be twofold. On the one hand, the movement required by his pantheistic understanding of the ground-consequent relation is one that cannot be provided for by a static being. There must, then, be a primal *movement* (and not just mover), which Schelling finds expression for in Böhme's sense of “craving.”<sup>544</sup> The ground can only insufficiently be described *in its causation*, for Schelling, by a Spinozan *potestas*-figure.<sup>545</sup> This is because “power” in itself must be *moved*, for Schelling—or much more must be movement, be in the continuously undulating relation of ground to consequent. Herder had tested the notion of *Kraft* to solve this problem; Schelling finds that only the synthesizing will can suffice here. The rejection of the “individual’s power” model of freedom leads to the second point, which is that, for Schelling, there must be a “rational insight” (*Vernunftinsicht*) into this process of movement itself. Schelling tells us, even as he quotes Lessing's *Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*, that the system of “true reason” would be “ein System, worin die Vernunft sich selbst wirklich erkannte,”<sup>546</sup> but that this recognition would not be enough. Schelling's future consists of the ur-

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<sup>544</sup> See the *Mysterium Pansophicum or Thorough Report on the Earthly and Heavenly Mysterium*, translated in F.W.J. Schelling, *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt (Albany: SUNY, 2006), pp. 85-99.

<sup>545</sup> See TTP Chapter 16: “For the power of nature is the very power of God who has supreme right to do all things... And since it is the supreme law of nature that each thing strives to persist in its own state so far as it can... it follows that each individual has a sovereign right to do this, i.e. (as I said) to exist and to behave as it is naturally determined to behave.” (Spinoza, *Theological-political Treatise*, ed. Jonathan Israel (Cambridge: Cambridge 2007), pp. 195-6.) See also *Ethics* I Prop. VII for Spinoza's definition of freedom. I have used Baruch de Spinoza, *Ethik in geometrischer Ordnung dargestellt*, ed. Wolfgang Bartuschat (Hamburg: Meiner 2007), here p. 6/7. I cite as: EIPVII (for generality).

<sup>546</sup> *FS*, p. 85.

movement provided for by the ontologization of the will, and the theoretico-practical indifference (the “indifference of Reason”) created by the a-temporal act.<sup>547</sup> He writes

Nur in der Persönlichkeit ist Leben; und alle Persönlichkeit ruht auf einem dunklen Grunde, der also allerdings auch Grund der Erkenntnis sein muss. Aber nur der Verstand ist es, der das in diesem Grunde verborgene und bloss potentialiter enthaltene herausbildet und zum Aktus erhebt.<sup>548</sup>

The twin concepts “life” and “personality” are thus re-worked by Schelling on the basis of his new conception of pantheism. They are intentionally mythologized, and the personality of the human, immersed in hermetic emanation of life, becomes the *organ* of God.<sup>549</sup> In the key passage about Lessing in the *FS*, Schelling points to the result of transformation of revelation into Reason:

Wir im Gegenteil sind der Meinung, dass eben von den höchsten Begriffen eine klare Vernunftansicht möglich sein muss, indem sie nur dadurch uns wirklich eigen, in uns selbst aufgenommen und ewig gegründet werden können.<sup>550</sup>

To conceive of the result of this process as human ownership of the truth is also to see that, for Schelling, Reason is capable of acting, is primarily *actu*, and as such, opens continuously onto a new dimension. This makes the relationship between two wills—general and individual—organological.

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<sup>547</sup> A-temporal, primarily, because a “thing-in-itself” on the Kantian model. I do not treat here the view of ethics which Schelling partially adopts and partially critiques from Kant's *Religion Within the Limits of Mere Reason*. The best treatment of this complex issue is Richard J. Bernstein, *Radical Evil: A Philosophical Interrogation* (Malden: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 9-46, and 76-98. See also Emile Fackenheim's “Kant and Radical Evil” in *University of Toronto Quarterly* (1954) 23, pp. 339-353.

<sup>548</sup> *FS*, p. 85.

<sup>549</sup> “Denn nur Persönliches kann Persönliches heilen, und Gott muß Mensch werden, damit der Mensch wieder zu Gott komme. Mit der hergestellten Beziehung des Grundes auf Gott ist erst die Möglichkeit der Heilung (des Heils) wiedergegeben. Ihr Anfang ist ein Zustand des Hellsehens, der durch göttliches Verhängnis auf einzelne Menschen (als hierzu auserwählte Organe) fällt, eine Zeit der Zeichen und Wunder, in welcher göttliche Kräfte den überall hervortretenden dämonischen, die besänftigende Einheit der Verteilung der Kräfte entgegenwirkt. Endlich erfolgte die Krisis in der Turba gentium, die den Grund der alten Welt überströmen, wie einst die Wasser des Anfangs die Schöpfungen der Urzeit wieder bedeckten, um eine zweite Schöpfung möglich zu machen – eine neue Scheidung der Völker und Zungen, ein neues Reich, in welchem das lebendige Wort als ein festes und beständiges Zentrum im Kampf gegen das Chaos eintritt, und ein erklärter, bis zum Ende der jetzigen Zeit fortdauernder Streit des Guten und des Bösen anfängt, in welchem eben Gott als Geist, d.h. als actu wirklich sich offenbart.” 476

<sup>550</sup> *FS*, p. 84.

Die allgemeine Möglichkeit des Bösen besteht, wie gezeigt, darin, daß der Mensch seine Selbstheit, anstatt sie zur Basis, zum Organ zu machen, vielmehr zum Herrschenden und zum Allwillen zu erheben, dagegen das Geistige in sich zum Mittel zu machen streben kann.<sup>551</sup>

Human selfhood is the necessary root of possible evil, but can be instrumentalized—made organ—not by God but by God’s reliance on the very selfhood in question. The hermetic text is used to make the individual will the organ of the general, metaphysical will. But this makes the hermetic text the organ of a metaphysics of freedom, a metapolitical organology based on the progressive synthesis of practical judgments. It is not that we proceed *a posteriori*, that we “have examples” in this system. It is that the very acts that must serve as evidence for thought can be made exemplary. By following Kant’s social rationalizing of the will, Schelling arrives at a metaphysical general will for which the individual will acts as an organ even as the philosopher of freedom makes theology his organ.

Activity is not reified, as Hegel had worried. The organs of will are not those of mere self-objectifying representational projection, because they are—as is Being in the *Freedom essay*—already self-differentiated. Reason grasps itself as will, as having started to act. It must trace the line backwards to the origin of its act, only to realize that its apparent essence relies always on its status as expressed. Its actuality is actual activity, and organ is no longer the sign of an arbitrary hermeneutics of observing reason. It is,

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<sup>551</sup> *FS*, p. 61. Schelling continues: “Ist in dem Menschen das finstere Prinzip der Selbstheit und des Eigenwillens ganz vom Licht durchdrungen und mit ihm eins, so ist Gott, als die ewige Liebe, oder als wirklich existierend, das Band der Kräfte in ihm. Sind aber die beiden Prinzipien in Zwietracht, so schwingt sich ein anderer Geist an die Stelle, da Gott sein sollte; der umgekehrte Gott nämlich; jenes durch die Offenbarung Gottes zur Aktualisierung erregte Wesen, das nie aus der Potenz zum Aktus gelangen kann, das zwar nie ist, aber immer sein will, und daher, wie die Materie der Alten, nicht mit dem vollkommenen Verstande, sondern nur durch falsche Imagination (*logismô nothô*) – welche eben die Sünde ist – als wirklich erfaßt (aktualisiert) werden kann; weshalb es durch spiegelhafte Vorstellungen, indem es, selbst nicht seiend, den Schein von dem wahren Sein, wie die Schlange die Farben vom Licht, entlehnt, den Menschen zur Sinnlosigkeit zu bringen strebt, in der es allein von ihm aufgenommen und begriffen werden kann.” *FS*, pp. 61-62. Note that *Band* can be a gloss on “organ,” and that false will (evil) leads to the “bastard knowledge” of Plato’s *Timaeus*.

instead, a necessary term for the dynamic relations of subsumption and subordination in the will to know. Organs are meant to be the practical categories of a radical metapolitics.

These organs are a synthesis of the early organological *Naturphilosophie* and the transcendental organology of the *StI*. The electrical and ideal organs of those two systems are combined into moral or metapolitical organs. These organs—the ur-will as the conflictual source of insight and action—constitute both the source of insight into Nature as infinite productivity, and root the ideal organs of the transcendental philosophy in a source which is not foreign to them but not simply created by them.<sup>552</sup> This is, in fact, why the metapolitical part of organology is so important: it provides the possibility of intervention in Nature and in history which is non-arbitrary but not pre-conceived. It tells us—now for the first time—that there can be something like a *technological metaphysics*. The metapolitics of organology offers the temptation of a systematic philosophy open to the contingency of real phenomenal flow and yet always preparing to interrupt that contingency with human categories, both theoretical and practical. That metapolitics thus bases itself on a revised notion of *techne*, something like a speculative activity.

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<sup>552</sup> Here I am re-valuing Eckart Förster's recent negative judgment of this characteristic of Schelling's philosophy. Förster writes that "Soll die intellektuelle Anschauung als Methode der Naturanschauung erhalten bleiben, dann geht das nur durch Depotenziierung (Ausschaltung) des anschauenden Subjekts. Es ist aber die Frage, ob eine intellektuelle Anschauung, in der vom Anschauenden abstrahiert wird, mehr als ein Spiel mit Worten ist... Soll dabei vom produzierenden Subjekt abstrahiert werden, dann müsste eine Einheit von Sein und Denken bestehen können, ohne dass diese als Produkt des Subjekts erschiene." (Eckart Förster, *Die 25 Jahre der Philosophie* (Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 2011), pp. 250-51) While an idealism that is not total in conception but offers the progressive possibility of ideal totalization is, for Förster, logically distasteful, organology offers precisely the theoretical groundwork for real, systemic categorial knowledge and alteration of the world and of history. Its perspective is not that of representation but of progressive and progressively human truth.

## Chapter IV: Universal Organs: Novalis's Romantic Organology

“Alles kann zum Experiment – alles zum *Organ* werden.”<sup>553</sup>

### Introduction

Where Hölderlin had inaugurated Romantic organology, introducing it as a new metaphysics of judgment with an ethics of tragedy, Schelling had given it classical form, retaining its physiological and logical provenances as he made natural science, aesthetics, and theology the instruments of philosophy. It was Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg) who would give the doctrine its name, as well as its most robust—and most deeply political—form. He would do this through similar discursive matrices to those of his predecessors. He would agree that there must be a new—as he put it—plastic metaphysics, true to Kant's Critical vision and capable of remaining open to the contingency of phenomena and their history. He would insist, with his friend Friedrich Schlegel, that this new metaphysics should be expressed in the form of a mythology, a new totality of beautiful propositions that could wield political force. Thus organology retained its dual mission: the progressive unification of the universal and the particular (in judgment's reflexive and open system) and the potential alteration of the world itself, both as Nature and as history. Where Hölderlin had envisioned an ethical organ, and Schelling a metaphysically moral organ, Novalis would be most insistent on a political organ. His version of organology is, in this sense, more thoroughly expressive of its

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<sup>553</sup> I cite Novalis from the Historisch-kritische Ausgabe (*Novalis Schriften: Die Werke Friedrich von Hardenbergs*), eds. Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1960/1977 ff.), in the form: *HKA* III, p. 391. I cite the *Allgemeines Brouillon* according to entry-numbers for generality, as: *AB* 657.

attachment to the post-revolutionary circumstance than those of his peers. Novalis agreed with them and in some ways went further than they did on the point that a flexible metaphysics was the logical outcome of Kant's impulse to include analysis of the knower in all analyses of the known. He also agreed that the result of that inclusion was the possibility of organs of knowledge that coincided, partially and actively, with the known. Metaphysics, in order to become modern after the Copernican and French revolutions, had to become technological, had to gain efficacy in the epistemological and political welter of the waning eighteenth century. For Novalis, this efficacy meant that organology could not remain on the political sidelines. It would have to provide what he improbably termed an "intellectual intuition of the political," the very substantial link between knowledge and action implied by the combined etymologies of "organ."

The Early Romantic project of a "new mythology" insisted on the possibility of radically new forms of cultural and political unity, forms that would be derived from the content of reason. This project thus had to be culturally totalizing, and its production would need to include revolutions in all aspects of that culture. For Novalis, working in the Jena atmosphere of Schelling's suggestions and Friedrich Schlegel's aesthetic revisionism, several sub-projects attached to the new mythology emerged in organological terms. First, in dialogue with Friedrich Schleiermacher, a new cosmology would have to be written. This cosmology makes the distance between Herder's quasi-organology and the Romantic doctrine most clear: the continuous and self-sufficient teleology of cosmological enjoyment (see chapter III above) proposed in the *Ideen* and even more explicitly in *Gott* was replaced with a world now defined as incomplete. Schleiermacher's revisionist anthropological theology served as a basis for Novalis to

introduce a kind of hole into the graph of the universe, a discontinuity built into any attempt to spatialize knowledge of the world. Novalis often conceives of human knowledge as mathematical—organs are sometimes described as both differentials and integrals—or cartographic. These two types of spatialization of lawful cognition of the world present a flat space that the subject observes from the other side. Talk of a “hole in the graph” (my terminology—Schleiermacher speaks of a “hole” as a “negative revelation of the universe”) serves to point to what Novalis conceives of as a constitutive inclusion of that observation in the construction of the graph. Like a curve with a single point missing, the universe is graphed or mapped by an included but really contradictory moment—as we shall see, the Critical organ. Cognition thus both includes the subject in the pictured world produced by that cognition, while marking that inclusion as contradictory. The organ is what separates subject from object, even as it serves to remind that there is a real interaction between them. That real interaction can only be rendered incompletely, because its object (cognition as form and content) is itself incomplete. From the pictured content of the world to its representation to the representer there is a discontinuity or a hole. That hole is the human organ, the total possibility of human assimilation and alteration of nature. In keeping with the Aristotelian sense of *organon*, that possibility had to remain a possibility for this quasi-cosmology to obtain. The universe is interrupted by the human, and each functions as an incomplete cipher of the other. The metaphysics of the organ is one of permanent theoretical incompleteness with paradoxically systematic pretensions.

That incomplete quality finds its philosophical home in Novalis’ organological revision of the Critical project, which expresses the second sub-project of the



mythological impulse. By replacing Kant's term *Vermögen* (faculty) with organ, Novalis provides the most explicit basis for a Criticism stripped of the finality of intuitions (what I called "intuitionism" in chapter I above). This philosophy calls for a reflexive analysis of the organs of knowledge, rather than "faculties," in all cognitive endeavors. This allows Novalis to claim lawful specificity and potential innovation in the Critical investigation of any cognition, indeed any form of cognition. "Organ" thus comes to designate both a cognitive act and its content (more strictly, its sphere of applicability). The term serves to help Novalis follow a suggestion from Lessing and Hemsterhuis to the effect that new organs could arise. These Critical organs—lawful specificities of knowledge in development—became the basis for the twin sub-projects of the new mythology for which Novalis is perhaps best known: Romantic encyclopedics and the writing of a "new Bible." In both these cases, Novalis is in dialogue with *Der Streit der Facultäten*, insisting that these books will be organs of reconciliation between the metaphysically isolated Kantian university faculties. These books were thus meant to be *organa* of the new mythology, the human universe of metaphysical organs in developmental revision of their self-critical cognitive production.

This multifarious project was deeply political. Drawing on a combination of Fichte's and Hemsterhuis's moral writings, Novalis followed his peers in noting the necessary ethical ramifications of organology. If metaphysics were re-established, it would have to be tied to doctrines of norms and action, as it had always been. Novalis insisted that this consequence could not remain innocent of an explicit politics. His writings on the "moral organ" for the legitimation of the political thus most explicitly tie organology to its social-historical context. Novalis was ostracized from the Jena group

because of his controversial presentation of these views, but his vision of the politics of organology is the most daring. It makes clear that both laws and institutions are organs, and that their developmental status means, in a post-revolutionary world, that they must be made to conform to the reason at the basis of the new mythology. The actual, for Novalis, is organological. In this proposition, Novalis anticipates the Young Hegelian interpretation of Hegel's *dictum* that the "actual is the rational"—the actual must be made to conform to the rational. Here we can see why it makes sense to call Romantic politics "radical": it insists on a change from the roots up. And yet organs are not only in the roots—they are at every level of the world and its history. Novalis's organology is, in this sense, "German Ideology": it makes critical demands on the present from the perspective of an ideal future. And yet its very terms—its very organ—are a mythological expression of the multi-temporal predicament of a "world" caught between imminent institutional dissolution and the reifying syncopation of restorations. An organ thus infused with productive energies is the basis of modern metaphysical ideological construction.

### **Mythological and Cosmological Organs, or: the Hole in the Graph of the Universe**

To understand Novalis' efforts, we will need an excursus on the new mythology and new cosmology more generally. Schelling gave a definitive impulse for mythologization to the Romantic physiologists. He had extrapolated in the *StI* from the organs/*organon* complex to a possible cultural container for the program of organology. This could not be philosophy in the old mode, nor could it be art without philosophy. It had to be presented as a higher unity of the two, and this, Schelling argued, was the very

concept of mythology, its traditional role in the history of humans. As we will see, this impulse was to ground a series of cosmological physiologies.

For the Schelling of the *StI*, philosophy was born from poetry during the childhood of science, and, since “ein System ist vollendet, wenn es in seinen Anfangspunkt zurückgeführt ist,”<sup>554</sup> the totality of the sciences now in their maturity must, to fulfill the organological vision, flow back into the ocean of poetry (aesthetic intuition as the organ of philosophy). The means for that return are historically evident:

Welches aber das Mittelglied der Rückkehr der Wissenschaft zur Poesie sein werde ist im allgemeinen nicht schwer zu sagen, da ein solches Mittelglied in der Mythologie existiert hat, ehe diese, wie es jetzt scheint, unauflöschliche Trennung geschehen ist. Wie aber eine neue Mythologie, welche nicht Erfindung des einzelnen Dichters, sondern eines neuen, nur *einen* Dichter vorstellenden Geschlechts sein kann, selbst entstehen könne, dies ist ein Problem, dessen Auflösung allein von den künftigen Schicksalen der Welt und dem weiteren Verlauf der Geschichte zu erwarten ist.<sup>555</sup>

The mythological dimension of organology is necessarily tied to origin-myths about science. As Schelling argues here, the unified cultural expression of a state of balance between poetry, science, and philosophy, has always been mythology. The need for a new unity arises from the apparently irresolvable separation of these disciplines (for that is what they now are), and a national project—the unification of a nation as a single poet—comes into view.<sup>556</sup>

Schelling’s efforts would bear discursive fruit among his contemporaries. A series of Romantic attempts at scientific mythology emerged in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. I will single out two—those of Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert and Joseph von Görres—because of their organological pretensions. In philosophical and scientific terms,

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<sup>554</sup> Schelling, *StI*, p. 300. That structure is famously the methodological principle of Hegel’s *Logic*.

<sup>555</sup> Schelling, *StI*, p. 300.

<sup>556</sup> In this sense I agree emphatically with Manfred Frank’s determination that the “new mythology” exists because of the institutional dissolution of feudalism presented by the American and French revolutions. His example text—which he treats exemplarily—is *das älteste Systemprogramm des deutschen Idealismus*. See Manfred Frank, *Der kommende Gott: Vorlesungen über die neue Mythologie* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1982), pp. 153-88.

these systems fall behind the conceptual and experimental finesse of Schelling and Novalis. They take neither Kant nor Fichte methodologically seriously, and in cosmologizing organs, they present a spatialized continuous universe lacking critical negativity. Like Herder, they refuse the skeptical moment at the basis of transcendental idealism. Their mythological elements nevertheless follow through on the totalizing cultural impulse of this aspect of organology.

Schubert's *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft*, a series of lectures delivered in 1808, starts with the premise that only a full history of the human relation to nature can complete the scientific picture. A primordial unity of man and nature, an account of the split and the collateral epistemic effects of that split, and the principled possibility of a re-unification are the necessary elements of that history.<sup>557</sup>

Schubert clarifies the original separation in a gloss on Kant's "Copernican revolution":

Es hat in jenen Tagen nicht der Geist des Menschen den Gestirnen, sondern diese dem Daseyn des Menschen Gesetze gegeben, wie den Bewegungen der Erde, und die Weisheit der alten Welt war: Alles und ganz zu thun, was ihr die Natur gelehrt.<sup>558</sup>

The Kantian revolution is literalized and inserted into a long evolution of human cognitive control over nature, the history of which is psychological as much as

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<sup>557</sup> Thus Schubert is interested in "pseudo-science" as the unconscious effects of the emergence of consciousness, i.e. the very split between the conscious and the unconscious. That his intention was nevertheless "rational" (in the Romantic sense) can be circumstantially supported by his benefactor Windischmann's letter to Hegel upon reading the *Phenomenology*: "Das Studium Ihres Syst[ems] d[er] W[issenschaft] hat mich ueberzeugt, dass dieses Werk einst, wann die Zeit des Verstaendnisses kommt, als das Elementarbuch der Befreiung des Menschen angesehen werden wird, als der Schluessel zu dem neuen Evangelium, von dem Lessing weissagte." (Windischmann an Hegel, 27. April 1810; in *Briefe von und an Hegel, Band I: 1785-1812*, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Meiner, 1952), p. 307, cited in John Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1841* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 82.

<sup>558</sup> Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert, *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* (Dresden: Arnold, 1808), p. 4.

cosmological. It is then cast in organological terms: humans and their societies are the organs of nature and each other:

Auf einen schnellen Blick wird das alte Ideal der Könige in erhabenem Glanz gesehen, wie sie, ein Vorbild des Göttlichen, Vermittler und Erhalter der alten Harmonie mit der Natur gewesen. Das Gesetz der Natur und der höhere Einfluß, waren die ersten Herrscher der Menschen, und als Stellvertreter sind diejenigen gewählt worden, welchen sich, als den reinsten Organen, der höhere Einfluß am innigsten mitgetheilt. Nicht den Herren sondern das getreue Organ der höheren Natur, hat jene Zeit in ihren Königen verehrt, und wir sehen noch in der ältesten Geschichte einige Völker, den ehrwürdigen König selber, als Priester dem Dienste der Natur vorstehen, sein graues Haupt auf hoher Sternwarte der Kälte der Nacht Preis geben, und das geweihte Auge für sein schlummerndes Volk den alten Bund des Menschen mit der Natur bewahren.<sup>559</sup>

The king is twice organ, first as the truest knower of nature, and second as the legislator of human law in the image of this nature. The psycho-mythology of science's night is the story of the emergence of human cognitive royalty, the becoming-king or becoming-organ of each human in transition to democratic mutuality. The king becomes irrelevant politically precisely as humans become organs and then legislators of nature.<sup>560</sup>

This psychological new mythology found an explicitly physiological complement in the work of Joseph von Görres, especially in his 1805 *Exposition der Physiologie*. The subtitle of that work—*Organologie*—is, to my knowledge, the only use of the term “organology” in Romanticism outside of Novalis's *allgemeines Brouillon*.

Görres, a Jacobin and dedicated Romantic physiologist,<sup>561</sup> undertook to make Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* into what he called “Iatropoetik”—a poetics of medicine or a physiological cosmology. He imagines a cosmos filled with organs as transmitters of

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<sup>559</sup> Schubert, *Ansichten*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>560</sup> The apparent political radicalism here is matched by a slide back into the judaeo-christian version of the *physis-techne* analogy, which undermines the intended Kantian analogy: “Der Mensch ist im Anfang ein untergeordnetes Organ der Natur gewesen. Nicht aber jenes Theils derselben, welcher nur die Basis der eigentlichen höheren ist, sondern jenes ewigen und göttlichen Gesetzes, nach welchem der Mensch ward.” Schubert, *Ansichten*, p. 8. This move makes clear why the new mythology is *radical* but indifferently reactionary or progressive. If politics is a metaphysically grounded intervention in historical-societal formation, pessimistic diagnoses of the state of human culture could point toward the demand for a royal *organ* to stabilize that society.

<sup>561</sup> For an informative and unfortunately dismissive overview of the movement, see Karl Eduard Rothschuh, *Geschichte der Physiologie* (Berlin: Springer, 1953), pp. 97 ff.

forces between different orders (like Schelling's *Potenzen*). The cosmos has a central organ, which is analogized to a "Centralsonne des Microcosm's": the brain.<sup>562</sup> Although directly inspired by Schelling,<sup>563</sup> the resulting cosmology is Herderian in quality. An aether subtends the universe, and spreads itself out finely and thickly through the organs—individuals as the *referenda* of the totality of the universe—according to their composition.<sup>564</sup> The Herderian picture (aether, organs as cosmic relations) is reinforced by Görres' reliance on analogy, which he licenses with his claim to be writing a scientific or medical poetics. The rhetoric of the work is Schellingian, but the method is not that of Romantic organology.<sup>565</sup> Lacking the philosophical depth of the *Frühromantiker*, Görres

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<sup>562</sup> "So sind wir denn bis zu dem Organe hin vorgedrungen, das die erste und die hoechste Stelle in der Hierarchie der organischen Gewalten behauptet; die Centralsonne des Microcosm's..." (Joseph von Görres, *Exposition der Physiologie. Organologie* (Koblenz: Lassaulz, 1805), pp. 160-61.) The introduction to the work has an extended polemic against Gall's doctrines, putting a point on the difference between Gall's organology and Romantic organology in method. See chapter III of the present study. Görres reasons thus: "Das Primitive kann nur im *Gehirne* liegen, denn im *Gehirne* ist das Centrum, von dem der ganze tiefere Organismus, wie ein Radius gegen das Erdencentrum hin ausstrahlt; im *Gehirne*, wo wesentlich das Leben wohnt, muss es sich aus zuerst gezündet haben; unmittelbar aus den zeugenden Flüssigkeiten muss es ursprünglich zusammengenommen seyn, und aus sich selbst heraus wird es dann ein auffassendes Organ produciren, mit dem es in den mütterlichen Organism übergreift, und eben erst selbstgezeugt schon wieder zeugend, die plastische Materie wiedergebährend als Organe sich anfügt." (Görres, *Exposition*, pp. 144-45; emphasis in original.) Hagner, *Homo cerebrialis*, pp. 170-80, has a helpful exposition of the brain-science in Görres's system.

<sup>563</sup> Görres even follows Schelling in the "triple" structure of the organ, see *Exposition*, pp. 150 ff.

<sup>564</sup> "In jeder Individualität wird daher das höhere erzeugende Princip in ihrer ganzen Totalität sich spiegeln, insofern jede einzelne Form das Streben ist, die eigenen Individualität im Selbstdenken objectiv auszuprägen; insofern aber dies Streben im Concreten nothwendig mislingen muss, und nur in fortlaufender Metamorphose durch eine zugleich successive und extensive Allgemeinheit erreicht werden kann, insofern wird das Einzelne auch nur jene richtungen aus der vollkommenen Integrität der denkenden Subjectivität repraesentiren, die in ihm zur Objectivität gekommen sind. Vermöge des Ersten ist das Einzelne göttlich, inwiefern es von ihm gebohren *nach* seinem Ebenbild geschaffen ist; vermöge des Andern ist es endlich, insofern es nur *in* dem Ebenbilde ist, nur ein Organ der Ganzheit; es wird gleichsam einen inneren Kern von Göttlichkeit besitzen, durch den es mit dem Höhern zusammenhängt; nach aussen hin aber wird es ein eine Differenz ausschlagen, die seine Entwicklungsstufe und seinen spezifischen Character bedingt." (Görres, *Exposition*, pp. 4-5; emphasis in original.)

<sup>565</sup> For example, as applied to sexual difference: "Und wie nun zweygliedrig zunächst die Kettenreihe der Organe ist, und die erste Folge die ganze Evolution der Einheit repräsentirt, insofern sie in das Leben aufgenommen wurde, und die ganze Metamorphose der organischen *Natur*; die Andere hingegen die Involution der Allheit in ihren Formen dargestellt uns zeigt, und die Manifestation der organischen *Intellectualität*, so werden Beyde überhaupt wie Universum und Geisterwelt in ihrer äussern Erscheinung sich verhalten; und wie die Centralmasse im Universum durch alle Potenzen hindurch in entgegengesetzte Weltgeschlechter sich zersetzt, ein Aetherisches, mehr Leuchtendes, und ein Festes mehr von der Schwere Durchdrungenes; so wird das Centralorgan eine gleiche sexuelle Differenz in die

offers a dogmatic crystallization of organology.<sup>566</sup> “Organ” is not the locus of methodological struggle here, but the panacea covering the connections in the projected mythological universe. Görres’ organology is firmly of the new mythological variety, but represents a Romantic parallel to that of Gall: the premises do not need to be spoken, and “organ” becomes literal, functional, and uncritical.

In his rather more famous editorial work on the Early Modern chapbooks, Görres makes the mythological dimensions of his project explicit. The immediate expressions of culture in the *Volkssagen* impress themselves upon the organ of the people.<sup>567</sup> Then—Görres analogizes to Homer for the Greeks—the *Volk* narrates its sense of self. This narration—the very chapbooks Görres is publishing—becomes the organ of a remembered second phase of nation-building, the mediated unity which can be

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untergeordneten Organe übertragen, die in ihm ausgebohrt werden. Aber diese Differenz wird jedesmal in einer tieferen, gemeinschaftlich producirtten Einheit sich aufzuheben streben, aber immer aus der Neutralisierung von neuem, obgleich unter beschränktern Formen sich entwickeln, bis endlich die Unterste ihren Gegensatz ausserhalb des Organism's sucht." (Görres, *Exposition*, pp. 163-64.)

<sup>566</sup> The system’s mythological element also borders on the astrological: “Wie daher jene innere Homogeneität die Wechselwirkung jeder Individualität gegen die höhere Universalität bedingt, so wird sie auch den Zusammenhang der Physiologie mit den höhern pansophischen Constructionen setzen, und von der Totalität des Universums wird so viel sich im Organismus reflectiren und als einzelne Richtung eingehen in die Bildung der Organe, als sein lebendiger Sinn umfassen mag. Dasselbe was die Naturhistorie ihr Centrum in der Organologie des menschlichen Körpers finden lässt, constituirt auch diese als integrierenden Theil der Geschichte des All's, und pflanzt, was die Abstraction gewaltsam aus dem mütterlichen Boden gerissen hat, wieder in denselben ein, dass der welkende Zweig von Neuem grünt und blüht, und der todte Leichnam der Anatomie von der Naturkraft durchglüht, in einer höhern Synthesis ersteht.” (Görres, *Exposition*, p. 5.)

<sup>567</sup> “Diese Dichtungen sind die *Volkssagen*, die die Tradition von Geschlecht zu Geschlechte fortgepflanzt, indem sie zugleich mit jenen Liedern, durch die Gesangsweise die sich dem Organe eingepägt, einmal gebildet, vor dem Untergange sich bewahrten.” (Joseph Görres: *Die deutschen Volksbücher*, in: Joseph Görres, *Gesammelte Schriften, Band 3: Geistesgeschichtliche und literarische Schriften I (1803–1808)*, p. 179.) Compare from the *Exposition*: “Es ist daher nur eine peripherische Bildung, die aus der Gediegenheit der jungen Natur zuerst hervorgetrieben wurde, damit die Welt den Funken anfachen koene, den die Zeugung gezündet hat; aber höhere Geister herrschen über diesen Regionen, von denen jene Elementarischen nur die vorangeschickten Boten sind, und diese Geister müssen ihr Organ, den Kern aller lebendigen Bildung unmittelbar im Acte schon sich zugebildet haben, ehe jene secondaire [sic] Schoepfung werden konnte, die von ihr ausgegangen, auch in allen Aeusserungen ihrer Thaetigkeit von ihr regul[är?] erscheint.” (Görres, *Exposition*, pp. 143-44.)

remembered for renewal.<sup>568</sup>

Görres' editorial mythologizing presents the one side of organological aesthetic theory. In one sense, this part of the project is not *new* mythology, but the recuperation of old mythologies. Friedrich Schlegel presented organological aesthetics with a kind of *Kunstorgan*, an artistic but also artificial organ. His was the proper aesthetics of organology, mythological in pretension and metaphysical in conception. Where Novalis speaks of an aesthetic organ, the conversation with his friend Schlegel is never distant.

Friedrich Schlegel's version of the new mythology is perhaps the most political, and the most aesthetic—it is certainly the most organological. In the *Rede über die Mythologie*, part of Schlegel's mixed-genre treatise *Gespäch über die Poesie*, Schlegel calls for a total unification of the cultural efforts of romanticism. What he perceives already happening, especially in “higher physics”<sup>569</sup> and philosophy, needs, however, a means for generic formation. As I pointed out in the Introduction to the present study, Schlegel provides a kind of mission-statement of organology in this context:

Auch ich trage schon lange das Ideal eines solchen Realismus in mir, und wenn es bisher nicht zur Mittheilung gekommen ist, so war es nur, weil ich das Organ noch dazu suche. Doch weiß ich, daß ichs nur in der Poesie finden kann, denn in Gestalt der Philosophie oder gar eines Systems wird der Realismus nie wieder auftreten können.<sup>570</sup>

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<sup>568</sup> That organ loses, along with immediacy, poetic form, and becomes the prose of the nation: “Jene andern Gesänge aber, ihrer Natur nach mehr ruhend, bestimmt, mehr an das Bild als an den Ton gebunden, und daher Zauberspiegeln gleich, in denen das Volk sich und seine Vergangenheit, und seine Zukunft, und die andere Welt, und sein innerstes geheimstes Gemüth, und Alles was es sich selbst nicht nennen kann, deutlich und klar ausgesprochen vor sich stehen sieht; diese Gebilde mußten vorzüglich in jenem äußeren Fixirenden ein glückliches Organ für ihre freie Entwicklung finden, weil sie ihrer Natur nach mehr im Extensiven sind, und nun, indem die Schranken, die die enge Capacität des Gedächtnisses ihnen zog, gefallen waren, sich frei nach allen Richtungen verbreiten konnten. So sind daher aus jenen Sagen die meisten Volksbücher ausgegangen, indem man sie, aufgenommen aus dem mündlichen Verkehr in den Schriftlichen, in sich selbst erweiterte und vollendete; nur Eines haben sie bei dieser Metamorphose eingebüßt: die äußere poetische Form, die man als bloßes Hülfsmittel des Gedächtnisses jetzt unnütz geworden wähnte, und daher mit der gemeinen Prosaischen verwechselte.” (Görres, *Die deutschen Volksbücher*, pp. 179-80.)

<sup>569</sup> “Die Spuren einer ähnlichen Tendenz könnt ihr schon jetzt fast überall wahrnehmen; besonders in der Physik, der es an nichts mehr zu fehlen scheint, als an einer mythologischen Ansicht der Natur.”

<sup>570</sup> Friedrich Schlegel, *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe. Erste Abteilung: Kritische Neuausgabe, Band 2* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1967 ff.), p. 315. I cite as: *KFSA II*, p. 315.



The means of mythological formation are named “organ,” and poetry must be that organ. The shared goal of an “ideal realism” is tasked to poetic formation. Although Schlegel insists here that a system cannot help, his repeated use of Spinoza as example<sup>571</sup> suggests that the poetry he intends as philosophical organ will have a good measure of systemic unity. Indeed, the organ of philosophy<sup>572</sup> here—we can now see—confers a higher (*organic*) unity on a whole discourse, one particularized in organology as critical metaphysics, and generalized in cultural and scientific projects (such as the creation of a new (national) literature, a new “Bible,” and a new politics).<sup>573</sup>

The reason for a new mythology is contemporary poetry’s lack of a *Mittelpunkt*, a “sensuous center.” The poetry of the ancients wove itself into a single large poem.<sup>574</sup> The

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<sup>571</sup> From the *Rede über die Mythologie*: “Versucht es nur einmal die alte Mythologie voll vom Spinoza und von jenen Ansichten, welche die jetzige Physik in jedem Nachdenden erregen muß, zu betrachten, wie Euch alles in neuem Glanz und Leben erscheinen wird.” (*KFSA* II, p. 319.) The justification of this role for Spinoza is: “Wie die Wissenschaftslehre nach der Ansicht derer, welche die Unendlichkeit und die unvergängliche Fülle des Idealismus nicht bemerkt haben, wenigstens eine vollendete Form bleibt, ein allgemeines Schema für alle Wissenschaft: so ist auch Spinoza auf ähnliche Weise der allgemeine Grund und Halt für jede individuelle Art von Mystizismus...” Spinoza, the arch-systematic philosopher, thus becomes the formal predecessor of all transcendental poetry.

<sup>572</sup> Schlegel’s uses of organ—many of which come early, in 1795 and 1796—display the intentional conflation of organ and *organon* characteristic of Romantic organology. Perhaps most pregnantly: “Sehr bedeutend ist der Griechische Name *Dialektik*. Die *ächte* Kunst, (nicht der Schein wie bey Kant), sondern die Wahrheit mitzuthellen, zu reden, gemeinschaftlich die Wahrheit zu suchen, zu *widerlegen* und zu *erreichen* (So bey Plato Gorgias – cfr. Aristoteles); ist ein Theil der Philosophie oder Logik und notwendiges *Organ* der Philosophie.” (Schlegel, *Philosophische Fragmente 1796*, 50.) Here philosophy’s organ is literally Aristotle’s *organon*.

<sup>573</sup> I will address the Bible-project, also with reference to Schlegel, below.

<sup>574</sup> Several early uses of “organ” occur in Schlegel’s essay *Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie*. The basic notion—that imagination is the organ—is given: “Die Poesie ist eine *universelle* Kunst: denn ihr Organ, die *Phantasie* ist schon ungleich näher mit der Freiheit verwandt, und unabhängiger von äußerem Einfluß.” (*KFSA* I, p. 256.) But Schlegel is also searching for a new “legislation” for modern poetry, which, because it is subjective (or broadly “sentimental” in the terms given by Schiller), is *interesting* but not *objective*. The term organ thus abounds here as a demand for the concrete laws of aesthetics which, in the *Rede*, are broadened to include the totality of culture. So, for example: “Freilich ist aber der bloße gute Wille nicht zureichend, so wenig wie die nackte Grundlage zur vollständigen Ausführung eines Gebäudes. Eine entartete und mit sich selbst uneinige Kraft bedarf einer Kritik, einer Zensur, und diese setzt eine *Gesetzgebung* voraus. Eine vollkommene ästhetische Gesetzgebung würde das erste *Organ* der ästhetischen Revolution sein. Ihre Bestimmung wäre es, die blinde Kraft zu lenken, das Streitende in Gleichgewicht zu setzen, das Gesetzlose zur Harmonie zu ordnen; der ästhetischen Bildung eine feste Grundlage, eine sichere Richtung und eine gesetzmäßige Stimmung zu erteilen.” (*KFSA* I, p. 272.) Perhaps

formation is automatically revolutionary: “Alle Wissenschaften und alle Künste wird die große Revolution ergreifen.”<sup>575</sup> The organ of imagination, as the aesthetic organ of a general cultural revolution, allows the free movement of the poet between primordial chaos and its formation.<sup>576</sup> Artists themselves thus become the unifying factors in the sensuous world, and their cultural-political activity is organological:

Durch die Künstler wird die Menschheit ein Individuum, indem sie Vorwelt und Nachwelt in der Gegenwart verknüpfen. Sie sind das höhere Seelenorgan, wo die Lebensgeister der ganzen äußern Menschheit zusammentreffen und in welchem die innere zunächst wirkt.<sup>577</sup>

The collective soul needs the interface of inner and outer, and for this it needs an *organ*. That organ is the artist in imaginative activity, and his task is to illuminate the present from the perspective of the past and the future. The collective *sensorium* must range imaginatively over the expanse of time in order to act in the present.

The aesthetico-mythological organ is thus the means by which to make an arrangement of cultural disciplines real. On the one hand, there should be philosophy, the self-positing of reason, in its moral/practical guise, but also as intellectual intuition<sup>578</sup>; on

most interesting in this organological revision of classicist aesthetic doctrine is that Schlegel implies that new organs must be created by not imitating the local *organs* of individual Greeks, but instead their total culture. The statement is clearly a re-working of the Winckelmannian *dictum* that to imitate the Greeks, the Germans must become inimitable: “Nicht *dieser und jener*, nicht ein einzelner *Lieblings-Dichter*, nicht *dielokale Form* oder das *individuelle Organ* soll nachgeahmt werden: denn *nie kann ein Individuum, »als solches«, allgemeine Norm sein*. Die sittliche Fülle, die freie Gesetzmäßigkeit, die liberale Humanität, das schöne Ebenmaß, das zarte Gleichgewicht, die treffende Schicklichkeit, welche mehr oder weniger über die ganze Masse zerstreut sind; den vollkommenen Stil des goldenen Zeitalters, die Ächtheit und Reinheit der Griechischen Dichtarten, die Objektivität der Darstellung; kurz den *Geist des Ganzen – die reine Griechheit* soll der moderne Dichter welcher nach echter schöner Kunst streben will, sich zueignen.” (KFSa I, pp. 346-47; emphasis in original)

<sup>575</sup> KFSa II, p. 314.

<sup>576</sup> “Denn das ist der Anfang aller Poesie, den Gang und die Gesetze der vernünftig denkenden Vernunft aufzuheben und uns wieder in die schöne Verwirrung der Fantasie, in das ursprüngliche Chaos der menschlichen Natur zu versetzen, für das ich kein schöneres Symbol bis jetzt kenne, als das bunte Gewimmel der alten Götter.” (KFSa II, p. 319.)

<sup>577</sup> KFSa II, p. 262.

<sup>578</sup> “Die intellectuelle Anschauung ist der kategorische Imperativ der Theorie.” (KFSa II, p. 176.) The formulation suggests just the idealism demanded in the *Rede*: the categorical imperative will be the transcendental arbiter of not just content but also form, now in cognition and not just morals.

the other hand, there is *Poesie*, which exists in the realm of “Chaos,” and works more communicatively. It stands on the side of the “real,” of *Realismus*, because it operates in the sensuous and creates therein. Religion stands between the two, the universal mediator and the mediator to the universe (more on this in a moment).<sup>579</sup>

As Manfred Frank has argued, the new mythology presents us with an early critique of bourgeois republicanism, not merely a defense of the new form of government. For Frank, the dichotomy organic/mechanical is used to separate between bourgeois laws (the laws of “mechanical,” “Enlightenment” reason) and a possible form of organically synthesized community—a utopia.<sup>580</sup> Frank’s point is both supported and metaphorically altered by an investigation of Schlegel’s early essay (1796), *Über den Begriff des Republikanismus*. Schlegel argues, in response to Kant’s *Zum ewigen Frieden*, that there should be a “deduction” of the republican form of government. Indeed, he accuses Kant of insufficient Critical impulse with respect to government: institutions should be characterized according to their sources in the faculties.<sup>581</sup> And yet the talk of

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<sup>579</sup> Summarized systemically as follows in the *Ideen*: “Die Philosophie ist eine Ellipse. Das ein Zentrum, dem wir jetzt näher sind, ist das Selbstgesetz der Vernunft. Das andre ist die Idee des Universums, und in diesem berührt sich die Philosophie mit der Religion.” (*KFSA* II, p. 267.) Schlegel would go on to formalize this “system” (in spite of his remarks in the *Rede*) in his 1800 *Vorlesungen über Transzendentalphilosophie*. NB: Schlegel continues to use *organ* in his mature years, but these fall outside the scope of the present effort. For a reading of Schlegel that takes his philosophical efforts in the first years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, see Beiser, *German Idealism*, pp. 435-65.

<sup>580</sup> See Frank, *Der kommende Gott*, pp. 176 ff.

<sup>581</sup> Schlegel’s suggestion is that the constitution corresponds to reason, legislative power to the understanding, judicial power to the power of judgment, and executive to sensibility. (*KFSA* VII, p. 15.) This suggestion remains unelaborated, but the basic Romantic suggestion (that history should be included as part of theoretical philosophy) is given in this thick but more basic objection: “Das, was diese Gewähr leistet, ist nichts Geringeres, als die große Künstlerin, *Natur*,” sagt Kant... So geistreich die Ausführung dieses trefflichen Gedankens ist, so will ich doch freimütig gestehn, was ich daran vermisse. Es ist nicht genug, daß die *Mittel* der Möglichkeit, die *äußern Veranlassungen des Schicksals* zur wirklichen allmählichen Herbeiführung des ewigen Friedens gezeigt werden. Man erwartet eine Antwort auf die Frage: *Ob die innere Entwicklung der Menschheit* dahin führe? Die (gedachte) *Zweckmäßigkeit der Natur* (so schön, ja notwendig diese Ansicht in andrer Beziehung sein mag) ist hier völlig gleichgültig: nur die (wirklichen) *notwendigen Gesetze der Erfahrung* können für einen künftigen Erfolg Gewähr leisten. *Die Gesetze der politischen Geschichte*, und die *Prinzipien der politischen Bildung* sind die einzigen Data, aus denen sich erweisen läßt, “daß der ewige Friede keine leere Idee sei, sondern eine

faculties is paralleled by talk of organs. Institutions of government can be organs precisely because they are the material expression of faculties: senses of the common body. For Schlegel, constitution and government differ as the permanent and alterable elements of the republican form.<sup>582</sup> The constitution, however, might include insurrection (Schlegel clearly has the United States constitution in mind). A constitution which rejects the possibility of revolution is simply blind, for Schlegel, since its power only extends as far as it actually constitutes. One which maintained the permanent possibility of insurrection, however, would “cancel itself” (*sich selbst aufheben*). And yet, the provision that revolution should follow failure of the constitution to maintain the republican ideal itself can be included:

Diejenige Insurrektion ist also *rechtmäßig*, deren Motiv die Vernichtung der Konstitution, deren Regierung bloß provisorisches Organ, und deren Zweck die Organisation des Republikanismus ist.<sup>583</sup>

Republican government—the only rational form of political constitution—may form for itself a provisional organ of self-correction when, in the course of organic events, reason fails to embody itself as constitution. Friedrich Schlegel’s new mythology includes a voice that might be characterized as the Jeffersonian strain of Romantic organology.

### A Hole in the Graph of the Universe: Cosmological Organs

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Aufgabe, die nach und nach aufgelöst, ihrem Ziel beständig näher kommt;” ... nach denen sich die künftige Wirklichkeit desselben, und sogar die Art der Annäherung, zwar nicht *weissagen* ... – thetisch und nach allen Umständen der Zeit und des Orts – aber doch vielleicht theoretisch (wenngleich nur hypothetisch) mit Sicherheit vorher bestimmen lassen würde.” (*KFSA* VII, p. 23; emphasis in original.) And again: “Nur aus *den historischen Prinzipien der politischen Bildung*, aus der *Theorie der politischen Geschichte*, läßt sich ein befriedigendes *Resultat über das Verhältnis der politischen Vernunft und der politischen Erfahrung* finden.” (*KFSA* VII, p. 24; emphasis in original.)

<sup>582</sup> While representationalism is the *organ*. Thus, on the difference between direct democracy and the republican form: “Daß aber die Volksmehrheit *in Person* politisch wirke, ist in vielen Fällen unmöglich, und fast in allen äußerst nachteilig. Es kann auch sehr füglich durch Deputierte und Kommissarien geschehen. Daher ist die *politische Repräsentation* allerdings ein unentbehrliches Organ des Republikanismus.” (*KFSA* VII, p. 17; emphasis in original.)

<sup>583</sup> *KFSA* VII, p. 25; emphasis in original.

Schlegel's new mythology was, in addition, just as theologically radical as Jefferson's bible. The religious feeling that links the subject to the universe, and poetry to philosophy, is also rooted in the organ of the imagination, with explicit reference to Friedrich Schleiermacher:

Der Verstand, sagt der Verfasser der Reden über die Religion, weiß nur vom Universum; die Fantasie herrsche, so habt ihr einen Gott. Ganz recht, die Fantasie ist das Organ des Menschen für die Gottheit.<sup>584</sup>

Schleiermacher—and especially his theologically radical *Reden über die Religion für die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern* (1799)—is the model for Schlegel's aesthetically focused version of organological mythology. And where new *organs* of art, even *artificial organs* (*Kunstorgane*) were brought into view by Schlegel, Schleiermacher provided the theological organs for the “new religion” that would operate as part of the new mythology. Novalis would bind all these factors together into the fullest statement of Romantic organology.

For Schleiermacher, religion is a sense.<sup>585</sup> The positive content of philosophy, the sciences, and morals, is subtended by the total human who binds them together in a more primitive, even more negative imaginative activity: the intuition of the universe.<sup>586</sup> This

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<sup>584</sup> *KFSA* II, p. 257. Note that Schlegel here means “productive imagination,” of the ability to form objects out of intuitions in the first place. Thus the organ, filtered through this Kantian doctrine and its centrality for Fichte, becomes the divine ability of the human to make a world—as we have seen, a key Romantic aesthetic doctrine.

<sup>585</sup> Or infinite intuition: “Praxis ist Kunst, Spekulation ist Wissenschaft, Religion ist Sinn und Geschmack fuers Unendliche.” (Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Über die Religion: Reden and die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1958), p. 30; cited as *Reden*, p. 30.)

<sup>586</sup> “Anschauen des Universums, ich bitte befreundet Euch mit diesem Begriff, er ist der Angel meiner ganzen Rede, er ist die allgemeinste und höchste Formel der Religion, woraus Ihr jeden Ort in derselben finden könnt, woraus sich ihr Wesen und ihre Grenzen aufs genaueste bestimmen lassen. Alles Anschauen gehet aus von einem Einfluß des Angeschaueten auf den Anschauenden, von einem ursprünglichen und unabhängigen Handeln des ersteren, welches dann von dem letzteren seiner Natur gemäß aufgenommen, zusammengefaßt und begriffen wird. Wenn die Ausflüsse des Lichtes nicht – was ganz ohne Euere Veranstaltung geschieht – Euer Organ berührten, wenn die kleinsten Teile der Körper die Spitzen Eurer

intuition, which makes up humanity's humanity, becomes the principle of communication between those of different religions, and indeed the basic principle of communication in general. The play of the positive and the negative in the religious organ makes the basis for a true communication between believers of different faiths.<sup>587</sup> Since the introduction to religious intuition is different for each person, mutual communication and yet substantial (we could say *organological*) tolerance is possible:

... so würdet Ihr doch Demjenigen Achtung und Ehrfurcht nicht versagen können, dessen Organe dem Universum geöffnet sind, und der, fern von jedem Streit und Kontrast, erhaben über jedes Streben, von den Einwirkungen desselben durchdrungen und Eins mit ihm geworden, wenn Ihr ihn in diesem köstlichen Moment des menschlichen Daseins betrachtet, den himmlischen Strahl unverfälscht auf Euch zurückwirft.<sup>588</sup>

This sense cannot be taught, just as art cannot, but its organ can be opened. And openness is the essential *desideratum* and even definition of that organ's activity.<sup>589</sup> It produces the

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Finger nicht mechanisch oder chemisch affizierten, wenn der Druck der Schwere Euch nicht einen Widerstand und eine Grenze Eurer Kraft offenbarte, so würdet Ihr nichts anschauen und nichts wahrnehmen, und was Ihr also anschaut und wahrnehmt, ist nicht die Natur der Dinge, sondern ihr Handeln auf Euch. Was Ihr über jene wißt oder glaubt, liegt weit jenseits des Gebiets der Anschauung. So die Religion; das Universum ist in einer ununterbrochenen Tätigkeit und offenbart sich uns jeden Augenblick." (*Reden*, pp. 31-32.)

<sup>587</sup> The common element of the first revelation is the religious organ: "Betrachtet noch einmal den erhabenen Augenblick in welchem der Mensch überhaupt zuerst in das Gebiet der Religion eintritt. Die erste bestimmte religiöse Ansicht, die in sein Gemüt mit einer solchen Kraft eindringt, daß durch einen einzigen Reiz sein Organ fürs Universum zum Leben gebracht und von nun an auf immer in Tätigkeit gesetzt wird, bestimmt freilich seine Religion; sie ist und bleibt seine Fundamental-Anschauung in Beziehung auf welche er Alles ansehen wird, und es ist im Voraus bestimmt, in welcher Gestalt ihm jedes Element der Religion sobald er es wahrnimmt, erscheinen muß. Das ist die objektive Seite dieses Moments; seht aber auch auf die subjektive: so wie durch ihn in jener Rücksicht seine Religion insofern bestimmt wird, daß sie zu einem in Rücksicht des unendlichen Ganzen völlig geschlossenen Individuum gehört, aber doch nur als ein unbestimmtes Bruchstück desselben, denn nur mit mehreren vereint kann es das Ganze darstellen: so wird durch denselben Moment auch seine Religiosität in Rücksicht der unendlichen religiösen Anlage der Menschheit als ein ganz eignes und neues Individuum zur Welt gebracht." (*Reden*, p. 147.)

<sup>588</sup> *Reden*, p. 131.

<sup>589</sup> "Die Philosophie wohl strebt diejenigen, welche wissen wollen, unter ein gemeinschaftliches Wissen zu bringen, wie Ihr das täglich sehet, die Religion aber nicht diejenigen welche glauben und fühlen, unter Einen Glauben und Ein Gefühl. Sie strebt wohl denen, welche noch nicht fähig sind das Universum anzuschauen, die Augen zu öffnen, denn jeder Sehende ist ein neuer Priester, ein neuer Mittler, ein neues Organ; aber eben deswegen flieht sie mit Widerwillen die kahle Einförmigkeit, welche diesen göttlichen Überfluß wieder zerstören würde. Die Systemsucht stößt freilich das Fremde ab, sei es auch noch so denkbar und wahr, weil es die wohlgeschlossenen Reihen des Eigenen verderben, und den schönen Zusammenhang stören könnte, indem es seinen Platz forderte; in ihr ist der Sitz der Widersprüche, sie muß streiten und verfolgen; denn insofern das Einzelne wieder auf etwas Einzelnes und Endliches bezogen wird,

religious sense in general and—because it is objective—the positive doctrine of particular religions. And yet it also maintains a dialectic of positivity and negativity internal to its operation. It is passive, general, negative: it opens onto the universe. Yet it is also concrete, active, and positive: it is the substrate of the cosmos itself. Novalis would both adopt both the term organ and elaborate its partly negative essence in debate with Schlegel about a “new religion.”

Schleiermacher’s religious organology has surprising Kantian roots, and surprising cosmological consequences—the latter will complete the picture of the discursive context into which Novalis placed his organology. In his early *Kurze Darstellung* (undated, but between 1793 and 1799), written after reading Jacobi’s *Spinoza-Büchlein*, Schleiermacher calls into question Kant’s account of the infinite in the *KdrV*. His line of critique is a refinement of the notion that the thing-in-itself is a problem for Kant. Schleiermacher argues that the infinity within the faculties (which Kant locates as the basic formal characteristic of reason) cannot be claimed to be immanent and transcendent simultaneously: if it is in the faculties, Kant is a Spinozist; if not, he falls into his own category of dogmatism.<sup>590</sup> The result, for Schleiermacher as for the others in the Jena circle, was that the question would have to be bracketed in favor of a continued application of a critique of the various areas of human cognitive endeavors. And

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kann freilich Eins das Andere zerstören durch sein Dasein; im Unendlichen aber steht alles Endliche ungestört nebeneinander, alles ist Eins und alles ist wahr.” (*Reden*, p. 36.) This separates religion from metaphysics, which is the expression of one of two basic drives—consumptive and resignative—that make up human nature for Schleiermacher. “Sie begehrt nicht das Universum seiner Natur nach zu bestimmen und zu erklären wie die Metaphysik, sie begehrt nicht aus Kraft der Freiheit und der göttlichen Willkür des Menschen es fortzubilden und fertig zu machen wie die Moral. Ihr Wesen ist weder Denken noch Handeln, sondern Anschauung und Gefühl. Anschauen will sie das Universum, in seinen eigenen Darstellungen und Handlungen will sie es andächtig belauschen, von seinen unmittelbaren Einflüssen will sie sich in kindlicher Passivität ergreifen und erfüllen lassen.” (*Reden*, pp. 28-29.)

<sup>590</sup> Schleiermacher makes this point especially clear in an early fragment inspired by Jacobi called the *Kurze Darstellung des spinozistischen Systems*.

Schleiermacher is thus led to religion as the object of a critical approach to the “infinite.” This approach is characterized by the “essence” of religion: the interaction between the faculties of intuition and feeling.

Schleiermacher glosses one of the basic doctrines of the *KdrV* (“Die Anschauung *sieht*, aber sie ist *leer*; das Gefühl *bezieht sich auf Realität*, aber es ist *blind*.<sup>591</sup>”) as follows:

Anschauung ohne Gefühl ist nichts und kann weder den rechten Ursprung noch die rechte Kraft haben, Gefühl ohne Anschauung ist auch nichts: beide sind nur dann und deswegen etwas, wenn und weil sie ursprünglich Eins und ungetrennt sind.<sup>592</sup>

Schleiermacher, in insisting that the organ of the infinite is the interaction of intuition and feeling, may, however, be referring proximately to Fichte’s own revision of Kant in the *Wissenschaftslehre*:

Die Anschauung *sieht*, aber sie ist *leer*; das Gefühl *bezieht sich auf Realität*, aber es ist *blind*.<sup>593</sup>

Kant is simply stating the doctrine that all cognition takes the form of judgments. The proposition of a given judgment is successful when it unites the content of some intuition with the generality of some concept. Fichte’s take on this passage comes in the practical philosophy of the *Wissenschaftslehre*. In striving infinitely to realize its true, absolute nature, the *Ich* builds upwards from the apparent passivity of *Empfindung*. But in the realm of feeling, there is only blank relation to “reality”—feeling is blind but connected. Intuition, on the other hand, “sees.” Fichte appears to be contradicting Kant, but he is really building in two directions simultaneously. Intuition sees because it is constructed in a descending categorical activity on the part of the theoretical ego, and marks a kind of threshold of conscious cognition as the practical ego emerges in the other direction. For

<sup>591</sup> *KdrV* B75.

<sup>592</sup> *Reden*, p. 41.

<sup>593</sup> Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Sämtliche Werke. Band 1* (Berlin: Veit, 1845/1846), p. 319.



Schleiermacher, the source of cognition is feeling—it connects us to reality, as it does for Fichte. Intuition, on the other hand, is not empty, but—as Novalis would say—plastic. If the two are to become one, they must do so by way of the infinitization of intuition. The name for that process, which underlies the religious “sense,” is “organ.”<sup>594</sup>

The religious organ is balanced between the consumptive and resignative drives: it is the field of potential poised between action and passion. The peace and poise that come with the operation of that organ are counterindicated by the speed and industriousness (not to speak of industrialization) of the contemporary world.<sup>595</sup> And yet *Geselligkeit* proceeds precisely from this balance<sup>596</sup>: the play of the positive and the negative in the critical religious organs forms the basis for a truly social society. This is

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<sup>594</sup> That process goes a long way to explaining the Romantic interest in and specific reading of Spinoza. As Herder before him, Schleiermacher prizes Spinoza’s “religious” sense: “Opfert mit mir ehrerbietig eine Locke den Manen des heiligen verstoßenen Spinoza! Ihn durchdrang der hohe Weltgeist, das Unendliche war sein Anfang und Ende, das Universum seine einzige und ewige Liebe, in heiliger Unschuld und tiefer Demut spiegelte er sich in der ewigen Welt, und sah zu wie auch Er ihr liebenswürdigster Spiegel war; voller Religion war Er und voll heiligen Geistes; und darum steht Er auch da, allein und unerreicht, Meister in seiner Kunst, aber erhaben über die profane Zunft, ohne Jünger und ohne Bürgerrecht.” (*Reden*, p. 31) Thus the prefiguration of intellectual intuition in the “third kind” of knowledge (*scientia intuitiva*) of *Ethica* Book II, proposition 42 scholium, and the entirety of book V on *amor intellectualis Dei*, are taken to be adventures not in dogmatic metaphysics, but in the expansion of the instruments of the broadly conceived philosophical and religious senses.

<sup>595</sup> “Um den Sinn einigermaßen gegen die Anmaßungen der andern Vermögen zu schützen, ist jedem Menschen ein eigener Trieb eingepflanzt, bisweilen jede andere Tätigkeit ruhen zu lassen, und nur alle Organe zu öffnen, um sich von allen Eindrücken durchdringen zu lassen; und durch eine geheime höchst wohlthätige Sympathie ist dieser Trieb gerade am stärksten, wenn sich das allgemeine Leben in der eignen Brust und in der umgebenden Welt am vernehmlichsten offenbart: aber daß es ihnen nur nicht vergönnt wäre, diesem Triebe in behaglicher untätiger Ruhe nachzuhängen; denn aus dem Standpunkt des bürgerlichen Lebens ist dies Trägheit und Müßiggang. Absicht und Zweck muß in Allem sein, sie müssen immer etwas verrichten, und wenn der Geist nicht mehr dienen kann, mögen sie den Leib üben; Arbeit und Spiel, nur keine ruhige, hingeebene Beschauung, – Die Hauptsache aber ist die, daß sie Alles verstehen sollen, und mit dem Verstehen werden sie völlig betrogen um ihren Sinn: denn so wie jenes betrieben wird, ist es diesem schlechthin entgegengesetzt. Der Sinn sucht sich Objekte, er geht ihnen entgegen und bietet sich ihren Umarmungen dar; sie sollen etwas an sich tragen, was sie als sein Eigentum, als sein Werk charakterisiert, er will finden und sich finden lassen...” (*Reden*, p. 82)

<sup>596</sup> “Ich hoffe Ihr seid aus dem vorigen mit mir einverstanden darüber daß in der wahren religiösen Geselligkeit alle Mitteilung gegenseitig ist, das Prinzip, welches uns zur Äußerung des eigenen antreibt, innig verwandt mit dem was uns zum Anschließen an das Fremde geneigt macht und so Wirkung und Gegenwirkung aufs unzertrennlichste miteinander verbunden. Hier im Gegenteile findet Ihr gleich eine durchaus andere Form: Alle wollen empfangen und nur einer ist da der geben soll; völlig passiv lassen sie auf einerlei Art in sich einwirken durch alle Organe, und helfen höchstens dabei selbst von innen nach soviel sie Gewalt über sich haben, ohne an eine Gegenwirkung auf Andere auch nur zu denken. Zeigt das deutlich genug, daß auch das Prinzip ihrer Geselligkeit ein ganz andres sein muß?” (*Reden*, p. 107.)

indeed, then, organology: the sense for the infinite turns into a theological social doctrine, a kind of post-revolutionary metapolitics.<sup>597</sup> But before I turn to Novalis' reception of this cocktail of mythology, religion, and aesthetics, I want to note the cosmological revisionism of the *Reden*. This revision, which introduced a kind of incompleteness into the cosmos, forms the entry-point into Novalis' organology.

The full radicality of Schleiermacher's vision emerges only when he defines the relationship between God and the universe. A religion "without God" can be better than one with, he writes controversially. God is, in one sense, simply the feeling, the manner of intuition that comes with the proper relationship of the human to the universe.<sup>598</sup> And this higher intuition intimates that the universe is like a work of art, harmonious internally, unified according to a law not expressed inside it, and therefore, in one sense, partial.<sup>599</sup> This partiality is reflected in our faculties as the divide between possible and actual lawfulness. A possible relation, in this sense, is a "negative revelation":

Und wenn Ihr Euch noch Verbindungen denken könnt, die Ihr nicht sehet, so ist auch **diese Lücke eine negative Offenbarung des Universum**, eine Andeutung, daß in dem geforderten Grade in der gegenwärtigen Temperatur der Welt diese Mischung nicht möglich ist, und Eure Phantasie darüber ist eine Aussicht über die gegenwärtigen Grenzen der Menschheit hinaus, eine wahre göttliche Eingebung, eine unwillkürliche und unbewußte Weissagung über das was künftig sein wird.<sup>600</sup>

The universe is the totality of being and thought—it is complete, includes possibility.

This possibility, as we will see emphasized in Novalis, includes the future. The current

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<sup>597</sup> It is also paradigmatically Romantic, following the rejection of Kant's *ungesellige Geselligkeit* and all doctrines based on self-interest in favor of a critically metaphysical doctrine of perfectibility.

<sup>598</sup> "Gott ist nicht Alles in der Religion sondern Eins, und das Universum ist mehr.... Mitten in der Endlichkeit Ein werden mit dem Unendlichen und ewig sein in einem Augenblick, das ist die Unsterblichkeit der Religion." (*Reden*, pp. 73-74.)

<sup>599</sup> For example: "Wo Ihr eine erhabene Einheit, einen großgedachten Zusammenhang ahnden sollt, da muß es neben der allgemeinen Tendenz zur Ordnung und Harmonie notwendig im Einzelnen Verhältnisse geben, die sich aus ihm selbst nicht völlig verstehen lassen. Auch die Welt ist ein Werk, wovon Ihr nur einen Teil überseht, und wenn dieser vollkommen in sich selbst geordnet und vollendet wäre, könntet Ihr Euch von dem Ganzen keinen hohen Begriff machen." (*Reden*, p. 47.) Again: "Das ist die Harmonie des Universums, das ist die wunderbare und große Einheit in seinem ewigen Kunstwerk." (*Reden*, p. 54.)

<sup>600</sup> *Reden*, p. 52; my emphasis.

“temperature” of the world, however, is another matter. The world is only the set of the actual, only that part that is explored in the sense for the particular. Part of that actuality, however, is the totality of the human and of humanity. And because the human is in the world, but has a sense (a religious sense) for the universe, the world is incomplete. It is a discrete totality, or a non-total entirety. The religious person is simply aware of this condition, and her feelings and even thoughts emerge from the social and intuitional organs of that negative space.<sup>601</sup>

The imagination, playing freely between the understanding and intuition, is made constitutive not of the world, but of the relation between the non-whole of the world and the universe: of God. Schleiermacher clarifies:

In der Religion wird das Universum angeschaut, es wird gesetzt als ursprünglich handelnd auf den Menschen. Hängt nun Eure Phantasie an dem Bewußtsein Eurer Freiheit so daß sie es nicht überwinden kann dasjenige was sie als ursprünglich wirkend denken soll anders als in der Form eines freien Wesens zu denken; wohl, so wird sie den Geist des Universums personifizieren und Ihr werdet einen Gott haben; hängt sie am Verstande, so daß es Euch immer klar vor Augen steht, Freiheit habe nur Sinn im Einzelnen und fürs Einzelne; wohl, so werdet Ihr eine Welt haben und keinen Gott. Ihr, hoffe ich, werdet es für keine Lästerung halten, daß Glaube an Gott abhängt von der Richtung der Phantasie; Ihr werdet wissen daß Phantasie das höchste und ursprünglichste ist im Menschen, und außer ihr alles nur Reflexion über sie; Ihr werdet es wissen daß Eure Phantasie es ist, welche für Euch die Welt erschafft, und daß Ihr keinen Gott haben könnt ohne Welt.<sup>602</sup>

The human religious organ is dual, active and passive, positive and negative. It treats the world, which is a precipitate of its interaction with the universe, as a holy but subordinate construction. God is not in that world but is immanent to the religious sense for the incompleteness of that world. God, intuition, the religious organ: these represent a hole in the graph of the universe.

Novalis worked with this problem as he developed his cosmology and Bible-

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<sup>601</sup> “... der magische Kreis herrschender Meinungen und epidemischer Gefühle umgibt und umspielt alles.” (*Reden*, p. 54.)

<sup>602</sup> *Reden*, pp. 71-72.

project, both before and in dialogue with Schleiermacher. Fragment 1144 of the *allgemeines Brouillon (AB)* claims that “das Denken is, wie die *Blüthe*,<sup>603</sup> gewiß nichts, als die feinste *Evolution* der plastischen Kräfte... Die Denkorgane sind die Weltzeugungs—die Natursgeschlechtsteile.”<sup>604,605</sup> The universe is interrupted, for Novalis as for Schleiermacher, by a constitutive partiality. Novalis more than Schleiermacher articulates the part-object “world” as the precipitate of the organs of thought<sup>606</sup>:

Diese höhere Bildung... benutzt die Welt, die eben deshalb Welt ist, weil sie sich nicht vollständig und *Total* bestimmt—und also noch mannichfach anderwärts her bestimmbar bleibt... Zur Welt gehört also alles, was sich nicht abs[olut] vollständig bestimmt... und dadurch gestört und im Wesentlichen verändert wird.<sup>607</sup>

*Bildung* becomes mutual—yet constitutively incomplete—through its organs. Those organs, in stark contrast to those of the Herderian system, are not placeholders for enjoyment. They are not merely related, but determining actors in the interrupted universe. Where the *Ideen* had insisted on the complete teleological self-enjoyment of God’s universe, the dialogue *Gott. Einige Gespräche*, was even more emphatic. In the final discussion, the revised Spinozan universe is gathered into a series of laws. Organic unities subsist and persist; they amalgamate themselves with similarities, and resist the

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<sup>603</sup> Because the next fragment goes on to claim that “D[ie] Blüthe ist das Symbol des Geheimnisses unsers Geistes” (*HKA* III, p. 477), we should think of the only series of philosophical fragments Novalis published during his lifetime, *Blüthenstaub*, as the plastic sediment of the Romantic brain.

<sup>604</sup> *HKA* III, p. 476.

<sup>605</sup> Novalis’s reading of Fichte has one valence based on this very notion: “Fichtes Philosophie ist ein *Denkerzeugungsproceß* oder Organisationsproc[ess] – ein *Phaenomen* selbst, oder rein *Factum*.” (*HKA* III, p. 477.) Jürgen Daiber has shown the extent to which Novalis treats the Fichtean complex as experiment—and thus makes literature experimental. See Jürgen Daiber, “*Experimentalphysik des Geistes*” – *Novalis und das romantische Experiment* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001).

<sup>606</sup> In his most complete theoretical statement, the *Logological Fragments* and *Poëticismen*, Novalis writes that the world is like “ein Niederschlag aus der Menschennatur... so ist die Götterwelt eine Sublimation—Beyde geschehen uno actu—Kein plastisches Praecipitat, ohne geistiges Sublimat.” (*HKA* II, p. 531)

<sup>607</sup> *HKA* II, p. 554. See also: “Gott und Welt entsteht zugleich”—the complex is contained in the singular conjugation)—“durch eine Zersetzung der Menschennatur.” (*HKA* II, p. 554.) And: “Das Praecipitat des Lebens ist ein Lebendiges... Das Produkt ist Leben” (*HKA* II, p. 556) And again: “Ein vollkommen vernünftiges Wesen kann nicht einmal gedacht werden—ohne um diesen Gedanken zu wissen und ihn mit zu bestimmen. (Gott etc.)”

dissimilar; and they “imprint” themselves internally and on other beings through a process called “similarization” (*Verähnlichung*).<sup>608</sup> As the rules unfold, the properties of opposition are included in a plane of immanent organic unfolding. The *plenum* persists. The universe is infinite, includes God and the self-naming animal (the human), and is even temporal.<sup>609</sup> But it suffers no break.

Kant had, in his inaugural dissertation of 1770, defined a world as the result of synthesis:

In composito substantiali, quemadmodum analysis non terminator nisi parte quae non est totum, h.e. SIMPLICI, ita synthesis non nisi toto quod non est parts, i.e. MUNDO.<sup>610</sup>

Here we have another example of the de-specified Critical system. Novalis strips away the specifics of the faculties, not to return to the noumenal metaphysics of the inaugural dissertation, but in the service of a construction that maintains its organological status on the edge of reality and ideality. It is literally in process, chiasmically extending to both total object (world) and total subject (spirit), but based in the systemic attitude that system is not representationally complete. It is only in such a system, for Novalis, that efficacy can come to be.<sup>611</sup> Subject and object are the result of a single mathematical function.<sup>612</sup> The organs of creation are holes in that graph.

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<sup>608</sup> The Leibnizian elements of this picture are not implicit: “Wie Leibnitz einen idealischen Einfluß der Monaden auf einander annahm: so möchte ich diesen idealischen Einfluß zum geheimen Bande der Schöpfung machen, das wir bei denkenden, bei handelnden Wesen unwidertreiblich und unzerstörbar bemerken.” (Herder, *Gott*, p. 786.)

<sup>609</sup> See Lovejoy, *Great Chain*. On the “infinity” of the universe, see Alexander Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968). On the immanence of the universe, see Hans Blumenberg, *Die Genesis der kopernikanischen Welt* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1975).

<sup>610</sup> AA II, p. 387.

<sup>611</sup> Following Schlegel and Schleiermacher, here the efficacious *organ* is the imagination: “Theorie der *Fantasie*. Sie ist das Vermögen des *Plastisirens*.” (*HKA* III, p. 401, emphasis in original). *AB* 327: “die Einbildungskraft ist das wirkende Princip.”

<sup>612</sup> Fragment 900: Alles Object wird *Reitz* (und *Formel* einer neuen *Objection*... Es ist ein *Geronnenes*—und das Subj[ect] ein Flüssiges, eine Atmosphäre. Es ist ein beständige Größe—das Subj[ect] eine Veränderliche—Beyde in *Einer Function* (Ibid., emphasis in original) “Beyde Operationen sind

The systemic incompleteness of the universe is reflected in the Romantic *organ*.

Novalis writes that organ into his fragments, generalizing the doctrine formally:

Werkzeuge armiren den Menschen. Man kann wohl sagen, der Mensch versteht eine Welt hervorzubringen, es mangelt ihm nur am gehörigen Apparat, an der verhältnißmäßigen Armatur seiner Sinneswerkzeuge. Der Anfang ist da. So liegt das Prinzip eines Kriegsschiffes in der Idee des Schiffbaumeisters, der durch Menschenhaufen und gehörige Werkzeuge und Materialien diesen Gedanken zu verkörpern vermag, indem er durch alles dieses sich gleichsam zu einer ungeheuren Maschine macht. So erforderte die Idee eines Augenblicks oft ungeheure Organe, ungeheure Massen von Materien, und der Mensch ist also, wo nicht actu, doch potentia Schöpfer.<sup>613</sup>

The martial organs of this anthropological textual shard include literal tools, the senses, and the possibility of new organs (on which more below) out of the terrible grandeur of material. The human is *potentia* creator, and as we shall see, this state of *potentia* is anything but a mere adjective. The form of the fragment reflects the organological program—the compact sentences filled with strained, hyperbolic vocabulary, describe the doctrine of construction (the engineer’s ship). Just as construction needs a principle that could make it more than the *techné* of machine-building, that could make it potentially active in the real metaphysical universe, so the fragment needs an idea which is not stated in it. This fragment—like Hölderlin’s *Empedokles*—is an invitation to construction, both of its historical and philosophical content (what I am attempting in this chapter). The fragment is the formal consequence of the Romantic revision of Kantian Criticism—that is, organology—because it concretizes forms of cognition in a formal container open to revision at both the formal and content-levels. It is the writing of the history of the *a priori*, of the organs of metaphysical and ultimately political possibility.

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idealistisch. Wer sie beyde vollkommen in seiner Gewalt hat ist der *magische Idealist*.” (HKA 3: 301)  
Letter of 27 February 1799 to Caroline Schlegel, at HKA 4: 281.

<sup>613</sup> HKA II, pp. 452/53.

The same view is expressed in cartographic terms by the third traveler in perhaps the most organological of all aesthetic productions, *Die Lehrlinge zu Saïs*. Beginning with an admiring plaint of an alienated apprentice in a hermetic school of nature, the explicit goal of which is to “lift the veil of Isis,” the narrative becomes a welter of voices. The second section, entitled laconically *Die Natur*, begins with a depiction of human relations to nature, not unlike that of the Schubert’s *Nachtseite* lectures or Schleiermacher’s myths about the origins of religion. This devolves into a discussion between the apprentices on the uses of and attitudes towards nature, which is followed by the arrival of a *Gespielle* who recounts the new mythological fairy-tale of Hyazinth and Rosenblütchen. This tale repeats the structure of the entire narrative’s desire. It begins with naïve original relation to love, continues with fascination and alienation with another (intellectual development, presented by an old man who passes through their hometown), and after long searching, finishes with the lifting of the veil of Isis to reveal—Rosenblütchen. (In fragments, sometimes it is the self rather than Rosenblütchen who is revealed.<sup>614</sup>) The apprentices leave the hall where they are gathered, and a conversation between the forces of nature they have conjured ensues. The hall is then occupied by a group of travelers, who carry on yet another conversation about the nature of nature. They are then included in the group of apprentices for a final speech by the master—yet another voice in the welter of nature-myths.

Nearly every voice in the fragment includes a consideration of instrumentality (more on the other voices below). The third of the travelers points to the arbitrariness of any “net” that is thrown into the sea of nature. The non-fit between system and

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<sup>614</sup> For the relation of woman to the linguistic process of *Bildung*, see Friedrich Kittler, “Heinrich von Ofterdingen als Nachrichtenfluß”, ed. Gerhard Schulz, *Novalis. Wege der Forschung*. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1986), pp. 480-508.

experience is the condition for investigation. The voice of third traveler then switches to the cartographic metaphor:

Glaubst du nicht, daß es gerade die gut ausgeführten Systeme sein werden, aus denen der künftige Geograph der Natur die Data zu seiner großen Naturkarte nimmt? Sie wird er vergleichen, und diese Vergleichung wird uns das sonderbare Land erst kennen lehren. Die Erkenntnis der Natur wird aber noch himmelweit von ihrer Auslegung verschieden sein. Der eigentliche Chiffrierer wird vielleicht dahin kommen, mehrere Naturkräfte zugleich zu Hervorbringung herrlicher und nützlicher Erscheinungen in Bewegung zu setzen, er wird auf der Natur, wie auf einem großen Instrument phantasieren können, und doch wird er die Natur nicht verstehn.<sup>615</sup>

The experimental method makes nature an instrument, and recognition goes systemically missing in its mapping endeavors. And yet the preparation of instrumental data returns, in the second speech by the third traveler, in a more positive light. The map becomes an artifact of the retrospectively real, ontological work of the cartographer.<sup>616</sup>

His work is rooted in that of the artist, whose perspective is that of the organologist:

Billig stellt der Künstler die Tätigkeit obenan, denn sein Wesen ist Tun und Hervorbringen mit Wissen und Willen, und seine Kunst ist, sein Werkzeug zu allem gebrauchen, die Welt auf seine Art nachbilden zu können, und darum wird das Prinzip seiner Welt Tätigkeit, und seine Welt seine Kunst.<sup>617</sup>

<sup>615</sup> *HKA I*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>616</sup> “Sind sie mit dieser mühseligen Arbeit fertig, so ist auch unvermerkt ein höherer Geist über sie gekommen, und es wird ihnen dann leicht, über die vorliegende Karte zu reden und jedem Suchenden seinen Weg vorzuschreiben. Unermeßlicher Nutzen segnet ihre mühsame Arbeit, und der Grundriß ihrer Karte wird auf eine überraschende Weise mit dem Systeme des Denkers übereinstimmen, und sie werden diesem zum Trost gleichsam den lebendigen Beweis seiner abstrakten Sätze unwillkürlich geführt haben.” (*HKA I*, p. 103.)

<sup>617</sup> Here I cannot agree with Jocelyn Holland’s otherwise informative work on Novalis. When she claims that “instrument” and “tool” are strictly divided from “organ” by the separation of organic and mechanical models, she runs against Novalis’s own text. Holland writes: “Applicable in the most diverse contexts, the instrument’s resiliency overcomes any possible tautology in the statement that it is nature, produces nature and is also required for understanding nature.” This excellent result of her research is then extended in the following way: “Just like the instrument which swung between the artist and the artwork, or which armed humans to accomplish creations of immense proportions, the concept of the instrument in *The Apprentices* redefines the threshold of man and nature in such a way as to complete the transition ongoing since the Renaissance from man/microcosm to world/macroanthropos and beyond: from a definition of man based on representation to one based on function.” (Holland, *German Romanticism and Science*, p. 109) In one sense, this is not incorrect, but it is precisely by missing the homology of *Werkzeug* and *Organ* (especially in but not limited to the *Lehrlinge*), she reduces Novalis’s logic below the level of system. The point is not that the logic of the instrument is unmechanical—or unimportant—but rather that the organ encompasses both sides of this logic. “Organ,” as we can see most clearly here, is not of organicist provenance, but makes that metaphors operate in the first place.



The universe is a map, a graph, that functions and is known systematically to be non-whole. This critical differentiation—the infinite yet discrete curve—is where the *organ* finds its home. The nameless voice (the narrator) of the beginning of the second part might be identified most strongly with the cosmology of this critical graphing. He states, perhaps most authoritatively:

Noch früher findet man statt wissenschaftlicher Erklärungen, Märchen und Gedichte voll merkwürdiger bildlicher Züge, Menschen, Götter und Tiere als gemeinschaftliche Werkmeister, und hört auf die natürlichste Art die Entstehung der Welt beschreiben. Man erfährt wenigstens die Gewißheit eines zufälligen, *werkzeuglichen* Ursprungs derselben, und auch für den Verächter der regellosen Erzeugnisse der Einbildungskraft ist diese Vorstellung bedeutend genug.<sup>618</sup>

The world comes to be as a tool. The origin is, then, the organ, real and ideal, that makes this instrumentalization possible. To do that, the world and the subject must be produced by an incompleteness in the universe. The cosmos is organological.

The *Allgemeines Brouillon (AB)* relates, under the heading “COSMOL[OGIE],” that the organ is the integral and simultaneous differential of the opposed tendencies of the inner and the outer. It homogenizes and separates, isolates and causes interaction. For these two opposed techniques in constructing a graph of the cosmos, it is “ihre *Function* überhaupt.”<sup>619</sup> The organ thus makes a zero-point—its apparent unification is always negative, because its essence is contradictory. “*Mittelbarkeit*,” writes Novalis, “*verstärkt die Unmittelbarkeit auf der anderen Seite... Indem sich die Organe berühren harmoniren die Seelen*”<sup>620</sup>. The organs of the universe’s incompleteness are also the organs of human souls—in fact, the soul’s organ, as we will see, is the very contradictory function that seeds the universe with incompleteness. It is the critical organ, the systemically necessary

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<sup>618</sup> *HKA I*, p. 85.

<sup>619</sup> *HKA III*, p. 293, *AB* 295.

<sup>620</sup> *HKA III*, p. 293. See below on the “moral organ” in the present chapter for more on the communication of souls.

split between knower and known. Novalis will not give up on this partially Kantian point, but as we have just seen, he will literally construct disciplines from its negativity, turning the canon of the understanding into the organ of a revised Criticism.

Much of Novalis's writing can be understood from this vantage point. His projects of a romantic encyclopedia and a new bible are—as we shall see—both elaborations of this critical moment. Ultimately, the “moral organ” he borrowed and developed from Hemsterhuis also rests on this basis, as do the political organs which alienated him from the Jena circle. The encyclopedic project intersected with the biblical project in just the moment of Novalis' explicit rejection of the specific version of Criticism that Kant had defended in the 1780s. In other words, the basis for Novalis's organology was a critical organ.

### **From the Senses to the Bible: Critical and Encyclopedic Organs**

The narration—which is not ascribed to a single voice—of the beginning of the second part of the *Lehrlinge* (“die Natur”) contains an anticipation of Schubert's idea that the observations of primordial humanity are an essential part of the history of nature itself.<sup>621</sup> Indeed, the organological origin of the world—its necessary production of tools as its very nature—makes humans in turn the instruments of perception:

Wir können daher die Gedanken unsrer Altväter von den Dingen in der Welt als ein notwendiges Erzeugnis, als eine Selbstabbildung des damaligen Zustandes der irdischen Natur betrachten, und besonders an ihnen, als den schicklichsten Werkzeugen der

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<sup>621</sup> This passage also makes clear how science and poetry share a common basis in the new mythology. Cf., from *Blüthenstaub* 110 (*HKA* II, p. 461): “Die Menschenwelt ist das gemeinschaftliche Organ der Götter. Poesie vereinigt sie, wie uns.”

Beobachtung des Weltalls, das Hauptverhältnis desselben, das damalige Verhältnis zu seinen *Bewohnern*, und seiner Bewohner zu ihm, bestimmt abnehmen.<sup>622</sup>

For Kant, our cognitive tools were too deeply hidden and ultimately incapable of providing rational insight into the ground of cognition<sup>623</sup>; for Schelling, the “hidden” organ was not too deep, but lay in the incomplete but complementary methods of *Naturphilosophie* and transcendental idealism. Novalis targets not the hiddenness of the organ but its capacity, its technical failure for Kant. The organs of those primordial observers, themselves tools of observation, stand in for a technical capacity of the organ which Novalis would develop in a vast discourse of the organ. This term runs throughout his work, as we have already begun to see. In the last years of his life, it became the explicit topic of conceptual and mythological concern—indeed, it demonstrates the link between Novalis’ philosophical and cultural-technological projects. The hole in the universe makes the critical-encyclopedic project possible, and makes its characterization as a Bible necessary. Those projects are supported by a “Critique of organs” in which organs are fungible, historical, new. The possibility of such organs—the possibility of

<sup>622</sup> HKA I, p. 83. Cf. *Blüthenstaub* 78 (HKA II, pp. 448/49), which defends the same position while adumbrating the metaphysical judgmentalism of organology: “In den ersten Zeiten der Entdeckung der Urtheilskraft war jedes neue Urtheil ein Fund. Der Werth dieses Fundes stieg, je anwendbarer, je fruchtbarer dieses Urtheil war. Zu Sentenzen, die uns jetzt sehr gemein vorkommen, gehörte damals noch ein ungewöhnlicher Grad von Leben des Verstandes. Man mußte Genie und Scharfsinn aufbieten, um mittelst des neuen Werkzeugs neue Verhältnisse zu finden. Die Anwendung desselben auf die eigenthümlichsten, interessantesten und allgemeinsten Seiten der Menschheit mußte vorzügliche Bewunderung erregen und die Aufmerksamkeit aller guten Köpfe auf sich ziehn. So entstanden die gnomischen Massen, die man zu allen Zeiten und bey allen Völkern so hoch geschätzt hat. Es wäre leicht möglich, daß unsere jetzigen genialischen Entdeckungen im Laufe der Zeiten ein ähnliches Schicksal träfe. Es könnte leicht eine Zeit kommen, wo das alles so gemein wäre, wie jetzt Sittensprüche, und neue, erhabene Entdeckungen den rastlosen Geist der Menschen beschäftigten.”

<sup>623</sup> “Ins Innere der Natur dringt Beobachtung und Zergliederung der Erscheinungen, und man kann nicht wissen, wie weit dieses mit der Zeit gehen werde. Jene transzendente Fragen aber, die ueber die Natur hinausgehen, wuerden wir bei allem dem doch niemals beantworten koennen, wenn uns auch die ganze Natur aufgedeckt waere, da es uns nicht einmal gegeben ist, unser eigenes Gemuet mit einer andern Anschauung, als der unseres inneren Sinnes, zu beobachten. Denn in dem selben liegt das Geheimnis des Ursprungs unserer Sinnlichkeit. Ihre Beziehung auf ein Objekt, und was der transzendente Grund dieser Einheit sei, liegt ohne Zweigel zu tief verborgen, als dass wir, die wir so gar uns selbst nur durch innern Sinn, mithin als Erscheinung, kennen, ein so unschickliches Werkzeug unserer Nachforschung dazu brauchen koennten, etwas anderes, als immer wiederum Erscheinungen, aufzufinden, deren nichtsinnliche Ursache wir doch gern erforschen wollten.” (*KdrV* B334/A278.)

possibility, as we will see—makes radical politics in an organological vein necessary.

The entirety of this project is sketched in a series of extraordinary letters between Novalis and Friedrich Schlegel from the fall of 1798 to the spring of 1799 (see the appendix to this chapter). The letters are the best surviving example of what the friends called *Symphilosophie*. As such, they attest to the breadth of the project, which included Schlegel's novel *Lucinde*, Novalis' encyclopedic and biblical efforts, Schlegel's own notion of a Bible—all on the basis of a new philosophy.

The central statement is Novalis' response to Schlegel's mention of a reiteration in the footsteps of Muhammad and Luther, literature as Bible:

Du schreibst von Deinem Bibelproject und ich bin auf meinem Studium der Wissenschaft überhaupt – und ihres Körpers, des *Buchs* – ebenfalls auf die Idee *der Bibel* gerathen – der Bibel – des des *Ideals jedwedem* Buchs. Die Theorie der Bibel entwickelt, giebt die Theorie der Schriftstellerey oder der Wortbildnerey überhaupt – die zugleich die symbolische, indirecte, Constructionslehre des schaffenden Geistes abgiebt. Du wirst aus dem Brief an die Schwägerinn sehn, daß mich eine vielumfassende Arbeit beschäftigt – die für diesen Winter meine ganze Thätigkeit absorbirt. Dies soll nichts anders, als eine Kritik des Bibelprojects – ein Versuch einer Universalmethode des Biblisirens – die Einleitung zu einer ächten Encyclopädistik werden. Ich denke hier Wahrheiten und *Ideen im Großen* – *genialische* Gedanken zu erzeugen – ein lebendiges, wissenschaftliches Organon hervorzubringen – und durch diese synkritische Politik der Intelligenz mir den Weg zur *ächtten Praxis* – dem wahrhaften Reunionsprozess – zu bahnen.<sup>624</sup>

The Book<sup>625</sup> is a function, and Novalis wants to offer its Critique. The introduction or propaedeutic to the New Bible would be the creation of a universal method: an *organon* that would offer—perhaps surprisingly—two only slightly distinct objects, an encyclopedia and a Bible.<sup>626</sup> The quoted passage demonstrates the compact presentation

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<sup>624</sup> *HKA* IV, pp. 262-63.

<sup>625</sup> Both encyclopedias and bibles can be placed in the superlative category. For the former, see the excellent treatment by Chad Wellmon, “Touching Books: Diderot, Novalis and the Encyclopedia of the Future,” *Representations* (114:1), 2011, pp. 65-102. His focus on the materiality of the Book is an important corrective to the idealizing tendencies in the historiography of the new mythology in general.

<sup>626</sup> The obvious reference is to Kant's claim that the *Kritik* is a universal method for philosophy, not that philosophy itself. For the pre-history of the encyclopedic relation to the Bible in the Enlightenment, see Jonathan Sheehan, “From Philology to Fossils: The Biblical Encyclopedia in Early Modern Europe,”

of the entirety of the project. The proposed project moves extensively towards a new religion, even as it seeks to deepen its approach on the basis of a doctrine of spiritual construction tied to organological metaphysics.<sup>627</sup> This project then becomes the basis for a *synkritische Politik der Intelligenz* (which, in Novalis' vocabulary, means both "intelligentsia" and "intelligence"). The connection, in the context of the encyclopedia, to syncretism is clear. "Syncreticism" would then be a collection of disciplines—this is how Novalis imagines the encyclopedia—connecting concrete organs to metaphysics and critique. He writes of this collective discipline as a "Bahn zur ächten Praxis... Vervollkommnung der *intellectualen Werckzeuge*..."<sup>628</sup> The Bible and encyclopedia projects seems to run together, each containing a generalized Critique followed by content. In each case, too, the content will be treated substantially from the perspective of the Critical organ. This is why Novalis takes issue with the demotion of *organon* in the *Streit*. For him, the critical container will be the Bible, indeed the Bible will be an organ of Critique or an *organon* for metaphysics. Novalis takes direct aim at Kant:

Kants Streit der Facultaeten ist ein schönes Advocatenspecimen – ein Gewebe feiner Chikanen. Kant wird jezt, wie ihr Leibnitz beschuldigt, *juristisch* – und es ist von Anfang an, etwas gewesen. Die phil[osophische] Facultaet ist, wie der ärgste Sünder, am besten zu vertheidigen. Die phil[osophische] Darstellung dieses Streits wäre die schönste Defension der phil[osophischen] Facultaet gewesen. Kant ist, in Beziehung auf die Bibel, nicht a la Hauteur.<sup>629</sup>

In the intention to build an encyclopedia, Novalis marks Kantian Discipline as his point of reference. Kant misunderstands something about the Bible, he cuts through its possibilities too quickly, indeed legalistically. Novalis goes so far as to accuse Kant's treatment of the university faculties as non-philosophical.

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*Journal of the History of Ideas* (64: 1), 2003, pp. 41-60. For a more general treatment by the same author, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

<sup>627</sup> On Novalis' notion and practice of construction, see Gaier, *Krumme Regel*.

<sup>628</sup> *HKA* III, p. 432; *AB* 841. This passage has three genitives: *der Werckzeuge*, *der Fernröhre*, and *der Theorieen*, demonstrating the generality of Novalis's organology.

<sup>629</sup> *HKA* IV, p. 264.

The disagreement is actually fourfold. Novalis and Schlegel are both working with Lessing's *Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*, which had claimed that a new "gospel of Reason" must be written. Indeed, Lessing had gone so far in that work as to say that revelation was not rational, but that the revealed was given to humans in order to be made rational. That formula of intentional secular reduction—preserving, as it does, the now disputed content of dogma—is the precursor to Schleiermacher's play of negative and positive as much as of the New Bible project.<sup>630</sup> Schlegel's nostalgia for Lessing—if only he were still alive, much of the project would not be necessary—makes up the one axis of this complex. The other is Novalis' engagement with Kant, which, in spite of his uncharacteristically negative designations, is terminologically deep.

We have seen the development of disciplinary organs in Kant's *Streit der Facultäten* (in the context of the return of metaphysics in biological discourse in the 1790s, in chapter II of the present study). Novalis singles out the demotion not of the theological faculty but of the *organa* of the faculties in general. Indeed, the accusation of legalism is tied to just this terminological shift. Novalis' dual project—encyclopedia and Bible—is an *organon* in the sense Kant had abandoned in the 1770s. This designation is not accidental—it is a reaction to a close reading of the *Streit*.

The specific conflict between the theological and the philosophical faculty—the "legal" version of this conflict<sup>631</sup>—is that between *Kirchenglaube* and *Vernunftglaube*.<sup>632</sup>

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<sup>630</sup> Schleiermacher is actually less optimistic about the written as a medium of religion: "Jede heilige Schrift ist nur ein Mausoleum der Religion ein Denkmal, daß ein großer Geist da war, der nicht mehr da ist; denn wenn er noch lebte und wirkte, wie würde er einen so großen Wert auf den toten Buchstaben legen, der nur ein schwacher Abdruck von ihm sein kann? Nicht der hat Religion, der an eine heilige Schrift glaubt, sondern der welcher keiner bedarf, und wohl selbst eine machen könnte." (*Reden*, p. 68.)

<sup>631</sup> Kant separates between "illegal" and "legal" forms of these conflicts. Those which are *gesetzwidrig* are based on the higher faculties attempting to usurp the truth-tribunal of the philosophical faculty, either through pretension or through governmental manipulation. Those which are *gesetzmäßig* are arguments

This division is in the Bible itself, according to Kant, but only in the way in which is read by the different faculties. The philosophical reading, which insists on the rational kernel of moral teachings, is the *canon* of religion in general. The higher faculty's reading, which is based on revelation, and focuses on the content of the stories, is the *organon* of religion. The *Streit* had demoted *organon* to an "aid" or "help" for practice in each higher faculty. The Bible is precisely this demoted tool, insofar as it is read by the higher faculty. It is the source of dogma, which finds its disciplinary home in the pulpit. Kant glosses *organon* with the even more deflationary *Vehikel*, which is repeated throughout the text.<sup>633</sup> The legalism that Novalis detects is not in the separation of the faculties, but in the disciplinary rejection of their substantial and political disagreement. Novalis agreed with Schleiermacher that substantial disagreement could be both politically and religiously salutary.

Fragment 782 of the *AB* informs us that "Gegen Kants Streit d[er] Facult[äten] ist sehr viel zu erinnern." For Novalis, as a practitioner of the new mythology trying to create a new Book, the restrictions the *Streit* terminologically placed on communication between the faculties could not be normatively accepted. And in fact, the hermeneutic and disciplinary problems presented in this debate went, for him, to the very heart of the Critical project. With Schlegel and Schleiermacher in dialogue, Novalis specifies his complaint against the *Streit*:

Religionslehre ist wissensch[aftliche] Poësie. Poësie ist unter d[en] Empfindungen – was Phil[osophie] in Beziehung auf Gedanken ist.  
(Selbstgedanke – *Selbstempfindung*.)

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about truth's social and technical application and its convenience to historical and governmental circumstance.

<sup>632</sup> The religion of reason was first fully articulated in *Religion within the Bounds of Mere Reason*, and it was the censoring of that book which prevented the *Streit*'s publication until 1798. See chapter II above.

<sup>633</sup> The first gloss is at AA II, p. 37, and is followed at pp. 42, 44, 45 48, 51, and 53. Once the gloss has occurred, Kant no longer uses *organon*.

Religion ist Synth[esis] von Gefühl und Gedanke oder Wissen  
 Rel[igions]Lehre ist also eine Synthesis von  
 Poëtik und Philosophik.

Hier entstehn ächte *Dogmata* – ächte Erfahrungssätze, d.h. aus Vernunfts[ätzen] (Direct) –  
 Philosophemen – und Glaubenssätzen (indirect) – *Poëmen* – wahrhaft zusammengesetzte  
 – nicht gegens[eitig] beschränkte, sonder vielmehr gegens[eitig] bestärkte und erweiterte  
 Sätze.

(Vernunft ist director Poët – direct produktive Imag[ination] –  
*Glauben* ist indirecter Poët indirect prod[uktive] Imag[ination].)<sup>634</sup>

The poet writes *dogma* from the productive imagination of reason (which constitutes the world) and the indirect production of belief. The “self-thought” of reason must remain in contact with the “self-sensation” of feeling, in which religious feeling emerges. In one sense, religion unites poetry in philosophy; in another, poetry is the container of actual *dogmata*. Derived from *dokein* (“to seem (to one),” but also “to think”), Kant’s excluded word becomes the temporary crystallization of experience, the expressive moment between the self-reflexive systems of reason and of feeling. It seems that *dogmata* are simply propositions that combine these two: in short, synthetic judgments *a priori*. The metaphysics of everyday judgment is built into the heart of the new religion.

The producer of *dogmata* will turn out to be the organ, nestled in the definitional core of the *organon*, Bible and encyclopedia. Novalis writes, just before the above quotation:

Tödtet der Mystizism d[ie] Vernunft? – Kant meint den Dogmatism – Dogmatism ist  
*Verhältnißaufhebende* etc. Thätigkeit oder Unthätigkeit.<sup>635</sup>

This unusual definition of dogmatism after Kant contains the whole vision of the *organon* for metaphysics. The larger difference between Kant and Novalis on the score of mysticism highlights the difference in their Bible teachings; the central adjective “relation-canceling” the difference in their conceptions of Critique. What relation would be cancelled in dogmatic thought?

<sup>634</sup> *HKA* III, pp. 420-21.

<sup>635</sup> *HKA* III, p. 420.



As we have seen, Kant's Bible is hermeneutically divided between faculties, and their communication is a "legal" battle over political pragmatics. The Bible is a mere ecclesiastical vehicle. It is, however, the document of the canon, too: it contains the truths of reason and of reason's belief, which the philosophical faculty must unearth. Novalis' Bible is a function, and an object. It is a book, containing a record of real dogmata, a history of organological Nature. It thus both contains the historical truth and is irrelevant otherwise. Its own history, as Book, makes up its true worth. Not the content—not even the rational kernel we might and should discover by reading the Bible—but the collocation and cultural force of the Bible should interest, for Novalis. The Bible is simply the total container of teachings—*dogmata*, results—and must therefore be reproduced. The assumption is that *ächte Dogmata*, philosophy itself, will change over time. The Bible must reflect the dual histories of self-sensation and self-thought.

If these histories are synthetic judgments *a priori*, why is "dogmatism" characterized as "relation-cancelling"? (Note that *Verhältnißaufhebende* applies only to *Thätigkeit*, thus making *Unthätigkeit* appositive to *Dogmatism* and a gloss on *Verhältnisaufhebende Thätigkeit*.) What relation is meant? Dogmatism is, according to Kant, the doctrines of reason without a previous critique of the faculties. The relation cancelled in dogmatic thought is thus that between Critique and philosophy. Philosophy by itself is the production of *dogmata* without the built-in assurance of their source and location in the system of knowledge. Novalis' reading of this problem agrees with the basic gesture: activity that cancels the self-reflexive examination of cognition in its very acts is actually not activity. *Ächte Dogmata* are those which are produced with critical energy, with simultaneous attention to form (thought) and content (feeling, likely here by

Schleiermacher's lights)—*or* they are those teachings which are subjected retroactively to such critique with sensitivity to the historical circumstance of both parts of cognition. That is, the Bible is the totality of propositions produced by a certain doctrine of judgment itself, a certain moment in the hylomorphy of human cognition. Their truth is in their witnessing, as the *Lehrlinge* has it on my reading above, of the condition of the constructed world, natural as well as social, at a certain time. The critique of the Bible is thus an *organon* for reading itself—this is why it overlaps with the encyclopedic project—or for the evaluation of judgments as producing the relation between self-knowledge and knowledge. If that relation also produces the non-whole world (and we shall see that it does), then the Book is an *organon* for metaphysics.

The bearer of such historically critical *dogmata* cannot be the proposition, which, by Kant's own admission, is not in itself critical. The name for that bearer is *organ*.

Novalis transcribes from the *KdrV* in his *Kant-Studien*:

Dogmatism hingegen ist dogmatisches Verfahren der reinen Vern[unft] ohne vorangehende Kritik ihres Organs.<sup>636</sup>

Either Novalis has here confused this with later passages,<sup>637</sup> or “organ” simply makes more sense to him as a characterization of the parts of intelligence. In any case, Kant had actually written that “Dogmatismus ist also das dogmatische Verfahren der reinen

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<sup>636</sup> *HKA* II, p. 388.

<sup>637</sup> Specifically: “In der Ausführung also des Plans, den die Kritik vorschreibt, d. i. im künftigen System der Metaphysik, müssen wir dereinst der strengen Methode des berühmten *Wolf*, des größten unter allen dogmatischen Philosophen, folgen, der zuerst das Beispiel gab, (und durch dies Beispiel der Urheber des bisher noch nicht erloschenen Geistes der Gründlichkeit in Deutschland wurde,) wie durch gesetzmäßige Feststellung der Prinzipien, deutliche Bestimmung der Begriffe, versuchte Strenge der Beweise, Verhütung kühner Sprünge in Folgerungen der sichere Gang einer Wissenschaft zu nehmen sei, der auch eben darum eine solche, als Metaphysik ist, in diesen Stand zu versetzen vorzüglich geschickt war, wenn es ihm beigefallen wäre, durch Kritik des Organs, nämlich der reinen Vernunft selbst, sich das Feld vorher zu bereiten: ein Mangel, der nicht sowohl ihm, als vielmehr der dogmatischen Denkungsart seines Zeitalters beizumessen ist, und darüber die Philosophen seiner sowohl, als aller vorigen Zeiten einander nichts vorzuwerfen haben.” (*KdrV* B xxxvi-xxxvii; emphasis in original.)

Vernunft, *ohne vorangehende Kritik ihres eigenen Vermögens.*<sup>638</sup> The shift from *Vermögen* to *Organ* reflects the entire program of organology. It shows, for Novalis, how Critique can be itself non-dogmatic (or non-“negatively dogmatic,” as Fichte had had it—see chapter III above). By making Critique a question of organs, fundamentally in development as judgmental combinations of the physical and the spiritual, Novalis insists on the history of possibility, indeed on the possibility of possibility. He comments on his transcription:

*/Kritik ist Bildung für das Vernunftorgan, durch Lenkung der Aufmercksamkeit auf dasselbe – man erwirbt sich durch die Kritik sichern Sinn für das Vernunftorgan, so daß man es brauchen und seine Functionen von allen andern streng unterscheiden lernt./*<sup>639</sup>

Critique is an experiment, and makes pure reason into an organ. Indeed, it involves itself in the development of the actual organs, and in so doing, means to provide the substantial link between the general (metaphysics) and the particular (the individual disciplines of the encyclopedic efforts).<sup>640</sup> Organ is no longer taken only as the physical sense-organ, but in the breadth of its etymological possibilities. The Bible as *organon* of the encyclopedia makes the relation between the general and the particular substantial. We have, no longer disciplinary organs, but disciplines *as organs*. Critique, in order to avoid dogmatism, must particularize its object. The faculties under Kant’s investigation become the generalized organs under Novalis’. These organs can be literally anything (see the epigraph). Thus, the *organon* of the encyclopedia, which is also the new Bible, is a discipline Novalis dubs *Organologie*:

ORGANOLOGIE. Das Werckzeug, als solches, läßt sich nicht müßig denken. Ein Organ

<sup>638</sup> *KdrV*, B xxxv; emphasis in original.

<sup>639</sup> *HKA* II, p. 388.

<sup>640</sup> That this is so is supported by the various entries on *Encyclopaedistik* in the *AB*. Those are *AB* passages 69, 90, 92, 176, 282, and 552. Together these passages emphasize that the instruments of the various sciences are made instrumental first by the generality of the encyclopedic effort, which also makes the various sciences themselves organs.

ist, seinem Begriff nach, in Bewegung und mithin in Verbindung mit seinem Reitz theils unmittelbar, theils mittelbar durch das Produkt. Der todte Körper todt gedacht wird uns keine Aufschlüsse über die Kraft geben, und ihre Verbundung mit ihm. Beobachtet das lebendige Organ und das bewegte Werkzeug.<sup>641</sup>

*Werkzeug* here is contrasted with *Organ*, but only to point out a higher concept of the organ, which applies to both.<sup>642</sup> That higher concept grounds Novalis' replacement for Kantian Critique, organology. Indeed, the concept of the organ here comes to replace the metaphorically organic judgment I located in Kant's doctrine of judgment in chapter I above. Organs are the forms of judgment, and they make what Novalis calls "magical idealism"—and what I will call "transcendental realism" to de-mystify the doctrine (see below)—possible. They are both called organology because the organs, physical and cognitive, that they attend to and eventually manipulate, cover the expanse of being in general and in particular.

If organs are the forms of judgment, then we must ask, what is the difference between an organ and a category? For Kant, the categories were unities of judgment under which synthesis (of intuitions and concepts) occur. "Organ" for Novalis is a designation of the form of that synthesis as it occurs. "Higher realism" is attention to the categories that holds open the possibility of their own development. Novalis writes:

Höhere Physik, oder höhere Mathematik oder ein Gemisch von beyden wurde immer unter Phil[osophie] bisher verstanden. Man suchte durch Phil[osophie] immer etwas werckstellig zu machen – man suchte ein allvermögendes Organ in der Philosophie.  
*Magischer Idealism.*<sup>643</sup>

This description of the historical search for an *organon* intentionally conflates that term with the organs at issue in "magical idealism," the distinctive doctrine that, over time,

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<sup>641</sup> *HKA* III, p. 332; *AB* 453.

<sup>642</sup> Ulrich Stadler has investigated the structure of the *Werkzeug* in great detail. I am in agreement with his two fundamental points, that the tool makes both its user and its use also take on the character of mediation, and that this mediation can, for Novalis, raise itself to a "higher" immediate mediation. See Ulrich Stadler, *Die theuren Dinge* (Bern/Munich: Francke, 1980), pp. 150-83. See also *HKA* III, p. 391; *AB* 656-58, which is Stadler's most important text.

<sup>643</sup> *HKA* III, p. 385; *AB* 642.

humans should make their involuntary organs fully voluntary. Its classical statement is:

Der thätige Gebrauch der Organe ist nichts, als *magisches, wunderthätiges* Denken, oder *willkührlicher* Gebrauch der Körperwelt—denn Willen ist nichts, als magisches, *kräftiges* Denkvermög[en].<sup>644</sup>

“Magic” functions for Novalis as a way of talking about real interactions between seemingly opposed entities, like body and soul.<sup>645</sup> Novalis thus reads the history of metaphysics as the search for an organ of intervention in the world, the first site of which will be our own bodies. This is because they are the site of our specific, historical organs, and the users of tools more generally. As he writes in *Blüthenstaub*:

Werkzeuge armiren den Menschen. Man kann wohl sagen, der Mensch versteht eine Welt hervorzubringen, es mangelt ihm nur am gehörigen Apparat, an der verhältnißmäßigen Armatur seiner Sinneswerkzeuge. Der Anfang ist da. So liegt das Prinzip eines Kriegsschiffes in der Idee des Schiffbaumeisters, der durch Menschenhaufen und gehörige Werkzeuge und Materialien diesen Gedanken zu verkörpern vermag, indem er durch alles dieses sich gleichsam zu einer ungeheuren Maschine macht. So erforderte die Idee eines Augenblicks oft ungeheure Organe, ungeheure Massen von Materien, und der Mensch ist also, wo nicht actu, doch potentia Schöpfer.<sup>646</sup>

The sense themselves become historical, their respective fields of potential a matter of *Potenzen* or possibility.<sup>647</sup> This solves a preliminary difficulty in considering organology

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<sup>644</sup> *HKA* III, p. 466; *AB* 1075.

<sup>645</sup> See *HKA* III, pp. 266-67 and p. 297; *AB* 137 and 322. *HKA* III, p. 301; *AB* 338 makes clear that magical idealism is tied to the outside world coming under rational control as well, and this under the heading METAPHYSIK. For the latter to make sense, organology must be the base discipline. The best treatment of this doctrine is still Manfred Frank, “Die Philosophie des sogenannten magischen Idealismus,” in Manfred Frank, *Auswege aus dem deutschen Idealismus* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2007), pp. 27-67.

<sup>646</sup> *HKA* II, pp. 452/53. This is a base-text for Holland’s investigation, and undermines the strict separation between *Werkzeug* and *Organ*. Although they are not identical, their relation is hardly one of analogy across the divide of mechanism and “organicism.” Instead, instrumental capability is intimately linked to having organs, which are in turn the precipitate of “higher organs.” It is the latter that must be realized and changed in the course of philosophy. *HKA* III, pp. 401-03; *AB* 702 claims that nature is simply “more” after it has passed through the philosophical *organ*. See pp. 295 ff. in the current chapter above for a formal reading of this fragment.

<sup>647</sup> As Daiber has pointed out, Novalis differs from his friend Ritter on the score of experimentation, because Novalis does not think that mere experiment will answer transcendental questions (Daiber, *Experimentalphysik*, pp. 99-115). Here we can see why: organs are not merely physical locations, nor are they transcendent sources of truth. They are always split between their physical and spiritual determinations—they are always the forms of possible judgment. Physiology and medicine are treated always from this perspective, where organ is both the concrete and physical location of a sense, and the potentially ideal historical condition of magical reality (possibility). See *HKA* III, pp. 307-08 (*AB* 370-72); pp. 314-15 (*AB* 399); pp. 317-19 (*AB* 409); pp. 322-23 (*AB* 437); pp. 327-29 (*AB* 446); pp. 331-32 (*AB* 452); pp. 369-71 (*AB* 593).

a revision of Critique. There can be no Kantian critique of organs—indeed, for Kant, organs fall into the realm of physiology (thus the medical faculty) because they are empirical. The *KdrV* often rejects the notion of a “physiology” of reason. Novalis responds with magical idealism.

While the latter doctrine seems a good candidate for hermetic obscurantism, it is based on a specific doctrine of the senses that frees them from the limitations of their fields of potential. Novalis makes this move by identifying *Sinn* and *Werkzeug*:

Sinn ist ein Werkzeug – ein Mittel. Ein absoluter Sinn wäre Mittel und Zweck zugleich.<sup>648</sup>

The sentence makes up the distance between magical idealism and transcendental idealism, by making the field of possibility of any given sense into an instrument itself. Novalis elsewhere calls this *Organibilität*.<sup>649</sup> Between the specifics of supposedly material and the generalities of the supposedly rational lies the previously experienced mixture of the two through an open-ended formation called “organ.” The sense attached to the organ is in turn the organ of philosophy itself. Fields of potential, precipitated out of historical formations of this very site of the formation of categories,<sup>650</sup> become fungible. Their activity is the activity of the universe. They are the organs of transcendental realism.

Transcendental realism is my name for this doctrine, the most robust form of

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<sup>648</sup> *HKA* II, p. 550. Stadler understands this passage in terms of his “general mediation” thesis. I agree, but there is more to the story.

<sup>649</sup> *HKA* III, p. 665.

<sup>650</sup> Historical development, which precipitates and sublimates *organs* from the primordially organological cosmos, introduces inertia into their “lower” forms. So *HKA* II, pp. 450/51; *Blüthenstaub* 80: “Eine allzugroße Dienstfertigkeit der Organe würde dem irdischen Daseyn gefährlich seyn. Der Geist in seinem jetzigen Zustande würde eine zerstörende Anwendung davon machen. Eine gewisse Schwere des Organs hindert ihn an allzuwillkürlicher Thätigkeit, und reizt ihn zu einer regelmäßigen Mitwirkung, wie sie sich für die irdische Welt schickt. Es ist unvollkommener Zustand desselben, daß ihn diese Mitwirkung so ausschließlich an diese Welt bindet. Daher ist sie ihrem Prinzip nach terminirt.” Similarly at *HKA* III, p. 281; *AB* 235, which describes organs as excrement.

Romantic organology. I use this name because “magic” denotes the real for Novalis, while idealism refers to the conditions of possibility that Kant calls “transcendental.”<sup>651</sup>

The organs of that philosophy, however, are in development. This means that they are not merely developmental or evolutionary factors in biological mass, but instead mark the history of possibility. Possibility is not, as Kant had had it, the formal coincidence of categorical contribution on our part with time as a form of intuition. Instead, it is the very hole in the graph of the universe. The divide between subject and object, which is also the condition of possibility for their reunification in each judgment, takes on different forms according to the whole complex of human natural, social, and indeed cultural-political perception and action.<sup>652</sup> The only word that could characterize that form in general was *organ*.

Novalis shares the approach that Fichte had given to Schelling, that of methodological stringency, the deferral of the question of the thing until the form-content complexes of judgment began to respond to this question independently. Schelling presented this approach in latency, always incomplete, always anticipatory; it is made a complete program by Novalis. The statement of transcendental realism is that sense is organ, where “organ” denotes both the physical locus of the sense and its

instrumentalization—*Organibilität*. The distance from the precipitate of the specific,

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<sup>651</sup> Novalis suggests something similar to this in *HKA* III, p. 401; *AB* 694: “Schmerz muß Täuschung sein. (Alle Erfahrung ist *Magie* – nur magisch erklärbar – Verminderung und Concentration d[er] Erfahrung. Verminderung und Concentration der Speculation. Der Empirism endigt mit einer einzigen Idee, wie der Rationalism mit einer einzigen Erfahrung anfängt. (Empirischer Idealism – und Realism. Rationeller Realism und Idealism.)” And similarly at *HKA* III, p. 316; *AB* 402 (emphasis in original): “Der Idealism ist nichts, als ächter *Empirism*.”

<sup>652</sup> So *HKA* III, p. 333; *AB* 457: “PHIL[OSOPHIE]. Synth[etische] Urtheile sind genialische—nicht antinomische, einseitige Urtheile – Eine Art von einseitigen Urtheilen begreift der Idealismus – die Andre der Realismus. Die synth[etischen] Urtheile begreift der Kriticism. Methode des *Synth[etischen] Urtheilens*—System der synth[etischen] Urtheile. Gemeiner—höherer Kriticismus. Angewandter Kriticism.” Critique is thus, through the filter of the forms of judgment in development (organs, or the possibility of experience as the possibility of possibility), the substantial link between Bible, encyclopedia, and the individual disciplines.

physical organ (which is defined literally and traditionally as the locus of a field of possibility) to the organ as the *use of the senses* is the distance from transcendental idealism (even in its stringent forms in Fichte and to an extent in Schelling) to transcendental realism, which is magical idealism. By conceiving of the senses as loci of possibility precipitated out of an instrumentally emergent “world,” Novalis literalizes “organ” both as and across the divide of object and subject. The effect for metaphysics and politics is that the world is then fully potentially constructible, but only in absolute devotion to its precipitated form. Construction becomes the instrument of the invention of what would be called categories.<sup>653</sup> The categories as Kant speaks of them are the universal subjective forms of the world. The Copernican revolution, traditionally understood, is just this reversal: the world’s very ability to appear (*Erscheinung*) is formally subsumed under the categories, while what appears is a matter of contingency (from a categorial or conceptual standpoint). Rather than making what appears a necessity, Novalis makes the form of its appearance (what Kant calls possible experience) also “contingent.” But here, one should say possible. The Copernican revolution made the lawfulness of Newton’s universe reflect in the lawfulness of the subject, freeing the flow of phenomena from rational anticipation and the rational will from empirical determination. Novalis responded by making the subject’s very lawfulness a half-phenomenal flow—*Bildung des Vernunftorgans*. The phenomenal

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<sup>653</sup> Novalis mentions the categories in *AB* 820, where he argues that *Kriticism* has provided a new way of looking at the link between subject and object, as one of active appropriation and self-alienation. The upshot is that “wir erblicken uns im System, als Glied.” Humans becomes organs, partial points of contact between substances in the universe—nowhere is the link between metaphysics and politics more clearly suggested. *HKA* III, p. 297; *AB* 321: “[MENSCH[EN]L[EHRE]. Der Mensch soll ein *vollkommenes* und *Totales Selbstwerkzeug* seyn.” Novalis often describes humans as *organs*, as Stadler rightly insists. Examples are at *HKA* III, p. 292 (*AB* 291); and *HKA* III, pp. 410-11 (*AB* 737). For Novalis’s anthropology, see Chad Wellmon, “Lyrical Feeling: Novalis’ Anthropology of the Senses,” *Studies in Romanticism* 47: 4 (2008), pp. 453-77; Holland, *Procreative Poetics*, pp. 85-113; and Florian Roder, *Menschwerdung des Menschen: der magische Idealismus im Werke des Novalis* (Stuttgart: Mayer, 1997).



freedom of the world in Kant is transferred to the transcendental subject, which is thereby not simply reified but made real in Kant's sense, in principle open to new discoveries, new and higher and more rational unities. So far from trapping the world in the net of the subject, this makes the world, for Novalis, first cognizable, first the property of cognition with its palette of categories, intuitions, feelings, sensations. In short, perception imposes an open framework on its resulting objects, but neither the object nor the subject ultimately precedes that interaction. The program of systemic imposition thus has to proceed by painstaking attention to the appearance *qua* organ. Thus Novalis' method is in a third position with respect to Kant and Fichte, whom he characterizes as "lower and higher natural history."<sup>654</sup> Kant has removed the one-sidedness of scientific construction according to a "single criterion" (the sun), and Fichte has uncovered the laws of the multiple-criterion system. Fichte is thus the "Neuton" or "2te[r] Copernikus," the inventor of laws for the interior world-system.<sup>655</sup> Novalis occupies a third position, which is based on a dynamic relation between the pre-Kantian systems and the interior constructions that follow on their critique. "Organ" designates the use—theoretical and practical—of the changing interaction between the pre-Kantian and Fichtean positions. As we will see below, for Novalis, Kant is the "lower organ" and Fichte the higher. In this context, this means that the method proposed by the KdrV takes the position of a concrete organ, the designator of a field of epistemological possibility crucial to the contemporary intelligentsia. The goal, then, must be to use this "lower" organ to influence the world in such a way that that organ itself is raised to a higher power. Metaphysics must realize itself in a politics that alters the very constitution of that

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<sup>654</sup> *HKA* III, p. 335; *AB* 460.

<sup>655</sup> *HKA* III, p. 335; *AB* 460.

metaphysics retroactively. Critique is transcendently real: it makes up the historical formation of cognition that leads to a better world, which will in turn change the organ of its production. The constant is “organ” as the general term for that mutually instrumental development. Novalis is a third Copernicus: following the construction of systems of law for the cosmos and the subject across the Critical divide, Novalis allows contingent flow to attach to both systems. The division between the two—their non-fit at the level of representation—constitutes the subject, which thus becomes the locus of organological capacity (the organ), or the possibility (as subject) of possibilities (of individual fields of potential, or organs).

The name “organ” thus also denotes appearance’s subjective/objective contingency or more precisely possibility, and thus demarcates the field of possibility of all possibilities. It allows construction of not the world (which is incomplete, constructed but present) but of the universe. That construction is no longer merely the pure creative act of an intellectual intuition (whether Kant’s or Fichte’s), but instead the production of possibilities. The organs of that production are necessarily mythological, biblical, encyclopedic.<sup>656</sup> Reason as organ is thus not free from empirical determination, but free

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<sup>656</sup> Thus, *HKA* III, p. 359; *AB* 540 (emphasis in original): “Eine Kritik der menschl[ichen] Intelligenz (als des *höchstgradigen Meters*, den wir haben) muß gleichsam die Propädeutik aller übrigen kritischen Disciplinen seyn.

(Niederer sinnlich[es] – höheres Sinnlich[es] allg[emeines] Sinnlich[es] etc. Erkenntn[iß] Verm[ögen].” And again, *HKA* III, p. 302; *AB* 343 (emphasis in original): “PHIL[OSOPHIE]. Jede Wissensch[aft] ist vielleicht nur eine Variation der Philosophie. / Die Phil[osophie] ist gleichsam die Substanz der W[issenschaft] – die überall gesucht wird – überall vorhanden ist, und nie dem Sucher erscheint. Dennoch soll sie *auch* in concreter Gestalt erscheinen, wie der Stein der Weisen und dies ist das höchste Problem.” *Organ* is at a minimum a designation for the desired concreteness. The connection provided here is also then reflected in a famous fragment on the *Mittler* in religion (grist especially for Stadler in *Die theuren Dinge*). Here, in *HKA* II, pp. 442/43; *Blüthenstaub* 74, Novalis writes that “Wahre Religion ist, die jenen Mittler als Mittler annimmt, ihn gleichsam für das Organ der Gottheit hält, für ihre sinnliche Erscheinung... Die wahre Religion scheint aber bei einer nähern Betrachtung abermals antinomisch getheilt in Pantheismus und Monotheismus. Ich bediene mich hier einer Lizenz, indem ich Pantheism nicht im gewöhnlichen Sinn nehme, sondern darunter die Idee verstehe, daß alles Organ der Gottheit, Mittler seyn könne, indem ich es dazu erhebe: so wie Monotheism im Gegentheil den Glauben

to determine empirically. For that, it needs fields of possibility in the plural, and it must have an active relation to them, i.e. they must become its instruments. The retroactive constructions of natural history are thus metaphysically innovative. They leave the *physis-techne* analogy behind, and they do so with the immediate task of revising the moral, social, and political orders.

## **The Absolute Annihilation of the Present: Moral, Social, and Political Organs**

### **I. Moral Organs**

The senses, for the magical idealist or transcendental realist, are historical formations of possibility. The historical conditions of possibility called organs form the possibility of that possibility because of their dialectical subject-object structure. For Novalis, this means also that organs have a future. And that future is political. Organs are tasked with the political: radical instauration of institutions from the theoretical nothingness which its capacity to abstract has reduced them. That pure possibility is subtended by attention to their nevertheless actual, contemporary forms. Thus a link is created between system and history, and this philosophical gesture is at the basis of German radicalism going forward into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Future organs had been a topic of discussion in at least two previous authors with whom Novalis was familiar. In a fragment by Lessing entitled *Daß mehr als fünf Sinne*

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bezeichnet, daß es nur Ein solches Organ in der Welt für uns gebe, das allein der Idee eines Mittlers angemessen sey, und wodurch Gott allein sich vernehmen lasse, welches ich also zu wählen durch mich selbst genöthigt werde: denn ohnedem würde der Monotheism nicht wahre Religion seyn." Thus *Organibilität* is the basis for panentheism, where *hen kai pan* is made into organology.

*für den Menschen sein können*, the Enlightenment stalwart defines the senses as areas of order and mass (*Ordnung und Maß*) within the realm of representations. Noting the gap between these fields of possible perception and the totality of possibly perceived things (*Materie* as the limits of individual senses), Lessing reasons that the discovery of other senses is possible. The obvious candidates are electricity and magnetism, since we know these phenomena indirectly—what in principle could prevent a direct means of knowledge in these areas?<sup>657</sup>

As Fritz Mauthner showed long ago, Lessing may well have influenced Novalis' beloved moral philosopher, Franz Hemsterhuis. The latter's conception of a moral organ was determinative for Novalis' own larger cultural projects.<sup>658</sup> Much has been written on Novalis and his relationship to Hemsterhuis, and I do not intend to repeat that excellent work here.<sup>659</sup> Instead, I offer a short summary of the Novalis-Hemsterhuis relationship, followed by a suggestion about the moral sense as organological conscience in the second part of *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. I then press on to the political organs.

The Dutch philosopher Franz Hemsterhuis wrote against sensualism and materialism throughout his career. His project was, in fact, a new mythology in the most literal sense. Works like *Alexis ou l'âge d'or* (1787) make clear that an *organe morale* is meant to restore the classical paradise on earth. Stadler has suggested that this project

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<sup>657</sup> Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Werke. Band 8* (Munich: Hanser, 1970 ff.), pp. 557-560.

<sup>658</sup> Fritz Mauthner, *Wörterbuch der Philosophie. Band 2* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1923), pp. 81-89. Mauthner simply assumes the identity of *Sinn* in Lessing and *organe* in Hemsterhuis, and argues for a subtler proto-organology in Lessing. For this study, much depends upon the word organ.

<sup>659</sup> Hans-Joachim Mähl argues that Hemsterhuis presents the “passive” side of mythological perception for Novalis, while Fichte represents the “active.” See Hans-Joachim Mähl, *Die Idee des goldenen Zeitalters im Werke des Novalis: Studien zur Wesensbestimmung der frühromantischen Utopie und zu ihren ideengeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1994 (1965)), pp. 266-87. Stadler, *Die theuren Dinge*, has revised this thesis by calling attention to the ambivalence between passivity and activity in Hemsterhuis's own work. Agreement exists to the extent that Novalis's “moral sense” is derived from his reading of Hemsterhuis.

was first taken to be a kind of guiding fiction, and then later became a poetic fact that should be realized.<sup>660</sup> Mähl has emphasized Hemsterhuis' pessimistic attitude—ultimately Pauline—towards organs: they exist as mediators because we are not face to face with the beautiful world, and we are not in the fullness of time because we have organs at all.<sup>661</sup> In the *Lettre sur l'homme et ses rapports* (1772), this ambivalent attitude is built into the definition of the organ. The organs are literal for Hemsterhuis, and they form the simultaneously separative and synthetic containers for the perception of objects. Indeed, they are the locus where signs are separated from objects—where criteria of recognition are abstracted from aggregates of material—and thus become the basis of the semiotics of memory.<sup>662</sup> “Organ” is defined as passive, but in this very gesture, also as receptive of activity. Thus its stasis—the duration of its modification by an affecting object—is its essence, but its ability to be moved is just as essential.<sup>663</sup> This definition is extended to a putative moral sense, which casts the very perception of the world in moral terms.<sup>664</sup> The central ambivalence is about the persistence of organs in the return of the Golden Age. In one mood, Hemsterhuis imagines an unmediated, pure moral perception. In another, he says that this condition will make us “tout *organe*.”<sup>665</sup>

For Novalis, this condition of total organicity was not ambivalent. There is, perhaps surprisingly, even in the moral sense which organology provides, no yearning for

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<sup>660</sup> Stadler, *Die theuren Dinge*, pp. 157-64.

<sup>661</sup> Mähl, *Die Idee*, pp. 278 ff. Novalis's notes on this writing make clear that he is not simply adopting passivity, but is thinking parallel to Hemsterhuis. See *HKA II*, pp. 362-63.

<sup>662</sup> That is, the ability to remember an isolated sign is the ability to think of an object by linking that sign to it. For a general study of semiotics in the (German) Enlightenment, see Welberry, *Laocoon*.

<sup>663</sup> This summary is taken from Franz Hemsterhuis, *Lettre sur l'homme et ses rapports* (Paris, 1772), pp. 9 ff., and especially p. 10.

<sup>664</sup> This ability has a theoretical history which extends backwards to antiquity, and was particularly intensely treated by medieval scholasticism under the heading *synderesis*. See Verplaetse, *Localising the Moral Sense*, pp. 1-30, for the pre-19<sup>th</sup> century theories.

<sup>665</sup> Frans Hemsterhuis: *Oeuvres philosophiques*, ed. L.S.P. Meyboom, print of the Leeuwarden edition 1846-50, Hildesheim, New York 1972, II, p. 138. Cited at Stadler, *Die theuren Dinge*, p. 164.

the unmediated. *Sehnsucht* fulfills a function, but is not determinative. Instead, the activity of the organ—its ability to potentialize the actual, make it an organ—provides the basis for Novalis' adoption of the moral organ from Hemsterhuis, because it provides a theoretical basis on which to make “possible” the moral coloration of perception.<sup>666</sup> The epistemological question was set in the notes on Hemsterhuis:

/Keime künftiger Organe – Perfectibilitaet der Organe. Wie läßt sich etwas zu einem Organ machen?<sup>667</sup>

The connection between the perceptive organs and the moral organ is thus not trivial. The potentializing activity I have identified above must play a role in the creation of a morally perceiving organ. The understanding and reason “drücken die Organe oder Vermögen für Verhältnisse aus.”<sup>668</sup> As we have seen, this means that the organological faculties—crystallizations of cognition in development—are in Critical or substantial relation to their putative content. If they are *aufgehoben*, we fall into dogmatism. They can affect that content, all the way down to its moral coloring. This means that “Jedes endliche Wesen ist ein Werckzeug...”<sup>669</sup> Organology should allow the world to be rebuilt morally, relying on absolute abstraction on the one side, and absolute attention to historical formations of knowledge and its constructed world on the other. In principle, for Novalis, this realism about the historical conditions of possibility should make the world alterable all the way down, through the ontological activity of poetry:

... und wenn die Philosophie durch Bildung des äußern Ganzen, oder durch die *Gesetzgebung*, die *vollkommene* Poësie möglich macht, so ist gleichsam die Poësie der Zweck derselben, durch den sie erst Bedeutung und anmuthiges Leben erhält – den die

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<sup>666</sup> Other than his extensive excerpting of various works by Hemsterhuis, Novalis mentions Hemsterhuis's *Theorie des moralischen Sinns* in *HKA* III, pp. 420-21; *AB* 782, where we started our investigation of Novalis's differences with Kant's *Streit*. From that standpoint it becomes clear that what the moral organ makes possible is the production of moral *ächte Dogmata*, experiential sentences that describe the moral world or allow the experience of the world as moral.

<sup>667</sup> *HKA* II, p. 368.

<sup>668</sup> *HKA* II, p. 364.

<sup>669</sup> *HKA* II, p. 370.

Poësie bildet die *schöne* Gesellschaft, oder *das innere Ganze* – die Weltfamilie – die schöne Haushaltung des Universi – Wie die Philosophie durch System und Staat *die Kräfte* des Individuums mit den *Kräften* des Weltalls und der übrigen Menschheit paart, und verstärckt – das Ganze zum Organ d[es] Individuums, und das Individuum zum Organ des Ganzen macht – So die Poësie – in *Rücksicht des Genusses* – Das Ganze ist der Gegenstand des individuellen Genusses, und das Individuum der Gegenstand des Totalgenusses. Durch *die Poësie* wird die höchste Sympathie und Coactivitaet – die innigste, herrlichste Gemeinschaft wirkklich. /D[urch] d[ie] Philosophie – möglich.<sup>670</sup>

Philosophy is organology, the organification of the whole-part relation. It establishes the mutuality—categorical community—at the basis of actual community, which must be based on poetry’s ability to make organs the objects of enjoyment. This enjoyment retains the form of the organological universe, however: it actualizes—both in the sense of making actual and in the borrowed sense of making contemporary—what philosophy has made possible. Philosophy after Kant is legislation (*Gesetzgebung*), but its potential syntheses are infinite. Where the human’s tools are *unschicklich*, Novalis writes, philosophy’s task is to make them serve. Every finite being is caught in this potentially endless circulation of ends and means. Philosophy makes the beautiful relation of whole and part possible by making that relationship mutual; poetry makes it real by expressing it as mutual enjoyment. The new mythology and its religion emerge from the negativity of the organological universe into the positive historical realm of discourse and politics.

This structure is most clear in the second part of the novel-fragment *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. (The unfinished second section is ironically titled *die Erfüllung*.) Heinrich, having finished his *Bildungsreise*, finds himself in a deserted landscape where he encounters a monk named Sylvester, who once taught his father. The father’s recognition and rejection of—but simultaneous nostalgia about—poetic fulfillment in the blue flower had the tone of the novel as the paradigmatic Romantic epistemological space, split and unified by the discursive distance from fulfillment and the bitter sweetness of desire for

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<sup>670</sup> *HKA* II, pp. 372-73; emphasis in original.

that completion. Heinrich wants to find what his father could not, and, as in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, the apparent end of the apprenticeship with Klingsohr is emphatically not the end. Heinrich asks Sylvester when the lack in the world will come to an end. Sylvester responds: “Läßt sich Musik dem Tauben erklären?” Dismayed, Heinrich responds: “Also wäre der Sinn ein Anteil an der neuen durch ihn eröffneten Welt selbst? Man verstünde die Sache nur, wenn man sie hätte?”<sup>671</sup> The “only” force in the world, according to Sylvester, is conscience (*Gewissen*), and it is connected to the senses by structural analogy and by a substantial link:

Das Weltall zerfällt in unendliche, immer von größern Welten wieder befaßte Welten. Alle Sinne sind am Ende Ein Sinn. Ein Sinn führt wie Eine Welt allmählich zu allen Welten. Aber alles hat seine Zeit und seine Weise. Nur die Person des Weltalls vermag das Verhältnis unsrer Welt einzusehn. Es ist schwer zu sagen, ob wir innerhalb der sinnlichen Schranken unsers Körpers wirklich unsre Welt mit neuen Welten, unsre Sinne mit neuen Sinnen vermehren können, oder ob jeder Zuwachs unsrer Erkenntnis, jede neue erworbene Fähigkeit nur zur Ausbildung unsers gegenwärtigen Weltsinns zu rechnen ist.<sup>672</sup>

Heinrich takes the organological challenge: how many worlds, how many senses?

Perhaps this is all the same, because the “fable” is, for Heinrich, “Gesamtwerkzeug meiner gegenwärtigen Welt...”:

Selbst das Gewissen, diese Sinn und Welten erzeugende Macht, dieser Keim aller Persönlichkeit, erscheint mir wie der Geist des Weltgedichts, wie der Zufall der ewigen romantischen Zusammenkunft des unendlich veränderlichen Gesamtlebens.<sup>673</sup>

*Alles kann zum Organ werden* (see the epigraph to this chapter): the sense of this dictum is ultimately a constitutive morality in the world, the historical ability to introduce, slowly and in connection with the most concrete of appearances (critically), difference into the categorical structure of things. Sylvester confirms the poetic, organological

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<sup>671</sup> HKA I, p. 331.

<sup>672</sup> HKA I, p. 331.

<sup>673</sup> HKA I, p. 331.



innovation suggested by Heinrich,<sup>674</sup> and Heinrich responds with the final word on the new theology: for that doctrine to come forward as science, it will need the moral organ that is conscience. That organ gathers the historical senses and makes their ultimate possibility possible: the personalization of the world.<sup>675</sup> Sylvester confirms: the general *Mittler* is conscience itself,<sup>676</sup> now conceived as the active sense, the sense *par excellence* as organ. The novel “ends” with the promise of a politicization of organs in the secularizing program of a new religion.

That program was explained to Schlegel as the “negativity of Christianity,” the total annihilation of the present as the condition for the production of the past (antiquity) and the genuinely new future (see the appendix to this chapter). This is an organological expansion of the play of negativity and positivity in Schleiermacher. Organs bear the

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<sup>674</sup> “Werter Pilger”, versetzte Sylvester, “das Gewissen erscheint in jeder ernsten Vollendung, in jeder gebildeten Wahrheit. Jede durch Nachdenken zu einem Weltbild umgearbeitete Neigung und Fertigkeit wird zu einer Erscheinung, zu einer Verwandlung des Gewissens. Alle Bildung führt zu dem, was man nicht anders wie Freiheit nennen kann, ohnerachtet damit nicht ein bloßer Begriff, sondern der schaffende Grund alles Daseins bezeichnet werden soll. Diese Freiheit ist Meisterschaft. Der Meister übt freie Gewalt nach Absicht und in bestimmter und überdachter Folge aus. Die Gegenstände seiner Kunst sind sein, und stehen in seinem Belieben, und er wird von ihnen nicht gefesselt oder gehemmt. Und gerade diese allumfassende Freiheit, Meisterschaft oder Herrschaft ist das Wesen, der Trieb des Gewissens. In ihm offenbart sich die heilige Eigentümlichkeit, das unmittelbare Schaffen der Persönlichkeit, und jede Handlung des Meisters ist zugleich Kundwerdung der hohen, einfachen, unverwickelten Welt, – Gottes Wort.” (*HKA I*, pp. 331-32.)

<sup>675</sup> “Also ist auch das, was ehemals, wie mich deucht, Tugendlehre genannt wurde, nur die Religion, als Wissenschaft, die sogenannte Theologie im eigentlichen Sinne? Nur eine Gesetzordnung, die sich zur Gottesverehrung verhält, wie die Natur zu Gott? Ein Wortbau, eine Gedankenfolge, welche die Oberwelt bezeichnet, vorstellt und sie auf einer gewissen Stufe der Bildung vertritt? Die Religion für das Vermögen der Einsicht und des Urteils? der Richtspruch, das Gesetz der Auflösung und Bestimmung aller möglichen Verhältnisse eines persönlichen Wesens?” (*HKA I*, p. 332.)

<sup>676</sup> “Allerdings ist das Gewissen”, sagte Sylvester, “der eingeborne Mittler jedes Menschen. Es vertritt die Stelle Gottes auf Erden, und ist daher so vielen das Höchste und Letzte. Aber wie entfernt war die bisherige Wissenschaft, die man Tugend- oder Sittenlehre nannte, von der reinen Gestalt dieses erhabenen, weitumfassenden persönlichen Gedankens. Das Gewissen ist der Menschen eigenstes Wesen in voller Verklärung, der himmlische Urmensch. Es ist nicht dies und jenes, es gebietet nicht in allgemeinen Sprüchen, es besteht nicht aus einzelnen Tugenden. Es gibt nur Eine Tugend, – den reinen, ernsten Willen, der im Augenblick der Entscheidung unmittelbar sich entschließt und wählt. In lebendiger, eigentümlicher Unteilbarkeit bewohnt es und beseelt es das zärtliche Sinnbild des menschlichen Körpers, und vermag alle geistigen Gliedmaßen in die wahrhafteste Tätigkeit zu versetzen.” (*HKA I*, p. 332.)

functional conceptual task of the reproduction of the world, and that task is not only moral, but also political.<sup>677</sup>

## II. Social Organs

The political is, for Novalis, the critical joining of sense and will, and, as such, it is derived from dialogue with Fichte.<sup>678</sup> Among Novalis' various opinions on Fichte,<sup>679</sup> his adoption of and revision of Fichte's doctrine of organs from the *Grundlage des Naturrechts* (GdN—1796) is most political. The notion of connecting *Sinn* and *Wille* will have been one of the primary tasks of the critical method, one primarily associated with Fichte's metaphysics.<sup>680</sup> In this context, Novalis casts the incunabula of Criticism in organological terms:

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<sup>677</sup> Thus the “new Christianity” is paradoxically more secular than Kant's Biblical *organa*. If we use Blumenberg's notion of secularization as the re-purposing of problems for different functions, we can see that the moralization of belief (which re-directs content to a different function) finds an even more secularizing tendency in the new mythology, which alters the function only by replacing its content. What seems to be a new religion is a new set of tools for a function designated religious. But then, those tools do not leave the function innocent: they make it an organ of political production. Again, the ambivalence of this radicality between the reactionary and the progressive is subtended by the radical attitude itself.

<sup>678</sup> The scholarship on Novalis and Fichte is broad but in flux. The old view that the Romantics were Fichteans, which was laid aside during the 20<sup>th</sup> century's editorial production and deepening of source-investigation, has returned as the picture of Fichte as a subjective and totalizing idealist has been called into question. See Bernard Loheide, *Fichte und Novalis: transcendentalphilosophisches Denken im romantisierenden Diskurs* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000). See the excellent review article on this literature by Dalia Nassar, “Interpreting Novalis' *Fichte-Studien*,” *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* (84: 3), 2010, pp. 315-341. My disagreements within the literature fall mostly with Manfred Frank, who insists on a “pre-reflexive” moment of self in Novalis. See Manfred Frank, *Unendliche Annäherung*, but also and especially, *Selbstgefühl* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2002).

<sup>679</sup> Most comprehensive on this is Frederick Beiser, *German Idealism*, pp. 407-35. In the course of the 1790s, Novalis became increasingly desirous of a figure who could present love in the universe, which Fichte had done insufficiently. Candidates included Spinoza (in agreement with Schlegel), Hemsterhuis, and above all, at the end of Novalis's life, Plotinus, on which see Hans-Joachim Mähl, “Novalis und Plotin,” in Schulz, *Novalis*, pp. 357-424. The basic attitude, including ambivalence, is sketched as follows: “Es wäre wohl möglich, daß Fichte Erfinder einer ganz neuen Art zu denken wäre—für die die Sprache noch keinen Namen hat. Der Erfinder ist vielleicht nicht der fertigste und sinnreichste Künstler auf seinem Instrument... Es können *wunderbare Kunstwercke* [sic] hier entstehen...” (*HKA II*, p. 524.)

<sup>680</sup> See *HKA III*, p. 445; *AB* 921.

Fichte ist der Bearbeiter der Kantischen Kritik – der 2te Kant – das höhere Organ, insofern Kant das niedere Organ ist... Er setzt die Leser da nieder, wo sie Kant aufnimmt.<sup>681</sup>

Kant's work is the basis of communication, the self-imposed passivity of the organ; Fichte's the active organ, and ultimately recognitive communication itself. Novalis takes his terms here from Fichte's *GdN*, an application of the *WL* to the political realm.<sup>682</sup> This work marks out what we might call the ethics of reason, the specific doctrine of action (and ultimately law) that results from the *WL*'s determination of the capacities of reason. The *Ich* sets itself as absolutely free, but can only do so in setting limitations for itself. These limitations take the form of a fungible sensible world—the entirety of the parallel deductions of the theoretical self and the practical self. For the rational being to inscribe itself into a social order, however, it will have to have a conception of limitations that it does not give itself, but which come from elsewhere. These are the so-called *Anstoß*, the beginning of embodiment in the recognition of other rational beings.<sup>683</sup> This relativizes the notion of the individual, who can only exist as one among many. The legal relation (*das Rechtsverhältnis*) is established by this mutual appearance of external limitation, which is actually based on the recognition of others as rational beings (and thus an act). In order to have this relation, the individual must posit himself as an embodied being. Indeed, the central paradox is that, while the body itself falls under the constructive freedom of the absolute *Ich*, the appearance of the restriction of freedom must occur, without metaphysical restrictions thereby being placed (from where?) on the *Ich*. Fichte

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<sup>681</sup> *HKA* III, p. 335; *AB* 463.

<sup>682</sup> The *GdN* is itself an excellent example of the reactionary/progressive ambivalence in radical metaphysics of the period. For some of the more reactionary moments, see Adrian Daub, *Uncivil Unions: The Metaphysics of Marriage in German Idealism and Romanticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), pp. 36-71, and further in that book for the Romantic appropriation. I will focus on the social doctrines of recognition here.

<sup>683</sup> Thus: "Der Mensch (so alle endliche Wesen überhaupt) wird nur unter Menschen ein Mensch..." *Fichtes sämtliche Werke* III, p. 39.

thus posits two *organs*, a higher and a lower, a concrete organ of rational communication and recognition, and a lower, bodily organ (sometimes the body itself, as complex). Ultimately, these two organs are identical in the will, but they are separated through recognition of others, so that other can influence the *Ich* not only in manipulation of the body, but in communication with reason.<sup>684</sup> The lower organs are those of the senses—completely heteronomous with respect to the influence of others, but completely autonomous with respect to the *Ich* itself. The higher organ is a sort of concrete schematic capacity—its basic schema is the human face—within reason. It is thus completely autonomous with respect to others, but is also what we might call *heautonomous*—necessarily free with respect to itself. Two types of material correspond to these two organs—*zähe Materie* and *subtilere Materie*. The subtle material is modified by the will itself, and makes communication rational in the sense that it is both transmitted concretely and leaves the higher organ under the power of the possessor's will.<sup>685</sup> This entire structure must be attributed to another being for the individual to exist at all. Thus there is a *Wechselwirkung* between both the higher and lower *organs* and between individuals communicating through them. The form of that interaction is organic, its perception intuitively understanding. Its science is called anthropology,<sup>686</sup> its method is

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<sup>684</sup> “Offenbar eine doppelte Weise, die Articulation zu bestimmen, die man indess selbst eine doppelte Articulation, oder ein doppeltes *Organ* nennen mag, die sich folgendermaassen zu einander verhalten: das erstere, in welchem die Person die aufgehobene Bewegung hervorbringt, und das wir das *höhere Organ* nennen wollen, kann modificirt werden durch den Willen, ohne dass es dadurch das andere, welches wir das *niedere Organ* nennen wollen, werde. Höheres und niederes Organ sind insofern unterschieden. Aber ferner: soll durch die Modification des höheren Organs das niedere nicht zugleich mit modificirt werden, so muss die Person den Willen zurückhalten, dass es dadurch modificirt werden solle: also höheres und niederes sind durch den Willen auch zu vereinigen, sind Ein und ebendasselbe Organ.” (*GdN*, p. 64.)

<sup>685</sup> *GdN*, pp. 70 ff., esp. at p. 72: “Die Wechselwirkung vernünftiger Wesen, *als solcher*, geschieht sonach stets vermittelst des höheren Sinnes; denn nur dieser ist ein solcher, auf welchen man nicht wirken kann, ohne ihn vorauszusetzen; und so bleibt das obige Kriterium dieser Wechselwirkung richtig: es ist eine solche, in welcher der Sinn des Objects der Wirkung vorausgesetzt wird.”

<sup>686</sup> *GdN*, pp. 76 ff. At p. 78 Fichte divides between *Naturprodukt* (which is organ) and the *Kunstprodukt*, which points quasi-organically to an external *telos*. This external goal demotes the *Kunstprodukt* from

intuitive understanding, and the immediacy of that recognition makes its fundamental principle that “Menschengestalt ist dem Menschen nothwendig heilig.”<sup>687</sup>

Thus, in spite of his limitations, Fichte presents Novalis with a higher organ of rational human commonality—a social organ—that he himself defined.<sup>688</sup> *AB* 452 uses these organs to discuss the body-soul problem. Lower organ is *Reiz*, and higher is reflection in the soul. The complex, clearly taken from Fichte, applies the logic of the critique of organs to the historical conditions of cognition. The direct excitement of the lower organ is indirectly (non-representationally) reflected in the higher organ. The result is feeling, which is thus harmonious or non-harmonious. No element of this system offers a real solution to the classical *commercium*-problem. This description lacks the activity of real critique (the making-possible or making-organ), functioning rather to prepare the imagination of social organs.

The surprising location of actual reception of the Fichtean doctrine is in the conversation between the travelers in the *Lehrlinge* (see above in the current chapter). In one sense, the whole novel-fragment seems to take place in the “subtle material” of communicative reason, what the first traveler calls *das elastische Medium*.<sup>689</sup> For this traveler, the nature of attention and its complex social conditions must be investigated in relation to the body before we can hope to penetrate into the depths of nature. The

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*Organ to Werkzeug*. The difference between animals and humans is then cast in partially traditional anthropological terms (the lack-argument) as that between *Bildung* and infinite *Bildsamkeit* (pp. 79-80). By attributing this *Bildsamkeit* as intuitive-organic form and content of (other) self to the other individual, the individual first realizes her humanity as common humanity. Fichte goes on to discuss important organs which have developed for humans, including the hand and the voice.

<sup>687</sup> *GdN*, p. 85.

<sup>688</sup> Violetta Waibel has called attention to Novalis’s interest in the *organ* in the *GdN*, but connects it to a passage on the “inner” and “outer” organs in the *Fichte-Studien*. The two adjectival complexes are not unrelated, of course, but at the least, Waibel has missed a larger philological context here. See the nevertheless very informative ““Inneres, äußeres Organ”: Das Problem der Gemeinschaft von Seele und Körper in den *Fichte-Studien* Friedrich von Hardenbergs,” *Athenäum. Jahrbuch für Romantik* 10 (2000), pp. 159-81.

<sup>689</sup> *HKA* I, p. 97.

*Forscher*

glaubt es am höchsten gebracht zu haben, wenn er, ohne jenes Spiel zu stören, zugleich die gewöhnlichen Geschäfte der Sinne vornehmen, und empfinden und denken zugleich kann. Dadurch gewinnen beide Wahrnehmungen: die Außenwelt wird durchsichtig, und die Innenwelt mannigfaltig<sup>690</sup> und bedeutungsvoll, und so befindet sich der Mensch in einem innig lebendigen Zustande zwischen zwei Welten in der vollkommensten Freiheit und dem freudigsten Machtgefühl.<sup>691</sup>

This traveler, who, implicitly leading the group as the first voice, will be among the community to receive the social-organological message of the master at the end of the fragment, ties the higher and the lower organs to the phenomenology of form-content connections which come to be called inner and outer organs.<sup>692</sup> If the novel is the subtle material of the higher organ, then its own higher organ is the voice of Fichte. One voice among many, he sets the social framework in its simultaneously subjective and objective traits. As the internal and higher *organ* of the constructivist novel,<sup>693</sup> he is thus the

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<sup>690</sup> This word is used repeatedly to describe nature, and is here transferred to the subject.

<sup>691</sup> *HKA I*, p. 97.

<sup>692</sup> Thus my fuller contextualization of Waibel's attention to Novalis's reading of Fichte. Novalis's most direct reflection of this doctrine is at *HKA II*, pp. 460/61; *Blüthenstaub*, 112: "Jede Menschengestalt belebt einen individuellen Keim im Betrachtenden. Dadurch wird diese Anschauung unendlich, sie ist mit dem Gefühl einer unerschöpflichen Kraft verbunden, und darum so absolut belebend. Indem wir uns selbst betrachten, beleben wir uns selbst. Ohne diese sichtbare und fühlbare Unsterblichkeit würden wir nicht wahrhaft denken können. Diese wahrnehmbare Unzulänglichkeit des irdischen Körpergebildes zum Ausdruck und Organ des inwohnenden Geistes, ist der unbestimmte, treibende Gedanke, der die Basis aller ächten Gedanken wird, der Anlaß zur Evoluzion der Intelligenz, dasjenige, was uns zur Annahme einer intelligiblen Welt und einer unendlichen Reihe von Ausdrücken und Organen jedes Geistes, deren Exponent oder Wurzel seine Individualität ist, nöthigt."

<sup>693</sup> If there is any doubt that this voice is Fichtean, this passage should quiet that doubt: "Um die Natur zu begreifen, muß man die Natur innerlich in ihrer ganzen Folge entstehen lassen. Bei dieser Unternehmung muß man sich bloß von der göttlichen Sehnsucht nach Wesen, die uns gleich sind, und den notwendigen Bedingungen dieselben zu vernehmen, bestimmen lassen, denn wahrhaftig die ganze Natur ist nur als Werkzeug und Medium des Einverständnisses vernünftiger Wesen begreiflich. Der denkende Mensch kehrt zur ursprünglichen Funktion seines Daseins, zur schaffenden Betrachtung, zu jenem Punkte zurück, wo Hervorbringen und Wissen in der wundervollsten Wechselverbindung standen, zu jenem schöpferischen Moment des eigentlichen Genusses, des innern Selbstempfängnisses. Wenn er nun ganz in die *Beschauung* dieser Urerscheinung versinkt, so entfaltet sich vor ihm in neu entstehenden Zeiten und Räumen, wie ein unermeßliches Schauspiel, die Erzeugungsgeschichte der Natur, und jeder feste Punkt, der sich in der unendlichen Flüssigkeit ansetzt, wird ihm eine neue Offenbarung des Genius der Liebe, ein neues Band des Du und des Ich. Die sorgfältige Beschreibung dieser innern Weltgeschichte ist die wahre Theorie der Natur; durch den Zusammenhang seiner Gedankenwelt in sich, und ihre Harmonie mit dem Universum, bildet sich von selbst ein Gedankensystem zur getreuen Abbildung und Formel des Universums. Aber die Kunst des ruhigen Beschauens, der schöpferischen Weltbetrachtung ist schwer, unaufhörliches ernstes Nachdenken und strenge Nüchternheit fordert die Ausführung, und die Belohnung

representative of social organology. Where Hemsterhuis had provided the basis on which to think the world as subjectively but constitutively moral (through the conscience), Fichte provided the basis on which to tie that moral world into a social sphere. The novel makes the humans in that sphere organs, the sensitive antennae of a possibly rational world. The concretization of that rationality is called politics.

### III. The Politics of Organs

In the context I have established, it is easy to see why Novalis would call everything from a court to a church an organ.<sup>694</sup> With that discourse, he anticipates the social-political use of organ so familiar to our contemporary ears. What is less familiar—even alienating—is his talk of a “christian monarchy,” of the love of the king and queen as the basis of the organological state.<sup>695</sup> The locale of these strange determinations—and indeed, the reason I have put politics last—reveals that they are the results of the other side of Novalis’ “German ideology,” the attempt to take the absolute abstractive drive (which is a reflection of the institutional dissolution occurring on the other side of the

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wird kein Beifall der mühescheuenden Zeitgenossen, sondern nur eine Freude des Wissens und Wachens, eine innigere Berührung des Universums sein.” (*HKA I*, pp. 101-02.)

<sup>694</sup> So *HKA II*, pp. 412/13; *Blüthenstaub* 3: “Der Weltstaat ist der Körper, den die schöne Welt, die gesellige Welt, beseelt. Er ist ihr nothwendiges Organ.” And *HKA II*, pp. 436/37; *Blüthenstaub* 65: “Gerichtshöfe, Theater, Hof, Kirche, Regierung, öffentliche Zusammenkünfte, Akademieen, Kollegien u.s.w. sind gleichsam die speciellen, innern Organe des mystischen Staatsindividuum.” *AB* 398 has the state itself as *Mittler*.

<sup>695</sup> That is the message of his *Glauben und Liebe*, and is also communicated to Schlegel in the letters of winter 1798-99. Terry Pinkard expresses what I take to be a common reaction to this discourse: “Whereas Kant had been heavily influenced by Scottish writings on morals and politics and had explicitly argued for a “liberal” political order, the early Romantics were far less influenced by any Scottish or English conceptions. If anything, they tended in particular to hold English views in contempt as crude, philistine, purely commercial, and blind therefore to the “higher” truths. Moreover, their own “revolutionary” notions of the new social order were heavily colored by the existing “hometown” structures of contemporary German life and by the idealized memories of Germany prior to its devastation in the century before. Thus, although they did not wish to restore the old society of orders, they nonetheless took large elements of it as their model.” (Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy, 1760-1840: The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 169.)

Rhein and the Atlantic) and join it with the concrete forms of contemporary institutional life. What Marx experienced as the international embarrassment of Germany, Novalis tried to pry open conceptually using his new system, organology.

Not only do the institutions of the feudal government become organs; the organs of metaphysics become political actors. Novalis articulated the final (and really only) statement of organological politics in a speech delivered to the Jena group in 1799, *Die Christenheit oder Europa*. The apparent mysticism and medieval nostalgia of the text alienated him from perhaps the only audience that could have appreciated his message.<sup>696</sup> After a vehement debate within the circle, Goethe was called in as an arbiter, and he saw nothing more in it than the others had. The text was not published in Novalis' lifetime.

Novalis' basic insistence is on the unification of state and culture—on a harmonious totality of society. And indeed, there is much that looks like nostalgia for medieval Catholicism on these grounds, right down to a bizarre retroactive momentary hope in the “secret society” *par excellence*, the Jesuits and their Inquisition. Novalis goes so far as to claim that the Reformation had simply destroyed Christianity, that the latter did not any longer exist after Luther's separatist activities.<sup>697</sup>

The theoretical heart of the essay is, however, the following statement:

Nun wollen wir uns zu dem politischen Schauspiel unsrer Zeit wenden. Alte und neue Welt sind in Kampf begriffen, die Mangelhaftigkeit und Bedürftigkeit der bisherigen Staatseinrichtungen sind in furchtbaren Phänomenen offenbar geworden. Wie wenn auch hier wie in den Wissenschaften eine nähere und mannigfaltigere Connexion und Berührung der europäischen Staaten zunächst der historische Zweck des Krieges wäre,

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<sup>696</sup> Schelling was most caustic in response, composing a satirical poem. It seemed to him that Novalis had gone back on the elements of Enlightenment that were included in the Romantic program. See Richards, *Romantic Conception*, pp. 103 ff., and Pinkard, *German Philosophy*, pp. 165 ff.

<sup>697</sup> *HKA* III, p. 513: “Die Moderatisten behalten die Oberhand, und die Zeit nähert sich einer gänzlichen Atonie der höhern Organe, der Periode des praktischen Unglaubens. Mit der Reformation wars um die Christenheit gethan. Von nun an war keine mehr vorhanden.” Similarly at *HKA* III, p. 520: “Erst durch genauere Kenntniß der Religion wird man jene fürchterlichen Erzeugnisse eines Religionsschlafs, jene Träume und Deliria des heiligen Organs besser beurtheilen und dann erst die Wichtigkeit jenes Geschenks recht einsehn lernen.”



wenn eine neue Regung des bisher schlummernden Europa ins Spiel käme, wenn Europa wieder erwachen wollte, wenn ein Staat der Staaten, eine politische Wissenschaftslehre, uns bevorstände! Sollte etwa die Hierarchie diese symmetrische Grundfigur der Staaten, das Prinzip des Staatenvereins als intellektuale Anschauung des politischen Ichs seyn?<sup>698</sup>

The present is the battle of the past and the future, and the state, now separated from its cultural and religious institutions (however partially), has become incapable of guiding its people through the passage of time. What is needed, then, is a political science of knowledge, a Fichteian doctrine (not Fichte's own) of political technology. The political *Ich* must be reflected in its institutions—the link between metaphysics and politics must become substantial. For that, it must be based on an intellectual intuition, the very instrument of Romantic organology. A non-representational, innovative relation between the rational metaphysics of instrumentality and political representation must be created. This is a call to theoretical arms, or more precisely, tools. Novalis anticipates Hegel: the state must be saturated with reason.<sup>699</sup> But as philosophy could only capture its time in reason for Hegel, so could the state for Novalis only capture reason in its historical development. The state is a science of the possibly possible. Governance is organology.

Thus a profane connection between religion and the state must persist, at least during the battle for the present: “Haben die Nationen Alles vom Menschen – nur nicht

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<sup>698</sup> *HKA* III, p. 522.

<sup>699</sup> The first study to compare Novalis and Hegel was that of Theodor Haering, *Novalis als Philosoph* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1954). The suggestive presence of Hegel in Novalis scholarship persists, up through Stadler, *Die theuren Dinge*, and on to the present. In any case, Hegel's negative comments on Novalis in the *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* do capture part of Novalis's program. Where Schlegel plays lightly (ironically) over existence, and Schelling lacks negativity, Novalis's thought is identified as *Vernichtungskunst*. That characterization is at least half right. Novalis applies the thought—completing it with the restorative connection between religion and state—to the historical battle for the present, *HKA* III, p. 517: “Aus der Vernichtung alles Positiven hebt sie ihr glorreiches Haupt als neue Weltstifterin empor. Wie von selbst steigt der Mensch gen Himmel auf, wenn ihn nichts mehr bindet, die höhern Organe treten von selbst aus der allgemeinen gleichförmigen Mischung und vollständigen Auflösung aller menschlichen Anlagen und Kräfte, als der Urkern der irdischen Gestaltung zuerst heraus. Der Geist Gottes schwebt über den Wassern und ein himmlisches Eiland wird als Wohnstätte der neuen Menschen, als Stromgebiet des ewigen Lebens zuerst sichtbar über den zurückströmenden Wogen.”

sein Herz? – sein heiliges Organ?“<sup>700</sup> It is the connection between religion, the Critique of all knowledge in the Book, and the nation-state, that must take on the immediacy of the intellectual intuition. Statescraft is the final theater for the breaking of the bonds between *physis* and *techne*, and for its project, the actual tools of the present are needed. Monarchs, persons, love: the discourse of feudalism is the found object that must be judged in a single, immediate historical intuition dictating the form of a new, human state. Novalis writes:

Der Schleier ist für die Jungfrau, was der Geist für den Leib ist, ihr unentbehrliches Organ dessen Falten die Buchstaben ihrer süßen Verkündigung sind; das unendliche Faltenpiel ist eine Chiffren-Musik, denn die Sprache ist der Jungfrau zu hölzern und zu frech, nur zum Gesang öffnen sich ihre Lippen.<sup>701</sup>

Note the reversal of terms: spirit is the organ of the body, and spirit’s analogical folds are the infinite letters of a prophecy sung into the heart of the present. Organological politics would be the construction of a political order out of the nothingness it intentionally creates,<sup>702</sup> but in constant dialogue with the persistence of the historically existing world. This program remained a suggestion—Novalis died less than two years after his conflict with the Jena group. And yet the suggestion is, in a way, powerful enough. Whatever else the politics of organology should have been, it would always have been what I have termed transcendental realism, persistently attendant to the historical conditions of political possibility, even as it systematically negated them in the interest of a plasticization of institutionality. That utopianism was anything but a sentimental dream: it united the abyss of alienated self-consciousness with the concrete ruination of the

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<sup>700</sup> *HKA* III, p. 523.

<sup>701</sup> *HKA* III, p. 521.

<sup>702</sup> Thus the (here) Hegelian Stadler is also half correct when he writes that “Die Vernichtung der gegenständlichen Welt war eine Vernichtung von Nichtigem.” (Stadler, *Die theuren Dinge*, p. 183), but I cannot agree in principle when he concludes that “jener Glaube [konnte] keine Berge versetzen, daß er vollkommen außerstande war, die Welt zu verwandeln und eine Epoche allgemeiner Vermitteltheit in ein Zeitalter neuer Unmittelbarkeit hinüberzuführen.” (Stadler, *Die theuren Dinge*, p. 184.)

political order around it. To change the world, the Romantics thought, the modern subject would have to tarry in the night of interpretation.

## Chapter V: Organs after Organology: Goethe, Hegel, and Technologies of Nature and of History

In den Wäldern des Amazonenflusses wie auf dem Rücken der hohen Anden erkannte ich, wie von einem Hauche beseelt von Pol zu Pol nur ein Leben ausgegossen ist in Steinen, Pflanzen und Tieren und in des Menschen schwellender Brust. Überall ward ich von dem Gefühle durchdrungen, wie mächtig jene Jenaer Verhältnisse auf mich gewirkt, wie ich, durch Goethes Naturansichten gehoben, gleichsam mit neuen Organen ausgerüstet worden war.

Alexander von Humboldt to Karoline von Wolzogen, 14 May 1806

### Prologue: Eruption in the Academy

(Probably) 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1830: Frédéric Soret hurries to Goethe’s residence in Weimar, the news of the July Revolution in Paris fresh in his mind. Goethe responds to the visit with apparent sympathetic immediacy: what does Soret think of this “volcanic eruption,” with everything in flames, and closed doors opening to reveal the true proceedings? Soret’s response is ambivalent yet excited: the events are “terrible” [*furchtbar*], yet where else could the story have ended? The royal family had to be driven out. But this guarded optimism, a sort of liberal kernel cloaked in a calculated, conservative rhetoric, met with Goethe’s dismissal. The event of the time—the epoch-shift truly in the air—was not in the revolution at all, but instead in the open skirmish in the Paris Academy of Sciences between the anatomist Cuvier and the zoologist Geoffroy de St.-Hilaire. Soret reports “several minutes” of complete stasis in his thoughts as a reaction to this strange, sudden shift in topic and enthusiasm.<sup>703</sup>

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<sup>703</sup> Johann Peter Eckermann, *Goethes Gespräche in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens*, Montag den 2. [?] August 1830, as WA (Anhang) 7, pp. 320-23, see note 708 *infra* for citational style. Also cited in Toby A. Appel, *The Cuvier-Geoffroy Debate: French Biology in the Decades Before Darwin* (Oxford: Oxford, 1987), p. 1. Goethe’s involvement in the debate—this episode included—has been treated comprehensively

If Soret seemed ready to waver on his political stance on the problem, Goethe's reply seems downright reactionary. Dismissing the news (which he clearly understood) about the potential breakdown of the Metternich consensus, Goethe seems to play his own Wagner here, withdrawing into the laboratory and away from life, idealistically setting his hopes for a new epoch not in institutional change but in abstruse shifts in zoological methodology in Paris.<sup>704</sup> Indeed, as he makes clear in the subsequent conversation (the minutes of Soret's stupefaction), what is at stake is a triumph of "spirit" [*Geist*] over matter in the sciences, a triumph which is German (that of *Naturphilosophie*) in an increasingly French-dominated institution<sup>705</sup>; Geoffroy has heralded the entrance of the "synthetic" method in the natural sciences into the leading institution of the day. This seems a far cry from the libertine and cultural-revolutionary enthusiasms of the author of *Werther*, let alone of *Tasso* or the *Römische Elegien*. If one thinks of the collectivist spiritualism of the French radicals of the time, or the soon-to-emerge German "Ideologists" in Berlin, Goethe strikes the figure of intellectual senility, missing the

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by Dorothea Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit. Studien über Goethes Kritik des französischen Akademiestreiches* (Graz: Böhlau, 1967)—for this conversation, see pp. 56-8.

<sup>704</sup> That Goethe was not "a-political" has been made clear by e.g. Theo Stammen, *Goethe und die politische Welt* (Würzburg: Ergon, 1999) and Ekkehart Krippendorf, *Goethe: Politik gegen den Zeitgeist* (Frankfurt/Main: Insel, 1999). Both political scientists relate Goethe's politics to his natural-scientific observational methods, as does Astrida Orle Tantillo, *The Will to Create: Goethe's Philosophy of Nature* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2002). My claim is not that morphology is inherently democratic, peaceful, or even "tender," but that Goethe's theoretical attitude makes possible a kind of historical technology which is—perhaps *pace* Goethe himself—political.

<sup>705</sup> See Appel, *Debate*, pp. 11 ff. for the rise of the French Academy in zoology. The perspective of the French on *Naturphilosophie* was often reduced to a generality: "Across the Rhine, the leading anatomists publicized a German style of transcendental anatomy, which, although it may have borrowed something from the French—German anatomists such as Oken, Johann Friedrich Meckel, and Johann Baptist von Spix had studied in Paris in the first decade of the nineteenth century—was also firmly rooted in an independent German philosophical tradition, based upon the writings of Kant. While some German anatomists—the so-called Göttingen school, in which Meckel can be placed—took a relatively empirical approach, Oken and others of the school of romantic *Naturphilosophie* endowed transcendental anatomy with a mystical form and cosmic dimensions that were entirely absent in the French counterpart. The French, however, did not distinguish among the schools of German science, and friends and foes alike linked Geoffroy with an undifferentiated "German philosophy of nature." (Appel, *Debate*, p. 106.) It is important to note that, while Goethe saw an ally in Geoffroy, he actually removed himself from the fray to point to the importance of philosophy in the natural sciences, as we shall see below.

epoch-making mark of his last years in favor of personal obsessions making up the least of his cultural legacy.<sup>706</sup>

None of these impressions holds water. By examining Goethe's adoption and adaptation of Romantic organology—his take on the *technologia transcendentalis* which has been the topic of this study—I will show that this first ending to my terminological history is one of philosophical synthesis with political possibilities. So far from isolating himself in the a-political and the scientistic—a charge he has shouldered perhaps singularly with his major dialogue-partner in the development of his version of organology, Hegel<sup>707</sup>—Goethe sought, cautiously and painstakingly, to found a practice of observation that could not only tenderly attend to the phenomena in their generality and concreteness, but that could change this phenomenal world categorially, in short, to found a system of experience capable of altering the world, a technological metaphysics. Since he developed this transformative system in oblique dialogue with the mature Hegel, and since this system seeks a rational agency *in* the historical world during its present constitution, we may be justified in calling Goethe the first Young Hegelian—or in saying that he anticipated the fundamental gesture of that radical movement he appeared to foreclose on in August of 1830.

## I. Goethe's Organs

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<sup>706</sup> Goethe's insistence on the pride of place of his scientific works among his efforts, and the long-standing dismissal of this claim in favor of his poetic works, is well-known. See, for example, Tantillo, *Will*, p. 1. The scholarship which seeks not merely to recover Goethe's "science" but to integrate it with our picture of the cultural producer will be cited throughout in the following.

<sup>707</sup> The mature relationship between Hegel and Goethe has been the topic of surprisingly little scholarly discussion to date. Those studies which exist will be noted *infra*—yet this topic needs much more consideration, especially after the wave of Goethe/Schelling scholarship which will be cited throughout.

Perhaps the best-known words in *Faust*, which Goethe was still completing when he turned his attentions to Paris, run:

Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach! in meiner Brust,  
Die eine will sich von der anderen trennen;  
Die eine hält, in derber Liebeslust,  
Sich an die Welt, mit klammernden Organen;  
Die andere hebt gewaltsam sich vom Dust  
Zu den Gefilden hoher Ahnen.<sup>708</sup>

Faust describes not his mind but his animal soul as so many lustful organs, clinging to and keeping him in the world. This passage is mirrored in the essay “Polarity,” where Goethe refers both to “zwei Seelen” *and* to the distinction “Geist/Materie,” adding to the polar pairs “zwei Körperhälften.” As Astrida Tantillo notes, the direction of the cut across the body is ambiguous. Perhaps it is precisely between the rational head and the sex-organs, thus further mirroring the distinction between souls across the spirit/matter axis in the body itself.<sup>709</sup> Organs, however, play a greater role in Goethe’s system than this casual mention might lead us to believe. Indeed, the formal role occupied by the term here is representative of a more general function I will examine in this chapter. In Faust’s speculative-experiential monologue, the organs of the lower soul are the sexual organs as such—yet then again, they are, in the soul, merely the desire of attachment to the world. And then again they are both (lower) spirit and their functioning bodily counterparts, polarized and unified across the spirit/matter divide. This emphatically dialectical terminological gesture already points in the direction of Goethe’s revision of the organological doctrine: uniting function and field across dual divisions—especially

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<sup>708</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethes Werke, Weimarer Sophienausgabe* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1887 ff.), I. Abteilung: 14. Band (1887), p. 57. Hereinafter as WA I: 14, p. 57. I will cite the Weimar-edition throughout for ease of reference, except where this hinders that ease. At those places, as throughout, I have consulted the Frankfurt and Munich editions, and especially the *Leopoldina-Ausgabe* of Goethe’s scientific works.

<sup>709</sup> Tantillo, *Will*, pp. 18-19.

spirit/matter—the organ becomes the *organon* of an intentionally quasi-philosophical approach to experience and science which ultimately also serves as the foundation for the alteration of the object addressed by that experience and that science: the world. Goethe’s organology is a technological metaphysics.<sup>710</sup>

## II. Canon and Organon: Hegel’s Critique of Kant

As we have seen above (Chapter I), Kant’s philosophical itinerary led him from the brink of organology to a methodological revolution in metaphysics which foreclosed the very possibility of that organology. Having accepted the challenge posed by the crisis of metaphysics at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Kant explicitly sought a “Newtonian”-style methodological revolution for his beloved discipline, seeking throughout the turbulent decade of the 1760s a foundation for the new science. In keeping with the tradition, he sometimes referred to that foundation as an “organon,” a specific or “special” logic that could guide the discipline.<sup>711</sup> Here he encountered a definitional difficulty: what specific logic could apply to the science of the general itself? Where Aristotle had noted this difficulty and optimistically affirmed a discursive “organon” (or a synthetic logic) that methodologically underwrote the dual appearance of the “categories” in his *Metaphysics* and in his logical treatise *The Categories*, Kant had to respond to skepticism on just this count. The question that Kant slowly brought to bear—which he came to call, in its critical form, “transcendental logic”—was itself the intentionally problematic foundation

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<sup>710</sup> The paradox of a technology (usually associated with the voluntary, with *Willkür*) united with the metaphysical (the object of which, as we have seen, is the necessary within being) is at the center of Goethe’s thought, as I shall be arguing throughout.

<sup>711</sup> The history of these terms has been extensively explored by Tonelli, *Kant’s Critique*.



for any possible metaphysics: how could our categories be genuinely informative about the categories “out there”? What made a real interaction between thought and being possible? For Kant, that interaction needed grounding in conditions of our thinking and conditions of our apprehension, respectively. And ultimately, it was the marriage—or actually procreation—of those two types of conditions that made up our particular kind of rationality: the synthesis of the intuited “material of perception” interacted with the synthesis of judgments (categories being the types of those syntheses) through the cipher of the transcendental synthesis of apperception, the unity of consciousness itself. This system allowed for a legitimate, rule-based manner of approaching the natural world and our judgments about it. And in establishing that set of rules, Kant gave it the name “canon”—a positive body of laws—rejecting now his earlier hopes for an “organon” of reason.<sup>712</sup> In one sense, the “synthesizing” reason which would have its base in this organon was a gloss for the possibility of metaphysics, and its rejection a dismissal of any reasoned insight into the ultimate link between thought and being.

As we have seen, finding a way back to the organological impulse in metaphysics was a primary factor in philosophical Romanticism in Germany. Maintaining the critical edge of Kant’s thought remained central<sup>713</sup> even as the Romantics painstakingly removed from the Critical philosophy what I have called Kant’s “intuitionism” (his reliance on a “material” condition of possibility for the legitimate rules of reason). And while this methodological intervention allowed for the “organon” of reason to ground this new

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<sup>712</sup> The term “organon of reason” grew out of this objection to Aristotle and to Kant’s near-collaboration and eventual rejection of Johann Heinrich Lambert’s *Neues Organon* (1764). The term “organon of reason” was connected to the latter interaction, as Kant’s lectures on logic make clear (see chapter I).

<sup>713</sup> This controversial thesis is based on the notion that the critical impulse is simply the rejection of dogmatic judgment-formation, and is removable from the specific architectonic of faculties which Kant came to defend. On the critical/architectonic relation to organology, see chapter I.

metaphysics, the term was enriched by the legacy of that other term, “organ,” which provided the field (dynamic, developmental nature) for the organon’s (rational) function. The new metaphysics was, as Frederick Beiser has put it, rational and organicist simultaneously.<sup>714</sup> But in this etymological conflation, it was more: it was meant to be interventionary, to make possible rational alteration of the world in a non-arbitrary manner. It was *technologia transcendentalis*, an attempt not to describe the world but to grasp it in its subject-implicating development. The task of grasping was only partially representational, and its other part was oriented towards changing it. The broad course of organology, into which Hegel and Goethe entered in conversation in the 1820s, was thus neither a return to “content” nor a bland dialectical formalism,<sup>715</sup> but instead a conception of the very content of being as the very forms-in-development of the human organ(on) itself, which thus, in keeping with the challenge first presented in these terms by Hölderlin (see Chapter II) to unite practical and theoretical philosophy, was capable of rational intervention in that content itself, the world in history.

Hegel’s entrance into this discursive field is marked not by his relationship to the Romantics, but by his critiques of Kant and Goethe, respectively. Indeed, it was a sort of oblique conversation between Goethe and Hegel that brought a first finishing episode to the organological adventure. And that episode was always entangled in both men’s relationships to Kant.

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<sup>714</sup> See Frederick Beiser, *German Idealism*, esp. pp. 349-465. This depiction of “romantic” or “absolute” idealism has received a more compact treatment from him in his *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 131-153.

<sup>715</sup> Accusations made against Romanticism and Hegel, most often made against the one by the other. For a modern version of Romanticism as methodological regression from the Enlightenment, see the (outdated) thesis of Isaiah Berlin, for example, *The Roots of Romanticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). See also the important article by Robert E. Norton, “The Myth of the Counter-Enlightenment,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 68 (2007), pp. 635-658.

Hegel everywhere critiques Kant. In his most famous—and most hostile—assessment of Kant’s philosophy, he presents the Critical system as the obverse of vulgar empiricism, which ignores the rational binding activity it uses for its putatively formally innocents observations. Hegel cites *Faust*:

Encheiresin naturae nennt die Chemie,  
Spottet ihrer selbst und weiß nicht wie.  
Hat die Teile in ihrer Hand,  
Fehlt leider nur das geistige Band.<sup>716</sup>

As elsewhere,<sup>717</sup> Hegel uses Faust’s indictment of the ideology of empiricism to mark his objection: that thoughtful analysis occurs in the allegedly naïve observation of the empiria. The obverse of empiricism’s error, then, is overcommitment to analysis. And indeed, Kant’s error is to cling too closely to the forms of thought (the categories) as fixed forms. The categories are, as we have seen, tied to the empirical forms of space-time intuition, but this is not Hegel’s objection.<sup>718</sup> Nor, as it is easy to think, is Hegel’s objection that Kant retains a “thing-in-itself” beyond thought.<sup>719</sup> Or rather, it is not to the “thing-in-itself” as such that Hegel objects, but rather to the way it emerges within Kant’s thought. For Hegel, the critical impulse remains incomplete in Kant’s work, because an obdurate “objectivity” remains external to the rational work the categories do, not outside consciousness but within it. That is: Hegel is relatively unconcerned about the problematic “thing” because he is already concerned with the establishment of

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<sup>716</sup> G. F. W. Hegel, *Werke in 20 Bänden. Bände 8-10. Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1979 ff.). I cite as *Enz. I*, §38. Also quoted at WA I: 14, p. 91.

<sup>717</sup> *Enz. II*, §246, Zusatz. More on this passage below.

<sup>718</sup> In this regard, I agree with Sally Sedgwick. See her *Hegel’s Critique of Kant: From Dichotomy to Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Our agreement is that Hegel’s primary line of objection is not to the “restriction” thesis (that thought is restricted by the forms of intuition, and therefore ultimately by a “thing in itself” tossed out into an unknowable void). While I agree with her assessment that Hegel rejects Kant’s dual contingencies for us with respect to the material of perception, I do not think it motivates Hegel’s objection, or that this is the optimal reading of Hegel.

<sup>719</sup> This objection was famously made by Jacobi, who had written that with the thing-in-itself, he could not get into the Critical system, without it, could not stay in it.

internalities and externalities inside consciousness in Kant's thought. The legitimate work done by the canon is fixed in its form, not due to the "material" of perception (the influence of which must remain technically problematic for Kant), but because the positivity of its laws can express only one kind of objectivity, one Kant describes as "constitutive," and which conforms, ultimately, to the mechanical-quantitative world-image of Newtonian physics and the qualitative-intensive scales of perception. The world so constituted is not or not only prey to a final exterior, but (also, and more importantly) to an internal splitting into an interior and an exterior, an impassive "material" element (ultimately related by Kant to apprehension) and a therefore necessarily incompletely constructive formal element (categorical synthesis).<sup>720</sup> Where the empiricist ignores the rational work he is unconsciously transporting into his observation, Kant misses the "empirical" element in his supposedly transcendental analysis of the forms of judgment. To repeat: it is not that Kant treats of genuine empiria in his analysis. Hegel's reading is subtler than that. The problem is that Kant maintains the problem of the empirical—its essence—in the categorical system. In trying to analyze what we do when we synthesize *a priori* (when we think non-arbitrarily but also informatively about the world), Kant imports the contradiction of thought and being into thought itself. The characteristic of being which does not allow of penetration by thought—does not allow of true understanding—is simply reproduced as the "material" of that thought in the judgmental form. The categories are fixed by a permanent contradiction, now not between thought

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<sup>720</sup> On this internal split and its consequences, see John McDowell, *Mind and World with a New Introduction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994). A similar thesis (cast in very different terms) is defended by Slavoj Žižek in *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology* (Durham: Duke, 1993), pp. 18-22.

and being, but between thought's form and thought's content. Hegel's critical question is: why should we regard this contradiction as permanent?<sup>721</sup>

Thus where the empiricist eternalizes the world (in contradiction with thought), Kant eternalizes the forms of thought, in internal contradiction. Because of this determination of thought's form, only an analytical canon was possible. Hegel writes:

Dem *Denken* bleibt [...] auf seiner höchsten Spitze die *Bestimmtheit* etwas *Äußerliches*; es bleibt nur schlechthin *abstraktes Denken*, welches hier immer *Vernunft* heißt. Diese, ist hiermit das Resultat, liefert nichts als *die formelle Einheit* zur Vereinfachung und Systematisierung der Erfahrungen, ist ein *Kanon*, nicht ein *Organon* der Wahrheit, vermag nicht eine *Doktrin* des Unendlichen, sondern nur eine *Kritik* der Erkenntnis zu liefern.<sup>722</sup>

A canon serves only to regulate and simplify judgments, not to extend them—in Hegel's terms, to establish valid abstract statements, but not to extend knowledge to an objective, or truthful, form. That form, according to Hegel, could not be fixed, but would have to be in movement. Neither the world nor its knowledge is in a fixed form: their interaction is in constant revolution, mutual informing activity, or what is usually called the dialectical relation.

Kant had divided the rationalists' distinction between *metaphysica generalis* (ontology) and *metaphysica specialis* (rational psychology, cosmology, and rational theology) into a canon of the understanding and a "regulative" system. For the form of judgment possible under the canon, the latter disciplines presented problems of a kind that could not be synthesized constitutively, since propositions about the immortality of

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<sup>721</sup> Hegel drew attention to this difficulty in Kant's thought as early as his *Differenz-Schrift* ("Vorerinnerung"), where he writes: "Es bleibt außer den objektiven Bestimmungen durch die Kategorien ein ungeheures empirisches Reich der Sinnlichkeit und Wahrnehmung, eine absolute Aposteriorität, für welche keine Apriorität als nur eine subjektive Maxime der reflektierenden Urteilskraft aufgezeigt ist; d. h. die Nichtidentität wird zum absoluten Grundsatz erhoben." He had also begun his analysis of an alternative in his earliest writing on Kant, *Glauben und Wissen* (1803), on which an extensive recent literature has sprung up. See representatively John McDowell, *Having the World in View: Essays on Kant, Hegel, and Sellars* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

<sup>722</sup> *Enz. I*, §52.

the soul, the infinity of the world, or the omnipotence of God could not correspond to any intuition.<sup>723</sup> Hegel's tack here is not to claim that we know those antinomic propositions constitutively, but that our constitutive knowledge is *also antinomical*.<sup>724</sup> The contradiction in thought between its objectivity and its form is affirmed, but as a part and foundation of thought's dialectical development. The instrument of that antinomical knowledge-process is the concept.

Perhaps the first (and certainly the most famous) articulation of this thought-in-movement is in the *Introduction to the Phenomenology of Spirit*. Here Hegel levels critiques against earlier philosophers for working with a false notion of what thought itself is. Wavering between the poles of "passive medium" and "tool," philosophers have missed the methodological point: thought certainly mediates, but in doing so is not merely formal, but is the formal presentation of any possible content. Hegel's point here—at the beginning of an introduction to a book in turn intended as the introduction to his system—is not that thought and being are dialectically mutually informative (this is the result of the system), but that they appear within thought to be so.<sup>725</sup> Taking a cue from Kant's anti-dogmatism, Hegel establishes a methodological baseline: what we know is presented in the form of thought, for us there is no "outside" to this form of content-presentation, and thus philosophy must take its impulse from this very form-content admixture, including its internal contradiction. The beginning of philosophy is where we

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<sup>723</sup> *Metaphysica generalis* is explicitly glossed as a "bloße Analytik des Verstandes" at A247/B303. For the regulative doctrine of the "ideas," see the opening passages of the "Dialektik der reinen Vernunft."

<sup>724</sup> "Die Hauptsache... ist, dass nicht nur in den vier besonderen, aus der Kosmologie genommenen Gegenständen die Antinomie sich befindet, sondern vielmehr in *allen* Gegenständen aller Gattungen, in *allen* Vorstellungen, Begriffen und Ideen... diese Eigenschaft macht das aus, was weiterhin sich als das *dialektische* Moment des Logischen bestimmt." (*Enz. I*, §48.)

<sup>725</sup> *PhdG*, *Einleitung*.

take note of the concrete forms of thought, what Hegel came to call *Denkbestimmungen* (“thought-determinations”).

Note that Hegel rejects the vulgar organological notion of thought as a “tool.” We should not be fooled into thinking that this leads him away from the more general organological path, for the sketch of the dialectic of the concept that follows is named, precisely in reaction to Kant, an “organon.” The concept—as representation and as process—is the organon of metaphysics.<sup>726</sup>

This is not the place to explain the entirety of Hegel’s concept-logic, but the basic procedure should be clear.<sup>727</sup> A representation of any sort has two sides: on the one hand, it is as itself a unit; on the other, it is related to something (to which it putatively refers), its object. The object is the intended content of the representation, but the critical method intervenes between intention and conclusion, and demands that we treat the object as provisionally non-independent from its representational form. Thus Kant’s thought-internal contradiction reappears, but now without its finalistic determination. The representation as unity is as representation a referring function, the object of which is uncertain already for the representation—the uncertainty of the reference leads us to imagine the object and the representation as external to each other. This process occurs,

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<sup>726</sup> My interpretation here sides with those who think that Hegel is a defender of a robust metaphysics. The recent debate about Hegel’s status as metaphysician or not is often presented as a conflict between those who see relevance in Hegel (Brandt, McDowell, Pinkard) and those who treat him more historically (Horstmann, Beiser). I think that Hegel was a metaphysician of a particular, post-Romantic stripe, and that he is relevant for precisely this reason. See, for example, Rolf-Peter Horstmann, “Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit as an Argument for a Monistic Ontology”, *Inquiry* 49 (2006), pp. 103-118, and Frederick Beiser, *Hegel* (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 51-80.

<sup>727</sup> Good summaries of the concept-dialectic can be found in Gunnar Hindrichs, “Die aufgeklärte Aufklärung”, in: *Kant and the Future of the European Enlightenment / Kant und die Zukunft der europäischen Aufklärung*, ed. Heiner F. Klemme (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), pp. 43-68, and Rolf-Peter Horstmann, *G. W. F. Hegel. Eine Einführung (zusammen mit D. Emundts)* (Stuttgart: Phillip Reclam, 2002). A “non-metaphysical” but formally clarifying analysis is in Klaus Hartmann, “Hegel: A Non-Metaphysical View,” in Klaus Hartmann, *Studies in Foundational Philosophy*, (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1988).

however, conceptually: we produce the concept of the object and the concept of its concept. This division is then seen as a “lack” in the representation, and drives us to create a new unity: the concept must be corrected, and applied to a new, more appropriate object. But this process of internal division is not limited by an external object: it is the nature of conceptuality as such. To approach philosophy from the perspective of the concept is to name this entire process “concept.”<sup>728</sup>

It now becomes possible to see why the concept can be a “synthetic organon” in Kant’s sense. Because it works through the concrete interaction of form and matter without ever treating the matter as permanently resistant or finally “external,” conceptuality provides its own index of concreteness. The categorical function—synthesis or the creation of types of unity out of given manifolds—is carried out by the concept, which is not only an element in the process but the methodological basis (or perspective) which allows the very analysis of that synthesis. *Denkbestimmungen* are really the concrete aspect of thought itself.

This intervention can be cast in organological terms.<sup>729</sup> The analysis of conceptuality as process reveals that the “material” of judgment is concrete, not finally resistant to but dialectically implied in that very process. The concept as “organ” (in the Romantic sense) thus provides its own extensive field for its function, delimiting the

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<sup>728</sup> This double name has led to many problems in Hegel interpretation. See Horstmann, *Einführung*, for a treatment of the unity and plurality of the “concept” in Hegel.

<sup>729</sup> Hegel usually uses these terms negatively, with reference to Kant, e.g.: “Es wird für einen Mißbrauch erklärt, daß die Logik, die bloß ein Kanon der Beurteilung sein solle, als **ein Organon zur Hervorbringung objektiver Einsichten** angesehen werde. Die Vernunftbegriffe, in denen man eine höhere Kraft und tieferen Inhalt ahnen mußte, haben nichts Konstitutives mehr wie noch die Kategorien; sie sind bloße Ideen; es soll ganz wohl erlaubt sein, sie zu gebrauchen, aber mit diesen intelligiblen Wesen, in denen sich alle Wahrheit ganz aufschließen sollte, soll weiter nichts gemeint sein als Hypothesen, denen eine Wahrheit an und für sich zuzuschreiben eine völlige Willkür und Tollkühnheit sein würde, da sie in keiner Erfahrung vorkommen können.” (Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik II*, “Vom Begriff im Allgemeinen.”)



extreme possibility of that field in concrete functional instances. Thus the concept is “objective”: “logic becomes one with metaphysics, the science of things grasped in thought, which in turn were meant to express *the essentiality of the things*.”<sup>730</sup> The “tools” themselves are de-neutralized, and their putative objects are leveled into their field’s functionality. Content is included in the form of conceptuality, treated from the perspective called the “concept,” which *as this perspective* is the organon of logic and metaphysics simultaneously. The categories become the dynamic organs of the concrete, the world as conceptual process.

### III. Organs of Mediation: Hegel’s Critique of Goethe

Hegel accuses Goethe of doing science without instruments.<sup>731</sup> The concreteness of the concept, allowing for synthetic knowledge of the truth of objects in their mutuality with the concept itself, is missing from Goethe method, even as his experience reveals the schema of the truth:

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<sup>730</sup> “Die *Logik* fällt daher mit der *Metaphysik* zusammen, der Wissenschaft der *Dinge* in *Gedanken* gefasst, welche dafür galten, die *Wesenheit der Dinge* auszudrücken.“ (*Enz I*, §24.) Cf. the introduction to *Wissenschaft der Logik I*.

<sup>731</sup> Hegel and Goethe’s interactions generally fall into three periods. They were first introduced in Jena and Weimar during Goethe’s intensive friendship with Schelling, which started in the last years of the 1790s. During this time, they worked together on experiments in the botanical gardens. This has been documented by Eckhart Förster, “Die Bedeutung von §§76, 77 der *Kritik der Urteilskraft* für die Entwicklung der nachkantischen Philosophie. Teil I” in ed. Jürgen Stolzenberg, *Kant und der Frühidealismus* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2007), pp. 59-80. The second period of interaction (for which, see Frederick Burwick, *The Damnation of Newton: Goethe’s Color Theory and Romantic Perception* (New York: de Gruyter, 1986), pp. 58-79) occurred Hegel’s time in Nürnberg in 1816-17, when he aided in experiments, this time in the later work on the theory of color, specifically on “entoptic” colors. This collaboration led Hegel to take sides with Goethe in the color controversy, and ushered in what I will call the third period of their interaction, from roughly 1821 until Hegel’s death. This period is marked by letters and a few visits in Weimar, and is generally cordial and friendly but distant. The only analysis of this last period of which I am aware is Karl Löwith’s short introductory study in his *From Hegel to Nietzsche: Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Thought*, transl. David Green (New York: Anchor, 1967), pp. 2-29. This very general introduction sketches the interaction admirably, but Hegel’s Christianity and Goethe’s philosophical prowess have both been convincingly reevaluated since Löwith’s time.

Bei der Erfahrung kommt es darauf an, mit welchem Sinn man an die Wirklichkeit geht. Ein großer Sinn macht große Erfahrungen und erblickt in dem bunten Spiel der Erscheinungen das, worauf es ankommt. Die Idee ist vorhanden und wirklich, nicht etwas da drüben und hinten. Der große Sinn, wie z.B. der eines Goethe, der in die Natur oder in die Geschichte blickt, macht große Erfahrungen, erblickt das Vernünftige und spricht es aus. Das Fernere ist sodann, dass man das Wahre auch in der Reflexion erkennen kann und es durch Verhältnisse des Gedankens bestimmt. Das Wahre an und für sich ist indes in diesen beiden Weisen noch nicht in seiner eigentlichen Form vorhanden. Die vollkommene Weise des Erkennens ist die in der reinen Form des Denkens.<sup>732</sup>

Hegel dubs this type of rational recognition „*sinnvolle* Anschauung.“<sup>733</sup> Playing on the dual sense of the word *Sinn*, Hegel accuses Goethe of leaving the term in this conflated state, where it deserves to be separated and re-joined to make up “das Allgemeine der Sache.“ Goethe “sense“ divines this general truth but remains without an organ for the determination of its insight.<sup>734</sup> The conclusion of the *Farbenlehre* is correct [*sic*], but its method is lacking: Goethe’s much-vaunted “intuitive” approach to nature lacks an internally insightful organ that could make it a candidate for inclusion in the metaphysical innovations of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Hegel’s objection is to a lack of rational accounting for the conclusion of the observation, a kind of meta-conceptual doubling (in his system, concept as representation and as process). The lacking function was called “organ” by the Romantics, yet Hegel’s accusation is ambivalent with respect to Goethe: only one step is missing in Goethe’s method (where the Romantics, for Hegel, misstep from the very outset). In the

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<sup>732</sup> Hegel, *Enz. I*, §24, Zusatz 3.

<sup>733</sup> Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik I (VüdÄ I)*, *Werke 13-15* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1986 ff.), p. 173.

<sup>734</sup> “Von solcher Art ist die Goethesche Beschauung und Darlegung der inneren Vernünftigkeit der Natur und ihrer Erscheinungen. Mit großem Sinne trat er naiverweise mit sinnlicher Betrachtung an die Gegenstände heran und hatte zugleich die volle *Ahnung ihres begriffsgemäßen Zusammenhangs*.” (*VüdÄ I*, p. 174; my emphasis.) Also: „Die innere Einheit *bleibt innerlich*, sie tritt für die Anschauung nicht in konkret ideeller Form heraus, und die Betrachtung lässt es bei der Allgemeinheit eines notwendigen beseelenden Zusammenhanges überhaupt bewenden. (*VüdÄ I*, p. 174; emphasis in original.)

*Encyclopedia*, the Romantics are accused of having the opposite of Goethe's problem: they have a "conceptless instrument"<sup>735</sup> where Goethe is missing only the organ.

Goethe's insistence on method in his own work speaks directly against Hegel's critique,<sup>736</sup> and yet an anomaly in Hegel's own presentation of Goethe may already point us in the direction of Goethe's response to this critique. As pointed out above, Hegel uses Faust's *encheiresin naturae* to reject empiricism's claim to conceptual innocence.<sup>737</sup> In doing so, he implicitly recognizes that Goethe's method is not *empirically* naïve: Goethe sees "reason" (*das Vernünftige*) in nature. And yet Goethean methodology, while not committing the error of Romantic *Naturphilosophie*, retains a naivety about just that judgmental analytical division of nature. Further, the passage makes clear that Goethe stands principally on the same side as Hegel in terms of the relationship of metaphysics to physics. Physics unknowingly defends a metaphysics, projecting a "world" which is ruled by a body of positive laws not visible but only calculable. The relation between general and particular is, for Hegel as for Goethe, unsatisfactory. (Newtonian) physics produces an unhappy parallel but not synthesis between the general-quantitative the qualitative-particular, not truly obviating metaphysics but producing a metaphysical image not grasped or graspable by experience.<sup>738</sup> Hegel characterizes this as an

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<sup>735</sup> *Enc. II*, §244 Zusatz: "[die Naturphilosophie] ist vielfältig, ja größtenteils in einen äußerlichen Formalismus ver- wandelt und in ein begriffloses Instrument für die Oberflächlichkeit des Gedankens und eine phantastische Einbildungskraft verkehrt worden."

<sup>736</sup> Most pointedly in a letter from 7 October 1820 to Hegel himself: "Es ist hier die Rede nicht von einer durchzusetzenden Meinung, sondern von einer mitzuteilenden Methode, deren sich ein jeder, als eines Werkzeugs, nach seiner Art, bedienen möge." (WA 4: 33, p. 295. Cited by Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, p. 4.)

<sup>737</sup> *Enc. II*, §246, Zusatz. See note 716 in the current chapter above.

<sup>738</sup> This is Hegel's articulation of a general complaint by Goethe against Newton, an objection that is grounded in the method of mathematical abstraction that Newton called "analytical," which searches for generalities in visible effects, but does not construct causes of those effects which could be directly demonstrated experimentally. For analysis of this objection, see my "Das Innere der Natur und ihr Organ: von Albrecht von Haller zu Goethe" (unpublished). For Hegel's polemics against Newton, see *Enc. II*, §§ 270, 318, 320. Goethe's relationship to Newton is particularly sensitively handled by Tantillo, *Will to*

overemphasis on unity: a formula is produced, but is exterior to any actual individual or event in the physical world, and nature is split in two. An implicit metaphysics arises, a split world parallel to the split thought-world of Kantian methodology.

What is missing is a categorical shift.<sup>739</sup> In Goethe's case, it seems, this would simply be the activation of these categories for the constructive participation in the conceptual world-process. With clear reference to Goethe, he writes:

Der philosophischen Allgemeinheit sind die Bestimmungen nicht gleichgültig; sie ist die sich selbst erfüllende Allgemeinheit, die in ihrer diamantenen Identität zugleich den Unterschied in sich enthält. Das wahrhaft Unendliche ist die Einheit seiner selbst und des Endlichen; und das ist nun die Kategorie der Philosophie und daher auch der Naturphilosophie. Wenn die Gattungen und Kräfte das Innere der Natur sind und gegen dies Allgemeine das Äußere und Einzelne das Verschwindende ist, so fordert man noch als dritte Stufe das Innere des Innern, welches nach dem Vorhergehenden die Einheit des Allgemeinen und Besonderen wäre.<sup>740</sup>

Goethe's method leaves a remnant of the division of inner and outer nature intact, because the inner and the outer are not doubly reflected as the dialectical core of identity and non-identity which is the concept, the true organ or category of (nature)philosophy.

Goethe observes but does not participate in the internal rationality of nature:

Der unbefangene Geist, wenn er lebendig die Natur anschaut, wie wir dies häufig bei Goethe auf eine sinnige Weise geltend gemacht finden, so fühlt er das Leben und den allgemeinen Zusammenhang in derselben: er ahnt das Universum als ein organisches Ganzes und eine vernünftige Totalität, ebenso als er im einzelnen Lebendigen eine innige Einheit in ihm selbst empfindet; bringen wir aber auch alle jene Ingredienzien der Blume zusammen, so kommt doch keine Blume heraus. So hat man in der Naturphilosophie die Anschauung zurückgerufen und sie über die Reflexion gesetzt; aber das ist ein Abweg, denn aus der Anschauung kann man nicht philosophieren.<sup>741</sup>

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*Create.* Note that in a relatively temperate moment in the *Farbenlehre* ("historischer Teil"), Goethe affords Newton an "organ": "Newton war ein wohlorganisierter, gesunder, wohltemperirter Mann, ohne Leidenschaft, ohne Begierden. Sein Geist war constructiver Natur und zwar im abstractesten Sinne; daher war die höhere Mathematik ihm als das eigentliche Organ gegeben, durch das er seine innere Welt aufzubauen und die äußere zu gewältigen suchte." (WA: II 4, p. 97.)

<sup>739</sup> Hegel puts it rather strongly here: "... Die Philosophie überhaupt hat als Philosophie andere Kategorien als das gewöhnliche Bewußtsein; alle Bildung reduziert sich auf den Unterschied der Kategorien. Alle Revolutionen, in den Wissenschaften nicht weniger als in der Weltgeschichte, kommen nur daher, daß der Geist jetzt zum Verstehen und Vernehmen seiner, um sich zu besitzen, seine Kategorien geändert hat, sich wahrhafter, tiefer, sich inniger und einiger mit sich erfassend." (*Enz. II*, §246, Zusatz.)

<sup>740</sup> *Enz. II*, §246, Zusatz. The phrase "das Innere des Inneren" is related to Goethe and Hegel's parallel treatments of the "inside of nature," on which my "Das Innere der Natur."

<sup>741</sup> *Enz. II*, §246, Zusatz.

This passage is immediately followed by a citation of Albrecht von Haller's famous words, "Ins Innere der Natur dringt kein erschaffener Geist / Glücklich, dem sie nur die äußere Schale weist." Rejecting this sentiment as an eternalization of the pseudo-metaphysical split in nature, Hegel quotes Goethe's rejection of Haller's poem, itself a poem entitled "*Dem Physiker*" (Newton):

»Ins Innre der Natur -«  
 O du Philister! -  
 »Dringt kein erschaffner Geist.«  
 Mich und Geschwister  
 Mögt ihr an solches Wort  
 Nur nicht erinnern: Wir denken:  
 Ort für Ort Sind wir im Innern.  
 »Glücklich, wem sie nur  
 Die äußre Schale weist!«  
 [...]  
 Natur hat weder Kern Noch Schale,  
 Alles ist sie mit einem Male.  
 Dich prüfe du nur allermeist,  
 Ob du Kern oder Schale seist.<sup>742</sup>

Goethe thus also polemicizes against a putatively "exterior" nature and its impenetrability by reason. Hegel concludes his section on *Naturphilosophie* with the correct version of the generalizing (or "theoretical") and particularizing (or "practical") attitudes towards the reflective negation of nature in observation. He thus leaves an ambiguous challenge to Goethe. Goethe's words have stood in for the (correct) critique of empiricism (twice), a one-sided approach to nature's true Reason, and the norm to which that Reason should tend in correct naturephilosophical methodology. Even in Hegel's ambivalent assessment, we begin to suspect that Goethe may have a response, an "organ" with which to go about his thought-work.

#### IV. From Organs to Categories: Goethe's Quasi-Philosophy

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<sup>742</sup> WA I: 3, p. 105.

### a) Taxonomy and Idealism

Goethe is not a philosopher. And yet he performs thought-work in collaboration with philosophy. This relationship is oblique, yet essential: Goethe's work forms a direct contribution to the family of philosophies I have been treating in this study, an alternate or response to the Romantic<sup>743</sup> organological project. That contribution emerges slowly and piecemeal in Goethe's works, forming less a "doctrine" than a conceptual attitude, and as such a robust response to Hegel's ambivalent organological critique.

Goethe sometimes addresses his relationship to philosophy directly, especially in his scientific works.<sup>744</sup> Yet his characteristic attitude in this regard is—I think—found in a literary text, the epistolary "novel"/aesthetic treatise *Der Sammler und die Seinigen*, published in 1799 in the *Propyläen*, a periodical meant to contain the heart of the classicist Weimar program. The collector himself (and it is hard not to see Goethe's primary identification with this figure<sup>745</sup>) delegates the taxonomic efforts to Julie<sup>746</sup> and

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<sup>743</sup> As Robert Richards has pointed out, the usual citation of Goethe's antipathy towards Romanticism was taken from late conversations dealing with *French* Romanticism in the 1820s. On 21 March 1830 he went so far as to claim to Eckermann that Schiller had shown he that he (Goethe) *was* a Romantic, and that the Schlegels had borrowed the term from them. See Richards, *Romantic Conception*, pp. 430-1.

<sup>744</sup> So in his scientific *magnum opus*, he points to possible collaboration yet difference with philosophers: "Vom Philosophen glauben wir Dank zu verdienen, daß wir gesucht die Phänomene bis zu ihren Urquellen zu verfolgen, bis dorthin, wo sie bloß erscheinen und sind und wo sich nichts weiter an ihnen erklären läßt. Ferner wird ihm willkommen sein, daß wir die Erscheinungen in eine leicht übersehbare Ordnung gestellt, wenn er diese Ordnung selbst auch nicht ganz billigen sollte." (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *Berliner Ausgabe. Kunsttheoretische Schriften und Übersetzungen. Band 19*, (Berlin: Aufbau, 1960 ff.), p. 24.) The scholarship I will be citing here is generally part of a recent wave of interest in Goethe and philosophy, after a period of neglect. Especially the studies by Astrida Tantillo, Wolf Engelhardt, Eckhart Förster, and the articles in the 2011 edition of the *Goethe-Yearbook* have reignited debate about "Goethe and Idealism."

<sup>745</sup> Johannes Grave has warned against identification-games in criticism of the novel. See *Der "ideale Kunskörper": Johann Wolfgang Goethe als Sammler von Druckgraphiken und Zeichnungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2006), p. 168. As always, narrow attempts at identification limit our critical-aesthetic assessment of the novel. And yet this particular work—part treatise, part epistolary novel, with explicit reference to the extradiegetic *Propyläen* in which it was published—does not suffer, I think, from more expansive dialogue about which intellectual figures play a role in its pages. See also his "Ideal and History. Johann Wolfgang Goethe's Collection of Prints and Drawings," *Artibus et Historiae*, 27: 53 (2006), pp. 175-186.

maintains a distance from the abstract brilliance of the “philosopher” in the group, insisting on a sort of cognitive innocence and tradition (his collection was started by his grandfather) in his relation to art. And yet, the novel narrates his reconciliation to the necessity of human cognitive intervention in both the production and the judgment of art. This reconciliation is clearly signified by the central debate between the philosopher and the *Gast*. The stranger presents the reader with an explicit ideology of the attitudinal innocence of the collector: he constantly brushes aside the “metaphysical,” foundation-searching thought-style of the philosopher, and maintains that classical art had room for the ugly and the monstrous. It is at this crucial moment that a Romantically ironic note is sounded with a reflexive reference to the very organ (the *Propyläen*) in which the novel has been published.<sup>747</sup> Before withdrawing from the conversation and giving the pen to the philosopher (!), the collector attempts to convince his interlocutor with an example he cannot disagree with: the *Laoköon* statues, and the tradition of their classicist interpretation. Both Lessing and Winckelmann are cited: surely no raw ugliness or *Entsetzliches* is included in this kind of art, but only that which is recuperated by a greater formal beauty.<sup>748</sup> The collector’s horror at the *Gast*’s response (“no”) is then turned into a genuine affection for the philosopher, who steps in to defend reason and its—organological, as we shall see—role in the production and judgment of art. The novel thus doubles back on to Goethe’s own history: having struggled with philosophy

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<sup>746</sup> Whose presence and centrality at least partially undermine the otherwise outright sexism of Goethe’s and Schiller’s writings on “dilettantism” from these years. See Hans Rudolf Veget, *Dilettantismus und Meisterschaft. Zum Problem des Dilettantismus bei Goethe: Praxis, Theorie, Zeitkritik* (Munich: Winkler, 1971), and also Elisabeth Krimmer, “German Women Writers and Classicism,” in ed. Simon Richter, *The Literature of Weimar Classicism* (Rochester: Camden House, 2005), pp. 237-265.

<sup>747</sup> WA I: 47, p. 162. Earlier mentions of the periodical are at pp. 146 and 152.

<sup>748</sup> On the tradition of this interpretation, see Simon Richter, *Laocoon's body and the aesthetics of pain: Winckelmann, Lessing, Herder, Moritz, Goethe* (Detroit: Wayne State, 1992), and also his very helpful “Introduction” in ed. *ipsus*, *Literature of Weimar Classicism*, pp. 3-45.

and its deductive stylings, he had, in 1798, begun a serious study of and with Schelling (on which more below). He had not and would not aspire to write philosophy: he left the defense of reason to the “philosophers.” Yet he included reason, and its discipline (metaphysics) in his intellectual itinerary. This inclusion was not incidental: his oblique contribution to organology, as we shall see, was indeed about progressive inclusions of the intuited and developing world. Resigning the ideological pen to the philosopher, Goethe diagonally supported, included and engaged in philosophy’s characteristic task. From this engagement emerged a quasi-philosophical episode in the organological adventure.

Goethe’s first significant use of the term organ (in his metamorphosis-writings)<sup>749</sup> and the first dislocation of that use into his aesthetic writings in the late 1790s seem to fall easily prey to Hegel’s accusation that Goethe shows us “reason’s exterior” without its internal “organ.”

The *Metamorphosis of Plants* (1790) contains two central doctrinal points in his natural-scientific thought. The first is “type-theory”<sup>750</sup>: the notion that development

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<sup>749</sup> Christopher Young and Thomas Gloning, *A History of the German Language Through Texts* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 248-9, suggest that the term would still have appeared to the German reading public as a *Lehnwort*, not as German, in 1790. See note 74 in chapter 1 above.

<sup>750</sup> The presence of a true type-theory in the *Metamorphose* is somewhat controversial, but its relation to Goethe’s famous *aperçu* from 1787 is not. The passage from the letter to Herder from Italy reads: “Die Urpflanze wird das wunderlichste Geschöpf von der Welt, um welches mich die Natur selbst beneiden soll. **Mit diesem Modell und dem Schlüssel dazu kann man alsdann noch Pflanzen in’s Unendliche erfinden**, die consequent sein müssen, das heißt: die, wenn sie auch nicht existiren, doch existiren könnten und nicht etwa mahlerische oder dichterische Schatten und Scheine sind, sondern eine innerliche Wahrheit und Nothwendigkeit haben. Dasselbe Gesetz wird sich auf alles übrige Lebendige anwenden lassen... So viel aber sei hier, ferneres Verständniß vorzubereiten, kürzlich ausgesprochen: Es war mir nämlich aufgegangen, **daß in demjenigen Organ der Pflanze, welches wir als Blatt gewöhnlich anzusprechen pflegen, der wahre Proteus verborgen liege, der sich in allen Gestaltungen verstecken und offenbaren könne**. Vorwärts und rückwärts ist die Pflanze immer nur Blatt, mit dem künftigen Keime so unzertrennlich vereint, daß man eins ohne das andere nicht denken darf. Einen solchen Begriff zu fassen, zu ertragen, ihn in der Natur aufzufinden ist eine Aufgabe, die uns in einen peinlich süßen Zustand versetzt.” (To Herder, 17 May 1787, Naples; WA I 32, p. 44; my emphasis.) Note that Goethe’s excitement comes from the *subjective* side of the discovery, both its “concept” and the “painfully sweet” state of



occurs according to a specific underlying form, one divivable from a correct perception of nature's individuals. An underlying form metamorphizes into the various parts of the plant. Rooted in the same teaching is the second point: the name for this form is "organ," the part expressing both its own function and its relation to the whole. Because this more general name is given to each separate form, the second doctrine is what Goethe named as a discipline: morphology. Development occurs through processes of concentration and expansion, forming "new" organs out of the functions of old. The two doctrines are related but not identical, and even seem to beg a question about form: what *is* the "organ" which, generating the model, schema, plan for the organic individual, is also encapsulated terminologically and ontologically in each "part"? That tension is at the heart of Herder's proto-organology, and it was from a Herderian setting that Goethe seems to have taken the term.<sup>751</sup>

Recall that the terms of Herder's abortive "organology" were the following: an organically developing Being qua force which, as God/World stood in mutual, expressive interaction with all of its parts, thought, material, or otherwise. Those "parts" were called "organs": functions with internal *teloi* expressing the necessary course of nature and culminating in humanity (*Menschheit*) itself, the ultimate organ. Although this doctrine probably created the strongest textual or terminological basis for organology, the

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activity into which it puts him. This is portentous of his increasing commitment to idealism, as is the constructive notion of "inventing plants to infinity" which might lack existence but not necessity.

<sup>751</sup> For an exploration of Goethe's relationship to "type-theory" and its origins in his collaborations with Herder, see H. B. Nisbet, "Herder, Goethe, and the Natural Type," p. 105: "But we find little reference to [the singular "type-theory"] in his completed botanical writings; he gradually lost interest in it after he had worked out in detail his theory of the ideal leaf or type organ of the higher plants in 1790." As Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, has shown, however, Goethe did return to this theory, especially in the context of the *Akademiestreit*. Robert Richards, *Romantic Conception*, p. 416, points out that this overlap between form and development puts Goethe between preformationism and epigeneticism in biology, with the "transcendental leaf" open to epigenetic developments, but forming the encapsulation common in preformationist theories.

Romantic metaphysical project—its *technologia transcendentalis*—was methodologically based on Kant’s philosophy, with its wavering on the question of an organon. This admixture—a textual alternative to Frederick Beiser’s “Fichte plus Spinoza” thesis<sup>752</sup>—was contradictory, and the stakes were that of the transition between the organic and the ideal organ. As we have seen above, this transition was included in Herder’s thought (indeed, he calls thought the “force of all forces”), and yet not defended. With Schelling, the term’s history took on a new profile as a norm, an intellectual tool for intervention in its field. Effectively, the next generation asked of Herder what Herder had asked of Spinoza: *what entitles us to conceive of Being in this way?* And this question became relevant in terms of content and not just methodology—what organ could justify itself in the actual world for knowledge of that world? Kant’s question was cast in Herder’s terms. Herder’s pullulating organs seemed, from the organological perspective, a single plane, a mere extension, an exterior of teleological entities with no basis in reason. The methodology he had defended was based only in analogy, in structural similarities between various organs proliferating in the organic unity of an undulating “Being.”<sup>753</sup>

It is easy to place Goethe’s early use of the term “organ” in this Herderian context. Take the more significant of those uses in the *Metamorphose* itself:

Wenn wir nun bemerken, daß es auf diese Weise der Pflanze möglich ist, einen Schritt rückwärts zu tun, und die Ordnung des Wachstums umzukehren; so werden wir auf den regelmäßigen Weg der Natur desto aufmerksamer gemacht, und wir lernen die Gesetze der Umwandlung kennen, nach welchen sie Einen Teil durch den andern hervorbringt, und die verschiedensten Gestalten durch Modifikation eines einzigen Organs darstellt.

<sup>752</sup> See Beiser, *Romantic Imperative*, pp. 131-53.

<sup>753</sup> Peter Hanns Reill has related this methodology to Goethe’s general procedure. See his “Bildung, Urtyp and Polarity: Goethe and Eighteenth-Century Physiology” in: *Goethe Yearbook*, 3 (1986), pp. 139-148. While this methodology certainly existed (see *ipsus*, *Vitalizing Nature*), I think that it represents only the earliest of Goethe’s *Ansichten der Natur*.

Die geheime Verwandtschaft der verschiedenen äußern Pflanzenteile, als der Blätter, des Kelchs, der Krone, der Staubfäden, welche sich nach einander und gleichsam aus einander entwickeln, ist von den Forschern im allgemeinen Längst erkannt, ja auch besonders bearbeitet worden, und man hat die Wirkung, wodurch ein und dasselbe *Organ* sich uns mannigfaltig verändert sehen läßt, die *Metamorphose der Pflanzen* genannt.<sup>754</sup>

Und so wären wir der Natur auf ihren Schritten so bedachtsam als möglich gefolgt; wir hätten die äußere Gestalt der Pflanze in allen ihren Umwandlungen, von ihrer Entwicklung aus dem Samenkorn bis zur neuen Bildung desselben begleitet, und ohne Anmaßung, die ersten Triebfedern der Naturwirkungen entdecken zu wollen, auf Äußerung der Kräfte, durch welche die Pflanze ein und eben dasselbe Organ nach und nach umbildet, unsre Aufmerksamkeit gerichtet.<sup>755</sup>

We note here, in paragraphs that open and close Goethe's reflections, that terms for "exterior" occur multiple times, that "exteriorization" or "expression (*Äußerung*)" is central, and that organic forces are everywhere at play. Goethe has successfully applied the Herderian monistic matrix to natural-scientific observation, leaving the "concept" of the plant announced in his 1787 letter to Herder somewhere in the methodology itself, allowing it to emerge in the narrative flow of his written observations. A failed organological metaphysics became the methodology of successful empirical observation. I would like to suggest here, however, that the philosophical impact of that methodology did not truly emerge until the inclusion of this writing in the *Morphologische Hefte* in the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it in fact became included in the history of organology.

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<sup>754</sup> WA II 6, pp. 25-6.

<sup>755</sup> WA II 6, p. 71. Other significant uses occur where Goethe speaks of concentration and expansion of organs: "Es mag nun die Pflanze sprossen, blühen oder Früchte bringen, so sind es doch nur immer *dieselbigen Organe*, welche, in vielfältigen Bestimmungen und unter oft veränderten Gestalten, die Vorschrift der Natur erfüllen. Dasselbe Organ, welches am Stengel als Blatt sich ausgedehnt und eine höchst mannigfaltige Gestalt angenommen hat, zieht sich nun im Kelche zusammen, dehnt sich im Blumenblatte wieder aus, zieht sich in den Geschlechtswerkzeugen zusammen, um sich als Frucht zum letztenmal auszudehnen.

Diese Wirkung der Natur ist zugleich mit einer andern verbunden, mit der *Versammlung verschiedener Organe um ein Zentrum* nach gewissen Zahlen und Maßen, welche jedoch bei manchen Blumen oft unter gewissen Umständen weit überschritten und vielfach verändert werden." (WA II 6, p. 91; emphasis in original.)

The migration of the term from the Herderian context to that of the late 1790s, from biology to aesthetics and beyond, is marked by Goethe's engagement with Karl Phillip Moritz, who uses the term in the same framework, but for aesthetic purposes:

Daher ergreift jede höhere Organisation, ihrer Natur nach, die ihr untergeordnete und trägt sie in ihr Wesen über. Die Pflanze den unorganisirten Stoff durch bloßes Werden und Wachsen; das Thier die Pflanzen durch Werden, Wachsen und Genuß; der Mensch verwandelt nicht nur Thier und Pflanze durch Werden, Wachsen und Genuß in sein innres Wesen, sondern faßt zugleich alles, was seiner Organisation sich unterordnet, durch die unter allen am hellsten geschliffne, spiegelnde Oberfläche seines Wesens, in den Umfang seines Daseins auf und stellt es, wenn sein Organ sich bildend in sich selbst vollendet, verschönert außer sich wieder dar.<sup>756</sup>

Goethe's reflections on Moritz's essay *Über die bildende Nachahmung des Schönen* come from conversations between the two men during Goethe's Italian journey, less than a year after his famous letter to Herder. The text slides analogically from one form and its organs to the next, and the creativity of the artist is attributed to the distinctively "formative" aspect of the human "organ." "Webs of organization" (*Gewebe der Organisation*) intertwine in a "thätige Kraft" (which is greater than but related to "Denkkraft"—Herder's term in *Gott*). And two epigenetic forces—formative (*Bildungskraft* or *-trieb*) and sensible (*Empfindungskraft*)—mirror (*abspiegeln*) the whole in its organization. The former, organic/ontological forms a perfect microcosmos, but the latter has a "single point" in the whole missing. The organic genius is thus again mirrored by the faculty of taste; a sense for the beautiful does not require genius. This relation is that of man to woman as well.<sup>757</sup> Thus the organs of the plant (e.g.) become those of the imitator of nature: ideal organs, as in Herder, are attributed to the figure of the genius. These organs confer on him the ability to extend the ontological hall of

<sup>756</sup> Transcribed in WA I 32, pp. 314-15.

<sup>757</sup> See note 746 in the current chapter above. See also Simon Richter, *Laocöon's Body*.

organic mirroring into the human world. Being is one and differentiated, in art as in nature.

This type of mimesis changes the frame of reference for the term, but makes no change to Herder's externalist "organology." At best, this system differentiates *Denkkraft* into a finer taxonomy. From a Hegelian perspective, however, it is just that: an extended taxonomy. If Goethe was going to defend a kind of mimesis, it was going to be a different one.

In the 1790s, Goethe started to use the term "organ" with some frequency again, but now with a generic difference. This difference is, I think, the first clue to the emergence of a particularly Goethean idealism, and the harbinger of his mature organology.

Goethe's theoretical writings of the late 1790s are marked precisely by a strong taxonomic bent. Thus the essay *einfache Nachahmung der Natur* divides between "manner" and "style" beyond "simple" imitation, and *Der Sammler und die Seinigen* ends with a counting-up of artistic "styles," numbering not less than 6, not counting subdivisions by emphasis and area of focus.<sup>758</sup> This apparently external descriptive enterprise is undercut, however, by some uses of the term "organ" that indicate Goethe's increasing commitment to idealist trends in philosophy at this time.

In the introduction to the mission-statement of the classicist project, the introduction to its organ, the *Propyläen*, Goethe divides again between artistic "treatments" of the object to be constructed, naming the "spiritual" (which works through the internal conjunction (*Zusammenhang*) of the object), the "sensible" (which presents exciting, mild, and pleasant sense-impressions), and finally:

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<sup>758</sup> The spectacular breakdown is given in the "Tabelle," for which see WA I 47, p. 338.

Die mechanische zuletzt wäre diejenige, die durch irgendein körperliches Organ auf bestimmte Stoffe wirkt und so der Arbeit ihr Dasein, ihre Wirklichkeit verschafft.<sup>759</sup>

Taxonomy mixes here with definition: the “organ,” meant quite literally, prepares determinate materials for “work,” giving the cipher through which the constructive activity can alone operate. This “organ” is close to the type of interventionary work admitted by Goethe in his reflections in *einfache Nachahmung*, where the “simple” imitation (which Goethe calls the “courtyard” of style) is mediated by “manner” (which binds the constructible-imaginary individual together in the manner of the artist’s *Geist*). Finally, “style” performs a complete mediation of nature and spirit:

Wie die einfache Nachahmung auf dem ruhigen Dasein und einer liebevollen Gegenwart beruht, die Manier eine Erscheinung mit einem leichten fähigen Gemüt ergreift, so ruht der *Stil* auf den tiefsten Grundfesten der Erkenntnis, auf dem Wesen der Dinge, insofern uns erlaubt ist, es in sichtbaren und greiflichen Gestalten zu erkennen.<sup>760</sup>

This earlier writing—summarizing the experience in Italy in 1789—shows us the direction Goethe is taking: the mediation of the more abstract cognitive apparatus with the concreteness of intuition and feeling.<sup>761</sup> By presenting art in this holistic manner, Goethe’s writing also trends towards the naturephilosophical point he would come to embrace: ultimately, reason’s framework must come to be identical with that of nature. The metaphysical point—that reflective knowledge must be included in nature, or that knowledge must include its own justification—begins to emerge, parallel to a new use of the term “organ.” Thus simple imitation of nature—vulgar mimesis—first gives way to mimetic ordering (or proliferating Herderian-Moritzian organs, encapsulated one within

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<sup>759</sup> WA I 47, p. 19.

<sup>760</sup> WA I 47, p. 80.

<sup>761</sup> Thus again in the *Einleitung* to the *Propyläen*: “Der Blick auf die Oberfläche eines lebendigen Wesens verwirrt den Beobachter, und man darf wohl hier, wie in anderen Fällen, den wahren Spruch anbringen: Was man weiß, sieht man erst! Denn wie derjenige, der ein kurzes Gesicht hat, einen Gegenstand besser sieht, von dem er sich wieder entfernt, als einen, dem er sich erst nähert, weil ihm das geistige Gesicht nunmehr zu Hülfe kommt, so liegt eigentlich in der Kenntnis die Vollendung des Anschauens.” (WA I 47, p. 13.)

the other in Being) and then opens to the demand for a metaphysical attitude in artistic and scientific encounters with nature. The demand presented by Goethe's work around the time he befriended Schelling is for a mimesis of the subject-object relation itself, the concrete inclusion of reason in nature or nature in reason. And this was the stated task of the Romantic organ.

But if this demand existed, and if Goethe's work was only just coming into its oblique yet essential relationship to Idealism, a direct anticipation of his mature "doctrine" nevertheless occurred in 1798, precisely in *Der Sammler und die Seinigen*. In the debate between the philistine stranger and the philosopher—who is speaking in the name of *Vernunft*—there is a clear tip of the hat to foundational, abstract thinking. As the caricatured *Gast* speaks out heretically against classicism, the philosopher steps in, responding to admonitions about his metaphysicizing with more metaphysics. The *Gast* is satisfied with that artist who can pick out actual characteristics, simplify them, and produce a presentation of his concept. The philosopher objects, saying there is more to the story, and the collector states pregnantly: "Zum Versuche gehe ich mit."<sup>762</sup> The philosopher describes what is lacking:

Durch jene Operation möchte allenfalls ein Kanon entstanden sein, musterhaft, wissenschaftlich schätzbar; aber nicht befriedigend fürs Gemüt.<sup>763</sup>

Here the collector breaks in again, strongly agreeing with this restriction: only a canon (a positive body of laws) can emerge from the abstract species-production that occurs through the representation of a concept. What is needed is "more" than this, and when the collector demurs, the philosopher picks up the thread: a full individual must be established, a circle of representation must be closed in the process, and this process must

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<sup>762</sup> WA I 47, p. 171.

<sup>763</sup> WA I 47, p. 171.

itself be that of reason, the only process satisfying *das Gemüt*. The *Gast* loses his cool at this point, accusing the philosopher of speaking obscurely. The philosopher avers that none of this is philosophy, merely “lauter Erfahrungssachen,” and the discussion continues:

Gast: Das nennen Sie Erfahrung, wovon ein anderer nichts begreifen kann!  
 Ich: Zu jeder Erfahrung gehört ein Organ.  
 Gast: Wohl ein besonderes?  
 Ich: Kein besonderes, aber eine gewisse Eigenschaft muß es haben.  
 Gast: Und die wäre?  
 Ich: Es muß produzieren können.  
 Gast: Was produzieren?  
 Ich: Die Erfahrung! Es gibt keine Erfahrung, die nicht produziert, hervorgebracht, erschaffen wird.<sup>764</sup>

The philosopher—who is not Goethe, but whose voice is now fully presented by the extradiegetical Goethe—anticipates Goethe’s mature organological attitude. Experience itself is organological, a matter of organs and their plastic production, fully mediated by reason and only grasped in its essence through that process. Mimesis is self-reflexive and, in a sense we shall explore shortly, technological. The artist as the scientist must take account of philosophy, or at least of its subject, reason, the mediator of which cannot be excluded, but must itself produce and include by that production experience itself. And this production cannot occur abstractly, but instead by means of a concrete instrument or an organ.<sup>765</sup>

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<sup>764</sup> WA I 47, p. 174.

<sup>765</sup> This passage is, in my estimation, circumstantial evidence that the philosopher should at least partly be identified with Schelling. Schelling’s *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur* (1798, precisely) closes with the words “Was ist denn nun jenes geheime Band, das unsern Geist mit der Natur verknüpft, oder jenes verborgenen Organ, durch welches die Natur zu unserm Geiste, oder unser Geist zur Natur spricht”... Goethe studied this writing with enthusiasm, and subsequently managed to get Schelling appointed to the university at Jena. (See von Engelhardt, *Goethes Weltansichten*, pp. 217 ff., which also deals with Goethe’s increasingly personal relationship with Schelling, and his study of the “new philosophy” regularly with Niethammer.) For an interpretation of the poems collected as *Gott und Welt* in Schellingian perspective, see Jeremy Adler, “The Aesthetics of Magnetism: Science, Philosophy, and Poetry in the Dialogue Between Goethe and Schelling” in ed. Elinor S. Schaffer, *The Third Culture: Literature and Science* (New York: de Gruyter, 1998), pp. 66-103.



## b) The Categories of Organs, or the Representation of Representation

Goethe had used the term *organ* in his essay *Metamorphose der Pflanzen* (1790) to denote the functional organic part, underlying both the type (unity) and development (becoming) of the plant.<sup>766</sup> The sense of the term, however, was altered by the essay's inclusion in the *Morphologische Hefte*,<sup>767</sup> which contain the beginnings of Goethe's broader organological thought, a conception of mimesis as the reproduction of representation itself. For Goethe, mimetic activity, scientific or poetic, is a doubling of representation's (already double) split between representing subject and represented object. The inclusion of the observer in the realm of observed—and of the represented in the realm of the representing—is recognizably Idealist in conception.

Goethe developed this line of argument further in his final biological efforts, especially his review of the *Akademiestreit* between Cuvier and Geoffroy de St.-Hilaire and a late series of fragments engaged with Galen and Aristotle. This latter discourse puts the emphasis on the reproduction of the mimetic enterprise. It thus points to Goethe's organology as a social-scientific program for altering the world itself in collective reproduction of representation. Goethe's late biological classicism mixes with his long

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<sup>766</sup> This tension between unity and development is clear in the rhetoric of the essay: “Wenn wir nun bemerken, daß es auf diese Weise der Pflanze möglich ist, einen Schritt rückwärts zu tun, und die Ordnung des Wachstums umzukehren; so werden wir auf den regelmäßigen Weg der Natur desto aufmerksamer gemacht, und wir lernen die Gesetze der Umwandlung kennen, nach welchen sie Einen Teil durch den andern hervorbringt, und die verschiedensten Gestalten durch Modifikation eines einzigen Organs darstellt. Die geheime Verwandtschaft der verschiedenen äußern Pflanzenteile, als der Blätter, des Kelchs, der Krone, der Staubfäden, welche sich nach einander und gleichsam aus einander entwickeln, ist von den Forschern im allgemeinen Längst erkannt, ja auch besonders bearbeitet worden, und man hat die Wirkung, wodurch ein und dasselbe *Organ* sich uns mannigfaltig verändert sehen läßt, die *Metamorphose der Pflanzen* genannt.” (WA II 6, pp. 25-6.)

<sup>767</sup> Which he began to gather late in the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and published starting in 1820. See Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, pp. 42 ff.

engagement with Idealism to produce a response to Romantic metaphysics, seeking to bind the latter's speculative enterprise to emergent disciplinary scientific institutions, mediating between comparative anatomy in Paris and Hegelian metaphysics in Berlin. Goethe thus insists that science should be what it in fact *is*: a determiner of a collective worldview inclusive of the citizens of that world. To participate in that determination is to inherit and form new organs of transcendental perception, to re-make the world categorially in scientific concert.

With the name “morphology” came a cluster of theoretical writings, poetic and expository, which shifted the sense of “organ” in the *Metamorphose* retroactively, grafting the structural-developmental organ onto its philosophical counterpart. What emerged was a version of organology, and a response to Hegel's charge that Goethe's methods were without a self-reflexive instrument which could ensure their truth.<sup>768</sup>

Goethe's perspective on mimesis itself, on the scientific or aesthetic representation of objects, had gained in just that reflexivity by the time of the *Hefte*. He writes:

Alles im Object was im Subject + *X*  
 Alles im Subject was im Object + *X* Verloren .....  
 Dem Object die Macht zugestehen  
 auf .... + zu verzichten  
 Das Subject mit seinen + zu erhöhen und jenes + nicht anerkennen.

Alles was im Subject ist, ist im Object und noch etwas mehr.

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<sup>768</sup> For representative example, the *Encyclopedia's* charge: “Bei der Erfahrung kommt es darauf an, mit welchem Sinn man an die Wirklichkeit geht. Ein großer Sinn macht große Erfahrungen und erblickt in dem bunten Spiel der Erscheinungen das, worauf es ankommt. Die Idee ist vorhanden und wirklich, nicht etwas da drüben und hinten. Der große Sinn, wie z.B. der eines Goethe, der in die Natur oder in die Geschichte blickt, macht große Erfahrungen, erblickt das Vernünftige und spricht es aus. Das Fernere ist sodann, dass man das Wahre auch in der Reflexion erkennen kann und es durch Verhältnisse des Gedankens bestimmt. Das Wahre an und für sich ist indes in diesen beiden Weisen noch nicht in seiner eigentlichen Form vorhanden. Die vollkommenste Weise des Erkennens ist die in der reinen Form des Denkens.“ (Hegel, *Enz. I*, §24, Zusatz 3.) Hegel's charge against Kant had been that the “canon of the understanding” should be expanded into an organon for synthetic knowledge *a priori*, i.e. metaphysics; his charge against Goethe is that his natural-scientific work remains external to its correctly *observed* object, which—lacking precisely that instrument—is not *grasped* (*begriffen*).

Alles was im Object ist, ist im Subject und noch etwas mehr.  
Wir sind auf doppelte Weise verlohren oder geborgen.  
Gestehen wir dem Object sein Mehr zu und gehen auf unser Subject Mehr zu...  
Pochen wir auf unser Subject. (WA II: 11 349)

Epistemologically, the situation is one of mutual excess. The identity of subject and object is complemented by the difference between them, and this dialectical formulation characterizes representation as a re-production of that dialectical identity itself.

Representation—on both sides of the subject-object divide—always represents that divide even as it produces the represented content. Mimesis is a “double infinite” built on the apparently simple mutual influence of subject and object. Self-reflexivity is built into representational knowledge, and Hegel’s charge is answered. This is not only the proliferating organ-world of being and becoming on Herder’s model (which would be open to the charge of external observation), but the intertwining relationships of both:

Kaum überzeugt er sich von diesem wechselseitigen Einfluß [des Objekts und Subjekts], so wird er ein doppelt Unendliches gewahr, an den Gegenständen die Mannichfaltigkeit des Seins und Werdens und der sich lebendig durchkreuzenden Verhältnisse, an sich selbst aber die Möglichkeit einer unendlichen Ausbildung, indem er seine Empfänglichkeit sowohl als sein Urteil immer zu neuen Formen des Aufnehmens und Gegenwirkens geschickt macht...<sup>769</sup>

The subject’s capacity to receive—just like its judgment—can experience on this basis infinite “training” or literally “outformation” (*Ausbildung*). On the one hand, receptivity is essential—Goethe is not an idealist in the sense that everything is meant to be *inside* representation.<sup>770</sup> And yet, even as a part of any possible object remains yet to be received, its inclusion in the crosshairs of dialectical self-representation shows that Goethe’s progressive stance towards knowledge is developmentally Idealist: the circle of

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<sup>769</sup> WA II: 6, p. 5.

<sup>770</sup> But then, neither is anyone else in the younger generation. I do not see the point of insistences on Goethe’s self-assessment as a “hartnäckiger Realist,” given the overwhelming evidence pointing in a more subtle direction, as in the quotation here. See, for example, Robert Richards, “Nature Is the Poetry of Mind, or How Schelling Solved Goethe’s Kantian Problems,” in Michael Friedman and Alfred Nordmann, *The Kantian Legacy in Nineteenth-Century Science* (Cambridge: MIT, 2006), pp. 27-51.

knowledge might find mediated and temporary completion in reason's organ. And that organ will have passed a Hegelian test, because it produces reflexive mimetic knowledge—the representation of representation itself. Indeed, the first passage above, found on the verso of a folio of the *Hefte*, might be taken to be playing with Kant's "transcendental object=X," the constituted form of any object for us.<sup>771</sup> If this is the case, then Goethe's point is that that which we constitute is nevertheless an apparent excess, not in principle in some "beyond" but not necessarily in our organ already. The world is *able to be included*. The inclusion of *more world* is not contingent but appears so, and this parallax is essential. Our "tender empiricism"<sup>772</sup> insists—*pocht*—on the subject.

Goethe gives this representational apparatus the name *organ*, writing programmatically that: "[z]um Ergreifen der Wahrheit braucht es eines höheren Organs als zur Vertheidigung des Irrthums."<sup>773</sup> This organ for "higher" knowledge responds both to his own demand for an articulated method for naturalist observation,<sup>774</sup> and also to Hegel's critique. And yet *organ* is of different provenance from *organon*.

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<sup>771</sup> This doctrine is one of the broadest results of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft (KdrV)*: we contribute the basic form of any object for us (its unity and consistency over repeated instances of representation), but *not* its content, which we gain in empirical viewings of phenomena. See e.g. *KdrV* A 104.

<sup>772</sup> Even this famous Goethean topos, so often used to show a *non*-interventionary observer in Goethean science, is based on the identity of subject and object and the possibility of their mutual influence: "Es gibt eine zarte Empirie, die sich mit dem Gegenstand innigst identisch macht, und dadurch zur eigentlichen Theorie wird. Diese Steigerung des geistigen Vermögens aber gehört einer hochgebildeten Zeit an." (WA II: XI 128-29) Note that "geistiges Vermögen" might be of Kantian derivation, while what it describes is the *organ* this study has treated. Goethe ultimately preferred the Romantic terminology.

<sup>773</sup> WA II 11, p. 162. NB: "Vertheidigung des Irrthums" is very close to the opposite of the definition of logic according to Kant (*KdrV* B16/A10). The organ is thus meant to include truth rather than exclude falsehood, and thus joins the terms organ and *organon* in Goethe's terminology, following precisely on the Romantic conflation of functional part and instrument. The implied "lower organ" is possessed by Newton: "Newton war ein wohlorganisirter, gesunder, wohltemperirter Mann, ohne Leidenschaft, ohne Begierden. Sein Geist war constructiver Natur und zwar im abstractesten Sinne; daher war die höhere Mathematik ihm als das eigentliche Organ gegeben, durch das er seine innere Welt aufzubauen und die äußere zu gewältigen suchte." (WA II, 4, p. 97.) The *Maximen und Reflexionen* clarify, objecting simultaneously to Hegel, that "Die Mathematik ist wie die Dialektik, ein Organ des inneren höheren Sinnes... Für Beide hat nichts Wert als die Form, der Inhalt ist ihnen gleichgültig..." (MA 17, p. 829).

<sup>774</sup> *Locus classicus* for talk of "higher experience" is Goethe's controversial essay, *Der Versuch als Vermittler zwischen Subjekt und Objekt*, composed in 1792 and then also included in the *Morphologische*

The classical commentary on the definitional problem of the “organ” is Aristotle’s *De Anima*. The philosopher uses *organon* in that work to specify that part (*morion*<sup>775</sup>) which is possible where its object is actual.<sup>776</sup> The instrument works in a determinate field, and so must be suited to that field. Thus, for Aristotle, the senses are fields of possibility for their respective objects. The sense of touch is already suited to the touched—otherwise touching would not occur through this sense (i.e. it would not be *this* sense).<sup>777</sup> With the help of an organ as the seat of possibility, the sense must deliver the formal element of perception to the understanding, without involving the material element. We see through the eye without having the seen in our eye; we represent wood without having corneal splinters. The organ separates the formal from the material but also unites both as a single object of perception. The “object” of the organ is subdivided into the representation and its being *qua* object. This is the most abstract determination of the process of knowing. The *possibly known* (in this passage in the *De anima*, the

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*Hefte*. For a Kantian reading, see von Wolf Engelhardt, *Goethes Weltansichten: auch eine Biographie* (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 2007), pp. 167-87. This essay does not use the term organ, but demands a qualitative approach to reason’s mediation of the observed, thus focusing on the manner of knowing as process, and articulating an area of methodological interest which the organ would come to name.

<sup>775</sup> On the terminological shift in antiquity from “part” (*meros*, diminutive *morion*—so Aristotle’s *Parts of Animals: Peri zoion morion*) to “functional/instrumental part” or “organon,” see Wolf, *Der Begriff*, and Löw, *Philosophie des Lebendigen*.

<sup>776</sup> Note that this use differs from the sense of *organon* given as title to the logical works by the earliest collaters of the Aristotelian corpus. The organon in Aristotle’s own usage is “that part which is potentially such as its object is actually” [*Hoste to poiouv hoion auto energiai, toioutovn ekeino poiei dunamei on*]—the organ is the “mean” between two opposites making up the field of perception: “What is “in the middle” is fitted to discern; relatively to either extreme it can put itself in the place of the other.” (*De anima* 423b/424a.) I will cite the Bekker numbers for convenience. Translations are from *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard Mckeeon (New York: Random House, 1941), pp. 535-607. Transliterations mine.

<sup>777</sup> On the sense-organ in particular Aristotle writes: “By a “sense” is meant what has the power of receiving into itself the sensible forms of things without the matter. This must be conceived of as taking place in the way in which a piece of wax takes on the impress of signet-ring without the iron or gold... but it is indifferent what in each case the *substance* is; what alone matters is what *quality* it has, i.e. in what *ratio* its constituents are combined... By an “organ of sense” [really *aestheterion*, seat of perception] is meant that in which ultimately such a power is seated.” [*Katholou de peri pases aistheseos die labein hoti he men aisthesis esti to dektikon ton aisthetow eidown aneu tes hules, hoion ho keros tou daktuliou aneu tou siderou kai tou chrusou dechetai to semeion, lambanei de to chrusouv e to chalkouv semeion, all’ ouch hei chrusos e chalkos... aistheterion de proton en joi he toiaute dunamis.*] (*De anima* 424a-b) That Goethe was familiar with this work is clear from the section on Aristotle in the “historischer Teil“ of the *Farbenlehre*.

sensible possibility) is transformed into the actuality of experience. The realm of the possible is delimited by the function of knowing, the *organon* itself.

Here Aristotle draws attention to a problem: where the sense-organs determine the specific laws of their fields of perception and thus delimit the areas of possible perception for themselves, this cannot possibly be the procedure for reason itself. For if thought itself had an *organon*, then it could only offer our knowledge those specificities suitable to the possibility of that tool. Knowledge would limit its field to the specifics of its instrument's function. We would be severely cognitively limited.<sup>778</sup>

Goethe was aware of the problem of the particularities of any organ, and thus tried to root knowledge in not “an” organ but organs as numerous as the objects they are meant to apprehend:

Jeder neue Gegenstand, wohl beschaut, schließt ein neues Organ in uns auf.<sup>779</sup>

Aristotle himself had come to the conclusion that the understanding always *is* the object thought by that understanding.<sup>780</sup> The generality of thought demanded by metaphysics implies that there can be no particular and separating mediator—no actualizing means or instrument—between thought and its object. Yet thought does cover a field of possibility,

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<sup>778</sup> “Therefore, since everything is a possible object of thought, mind in order, as Anaxagoras says, to dominate, that is, to know, must be pure from all admixture; for the co-presence of what is alien to its nature is a hindrance and a block: it follows that it too, like the sensitive part, can have no nature of its own, other than that of having a certain capacity. Thus that in the soul which is called mind (by mind I mean that whereby the soul thinks and judges) is, before it thinks, not actually any real thing. For this reason it cannot reasonably be regarded as blended with the body: if so, it would acquire some quality, e.g. warmth or cold, or even have an organ like the sensitive faculty: as it is, it has none.” [*ananke ara, epei panta noei, amige einai, hosper phesin Anaxagoras, hina krate, touto d' estin hina gnorizei: paremphainomenon gar koluei to allotrion kai antiphrattei, hoste med' autou einai phusin medemian all' e tauten, hoti dunatov. Ho ara kaloumenos tes psyches mous (lego de noun hoi danoeitai kai hupolambanei he psyche) ouden estin energeiai town onton prin noein. Dio oude memichthai eulogon auton toi somati: poios tis gar an vivnoito, psuchros e thermos, e kan organon ti eie, hosper toi aesthetikoi; nun d' outhen estin.*] (*De anima* 429a/19)

<sup>779</sup> WA II 11, p. 59.

<sup>780</sup> “In every case the mind which is actively thinking is the objects which it thinks.” [*holos de ho nous estin ho kat' energeian ta pragmata noon*] (*De anima* 431b).

one greater than any possible organ. That field of possibility is principally unlimited: cognition in general functions without mediator, and is thus noumenal, unmediated.

Goethe reflects both sides of this difficulty. He writes first of an organ, the eye, which he develops towards organological freedom on the basis of Aristotle's model. But he also talks of higher organs—categories, as we shall see—in dynamic cognitive development. Organology covers the spectrum of human cognition.

Perhaps the *Farbenlehre*'s most famous passage tells us that the deeds of phenomena, not their essences, are to be observed and described, and continues:

Die Farben sind Thaten des Lichts, Thaten und Leiden. In diesem Sinne können wir von demselben Aufschlüsse über das Licht erwarten. Farben und Licht stehen zwar unter einander in dem genauesten Verhältniß, aber wir müssen uns beide als der ganzen Natur angehörig denken: denn sie ist es ganz, die sich dadurch dem Sinne des Auges besonders offenbaren will.<sup>781</sup>

The unity of the phenomenon must be established for scientific observation to have validity. The *derivation* of color will not do.<sup>782</sup> We need instead to place color in the whole (*das Ganze*) of nature, because only this inclusion can demonstrate the desired unity. Nature, however, reveals itself particularly through the sense belonging to the eye, and does so completely. An earlier redaction of this passage had phrased it:

Die Farben sind die ganze Natur dem Organ des Auges offenbart und recht sehen heißt recht seyn.<sup>783</sup>

This more compact version of the sentence shows that nature's holism can be divided by organs and nevertheless remain complete.<sup>784</sup> Indeed, the sentence is a sort of *précis* of the

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<sup>781</sup> WA II I, pp. ix-x.

<sup>782</sup> For Goethe's systematic position against Newton in this regard see Hartmut R. Schönherr, *Einheit und Werden: Goethes Newton-Polemik als systematische Konsequenz seiner Naturkonzeption* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1993). See also Burwick, *Damnation*, for the broader consequences of Goethe's polemic.

<sup>783</sup> WA II: I, p. 384.

<sup>784</sup> Spinoza's notion of "attributes"—as infinite in their kind—which do not divide *natura* (which is absolutely infinite) might be the source or model of this type of division. See *Ethics* I, Defs. IV and VI, also Prop. X. Goethe's engagements with Spinoza are well-documented. His reading of the *Ethics* will have

whole work: colors are nature itself, whole and revealed in a single organ. The possibility of error in perception parallels that of moral degeneration, and their simultaneous correction foregrounds the section on the “aesthetic-moral” effects of colors. Nature’s totality is given under one aspect to the eye’s *organ*. The term can be taken here as the physical eye (*appositive genitive*) or as a distinct capacity—on Aristotelian lines—for the realization of the eye’s polarized field of possibility (*possessive genitive*). Goethe must at least include the latter sense in the former, for the *organ*’s capacities develop just this Aristotelian model towards “freedom.”

Goethe makes good on this promise of an organology of color in the section on *Totality and Harmony*. The eye—as in Aristotle, suspended between two poles in a field (of vision)—takes the single impulse it receives from one end of that spectrum and complements it, running from one pole to the other, revealing the totality of color.<sup>785</sup> But this is only the first step: the organ goes on to harmonize the phenomena—some of which it has just produced—and thereby makes itself free.<sup>786</sup> Goethe ascribes spontaneity to an organ both physical and metaphysical. The specificity of that organ (its field of possibility) is thus complemented by a function which, going immediately to totality, frees up perception for error and for truth. The organ is formed and forms towards freedom, a freedom which attaches also to the organs of knowledge. Organology inserts

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been during the “Spinoza summit” in 1783-4 in Weimar, together with Karl Phillip Moritz and Herder. See Engelhardt, *Goethes Weltansichten*, pp. 157-67, and David Bell, *Spinoza in Germany from 1670 to the Age of Goethe* (London: Institute of Germanic Studies, 1984).

<sup>785</sup> This is most obviously seen, as Goethe confirmed, in the after-image on a white surface, which produces the contrary color in the wheel.

<sup>786</sup> “Wurden wir vorher bei dem Beschauen einzerner Farben gewissermaßen pathologisch afficirt, indem wir zu einzelnen Empfindungen fortgerissen, uns bald lebhaft und strebend, bald weich und sehnd, bald zum Edlen emporgehoben, bald zum Gemeinen herabgezogen fühlten; so führt uns das Bedürfniß nach Totalität, welches unserm **Organ** eingeboren ist, aus dieser Beschränkung heraus; **es setzt sich selbst in Freiheit**, indem es den Gegensatz des ihm aufgedrungenen Einzelnen und somit eine befriedigende Ganzheit hervorbringt.” (WA II 1, pp. 323-24; my emphasis.)



itself between science's objects and philosophy's subjects, and extends its terminology into both. The organs of plants become the free organs of sense—and these pass into the *Organ(e) des Wissens*.

All of nature flows formally in through the eye, which totalizes and harmonizes nature, freeing itself technically from mere receptivity. This eye, and the scientist possessing it, must have some means of making sense out of this colorful nature. In the *Hefte*, then, Goethe names that means “intuitive judgment” (*anschauende Urteilskraft*),<sup>787</sup> a term derived from Kant<sup>788</sup> but deviating from the letter of the Critical system.<sup>789</sup>

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<sup>787</sup> This is not explicit, but the centrality of this doctrine to his methodology, and his stated intention to create “higher organs” for knowledge justifies my interpretive gesture. See Eckhart Förster, “Die Bedeutung von 76, 77 der *Kritik der Urteilskraft* für die Entwicklung der nachkantischen Philosophie. Teil 1” in ed. Jürgen Stolzenberg, *Kant und der Frühidealismus* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2007), 59-80, and *ipsus*, “Goethe and the “Auge des Geistes”,” *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 75: 1 (2001), pp. 87-101, with an explicit comparison to Hegel's “idea” at p. 98. The notion that “new sense organs” will develop as a result of this doctrine (p. 98) is, I hope, bolstered by my analysis here.

<sup>788</sup> “Zwar scheint der Verfasser hier auf einen göttlichen Verstand zu deuten, allein wenn wir ha im Sittlichen, durch Glauben an Gott, Tugend und Unsterblichkeit uns in eine obere Region erheben und an das erste Wesen annähern sollen; so dürft's es wohl im Intellectuellen derselbe Fall sein, dass wir uns, das das Anschauen einer immer schaffenden Natur, zur geistigen Teilnahme an ihren Produktionen würdig machten. Hatte ich doch unbewußt und aus innerem Trieb auf jenes Urbildliche, Typische rastlos gedrungen, war es mir sogar geglückt, eine naturgemäße Darstellung aufzubauen, so konnte mich nunmehr nicht weiter verhindern, das *Abenteuer der Vernunft*, wie es der Alte vom Königsberge selbst nennt, mutig zu bestehen.” (MA XIII, pp. 30-31) Robert Richards reads this passage as a reference to gradualist evolutionism: “Goethe was thus ready, as he concluded, boldly to undertake that adventure of reason rejected by Kant, namely, that of evolution.” (*Romantic Conception*, p. 491) To be sure, Kant's own use of the phrase (at AA 5 419) is probably written with Herder's teleology in mind. But the *problem* with gradualism is its status as *idea* without possible corresponding *intuition*, which is the defining problem of (special) metaphysics in the *KdrV*. Thus, Richards points to a sub-problem included in the more general metaphysical crux. Goethe's essay, however, is about modes of knowing, and his reference stays at this more general level. *Kurz und gut*, the passage is a confession of adherence to post-Kantian metaphysics.

<sup>789</sup> Among Goethe's many positive statements on the “new philosophy,” the best known is perhaps the essay in the *Hefte* called “Einwirkung der neueren Philosophie,” where he describes his conversion (which I place about 1798). But a lesser-known and very sensitive assessment is reported by Victor Cousin from a conversation of 20 October 1817, in which Goethe reported: “J'ai tout vu en Allemagne, depuis la raison jusqu'au mysticisme. J'ai assisté à toutes les révolutions. Il y a quelques mois, je me suis mis à relire Kant; rien n'est si clair depuis que l'on a tiré toutes les conséquences de tous ses principes. Le système de Kant n'est pas détruit. Ce système, ou plutôt cette méthode, consiste à distinguer le sujet de l'objet, le moi qui juge de la chose jugée avec cette réflexion que c'est toujours moi qui juge. Ainsi les sujets ou principes du jugement étant différents, il est tout simple que les jugements le soient. La méthode de Kant est un principe d'humanité et de tolérance. --- La philosophie allemande,” me dit-il encore, “c'est la manifestation des diverses qualités de l'esprit. Nous avons vu paraître tour à tour la raison, l'imagination, le sentiment,

*Intuition* for Kant is the representation of particulars without anything “general.” It is therefore always of the senses, because the general can only be contributed to knowledge by the concept. On this basis, Kant polemicizes against any possible “intellectual intuition,”<sup>790</sup> that is, representation of noumena. But, as we have seen, Kant makes a famous regulative exception in the name of biology in *KdU* §§76 und 77.<sup>791</sup> As I detailed in chapter II of the present study,<sup>792</sup> the notion of intuitive understanding in that passage stands in stark contrast to the subsumptive judgments of the constitutive function of the understanding. Where the latter proceeds to construct the relation between concept and intuition, between part and whole analytically, the former conceives of the relation holistically or synthetically. For the constitutive understanding, wholes are aggregates; for the intuitive understanding, wholes are determinative moments in the development of a complex being characterized, finally, by its possession of organs.

Goethe calls his variant of this knowledge not “understanding,” but “power of judgment” (*Urteilkraft*). The understanding, for Kant, is the faculty of concepts, and Goethe replaces its terminologically with the faculty for unifying representations.<sup>793</sup> The

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l'enthousiasme.”” (WA (Anhang) 3, pp. 290-1) The attention to *jugement* links to his terminological shift from *Verstand* to *Urteilkraft*.

<sup>790</sup> *Locus classicus*: *KdrV* B176/A137-B187/A147.

<sup>791</sup> The results of this engagement are treated thoroughly by Eckhart Förster, “Die Bedeutung von 76, 77 der *Kritik der Urteilkraft* für die Entwicklung der nachkantischen Philosophie. Teil I” in ed. Jürgen Stolzenberg, *Kant und der Frühidealismus* (Hamburg: Meiner 2007), pp. 59-80. Förster claims that Goethe doesn't defend “intellectual intuition” but “intuitive understanding.” Although I think Förster is right that Goethe and his contemporaries were not pushing for the conceptual *creation* of objects in intellectual intuition, we will see below that Goethe nevertheless did mean to introduce a kind of conceptual *intervention* in the object-world through this line of thinking.

<sup>792</sup> See pp. 146 ff. in chapter II above.

<sup>793</sup> Kant explains that concepts of the understanding rely on “functions” of unification in judgment, and continues: “Alle Urteile [...] sind Funktionen der Einheit unter unsern Vorstellungen, da nämlich statt einer unmittelbaren Vorstellung eine höhere, die diese und mehrere unter sich begreift, zur Erkenntnis des Gegenstandes gebraucht, und viel mögliche Erkenntnisse dadurch in einer zusammengezogen werden. Wir können aber alle Handlungen des Verstandes auf Urteile zurückführen, so daß der *Verstand* überhaupt als *ein Vermögen zu urteilen* vorgestellt werden kann... Die Funktionen des Verstandes können also insgesamt gefunden werde, wenn man die Funktionen der Einheit in den Urteilen vollständig darstellen kann.” (*KdrV*,

understanding is the unity of consciousness in the concept, while the power of judgment is that which unifies whatever representations—intuitions or concepts—are produced in that consciousness. The Power of judgment is thus the practical element of the ideal, the activity of spirit itself.<sup>794</sup> Its forms determine the quality of knowledge and its content. And yet, for Kant, judgment’s operation is second-order, working only on consciousness’s representations, while the latter possess a possible (and always problematic) relation to an “outside.”<sup>795</sup>

Because the unifying functions of judgments (the most general form of which Kant calls “categories”) do not have an effect on any “exterior” or “material,” for Goethe they can therefore become kinds of synthetic thought. This intellectual-historical conjuncture thus recommends that the doctrine of the categories in Kant be brought into conversation with the Aristotelian teaching on “organs.” This is because the categories do the work of the organ: they divide the content of the represented from its form and determine knowledge as possible forms of whatever is represented. These forms are thus unities of the represented, and as forms they determine this content, the knowledge of which consists only in these forms.<sup>796</sup> For Kant they only determine this content formally,

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B92/A67 ff.) This leads directly to the table of the functions of judgment, which leads to the table of categories.

<sup>794</sup> A number of readings of Goethe’s speculative work emphasize this practical element. See, for example, Eckhart Förster, “Die Bedeutung,” Gunnar Hindrichs, “Goethe’s Notion of an Intuitive Power of Judgment” in *Goethe Yearbook XVIII* (2011), pp. 51-67, and Chad Wellmon, “Goethe’s Morphology of Knowledge, or the Overgrowth of Nomenclature,” *Goethe Yearbook 17* (2010), pp. 153-177. These readings emphasize that Goethe’s philosophical work is practice-oriented, indeed suggest that he introduces a focus on operation into idealism. While I agree that this is one ramification of Goethe’s use of *organ* too, the term’s use also illustrates an instrumental metaphysics in keeping with Romantic organology more broadly. In other words, Goethe presents us with something like a practice of speculation.

<sup>795</sup> “Das Urteil ist also die mittelbare Erkenntnis eines Gegenstandes, mithin die Vorstellung einer Vorstellung desselben. In jedem Urteil ist ein Begriff, der für viele gilt, und unter diesem Vielen auch eine gegebene Vorstellung begreift, welche letztere den auf den Gegenstand unmittelbar bezogen wird.” (*KdRV*, B93/A68)

<sup>796</sup> This is my gloss on Kant’s thesis that the “I think” must be able to complement any thought content. The “I think” establishes “analytic unity”—that the whole of my perception is included under the mark of

and the Critical question remains: whether we can have legitimate knowledge of the coincidence of these forms with any possible content. But for Goethe the content in the form is not external: a category becomes an organ in just that moment where the formal element of cognition itself becomes a synthesis of content and form. For Goethe, the judgment is the mediator that offers us the unities of nature we investigate in science and reproduce in art. We intuit nature not in the concept, but in the unities of the forms of judgment. The organs of these judgments are these forms themselves, which progressively transform themselves according to and in symbiosis with the “content” they treat. These forms—actually formations of organs—result from the process of science. Science is not merely the constitution of a world made image and law,<sup>797</sup> but also the production of knowledge itself, the production of the meaning of the represented world and thus of that world itself. Science and culture are united socially in this judgment: we must, because we in fact do, *formulate* the world. Our constructive activity is a kind of creative imagination, and it literally creates experience, not in isolation from “objects” but in progressive mimetic reproduction of our very representation of them.

In progressive, investigatory reason *qua* organ, we continuously form new organs according to the syntheses demanded by the process of judgment. Goethe’s famous “tender empiricism” is thus meant to remind the judging consciousness of its own

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that apperceptive judgment—while the intuited matter presents a “synthetic” unity, unified amongst itself and genuinely informative for the apperceptive being (I). As Paul Guyer puts it (“The Arguments of the Critique” ed. Paul Guyer, *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 140: “He then argues that the “I think” of pure apperception “must be able to accompany all my representations,” and that it too must be the product of an “act of spontaneity,” or more specifically express not merely an analytic unity among my representations – that is, that they each severally belong to me – but a synthetic unity among them, that they each belong to me because of some substantive connection among all of them, which is itself the product of an act of synthesis on the part of my understanding (§16, B 131–3).”

<sup>797</sup> A critique that cuts against both Kant and Newton, since it rejects the externality of general formulae to particulars *and* the removal of that lawfulness to the process of representing nature.

formation (and mutual formulation) in being. The judgment unites intuitions and concepts into an order (*Ordnung*) called the “idea.”<sup>798</sup> It then allows this order to be continuously transformed judgmentally according to intuitions that are parts of that judgment’s unity. This mutuality allows in turn for a kind of intervention into nature. What is “tender” is the categorial transformation we undertake.<sup>799</sup>

We can now return to the *Metamorphose*, with its overtones overturned in its new, organological, context, and see its retroactively Idealist organ as a response to Hegel. Hegel’s notion of the concept is the name for both the representational element of the cognitive process and the name for that process itself.<sup>800</sup> The concept’s double appearance in Hegel’s taxonomy gives it the quality of the Romantic organ: it serves as the demarcator of the field of cognition even as it assigns rules to that field or provides the function in the process. It is thus the most general name for a “category”—it unites cognition in judgment. But it is also the object of that cognition, and so is also a category in the Aristotelian sense, ontological and formal-ideal simultaneously. The specifically Critical edge to this thought is its inclusion of the “material” of thought in the analysis of that thought, the treatment of content as formally implicated. The name for the

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<sup>798</sup> “Begriff ist Summe, Idee Resultat der Erfahrung; jene zu ziehen wird Verstand, dieses zu erfassen, Vernunft erfordert.” (WA II 11, p. 158) This division between two faculties, clearly of Kantian mint, is rarely accounted for in the scholarship. But Goethe’s notion of order differs from Kant’s, coming far closer—precisely in its relation to order and ordering in being and representation—to Hegel’s.

<sup>799</sup> See on this issue Hindrichs, “Goethe’s Notion,” p. 62: “In such a mimesis of nature, the subjective domination of objects is suspended in favor of faithful presentation of individuals.” As true as this is, my claim is that the Goethean “organ” (as “intuitive judgment”) is also—if not tyrannically in this sense—influential in nature.

<sup>800</sup> Actually, the concept is only the representational part *from* the perspective of the process-concept, and then only momentarily: the concept is both part and structural unity, a synthetic *organon* of metaphysical knowledge. See note 727 above.

unification of the form/content split, and the name for that split itself, is concept, and that concept is the “organon of truth.”<sup>801</sup>

This dual role is precisely that played by the *organ* in the *Metamorphose*, read in the context of the theoretical apparatus of the *Morphologische Hefte*. Morphology alters the sense of metamorphosis. “Organ” comes to play the categorical role of Hegel’s concept, neither only the functional part of an organic universe, nor merely that part reflected seamlessly into the ideal, a “force” underlying genius—as it had been for Herder and Moritz. There is a seam, precisely where the two organs meet. The subject-object split is reproduced, and thus becomes identity including difference.<sup>802</sup> Goethe’s science is a mimesis of the order of representation itself. Goethe is strikingly close to Hegel in this conception, but his instruments of cognition are other than Hegel’s.

If we accept that the insertion of this essay into the *Morphologische Hefte* alters the sense of its science—literally the manner of our knowledge of the phenomenon—then the organ comes to play the categorical role of Hegel’s concept. The “organ” is not only the functional part of an organic universe. Nor, however, is it merely that part reflected seamlessly into the ideal, a “force” underlying genius. There is a seam, precisely where

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<sup>801</sup> For Brady Bowman, following Rolf-Peter Horstmann, this doubling over forms a requirement for “subjectivity“ in Hegel, which is found only where a relation between two forms mirroring each other, thus forming an identity which is the identity of each with itself *and* of the other simultaneously. See Brady Bowman, “Goethean Morphology, Hegelian Science: Affinities and Transformations,” in: *Goethe Yearbook XVIII* (2011), pp. 159-183, here pp. 166-7. This otherwise excellent essay errs in accepting too much of Hegel’s critique of Goethe.

<sup>802</sup> This is where Bowman misses the Goethean point, in accepting Hegel’s (paraphrased) charge that “Goethe neglects explicit reflection on the fact that identity is given *only in and through the difference* of subject and object”. See Bowman, “Goethean Morphology, Hegelian Science,” p. 165. NB Goethe’s statement: “So bald aber jener Streit [über “die alte Hauptfrage, wie viel unser Selbst und wie viel die Außenwelt zu unserm geistigen Dasein beitrage”] zur Sprache kam, mochte ich mich gern auf diejenige Seite stellen welche dem Menschen am meisten Ehre macht, und gab allen Freunden vollkommen Beifall, die mit Kant behaupteten: wenn gleich alle unsere Erkenntniß mit der Erfahrung angehe, so entspringe sie darum doch nicht eben alle aus der Erfahrung.“ (WA II 11, p. 49), with reference to *KdrV*, B 1: “Wenn aber gleich alle unsere Erkenntnis *mit* der Erfahrung anhebt, so entspringt sie darum doch nicht eben alle *aus* der Erfahrung.”

the two organs—recall the passage from *Faust*—meet. There is literally a subject-object split, and this split itself is mirrored as identity and difference in one. Goethe's science is a mimesis of the order of representation itself. If we look to the conclusion of Hegel's treatment of *Naturphilosophie* in the *Encyklopädie*, we see the true but limited parallel to Goethe's work, and thus resolve the ambivalence in Hegel's assessment's of Goethe:

Indem das Innere der Natur nichts anderes als das Allgemeine ist, so sind wir, wenn wir Gedanken haben, in diesem Innern der Natur bei uns selbst. Wenn die Wahrheit im subjektiven Sinn die Übereinstimmung der Vorstellung mit dem Gegenstande ist, so heißt das Wahre im objektiven Sinne die Übereinstimmung des Objekts, der Sache mit sich selbst, daß ihre Realität ihrem Begriffe angemessen ist.<sup>803</sup>

Hegel's point is that, because of the reflexive yet ontological process of the concept in which we participate, there is a normative way of looking at real difference. Where the proliferation of organs obliterated that difference by including all organs in a single generic order,<sup>804</sup> Hegel asserts it as real and conceptual simultaneously. Difference made contradiction is real, and this reality's contradictory nature allows for normative grasping of that reality. Goethe, it turned out, shared this viewpoint. Hegel's citational sense of Goethe was better than his stated opinion.

This real normativity in subject-object mimesis is the metaphysics of judgment, and without it, science—and history—lose their metaphysical quality. “Truth” is neither merely object-thought correspondence, nor the correspondence of elements of our cognition with each other according to a “canon”: it is the conformity of the object to its reflection in reason, or, in his terms, to “itself.” I have shown that Goethe is strikingly

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<sup>803</sup> *Enz. II*, § 246.

<sup>804</sup> This objection is not insignificantly precisely the one Hegel makes against Spinoza in the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. Because Spinoza's absolute does not develop, however, he is guilty of worse than “exteriorism”: he obliterates the world itself—and thus precipitates modern, subject-oriented philosophy.

close to this conception,<sup>805</sup> although his means for that transformation-based truth are other than Hegel's. And thus it is this difference in means—the line between two reactions to Romantic organology—that makes up the distance between the two thinkers.

The response to Hegel first answers to reason's demand for mediation of all known material, then goes a step further. For the organ, according to the character "der Philosoph" in *Der Sammler und die Seinigen*, must also produce experience:

Ich: Zu jeder Erfahrung gehört ein Organ.

Gast: Wohl ein besonderes?

Ich: Kein besonderes, aber eine gewisse Eigenschaft muß es haben.

Gast: Und die wäre?

Ich: Es muß produzieren können.

Gast: Was produzieren?

Ich: Die Erfahrung! Es gibt keine Erfahrung, die nicht produziert, hervorgebracht, erschaffen wird.<sup>806</sup>

Here Goethe's Idealism foreshadows his late turn in an ideal technology. The possibilities of conceptual intervention in and receptive inclusion of the world in development extend both to our speculative capacity and to our natural-scientific method. Scientific practice exceeds the bounds of contemporary disciplinary science; Idealism turns from representation to the reproduction of representation itself, and in so doing, aims to make intervention not only into nature but also into (nature's) history possible.

## b) Reason's Hand: The Organ of Organs and Ideal Technology

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<sup>805</sup> Here we can see why Hans Blumenberg's assessment of Goethe in the *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* is wrong. As we saw in Chapter I, a conceptually tinged version of his methodology is helpful for analyzing the emergence of organology. And yet, as indicated above, he is missing a significant point about the constructive family of philosophies I have tried to outline in this study. With respect to Goethe in particular, his approach leads him to claim that the Weimar Sage looked backwards to truth-terms based in Aristotelian being and the surety that metaphysical sensibility could bring. I hope to have shown the opposite here, and to have included Goethe in the high-stakes game of an only partially metaphorical disciplinary emergence: Romantic organology.

<sup>806</sup> WA I 47, p. 174.



In his last years, Goethe was both close enough to the mature Hegel and sure enough of his own quasi-philosophical approach to nature and history to level critiques back at Hegel, privately but with assurance that they would reach Hegel's ears.<sup>807</sup> Thus on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August, 1827, he received the Hegelian jurist Eduard Gans in Weimar. The conversation focused on Berlin's university, and Hegel's rise to dominance. Goethe was concerned to see that the philosophy current in Berlin did not exclude productive engagement with empiricists, repeating his critique of Hegel, asking if philosophy's categories did not need to change as history and science advanced.<sup>808</sup> Gans responded, with specific reference to the Hegelian organ *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik* (to which Goethe had been invited to contribute), with the Hegelian dictum that philosophy is not an attempt to step out of time but to present its time in thought, to transform with that time. This, according to Gans's report, appeared to please Goethe. The conversation turned to specific examples in the periodical.<sup>809</sup>

Goethe's concern stemmed from his administrative sense for balance. Hegel's prowess notwithstanding, it was exceedingly rare to find one person with both synthetic and analytical genius. This was demonstrated, for Goethe, by the increasing tension between a synthesizer and an analyzer in Paris: Geoffroy de St.-Hilaire and Cuvier.<sup>810</sup> By

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<sup>807</sup> Goethe had critiqued Hegel, more and less convincingly, since their first work together in Jena. But until this period there is no evidence that he did so with the intention of his remarks reaching Hegel.

<sup>808</sup> The conversation demonstrates the consistency of the issues in the dialogue between Goethe and Hegel: the categorical, nature, and *history*. "Er traue Hegel zwar sehr viele Kenntnisse **in der Natur wie in der Geschichte** zu, ob aber seine philosophischen Gedanken sich nicht immer **nach den neuen Entdeckungen**, die man doch stets machen würde, modificiren müßten, und dadurch selber **ihr Kategorisches** verlören, könne er zu fragen doch nicht unterlassen." (WA (Anhang) 6, pp. 180-1; my emphasis.)

<sup>809</sup> The conversation's entirety may be found at WA (Anhang) 6, pp. 179-181.

<sup>810</sup> See WA (Anhang) 6, p. 180.

referring to an example weighing ever more heavily on his mind, Goethe (perhaps unintentionally) brought his organological conversation with Goethe into the final register he would give it: the instrumental or technological side of its etymology. And here, for reasons I will explore below, his conversation left its Hegelian key and entered into more present and ancient dialogues, with Paris on the one hand and Aristotle and Galen on the other.

On 11 May 1828 Goethe had written to Soret to be reminded of the title of a work they had discussed: August Pyramus de Candolle's *Organographie végétale*, which he then procured.<sup>811</sup> This work, expansive and dedicated to a functional but empiricist approach to the organs of plants, served Goethe as a sort of dictionary of French scientific usage at the time.<sup>812</sup> And Goethe himself was mentioned in the preface to the work:

Plusieurs naturalistes allemands, en tête desquels il faut citer dans les temps anciens le botaniste Jungius, et, parmi les modernes, l'illustre poète Goethe, ont appelé l'attention sur la symétrie de **la composition des plantes** ... L'Organographie est le développement de ce qui tient à la symétrie des organes partiels, et le *Prodromus* est destiné à indiquer le résumé de l'état actuel de nos connaissances sur les rapports d'ensemble qui constituent les familles naturelles.<sup>813</sup>

Generally sympathetic to de Candolle's attempt to balance functional comparisons of organs with type-comparisons across species and genera, Goethe thought that balance needed a philosophical means. He thus sought to connect Berlin and Paris through an organ. Even in de Candolle's praise, he found cause for terminological concern:

*Composition*, ein gleichfalls unglückliches Wort, mechanisch mit dem vorigen mechanischen verwandt... Eben so wie in der Kunst, ist, wenn von der Natur gesprochen

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<sup>811</sup> WA IV 44, p. 88.

<sup>812</sup> See Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, p. 48. Goethe's assessment was that: "Da macht es sich denn dießmal gar hübsch: Herr De Candolle, welcher vom Besondern in's Allgemeine geht, behandelt uns andere, die wir vom Allgemeinen in's Besondere trachten, nicht unfreundlich, und gar viele der beiderseitigen Enuntiationen, wie sie sich begegnen, sind gleichlautend; an wenig Stellen erscheint ein Widerstreit, welcher keiner Auflösung bedarf; es sind nur zwey verschiedene Sprachen, und man versteht sich wohl." WA IV: 44 (146). Goethe here positions himself on the *naturphilosophisch* end of the spectrum, while leaving room for the differences between Geoffroy and himself/his compatriots.

<sup>813</sup> August de Candolle, *Organographie végétale* (Paris: Deterville, 1827), pp. vii-viii; my emphasis.

wird, dieser Ausdruck herabwürdigend. Die Organe komponieren sich nicht als vorher fertig, sie entwickeln sich aus- und aneinander zu einem notwendigen ins Ganze greifenden Dasein.<sup>814</sup>

Organology thus perches inside evolutionary biology,<sup>815</sup> intervening in the debate between anatomical comparison (Cuvier) and physiological teleology (based, in Geoffroy's case, on a material monism).<sup>816</sup> Goethe's conceptualization of organs, however, is not merely an insistence on holism and organicism. Instead, it is based in a practical treatment of cognition's own power to represent and reproduce, both metaphysical and active. In a sense, even the organs of knowledge expand and contract, forming a necessary whole which—representing and reproducing itself as the order of being and of thought—intervenes in its own development.

Goethe thus enters a debate here on the brink of shifting dramatically. The role of the part's development in the formation of the animal, so centrally debated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (see Chapter I above), would, in the next decades, come to a head in Britain with the advent of Darwin's theory of natural selection. As Robert Richards has argued, Goethe was closer than previously realized to Darwin's evolutionary concept, precisely because he allowed for external circumstances to influence formation. Here we see this played out at the level of the part and its function rather than at the level of organism.

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<sup>814</sup> MA 18 2, p. 534. The term *composition* was key in the larger debate, but Goethe is likely *not* disagreeing with the sense given in Geoffroy's *unité de composition*, since this is meant to point to the philosophical underpinnings of zoology in analogy, a point Goethe agrees with. It is a more general use of *composition*—and indeed the very term's non-synthetic connotation—which Goethe rejects.

<sup>815</sup> As Robert Richards has argued, Goethe was closer than previously realized to Darwin's evolutionary concept, precisely because he allowed for external circumstances to influence formation. See Richards, *Romantic Conception*, p. 486: "... there can be little doubt that Goethe believed in a gradual transmutation of species over long periods of time and that he thought such change occurred by thoroughly natural processes."

<sup>816</sup> Goethe also draws attention to the conceptual problems of *unity*, *type*, and *taxonomy*, in each case objecting to mechanicism in the term's use. For Goethe's more general final efforts in biology, see Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, pp. 48-63.

The passage on *Naturphilosophie* in Hegel's *Encyklopädie*—which also included his critique of Goethe—rejects the possibility of natural selection.<sup>817</sup> Because essence is both concept and reality for Hegel, its development is not “mechanical,” an external re-ordering of parts. The conceptual side of reality by its very nature demands that leaps in quality occur for essences to change. No extensive infinite is allowed, and gradualistic development is therefore rejected. A new species is another essence, conceptually and thus ontologically distinct from what went before. This applies all the way down to the smallest functional part, the organ.

If Goethe's response to Hegel was such that the constitutional overlap between thought and being made intervention (*das Eingreifen*) possible, this meant that he could allow for gradual progress in the organ-based observational process. The organ, which spreads out to “intervene” in the whole as it enters into being, is mirrored in a double-mimesis by the human organ, the evolution of which is *up to us*. The broadest sense of *organ* relates to its Indo-European (\*uerg) and Greek (*ergon*) roots: the organ is metaphysical efficacy. Organology is *transcendental technology*, because it conditions all technological possibility.<sup>818</sup>

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<sup>817</sup> Hegel's language leaves no doubt that Goethe is included in his critique: “Auch bei der Vorstellung der Metamorphose wird eine Idee zugrunde gelegt, welche in allen verschiedenen Gattungen, ebenso in den einzelnen Organen beharre, so daß sie nur Umbildungen der Form des einen und desselben Typus sind. So spricht man auch von der Metamorphose eines Insekts, indem z. B. Raupe, Puppe und Schmetterling ein und dasselbe Individuum sind; bei den Individuen freilich ist die Entwicklung eine zeitliche, aber bei der Gattung ist dies anders. Wenn die Gattung auf besondere Weise existiert, so sind zugleich die anderen Weisen der Existenz gesetzt; insofern Wasser ist, ist zugleich auch Luft, Feuer usw. gesetzt. Die Identität festzuhalten ist wichtig, das andere ist aber, den Unterschied [festzuhalten]: dieser ist zurückgestellt, wenn nur von quantitativer Veränderung die Rede ist; und das macht die bloße Vorstellung der Metamorphose ungenügend.” (*Enz. II* §249.)

<sup>818</sup> My claim about this “ideal technology” thus runs parallel to Jonathan Crary's placement of Goethe's attention to the subject in his *Farbenlehre* at the beginning of a history of manipulation of the senses. See Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: MIT, 1992), pp. 97-100. Crary claims that “once vision became relocated in the subjectivity of the observer, two intertwined paths opened up. One led out toward all the multiple affirmations of the sovereignty and autonomy of vision derived from this newly empowered body... The other path was toward the increasing

Intervening in the debate between anatomical description and physiological teleology (based, in Geoffroy's case, on a material monism), Goethe drew attention, focusing on the French of the matter, to the problems of unity, type, and taxonomy. In this last effort to approach this area,<sup>819</sup> He unified the discourse around the classical problem of function in the term "organ." Pushing his classical taxonomy characteristically into philosophical territory was Goethe's last scientific effort.

The problem is classical in two senses. First, it is indebted to the tradition of the ancients in biology, the "classics" (primarily Aristotle, Galen, and Hippocrates), whom Goethe now read one final time. But the problem is also related to his own "classicism," his aesthetic and scientific methodology, covering both external taxonomy and idealistic organological technique.<sup>820</sup> And this classical problem is therefore treated through the organological detour, adding in this way a new factor to Goethe's quasi-philosophy: a technology of sorts.

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standardization and regulation of the observer that issued from knowledge of visionary body, toward forms of power that depended on the abstraction and formalization of vision." (Crary, *Techniques*, p. 150) I will come closer to this line of thought in my final chapter, on Marxist organology. Here, suffice to say that Goethe's participation in the material history of observation is complemented by his participation in another kind of technology. For Goethe's general attitudes towards the technological, see Hartmut Boehme, "The Metaphysics of Phenomena: Telescope and Microscope in the Works of Goethe, Leeuwenhoek and Hooke," in *Collection, Laboratory, Theater: Scenes of Knowledge in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 355-394.

<sup>819</sup> For Goethe's more general final efforts in biology, see Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, pp. 48-63.

<sup>820</sup> A similar point is made by Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, p. 155: "Offenbar umfaßt in diesem letzten Augenblick der Steigerung Goethes "Klassik" das Romantische bis zu einer Grenze, an der sie nicht mehr klassisch wäre, -- wenn der Dichter sich auf das romantische Lebensgefühl und das Denkschema des deutschen Idealismus eingelassen hätte. Aber eine Systematik des Denkens, eine Theorie des Erkennens bietet er ebensowenig, wie er aus dem klassisch umgrenzten Menschsein aufbricht zu transzendenten Bereichen des Unendlichen, welches ihm gestaltlos, oder des Religiösen, das ihm dogmatisiert vorkommen mußte. Er hält sich bei der Betrachtung und Erforschung der Natur auf, verschafft sich Zugang durch sein *gegenständliches Denken* mit den Mitteln *zarter Empirie* und der Idee des wandlungsfähigen Typus." Agreeing with Richards's point about externalities and deformities in the evolutionary picture is Astrida Tantillo, "Goethe's "Classical" Science," in ed. Richter, *Literature*, pp. 323-47. Tantillo's argument for "another" classicism focused on the deformation process and its evolutionary possibilities is, however, complemented in Goethe's work by a complex engagement in the "first" classicism, as we shall now see.

Five days before his death, Goethe wrote to Wilhelm von Humboldt:

Die Tiere werden durch ihre Organe belehrt, sagten die Alten, ich setze hinzu: die Menschen gleichfalls, sie haben jedoch den Vorzug ihre Organe dagegen wieder zu belehren.<sup>821</sup>

This dictum guides the central historical section of the *Rezension des Akademiestreits*, and appears on a folio's verso,<sup>822</sup> transcribed from the *Maximen und Reflexionen*<sup>823</sup> and dated to September 1830. The presence of the cluster of *Maximen* on the paper on which the review was written, and its conceptually guiding role in the historical unfolding of the debate in the Academy, makes clear its centrality to Goethe's final theoretical efforts. The organ, in short, which distinguishes humanity is one in evolution (*Bildung*) of another sort: encompassing the "lower" soul and the physical organs, the higher operations of reason and judgment in their categories, it is a pedagogical or even technological organ, an organ for the formation of humanity and indeed human history.

Indeed, this line of thinking, brought to bear on the "volcanic eruption" of the Academy in 1830, is classicist in its source and its scope.<sup>824</sup> The Aristotelian treatises to

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<sup>821</sup> Goethe to W. von Humboldt, (FA 11, p. 549.) This notion had been introduced into the academy-debate by Geoffroy himself, who asked in his own *Principes de philosophie zoologique* if human and animal organs could not be compared: is the human *hand* not the form from which the degradations of the paw and so forth derive? (See Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, pp. 97-8.) Goethe, however, drawing on the ancients, levels the hierarchy and replaces it with a techno-rational divide.

<sup>822</sup> WA II 13, p. 114.

<sup>823</sup> "1190: Das Tier wird durch seine Organe belehrt, der Mensch belehrt die seinigen und beherrscht sie." (September 1830—dating of *Maximen* at MA 17, p. 1245), (MA 17, p. 917).

<sup>824</sup> The problem is thus classical in two senses. First, it is indebted to the tradition of the ancients in biology, the "classics" (primarily Aristotle, Galen, and Hippocrates), whom Goethe now read one final time. But the problem is also related to his own "classicism," his aesthetic and scientific methodology, covering both external taxonomy and idealistic organological technique. A similar point is made by Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, p. 155: "Offenbar umfaßt in diesem letzten Augenblick der Steigerung Goethes "Klassik" das Romantische bis zu einer Grenze, an der sie nicht mehr klassisch wäre, -- wenn der Dichter sich auf das romantische Lebensgefühl und das Denkschema des deutschen Idealismus eingelassen hätte. Aber eine Systematik des Denkens, eine Theorie des Erkennens bietet er ebensowenig, wie er aus dem klassisch umgrenzten Menschsein aufbricht zu transzendenten Bereichen des Unendlichen, welches ihm gestaltlos, oder des Religiösen, das ihm dogmatisiert vorkommen mußte. Er hält sich bei der Betrachtung und Erforschung der Natur auf, verschafft sich Zugang durch sein *gegenständliches Denken*

which Goethe returned were those on the *Animalia* (especially *De historia animalium*, *De partibus animalium*, and the *De anima*), treating of the physical, functional, and formal developments of animals in general. Aristotle's treatises therefore cover organ-formation in three distinct senses,<sup>825</sup> senses Goethe adopted and adapted to his doctrine.<sup>826</sup> For even as he read the hylomorphic accounts of organ-formation in the organic sphere, Goethe focused on the problem of the hand in this literature and re-formulated the text he found, pushing his German into the realm of the technological.

*Maxime* 1192 (also on the verso of the *Rezension*) reads:

Die Alten vergleichen die Hand der Vernunft.<sup>827</sup>

Galen, basing himself largely on Aristotle,<sup>828</sup> was the source of this speculative comparison. Goethe had read in the *De usu partium*, in a passage meditating on the anthropological lack of specific organs in favor of the generality or versatility of the hand, that:

Indeed, Aristotle was right when he said that the hand is, as it were, an instrument for instruments, and we might rightly say in imitation of him that reason is, as it were, an art for arts. For though the hand is no one particular instrument, it is the instrument for all instruments because it is formed by Nature to receive them all, and similarly, although

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mit den Mitteln *zarter Empirie* und der Idee des wandlungsfähigen Typus." Agreeing with Richards's point about externalities and deformities in the evolutionary picture is Astrida Tantillo, "Goethe's "Classical" Science," in ed. Simon Richter, *The Literature of Weimar Classicism* (Rochester: Camden House, 2005), pp. 323-47. Tantillo's argument for "another" classicism focused on the deformation process and its evolutionary possibilities is, however, complemented in Goethe's work by a late complex engagement with the "first" classicism, as we shall now see.

<sup>825</sup> See A. L. Peck, "Introduction" in Aristotle, *The Parts of Animals*, ed. A.L. Peck; *The Movement of Animals and the Progression of Animals*, ed. E.S. Forster (London: Heinemann, 1937), pp. 9 ff.

<sup>826</sup> Karl Schlechta's *Goethe in seinem Verhältnisse zu Aristoteles: Ein Versuch* (Frankfurt/Main.: Klostermann, 1938) deals comprehensively with Goethe's readings in Aristotle. He mentions this episode at pp. 81-2 as an example of Goethe's agreement with Aristotle on the "law of compensation" or the "balance of organs" in the organism. Schlechta's only notice of Goethe's having read the *De anima* comes at p. 28, with reference to the historical part of the *Farbenlehre*. My suggestion that there is a closer reading and philological relationship to this text below will also show that Goethe's "agreement" with Aristotle extends beyond fascination with the same "problems." For Goethe's engagement in 1827/8 with the Aristotelian "*probemata*," see pp. 53-62.

<sup>827</sup> WA II 13, p. 114. Undated according to the MA.

<sup>828</sup> Goethe opens his consideration of the central functional organ (the hand in the human, the forearm in other mammals) in the *Rezension* with "Ohne gelehrt scheinen zu wollen, beginnen wir von Aristoteles, Hippokrates und Galen, nach dem Bericht des letzteren." (MA 18 2, p. 529.)

reason is no one of the arts in particular, it would be an art for the arts because it is naturally disposed to take them all unto itself. Hence man, the only one of all the animals having an art for arts in his soul, should logically have an instrument for instruments in his body.<sup>829</sup>

[*kalos men ouv kai Aristoteles oion organon ti pro organon epasken einai ten cheirai: kalos d' an tis kai hemon, ekeionon mimesumenos, oion texnen tina pro texnon pheseien einvai ton logon. Hos har he cheir, ouden ousa ton kaka meros organon, hoti panta kalos pephuke dechesthai, pro panton estiv organon, houtos ho logos, oudemias men ton kata meros hupurchon technon, hapasas d' eis heauton dechesthai pephukos, techne tis an sin pro technon. Anthropos ouv monas hepanton zoon, technen echon pro technon en psuche, kuta logon en toi somati pro organon organon echtesato.*<sup>830</sup>]

The ancients, engaged in a debate about the human from the perspective of its parts,<sup>831</sup> draw an analogy from the versatility of the hand (its general capacity to instrumentalize nature) to the generality of reason's grasp of all things. And so Goethe finished his cluster of *Maximen* with a translation of the climactic sentence from this passage from Galen:

Die Vernunft ist die Kunst der Künste, die Hand die Technik alles Handwerks.<sup>832</sup>

Goethe has, at the very least, reduced the complex syntax in Galen to the pith of complementarity. But he has also done more than this, taking the key repeated phrase, *techne pro technon* (for reason), and rendering it in the antiquated sense of “art” in its root in *artificialis/künstlich*. Reason (*logos*) is constructive, even technological, an artifice which builds not arbitrarily (by *composition*) but necessarily, progressively including more nature in its constructive apparatus and literally giving it new form, creating new categories within it. That would be a technological metaphysics, mixture of

<sup>829</sup> Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body*, trans. Margaret Tallmadge May (Ithaca: Cornell, 1968), p. 71. The passage from the *De partibus* is at IV, 10, 687a20-21, *organon ti pro organon*. See May's commentary on the translation tradition at the same location.

<sup>830</sup> Claudii Galeni, *Opera Omnia, Tomus III*, ed. Carolus Gottlob Kühn (1822), pp. 8-9. My transcription and transliteration from the edition Goethe used.

<sup>831</sup> The local debate from Aristotle on is with Anaxagoras, who had claimed that the hand had made the human intelligent. For Aristotle as for Galen, the reverse is true: the hand is a suitable instrument for the animal possessing reason. Note how Galen plays in the last quoted sentence on the beginning of Aristotle's politics: *anthropos zoon exon logon*... Similarly, Goethe uses the debate in the academy to address scientific issues *at the same time* as he addresses the methodological. This generic parallel to Aristotle (and to Galen) is a sort of genre-classicism, the content behind the form of which is the organological debate with Hegel. Both Wolf, *Der Begriff*, and Löw, *Philosophie des Lebendigen*, suggest that Galen's teleological thinking is a flattening of a more sensitive model in Aristotle.

<sup>832</sup> WA II 13, p. 114; MA 18 2, p. 529; April 1829. I am not aware of a previous mention of this philological connection to Galen in the literature.



making and necessity. The hand then becomes “technology” too, and the translation of organ into *Technik* makes finally clear that Goethe goes beyond Hegel’s framework.

Beyond the instrument for truth is the instrument for making truth. Organ is the instrument of instruments, a reflexive technology spanning the spectrum of human being, which turns out to be human making. The mirroring of the organ from reason’s capacity to intervene in nature into the technology of the versatile hand is not merely analogical.<sup>833</sup>

The generality and productivity of each is isomorphic with that of the other—they interact in what the Romantics would have called “higher realism.” If Goethe has an “anthropology,” it is *technologia transcendentalis*, or organology. Reason’s *organ* is not a specific logic, not merely an *organon*. Or rather, it is precisely that *organon for metaphysics*<sup>834</sup> that Kant had once called for. And yet it is more than that. Redoubling mimesis and creating a dialectical and constructive relationship between thought and being, it also trends towards the practical. And we should not think of “practical” in a vulgar empiricist sense here, but instead as the ideal interaction in reality which Goethe’s organ is meant to make possible. For Goethe, the possibility of the “externality” of agents of change in the evolutionary process is maintained permanently as a possibility, precisely because the organ of reason is prepared to learn something principally new and

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<sup>833</sup> Goethe’s is thus neither Herder’s nor Geoffroy’s organ, strictly speaking.

<sup>834</sup> Kuhn writes that “Hier erschließen sich ihm die Bereiche der Wirklichkeit, die wir als empirische und ideelle nachzuzeichnen versuchten; der empirische, der die Realität umgreift, der ideelle, der sich öffnet zu Typus, Gestalt und Gesetz, ohne zu transzendieren zu einem Reich reiner Ideen. Innerhalb dieser Wirklichkeit liegt für Goethe das Erkennbare, das er in der Betrachtung der Wirkung, Funktion und Form, nicht in einer unmittelbaren Betrachtung des Wesens der Dinge sucht. Aber der aufmerksame Blick in die Wirklichkeit und das voreifende Aperçu **treiben das Unerforschliche in die Enge**. Es bleibt ein Rest, ein verborgenes, im Unendlichen liegendes Ziel, dem man sich nur nähern, das man nicht erreichen kann.” Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, p. 155. I add the emphasis to indicate her claims’ rejection of Wilhelm Dilthey’s thesis that Goethe is “non-metaphysical” (a charge that here seems to amount to “non-Hegelian”) because of a “Kern der Unerforschlichkeit” that remains in his thought. See Wilhelm Dilthey, *Weltanschauung und Analyse des Menschen seit Renaissance und Reformation (Gesammelte Schriften II)*, ed. Georg Misch (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1991), pp. 391-416. Kuhn’s sense that Goethe’s attitude is parallel to that of the Romantics on this issue is, as I have been arguing, correct.

then *alter* that newness in its reproduction of representation. Mimesis—as the reproduction of representation itself—holds the possibility of a shift in the represented in reserve.<sup>835</sup>

Perhaps Goethe was not merely translating that passage in Galen, but proposing terms for a transfer of the whole discourse of the ancients on the hand as technology (“die Alten sagten. . .”) Aristotle, on whom Galen is clearly drawing, had written in the *De anima*:

It follows that the soul is analogous to the hand; for as the hand is a tool of tools, so the mind is the form of forms and sense the form of sensible things.<sup>836</sup>  
*hoste he psyche hosper he cheir estin: kai gar he cheir organon estin organon, kai ho nous eidos eidon kai he aisthesis eidos aestheton.*

“Tender empiricism” brushes the world with new organs, new categories, painstakingly reproducing its split between subject and object, and changing the form—*eidos*—(and thus content) of that split through reproduction. The hand, the sense, and Reason itself thus describe an organological human with dialectical ability, one who can progressively include and alter the world in development. This organology thus reproduces the order of representation and becomes productive within it—*physis* and *techne* are underpinned not

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<sup>835</sup> This can help to solve the scholarly problem about what *genre* Goethe’s natural-scientific writings fall into. So, for example, Dietrich von Engelhardt describes Goethe’s writing as an amalgamation of aesthetics, philosophy, science, and biography: “Die Frage nach der Stellung und Eigenart der Naturbetrachtung Goethes im Spektrum der verschiedenen naturphilosophischen und naturwissenschaftlichen Positionen um 1800 verlangt noch viele weitere Untersuchungen. Es wird hierbei weniger um Verteidigung oder Ablehnung Goethes als eines empirischen Naturforscher gehen als vielmehr um Beschreibung und Analyse seiner Art der Naturbetrachtung al seiner spezifischen Verbindung von Ästhetik, Philosophie, Wissenschaft und Biographie.” Dietrich von Engelhardt, “Natur und Geist, Evolution und Geschichte. Goethe in seiner Beziehung zur romantischen Naturforschung und metaphysischen Naturphilosophie,” in: Peter Matussek (ed.), *Goethe und die Verzeitlichung der Natur* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998), pp. 73-4. And as Dorothea Kuhn has noted about the *Rezension* in particular, Goethe is not writing epistemology, anthropology, or anything else specific to a discipline, but *progressing in each of them*: “Da er in diesem Essay zwar keine Naturwissenschaft, keine Erkenntniskritik, keine Anthropologie im fachlich spezialisierten Sinne bot, aber in jeder von diesen drei Richtungen vorwärtsging [sic], konnte die Interpretation auf drei entsprechenden Stufen ansetzen.” Kuhn, *Empirische und ideelle Wirklichkeit*, p. 153. That would be the genre of Goethe’s organology: meaningful progression in the development of plastic categories extending from “pure” cognition to the specific sciences—a quasi-philosophy meant to make the world quite literally meaningful.

<sup>836</sup> *De anima* 432a.

by Galen's *logos* but by Aristotle's self-knowing *nous*. Goethe's "translation" of this discourse pushes self-knowledge (in Hegelese: *das Selbstwissen des Geistes*) into production: the encapsulated organs of form confront the genuinely gradual developments of a processual world. Taxonomy treats the proliferation of forms in development, but is complemented and harmonized by an Idealism founded in Reason's categorial organs. Organology thus offers the vision of a *technological freedom*. Nature is delicately forced to mean something, and our human organs match the forward march of technological and disciplinary isolation with a thus meaningful resistance.

**Epilogue: *De vino et historia*.**

Frage sich doch jeder, mit welchem Organ er allenfalls in seine Zeit einwirken kann und wird! –*Maximen und Reflexionen*

Young Hegelians have three characteristics. First, they are inspired by fundamental dialogue with Hegel. Second, they have some disagreement with Hegel. Third, the second amounts to a disagreement about the relationship of philosophy to history. Leszek Kolakowski calls this disagreement a "Fichteanization" of Hegel broadly, since the Hegelian Left reintroduced (political) striving into a generally Hegelian analytical framework. It can also be noted that the Hegelians in the first generation after the death of the master tended to emphasize the future as Hegel had not.<sup>837</sup> If we put this development in Hegelianism in Hegelian terms, however, we can see that the shared

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<sup>837</sup> "The Young Hegelians, especially in their later phase (1840-3), were to "Fichteanize" Hegel, if I may so put it, by reintroducing the aspect of obligation (Sollen) in their approach to history." Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, trans. P. S. Falla (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005/1978), p. 70. For the latter claim, see Horst Stuke, *Philosophie der Tat: Studien zur Verwirklichung der Philosophie bei den Junghegelianern und den Wahren Sozialisten* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1963). See also the comprehensive study by John Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1841* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

intellectual gesture is the conflation of *objective spirit* and *absolute spirit*. The famous dictum that “the owl of Minerva only flies at dusk” is meant to intimate, for Hegel, that the philosophical history of the development of institutions—the objectification of spirit—is a thing of the past. Objective spirit has placed the necessities in front of us for the absolute spirit to take its final form: that of philosophy, or the self-mediation of spirit in its concept. Philosophy tells us the truth about institutions, but it is not meant to intervene in them.<sup>838</sup> As we shall see more clearly in the epilogue of this study, it is this exclusive relationship between two forms of spirit which the Young generation rejected. From Bauer to Feuerbach to especially Czeskowsky and Marx, a clarion call for philosophical intervention in history’s events, and especially in politics, was sounded. Objective spirit was not through evolving, and only absolute spirit’s mediation could help it do so correctly.

When Goethe named the wrong event of the epoch to Soret, then, he seemed a good distance from 3), although—as we have seen—he admirably fulfills conditions 1) and 2). But a curious incident in the interactions between the two men illustrates that Goethe anticipated at least the philosophical conditions—if not the political commitments—for being a Young Hegelian.

On 13 April 1821, Goethe, celebrating his *Farbenlehre*’s favorable treatment in the *Encyklopädie*, sent Hegel a letter. The letter was attended by a glass, colored yellow and with a piece of black silk inside, making the glass appear blue.<sup>839</sup> For Goethe, this bit

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<sup>838</sup> This rather flat interpretation of Hegel’s philosophy is not necessarily one I want to defend here. It is, however, a necessity for understanding the gestures of the Young Hegelians. For recent readings that see Hegel as more future-oriented, see Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel* (New York: Routledge, 2005), but also John Burbidge, *Hegel on Logic and Religion: The Reasonableness of Christianity* (Albany: SUNY, 1992).

<sup>839</sup> Descriptions of the glass (along with the letters) can be found in ed. Karl Hegel, *Briefe von und an Hegel II* (Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1887), p. 47, and Arnold Genthe, “Acht Briefe Hegels an

of black demonstrated that the spectrum was generated by the admixture of light and dark. Hegel responded cordially, musing on the help that wine could give philosophy. This line of thought ran quickly into the debate raging between Voss and Creuzer on mythology. Mirroring the terms of the classicist debate more generally, Creuzer was on his way to a demolishing critique of the genteel theories of Voss: mythology emerged from a violent symbolic darkness, one that had to be taken account of in the emergent folkloric and mythological disciplines. Hegel invoked Bacchus. What better than this God-symbol to show that wine is the proof that nature and spirit are one?<sup>840</sup> Relations between the giants were established as friendly, and several visits from Berlin to Weimar (as well as visits by disciples, as noted above) kept diplomacy online until their respective deaths at the beginning of the next decade.

This episode, seemingly innocent of the deeper dialogue between the two men, was in fact fraught. As Hegel began to lecture on aesthetics in Berlin, he incorporated Creuzer's work into his. The lowest level of absolute spirit's mediation of itself—in the sensible—art began with a quasi-mythological phase Hegel dubbed “symbolic,” in which spirit, not grasping its own essence, strove to be represented in difference from itself (indeed, from its own misunderstanding of itself). This phase would give way to the “classical” (typified by the balance of the Greek representation of the human form), and then to the form in which spirit grasps itself and comes to mourn its unrepresentability in the sensible, the Romantic. Creuzer had allowed Hegel to formulate a dialectical history of art, ending in a lack that gave way to absolute spirit's next form of self-mediation (*im Gemüt*): religion.

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Goethe,” *Mitteilungen aus dem Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv Neue Mitteilungen Goethe-Jahrbuch* 16, pp. 56 – 79, here p. 76.

<sup>840</sup> Hegel, *Briefe*, p. 61 ff.

And yet, as we have seen, the *Aesthetics Lectures* also contain a critique of Goethe's view of nature. And they contain what may have been the even more peculiar result of the peculiar epistolary exchange above.

We note that Hegel's critique was not only of natural-scientific observation:

Bei der Erfahrung kommt es darauf an, mit welchem Sinn man an die Wirklichkeit geht. Ein großer Sinn macht große Erfahrungen und erblickt in dem bunten Spiel der Erscheinungen das, worauf es ankommt. Die Idee ist vorhanden und wirklich, nicht etwas da drüben und hinten. Der große Sinn, wie z.B. der eines Goethe, **der in die Natur oder in die Geschichte blickt**, macht große Erfahrungen, erblickt das Vernünftige und spricht es aus.<sup>841</sup>

Hegel himself had developed the sense that Goethe's thought was not only aimed at nature, but also history. Thus, in the *Aesthetics Lectures*:

Von solcher Art ist die Goethesche Beschauung und Darlegung der inneren Vernünftigkeit der Natur und ihrer Erscheinungen. Mit großem Sinne trat er naiverweise mit sinnlicher Betrachtung an die Gegenstände heran und hatte zugleich die volle Ahnung ihres begriffsgemäßen Zusammenhangs. **Auch die Geschichte kann so erfasst und erzählt werden**, dass durch die einzelnen Begebenheiten und Individuen ihre wesentliche Bedeutung und ihr notwendiger Zusammenhang heimlich hindurchleuchtet.<sup>842</sup>

What seems a slight digression on "history" hangs closely together with Hegel's sense of Goethe's project. When he returns to Goethe, Hegel is rejecting the possibility of contemporary epic. The conditions for the true epic—the "world condition" (*Weltzustand*) of exposure to nature in an underinstitutionalized society—have disappeared. We need not read between too many lines to see that Hegel means that the progress of objective spirit has made the heroic epic, with its exposure of its hero directly to nature, the wrath of others, and the destinal wrath of the Gods themselves, irrelevant. As he puts it, this condition has given way to a "private" condition based in the home

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<sup>841</sup> Hegel, *Enz. I*, p. 87.

<sup>842</sup> Hegel, *VÄ I*, pp. 173-4.

(*häuslich*).<sup>843</sup> Thus, when a heroic condition returned—in the Revolution of 1789 and the disintegration of the protective measure established by institutional life—the epic could return, too, but in a different form. *Not* the questioning of destiny and the hero's journey, as Büchner would depict *Danton*, but instead, an unmediated connection between the private, homey condition of those living pastoral lives and the breaking down of order at the highest level. Hegel called this new genre an “idyllic epic,” and used, as his primary example, Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea*.<sup>844</sup>

Goethe's hexameter epic about the pursuit of love in the refugee conditions established by the Wars of Revolution was published in 1798. For Hegel, it returned, within the strictures of the objectively supported absolute spirit, to certain key elements of the epic. The “general world condition” implies that the hero has an unmediated relationship to many of the objects in his surroundings.<sup>845</sup> Even the marriage-bed of Odysseus is of the hero's own making.<sup>846</sup> But the “idyllic” conditions of the home in the contemporary world are such that even the apparently self-contained enjoyment of drink

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<sup>843</sup> “Die Entwicklung des Geistes ist, daß er... II. in der Form der Realität als einer von ihm hervorzubringenden und hervorgebrachten Welt [ist], in welcher die Freiheit als vor- handene Notwendigkeit ist, - objektiver Geist...” (*Enz. III* §385)

<sup>844</sup> Hegel, *VÄ III*, pp. 414-15: “Hier wird uns zwar der Blick auf den Hintergrund der in unserer Zeit größten Weltbegebenheit eröffnet, an welche sich dann die Zustände des Wirtes und seiner Familie, des Pastors und Apothekers unmittelbar anknüpfen, so daß wir, da das Landstädtchen nicht in seinen politischen Verhältnissen er- scheint, einen unberechtigten Sprung finden und die Vermittlung des Zusammenhanges vermissen können; doch gerade durch das Weglas- sen dieses Mittelgliedes bewahrt das Ganze seinen eigentümlichen Charakter. Denn meisterhaft hat Goethe die Revolution, obschon er sie zur Erweiterung des Gedichts aufs glücklichste zu benutzen wußte, ganz in die Ferne zurückgestellt und nur solche Zustände derselben in die Handlung eingeflochten, welche sich in ihrer einfachen Menschlichkeit an jene häuslichen und städtischen Verhältnisse und Situationen durch- aus zwanglos anschließen.”

<sup>845</sup> Hegel, *VÄ III*, pp. 343-44: “Die Existenz der Heroen aber hat eine ungleich ursprünglichere Einfachheit der Gegenstände und Erfindungen und kann sich bei ihrer Beschreibung aufhalten, weil alle diese Dinge noch in gleichem Range stehen und als etwas gelten, worin der Mensch, insofern sein ganzes Leben ihn nicht davon ableitet und in eine nur intellektuelle Sphäre führt, noch eine Ehre seiner Geschicklichkeit, seines Reichthums seines positiven Interesses hat. Ochsen zu schlachten, zuzubereiten, Wein einzuschenken usf. ist ein Geschäft der Heroen selbst, das sie als Zweck und Genuß treiben, während bei uns ein Mittagessen, wenn es nicht alltäglich sein soll, nicht nur seltene delikate Sachen zutage bringen muß, sondern außerdem auch vortreffliche Diskurse verlangt.”

<sup>846</sup> “Odysseus hat sich sein großes Ehebett selbst gezimmert...” (Hegel, *VÄ I*, p. 338.)

makes reference to the greater world: coffee, or sugar, indicates the world market's trade, "civil society's" intrusion into the traditional (and potentially heroic) life of the family. Hegel's negative example throughout the *Aesthetics Lectures* is Voss's *Luise*, in which precisely coffee and sugar are enjoyed. For Hegel, this attempt at idyllic epic breaks its balance through inadvertent reference to the advanced world condition, no longer general but specifically split into family, civil society, and state, in increasingly global trade. Goethe, on the other hand, gets its right.<sup>847</sup>

*Hermann und Dorothea*, for Hegel, leaves the breakdown of order in France and its intrusion into the Rhein region separate from the intrusion of the market into familial relations. The characters are presented in better light as they are themselves more cosmopolitan, but the epic element is introduced by the objects:

So trinkt z. B., um nur an dies eine zu erinnern, der Wirt mit seinen Gästen, dem Pfarrer und Apotheker, nicht etwa Kaffee: "Sorgsam brachte die Mutter des klaren, herrlichen Weines,/ In geschliffener Flasche auf blankem zinnernen Runde,/ Mit den grünlichen Römern,/ den echten Bechern des Rheinweins." Sie trinken in der Kühle ein heimisches Gewächs, Dreiundachtziger, in den heimischen, nur für den Rheinwein passenden Gläsern; „die Fluten des Rheinstroms und sein liebliches Ufer“ wird uns gleich darauf vor die Vorstellung gebracht, und bald werden wir auch in die eigenen Weinberge hinter dem Hause des Besitzers geführt, so daß hier nichts aus der eigentümlichen Sphäre eines in sich behaglichen, seine Bedürfnisse innerhalb seiner sich gebenden Zustands hinausgeht.<sup>848</sup>

Wine and its container come to the rescue of philosophy, and of the epic. And it is in this strange passage of aesthetic judgment that Hegel's most ambivalent word about Goethe is spoken. For Hegel is uncharacteristically advocating an unmediated quality in the

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<sup>847</sup> "Die idyllischen Zustände unserer heutigen Gegenwart haben wieder das Mangelhafte, daß diese Einfachheit, das Häusliche und Ländliche in Empfindung der Liebe oder der Wohlbehägigkeit eines guten Kaffees im Freien usf., gleichfalls von geringfügigem Interesse sind, indem von allem weiteren Zusammenhänge mit tieferen Verflechtungen in gehaltreichere Zwecke und Verhältnisse bei diesem Landpfarrerleben usf. nur abstrahiert wird. Daher ist auch in dieser Beziehung Goethes Genius zu bewundern, daß er sich in *Hermann und Dorothea* zwar auf ein ähnliches Gebiet konzentriert, indem er aus dem Leben der Gegenwart eine engbegrenzte Besonderheit herausgreift, zugleich aber als Hintergrund und als Atmosphäre, in welcher sich dieser Kreis bewegt, die großen Interessen der Revolution und des eigenen Vaterlandes eröffnet und den für sich beschränkten Stoff mit den weitesten, mächtigsten Weltbegebenheiten in Beziehung bringt." (Hegel, *VÄ I*, pp. 250-51.)

<sup>848</sup> Hegel, *VÄ I*, p. 340.



thought-work of the poem. The return to the “general world condition” in the Revolution calls, according to the *Lectures*, for exclusion of the market—the locality of the objects—in its now once again epic representation. The private is broken by that market and the abstract distance of international trade, but the breakdown of governmental order requires this return to beds and food and wine made by heroes themselves. Wine helps philosophy under revolutionary conditions, precisely where coffee and sugar fail it.

But if Goethe’s project were—from precisely ca. 1798—to allow for the categorial transformation of the world in development, then Hegel is unconsciously drawing attention here to a moment in which Goethe—according to Hegel, correctly—grasps a world-situation returned to the general. In that space, a revolution occurred, and then occurred again, in July of 1830. For Hegel, Goethe had produced a poetological organology—inspired by wine—that justified not the revolution itself but the transformative efforts it made necessary.<sup>849</sup> *Hermann und Dorothea* anticipates what Peter Schwartz has identified as the paradigmatic Goethean web of concerns in civil politics: the interrelation of property, inheritance, and marriage.<sup>850</sup> Indeed, the text displays concern for all three both literally (Hermann’s father wants him to marry the neighbor’s daughter to enrich the household Hermann will ultimately inherit) and metaphorically (what counts as *our world* is in constant question because of the alien threat, and it is precisely the *Rhein* but also the vineyards which mark the territorial boundary—Hermann crosses outside the vineyards, against his habit, to weep for

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<sup>849</sup> Karl Otto Conrady, *Goethe und die französische Revolution* (Frankfurt/Main.: Insel, 1988), pp. 120-2, points out that some of Goethe’s most sympathetic words about the Jacobins are expressed with respect to the first fiancé of Dorothea, who died in Paris in support of the cause. For the different reactions of German writers to the Revolution, see Stammen, *Goethe und die politische Welt*, pp. 107-43.

<sup>850</sup> See Peter Schwartz, *After Jena: Goethe’s Elective Affinities and the End of the Old Regime* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2010).

Dorothea, and again to *find* her). The epic in idyll is a mimesis of the *Weltzustand* because it, and it alone, shows objective spirit in revolution where absolute spirit is correctly engaged with it. Ultimately, *Dorothea* is the bearer of the Hegelian judgment—she is allowed to reverse legal and gender relations in her violent rescue of herself and a roomful of other young women from marauding rape. Yet famously, the epic ends with her domestication through marriage, and the twin monologues—her first husband’s, who has gone to Paris and died, which she speaks—and Hermann’s, with the famous lines:

Denn der Mensch, der zur schwankenden Zeit auch schwankend gesinnt ist,  
 Der vermehret das Übel und breitet es weiter und weiter;  
 Aber wer fest auf dem Sinne beharrt, **der bildet die Welt sich...**  
**Du bist mein; und nun ist das Meine meiner als jemals.**  
 Nicht mit Kummer will ichs bewahren und sorgend genießen,  
 Sondern mit Mut und Kraft...<sup>851</sup>

This mysterious line can be read in the following way: you *Dorothea* are mine, and now that which is mine *my inheritance of the Goldener Löwe and the vineyards* belongs more to me *because I have formed the world according to my wish* (and not my father’s). Inheritance is not a *passive process*: the new generation must *earn its world* by domesticating it differently in different conditions than its parents had. In Hegelian terms, literal possession at all three levels is underpinned by absolute spirit’s poetic vessel—and also undermined. The idyllic epic has the virtue of immediate presentation of the actual—but it becomes through this very presentation the mediation of that developing actuality, in this case the imminent emergence of civil politics. The absolute becomes the instrument of the representation and alteration of historical circumstance.

*Hermann und Dorothea* was organological: it *formed* the world, insisting on its rightness, on *possession* as a generational and gendered *category justifiably in development*, but not yet revolutionized, at least east of the Rhine. If we consider this

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<sup>851</sup> WA I 50, p. 267.

work from the perspective of 1830—at the beginning of the end of the revolutionary epoch—then its lessons look nationalist compared to the internationalist Goethe of *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, *Faust II*, and the nascent concept of *Weltliteratur*. But perhaps it is precisely through the time-sensitive organological lens that we can locate already in 1798 the beginning—passive and not without resistance—of what Thomas Mann described as Goethe’s late *Zug ins Weltweite*.<sup>852</sup> *Hermann und Dorothea*’s aesthetic program can be retroactively grasped as the first wobbly step into the new cosmopolitan civil era, where the human is systemically capable in the apparent contingency of historical breakdown, capable precisely of technological reorganization of the natural and social worlds. This attitude is formally (if not politically) identical to that of the Young Hegelians, connecting Hegel’s absolute and objective spirits, metaphysics and institutions. It seeks to reproduce this world mimetically in order to change it. Goethe’s Owl of Minerva flies alongside History, reproducing the world in representation, and in that reproduction holding the possibility of intervention into that history in reserve.

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<sup>852</sup> Thomas Mann, *Goethe als Repräsentant des bürgerlichen Zeitalters* (Berlin: Fischer, 1932). See also Dieter Borchmeyer’s speech, “Welthandel – Weltfrömmigkeit – Weltliteratur,” available at <http://www.uni-heidelberg.de/presse/news/2212borch.html>, visited 20 May 2012.

### **Communist Organs and the Legacies of Organology: *statt eines Epilogs***

If I have been faithful in this study to what I called in its Introduction a “restitutive” impulse with respect to Romantic organology, then my conclusion will flesh out that intention. I have not argued that Romanticism is the paradigm under which we still live; I have not been reconstructing organology with the thought of rescuing it from the rubble-heap of semi-forgotten history; nor, finally, have I wanted to argue that its doctrines are of pressing importance for the solution of our contemporary problems. Each of these claims could be tempered, of course. Romanticism was a major development in Western intellectual history, and its legacies are not absent in the present.

Historiographically speaking, I have been laboring precisely to save a strand of its thought—organology—that would otherwise potentially fade into scholarly oblivion. The last point, however, is the most worried in my presentation: while I do not think that Romantic organs can be unproblematically applied to our world, I do think my investigation calls attention to a kind of thinking that, at the beginning of the age we are perhaps witness to the end of, presents us with a much-needed theoretical call to arms. Schlegel’s organs of representational government, for example, are clearly artifacts of the post-revolutionary setting. It will hardly do to claim them as our own. And yet, the grander problems that motivated the development of Romantic organology—metaphysical and scientific despair and political disintegration—are not only not gone from our contemporary scene: they are pitched as echoes (not to say: death-rattles) of the very chaos that inaugurated the modern political order and its philosophical imagination in Europe.

Francis Fukuyama wrote famously, after the fall of the Soviet Socialist

governments in 1989/90, that history had ended. He saw the triumph of democracy—and an end to war—in the end of the USSR, and with that triumph an alternate vision to Hegel’s Prussian end to history.<sup>853</sup> Hardly a decade later, however, history had “recommenced” for Fukuyama, and not because of the spectre of international terrorism. The worries of the future were those of biology.<sup>854</sup> The very notion of “biotechnology” shakes the pacific façade of the neo-Hegelian end-times. This is because that façade is built on the metaphorical ground of technomorphism, and politics is immediately implicated in any shifting of those Aristotelian terms.<sup>855</sup> Worries about bio-technology have a conceptual depth based in the *techne-phusis* analogy. As Fukuyama frames the issue: what is to become of “human nature” and “natural law” when our happiness, aging processes, and perhaps even our ability to live are affected by intentional intervention? In other words, what kind of a thing is a human after the political order has settled its accounts and left further developments up to that very human? Fukuyama thus repeats Hegel’s gesture: objective spirit has reduced itself to the proper arrangement of human affairs on top of which absolute spirit can develop itself. But where Hegel saw a progression of absolute spirit from art through religion to philosophy, Fukuyama sees a technological risk of recursively political proportions. Just when History had laid down its tools and come to apparent rest, absolute spirit re-enters the scene in the guise of a reminder that *phusis* and *techne* have long since been separated. The conceptual worries of the present do, in this particular sense, bear more than a passing resemblance to those the Romantics confronted. What they invented as a response—*technologia*

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<sup>853</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992/2006).

<sup>854</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2003).

<sup>855</sup> Fukuyama is explicit about his Aristotelianism, see *Posthuman Future*, pp. 12 ff.

*transcendentalis*—has an empirical correlate in what we might call technological capitalism. But as Fukuyama’s worries demonstrate, the correlate is only mildly “empirical,” since the object of judgment that genetic manipulation (for example) produces is not merely another being, but calls the categories of being-identification into question. *Posthuman* serves as a designation of this metaphysical and political doubt.

This analogy should remain one: I wish to leave at the level of a suggestion the connection between the technological discourse of *1800* and the realities of *2000*. The distance between the two is the distance of that analogy. Without suggesting the perimeter of an organic historical unity, we can see that the organological project was central in its time, and as generic theoretical intervention might not be trivial in ours. But I want to follow up on this possible usefulness not in the elaboration of “organology in the present,” but in a few of its legacies.

Max Horkheimer, writing at the outbreak of the Second World War and in the passage from the Institute of Social Research to the formation we now call the Frankfurt School, recognized a hidden organological agenda of the early Marx’s project. The mission-statement of the Frankfurt School, *Traditionelle und kritische Theorie* (1937), divides famously between a traditional theory caught in an attempt to describe everything the skeptical subject can come to know, and a critical theory which realizes itself as the legitimate product of the class-relation as it emerges from the mode of production. This second, historicized theory treats its very objects and its means of perception not as static, but as the result of social development (of work). Horkheimer writes:

Die Tatsachen, welche die Sinne uns zuführen, sind in doppelter Weise gesellschaftlich präformiert: durch den geschichtlichen Charakter des wahrgenommenen Gegenstands und den geschichtlichen Charakter des wahrnehmenden Organs. Beide sind nicht nur natürlich, sondern durch menschliche Aktivität geformt; das Individuum jedoch erfährt sich selbst bei der Wahrnehmung als aufnehmend und passiv. Der Gegensatz von

Passivität und Aktivität, der in der Erkenntnistheorie als Dualismus von Sinnlichkeit und Verstand auftritt, gilt für die Gesellschaft nicht im gleichen Maß wie für das Individuum. Wo sich dieses als passiv und abhängig erfährt, ist jene, die sich doch aus Individuen zusammensetzt, ein wenn auch bewusstloses und insofern uneigentliches, jedoch tätiges Subjekt.<sup>856</sup>

The appearance of passivity—the sense of an external limitation not produced by the self—is the result of social work (as it had been for Fichte). The passage is a précis of the larger argument. Even with his sophistication, Kant has reified a felt contradiction by retaining a view from the subject (Horkheimer goes on to read the *epigenesis*-metaphor with respect to the emergence of ideology from the infrastructure). To the subject, to be sure, the *organs* are passive, static, receptive. From the social standpoint of critique, however, they are also active, because they are the result of a history. This means not that they are themselves dynamic in reception, but that this very receptivity is active in the sense of *form-giving*. These are the ambivalent organs of an ideology, and the task is to critique their offerings, to make them match up with the content of the class struggle.

This notion of ideological organs is ultimately derived from Marx, as we will see momentarily. But it was a powerful strain of thought in the circles of the Frankfurt school. Its formulation goes back at least to Walter Benjamin's famous essay on *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner Reproduzierbarkeit* (1936):

Da kam der Film und hat diese Kerkerwelt mit dem Dynamit der Zehntelsekunden gesprengt, so daß wir nun zwischen ihren weitverstreuten Trümmern gelassen abenteuerliche Reisen unternehmen. Unter der Großaufnahme dehnt sich der Raum, unter der Zeitlupe die Bewegung.<sup>857</sup>

The categorial banality of the everyday is redoubled and exploded by the technological organ of the aesthetic, film. The tricks of the medium's presentation cut, in Benjamin's terms, surgically into the complex of our perception, altering time and movement

<sup>856</sup> Max Horkheimer, *Gesammelte Schriften. Band 4: Schriften 1936-1941*, ed. Alfred Schmidt (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 1988), p. 174.

<sup>857</sup> Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften. Band I, Teil 2*, eds. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1980), pp. 499-500.

fundamentally. If we look forward to Horkheimer's essay of the next year, we can see an organological strand in this ideologically critical media theory. That is not incidental, of course: as far back as Herder it had always been clear that media need *organs* to sustain any investigation of them.

Horkheimer, writing with Theodor Adorno, would later give another striking formulation to the thought:

Die Leistung, die der kantische Schematismus noch von den Subjekten erwartet hatte, nämlich die sinnliche Mannigfaltigkeit vorweg auf die fundamentalen zu beziehen, wird dem Subjekt von der Industrie abgenommen. Sie betreibt den Schematismus als ersten Dienst am Kunden. In der Seele sollte ein geheimer Mechanismus wirken, der die unmittelbaren Daten bereits so präpariert, daß sie ins System der Reinen Vernunft hineinpassen. Das Geheimnis ist heute enträtselt.<sup>858</sup>

The schematism is the empirical subsumption of intuition under concept—the application of the epigenetic quality of pure reason. Transcendental schemata must be generated, for Kant, in order to allow for this mediation between the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* to occur. These schemata allow for the formation of empirical correlates (the form of a plate, say, or a dog, in general). Schematism allows the *KdrV* to pass from possible experience to actual experience.

Film, for Horkheimer and Adorno in 1945, changes all that. Or rather, it changes the source of schematic generation. Film takes over the task of making the categories applicable to empirical intuitions, literally because it replaces the mechanism for intuition-delivery, displacing it from the senses in relation to their world to the senses in relation to a mechanically-generated and completely controlled simulation of a world. The film destroys the mythical secret of the soul's schematism (the “ground of sensibility,” into which we cannot see, lacking *schickliche Werkzeuge*). Shifting the

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<sup>858</sup> Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung. Philosophische Fragmente* (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 1988), p. 151.



construction and constructability of the object of the senses, film fulfills the aesthetic task of creating a “world within a world.” But it also shifts the burden of aesthetic content—the generation of ideology—to Hollywood, to the culture industry. Ideology is thus buried deeper than previously possible: it is delivered directly to the disenchanting soul, which understands its immediacy as myth. Filmic Enlightenment returns of itself to its opposite, and Benjamin’s optimism is undermined. The Frankfurt School inherited a strand of organology, but found no hope in it for a salutary politics.<sup>859</sup>

Returning to *Traditionelle und kritische Theorie*, however, we find a striking de-organizing version of the claim that also ultimately goes back to Marx:

Der physiologische Sinnesapparat des Menschen arbeitet selbst schon längst weitgehend in der Richtung physikalischer Versuche. Die Art, wie im aufnehmenden Betrachten Stücke geschieden und zusammengefasst werden, wie einzelnes nicht bemerkt, anderes hervorgehoben wird, ist ebensowohl Resultat der modernen Produktionsweise, wie die Wahrnehmung eines Mannes aus irgendeinem Stamm primitive Jäger und Fischer Resultat seiner Existenzbedingungen und freilich auch des Gegenstandes ist. Bezogen darauf ließe sich der Satz, die Werkzeuge seien Verlängerungen der menschlichen Organe, so umdrehen, dass die Organe auch Verlängerungen der Instrumente sind. Auf den höheren Stufen der Zivilisation bestimmt die bewusste menschliche Praxis unbewusst nicht bloß die subjektive Seite der Wahrnehmung, sondern in höherem Maß auch den Gegenstand.<sup>860</sup>

Critical theory grasps, at its very starting-point, an essential element of the organological program. On the basis of the Marxist theory of modes of production (and this not accidentally, as we shall see in a moment), tools and organs become interchangeable. *Work* is here reduced to its most abstract concept (in keeping with Marx’s elaboration in the *Grundrisse*): *techne* as the condition of a world with humans in it means that organs are the result of work, and that their object-determining work is in turn a source for the production of a better ideology. This moment of optimism in 1937 was drowned out by

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<sup>859</sup> Where the term organ occurs in elsewhere in the *Dialektik*, it is usually subordinated to the logic of pure (or bad) instrumentality. Needless to say, this logic usually overlooks the Romantic sensibility about organicity. I am trying to mark out some metaphorical resistances to the usual picture here, however, resistances that derive most obviously from Marx.

<sup>860</sup> Horkheimer, “Traditionelle und kritische Theorie,” p. 175.

war, and especially the technologies of mass murder, by the time Horkheimer and Adorno reformulated the doctrine in 1945.<sup>861</sup> Still, the version of organology Horkheimer had drawn on for his early definition of critical theory was Marxist down to the very text.

The passage indeed picks up two parts of Marx's organology: on the one hand, the idea of a history of the human senses, and on the other, the technical interchangeability of "organ" and "tool." Marx gave voice to the first in his *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte* (1844), and the second in chapter 13, volume I, of *Das Kapital* (1867).

The *Manuskripte* are a curious mix of Feuerbach and Hegel. We can read Feuerbach in Marx's attachment to the human, and Hegel in such formulations as "communism is the standpoint of the negation of the negation."<sup>862</sup> The term organ, which runs throughout the section on "private property and communism," is of other (Romantic) provenance.<sup>863</sup> The abstract character of industrial work has, for Marx, stripped humans

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<sup>861</sup> Not that the restraint is absent in 1937. For example: "Das Reden glaubt, das Organ der Allgemeinheit zu sein. In der zerrissenen Gesellschaft der Gegenwart ist dieses Denken, vor allem in gesellschaftlichen Fragen, harmonistisch und illusionär." (Horkheimer, "Traditionelle und kritische Theorie," p. 184.)

<sup>862</sup> "Der Kommunismus ist die Position als Negation der Negation, darum das *wirkliche*, für die nächste geschichtliche Entwicklung notwendige Moment der menschlichen Emanzipation und Wiedergewinnung. Der *Kommunismus* ist die notwendige Gestalt und das energische Prinzip der nächsten Zukunft, aber der Kommunismus ist nicht als solcher das Ziel der menschlichen Entwicklung – die Gestalt der menschlichen Gesellschaft." Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke, Ergänzungsband, I. Teil* (Berlin: Dietz, 1968), p. 546. Cited as Marx, *Manuskripte*, p. 546.

<sup>863</sup> Of course, Feuerbach also speaks of organs, even active ones: P40: "Also ist *nicht nur das Endliche*, das *Erscheinende*, sondern auch das *wahre, göttliche Wesen Gegenstand der Sinne—der Sinn Organ des Absoluten*." And again, p. 93: "die Organe des Ergreifens." But Marx's text, as we shall see, is shot through with a dynamism in the *organ* that corresponds to the dynamism he would demand of materialism in response to Feuerbach. At least in 1844, that dynamism is framed in Hegelian terms. John Toews, *Hegelianism* (p. 327), writes: "The distinctiveness of Feuerbach's viewpoint lay in his conception of human essence, of man's "species being." It was not his "humanism," his reduction of theology and metaphysics to "anthropology," that made him unique among the Left Hegelians, but his "sensualism," "naturalism," or "materialism," his attempt to ground man's autonomy and universality as a "species being" in the concrete reality of his natural, sensuous, "immediate" existence." The picture is complicated by Warren Breckman: "The need to accommodate sensuousness in a thoroughly immanent concept of human social being became the leitmotif of his seminal critique of Christian personalism and speculative Idealism in the years between 1838 and 1843. A search for that accommodation became the dominant task of the "philosophy of the future" that Feuerbach enunciated in the early 1840s." (Warren Breckman, *Marx, the Young Hegelians, and*

not only of their possessions through immiseration, but also of the specifically human property of their very perceptions. To reclaim the commonality of perception is an essential part of the project of the establishment of a non-abstract communism. The latter requires the formation of literally communistic organs, both in the social sense (institutions as organs) and in the physiological sense (common organs of metaphysical and ethical perception conducive to socialist politics).<sup>864</sup> The first statement of the post-organological program (from which Horkheimer seems to be drawing) reads:

Denn nicht nur die 5 Sinne, sondern auch die sogenannten geistigen Sinne, die praktischen Sinne (Wille, Liebe etc.), mit einem Wort der *menschliche Sinn*, die Menschlichkeit der Sinne wird erst durch das Dasein seines Gegenstandes, durch die *vermenschlichte* Natur. Die *Bildung* der 5 Sinne ist eine Arbeit der ganzen bisherigen Weltgeschichte. Der unter dem rohen praktischen Bedürfnis befangene *Sinn* hat auch nur einen *bornierten* Sinn... also die Vergegenständlichung des menschlichen Wesens, sowohl in theoretischer als praktischer Hinsicht, gehört dazu, sowohl um die *Sinne* des Menschen *menschlich* zu machen als um für den ganzen Reichtum des menschlichen und natürlichen Wesens entsprechenden *menschlichen Sinn* zu schaffen.<sup>865</sup>

Note that this statement contains the essential characteristics of Romantic organology.

The five senses are the precipitate of the history of humanity; they are essentially related to the practical senses and the spiritual “senses”; and they are used ultimately to make the world human and those sense themselves proper to humanity. *Der menschliche Sinn* runs the two senses of sense through each other: it is both the field of potentiality of humanity’s self-recognition (as the bearer of historical and infinite fields of potentiality),

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*the Origins of Radical Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 199.) Marx, of course, rejected all such immediacy, here locating mediation in a historical *organ*.

<sup>864</sup> This early Marx is explicit about the latter project. He writes, with respect to the unification of science and philosophy: “Der Wille war da, aber das Vermögen fehlte.” (Marx, *Manuskripte*, p. 543.) Here *Vermögen* might profitably be re-written as *organ*. The entire essay carries the notion that the expression of common human essence (Feuerbach’s *Gattungswesen*) requires an overhaul of science in the terms set by industry in order to change industrial conditions. The human must become the object of natural science, since, it is implied, he is the medium of that science: “Die Naturwissenschaft wird später ebensowohl die Wissenschaft von dem Menschen wie die Wissenschaft von dem Menschen die Naturwissenschaft unter sich subsumieren: es wird *eine* Wissenschaft sein.” (Marx, *Manuskripte*, p. 543.) This line of thought runs through later Marxism, of course, from the Second International’s debate of “scientific socialism” to issues of science under actually existing socialism. The question raised here is slightly different: it is that of a Marxist New Mythology in a post-Romantic sense.

<sup>865</sup> Marx, *Manuskripte*, p. 541; emphasis in original.

and the rhetorically milder understanding for other humans. The work of history must be matched by a new kind of work if this sense is to be developed.<sup>866</sup>

This project is necessarily communistic, since the human is defined in Feuerbachian terms as the generality of its essence. This generality is alienated, of course, for the young Marx, alienated through the process of abstract work and the privatization of property. The specific cocktail of perception and legality that ownership of objects<sup>867</sup> hampers the free development of the organs of human perception, creation, and social being. Thus:

Die Aufhebung des Privateigentums ist daher die vollständige *Emanzipation* aller menschlichen Sinne und Eigenschaften; aber sie ist diese Emanzipation grade dadurch, daß diese Sinne und Eigenschaften *menschlich*, sowohl subjektiv als objektiv, geworden sind. Das Auge ist zum *menschlichen* Auge geworden, wie sein *Gegenstand* zu einem gesellschaftlichen, *menschlichen*, vom Menschen für den Menschen herrührenden Gegenstand geworden ist. Die *Sinne* sind daher unmittelbar in ihrer Praxis *Theoretiker* geworden. Sie verhalten sich zu der *Sache* um der Sache willen, aber die Sache selbst ist ein *gegenständliches menschliches* Verhalten zu sich selbst und zum Menschen und umgekehrt. Das Bedürfnis oder der Genuß haben darum ihre *egoistische* Natur und die Natur ihre bloße *Nützlichkeit* verloren, indem der Nutzen zum *menschlichen* Nutzen geworden ist. Ebenso sind die Sinne und der Genuß der andren Menschen meine *eigene* Aneignung geworden. Außer diesen unmittelbaren Organen bilden sich daher *gesellschaftliche* Organe, in der *Form* der Gesellschaft, also z.B. die Tätigkeit unmittelbar in Gesellschaft mit andren etc. ist ein Organ meiner *Lebensäußerung* geworden und eine Weise der Aneignung des *menschlichen* Lebens.<sup>868</sup>

Private property is not merely a legal problem—it is an epistemological problem. In the perception of a possessed object, something goes missing not only from the object but also from the field of possibility represented by the literal organ, the eye. The senses have

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<sup>866</sup> Thus: “Der Mensch eignet sich sein allseitiges Wesen auf eine allseitige Art an, also als ein totaler Mensch. Jedes seiner *menschlichen* Verhältnisse zur Welt, Sehn, Hören, Riechen, Schmecken, Fühlen, Denken, Anschauen, Empfinden, Wollen, Tätigsein, Lieben, kurz, alle Organe seiner Individualität, wie die Organe, welche unmittelbar in ihrer Form als *gemeinschaftliche* Organe sind, sind in ihrem *gegenständlichen* Verhalten oder in ihrem *Verhalten zum Gegenstand* die Aneignung desselben. Die Aneignung der *menschlichen* Wirklichkeit, ihr Verhalten zum Gegenstand ist die *Betätigung der menschlichen Wirklichkeit*; menschliche *Wirksamkeit* und menschliches *Leiden*, denn das Leiden, menschlich gefaßt, ist ein Selbstgenuß des Menschen.” (Marx, *Manuskripte*, p. 540; emphasis in original.)

<sup>867</sup> But also of others: the section contains a long analysis of the “communism of women” in non-Hegelian socialist experimental societies—see Marx, *Manuskripte*, pp. 534 ff.

<sup>868</sup> Marx, *Manuskripte*, p. 540; emphasis in original.

become immediate theorists, because perception itself is not innocent of the production-processes that stand behind its objects. The development of the senses—itsself a product of social historical work in common—is thus perverted by the privately possessed, we might almost say, by *private perception*. The atomistic ego is the result of this process, and its relations are those of mere instrumentality. But for Marx, there is no going back. The senses should not return to their unadulterated state. They should be built and educated further, in the direction of “humanity.” This means taking a further step, one anticipated by the Romantics and despaired of in the Frankfurt school: creating social (and ultimately socialist) organs in the forms of society. We might think of Goethe’s imagined scientific community in this context. Marx thinks of such communal (and communist) organs as the bearers of superstructural organization. In a sense not given by his work of the following year, *Die deutsche Ideologie* (1845), such *organs* would be ideological in a positive sense.<sup>869</sup> They would have been the non-instrumental organs of the content of the state.

What Horkheimer had identified—the historicity and produced nature of the organs of perception—was thus derived from an early hope of Marx himself. And Horkheimer had also recognized, perhaps unintentionally, another part of Marx’s organology. When the former spoke of the interchangeability of organs and experimental tools (as extensions of one another), he was calling upon the non-utopian discourse of *Das Kapital*.

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<sup>869</sup> On the uses, Marxist and otherwise, of the term *ideology*, see Emmet Kennedy, “Ideology from Destutt de Tracy to Marx,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 40:3 (1979), pp. 353-68. As Kennedy notes, the original *idéologues* in post-revolutionary Paris sometimes used the epigenetic metaphor with respect to the generation of ideas from impressions. For Marx, *ideology* is not a set of illegitimate ideas, but a set of illegitimate ideas about the origins of ideas.

There has been, of course, endless debate on Marx's development.<sup>870</sup> I tend to see this problem as one of method above all.<sup>871</sup> In the early works, Marx is concerned, as his Young Hegelian peers were, to state the program for a good politics based on various intentional distortions of Hegel's system.<sup>872</sup> *Das Kapital*, on the other hand, is committed to dialectical method as the substantial connection of discourse and reality. It does not seek to represent the future, but to penetrate the laws of the present deeply enough to provide them with a counterweight. If the anti-capitalist Owl of Minerva flies only at dusk, it nevertheless thinks the next day might be constituted differently because of its flight. *Das Kapital* is thus also an organological response to Hegel, as we are about to see. Like Goethe, Marx proposes that the dialectical method might be used to change the rules—of the natural world as well as the social.

For Marx, the advent of the machine-driven factory represents the industrial mode of production finally achieving its normative form. Marx is treating such developments as the Cotton Gin and the Spinning Jenny, replacements for hand-driven machines that increase productivity through an increase and differentiation of the abilities of fixed capital. The machine is divided into three parts: the force-impulse mechanism, the transmission mechanism, and the mechanism of tools. According to Marx, the third of these is the key, and a shift in its constitution has brought the factory into its own—it has

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<sup>870</sup> The classic terms of the contemporary debate were set out by Louis Althusser in various writings in the 1960s and 1970s, and reflect concern about the role of the “human” in Marx. The sharp distinction made by Althusser can be set against Kolakowski's view that there is only a re-setting of terms (see Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Current in Marxism*, transl. P.S. Falla (New York: Norton, 2005), pp. 146-50.

<sup>871</sup> The distinctions in method I elaborate here are based on a larger agreement with Breckman's presentation of critique as universal. By shifting the object of critique from local areas (like religion) to the very form of any possible set of propositions (that is, by “secularizing” critique, in Marx's language), Marx sets his discourse literally against the entire constitution of the human-produced world—such my rephrasing of the argument at Breckman, *Dethroning*, pp. 292 ff.

<sup>872</sup> Kolakowski describes this as the “Fichteanization” of Hegel—see Kolakowski, *Main Currents*, pp. 43-80.

technized the site of work. Older developments had, of course, changed the source of energy, for example through the use of animal or water power to lend force to the machine for operating. The complexity of transmission-mechanisms, which guide and transfer the force to the functional parts of the machine, has also increased. But neither the origin of force nor the design of the transfer have changed the fundamental character of the machine, and thus of work. This change depends on the last, on the character of the tools of the machine—that change brings about the revolution that is called industrial.<sup>873</sup>

The workshop had undergone a similar transition, from the site of isolated workstations to a functional unity in greater production because of the division of labor. But even the resulting factory still relied on juxtaposed elements, not in its use of human labor, but in its use of machines. These machines were replacements for human hand-operations: they worked on individual areas of application, each functioning on the above model. The factory realizes its own concept, however, only when the machines are united such that laborers are only guiding their activity. When this happens, the individual machines become functional parts of a greater factory-machine—just as the factory was a greater unity of the workshop.<sup>874</sup> And just as individual workers became functional parts of the factory, the tool-mechanisms of individual machines becomes, in the greater factory-machine, organs:

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<sup>873</sup> “Dieser Teil der Maschinerie, die Werkzeugmaschine, ist es, wovon die industrielle Revolution im 18. Jahrhundert ausgeht. Sie bildet noch jeden Tag von neuem den Ausgangspunkt, sooft Handwerksbetrieb oder Manufakturbetrieb in Maschinenbetrieb übergeht.” (Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke, Band 23, “Das Kapital,” Bd. I, Vierter Abschnitt* (Berlin: Dietz, 1968), p. 393.)

<sup>874</sup> “Nachdem erst die Werkzeuge aus Werkzeugen des menschlichen Organismus in Werkzeuge eines mechanischen Apparats, der Werkzeugmaschine, verwandelt, erhielt nun auch die Bewegungsmaschine eine selbständige, von den Schranken menschlicher Kraft völlig emanzipierte Form. Damit sinkt die einzelne Werkzeugmaschine, die wir bisher betrachtet, zu einem bloßen Element der maschinenmäßigen Produktion herab. Eine Bewegungsmaschine konnte jetzt viele Arbeitsmaschinen gleichzeitig treiben.” (Marx, *Das Kapital*, p. 398.)

Ganz wie viele Werkzeuge die Organe einer Arbeitsmaschine, bilden viele Arbeitsmaschinen jetzt nur noch gleichartige Organe desselben Bewegungsmechanismus.<sup>875</sup>

Tools become organs in the completion of the concept of the industrial revolution. The complexity of the factory now takes on the fullness of its concept as a higher unity: it becomes organic. If there was indecision in the 18<sup>th</sup> century about where organs could properly be located—from Leibniz to Reil one had spoken of machine-organs—Marx points to the re-emergence of organological unity on the other side of supposed machinic reduction. What might have seemed a technicization<sup>876</sup> and machinification<sup>877</sup> in the simple terms of mechanism takes on, in its character as and determination of work, the characteristics of the humanity Marx had sought twenty years earlier. Organ becomes the necessary resurgent designator of this apparent return, on the other side of abstraction and degradation, to a higher unity in the workplace.

The resurgence, however, has a dark side. The machine-factory intensifies labor even as it simplifies it, forcing women and children into the factory in greater masses (Marx notes that, due to their relative lack of education, they are effectively sold as slaves by men in this context). The re-emergent organic unity of the machine is monstrous:

Als gegliedertes System von Arbeitsmaschinen, die ihre Bewegung nur vermittelt der Transmissionsmaschinerie von einem zentralen Automaten empfangen, besitzt der Maschinenbetrieb seine entwickeltste Gestalt. An die Stelle der einzelnen Maschine tritt hier ein mechanisches Ungeheuer, dessen Leib ganze Fabrikgebäude füllt und dessen

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<sup>875</sup> Marx, *Das Kapital*, p. 400.

<sup>876</sup> For example: “Mit der Zunahme der Erfindungen und der wachsenden Nachfrage nach den neu erfundenen Maschinen entwickelte sich mehr und mehr einerseits die Sondrung der Maschinenfabrikation in mannigfaltige selbständige Zweige, andererseits die Teilung der Arbeit im Innern der maschinenbauenden Manufakturen. Wir erblicken hier also in der Manufaktur die unmittelbare technische Grundlage der großen Industrie.” (Marx, *Das Kapital*, p. 403.) And again: “Die große Industrie mußte sich also ihres charakteristischen Produktionsmittels, der Maschine selbst, bemächtigen und Maschinen durch Maschinen produzieren. So erst schuf sie ihre adäquate technische Unterlage und stellte sich auf ihre eignen Füße.” (Marx, *Das Kapital* p. 406.)

<sup>877</sup> “Durch die Maschine wird, wie wir sahen, das Werkzeug nicht verdrängt. Aus einem Zwergwerkzeug des menschlichen Organismus reckt es sich in Umfang und Anzahl zum Werkzeug eines vom Menschen geschaffnen Mechanismus. Statt mit dem Handwerkszeug, läßt das Kapital den Arbeiter jetzt mit einer Maschine arbeiten, die ihre Werkzeuge selbst führt.” (Marx, *Das Kapital*, p. 408.)



dämonische Kraft, erst versteckt durch die fast feierlich gemeßne Bewegung seiner Riesenglieder, im fieberhaft tollen Wirbeltanz seiner zahllosen eigentlichen Arbeitsorgane ausbricht.<sup>878</sup>

Organics is not organology: Marx' vision threatens here to deliver the humanity of humans to the machines replacement-organs. It seems that the structure of work will cannibalize the worker. The robust organology of the *Manuskripte* seems to have been replaced with a terrifying anticipatory version of Horkheimer's claim that organs and tools have become extensions of each other. Two lines of flight from this theoretical pessimism present themselves.

First, in a move that will be adopted throughout the Marxist tradition in reaction to refinements of the capitalist system that threaten the ability to resist, Marx points to the cooperative character of the machine-factory:

Als Maschinerie erhält das Arbeitsmittel eine materielle Existenzweise, welche Ersetzung der Menschenkraft durch Naturkräfte und erfahrungsmäßiger Routine durch bewußte Anwendung der Naturwissenschaft bedingt. In der Manufaktur ist die Gliederung des gesellschaftlichen Arbeitsprozesses rein subjektiv, Kombination von Teilarbeitern; im Maschinensystem besitzt die große Industrie einen ganz objektiven Produktionsorganismus, den der Arbeiter als fertige materielle Produktionsbedingung vorfindet. In der einfachen und selbst in der durch Teilung der Arbeit spezifizierten Kooperation erscheint die Verdrängung des vereinzelt Arbeiters durch den vergesellschafteten immer noch mehr oder minder zufällig. Die Maschinerie, mit einigen später zu erwähnenden Ausnahmen, funktioniert nur in der Hand unmittelbar vergesellschafteter oder gemeinsamer Arbeit. Der kooperative Charakter des Arbeitsprozesses wird jetzt also durch die Natur des Arbeitsmittels selbst diktierte technische Notwendigkeit.<sup>879</sup>

In one sense, then, the hope for the humanization of work and of the organs of that work from the *Manuskripte* is suggested in its dual subjective and objective character.

Cooperation is no longer a contingent element of factory-life—it is a technical necessity.

Technicization has brought with it not only immiseration and partial irrelevance of the specificity of human work, but also the necessity of community, the necessity of planning

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<sup>878</sup> Marx, *Das Kapital*, p. 402.

<sup>879</sup> Marx, *Das Kapital*, p. 407.

to force the organs of production to work in concert. The *telos* of the organic factory should emerge, then, from the internal planning of what would eventually receive the name *soviet*. This optimism, however, about cooperation and community, has always been in one sense reactionary. To hope for the opposite to emerge, to point to new conditions of organization, does not solve the fundamental problem of technicity, namely, that the higher organic unity of the machine-factory (and the system of such factories in the global market) threatens to grow out of all proportion with any even cooperative effort to master and guide that system. If, then, any hope is to emerge from this characterization, it will have to be more than an imposed *telos*, more than a regulative suggestion.

When Marx first mentions the Spinning Jenny and the problem of the machine-revolution, he appends a long footnote on methodology, which I reproduce here in its entirety:

Schon vor ihm [dem Spinning Jenny] wurden, wenn auch sehr unvollkommene, Maschinen zum Vorspinnen angewandt, wahrscheinlich zuerst in Italien. Eine kritische Geschichte der Technologie würde überhaupt nachweisen, wie wenig irgendeine Erfindung des 18. Jahrhunderts einem einzelnen Individuum gehört. Bisher existiert kein solches Werk. Darwin hat das Interesse auf die Geschichte der natürlichen Technologie gelenkt, d.h. auf die Bildung der Pflanzen- und Tierorgane als Produktionsinstrumente für das Leben der Pflanzen und Tiere. **Verdient die Bildungsgeschichte der produktiven Organe des Gesellschaftsmenschen, der materiellen Basis jeder besondern Gesellschaftsorganisation, nicht gleiche Aufmerksamkeit?** Und wäre sie nicht leichter zu liefern, da, wie Vico sagt, die Menschengeschichte sich dadurch von der Naturgeschichte unterscheidet, daß wir die eine gemacht und die andre nicht gemacht haben? **Die Technologie enthüllt das aktive Verhalten des Menschen zur Natur, den unmittelbaren Produktionsprozeß seines Lebens, damit auch seiner gesellschaftlichen Lebensverhältnisse und der ihnen entquellenden geistigen Vorstellungen.** Selbst alle Religionsgeschichte, die von dieser materiellen Basis abstrahiert, ist - unkritisch. Es ist in der Tat viel leichter, durch Analyse den irdischen Kern der religiösen Nebelbildungen zu finden, als umgekehrt, aus den jedesmaligen wirklichen Lebensverhältnissen ihre verhimmelten Formen zu entwickeln. Die letztere ist die einzig materialistische und daher wissenschaftliche Methode. Die Mängel des abstrakt naturwissenschaftlichen Materialismus, der den geschichtlichen Prozeß ausschließt, ersieht man schon aus den abstrakten und ideologischen Vorstellungen seiner Wortführer, sobald sie sich über ihre Spezialität hinauswagen.<sup>880</sup>

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<sup>880</sup> Marx, *Das Kapital*, p. 392 (footnote 89); my emphases.

Natural history is the history of a godless technology, its Darwinian *organs* seeking nothing but nevertheless open to analysis. A history of technology would exclude the analogy to God as an externally imposing function from its writing—the individual, the human is excluded as *telos*, even in the most human and most obviously *end*-related areas of human activity. Technology, here, is nothing other than the ground of philosophy, the “active relation of the human to nature,” stripped of its seemingly natural teleology. For Marx, the active relation to nature is the most abstract definition of work, and the means of that work are now, in the technicized fully industrial era, to be characterized as organs. Those organs are the source of any set of ideas, any ideology, any religion—but not any science, since here as in the *Manuskripte* science is the privileged locus of reflection on just these organs. Sub-disciplines of that science (like Darwinian biology) can of course exist, and even claim legitimacy. But they are and must be subordinated to the human history of humans, which, conditioned now by the resurgent and monstrous organs of a second organics, are paradoxically also excluded from that history. Humans are retrospectively not the fundamental term: organs are the object of a new science—the new science—that follows on a technical revolution. Rather than resisting its instrumental impulse, the Marx of *Das Kapital* responds with a shift in terms. Organs might be only marginally human when they emerge in the machine, but if the method and history of human science has always been that of organs—as it now is, for him—then they are not without his ken and potential control. This is so because he is not outside their orbit, because he is characterized by their very problem. We can go further: it is because, as Marx says following Vico, he has produced their very problem, that it cannot ultimately threaten to spin outside the purview of his activity. The machinic unconscious simply *is*

that activity, and the effort to describe its particularity in the present is thus not methodologically innocent. Instead, even in this pessimism, in this statistically-driven analysis, the other side of the dialectic has not fully disappeared. The usual dialectical reading demands that we observe the emergence of this qualitatively new form (technicity of work) in a process of synthesis. But openly hidden in the language that emerges alongside the image of the technical is the will to intervene. A description of that intervention, for the late Marx, is nothing less than a betrayal of the method. And yet the politics of *Das Kapital* can be read in its literal organs: alongside the monstrous resurgence of organics in the machine-system, there is the retrospective casting of the human in those very terms. The human organs of Marxism as a political project are patent in the very text of its science. By tying science and politics together in dialectical presentation and through the term organ, Marx inherits and passes on the impulse and legacy of Romantic organology.

If we recall the terms Blumenberg set forth for a history of technology, we can see here that his characterization of Marx misses the mark. The text of *Das Kapital* reveals, in light of Romantic organology, much more than the identification of conditioning circumstances for technological development (see the Introduction above). I said above that this study would examine how a *technological imagination* (rather than *will*) would step out of history.<sup>881</sup> In Romantic organology, we can read the reflexive moment of a first techno-imagination, one that does not merely play with new images, but literalizes

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<sup>881</sup> With respect to this admirable formulation by Blumenberg: “Geschichte der Technik wird auch und vor allem die Geschichte des Heraustretens der Technik *aus der Geschichte* sein müssen. Ob und wie aus einem bestimmten neuen Verständnis der Wirklichkeit und der Stellung des Menschen innerhalb dieser Wirklichkeit technischer Wille entsteht, wird Thema einer Geistesgeschichte der Technik sein müssen, die nicht nur Selbstdeutungen der technischen Tätigkeit und Urheberchaft sammelt und registriert, sondern die Motivationen eines auf Technik zielenden und von Technik getragenen Lebensstils faßbar werden läßt.” (Blumenberg, *Geistesgeschichte*, 13; emphasis in original.)

and transcendentalizes the conditions of its own thought. In so doing, the Romantics offer a kind of response (rather than reaction) to the conditions of disciplinarity and technicization. Technological *will* might be taken, with Marx, to be the hallmark of human activity (simply *techne*) and the ground of philosophy alike. Alternatively, the specificity of technological will in Blumenberg's sense might be taken to appear earlier than the technological imagination. Even if that is true, however, a second technological will is the result of the connection of metaphysics and politics in Romantic organology. Whatever the status of the origins of the modern technological moment (and this question remains of the utmost importance for work in this field), the will to make the abstract concrete—and the means to impose technologies of the spirit onto the apparently given world—will have been the locus of a modern metaphysical imagination. I hope to have shown here that this imagination was a signal contribution of the Jena Romantics to intellectual history. That is, I take it, an unexpected Romanticism, and the possibility of historical dialogue with it for presentist purposes is for all that the richer, and perhaps the more pressing.

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