

Ultimately, what Marey tries to capture throughout the seven chapters of her study is the political potential of the idea of popular sovereignty, as a means to ameliorate – and, ultimately, to eradicate – the injustices of a system of nation-states that negates the active and fully omnilateral participation of diverse political communities around the world. For Marey, Kant’s commitment to an omnilateral will should not be reduced to an *ideal* mark of all political authority; rather it should be assumed as the normative criterion against which we must evaluate, contest and transform the injustices of our existing practices and institutions. For these reasons, the book represents an important contribution to ongoing debates in Kantian studies, as well as to problems *beyond Kant*. The book leaves us with the hope of a kind of ‘political ethics’, one that is based on our unavoidable interaction as free agents in a shared and finite earth.

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## Note

1 All translations from Spanish into English are my own.

J. Colin McQuillan (ed.), *Baumgarten’s Aesthetics: Historical and Philosophical Perspectives*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021. Pp. viii + 364. ISBN 9781538146255 (hbk) £100.00

In recent decades, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten has attracted the interest of many scholars. Shortly after the turn of the millennium, two international conferences on Baumgarten were held (2007, 2014), two products of which were the anthologies by Alexander Aichele and Dagmar Mirbach (2008) and that of Andrea Allerkamp and Dagmar Mirbach (2016). Their respective works are evidence of the development of Baumgarten studies and the diversification of its themes. In addition, English translations have recently appeared of both Baumgarten’s *Metaphysica* (Baumgarten 2013) and, just recently, his *Initia philosophiae practicae primae acroamaticae* (Baumgarten 2020). This is just some evidence of the growing interest in Baumgarten studies in recent years, but it is enough to indicate that something of a Baumgarten renaissance is under way.

Significantly, the renewed interest in Baumgarten is also a part of a larger effort by historians to rewrite the history of eighteenth-century German philosophy, with new attention to the contributions made by many thinkers active between Leibniz and Kant. Even considered within this tradition, Baumgarten has emerged as an independent and original thinker. A number of essays collected in the recent volume *Baumgarten and Kant on Metaphysics* (ed. Fugate and Hymers 2018) show just this, with Brandon Look, for instance, making the case for regarding Baumgarten himself as a ‘rationalist Pietist’ (Look 2018: 12), while several of the other essays in the collection

seek to distinguish various aspects of Baumgarten's thought from that of Wolff, even raising the question as to the extent to which Baumgarten is a Wolffian rationalist.

Following in this trend, but also extending it, J. Colin McQuillan's collection presents an excellent opportunity for a deeper study of Baumgarten's aesthetics. The book extensively discusses the key concepts that characterise his aesthetics, while at the same time drawing attention to the historical impacts of Baumgarten's innovative founding of this new science. In his own contribution to the volume, 'Wolffian Rationalism and Baumgarten's Aesthetics', McQuillan returns to the question of Baumgarten's place in the Wolffian tradition, and contends that Baumgarten 'should be counted among the Pietist critics of Wolffian rationalism, instead of being seen as one of its advocates or defenders' (p. 168). McQuillan reveals an important but subtle difference between Wolff's rationalism and Baumgarten's aesthetics by examining Baumgarten's views on 'the mathematical method' and 'the marriage of reason and experience'. According to Wolff, the mathematical method is the methodological principle for mathematical demonstrations, i.e. 'the order that mathematicians follow in their lectures, which begins with definitions, proceeds to axioms, and from there to theorems and problems' (p. 154), and philosophical demonstrations also follow the same methodological principle. It is, however, not obvious that, for Baumgarten, the philosophical and mathematical methods both depend on the same methodological principle. McQuillan points out that Baumgarten may have thought that 'the mathematical method is really just a function of the "presentation" of philosophical doctrines' (p. 164), and McQuillan contends that this difference in the respective roles assigned to the mathematical method reflects the differing importance assigned to logic as a result of different appraisals of human cognitive faculties. Wolff says that 'logic', which teaches us the right use and application of human understanding, 'is actually concerned with all the ways in which human beings come to know things, through all of the cognitive faculties they possess' (p. 165), in the sense that human understanding is (also) concerned with cognition that arises from sense and thought. Baumgarten, by contrast, wants to 'restrict the scope of logic, so that it only concerns the cognition of the *superior* cognitive faculty (the understanding) and the perfection of its cognition (clear and distinct knowledge of the truth)' (p. 165). As such, the difference in the scopes assigned to logic reveal different positions on the relationship between sensible and intellectual cognition. In other words, while Wolff maintains a merely quantitative difference – a difference in degrees of clarity and distinctness – Baumgarten asserts a qualitative difference – a distinction between kinds of cognition. By introducing this qualitative difference, Baumgarten undermines the Wolffian marriage of reason and experience, the sought-for combination of cognition derived from the senses with that of the understanding. McQuillan also draws an analogy between 'logic', which is restricted in order to establish aesthetics, and 'philosophy', which is restricted in order to protect the authority of theology. In other words, just as logic cannot be useful beyond its scope, philosophy cannot be used to know the theological truths known through faith. In the end, the image McQuillan presents of the new Baumgarten captures the 'innovativeness' that arose amid the tension between the two traditions of Wolffianism and Pietism.

Baumgarten's deviation from Wolff's rationalism, in which the difference between sensible and intellectual cognition is a qualitative difference, is also thematized in Angelica Nuzzo's essay 'Baumgarten's Conception of Aesthetic Truth in the

*Aesthetics*, as the problem of 'aesthetic truth'. Baumgarten proposes 'many irreducible truths' (p. 106), such as 'aesthetic truths' and 'logical truths', each of which has a 'territory and sphere', or 'horizon', appropriate to each truth. In this way, Nuzzo focuses on the 'pluralism of truths' (p. 106) and explains the qualitative difference between sensible and intellectual cognition as the fact that they remain within different horizons. Furthermore, Nuzzo points out that aesthetic truths are positioned closer to 'metaphysical truth', which is 'one and indicates "the unity of many in one"', and are 'only in God' (p. 109), than to logical truth, because of the former's sensible concreteness and role in conveying 'the reality of human cognitive experience' (p. 123). Ultimately, Nuzzo contends that Baumgarten's theory of truth has an advantage over the rationalist conception of the mono-dimensionality of truth across the domains of cognition and the arts.

However, not all essays investigate Baumgarten's deviations from Wolff's rationalism. For example, Matthew McAndrew, in his chapter 'Beauty and Appearance in Baumgarten's *Metaphysics* and *Aesthetics*', considers the definition of 'beauty' in the *Metaphysics*, namely as 'the perfection of an appearance' (Baumgarten 2013: 239–40 (\$662)) and assesses Baumgarten's theory of beauty as a variation of the standard 'Wolffian theory of beauty', i.e. 'beauty is perfection that is represented without distinctness' (p. 91).

The Pietistic aspects of Baumgarten emphasized by McQuillan are also taken up in their historical context by Simon Grote in his essay 'Pietist *Aisthēsis* and Moral Education in the Works of Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten'. Grote succeeds in situating Baumgarten's aesthetic theory within the Pietist theological tradition by detailing the exegetical debates on '*aisthēsis*' among Halle theologians of the time. This serves to emphasize the practical and ethical aspects of Baumgarten's aesthetics, which are also taken up by Anne Pollok and Robert R. Clewis. In 'An Exercise in Humanity: Baumgarten and Mendelssohn on the Importance of Aesthetic Training', Pollok argues for Baumgarten's 'aesthetic training' and shows how it was developed by Mendelssohn in the context of the discussion of the 'vocation (*Bestimmung*)' of humanity. Clewis, in 'The Majesty of Cognition: The Sublime in Baumgarten, Mendelssohn, and Kant', introduces us to Baumgarten's theory of the sublime, which has been overlooked by many scholars. According to Clewis, Baumgarten sees the sublime as a kind of beauty and the 'aesthetic dignity' contained within the sublime as concerned primarily with the ethical and the theological. All three of the above arguments are strongly connected to one of the central aims of Baumgarten's aesthetics, namely the formation of the *felix aestheticus*, and all succeed in highlighting the religious-theological element of his aesthetics.

However, that Baumgarten thus occupies such a distinctive position within the Wolffian tradition should also lead us to reconsider his relationship to Leibniz. The received view is that, in contrast with Wolff's deviations from Leibniz, Baumgarten returns to a more orthodox Leibnizian position, yet Leibniz was also a target of Pietist criticism. The Pietist theologian Lange regarded Wolff as committing to a 'partial Spinozism' inasmuch as he considered all things in the world as belonging to 'the single-world substance or world-machine' and criticized him as a determinist (Lange 2019: 153). This is a criticism which Lange regarded Leibniz as subject to because Leibniz 'makes the motions of the body depend upon its own mechanical structure and that of the entire universe' (Lange 2019: 144). This controversy in

Halle influenced the formation of Baumgarten's philosophical views, as Schwaiger, Dyck and others have already pointed out; but if Baumgarten is one of the Pietist critics of Wolffian rationalism, it is also the case that he is not a complete Leibnizian. Nuzzo, for one, is careful to draw attention to the differences between Baumgarten and Leibniz, but for the most part Baumgarten's departures from Leibniz are less attended to than those from Wolff.

That said, this collection does succeed in stripping Baumgarten of the label of a mere 'member of the Wolffian school', which has long been appended to him. The picture of Baumgarten that emerges from this collection is of a much more innovative, even lively thinker, in part as a result of his immersion in the competing intellectual traditions of his day. Thus this collection constitutes an important contribution to the ongoing Baumgarten renaissance.

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Carl Posy and Ofra Rechter (eds), *Kant's Philosophy of Mathematics*, vol. 1. *The Critical Philosophy and its Roots*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. x + 321. ISBN 9781107042902 (hbk) £75.00

Following a 1983 conference at Duke University, Carl Posy edited a volume titled *Kant's Philosophy of Mathematics: Modern Essays* (Posy 1992) that effectively launched a new subfield of Kant studies. Posy included the handful of already seminal treatments of Kant's theory of mathematics from the 1960s and 1970s as well as exciting new work from Michael Friedman, Jaakko Hintikka, Charles Parsons and several others. The volume collected papers on a range of issues, from Kant's general theory of the mathematical method to his specific views of arithmetic, geometry and algebra; some of the papers further examined the connection between Kant's thoughts about