

**Christian Garve's Quarrels, Rhetoric, and Humanism**  
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**Short Abstract**

The philosopher Christian Garve (1742-1798) is now largely forgotten. Some scholars apparently think that this was deserved. However, most will admit that Garve was also a victim of historical developments. He embraced a particular set of intellectual values; he regarded it as the philosopher's duty to communicate with the public and do work of value to them. During and after his lifetime, this view came to be excluded from German intellectual culture. A very different set of values prevailed: on this view, a dichotomy exists between serious intellectual work and the wider public.

The conflict between these two sets of values is dramatized in several episodes from Garve's experience. The present thesis analyses four exchanges involving Garve and a range of prominent contemporaries: Kant, Schiller, Goethe, Schlegel, and Schleiermacher. In these exchanges, the contrasting positions of Garve and his opponents take on concrete expression. The thesis draws out the underlying assumptions which inform their arguments. The individual episodes therefore become microcosms for more fundamental developments. This gives them unique significance: the outcome of this conflict still shapes German intellectual culture today.

The thesis interprets Garve's quarrels as local expressions of a conflict between two views of the intellectual's vocation. Both go back to ancient models. Plato argued that the philosopher should preserve independence from society; Cicero argued that he must serve his fellow men. Cicero sought to bring philosophy down from heaven; Plato was concerned to send it back. The present thesis identifies Garve with the Ciceronian position, labelled here as 'humanism', and his opponents with Plato. It also notes that his arguments frequently draw on rhetorical principles; rhetoric and humanist philosophy were closely linked. Accordingly, the thesis locates each individual exchange against the background of key texts from those two traditions.

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**Long Abstract**

The present thesis analyses four exchanges between the philosopher Christian Garve (1742-1798) and other important German intellectuals. It interprets these exchanges within a historical conflict between two views of the intellectual's vocation. One view is traceable to Plato. It claims that the philosopher should pursue metaphysical truth and take little to do with his society.<sup>1</sup> The other is traceable to Cicero. It stresses the duty of the intellectual to be active in public life, and to make his work accessible to the general public. Garve upholds the second view. His reputation perished because it was excluded from German intellectual culture. These four exchanges therefore illuminate developments whose effects are still felt in Germany today.

Garve was born, died, and spent most of his life in the city of Breslau. He studied in Halle, Frankfurt an der Oder, and Leipzig. At the latter university, he lectured in philosophy for two years, but then effectively retired at the age of thirty. The rest of his life was spent at home in writing and scholarship. He was supported by the proceeds from the family dye business. In his lifetime, he enjoyed considerable fame as a literary critic, writer of philosophical essays, and translator. The better known

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this thesis, masculine pronouns are used for any representative figures mentioned ('the intellectual', 'the philosopher', 'the author', 'the orator'). It is assumed that Garve and contemporaries are highly likely to have thought of such figures overwhelmingly as male.

translations include Adam Ferguson's *Institutes of Moral Philosophy*, Edmund Burke's essay on the sublime, Cicero's *De officiis*, and Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. The Cicero translation was completed at the request of Frederick the Great; it went through several editions after Garve's death.

It was the only work of his to enjoy such success. After a mauling at the hands of the Romantics, he fell into disrepute. This change in fortune was connected with wider developments. Garve was associated with the programme of *Popularphilosophie*. *Popularphilosophen* sought to release philosophy from pedantry, treating themes of practical interest in an accessible style. With the ascendancy of Kantian philosophy, however, *Popularphilosophie* was dismissed as lacking in intellectual substance. As one of its most high-profile representatives, Garve's fate was sealed. This is reflected in the state of research on him. Previous work has amounted to a handful of dissertations and some more specialized investigations.<sup>2</sup>

The chief problem facing research on Garve today is to establish his significance. Even if his opponents' verdicts are read through critical eyes, the question still lurks: what makes him worth investigating? The period in which he lived is rife with unjustly neglected intellectuals. Others might have a more evident claim to attention. Sulzer, Eschenburg, and Nicolai, for example, have all been the subject of recent essay volumes. All produced significant theoretical works or made defining contributions to *Aufklärung* discourse. It is easy to see why studying Sulzer's *Theorie*

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<sup>2</sup> The thesis introduction gives more detail about previous Garve research.

would be worthwhile; at one time, all educated Germans were aware of it. The *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* enjoyed similar coverage. Eschenburg influenced literary education well into the nineteenth century. Garve has no such case to make.

His unique claim lies elsewhere. As indicated, Garve (like Sulzer and Nicolai, and perhaps Eschenburg) fell into oblivion because he was on the wrong side of a crucial conflict. This conflict is given concrete historical expression in several episodes from Garve's career. He made a habit of repeatedly coming into contact with important contemporaries. Garve engaged Kant in dialogue after the publication of the first *Kritik*. A decade later, he became involved in debate with Schiller, and eventually Goethe, over *Die Horen* and the *Xenien*. As indicated above, he was the victim of an unusually brutal attack from the Romantics.

These exchanges span three defining movements in German intellectual culture, and fundamental principles were at stake in them. Garve and Kant discuss the possibility of expressing the *Kritik* in popular language; their contrasting answers to this question are rooted in contrasting assumptions about what philosophy is. Schiller explicitly proclaims himself to be offering Garve a subject of great cultural importance when he asks him to write on the relationship between the author and the public. Later, the arguments that Garve brings in defence of Manso evoke a specific set of criteria of judgement (which Schiller rejects). When the Romantics come to attack Garve, they frequently target important areas of his philosophical project in order to recast them negatively; so Garve's commitment to observation becomes proof of his inability to think with systematic rigour.

Garve thus becomes an index to important developments in the period. By repeatedly entering into dialogue – willingly or otherwise – he created a series of concrete historical situations where fundamental conflicts play out. Again and again in these exchanges, some important point of opposition crystallizes in the statements of Garve and of his opponents. He thus provides modern scholarship with a series of invaluable, historically-based case studies. These are rich sources of insight into intellectual debate in the period. It is, of course, possible to outline opposing positions simply by comparing key texts. The value of these episodes, however, is that the two sides respond directly to one another; the key points of disagreement are sharply defined.

A central theme in the debates is the relationship between the intellectual and the wider public. The thesis draws out the contrasting assumptions which inform both sides' positions. Garve typically thinks of the intellectual as linked with his fellow members of society. His work should contribute to serving them. Clear communication and the choice of practically-minded themes are means to this end. By contrast, his opponents stress a dichotomy between the intellectual and his society. This dichotomy takes on various forms in each case. For Kant, the philosopher thinks about quite different things to the layman; for Schiller, the poet is a prophetic figure from another realm; for the Romantics, the philosopher should seek what is true, not what benefits society.

Research frequently deals with this opposition by interpreting Garve as a *Popularphilosoph*, a term which he used himself. *Popularphilosophie* is then placed over against Kant and the Kantian inheritance.<sup>3</sup> However, such an approach has important shortcomings. It assumes a teleological narrative in German intellectual history. The triumph of Kantianism is read as the result of its obvious superiority. On this view, the unfortunate *Popularphilosophen* were doomed from the start. Their failure to engage with Kant is evidence of intellectual deficiency. Garve, like many other *Aufklärung* intellectuals, found himself unequal to the new philosophy. The same teleological approach can be applied to literary debates: Manso and Garve appear as philistines, unable to grasp what Goethe and Schiller were doing.<sup>4</sup>

The present thesis adopts a different approach. There is more than one way of framing the difference between the two sides' priorities. The conflict between *Popularphilosophie* and Kantianism was a local manifestation of an age-old opposition between two attitudes to intellectual life. On the one hand stands the view articulated by Cicero, and embraced by the Renaissance humanists. According to this view, human nature is both rational and sociable. All men have a moral duty to contribute to their society, and so intellectual work must have an obvious practical purpose. On the other hand stands the view articulated in Plato's *Theaetetus*. The true philosopher will shun sordid public life. He will be interested only in general truths, not in the contingent phenomena of society.

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<sup>3</sup> Goethe and Schiller could scarcely be called Kantians. However, they, like the Romantics, thought highly of Kant's philosophy and engaged with it in depth. For the purposes of this thesis, they are therefore associated with the broad tendency in German thought descended from Kant.

<sup>4</sup> For examples of this perspective, see in particular chapter three of this thesis.

Garve is here identified with the first view, his opponents with the second. This is not simply an interpretive convenience: Garve repeatedly identifies himself, implicitly or explicitly, with the humanist tradition. This is most evident in his frequent recourse to positions from classical rhetoric. With Kant, he discusses clarity (*Deutlichkeit*). Clarity was central to the rhetorical theory of style, and Garve's definition matches that in the *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian. His foes also associated him with a way of thinking that emphasized clear communication. Friedrich Schlegel's essay, 'Über die Unverständlichkeit', contains an aside to this effect ('ich wollte [...] darstellen, wie unverständlich mir zum Beispiel Garve sei'<sup>5</sup>). Rhetoric crops up elsewhere as a guide to literary composition. Garve appeals to Schiller's knowledge of 'die Kunst der Wohlredenheit und der Poesie'.<sup>6</sup> Finally, Garve's definition of the intellectual's role in society evokes the ideal orator in the *Institutio*.

Rhetoric, as Garve uses it, is much more than a set of technical guidelines for persuasive speech. Its prescriptions are bound up with far-reaching claims about human thought and life. They embody the values of humanist philosophy. Rhetoric and humanism went hand in hand; Cicero united them in his person. The importance of eloquence was a given for thinkers who saw the intellectual as morally obliged to participate in public life.

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<sup>5</sup> Friedrich Schlegel, 'Über die Unverständlichkeit', now in *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe*, ed. Ernst Behler et al, 35 vols (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1958-), vol. 2, p. 364.

<sup>6</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, now in Friedrich Schiller, *Werke. Nationalausgabe*, ed. Julius Petersen et al, 43 vols (Weimar: Böhlau, 1943-), vol. 37.i, p. 137.

Rhetoric and humanism are treated here as the proper context for Garve's positions. The four exchanges are read as part of a late skirmish in a long war between two contrasting approaches. One side believes that the intellectual can only fulfil his vocation by playing an active part in society; the other believes that he must preserve his independence from that society. The thesis paints with a broad brush. However, this serves two positive functions. Firstly, it illuminates very real differences between Garve and his opponents, and locates these differences in a coherent framework. Conflicting assumptions about the intellectual's role unite these otherwise disparate episodes. Garve's opponents are a diverse group, yet all share in the rejection of his claims. Secondly, the frame gives these events their rightful significance. These are no ephemeral clashes. Here, two different ways of thinking – equally ancient, equally distinguished – collide. The outcome of this collision still shapes German intellectual life today. The values of Garve's opponents still hold sway; their verdicts can still be found reiterated in contemporary research.

The thesis introduction elaborates the approach adopted here, relating it to previous research on Garve. A first chapter treats Garve's exchange with Kant after the publication of the first *Kritik*. The two writers differ on whether Kant could have expressed the *Kritik* more accessibly; the chapter traces this difference to their contrasting concepts of philosophy. A second chapter begins with Schiller's unsuccessful attempt to involve Garve in *Die Horen*. The two discuss the author's role in society; again, their positions are very different. Garve argues for the author as a public servant, sharing the public's faculty of mind and language. Schiller presents poetry as an alternative to political reform, and the poet as a

representative of alien cultural values. A third chapter details further developments in this exchange. After Garve's friend Manso attacked *Die Horen*, he was ridiculed in the *Xenien*. Garve wrote to Schiller in Manso's defence, invoking rhetorical values, but this appeal was rejected. A final chapter traces four important aspects of the Romantic polemic against Garve. Each of these consists in taking a central positive value in Garve's project and recasting it as negative. All four chapters locate Garve and his opponents with reference to the rhetorical and humanist traditions; the final chapter also suggests further contexts for Garve's thought.

## Introduction

The following quotation refers to the philosopher Christian Garve (1742-1798):

Als Garve wenige Wochen vor seinem Tod Bilanz zieht über seine philosophische Lebensleistung, scheint er ein deutliches Bewußtsein davon zu haben, daß die Zeit und die philosophische Entwicklung über ihn und sein Philosophieverständnis bereits hinweggegangen sind. [...] Als Popularphilosoph orientierte sich Garve an der alltäglichen Lebenspraxis: den Menschen durch ein an die Erfahrung rückgebundenes, sich auf gesunden Menschenverstand berufendes und in allgemein verständlicher Sprache geschriebenes „Meditieren“, das weniger belehren als zum Selbstdenken anregen wollte, praktische Lebenshilfe zu vermitteln, das war nach Garves Meinung Aufgabe der Philosophie; und dieser Aufgabe hat er sich in seinen zahlreichen Aufsätzen und wenigen Büchern gewidmet. Originalität, Schärfe und Gründlichkeit des Denkens dagegen waren seine Sache nicht.<sup>7</sup>

The source is a biographical article in the *Metzler Philosophen Lexikon*; its author is Claus Altmayer. The *Lexikon* is a reputable reference work. It is therefore surprising to find within it a thinker lacking in ‘Originalität, Schärfe und Gründlichkeit des Denkens’: in short, a fool. It might – possibly – be retorted that originality is not a precondition for intellectual merit. Yet perspicuity and thoroughness surely are. Similar verdicts can be found elsewhere. Rudolf Vierhaus echoes Altmayer in dismissing the movement to which Garve belonged: ‘Wer will bestreiten, daß [die Popularphilosophen] oft in Trivialitäten stecken blieben und daß es ihnen an denkerischer Originalität mangelte?’<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Claus Altmayer, ‘Garve, Christian’, in Bernd Lutz (ed.) *Metzler Philosophen Lexikon* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2003), pp. 242-243.

<sup>8</sup> Rudolf Vierhaus, ‘Christian Garve’, in Vierhaus (ed.), *Aufklärung als Prozess* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1988), p. 135.

The background to these verdicts lies in a point made several times by Altmayer.<sup>9</sup> Garve's reputation underwent a dramatic reversal, as a result of wider developments in German intellectual culture. He once enjoyed a high standing: an oft-quoted dictum from Kant calls Garve 'ein Philosoph in der ächten Bedeutung des Wortes'.<sup>10</sup> Around the time of his death, however, Kantian values achieved hegemony over German intellectual life. Garve and his very different priorities came to be discredited. He has never really recovered. Attempts to rehabilitate him frequently echo the verdicts of his foes. Altmayer is a case in point. He goes on to claim that recent research has tried to be fair to Garve, but his own article tells a different story.<sup>11</sup> The suggestion that Garve lacks 'Originalität, Schärfe und Gründlichkeit' echoes the polemic of Friedrich Schlegel and Friedrich Schleiermacher, two hundred years before.

This thesis argues that several episodes from Garve's career illuminate the historical developments which sealed his fate. In these episodes, the conflict between his way of thinking and that of his opponents is dramatized. A crucial background to this conflict lies in the intellectual traditions of humanism and classical rhetoric. Garve's view of the intellectual's vocation evokes those traditions, but his opponents articulate a very different view. He believed that philosophy should dwell in the cities of men; they were concerned to send it back to heaven. The remainder of this

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<sup>9</sup> See further Altmayer, 'Garve', p. 242: 'schon etwa zehn Jahre später war Garve weitgehend vergessen, nicht zuletzt, weil er einen Begriff von Philosophie vertrat, für den die Generation von Fichte, Schelling und Hegel nicht das geringste Verständnis mehr aufbrachte.'

<sup>10</sup> See Immanuel Kant, *Kants Gesammelte Schriften (Akademie-Ausgabe)*, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 29 vols (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1894-), vol. 6 [= AA 6], p. 206.

<sup>11</sup> See Altmayer, 'Garve', p. 243: 'Um eine historisch gerechte, unvoreingenommene Beurteilung dieses Werkes und des darin zum Ausdruck kommenden Philosophieverständnisses hat sich die Forschung erst in jüngster Zeit bemüht.'

introduction will detail Garve's biography and the state of prior research before elaborating the approach adopted here.

## Biography and reception history

Garve was born in Breslau in 1742, the son of Nathanael Garve, a dyer, and Anna Katharina Garve.<sup>12</sup> His father died when Garve was very young; different accounts give the date variously as 1744, 1747, or 1748.<sup>13</sup> After receiving his initial education at home, Garve matriculated as a theology student at Frankfurt an der Oder in 1762. The next year, he moved to Halle, where his studies became increasingly oriented towards philosophy and mathematics. In 1765, he matriculated at the university of Leipzig; he was, however, still able to complete his *Magister* examination in Halle one year later, under the supervision of Johann Andreas von Segner. In Leipzig, he met the philologist Johann August Ernesti and also Christian Fürchtegott Gellert. Garve lodged with Gellert, and subsequently regarded him as an academic mentor. In 1767, he returned briefly to Breslau, but the following summer saw him back in Leipzig to lecture in mathematics and philosophy. After Gellert's death in 1769, Garve inherited the older man's post as associate professor of philosophy. However, he found that academic life did not agree with him, and returned to Breslau in 1772. He spent the rest of his days in scholarship and writing, supported by the bequest from his father's prosperous business. Until her death in 1792, his mother was

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<sup>12</sup> For Garve's biography, see Kurt Wölfel, 'Garve, Christian', in *Neue Deutsche Biographie* vol. 6 (1964), pp. 77-78; Vierhaus, 'Garve', pp. 135-137; Claus Altmayer, *Aufklärung als Popularphilosophie: bürgerliches Individuum und Öffentlichkeit bei Christian Garve* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1992), pp. 17-30; Leonie Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie und Volkskunde: Christian Garve (1742-1798) – Reflexionen zur Fachgeschichte* (Marburg: Elwert, 1998), pp. 43-104; Fania Oz-Salzberger, 'Christian Garve', in Alan Charles Kors (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 101-102; Altmayer, 'Garve'; Falk Wunderlich, 'Garve, Christian', in Heiner Klemme and Manfred Kuehn (eds), *The Bloomsbury Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century German Philosophers* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp. 246-251.

<sup>13</sup> See Wölfel, 'Garve', p. 77; Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, p. 17; Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie*, p. 45.

apparently his chief companion. Correspondence kept him in touch with friends in Leipzig and elsewhere. He died from a cancer of the eye in 1798.

Most of Garve's literary activity was as an essayist and translator. The essays range from a fragment of La Rochefoucauld to the Silesian peasantry; they take in philosophy, politics, literary criticism, psychology, and sociology. Garve's better-known translations include Cicero's *De officiis*, Adam Ferguson's *Principles of Moral Philosophy*, and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Garve included copious notes with the Cicero and Ferguson translations. His work on Aristotle led him to produce two independent pieces; both of these relate Garve's moral philosophy to previous trends.<sup>14</sup>

After an initial spate of obituaries and sympathetic appreciations, research on Garve has been fitful. The late nineteenth century saw several articles on his interactions with more prominent figures, including Schiller and Kant.<sup>15</sup> In 1905, a dissertation was published which compared his ethical model with Kant's.<sup>16</sup> Two post-war dissertations (1955 and 1970) covered themes from Garve's aesthetics and literary criticism.<sup>17</sup> Around the same time, Günter Schulz began to publish extensively on

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<sup>14</sup> For a full bibliography of Garve's published works, see Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie*, pp. 564-569.

<sup>15</sup> See Daniel Jacoby, 'Schiller und Garve', *Archiv für Literaturgeschichte* 7 (1878), pp. 95-145; Jacoby, 'Schiller und Garve', *Euphorion* 12 (1905), pp. 262-71; Albert Stern, 'Ueber die Beziehungen Christian Garves zu Kant nebst mehreren bisher ungedruckten Briefen Kants, Feders und Garves', (Leipzig: Leopold and Bär, 1884); Stern, 'Urtheil eines Popularphilosophen über den Weimarer Dichter-Kreis in einem ungedruckten Briefe aus dem Jahre 1781', in *Vossische Zeitung* 18, Berlin, 2.5.1886.

<sup>16</sup> Paul Müller, *Christian Garves Moralphilosophie und seine Stellungnahme zu Kants Ethik* (Borna; Leipzig: Noske, 1905).

<sup>17</sup> Dietlinde Dänzer-Vanotti, *Die Stellung Christian Garves zu den Beziehungen zwischen Antike und Moderne* (Freiburg in Breisgau: doctoral dissertation, 1955); Robert Van Dusen, *Christian Garve and English Belles-Lettres* (Bern: Lang, 1970).

Garve. Some of Schulz's work builds upon previous treatments of the relationships with Kant and with Schiller.<sup>18</sup> The editorial work of Kurt Wölfel, beginning in the 1970s, laid a foundation for all subsequent Garve scholarship. Wölfel has produced a facsimile edition of Garve's complete works, as well as a two-volume anthology of texts related to *Popularphilosophie*. Both publications include substantial essays by Wölfel.<sup>19</sup> Several more general treatments of *Popularphilosophie* have sought to locate Garve in the movement.<sup>20</sup> The 1990s saw two major dissertations from Claus Altmayer (*Aufklärung als Popularphilosophie*, 1992) and Leonie Koch-Schwarzer (*Populare Moralphilosophie als Volkskunde*, 1998); both look at Garve through the lens of *Popularphilosophie*. More recently, Garve's translations of Scottish Enlightenment figures have received some attention.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Günter Schulz, 'Christian Garve und Immanuel Kant: Gelehrtentugenden im 18. Jahrhundert', in *Jahrbuch der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau*, 5 (1960), pp. 123-88; Schulz, 'Christian Garve über den Patriotismus der Schlesier und seine historischen Grundlagen', in *Schlesien* 9 (1964), pp. 138-142; Schulz, 'Christian Garve zum Charakter der Schlesier', in *Schlesien* 12 (1967), pp. 133-139; Schulz, 'Zwei Freunde der Wahrheit. Ein Briefwechsel zwischen Christian Garve und Johann Caspar Lavater', in *Jahrbuch der schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau* 3 (1958), pp. 182-199; Schulz, 'Christian Garve im Briefwechsel mit Friedrich Nicolai und Elisa von der Recke', in *Wolfenbütteler Studien zur Aufklärung* 1 (1974), pp. 222-305; Schulz, 'Bürgertum und Bürgerlichkeit in der Darstellung Christian Garves', in Rudolf Vierhaus (ed.), *Bürger und Bürgerlichkeit im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Heidelberg: Schneider, 1981), pp. 255-263.

<sup>19</sup> See Garve, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Kurt Wölfel, 16 vols (Hildesheim; Zürich; New York: Olms, 1985-1987); Garve, *Popularphilosophische Schriften über literarische, ästhetische und gesellschaftliche Gegenstände*, facsimile edition ed. Wölfel, 2 vols (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1974).

<sup>20</sup> Monika Ammermann, *Gemeines Leben: Gewandelter Naturbegriff und literarische Spätaufklärung* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1979); Doris Bachmann-Medick, *Die ästhetische Ordnung des Handelns: Moralphilosophie und Ästhetik in der Popularphilosophie des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1989).

<sup>21</sup> The two key figures here are Norbert Waszek and Fania Oz-Salzberger. See Waszek, 'Der junge Hegel und die "querelle des anciens et des modernes": Ferguson, Garve, Hegel', in Hans-Jürgen Gawoll and Christoph Jamme (ed.), *Idealismus mit Folgen. Die Epochenschwelle um 1800 zwischen Kunst und Geisteswissenschaften* (Munich: Fink, 1994), pp. 37-46; Waszek, 'Christian Garve als Zentralgestalt der deutschen Rezeption schottischer Aufklärung', in Daniel Brühlmeier, Helmut Holzhey, and Vilem Mudroch (ed.), *Schottische Aufklärung. A Hotbed of Genius* (Berlin: 1996), pp. 123-145; Waszek, 'Aux sources de la "Querelle" dans les "Lettres sur l'Education Esthétique de l'Homme de Schiller: Adam Ferguson et Christian Garve', in Jean-Marie Paul (ed.), *Crise et Conscience du Temps* (Nancy: 1998), pp. 111-129; Waszek, 'La "Tendance à la sociabilité" (Trieb der Geselligkeit) chez Christian Garve', in *Revue Germanique Internationale* 18 (2002), pp. 224-225; Waszek, 'Übersetzungspraxis und Popularphilosophie am Beispiel Christian Garves', in *Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert* 31.1, (2007), pp. 42-61; Waszek, 'The Scottish Enlightenment in Germany, and its

## Garve and Aufklärungsforschung

Current Enlightenment research does not offer an obvious context for work on Garve. This is not due to a lack of interest in non-canonical figures. Recent examples of *Aufklärungsforschung* have expressly sought to include writers who had previously been overlooked. Epochal brilliance (of the order of Lessing or Kant) is no longer a criterion, as Stefanie Stockhorst explains:

Gelegentliche Neubestimmungen des kanonisierten Höhenkamms sorgen allerdings für frischen Wind in der Aufklärungshistoriographie, etwa wenn Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann und Ralph Häfner Johann Jacob Bruckers (1696-1770) *Historia critica philosophiae* (1742-1767) als „sicherlich die herausragendste Leistung dieser Epoche“ deklarieren. Wissenschaftliche Aufmerksamkeit verdienen indes nicht nur die innovativen Vordenker, sondern auch die Multiplikatoren, die Träger und „Macher“, die Popularisierer und Trivialisierer – diejenigen, die das Fundament für die unerhörte Nachhaltigkeit des Projektes „Aufklärung“ gelegt haben.<sup>22</sup>

For some time, research has prioritised individuals who made significant contributions to the project of *Aufklärung*. Such contributions could take various forms: influential theoretical statements, institutional activity, or the shaping of public debate.

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Translator, Christian Garve (1742-1798)', in Tom Hubbard, R. D. S. Jack, and Ian Rankin (eds), *Scotland in Europe* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), pp. 55-71. See also Oz-Salzberger, *Translating the Enlightenment: Scottish Civic Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Oz-Salzberger, 'Did Adam Ferguson inspire Friedrich Schiller's Philosophy of Play? An Exercise in Tracking the Itinerary of an Idea', in Stefanie Stockhorst (ed.), *Cultural Transfer Through Translation* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), pp. 315-337. See further Johan van der Zande, 'The Microscope of Experience: Christian Garve's Translation of Cicero's *De Officiis* (1783)', in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59.1 (1998), pp. 75-94.

<sup>22</sup> Stefanie Stockhorst, 'Einleitung', in Stockhorst (ed.), *Epoche und Projekt: Perspektiven der Aufklärungsforschung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013), pp. 18-19. Stockhorst quotes Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann and Ralph Häfner, 'Richtungen und Tendenzen in der deutschen Aufklärungsforschung', in Carsten Zelle (ed.), *20 Jahre Deutsche Gesellschaft für die Erforschung des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts: Aufklärungsforschung – Bilanzen und Perspektiven* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1995), p. 165.

This approach is evident in a variety of recent work. In 2011, Frank Grunert and Gideon Stiening edited a volume of essays on Johann Georg Sulzer. Grunert and Stiening's introduction begins with a justification for studying Sulzer:

Nach seiner Übersiedelung nach Berlin und seiner Aufnahme in die Akademie der Wissenschaften entwickelte sich der Schweizer Mathematiker, Pädagoge und Philosoph zwischen 1750 und 1775 durch seine Beiträge zur Philosophie – vor allem zur Psychologie, Anthropologie und Ästhetik – aber auch zur Wissenschaftstheorie, Mathematik, Ethik und Pädagogik – zu einem der bekanntesten und wirkmächtigsten Theoretiker sowie durch seine Tätigkeit an der Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaften und diverser gelehrter Gesellschaften zu einem der prägenden Organisatoren der Aufklärung.<sup>23</sup>

Two aspects of Sulzer's achievement are named which merit attention. Firstly, he was an assiduous producer of theoretical work, covering a range of fields and widely read: the best-known example (but by no means the only one) is his *Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste*. Secondly, he was an important figure in the Berlin Academy, creating a forum for debate on the questions of the day.

Stockhorst introduces a recent volume on Friedrich Nicolai with the claim that comparisons with heavyweights such as Lessing are inevitably counterproductive. Nicolai needs to be evaluated on his own terms, not against a narrow definition of literary greatness:

Die Herausforderung [liegt] darin, Nicolai in seinen Funktionen als Protagonist, als „Macher“ und Multiplikator der deutschen Aufklärung einschließlich der ihr eigenen Aporien und Friktionen (die Nicolai in bezeichnender Weise verkörpert) [...] zu untersuchen. [...] Unter dem Aspekt von faktischer Präsenz, Quantität und Wirkung gehört Nicolai

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<sup>23</sup> Frank Grunert and Gideon Stiening, 'Einleitung', in Grunert and Stiening (ed.), *Johann Georg Sulzer (1720-1779): Aufklärung zwischen Christian Wolff und David Hume* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2011), p. 11.

allemaal zu den Schlüsselfiguren der Aufklärung, und zwar nicht nur in Preußen, sondern im deutschsprachigen Raum insgesamt.<sup>24</sup>

Nicolai is worth studying because one can scarcely imagine the *Aufklärung* without him. Few individuals exerted more influence in the actual project of Enlightenment in Germany. He was active as a publisher in a wide range of areas. By editing the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*, he made available a crucial organ for debate ('ein Brennpunkt der kritischen Diskussionskultur seiner Zeit').<sup>25</sup> Nicolai fits ideally with the programme outlined by Stockhorst in her more general introduction. The same basic argument for studying him appears there: 'Man denke nur an die verlegerischen Höchstleistungen [...] eines Friedrich Nicolai, der in seiner *Allgemeinen Deutschen Bibliothek* (1765-1796) und *Neuen Allgemeinen Deutschen Bibliothek* (1797-1806) insgesamt über 60,000 Rezensionen internationaler Neuerscheinungen aus allen Wissensgebieten druckte und damit eine kritische Öffentlichkeit *par excellence* schuf.'<sup>26</sup>

A 2013 volume on Johann Joachim Eschenburg, edited by Cord-Friedrich Berghahn and Till Kinzel, makes a similar pitch:

Die deutsche Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte kennt kaum einen Wissenschaftler von derart weitreichender Ausstrahlung, derart weitgespannten Interessen und derart intensiver Forschungs- und Lehrtätigkeit wie Johann Joachim Eschenburg (1743-1820). [...] [Am Braunschweiger Collegium Carolinum] hat er – zunächst als Lektor, dann als außerordentlicher Professor (ab 1773), schließlich auf dem Lehrstuhl für *Schöne Literatur und Philosophie* (1777-1820) – eine

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<sup>24</sup> Stockhorst, 'Einleitung', in Stockhorst (ed.), *Friedrich Nicolai im Kontext der kritischen Kultur der Aufklärung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), pp. 11-12.

<sup>25</sup> Stockhorst, 'Einleitung', in Stockhorst (ed.), *Nicolai*, p. 12.

<sup>26</sup> Stockhorst, 'Einleitung', in Stockhorst (ed.), *Epoche und Projekt*, p. 19.

Wirksamkeit entfaltet, für die es in Aufklärung, Klassik und Romantik kein zweites Beispiel im deutschen Sprachraum gibt.<sup>27</sup>

Eschenburg is hailed for his diverse range of activity. He wrote on an enormous variety of themes. In over half a century at the *Collegium Carolinum*, he was an ‘unermüdlicher Organisator’.<sup>28</sup> The introduction goes on to cite the enduring influence of his pedagogical texts, *Entwurf einer Theorie und Literatur der schönen Wissenschaften*, *Handbuch der classischen Litteratur* and *Lehrbuch der Wissenschaftskunde*: ‘Als Theoretiker der Wissenschaften hat Eschenburg drei für die Ordnung des Wissens zwischen Aufklärung und Romantik bedeutsame Werke verfasst, die nicht nur wissenschafts-, sondern auch disziplinengeschichtlich wegweisend waren und sich bis weit in das 19. Jahrhundert in den Lehrplänen hielten.’<sup>29</sup>

Recent research has done much to place figures like Sulzer, Nicolai, and Eschenburg in a more sympathetic light. All three men, furthermore, invite comparison with Garve as *Aufklärung* thinkers who later fell into neglect. However, if the qualification for inclusion in *Aufklärungsforschung* is influence in public discourse, Garve’s case is doubtful. He produced no magnum opus equivalent to Sulzer’s *Theorie* or Eschenburg’s triad, and was not widely read after his death. Of all his works published around 1800, only an essay on arguments for the existence of God made it to a second edition.<sup>30</sup> Most of his adult life was spent in relative isolation. He

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<sup>27</sup> Cord-Friedrich Berghahn and Till Kinzel, ‘Einleitung’, in Berghahn and Kinzel (eds), *Johann Joachim Eschenburg und die Künste und Wissenschaften zwischen Aufklärung und Romantik* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2013), p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> Berghahn and Kinzel, ‘Einleitung’, p. 11.

<sup>29</sup> Berghahn and Kinzel, ‘Einleitung’, p. 10.

<sup>30</sup> See Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, pp. 39-40.

frequently paints Breslau as an intellectual backwater.<sup>31</sup> His correspondence gives the impression of a somewhat passive character; he certainly exerted no great influence on the institutions of *Aufklärung* public debate. Though a member of the Berlin Academy, he was not particularly active in it. His translations are the only area of his activity which really matches current research interests; it is not surprising that they have featured prominently in recent work.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> See the preface to the first volume of his correspondence with Christian Felix Weiße, in Garve, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 15, part 1 [= GW 15.1], p. iv: 'In der That wird [Garves Briefe] schwerlich Jemand aus der Hand legen, ohne die Bemerkung zu machen, daß Garve, als Gelehrter, mit seinen Mitbürgern eigentlich in fast gar keiner Verbindung lebte, sondern größtentheils auf den Briefwechsel mit einigen geistreichen Männern des Auslandes, und auf den Genuß, den ihm von Zeit zu Zeit eine Reise nach Berlin und Sachsen gewährte, beschränkt war.'

<sup>32</sup> See above, p. 17.

## Conflicts and Quarrels

Garve is interesting for other reasons. His career has a striking peculiarity. In a crucial period in German intellectual history, he appears at several significant moments. He becomes involved in a series of exchanges with important contemporaries. In these exchanges, matters of intellectual substance are discussed; they therefore illuminate concrete intellectual debates from the time.

After the publication of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Kant was much annoyed by a review which appeared in the *Göttinger Gelehrte Anzeigen*. This review was based on an original by Garve, but had been heavily edited (with an anti-Kantian slant) by Johann Georg Heinrich Feder. Garve subsequently wrote to Kant to defend himself; there ensued a discussion between the two on the difficult language of the *Kritik*.

A decade later, Schiller wrote to Garve in the hope that the older man might contribute to his new journal project, *Die Horen*. Garve declined, but not before he and Schiller had exchanged views on the relationship between the author and society. Later correspondence brought further discussion. Here the theme recalls the previous exchange with Kant: Garve expressed doubts about the difficult language of *Die Horen*. His criticisms were later expressed with a good deal more polemical force by his friend and protégé, Johann Kaspar Friedrich Manso, in a review of *Die Horen*. The review made Manso an inviting target for the *Xenien*; when they were published, Garve wrote to Schiller to take up Manso's cause, and was duly dismissed by both Schiller and Goethe as a representative of pedestrian German thinking.

Shortly afterwards, Garve was the object of particularly harsh treatment from the Romantics, Friedrich Schlegel and Friedrich Schleiermacher. He was not the only *Aufklärer* to fare similarly, but the attack on him appears to have had a strategic dimension. Schleiermacher's review was intended to make others take notice of the Romantic position: 'Aergerniß werden wir doch genug geben [...]. Dein einziger Garve reicht allenfalls hin – denn es wird groß Geschrey dagegen seyn.'<sup>33</sup> Schlegel and Schleiermacher's polemic against Garve is frequently *pars pro toto*. He was representative of all the Romantics detested:

Ich [glaube] jetzt, daß *Voß* und *Wieland* der Garve und Nicolai der Poesie sind. Es giebt jetzt offenbar ein wirklich böses Princip, einen Ahriman in der deutschen Litteratur. Das sind sie, die negativen Classiker. [...] [Ihre Poesie] hat gar keinen Werth, sondern wirklichen Unwerth, und muß also in Belagerungsstand erklärt werden.<sup>34</sup>

Garve thus came into conflict with three movements which defined modern German literature and thought: Kantianism, Weimar Classicism, and Romanticism. These conflicts provide the present thesis with its basic structure and focus.<sup>35</sup> This approach can draw upon an established tradition in modern German scholarship. Carlos Spoerhase's article, 'Wissenschaftsgeschichte als Konfliktgeschichte', stresses the heuristic value of studying conflicts:

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<sup>33</sup> Friedrich Schlegel and Dorothea Veit to Schleiermacher, 29.11.1799, in Friedrich Schlegel, *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe*, ed. Ernst Behler et al, 35 vols (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1958-), vol. 25 [= KFSa 25], p. 28.

<sup>34</sup> Friedrich Schlegel to Caroline Schlegel, 20.10.1798, in KFSa 24, p. 185.

<sup>35</sup> The thesis distinguishes two separate exchanges between Garve and Schiller. Both stem from the same initial correspondence exchange, but (as should be clear from the chapters) the themes covered are ultimately quite different. The overall exchange thus lends itself to two separate treatments.

Die Kontroversengeschichte ist [...] insofern ein nützlicher Zugang zu vergangenen Wissensformationen, als sie deren meist verdeckte Fundamente freizulegen erlaubt. In der Regel entsteht erst in epistemischen Kontroversen ein Rechtfertigungsdruck, der die Kontroversenteilnehmer dazu anhält, ihre sonst impliziten inhaltlichen Vorannahmen auf die Ebene eines expliziten argumentativen Diskurses zu heben. Kontroversen zwingen die an ihnen teilnehmenden Parteien also, ihre Positionen umfassender zu artikulieren und zu legitimieren, als das sonst der Fall gewesen wäre.<sup>36</sup>

Challenges call for explanations. According to Spoerhase, only when writers become embroiled in dispute do they articulate and defend their own basic assumptions. The study of controversies thus provides insight into intellectual frameworks ('Wissensformationen') which is not easily available by other means.<sup>37</sup>

The approach Spoerhase describes has been applied intermittently to the eighteenth century. Iwan-Michelangelo D'Aprile and Winfried Siebers claim that key *Aufklärung* concepts take shape in the thick of debates.<sup>38</sup> Ursula Goldenbaum has edited two volumes on public debate in the period.<sup>39</sup> An early landmark, still valuable, is the work of Hans-Dietrich Dahnke and Bernd Leistner. Their two volumes on *Debatten und Kontroversen* furnish a rich account of a series of disputes. They treat controversies as sources of insight into a time of profound change:

Tatsächlich eröffnet jeder öffentliche Disput, jedes Streitgeschehen Einblicke in eine komplizierte literaturgeschichtliche Entwicklungssituation; die Aufarbeitung der jeweiligen Reaktionen

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<sup>36</sup> Carlos Spoerhase, 'Wissenschaftsgeschichte als Konfliktgeschichte. Am Beispiel von Kontroversen in der Literaturtheorie', in *Geschichte der Germanistik* 29/30 (2006), p. 21.

<sup>37</sup> See also Kurt Flasch, *Kampfpplätze der Philosophie* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2008), pp. 7-8: '[Kontroversen] verraten die Prämisse ihrer Zeit [...] Da kämpften Autoren miteinander um das, was gut oder schlecht, wahr oder falsch sei, und der heutige Betrachter hat davon den Nutzen, die Kriterien der Kontrahenten zu erfahren.'

<sup>38</sup> See Iwan-Michelangelo D'Aprile and Winfried Siebers, *Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert: Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2008), pp. 16-19.

<sup>39</sup> Ursula Goldenbaum (ed.), *Appell an das Publikum: die öffentliche Debatte in der deutschen Aufklärung*, 2 vols (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2004).

kommt daher – auch – dem Indizieren eines aufschlußreichen Querschnittes gleich; und die Reihung solcher Querschnittsbetrachtungen läßt das wechselvolle Neben-, Mit- und Gegeneinander eben als eine Bewegung hervortreten, deren verwickeltes und spannungsvolles Gesamt auf diese Weise recht sinnfällig gemacht werden kann. [...] Gerade in den Kontroversen spiegeln sich charakteristische geistige Haltungen und Positionen sowie deren Wandlungen besonders prägnant.<sup>40</sup>

Dahnke and Leistner echo Spoerhase. Faced with opposition, thinkers are required to justify themselves. Controversies serve to clarify positions and illustrate their complex character. They thus offer privileged insight into what was really at stake in older debates.

There is much to be said for applying *Konfliktgeschichte* to Garve. Certainly, he was in strong disagreement with his contemporaries over important matters. Equally certainly, these episodes illuminate broader developments in German intellectual history: this is what makes them worth studying. However, the label ‘conflict’ needs to be qualified, for two reasons. Firstly, much common ground united Garve with his opponents. The scope of this thesis does not permit detailed investigation of continuities, but they were nonetheless very real. Secondly, open warfare is relatively rare. These rarely develop into frontal controversies; points of disagreement are rather more subtle.

Studying the relationship between Garve and Kant, Franz Nauen makes the following observation: ‘Das Beste von Garves Denken findet man auch bei Kant, und dort viel

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<sup>40</sup> Hans-Dietrich Dahnke and Bernd Leistner, ‘Vorbemerkung’, in Dahnke and Leistner (eds), *Debatten und Kontroversen. Literarische Auseinandersetzungen in Deutschland am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols (Berlin; Weimar: Aufbau-Verlag, 1989), vol. 1, p. 10.

präziser.<sup>41</sup> This particular point might be queried, but the two men certainly had a fruitful interaction which has been the subject of some research.<sup>42</sup> The case for common ground between Schiller and Garve is even stronger. Schiller read Garve all his life, and Peter-André Alt has argued that Garve remained an important influence for Schiller's major theoretical works.<sup>43</sup>

Even (!) the Romantics, Garve's chief detractors, offer points of contact. Some twentieth century research sought to correct unhelpful polarities between *Aufklärung* and Romanticism by stressing both continuity and discontinuity: 'In die Richtung eines differenzierten Verständnisses weisen Formeln, mit denen man eine Einheit von Kontinuität und Diskontinuität ausdrücken möchte.'<sup>44</sup> Garve and August Wilhelm Schlegel furnish one notable example of the case.

Schlegel's Berlin *Vorlesungen über schöne Literatur und Kunst* present *Aufklärung* as wholly opposed to the values and priorities of Romanticism. The spirit of Enlightenment is 'eine ungebührliche Herrschaft des Verstandes im Verhältniß zur Vernunft und Phantasie'.<sup>45</sup> Schlegel offers an alternative perspective. The mind's light must be balanced by darkness.

Unser Gemüth theilt sich wie die äußere Welt zwischen Licht und Dunkel, und der Wechsel von Tag und Nacht ist ein sehr treffendes Bild unsers geistigen Daseyns. [...] Der Sonnenschein ist die Vernunft

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<sup>41</sup> Franz Nauen, 'Garve – ein Philosoph in der echten Bedeutung des Wortes', in *Kant-Studien* 87 (1996), p. 184.

<sup>42</sup> See e.g. Carlos Melches Gilbert, *Der Einfluß von Christian Garves Übersetzung Ciceros 'De officiis' auf Kants 'Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten'* (Regensburg: Roderer, 1994).

<sup>43</sup> See below, pp. 160-161.

<sup>44</sup> Ludwig Stockinger, 'Die Auseinandersetzung der Romantiker mit der Aufklärung', in Helmut Schanze (ed.), *Romantik-Handbuch* (Stuttgart: Kröner, 2003), p. 85.

<sup>45</sup> August Wilhelm Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe der Vorlesungen*, ed. Ernst Behler et al, 3 vols (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1989-), vol. 1 [= AWS 1], p. 532.

als Sittlichkeit auf das thätige Leben angewandt, wo wir an die Bedingungen der Wirklichkeit gebunden sind. Die Nacht aber umhüllt diese mit einem wohlthätigen Schleyer, und eröffnet uns dagegen durch die Gestirne die Aussicht in die Räume der Möglichkeit; sie ist die Zeit der Träume. [...] [Vernunft und Fantasie] sind gleich schaffend und allmächtig, und ob sie sich wohl unendlich entgegengesetzt scheinen, indem die Vernunft unbedingt auf Einheit dringt, die Fantasie in grenzenloser Mannichfaltigkeit ihr Spiel treibt, sind sie doch die gemeinschaftliche Grundkraft unsers Wesens. [...] Eben auf dem Dunkel, worein sich die Wurzel unsers Daseyns verliert, auf dem unauflöselichen Geheimniß beruht der Zauber des Lebens, dieß ist die Seele aller Poesie.<sup>46</sup>

Schlegel proposes the dark, mysterious dimension of the mind as essential to human existence in all its fullness. The secret of creativity lies here, where the two faculties neglected by Enlightenment meet. The distinctively human activity of poetry is rooted in this inaccessible realm. The *Aufklärer* are wholly mistaken when they assume that everything important can be understood like a piece of arithmetic.<sup>47</sup>

Informed readers might have noted that at least one *Aufklärer* claimed nothing of the sort. Garve covered similar ground in the essay 'Die Kunst zu denken', his most developed reflection on philosophical method. The essay's introduction affirms that the invention of ideas is an obscure process:

Ein undurchdringliches Dunkel hängt, wie über dem Ursprunge jedes Dinges, und über jede Wirksamkeit der Natur, durch welche sie etwas hervorbringt, so auch über der Entstehung des Gedankens, und über der so merkwürdigen Verrichtung des Geistes, in welcher der erste Grund von allem liegt, was die Menschen Großes und Gutes hervorgebracht haben – der Meditation. Von der einen Seite ist augenscheinlich unser freyer Wille, unser Vorsatz dabey wirksam. [...] Auf der andern Seite ist die planmäßigste Untersuchung des Philosophen den Eingebungen des begeisterten Dichters, in vielen Punkten, ähnlich; und die Natur, oder der Zufall, – das Genie, oder

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<sup>46</sup> AWS 1, pp. 524-525.

<sup>47</sup> See the preceding comment in AWS 1, p. 524: 'Ein beschränkter endlicher Zweck läßt sich ganz durchschauen, und so soll ihnen auch das menschliche Daseyn und die Welt rein wie ein Rechen-Exempel aufgehn.'

eine höhere Macht scheinen dazu ihre, von der Willkür des Menschen nicht abhängige, Beyträge zu thun.<sup>48</sup>

The origin of thought is inaccessible to human understanding. In this, it reflects nature's productive activity as a whole. The thinker's agency has a role to play, but thinking cannot be reduced to this. An incomprehensible factor – given diverse labels, but never explained – is equally essential. Schlegel argued for a 'poetic', mysterious element to all thought, beyond rational analysis. Garve here suggests something recognizably similar. Even where a philosopher appears to have followed a purely rational, systematic procedure, his work has much in common with poetic 'inspiration'.

The two are not identical, but important continuities exist between Schlegel's account of human thought and Garve's. In spite of their important disagreements, they are not polar opposites. The relationship between Garve's thought and that of his opponents is a complex one: the present thesis interprets this relationship as a conflict, but other interpretations would be possible.

A further point which complicates the 'conflict' interpretation is the simple fact that outright conflict rarely breaks out. There is little open warfare here; Garve was not the sort of man to engage in fierce polemic. The Romantics engaged in a polemical attack, but Garve did not reciprocate. Schleiermacher's review was published after Garve's death. Even when he was alive, he greeted the Schlegels' attacks with confident equanimity: 'Was die beyden Schlegel betrifft, so mögen diese immer

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<sup>48</sup> Garve, 'Einige Beobachtungen über die Kunst zu denken', in GW 1.2, pp. 247-248.

gegen mich schreiben. [...] Ihre Art zu sehen aber ist gewiß nicht die richtige; und sie wird sich, wenn sie gute Köpfe sind, ändern, wenn sie älter werden.’<sup>49</sup>

The vocabulary of war is prominent in the *Xenien*; Goethe called them a *Kriegserklärung*.<sup>50</sup> However, both Schiller and Garve spend a lot of time trying to convince one another (and perhaps themselves) that they are in fact bosom intellectual companions. Even when Goethe and Schiller finally rejected Garve’s position, they did so without personal animosity. Goethe’s final letter refers to Garve as a poor, sickly old man. This may be patronizing, but it is not polemical.

As for Garve and Kant, both seem to have held each other in high regard. This apparently remained undiminished in spite of misunderstandings. Kant’s final letter to Garve, written only months before Garve’s death, can still hail him as ‘theuerster Freund’, and look back to a time ‘da wir miteinander freundschaftlich controvertirten’.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps the intervening decade and a half had given previous events a rosy glow, but Kant, at least, seems not to have thought of them as a war.

However, if this is not a war, it remains true that there were important points of disagreement between the two sides. These disagreements are frequently subterranean; they may not have seemed evident at the time. Yet they are real, and they are intractable. Repeatedly, sometimes in spite of their best efforts, Garve and his opponents cannot agree, because they are arguing from quite different premises.

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<sup>49</sup> Garve to Weiße, 9.10.1798, in GW 15.2, p. 275.

<sup>50</sup> See below, p. 185.

<sup>51</sup> Kant to Garve, 21.9.1798, AA 12, pp. 256-257.

It is this sense of intractable difference which the present thesis seeks to pursue and explain. Identifying the premises requires some archaeological work; each chapter seeks to tease out the assumptions behind explicit arguments. What emerges is a clash, not primarily between persons, but between contrasting attitudes.

For this reason, the episodes treated here are framed as quarrels. They have something in common with the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns in early modern France.

The personal quarrels and rivalries of that period [*sc.* the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns] are however better seen as the local idiom in which long-standing cultural issues were articulated; the apparently surprising virulence it engendered is no doubt an indication that a critical moment had been reached, a moment whose significance is clearer from our own historical vantage point.<sup>52</sup>

‘Long-standing cultural issues’ are articulated in Garve’s exchanges. These skirmishes, misunderstandings, and caricatures become discrete scenes in a larger drama.

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<sup>52</sup> Terence Cave, ‘Ancients and Moderns: France’, in Glyn P. Norton (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism Volume 3: The Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 417.

## Framing the Quarrel

In what, then, do the differences consist? How are the quarrels treated here best understood? They cover a wide range of themes, and the four chapters of this thesis all seek to draw out diverse aspects. An important common thread, however, is the intellectual's vocation, and his relationship to the general public. Certain central issues recur: whether serious intellectual work can or should be accessible to the public, and whether it should engage with their concerns rather than more abstract themes.

This is a key dividing line between Garve and his opponents. His position on the matter is clear and consistent. He typically stresses what the intellectual has in common with the public. Both are united by a shared faculty of language and reason. In Garve's vision, the ideal philosopher is very much located within his society: he is not merely present among them, but is one of them. He is a good public servant. His work should answer to the questions they ask, and should be written in a style that they can understand. This is nothing less than a moral duty.

On this point, Kant and the others are united in their opposition to Garve's view.

They are not an obviously coherent grouping – though surely Schiller, Goethe, and the Romantics all wrote as self-conscious inheritors of Kant.<sup>53</sup> However, they do all

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<sup>53</sup> See e.g. the first of Schiller's *Ästhetische Briefe*: 'Zwar will ich Ihnen nicht verbergen, daß es größtenteils Kantische Grundsätze sind, auf denen die nachfolgenden Behauptungen ruhen werden.' Schiller, *Werke und Briefe*, ed. Otto Dann et al, 12 vols (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1988-2004), vol. 8 [= FA 8], p. 557. All references to 'FA' assume Schiller unless otherwise indicated. More generally, see also Vittorio Hösle, *A Short History of German Philosophy*, trans. Steven Rendall

reject Garve's position. All stress the separation between the intellectual and the general public. Kant's philosopher cannot expect to be understood by the public; his work is beyond their capacity to understand. Schiller's poet is an alien presence in a debased culture; all efforts to improve that culture from within – through existing social institutions – are doomed to failure. He challenges Garve's claim that the language of his theoretical work should reflect common usage. He and Goethe also reject the notion that they should appeal to their contemporaries: their aesthetic programme requires them to forget their century. Like many *Aufklärer*, Garve emphasized the practical value of studies, but the Romantics interpreted this as a confusion of priorities: for them, the philosopher should pursue what is true, not what is useful.

The exchanges therefore become a crystallization point. In them, an important conflict between Garve and contemporaries gains concrete historical expression. Previous research on Garve has typically dealt with this conflict by framing Garve as a *Popularphilosoph*. *Popularphilosophie* was a heterogeneous movement.<sup>54</sup> The term is perhaps best regarded as a label for concerns which were shared by a wide range of eighteenth-century thinkers, in Germany and elsewhere. An important common

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(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), p. 10: 'The simultaneity of brilliant literary and philosophical achievements is one of the reasons for the special attraction of classical German philosophy. The latter took up questions raised by modern science and the Enlightenment, as did other European philosophies of the time, but it developed at the same time as a poetry of original greatness was forming, a poetry of a kind that hardly still existed in neighboring Western countries. The well-known view mentioned above, to the effect that Germans are the people of poets and thinkers, was first shaped in the nineteenth century to mark the high level of culture among Germans in general; but it can also be understood as indicating a connection between philosophical and poetic development so close that it had before this existed only in Greece. It is exemplified by the youthful friendship of Hegel, Schelling, and Hölderlin.'

<sup>54</sup> See further below, pp. 70-71.

belief was that intellectual work should be accessible to a broad audience: clear communication and a lack of pedantry were prized. One programmatic statement came from Joseph Addison in the *Spectator*:

It was said of Socrates, that he brought Philosophy down from Heaven, to inhabit among Men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me, that I have brought Philosophy out of Closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell in Clubs and Assemblies, at Tea-Tables, and in Coffee-Houses.<sup>55</sup>

Addison calls for a philosophy which is not confined to an academic setting, but is accessible and pleasing to the general public. Garve himself defines

*Popularphilosophie* along similar lines, in one of his last published works:

Es wird der jetzt herrschenden Partey der Philosophen [...] nicht entgangen seyn, daß ich ein populärer Philosoph, im schlimmsten Sinne des Wortes, oder vielmehr, daß ich ein Prediger des allgemeinen *Menschensinnes* – des Feindes aller ächten Philosophie, sey. Ich gestehe ihnen, daß sie Recht haben.<sup>56</sup>

A *Popularphilosoph*, on this definition, places a high degree of confidence in common sense. The continuity with Addison's claim is clear. This model of philosophy appeals to the shared human faculty of mind, rather than being accessible only to specialists.

The approach of interpreting Garve as a *Popularphilosoph* is a popular one.

*Popularphilosophie* is a prominent concept in both Altmayer's and Koch-Schwarzer's dissertations; Altmayer uses the term in his title, and Koch-Schwarzer paraphrases it.

Both scholars assume Garve to be representative of the trend. For Altmayer, Garve is

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<sup>55</sup> Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, ed. Donald F. Bond, 5 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), vol. 1, p. 44.

<sup>56</sup> Garve, 'Eigene Betrachtungen über die allgemeinsten Grundsätze der Sittenlehre. Ein Anhang zu der Uebersicht der verschiedenen Moralsysteme', GW 8.2, p. 1.

‘unzweifelhaft der „Popularphilosophie“ zugehörig und [...] einer ihrer bedeutendsten Vertreter’.<sup>57</sup> Koch-Schwarzer’s description is almost identical: Garve is ‘einer [der] bedeutenden Repräsentanten [der Popularphilosophie]’.<sup>58</sup>

This approach locates Garve in a historical narrative whereby *Popularphilosophie* is displaced by Kantianism. The neglect which he has suffered is related to the rejection of his programme in the German academy. Altmayer’s introduction begins with the claim that *Popularphilosophie* is a major lacuna in Enlightenment research.<sup>59</sup> His thesis joins in a well-established ‘Klage über die lange und unverdiente Vernachlässigung der „Popularphilosophie“ in Literatur- und Philosophiegeschichte’.<sup>60</sup> The concept is hampered by a ‘traditionell negative Nebenbedeutung’.<sup>61</sup> It fell into discredit as the result of a paradigm shift in German intellectual life. Garve was a key victim:

Im Zuge des Epochenumbruchs von der Aufklärung zu Klassik, Romantik und idealistischer Philosophie hatte sich schon in den neunziger Jahren des 18. Jahrhunderts bei den „Klassikern“ Goethe und Schiller, vor allem bei der jüngeren Generation der Romantiker, bei Friedrich Schlegel und Schleiermacher, der doch zuvor noch Garve zu seinen bevorzugten Schriftstellern zählte, ein Umwertungsprozeß angekündigt, der sich dann nach der Jahrhundertwende voll durchsetzte; fortan galt Garve als Repräsentant einer vergangenen und überholten Epoche.<sup>62</sup>

Garve had enjoyed a high standing in his own lifetime. Altmayer cites Goethe’s comment on *Popularphilosophie* to prove the point.<sup>63</sup> Shortly afterwards, however,

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<sup>57</sup> Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, p. 15.

<sup>58</sup> Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie*, p. 12.

<sup>59</sup> Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, p. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, p. 12.

<sup>62</sup> Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, pp. 33-34.

<sup>63</sup> See Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke. Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche*, ed. Karl Eibl et al, 40 vols (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1986-2013), vol. 14 [= Goethe, FA 14], p. 303: ‘Und

he was overtaken by major developments in intellectual history. Altmayer describes these developments as both a chronological divide (*Epochenumbruch*) and a shift in values (*Umwertungsprozeß*), whereby what Garve stood for came to be regarded in a very negative light. Goethe, Schiller, Schlegel, and Schleiermacher are key figures in this process.

Koch-Schwarzer presents her work as a 'Rehabilitation' of Garve in the specific disciplinary context of *Volkskunde*: 'Christian Garve [ist] als popular schreibender Moralphilosoph in der volkswissenschaftlichen Disziplingeschichte nahezu unbekannt.'<sup>64</sup> She follows Altmayer in affirming the generally negative connotations of *Popularphilosophie*. Her thesis title avoids the term: 'Christian Garves Philosophie wird daher im folgenden in der Regel als populäre Moralphilosophie angesprochen, um den [seit den Kantianern] mit dem Begriff „Popularphilosophie“ einhergehenden negativen Konnotationen auszuweichen.'<sup>65</sup> Like Altmayer, Koch-Schwarzer connects Garve's negative posthumous reception with broader developments in German intellectual history:

Indem [Garve] in einer spätaufklärerischen Position verharrte, sie in diskursiven Auseinandersetzungen um seine populäre Moralphilosophie sogar noch verfestigte, blieb Garve ideengeschichtlich hinter den Entwicklungen seiner Zeit zurück, wurde dafür kritisiert und dann alsbald vergessen.<sup>66</sup>

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nun fanden die Philosophen selbst sich genötigt, um popular zu sein, auch deutlich und faßlich zu schreiben. *Mendelssohn, Garve* traten auf und erregten allgemeine Teilnahme und Bewunderung.' Cited in Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, p. 33.

<sup>64</sup> Koch-Schwarzer, *Populäre Moralphilosophie*, p. 9.

<sup>65</sup> Koch-Schwarzer, *Populäre Moralphilosophie*, p. 9.

<sup>66</sup> Koch-Schwarzer, *Populäre Moralphilosophie*, p. 10.

Koch-Schwarzer echoes Altmayer in the *Metzler Philosophen-Lexikon*: Garve was ‘left behind’. He was forgotten because great changes took place in his lifetime and he was unable to adjust to them. Elsewhere, she uses the term *Paradigmenwechsel* to frame the relationship between Garve and Kant.<sup>67</sup>

Interpreting Garve in light of *Popularphilosophie* is in some ways an attractive approach. It can draw on a terminology familiar to historical actors. Garve characterized himself as a *Popularphilosoph*, and popularity was a central concept in the exchange with Kant. However, approaches which focus on *Popularphilosophie* frequently produce teleological readings of Garve’s career. The triumph of Kantianism and the death of *Popularphilosophie* are understood to be the natural result of the former’s superiority. Both Altmayer and Koch-Schwarzer fall into this interpretation. In the above quotation, Koch-Schwarzer uses the term ‘verharrte’ to describe Garve’s attitude. This suggests an accusation: Garve ought not to have been so stubborn, when it was clear that Kantianism was the future. Altmayer’s biographical article takes a similar line.<sup>68</sup> Its vocabulary of development (‘die Zeit und die philosophische Entwicklung’) implies that Garve was out-dated. The interpretation is cliché-ridden. Garve’s work lacked originality, perspicuity and thoroughness; it was obviously inferior to Kantianism; it is therefore (presumably) good and right that he was forgotten.

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<sup>67</sup> See Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie*, pp. 34, 292-344.

<sup>68</sup> See above, p. 12.

The present thesis therefore avoids using *Popularphilosophie* as its frame. The title indicates the different approach adopted here. A central point of disagreement between Garve and his opponents is indeed where philosophy should dwell: whether heaven, or in the cities of men.<sup>69</sup> Both sides hold different views on whether the intellectual should do work that is accessible and relevant to a broad general public. However, the thesis does not interpret these two sides as *Popularphilosophie* and Kantianism. Instead, the flashpoints covered here are treated as late skirmishes in a long war between two contrasting understandings of philosophy and of the philosopher's vocation. The proper context for Garve's claims is not *Popularphilosophie*, but the distinguished intellectual tradition to which *Popularphilosophie* itself belongs: namely classical humanism, informed by rhetorical values and articulated in the philosophy of Cicero.<sup>70</sup>

There is a historical basis for this approach; eighteenth-century philosophers who shared Garve's convictions felt themselves to be of one mind with an array of ancient models. When Addison refers to Socrates bringing philosophy down from heaven, he is in fact alluding to Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*:

Socrates [...] was the first to call philosophy down from the heavens and set her in the cities of men and bring her also into their homes

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<sup>69</sup> 'Philosophy' in the thesis title is understood in a broad sense, as denoting all serious intellectual work.

<sup>70</sup> For this understanding of the term, 'humanism', see art., 'Humanism, n.', 3.b, in *OED*: 'A European intellectual movement or climate of thought from the 14th to the 16th cent., which was characterized in scholarship by attentiveness to classical Latin (and later Greek), in neo-Latin and vernacular literature by the creative imitation of ancient texts, in education and public life by the promotion of some or all of the wide range of cultural ideals which these texts were supposed to transmit, and in the fine and applied arts by creative response to Roman and Greek artefacts or principles.' Available online at <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2355/view/Entry/89272?redirectedFrom=humanism#eid>. Article retrieved 31.7.2018. The use of the concept in this thesis is explained further in the following pages.

and compel her to ask questions about life and morality and things good and evil.<sup>71</sup>

Philosophy, on this view, dwells in the cities of men. It is accessible not only to cloistered scholars but to the general public, interested in their concerns rather than abstruse speculation.

The quotation gives some idea as to Cicero's priorities; he certainly thought that bringing philosophy down from heaven was a good thing. The humanist position becomes clearer when it is contrasted with the opposing view, expressed by Socrates in Plato's *Theaetetus* (Socrates could be enlisted in quite contradictory causes). Socrates contrasts the speaker in a court of law with the philosopher. The former is always in a hurry. He speaks as the slave of the clock. True philosophers, by contrast, are men at liberty. 'They do not care at all whether their talk is long or short, if only they attain the truth.'<sup>72</sup> They do not condescend to the base matters of everyday life:

The leaders [sc. superior philosophers], in the first place, from their youth up, remain ignorant of the way to the agora, do not even know where the court-room is, or the senate-house, or any other public place of assembly; as for laws and decrees, they neither hear the debates upon them nor see them when they are published; and the strivings of political clubs after public offices, and meetings, and banquets, and revellings with chorus girls – it never occurs to them even in their dreams to indulge in such things. And whether anyone in the city is of high or low birth, or what evil has been inherited by anyone from his ancestors, male or female, are matters to which they pay no more attention than to the number of pints in the sea, as the saying is. And all these things that philosopher does not even know that he does not know; for he does not keep aloof from them for the sake of gaining reputation, but really it is only his body that has its

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<sup>71</sup> Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, trans. J. E. King (London: Heinemann; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1945), V.iv.11, p. 435.

<sup>72</sup> See Plato, *Theaetetus*, trans. H. N. Fowler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1987), 172.d-e, pp. 115-117.

place and home in the city; his mind, considering all these things petty and of no account, disdains them and is borne in all directions, as Pindar says, 'both below the earth,' and measuring the surface of the earth, and 'above the sky,' studying the stars, and investigating the universal nature of every thing that is, each in its entirety, never lowering itself to anything close at hand.<sup>73</sup>

Plato's Socrates is very different from Cicero's. He is not interested in bringing philosophy to dwell in the cities of men. Such cities are sordid, populated by chorus girls and amoral politicians. The philosopher is defined by his detachment from them. His only motivation is the pursuit of truth, his only interest the leisure necessary for this pursuit. Naturally, he will not be found amid the hustle and bustle of public life. The same is true for the contents of his studies. Though his body may be in the city, his mind ought not to be: he is concerned not with the particular and the concrete but with the general and the abstract.

This was one possible position: the philosopher is only interested in truth, and shuns the messiness of human society. The opposite view finds expression in Cicero's *De officiis*. There, society is not something to be avoided, but something to be embraced. It is essential to human nature:

We are not born for ourselves, to use Plato's splendid words, but our country claims for itself one part of our birth, and our friends another. Moreover, as the Stoics believe, everything produced on the earth is created for the use of mankind, and men are born for the sake of men, so that they may be able to assist one another. Consequently, we ought in this to follow nature as our leader, to contribute to the common stock the things that benefit everyone together, and, by the exchange of dutiful services, by giving and receiving expertise and effort and means, to bind fast the fellowship of men with each other.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Plato, *Theaetetus*, 173.c-e, pp. 119-121.

<sup>74</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis*, ed. and trans. Miriam T. Griffin and E. Margaret Atkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), I.22, pp. 9-10. Throughout this thesis, *officiis* is capitalized in footnotes to

Social interaction is the purpose for which human beings are born. Plato appears as a source for the ideal.<sup>75</sup> It follows that all are responsible to engage actively in society, seeking to benefit their fellow citizens.

This vision brings other assumptions with it. If sociability is essential to human nature, the moral duty to contribute to society is an imperative one. Already, the *De officiis* is far from Socrates' position in the *Theaetetus*. The active life is more valuable than the (merely) contemplative:

In my view those duties that have their roots in sociability conform more to nature than those drawn from learning. [...] Learning about and reflecting upon nature is somewhat truncated and incomplete if it results in no action. Such action is seen most clearly in the protection of men's interests and therefore is concerned with the fellowship of the human race. For that reason this should be ranked above mere learning. Any good man will agree with that, and show it in practice. For there is no one, surely, however greedy he is to examine and understand the nature of things, who, though contemplating in his studies the highest objects of learning, would not cast them all aside, if his country were suddenly and critically endangered and he could come to its aid or relief.<sup>76</sup>

Here, a philosophy which puts private study before the needs of the community is classed as morally suspect. Reflection without action is incomplete – and action has the specific sense of involvement in public business.

The same priorities guide Cicero when he comes to discuss the purpose of scholarship:

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refer to Griffin and Atkins' translation. Uncapitalized, in the main body of the text, it refers to Cicero's original.

<sup>75</sup> Again, it is easiest to interpret the ancient sources as exhibiting a conflict between positions rather than persons: like Socrates, Plato appears on both sides of the debate.

<sup>76</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.153-154, pp. 59-60.

But note that those who have devoted their entire life to learning things have, after all, managed to contribute to the benefits and advantages of mankind. They have educated many to be better citizens and more beneficial to their countries. So, for example, Lysis the Pythagorean taught the Theban Epaminondas, Plato taught Dion of Syracuse, and there are many similar cases; I myself, whatever assistance I have given to the republic, if I have given any, came to public life trained and equipped by my teachers and their teachings. Not only when they are alive and present do such men educate and instruct their assiduous students; they continue the same task after their death by means of their writings, which they leave as memorials. There is no theme relevant to the laws of our country, to its customs, to its education, that they have overlooked; they seem to have devoted their leisure to our business. The very men, then, who have given their lives to the pursuit of teaching and wisdom, provide above all good sense and understanding for the benefit of mankind. Therefore it is better to speak at length, provided one does so wisely, than to think, however penetratingly, without eloquence. For speculation turns in on itself, but eloquence embraces those to whom we are joined by social life.<sup>77</sup>

Intellectuals who do not engage directly in public life can still serve as teachers for those who do; Plato is once more a distinguished example. This means studying societies in all of their contingency (in the *Theaetetus*, Socrates suggested that the philosopher should leave such studies alone). Eloquence is crucial to this ideal. For the philosopher to be useful to his fellow human beings, he must be able to communicate with them.

The views of Plato and Cicero are two poles in a conflict which recurs through centuries of Western intellectual history. One side portrays the true philosopher as detached from his society and occupied with general truths; the other privileges the active life and communication. The Renaissance witnessed a similar opposition. The

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<sup>77</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.155-156, pp. 60-61.

scholastics sought absolute truth, but the humanists were much more practically-minded:

[Scholasticism and humanism] differ in their orientation, with scholastics aiming at the perfection of doctrinal theories and humanists focusing on the implementation of doctrine in the life of the believer. The humanists were, as Lewis Spitz put it, 'action-oriented and people directed'.<sup>78</sup>

[The humanist conception of education] suggests that intellectual mastery of absolute truth, the metaphysical certitude exalted by medieval Aristotelian philosophy, was probably beyond human ability and certainly was not necessary for everyday living. It implies that the ultimate goal is not knowledge of truth, as the tradition of Thomas Aquinas taught. Instead, those humanists who addressed such matters usually declared that the purpose of human life is to make sound moral decisions in the course of daily living.<sup>79</sup>

It is not surprising that *De officiis* was a key source text for the humanist ideal.<sup>80</sup>

Cicero supplied the humanists with an ethical and intellectual foundation for their participation in political life.

Ian Hunter takes a similar approach in his book, *Rival Enlightenments*. Hunter distinguishes two separate 'intellectual cultures' in early modern Germany: 'civil philosophy', represented by Pufendorf and Thomasius, and 'university metaphysics', represented by Leibniz and Kant.<sup>81</sup> Thomasius' intellectual ethos was a practical response to the circumstances of confessional division and religious civil war.<sup>82</sup> Here again, a scholastic philosophy collided with a philosophy oriented towards public life.

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<sup>78</sup> Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 12.

<sup>79</sup> Charles G. Nauert, *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 15.

<sup>80</sup> See Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 270-276. See also Peter G. Walsh, 'Introduction', in Cicero, *On obligations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. xl.

<sup>81</sup> See Ian Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. ix-xiii.

<sup>82</sup> Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments*, p. 8.

The quarrel surrounding *Popularphilosophie* thus had a number of precedents. When Hegel repudiated *Popularphilosophie*, his target was the approach of Cicero and the humanists:

Eine andere herrschende Manier [der Philosophie] hat durchaus nur nachteilige Seiten, nämlich diejenige, welche sogleich die philosophischen Ideen, wie sie hervortreten, *populär* oder eigentlich gemein zu machen bestrebt ist. Die Philosophie ist ihrer Natur nach etwas Esoterisches, für sich weder für den Pöbel gemacht noch einer Zubereitung für den Pöbel fähig; sie ist nur dadurch Philosophie, daß sie dem Verstande und noch mehr dem gesunden Menschenverstande [...] gerade entgegengesetzt ist; im Verhältnis zu diesem ist an und für sich die Welt der Philosophie eine verkehrte Welt. [...] So muß die Philosophie zwar die Möglichkeit erkennen, daß das Volk sich zu ihr erhebt, aber sie muß sich nicht zum Volk erniedrigen.<sup>83</sup>

Hegel seeks to exclude from the definition of philosophy the model which appeals to a non-expert public. *Pöbel* and *Volk* are two none too complimentary ways of presenting this public. Philosophy is not for the masses, nor accessible to a shared human faculty of common sense. By descending to these, it ceases to be philosophy. Hegel dismisses the claim of both Addison and Cicero: philosophy must not come down and dwell amongst men.

The present thesis treats this age-old opposition as the proper context for the disputes between Garve and his opponents. At one point after another, the issues which arise evoke the conflict between Ciceronian humanism on the one hand and metaphysical philosophy on the other. Whether the intellectual should be engaged in society, or else remain distinct from it; whether he can communicate to a broader

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<sup>83</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Werke*, ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel, 20 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1969-1971), vol. 2, p. 182.

public, confident that they share in his faculty of reason: to these questions, Cicero provides one set of possible answers, based on an understanding of human nature as rational and sociable. Garve's arguments repeatedly draw upon the Ciceronian view; his opponents repeatedly reject it. He seeks to bring philosophy down from heaven: they are concerned to send it back.

## Rhetorical values

The particular facet of the Ciceronian and humanist vision which is most important in this thesis is the tradition of classical rhetoric. Garve frequently adopts positions based either explicitly or implicitly on rhetorical assumptions about human communication and thought. Rhetoric, however, is a slippery concept. At least three distinct senses can be attached to the term; the first is irrelevant here, and the second only of tangential interest. The following section indicates how rhetoric is understood in this thesis.

The OED defines rhetoric as persuasive speech:

The art of using language effectively so as to persuade or influence others, especially the exploitation of figures of speech and other compositional techniques to this end; the study of principles and rules to be followed by a speaker or writer striving for eloquence, especially as formulated by ancient Greek and Roman writers.<sup>84</sup>

In this first sense, rhetoric is practically coterminous with linguistic communication (and indeed all communication). This definition is of little use as a background to Garve's disputes. A dispute presupposes attempts on both sides to persuade and influence. In this sense, both sides use rhetoric.

The second part of the OED definition allows for a different, more precisely determined understanding of rhetoric. It suggests a measure of theoretical reflection on persuasive speech. This theoretical reflection was rich and varied in character. In

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<sup>84</sup> Art., 'rhetoric, n. 1' in *OED*, online at <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2355/view/Entry/165178?rskey=gq8ybm&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid>. Article retrieved 11.06.2018.

his work on the rhetorical background to Klopstock's thought, Kevin Hilliard describes rhetoric as a 'rich store of concepts and ideas', formulated in canonical texts: Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, Cicero's *De inventione*, *Orator*, and *De oratore*, the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*.<sup>85</sup>

In the latter work, Quintilian affirms that his project is intended to have a broad scope. The famous *Prooemium* to book 1 distinguishes the *Institutio* from previous works on rhetoric. These 'have started with the assumption that their readers were perfect in all other branches of education and that their task was merely to put the finishing touches to their rhetorical training'. Quintilian's intention is to do rather more.

For my part, however – holding as I do that nothing is foreign to the art of oratory which must be admitted to be essential for the making of an orator, and that one cannot reach the top in any subject without going through the elementary stages – I shall certainly not refuse to stoop to those matters which, though minor, cannot be neglected without blocking the way to greater things.<sup>86</sup>

Quintilian's approach is holistic. He intends to discuss everything relevant to the task of educating the orator. In a sweeping gesture, he claims all of human thought and language as the legitimate concern of rhetoric: 'How then can there be any doubt that wherever intellectual power and fullness of diction are required, the orator has the leading role?'<sup>87</sup> The range of content in the *Institutio* is vast, covering philosophy,

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<sup>85</sup> Kevin Hilliard, *Philosophy, Letters, and the Fine Arts in Klopstock's Thought* (London: Institute of Germanic Studies, 1987), p. ix.

<sup>86</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. Donald A. Russell, 5 vols (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2001), I.pr.4-5, vol. 1, p. 55.

<sup>87</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* I.Pr.12, vol. 1, p. 57.

ethics, anthropology, pedagogy, and literary criticism. Rhetorical reflection extends well beyond narrow technical questions of persuasive speech.

It is also possible, then, to use 'rhetoric' as a label for this store of reflection.

However, the store could be exploited by writers who held contrasting assumptions.

One could quite reasonably speak of Kant's use of rhetoric (or Schiller's, or

Schlegel's). For all of them, a body of research exists on their engagement with the

rhetorical tradition.<sup>88</sup> The tradition long remained a fertile source of ideas, as Olaf

Kramer's comment on Goethe makes clear:

Goethe [rezipiert] beinahe sein ganzes Leben hindurch rhetorische Autoritäten, Klassiker wie Aristoteles, Cicero und Quintilian, ebenso zeitgenössische rhetorische Werke. [...] Dass Goethes Texte auf der *elocutio*-Ebene rhetorischen Regeln folgen, mit Hilfe rhetorischer Figuren beschrieben werden können, ist nicht der eigentliche Punkt. Rhetorische Figuren sind schließlich auch in Texten zu finden, deren Verfasser nichts von der Rhetorik wissen. Wenn sich rhetorische Figuren und eine ausgefeilte *dispositio* aber wie im Beispiel der Shakespeare-Rede häufen, kann dies als Indiz gelten, dass Goethe solche rhetorische Techniken kennt und auch während des Sturm und Drang in der Tradition der Rhetorik verwurzelt bleibt. Goethe versteht jedoch unter Rhetorik mehr als eine Anleitung zur richtigen *elocutio* oder *dispositio*, ganz selbstverständlich bezieht er sich auf Rhetorik, wenn er ästhetische, anthropologische oder erkenntnistheoretische Fragen behandelt. In seinen theoretischen Texten wie in seinen literarischen Werken ist Rhetorik als eine Theorie intentionaler Kommunikation mit einem ästhetischen, anthropologischen und erkenntnistheoretischen Hintergrund präsent.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> See e.g. Tobia Bezzola, *Die Rhetorik bei Kant, Fichte und Hegel: Ein Beitrag zur Philosophiegeschichte der Rhetorik* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1993); Peter Lothar Oesterreich, *Das gelehrte Absolute: Metaphysik und Rhetorik bei Kant, Fichte und Schelling* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997); Gert Ueding, *Schillers Rhetorik: idealistische Wirkungsästhetik und rhetorische Tradition* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1971); Olaf Kramer, *Goethe und die Rhetorik* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010); Peter Schnyder, *Die Magie der Rhetorik: Poesie, Philosophie und Politik in Friedrich Schlegels Frühwerk* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1999); Peter Krause, *Unbestimmte Rhetorik: Friedrich Schlegel und die Redekunst um 1800* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001); Norbert Gutenberg, 'Über das Rhetorische und das Ästhetische – Ansichten Schleiermachers', in *Rhetorik* 19 (2000), pp. 68-91.

<sup>89</sup> Kramer, *Goethe und die Rhetorik*, pp. 8-9.

Kramer defines rhetoric as ‘eine Theorie intentionaler Kommunikation mit einem ästhetischen, anthropologischen und erkenntnistheoretischen Hintergrund’, and argues that it is relevant to a very wide variety of Goethe’s work. This might have been expected. Goethe, like so many others, grew up breathing the intellectual air of rhetoric. It was integral to the pedagogical culture of the time. For centuries, rhetoric had provided thinkers with their basic conceptual toolkit for reading and writing. ‘The legacy of rhetoric, founded on ancient tradition, endured as the basis of all learned writing and reading until about the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.’<sup>90</sup> Rhetoric’s resources were susceptible of almost infinite reinvention. The present thesis illustrates the fact: chapter three demonstrates how the attack on Manso in the *Xenien* draws upon rhetorical concepts.

Rhetoric as a repository of ideas is, however, little help as a guide to contrasting positions. All sides could draw upon it, and did so. However, there is a third sense which can be attached to rhetoric, and this sense is the most important for the present thesis. Kevin Hilliard frames rhetoric as a ‘system of values’: ‘classical rhetoric contained an implicit or explicit philosophy, ethics, anthropology, a judgement of what is and what is not important in human life, which was transmitted to succeeding ages as part and parcel with the more technical prescriptions of the rhetorical treatises.’<sup>91</sup> Not only did the tradition reflect on these areas, but its reflection is rooted in a coherent set of values and normative

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<sup>90</sup> Franz Josef Worstbrock, art. ‘Rhetoric’, in *Brill’s New Pauly*, online at <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2134/entries/brill-s-new-pauly/rhetoric-ct-e15206680?s.num=22&s.start=20>. Article retrieved 19.04.2017.

<sup>91</sup> Hilliard, *Klopstock*, pp. ix-x.

assumptions. These bear upon a wide range of areas, including the nature of philosophy and of thought more generally. Above all, rhetoric implies a particular view of what human beings are and of how they ought to live. This view is the same view articulated in the *De officiis*.

The background to this more normative notion of rhetoric lies in the problems raised by a narrow definition. A widespread and long-lived objection to rhetoric is that persuasive speech can be used for purposes good and bad. It might even facilitate deceit. Some famous early examples of this accusation can be found in Plato. A lengthy passage in the *Gorgias* deals with objections to rhetoric in detail, but Socrates provides a summary in the dialogue *Phaedrus*. While discussing how to construct a good speech, Socrates cites a list of famous theoreticians:

And shall we leave Gorgias and Tisias undisturbed, who saw that probabilities are more to be esteemed than truths, who make small things seem great and great things small by the power of their words, and new things old and old things the reverse [...]?<sup>92</sup>

Socrates presents rhetoric as standing in an uneasy relationship with truth.

Rhetorical arguments are concerned not ultimately with what is true, but with what is probable. Furthermore, persuasive speech always carries the risk of deception.

The orator's power with language allows him to make things appear what they are not, and so to manipulate his audience.

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<sup>92</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. Harold North Fowler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1977), 267.B, pp. 537-539.

The association of rhetoric with deception proved durable. One of its best-known modern proponents was Kant himself. A classic example appears in the *Kritik der Urteilskraft*:

Die Beredsamkeit, sofern darunter die Kunst zu überreden, d. i. durch den schönen Schein zu hintergehen (als *ars oratoria*), und nicht bloße Wohlredenheit (Eloquenz und Stil) verstanden wird, ist eine Dialektik, die von der Dichtkunst nur so viel entlehnt, als nöthig ist, die Gemüther vor der Beurtheilung für den Redner zu dessen Vortheil zu gewinnen und dieser die Freiheit zu benehmen. [...] Da [die Maschinen der Überredung] eben sowohl auch zur Beschönigung oder Verdeckung des Lasters und Irrthums gebraucht werden können, [können sie] den geheimen Verdacht wegen einer künstlichen Überlistung nicht ganz vertilgen.<sup>93</sup>

Kant's primary concern in the passage is to give poetry the highest place among the fine arts.<sup>94</sup> Rhetoric appears as poetry's inferior. Kant distinguishes 'Beredsamkeit' from 'Wohlredenheit', which appears to denote facility with language generally ('Eloquenz und Stil'). 'Beredsamkeit' involves the adept use of language in order to manipulate an audience. It is essentially amoral, and viewed with suspicion: it persuades by appearances rather than truth.<sup>95</sup> Like Socrates in the *Phaedrus*, Kant emphasizes the orator's power to make things seem what they are not.

The theme of rhetoric as cunning manipulation occurs elsewhere in Kant's work. One example is his response to criticisms of his philosophy in Johann August Eberhard's *Philosophisches Magazin*. Kant accuses Eberhard of disguising poor arguments in a chaotic barrage of material: 'Es ist schlimm, mit einem Autor zu thun zu haben, der

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<sup>93</sup> Kant, AA 5, p. 327.

<sup>94</sup> See Kant, AA 5, p. 326.

<sup>95</sup> In the same passage, Kant stresses that this moral force is the only acceptable justification for doing good: 'Es ist nicht genug, das, was Recht ist, zu thun, sondern es auch aus dem Grunde allein, weil es Recht ist, auszuüben.' Kant, AA 5, p. 327.

keine Ordnung kennt, noch schlimmer aber mit dem, der eine Unordnung erkünstelt, um seichte oder falsche Sätze unbemerkt durchschlüpfen zu lassen.<sup>96</sup> This disingenuous strategy follows a rhetorical model: it is ‘recht nach dem Rathe, den Quintilian dem Redner in Ansehung seiner Argumente giebt, um seine Zuhörer zu überlisten.’<sup>97</sup> Again, ‘überlisten’ is the key term: rhetoric is primarily a means to manipulate unsuspecting audiences.

Ancient rhetorical theorists did not overlook the problem first raised by Plato, that rhetoric could assist deceit and manipulation. Their response was to define the practice in ethical terms. Someone abusing rhetorical skill would forfeit the noble title of an orator. Cicero, for example, sketches a high ideal for the orator’s role in society. Instead of engendering deception, he is to work against injustice and exploitation: ‘What function again is so kingly, so worthy of the free, so generous, as to bring help to the suppliant, to raise up those that are cast down, to bestow security, to set free from peril, to maintain men in their civil rights?’<sup>98</sup>

Quintilian is well aware of the risks inherent in persuasive speech. He cites the classic objection: ‘[Eloquence’s] greatest use is to stand up for falsehood against truth.’<sup>99</sup> However, all public activities are susceptible to such abuse: ‘On this principle,

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<sup>96</sup> Kant, ‘Über eine Entdeckung, nach der alle neue Kritik der reinen Vernunft durch eine ältere entbehrlich gemacht werden soll,’ AA 8, p. 189.

<sup>97</sup> Kant, AA 8, p. 189. The passage is from Quintilian, V.xii.5, vol. 2, p. 457: ‘So Arguments which cannot have force on the ground of their importance may require it by strength of numbers. [...] Individually, these points are trivial and commonplace, but taken together they are damaging – not like a thunderbolt, maybe, but like a shower of hail.’

<sup>98</sup> Cicero, *De oratore*, trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1996 [1959]), I.viii.32, vol. 1, p. 25.

<sup>99</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* II.xvi.2, vol. 1, p. 371.

neither generals nor magistrates nor medicine nor philosophy itself will be “useful”.<sup>100</sup> The solution is not to abolish the practice, but to give it an ethical dimension. Rhetoric must be more than mere persuasion:

The definition which will best suit this notion of its real nature is that ‘rhetoric is the science of speaking well.’ This includes all the virtues of speech in one formula and at the same time also the character of the orator, because only a good man can speak ‘well.’<sup>101</sup>

Quintilian moves beyond the discussion of a capacity to the characterization of a certain type of human being, ‘the orator’, to be understood as someone who speaks ‘well’.<sup>102</sup> He is to be ‘good’, in the fullest sense of being both technically proficient in his field and also ethically commendable.

Quintilian thus frames a distinctive ethical ideal for the orator. The key formulation occurs (again) in the *Prooemium* to book 1:

I am proposing to educate the perfect orator, who cannot exist except in the person of a good man. We therefore demand of him not only exceptional powers of speech, but all the virtues of character as well. I cannot agree that the principles of upright and honourable living should, as some have held, be left to the philosophers. The man who can really play his part as a citizen, who is fit for the management of public and private business, and who can guide cities by his counsel, give them a firm basis by his laws, and put them right by his judgements, is surely no other than our orator.<sup>103</sup>

The orator is above all else a man able to provide moral and intellectual leadership in society. He may occupy a variety of roles in the context of the state, executive,

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<sup>100</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* II.xvi.5, vol. 1, p. 371.

<sup>101</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* II.xv.34, vol. 1, p. 367.

<sup>102</sup> Quintilian’s famous definition is based upon that of Cato, ‘a good man, skilled in speaking’ (Lat. *vir bonus dicendi peritus*): see Quintilian, *Institutio* XII.i.1, vol. 5, p. 197. The quotation is apparently drawn from Seneca: see Seneca the Elder, *Controversiae*, trans. M. Winterbottom, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1974), I.Pref.9, vol. 1, pp. 9-10.

<sup>103</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* I.pr.9-10, vol. 1, p. 57.

judicial, and legislative: in all respects, he is to play his part as a citizen, acting for the good of his fellow human beings.

Defining the orator as a 'good man' inevitably implies a particular view of what a 'good man' is. This view is apparent in both Quintilian and Cicero's definitions: it means active involvement in society. The orator's chief duty, as a good man, is to serve the public good. He is the incarnation of rational and sociable humanity, along the lines traced out in Cicero's *De officiis*. Rhetoric and the humanist ideal go together. It is natural that a vision which privileges society should attach high value to eloquence. As Cicero stresses, society depends on communication: 'For speculation turns in on itself, but eloquence embraces those to whom we are joined by social life.'<sup>104</sup>

Similar values were at play in Renaissance humanism. The privileging of rhetoric went hand in hand with a high view of the active life:

The importance of rhetoric to the civil life lay in its ability to translate ideas into action, through the means of persuasion. All Renaissance rhetoric, and much of its poetics, is premised on the superiority of action over contemplation, and of the necessity of communicating. Petrarch draws on Ciceronian tradition in declaring thought and language to be mutually dependent, and anticipates many later writers in denouncing silence or withdrawal from society. Man's duty was to take part in social life, to make virtue a practical, not a theoretical attribute. Salutati was not alone in equating the study of literature with virtue and *humanitas*. Since, as Cicero had said, 'the whole praise of virtue consists in action', then the end of learning must be virtue, not mere erudition. [...] Reason, virtue and the social order all depend on the right use of language. [...] The study of eloquence was to be pursued for utility, not ornament, and for the

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<sup>104</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.155-156, pp. 60-61.

frequently asserted – though seldom properly defined – motive of the common good.<sup>105</sup>

For the humanists, it was the intellectual's responsibility to engage in public life rather than withdrawing into contemplation. Contrary to Plato, both body and mind must be present in the city. Rhetoric is valuable because it fulfils this end. The philosopher adept with language can share his thought with a wider audience. This is how intellectual work is made useful.

The rhetorical values which Quintilian and Cicero articulate, and which the humanists embraced, shaped Western pedagogical culture for centuries. It was still possible in Garve's lifetime for scholars to refer unselfconsciously to this tradition. In 1780, Christian Gottlob Heyne wrote a report for the Königliches Pädagogium zu Ilfeld, between Hannover and Leipzig.<sup>106</sup> Heyne was professor of rhetoric and poetry at the University of Göttingen. His report paints a picture of an institution where the humanist model of education, informed by rhetoric, played a central role. Education at the school begins with classical languages and literature. Heyne notes this with approval. Ancient languages are the foundation for all scholarship:

Indessen kan der jugendliche Unterricht derjenigen, die sich künftig den Studien widmen, die gelehrten Sprachen und die alte Litteratur nicht entbehren; der Unterricht muß so gar von Latein und Griechisch ausgehen. Auf dem Fuße, auf welchem unsre Gelehrsamkeit einmal stehet, da unsre Religion sich auf heilige Bücher, die in todten Sprachen geschrieben sind, und auf ihren rechten Verstand, auf gesunde Auslegung, gründet; da selbst unsere Rechtsgelährtheit der Kenntniß und des Gebrauchs fremder Rechte, die in einer gelehrten Sprache abgefaßt sind, nicht entbehren kan; da für diejenigen, die in

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<sup>105</sup> Brian Vickers, 'Rhetoric and poetics', in Eckhard Kessler, Charles B. Schmitt, and Quentin Skinner (eds), *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 730.

<sup>106</sup> I am particularly indebted to Dr Kevin Hilliard for drawing my attention to Heyne's text and its significance as a guide to the rhetorical and humanist traditions in eighteenth-century Germany.

einer jeden Wissenschaft über die bloß mechanische Erlernung hinausgehen und eine gelehrte Kenntniß sich erwerben wollen, Uebersicht dessen, was in vorigen Zeiten darinn geschehen ist, eine nothwendige Sache bleibt; und endlich schöne Künste und Wissenschaften gleichsam Sprößlinge des Alterthums sind; so lange dieses alles sich so verhält: so läßt sich das gelehrte Studium sich kaum anders als mit der Erlernung der todten Sprachen anfangen.<sup>107</sup>

Theology and law depend on texts written in ancient languages; so does any access to previous scholarship; and all branches of learning have their roots (the horticultural metaphor is Heyne's) in antiquity. Knowledge of Latin and Greek is thus essential for all the careers available to the boys of Ilfeld.

This view of the structure of learning is essentially informed by rhetoric.

Königl[iche] Regierung [hat] verordnet, daß der Verfasser dieses Aufsatzes, als Professor der Redekunst und der Dichtkunst, unter welcher Benennung der von Alters hergebrachte Sprachgebrauch der Academien alte Litteratur, schöne Wissenschaften und Künste überhaupt, und die sogenannten Schulwissenschaften insonderheit, zu bezeichnen scheint, eine beständige Aufsicht, und forthin eine jährliche Visitation des Pädagogii auf der Stelle, übernehmen soll.<sup>108</sup>

Heyne's description of his role includes a crucial throwaway remark. In academic idiom, rhetoric and poetry are a shorthand not only for classical literature, but for all higher learning. As a professional teacher and scholar of the discipline, Heyne is well placed to evaluate the school.

Rhetoric is equally (and predictably) prominent in Heyne's curriculum for the higher classes at the school.

In der lateinischen Litteratur werden die Scholaren nach und nach mit den besten classischen Schriftstellern bekannt gemacht. Cicero's

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<sup>107</sup> Christian Gottlob Heyne, *Nachricht von der gegenwärtigen Einrichtung des Königl. Pädagogii zu Ilfeld* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1780), pp. 15-16.

<sup>108</sup> Heyne, *Nachricht*, p. 36.

Briefe und Reden, nicht bloß die so genannten *selectae*, sondern auch z. E. die *Verrinae*, die Bücher *de Oratore*, die *Quaestiones Tusculanae*, die Bücher von den Pflichten, die kleinern Schriften, *de Amicitia* s. w. werden interpretirt und genau zergliedert. In den suppletorischen unentgeltlichen Stunden wird insonderheit etwas zum Lesen und Erklären gewählt, das in den öffentlichen Stunden nicht vorkommt, als Cicero's Bücher *de Natura deorum*, *de divinatione*, *de fato*; oder das auch eine Beziehung auf jene Lectionen hat, als, wenn in den öffentlichen Stunden die Bücher vom Redner erklärt wurden, so sind dienliche Stücke aus dem Quintilian in den suppletorischen Stunden durchgegangen worden.<sup>109</sup>

Here we find the primary source texts for the rhetorical tradition: Cicero's *De oratore* and Quintilian's *Institutio*. It is assumed that these two would lend themselves to being taught in tandem. The *De officiis* is present, too. Education at Ilfeld meant rhetorical education.

This model drew heavily upon the humanist understanding of philosophy. A few pages later, Heyne argues that education should convey knowledge of concrete and particular phenomena. Abstract speculation can wait:

Abstrakte Begriffe setzen concrete voraus; ehe Begriffe sollen analysirt, ehe soll gezeigt werden, was mehrere unter einander gemein oder nicht haben, ehe Begriffe systematisch sollen gestellet werden, müssen Begriffe da seyn; diese erhält der junge Mensch einzeln, er verbindet sie einzeln, und gehet nur spät zum Allgemeinen fort; und dafür ist der academische Unterricht; der hingegen auch selbst, wenn er nach Wunsche fruchten soll, Köpfe antreffen muß, die bereits mit einem Vorrath von Ideen versehen sind. [...] Vornehmlich wird die Logik praktisch betrieben, indem Schriftsteller erklärt, ihre Gedanken geprüft, zergliedert, auf andre Fälle angewendet werden. Gute Interpretation wird eben hiedurch ein so wichtiger Gegenstand des frühen Unterrichts, in Beziehung auf richtig Denken.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Heyne, *Nachricht*, pp. 42-43.

<sup>110</sup> Heyne, *Nachricht*, pp. 52-53.

‘Logik und Metaphysik’ are only to be taught sparingly at the Pädagogium.<sup>111</sup> The work of textual interpretation is much more important, and itself a sound introduction to disciplined, logical thought.

In his day, Heyne was the leading classical scholar in Germany, and he was not whistling in the wind when he framed his educational model. A decade later, his *Nachricht* appeared in the first volume of a series on pedagogical theory. The preface gave it a ringing endorsement:

Wir machen mit dieser schon 1780 im Dieterischen Verlage zu Göttingen erschienenen Schrift, aus mehr als einem Grunde in unserm Magazine den Anfang [...]. Sie scheint uns nemlich ein von einem der Sache kundigen Manne entworfnes Ideal zu seyn, nach dem man, so viel als thunlich, alle Schulen einrichten sollte, und das wenigstens vieles, welches für alle Schulen brauchbar ist, enthält.<sup>112</sup>

Heyne is praised as articulating a universal ideal. His rhetorical values were widely accepted as normative. There is thus historical support for treating rhetoric as a significant context for late eighteenth-century debates. Rhetoric and humanism went together within a coherent vision of intellectual life which was (for the time being) very much alive.

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<sup>111</sup> See Heyne, *Nachricht*, p. 51.

<sup>112</sup> *Magazin für öffentliche Schulen und Schullehrer* 1.1 (Bremen: Johann Heinrich Cramer, 1790) p. 2.

## Tectonic plates

The present thesis applies the intellectual framework outlined by Heyne to Garve's exchanges. Each chapter locates one particular quarrel with reference to this framework. The primary sources are key ancient texts: Quintilian's *Institutio* and Cicero's *De oratore* and *De officiis*. All three would have been familiar to all participants (Garve's translation of Cicero was a landmark). The thesis demonstrates how Garve's positions frequently evoke these models. Different aspects of the traditions vary in their prominence at different times, and other intellectual contexts also play a role. Chapter four, in particular, seeks to locate the Romantics' attack on Garve in a broader intellectual context. However, humanism, informed by rhetorical values, is the central unifying thread for all four episodes.

Reading Garve in this light can do much to explain the intractable nature of his quarrels. The real differences in assumptions between him and his opponents become clear. So, too, does the historical significance of these events. They are seen not as the local rejection of German *Popularphilosophie*, but as part of an age-old quarrel between contrasting positions. Garve becomes the contemporary not of a long list of forgotten figures (Engel, Weiße, Feder) but of Cicero and of the Renaissance humanists. He stands in a long tradition which believed that the public intellectual's first duty was not the pursuit of abstract truth, but the service of his society. From this duty flow others: to communicate clearly, and deal with subjects of practical interest. This vision, and the assumptions on which it was founded, are central to the disputes treated here.

Garve's career is, then, a unique source of insight into a period of profound change in German intellectual history. Repeatedly, he appears at key cultural moments; and repeatedly, in these moments, a conflict is articulated between two very different ways of thinking. These surface clashes are symptomatic of tectonic plate movements, whose effects are still felt today. This introduction began with a dismissal of Garve as deficient in originality, perspicuity, and thoroughness. Such a sentence could only be written in a culture where metaphysical philosophy had triumphed completely over humanism and rhetoric; where philosophy had gone back to heaven. This thesis casts new light on how this situation came to be – and on just what the much-maligned Garve stood for.

## Chapter 1

### 'Keineswegs dem populären Gebrauche angemessen'<sup>113</sup>: Garve and Kant on popularity

The 'Göttingen Review' of Immanuel Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* has some notoriety. Published in the *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen* in January 1782, the year after the first edition of the *Kritik* appeared, it was one of the earliest reviews of the work and remains an important source for how Kant was initially read by his contemporaries.<sup>114</sup> The review gave rise to an important dispute between Christian Garve and Immanuel Kant. The dispute focuses on the question of whether the contents of the famously difficult *Kritik* could have been expressed in language accessible to anyone outside of the philosophical academy: a key term in this debate was the German 'populär'.

The question of popularity is essentially a question of literary style. However, the positions of both Garve and Kant are rooted in more general assumptions about the contents of philosophy. They differ, not primarily over whether Kant ought to frame his philosophy more accessibly, but whether it would be possible for him to do so. The title of this chapter comes from the preface to the first edition of the *Kritik*. There, Kant trenchantly claims that his work could not, by definition, be suited to popular use.

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<sup>113</sup> Kant, AA 4, p. 12.

<sup>114</sup> See Manfred Kühn, 'Kant's critical philosophy and its reception – the first five years (1781-1786)', in Paul Guyer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 630-664, esp. pp. 634-636.

A key to the difference lies in the two thinkers' views on the relationship between the thought of the philosopher and that of the layperson. For Garve, a basic continuity joins the two. Philosophy consists in reflection on experience, a universal inheritance. Common sense is the criterion of truth. For Kant, however, the philosopher's enterprise is distinctive. He understands philosophy primarily as metaphysics; common sense belongs to a different order of thinking.<sup>115</sup>

The tradition of classical rhetoric is an important background to this debate. Garve's definition of popular style evokes Quintilian's definition of clarity in the *Institutio Oratoria*. Quintilian also argues that all areas of human thought are related to one another: the same faculty of mind is used in all of them. He understands philosophy as an earth-bound enterprise focused mostly on practical ethics (just the sort of philosophy which might be required by an orator in a court of law). Garve's position exhibits strong parallels with the rhetorical tradition; Kant puts forward a very different view.

The chapter draws upon statements made by Garve and Kant in the immediate context of their dispute, but also upon relevant comments elsewhere. It begins by reporting the genesis of the Göttingen review, arguing that the discrepancy between Garve's original and the published version has often been neglected. It then

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<sup>115</sup> The lively debate over 'common sense' or 'gemeiner Menschenverstand' in Early Modern philosophy is relevant to the exchange considered here, but beyond the scope of this chapter. For an introductory survey, see e. g. art., 'Sensus communis', in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, eds Joachim Ritter, Günther Bien, and Rudolf Eisler (Basel: Schwabe, 1971-2007), vol. 9 [= HWPh 9], cols 622-675.

identifies the opposition between Garve and Kant over whether the *Kritik* could have been transposed into more accessible ('popular') language. It continues by establishing the relationship between popularity and the rhetorical virtue of clarity. It goes on to trace Quintilian's understanding of the philosophical enterprise, based upon his validation of a shared human faculty of reason. Quintilian then becomes the background to a concluding analysis of Garve and Kant's contrasting views on the relationship between the thought of the philosopher and that of the layperson.

## The Göttingen Review: Historical Background

A convoluted set of circumstances lay behind the Göttingen review of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. In July and August of 1781, Christian Garve punctuated a tour through Germany with an extended stay in Göttingen.<sup>116</sup> Garve was already an established translator, literary critic, and writer of philosophical essays. He enjoyed a high standing as an intellectual: Kant would later express hope that Garve might be among the few capable of understanding his work and securing its positive reception.<sup>117</sup> When he visited Göttingen, Garve was busy with what would be his most famous work: a translation of Cicero's *De officiis*, carried out at the request of Frederick the Great. With this in mind, he hoped that his visit might allow him to hear Heyne lecture on ancient Rome.<sup>118</sup>

During Garve's stay, he agreed to write a review of the newly published *Kritik*.<sup>119</sup> According to Garve's own version of events, as told subsequently to Kant, he quickly became aware that he would not be able to do justice to the work. His poor health

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<sup>116</sup> See Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie*, pp. 217-232. The following account is based on Garve's correspondence, as well as isolated references from other writers; see Garve, letter to Kant, 13.7.1783, in Kant, AA 10, pp. 329-331; Christian Gottfried Schütz, letter to Kant, 10.7.1784, in Kant, AA 10, pp. 392-394. In an article in the *Neue Berlinische Monatsschrift*, published in 1801, Johann Ernest Gruner recounts a visit to Göttingen as a young student and acquaintance of Feder's; according to Gruner, he met and conversed with Garve at precisely the time when Garve was writing the review. See Johann Ernest Gruner, 'Adam Smith und Christian Garve', in *Neue Berlinische Monatsschrift* 6, 1801, pp. 38-61.

<sup>117</sup> See Kant, letter to Garve, 7.8.1783, and Kant, letter to Mendelssohn, 16.8.1783, both in Kant, AA 10, pp. 341 and 346.

<sup>118</sup> Gruner, 'Smith und Garve', p. 39; Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie*, p. 218; see also Garve, letter to Georg Joachim Zollikofer, 24.7.1781, now in GW 16.1, pp. 245-246.

<sup>119</sup> Garve asserts that he offered of his own accord to write a review, motivated by the friendship and hospitality shown to him in Göttingen, and this claim is loosely corroborated by Schütz; see Garve to Kant, 13.7.83, and Schütz to Kant, 10.7.1784, both in Kant, AA 10, pp. 329 and 392.

at the time of writing made matters worse (a characteristic claim from Garve).<sup>120</sup> He did, however, complete a draft manuscript, and posted this to Göttingen from Leipzig. This first manuscript greatly exceeded the conventional length for articles in the *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* (a claim corroborated by Christian Gottfried Schütz).<sup>121</sup> Garve was aware that it would need to be edited for publication.

Edited it had been, and heavily, by Johann Georg Heinrich Feder, before it appeared in the journal in January 1782.<sup>122</sup> Kant read it, was unimpressed, and responded forcefully in his *Prolegomena* the following year: '[Mein Recensent] scheint gar nicht einzusehen, worauf es bei der Untersuchung, womit ich mich (glücklich oder unglücklich) beschäftigte, eigentlich ankam.'<sup>123</sup> Garve quickly wrote to Kant to protest the extent of Feder's intervention and to declare his own dissatisfaction with the Göttingen version:

Sie können glauben, daß Sie selbst nicht so viel Unwillen oder Mißvergnügen bey dem Anblick derselben haben empfinden können, als ich. Einige phrases aus meinem *Mscrypt* waren in der That beybehalten; aber sie betragen gewiß nicht den 10<sup>ten</sup> Theil meiner, und nicht den 3<sup>ten</sup> der Göttingischen Rezension.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> See Garve to Kant, 13.7.1783, in Kant, AA 10, p. 329: 'Ich erkante bald, da ich das Werk anfieng zu lesen, daß ich unrecht gewählt hatte; daß diese Lecture, besonders jetzt, da ich auf der Reise, zerstreut, noch mit andrer Arbeit beschäftigt, seit vielen Jahren geschwächt, und auch damals, wie immer, kränklich war, für mich zu schwer sey. Ich gestehe Ihnen, ich weiß kein Buch in der Welt, das zu lesen mir soviel Anstrengung gekostet hätte.' Gruner also claims to have heard Garve protest the difficulty of the *Kritik* immediately after completing his own reading of it, in a conversation which Gruner dates to the 13<sup>th</sup> August 1781. See Gruner, 'Smith und Garve', p. 53.

<sup>121</sup> See Garve to Kant, 13.7.1783, and Schütz to Kant, 10.7.1784, both in Kant, AA 10, pp. 330 and 392.

<sup>122</sup> The Göttingen review is in the *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, 1782, *Zugabe* vol. 1, pp. 40-48. At eight pages, it is approximately one third of the length of Garve's original.

<sup>123</sup> Kant, *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können*, in AA 4, p. 373.

<sup>124</sup> Garve to Kant, 13.7.1783, in Kant, AA 10, p. 330.

In the letter, Garve informs Kant that he had received his original manuscript back from Göttingen and sent it on to Johann Joachim Spalding in Berlin. Spalding was to show the original to some acquaintances of Garve's, and so mitigate the negative impression made by the published version.<sup>125</sup> Garve reports further that his original is to be published in Nicolai's *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*, and invites Kant to compare the two versions.<sup>126</sup>

Kant's reply to Garve is warm in its tone:

Sie können mir, geehrtester Herr, festiglich glauben, auch zu aller Zeit auf der Leipziger Messe bey meinem Verleger Hartknoch erkundigen, daß ich allen seinen Versicherungen, als ob Sie an der [Göttinger] Recension Antheil hätten, niemals geglaubt habe und nun ist es mir überaus angenehm, durch Ihre gütige Nachricht von meiner Vermuthung die Bestätigung zu erlangen.<sup>127</sup>

Kant goes on to claim that he looks forward to reading Garve's original when it appears in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*.<sup>128</sup> However, the experience did not live up to his expectations. On reading the original, he apparently felt himself to have been treated as an 'Imbecille'.<sup>129</sup>

Reception of Garve's review has frequently done little to distinguish it from its Göttingen relative. Kant's verdict in the *Prolegomena* has been taken to apply to

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<sup>125</sup> Garve to Kant, 13.7.1783, in Kant, AA 10, pp. 330-331.

<sup>126</sup> Garve to Kant, 13.7.1783, in Kant, AA 10, p. 331. Garve's original eventually appeared in the *Anhang zur Allgemeinen Deutschen Bibliothek Bd. 37-52*, vol. 2 (1783), pp. 838-862.

<sup>127</sup> Kant to Garve, 7.8.1783, in Kant, AA 10, pp. 337-338.

<sup>128</sup> Kant to Garve, 7.8.1783, in Kant, AA 10 p. 338.

<sup>129</sup> The source for Kant's reaction is a letter from Johann Georg Hamann to Johann Gottfried Herder, dated 8.12.1783; now in Hamann, *Briefwechsel*, 7 vols, ed. Walther Ziesemer and Arthur Henkel (Wiesbaden: Insel-Verlag, 1955-1979), vol. 5 (1965), p. 107; see Franz Nauen, 'Garve – ein Philosoph in der echten Bedeutung des Wortes', in *Kant-Studien* 87 (1996), p. 186; Manfred Kühn, *Kant. Eine Biographie*, trans. Martin Pfeiffer (München: Beck, 2003), p. 309; Gerd Irrlitz, *Kant-Handbuch* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2010), p. 266.

both versions. Garve's claim that the Göttingen version is very different from his original has met scepticism. In a piece commemorating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Kritik*, Hans-Georg Gadamer passes judgement on Garve: 'An der Art, wie sich Garve – wenn auch mit ungerechtfertigter Abschwächung – zur Verfasserschaft bekannte, wurde in Wahrheit offenbar, wie sehr die "Kritik der reinen Vernunft" die Zeitgenossen überfordert hatte.'<sup>130</sup> Steffen Dietzsch identifies Garve as a 'ratlose[r] Rezensent', one of many early critics who failed to grasp what Kant was doing: Kant himself is marshalled in support of this view.<sup>131</sup> Manfred Kühn also asserts that Garve's verdict is not fundamentally different from Feder's.<sup>132</sup> The same perspective is evident in Gerd Irrlitz's *Kant-Handbuch*: 'Garve [...] war der Beurteilung des Buches nicht gewachsen.'<sup>133</sup> Irrlitz describes Garve's original (not the Göttingen version!) as exhibiting pure 'Unverständnis', and also joins Gadamer, Dietzsch and Kühn in stressing the basic similarity between the Göttingen review and Garve's original: '[Garve] verringerte nun seinen Anteil an der Federschen Fassung der Rezension mehr als es die Tatsache gleichen Urteils in der Sache [...] doch eigentlich gestattete.'<sup>134</sup>

Such criticisms of Garve often refer to the Göttingen review, and foreground the aspect of it which most vexed Kant: its identification of the *Kritik* with Early Modern

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<sup>130</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, 'Kants "Kritik der reinen Vernunft" nach 200 Jahren', in Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke*, 10 vols (Tübingen: Mohr, 1985-2010), vol. 4, p. 337.

<sup>131</sup> Steffen Dietzsch, *Immanuel Kant. Eine Biographie* (Leipzig: Reclam, 2003), p. 118. Dietzsch quotes Kant's letter to Jacob Sigismund Beck, 4.12.1792, in AA 11, p. 395.

<sup>132</sup> See Kühn, *Kant*, p. 309.

<sup>133</sup> Irrlitz, *Kant-Handbuch*, p. 265.

<sup>134</sup> Irrlitz, *Kant-Handbuch*, p. 266.

idealist philosophy, represented chiefly by George Berkeley.<sup>135</sup> However, this reading of Garve is unduly dependent on Feder. In the Göttingen version, the accusation of idealism appears as early as the first sentence (later quoted by Kant as proof of his reviewer's incomprehension): 'Dieses Werk [...] ist ein System des höhern, oder, wie es der Verfasser nennt, des transcendentellen Idealismus.'<sup>136</sup> Berkeley's name appears on the second page: 'Auf diesen Begriffen, von den Empfindungen als blossen Modificationen unserer selbst, (worauf auch Berkeley seinen Idealismus hauptsächlich baut) vom Raum und von der Zeit beruht der eine Grundpfeiler des Kantschen Systems.'<sup>137</sup> Feder would later lay sole claim to this aspect of the review: 'Von mir, nicht von Garve, ist das Urtheil am Ende der Recension, über den Kantischen Idealismus in Zusammenhaltung mit dem Berkeleyschen; welches wohl am meisten beleidigt haben mag, ich aber am wenigsten bereue.'<sup>138</sup> A comparison of the two reviews supports this assertion. Berkeley's name does not appear in Garve's version. The sentence where it appears in the Göttingen version appears to be a deliberate editorial intervention: a similar sentence features in the original, but has been reformulated and relocated by Feder.<sup>139</sup> Garve does use the expression 'transcendenteller Idealismus', but it does not carry the same provocative force in

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<sup>135</sup> See Kant, AA 4, pp. 373-375: 'Mein so genannter (eigentlich kritischer) Idealism ist also von ganz eigenthümlicher Art, nämlich so, daß er den gewöhnlichen umstürzt. [...] Es sei mir also erlaubt, ihn künftig [...] den formalen, besser noch den kritischen Idealism zu nennen, um ihn von dem dogmatischen des Berkeley und vom sceptischen des Cartesius zu unterscheiden.'

<sup>136</sup> Garve/Feder, 'Critik der reinen Vernunft. Von Immanuel Kant', in *GGA* 1782, Z1, p. 40. See further Kant, AA 4, p. 373.

<sup>137</sup> Garve/Feder, 'Critik', p. 41.

<sup>138</sup> Johann Georg Heinrich Feder, *Leben, Natur und Grundsätze* (Leipzig: Schwickert, 1825), p. 119.

<sup>139</sup> In his original, Garve refers to Kant's redefinition of space and time as 'einer von den Grundpfeilern des Kantschen Systems' (the phrase coopted by Feder), but with no reference to Berkeley. Garve, 'Kritik', p. 841. Berkeley is named in connection with Garve's review by Dietzsch (Dietzsch, *Kant*, p. 118); Kühn concedes that Berkeley is not explicitly named in it (Kühn, *Kant*, p. 309).

his review as in the Göttingen version. In the latter, its presence in the first sentence sets up a programmatic attack; in Garve's original, it almost escapes unnoticed.<sup>140</sup>

The Göttingen review thus goes much further than Garve's original in identifying Kant's idealism with Berkeley's. It also all but expunges an important aspect of Garve's argument: his criticisms of the difficult language of the *Kritik*.<sup>141</sup> The question of whether Kant could have expressed his contents in more popular language was central to the exchange which followed.

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<sup>140</sup> See Garve, 'Kritik', p. 850.

<sup>141</sup> The issue of Kant's difficult language is raised only once in the Göttingen review, as a polemical aside in the opening sentence. In full, the sentence runs as follows: 'Dieses Werk, das den Verstand seiner Leser immer übt, wenn auch nicht immer unterrichtet, oft die Aufmerksamkeit bis zur Ermüdung anstrengt, zuweilen ihr durch glückliche Bilder zu Hülfe kömmt, oder sie durch unerwartete gemeinnützige Folgerungen belohnt, ist ein System des höhern, oder, wie es der Verf. nennt, des transcendentellen Idealismus.' Garve/Feder, 'Critik', p. 40.

## Can the *Kritik* be popular?: Garve and Kant

Leonie Koch-Schwarzer describes the exchange between Garve and Kant as ‘eine umfassende Diskussion über die Möglichkeiten und Grenzen popular-allgemeinverständlichen Schreibens bzw. über Möglichkeiten und Grenzen des Publikumsbezugs von Philosophie.’<sup>142</sup> Popularity was (among other things) a stylistic quality: a popular text was accessible to a non-expert public. This reflects the reference to a ‘popular’ form of philosophy in Cicero’s *De finibus*. There, Cicero divides the works of the Peripatetic philosophers into two classes: ‘one popular in style (Lat. *populariter*) [...] the other more carefully wrought.’<sup>143</sup> In the eighteenth century, popularity came to denote a particular set of priorities for intellectual life, with roots in the rhetorical tradition.<sup>144</sup> Diderot’s *Pensées sur l’interprétation de la nature* issue an appeal: ‘hâtons-nous de rendre la philosophie populaire.’<sup>145</sup> He was calling for works of natural science to be expressed in language accessible to the general public, instead of the obscure style typified (for Diderot) by Isaac Newton

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<sup>142</sup> Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie*, p. 305. See also Klaus Petrus, ‘“Beschriebene Dunkelheit” und “Seichtigkeit”: Historisch-systematische Voraussetzungen der Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kant und Garve im Umfeld der Göttinger Rezension’, in *Kant-Studien* 85 (1994), p. 293.

<sup>143</sup> Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1994), V.12, p. 403.

<sup>144</sup> See Helmut Holzhey, art. ‘Popularphilosophie’, in *HWP* 7, cols 1093-1100; Christoph Böhr, *Philosophie für die Welt* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2003); Christoph Binkelman and Nele Schneidereit, (eds), *Denken fürs Volk? Popularphilosophie vor und nach Kant* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2015). See also Gert Ueding, art., ‘Popularphilosophie’, in *Hansers Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur vom 16. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*, 12 vols (Munich: Hanser, 1980-2009), vol. 3 (1980), pp. 605-634, and Johan Van der Zande, ‘In the Image of Cicero: German Philosophy Between Wolff and Kant’, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56.3 (July 1995), pp. 419-442. See further the introduction to this thesis and below, p. 74.

<sup>145</sup> Denis Diderot, *Pensées sur l’interprétation de la nature*, in Diderot, *Œuvres Complètes*, ed. Herbert Dieckmann et al, 33 vols (Paris: Hermann, 1981-), vol. 9 (1981), XL, p. 69. ‘Philosophy’ should here be understood broadly: Diderot is discussing ‘natural philosophy’, which contemporary disciplinary boundaries would locate under the heading of science.

and Georg Ernst Stahl.<sup>146</sup> In the first volume of the *Spectator*, Joseph Addison borrowed from Cicero in order to formulate the project of popular philosophy: 'It was said of Socrates, that he brought Philosophy down from Heaven, to inhabit among Men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me, that I have brought Philosophy out of Closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell in Clubs and Assemblies, at Tea-Tables, and in Coffee-Houses.'<sup>147</sup> This project consists in promoting humane learning instead of pedantry, and in taking this learning out of the academy into the public sphere.

Popularity could also be a stylistic quality. In Adelung, the label 'populär' is a somewhat unwelcome guest, but the concept carries positive connotations:

Ein von einigen neuern Schriftstellern ohne Noth aus dem Franz. Populaire entlehntes Wort, dem größten Haufen, den niedern Classen der Glieder eines Staates verständlich. Ein populärer Vortrag. Ein populärer Schriftsteller. Auch für, den niedern Classen der Weltbürger nützlich, haben es einige einführen wollen, als wenn wir nicht schon das gute, eben das sagende Deutsche Wort gemeinnützig hätten. Bey andern bedeutet es, der Art zu denken und sich auszudrücken des großen Haufens gemäß.<sup>148</sup>

For Adelung, popularity depends on a text's comprehensibility ('verständlich') for various audiences beyond a restricted academic elite. 'Populär' has humanitarian undertones; Adelung associates it with the older German term 'gemeinnützig'. A popular text will be useful and beneficial to a broad community. Garve defines

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<sup>146</sup> 'Si nous voulons que les philosophes marchent en avant; approchons le peuple du point où en sont les philosophes. Diront-ils qu'il est des ouvrages qu'on ne mettra jamais à la portée du commun des esprits? S'ils le dissent, ils montreront seulement qu'ils ignorent ce que peuvent la bonne méthode et la longue habitude.' Diderot, *OC* 9, p. 69.

<sup>147</sup> Addison and Steele, *Spectator*, vol. 1, p. 44.

<sup>148</sup> Art., 'populär', in Johann Christoph Adelung, *Grammatisch-kritisches Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart*, online at <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Populär?hl=popular>. Article retrieved 17.03.2017.

popularity in the same vein in a late essay, 'Von der Popularität des Vortrages' (1793): 'Ich verstehe unter einem populär geschriebenen Buche [...] dasjenige, welches dem größern Publicum, und nicht bloß dem gelehrten, verständlich ist und gefällt.'<sup>149</sup> For a text to be popular, it must be comprehensible to the general public.

Garve and Kant held fundamentally different views on whether this kind of popularity – accessibility to a non-expert audience – could reasonably be demanded of the *Kritik*. In the preface to the first edition, Kant unequivocally positions his work as unpopular:

Beispiele und Erläuterungen schienen mir immer nöthig und flossen daher auch wirklich im ersten Entwurfe an ihren Stellen gehörig ein. Ich sah aber die Größe meiner Aufgabe und die Menge der Gegenstände, womit ich es zu thun haben würde, gar bald ein; und da ich gewahr ward, daß diese ganz allein im trockenen, blos scholastischen Vortrage das Werk schon gnug [*sic*] ausdehnen würden, so fand ich es unrathsam, es durch Beispiele und Erläuterungen, die nur in populärer Absicht nothwendig sind, noch mehr anzuschwellen, zumal diese Arbeit keineswegs dem populären Gebrauche angemessen werden könnte und die eigentliche [*sic*] Kenner der Wissenschaft diese Erleichterung nicht so nöthig haben.<sup>150</sup>

Kant indicates why illustrations and examples were ultimately shorn from the *Kritik*. He did not want to make it unnecessarily voluminous, since the barest possible presentation of his argument must be long and involved. Furthermore, concrete illustrations are only necessary for a work written 'in populärer Absicht': namely for non-expert readers. The *Kritik*, by contrast, can only be relevant to specialists familiar with its subject matter ('die eigentliche Kenner der Wissenschaft'). The inclusion of helps would be futile. Kant thus defends the dry nature of the *Kritik* by

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<sup>149</sup> Garve, 'Von der Popularität des Vortrages', in GW 4.1, p. 333. Koch-Schwarzer provides the date for the essay: see Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie*, p. 314.

<sup>150</sup> Kant, AA 4, p. 12.

claiming that his content could not, by definition, be of interest to a non-specialist audience.

After Garve had read the *Prolegomena*, he wrote to Kant to trace out a diametrically opposed position. The letter begins in conciliatory tone, as Garve protests the difference between the offensive Göttingen review and his original.<sup>151</sup> Having affirmed his goodwill, however, he issues a criticism of Kant's difficult style.

Ich will das nicht ganz von mir ableugnen, was Sie dem Göttingischen *Recensenten* Schuld geben, daß er über den Schwierigkeiten, die er zu überwinden gehabt, unwillig geworden sey. Ich gestehe, ich bin es zuweilen geworden; weil ich glaubte es müsse möglich seyn, Wahrheiten, die wichtige Reformen in der Philosophie hervorbringen sollen, denen welche des Nachdenkens nicht ganz ungewöhnt sind, leichter verständlich zu machen. [...] Das ist auch jetzt noch meine Meynung, vielleicht eine irrige: daß das Ganze Ihres Systems, wenn es wirklich brauchbar werden soll, populärer ausgedrückt werden müsse, und wenn es Wahrheit enthält, auch ausgedrückt werden könne.<sup>152</sup>

In the *Prolegomena*, Kant had suggested that the anonymous Göttingen reviewer had been too lazy to engage properly with the *Kritik* ('Ungeduld, ein weitläufiges Werk durchzudenken').<sup>153</sup> In response, Garve asserts that the difficulty of reading the *Kritik* did indeed cause him some annoyance. The text implicitly challenged a fundamental conviction of his: that it must be possible to express important philosophical truths in terms accessible to the intelligent non-expert. This conviction has not been shaken by reading Kant's work ('das ist auch noch jetzt meine

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<sup>151</sup> See Garve to Kant, 13.07.83, in Kant, AA 10, pp. 328-329: 'Ich würde untröstlich seyn, wenn [diese Recension] ganz aus meiner Feder gefloßen wäre. [...] Da mir daran gelegen ist, daß ein Mann den ich von jeher sehr hochgeschätzt habe, mich wenigstens für einen ehrlichen Mann erkennt, wenn er mich gleich einen seichten Metaphysiker ansehen mag: so trete ich aus dem *Incognito*.'

<sup>152</sup> Garve to Kant, 13.07.83, in Kant, AA 10, p. 331.

<sup>153</sup> See Kant, AA 4, p. 373.

Meynung'), and Garve summarizes his thinking with reference to the key term *populär*. If Kant's system really does contain truth, it can be given 'popular' expression, and it must be, if it is to be useful. Garve's objection to the difficulty of the *Kritik* is not a minor quibble of style, but arises out of a guiding intellectual conviction. The possibility of popular expression is the criterion for judging Kant's claim to truth.

## 'Popularity' and Rhetoric

Garve and Kant thus disagree over whether the content of the *Kritik* can be expressed in language accessible to the non-expert public. This debate has an important background in the tradition of classical rhetoric.<sup>154</sup> Rhetoric was a highly relevant context for the project of 'popular philosophy', with which Garve is frequently identified. The tradition was, among other things, a programme of holistic education, and it stressed the importance of linguistic communication for human society. It could therefore speak to popular philosophy's concerns for clear expression and accessible scholarship – something well recognized in recent research.<sup>155</sup> When popular philosophers needed distinguished precedents for their enterprise, they turned to the rhetorical tradition. Addison's famous quotation about bringing philosophy to dwell in coffee houses is, of course, an allusion to Cicero – the greatest of orators, as well as being a key figure in the broad humanist tradition.

Rhetoric as an intellectual framework is also relevant more specifically to the exchange between Garve and Kant. The disputed concept of 'popularity', as defined

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<sup>154</sup> Also, therefore, in Ciceronian humanism more generally; however, rhetoric is the primary focus of this chapter.

<sup>155</sup> See e. g. Ueding, 'Popularphilosophie', pp. 615, 617: 'Ohne den Kult der lateinischen Rhetorik und die Verehrung Ciceros ist die Entstehung des Laienpublizisten und Laienschriftstellers in Opposition zur kirchlichen Literatur im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert nicht zu begreifen. [...] So entstand aus dem Wirkungsinteresse der Aufklärung eine kritische Philosophie der deutschen Sprache und ihrer Rhetorik.' See also Van der Zande, 'In the Image of Cicero', p. 422: 'As a humanistically inspired philosophy of life and moral action, popular philosophy was deliberately rhetorical in nature. [...] Broad learning, not specialization, and the art of conversation, not a scholar's jargon, were the first requisites for [its] purposes.' See also Ueding, *Aufklärung über Rhetorik: Versuche über Beredsamkeit, ihre Theorie und praktische Bewährung* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992).

by both Garve and Kant, is closely related to the rhetorical virtue of clarity.<sup>156</sup>

Immediately before the passage quoted above, where Kant claims that his work could never be suited to popular use, he raises the problem of ‘Deutlichkeit’.<sup>157</sup> ‘Was [...] die *Deutlichkeit* betrifft, so hat der Leser ein Recht, zuerst die *discursive* (logische) *Deutlichkeit* **durch Begriffe**, dann aber auch eine *intuitive* (ästhetische) *Deutlichkeit* **durch Anschauungen**, d. i. Beispiele oder andere Erläuterungen in concreto, zu fordern.’<sup>158</sup> In the context, Kant is defining the Cartesian technical quality of ‘distinctness’, the complement of ‘clarity’. He claims that it should be possible both to identify the diverse aspects of his argument and to relate them to one another.<sup>159</sup> However, in describing the second kind of distinctness, Kant’s discussion of philosophical technicalities touches upon the realm of textual comprehension. As he goes on to explain, this intuitive or aesthetic distinctness has to do with the reader’s capacity to grasp his argument. What is ‘deutlich’ can be understood: ‘Wenn man auf die Faßlichkeit eines weitläufigen, dennoch aber in einem Prinzip zusammenhängenden Ganzen speculativer Erkenntniß seine Absicht richtet, könnte man [...] sagen: manches Buch wäre viel deutlicher geworden, wenn es nicht so gar deutlich hätte werden sollen.’<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> See Bernhard Sowinski, *Stilistik*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999), pp. 17-18.

<sup>157</sup> Kant, AA 4, pp. 10-11.

<sup>158</sup> Kant, AA 4, p. 12. Italicized and bold type follows the *Akademie Ausgabe*.

<sup>159</sup> See Dagmar Mirbach, ‘Einführung’, in Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Aesthetik, Lateinisch-Deutsch*, ed. Mirbach, 2 vols (Hamburg: Meiner, 2007), vol. 1, pp. xxxiii: ‘Klar [...] ist eine Vorstellung, die zur Wiedererkennung eines Ganzen in Unterscheidung von anderen genügt. [...] Klar-deutlich ist im Unterschied dazu eine Vorstellung, welche auch einzelne Merkmale des erkannten Gegenstands enthält, [...] die unter sich keinen Widerspruch enthalten und die dazu hinreichen, den Gegenstand von anderen zu unterscheiden und ihn als zugehörig zu einer bestimmten Art oder Gattung zu erkennen.’

<sup>160</sup> Kant, AA 4, pp. 12-13.

In discussing Cartesian distinctness, Kant thus evokes – albeit indirectly – the rhetorical virtue of clarity. The question at stake is whether the unlearned reader can be expected to understand his work: ‘so fand ich es unrathsam, es durch Beispiele und Erläuterungen, die nur in populärer Absicht nothwendig sind, noch mehr anzuschwellen, zumal diese Arbeit keineswegs dem populären Gebrauche angemessen werden könnte und die eigentliche Kenner der Wissenschaft diese Erleichterung nicht so nöthig haben, ob sie zwar jederzeit angenehm ist.’<sup>161</sup> In the rhetorical tradition, this was precisely what clarity meant: comprehensibility for the non-expert reader.

In Quintilian’s *Institutio*, clarity is the foundational linguistic virtue. It long remained the primary quality of a good style in the rhetorical tradition, and still shaped discussion in German style handbooks of the late eighteenth century.<sup>162</sup>

Let us then take, as the primary virtue, Lucidity, ‘proper’ words, straightforward order, no long-delayed conclusion, nothing missing and nothing too much. This will lead to language acceptable to the learned and plain to the unlearned.<sup>163</sup>

Good style, for Quintilian, will neither be too crude for the ‘learned’, nor too complex for the ‘unlearned’. All sections of society will be able to appreciate it.

There is thus a significant parallel between this influential definition of clarity and the concept of popularity, as articulated by Garve and Kant. For both writers, a popular work is a work which can be understood by the general public and not

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<sup>161</sup> Kant, AA 4, p. 12.

<sup>162</sup> See e.g. Adelung, *Ueber den deutschen Styl*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, 2 vols (Berlin: Voss, 1789), vol. 1, p. 127: ‘Diese Eigenschaft [sc. Klarheit und Deutlichkeit] ist die erste und wesentlichste Eigenschaft eines guten Styls, deren Abwesenheit sich durch nichts ersetzen läßt.’

<sup>163</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* VIII.ii.22, in vol. 3, p. 339.

merely academic specialists; and in the rhetorical tradition, a good style is a style accessible to all.

When discussing popularity elsewhere, Garve echoes and endorses Quintilian's definition of clarity. He defines the key term 'Deutlichkeit' in his essay, 'Von der Popularität des Vortrages'; written some time after the exchange with Kant, the essay contains Garve's subsequent reflection on the questions raised.<sup>164</sup> Here, Garve appears to understand 'Deutlichkeit' exclusively in the sense of rhetorical clarity: it is the cognitive link between the understanding of the writer and that of the reader.

Um dem größern Publicum in Schriften zu gefallen, dazu gehört eben das, wodurch man der Gesellschaft im Umgange gefällt. Das erste ist, daß man verstanden werde. [...] [Der populäre Schriftsteller] muß also einen höhern Grad von Deutlichkeit besitzen – eine solche, wenn es möglich ist, welche das Nichtverstehen seiner Gedanken unmöglich macht.<sup>165</sup>

According to Garve, clear communication is the defining characteristic of popular writing. Clarity for Garve means being comprehensible to a broad public ('das größere Publicum', 'die Gesellschaft'), rather than only to a limited body of experts: he thus understands it precisely as Quintilian does in the *Institutio*. Garve further provides the ideal criterion of clarity: a piece of writing is only clear when it is practically impossible to misunderstand it. In this too, he evokes Quintilian's definition: 'Our aim must not be to put [the judge] in a position to understand our argument, but to force him to understand it.'<sup>166</sup> True clarity, for Quintilian, excludes the possibility of misunderstanding. Garve elsewhere makes his dependence on

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<sup>164</sup> Koch-Schwarzer dates it to 1793; see Koch-Schwarzer, *Populäre Moralphilosophie*, p. 307.

<sup>165</sup> GW 4.1, pp. 334-335.

<sup>166</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* VIII.ii.24, in vol. 3, p. 211.

Quintilian in this matter explicit. Commenting on a poem by his friend and correspondent, Christian Felix Weiße, Garve notes in passing that a particular line of Weiße's could be clearer. This constitutes a blemish ('kleiner Fleck'): 'Man versteht es: aber man ist nur dann deutlich, sagt Quintilian, wenn es unmöglich ist, uns nicht zu verstehen.'<sup>167</sup> Garve's position on clear communication and popular expression is thus demonstrably drawn from Quintilian.

It is perhaps easy to see why rhetoric, as a theory of language, would be relevant at some level to Garve and Kant's discussion of popular expression. However, Quintilian's prescription of clarity is related to other guiding assumptions about the human mind; these, too, bear upon the argument treated here. The differences between Garve and Kant extend well beyond stylistic squabbles. The two ultimately hold different views about the contents of philosophy, and about whether these are connected with the thought of the layperson. In this, too, the rhetorical tradition is an important context. Quintilian formulates the view of philosophy and of the human mind around which the opposition crystallizes: whereas Garve endorses this view, Kant rejects it.

Quintilian's case for the ideal orator culminates in a vision of human nature. The orator is not only a model citizen, but also a model human being. He excels in the most defining and uniquely human of capacities:

And so the creator gave us Reason as our special gift, and chose that we should share it with the immortal gods. Yet Reason itself would not help us so much, or be so evident in us, if we did not have the

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<sup>167</sup> Garve, letter to Weiße, 2.10.1798, now in GW, 15.2, p. 308.

power to express the thoughts we have conceived in our minds. [...] And so, if we have had no better gift from the gods than speech, what else should we think so deserving of careful cultivation? In what should we prefer to excel among men more than in that in which mankind excels other living creatures? [...] Is there not a splendour in the very fact of using our common understanding and the words that all use to achieve such praise and glory that you seem not just to be speaking or pleading, but like Pericles, to 'lighten and thunder?'<sup>168</sup>

Quintilian's concern is to secure rhetoric's dignity. As special attention to language, rhetoric develops the capacity which elevates human beings above all other mortal creatures: 'And indeed, that first god, the father of all things and the maker of the universe, distinguished man from other living creatures that are subject to death by nothing so much as the faculty of speech.'<sup>169</sup> Quintilian also associates language intimately with the faculty of reason. Animals might possess some crude capacity for thought, but it is language which permits effective use of the mind: 'It is [speech], rather than some degree of understanding and thought, which we see to be lacking in other animals.'<sup>170</sup> Reason is an ennobling capacity: it gives humans the ability to share in the life of the gods.

For Quintilian, the joint capacity for reason and language is definitive of humanity; it follows that all human beings share in this capacity. Quintilian emphasizes the complementary principles of humanity's distinctiveness and its shared nature: as an expert in the use of language, the orator's skill is not only in 'that in which mankind excels all other living things', but also in 'the understanding which is common to mankind and the words that are used by all.' Quintilian's framing of his orator as a

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<sup>168</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* II.xvi.14-19, vol. 1, pp. 375-377.

<sup>169</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* II.xvi.12, vol. 1, p. 375.

<sup>170</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* II.xvi.15, vol. 1, pp. 375-377.

human ideal thus implies a particular view of human nature. The parallel with Cicero's view in *De officiis* is clear: 'The same nature, by the power of reason, unites one man to another for the fellowship both of common speech and of life.'<sup>171</sup>

This stress on the common human faculty of mind also undergirds Quintilian's model of philosophy. If the faculty is shared by all human beings, diverse intellectual pursuits also have much in common. In the *Prooemium*, Quintilian defends his 'encroachment' on philosophical territory by arguing that the themes in question are of universal concern: 'I cannot agree that the principles of upright and honourable living should, as some have held, be left to the philosophers.'<sup>172</sup>

This implies a particular view of the stuff of philosophy as linked with the thought of the ordinary person.

In fact, we all regularly handle the themes which philosophy claims for its own. Who – if not an utter villain – does not speak about justice and equity and goodness? Who – even among country folk – does not ask some questions about the causes of natural phenomena?<sup>173</sup>

Philosophy, as Quintilian defines it, consists in enquiry into the existential questions common to all human beings. He regards the philosopher as concerned not with abstract speculation, but with questions of robustly practical import and with the phenomena of concrete experience. The philosopher's reflection may be more detailed and sophisticated than that of the layman, but there is nonetheless a strong and clear continuity between the two.

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<sup>171</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.12, p. 6.

<sup>172</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* I.pr., vol. 1, p. 57.

<sup>173</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* I.pr.16, vol. 1, pp. 59-61.

For Quintilian, the contents of philosophy are thus fundamentally united with the concerns which all human beings share. In view of this, his demand for clarity makes perfect sense. If the reflection of an intellectual elite is fundamentally linked with that of the rest of society, then they should be able to express themselves in a way that is 'approved by the learned and clear to the unlearned'. This understanding of the philosophical enterprise and its implications are a crucial background to Garve and Kant's dispute. Both writers' contrasting claims about the possibility or desirability of popular style are rooted in conflicting assumptions about the contents of philosophy. Garve agrees with Quintilian that the philosopher's activity is essentially continuous with common human reflection, but Kant rejects this view. He radically questions the value of common sense for serious intellectual enquiry.

## Philosophy and Common Sense: Garve

The intellectual foundations for Garve's response to Kant are briefly apparent in his review, and developed more thoroughly in the later essay, 'Von der Popularität des Vortrages'. His argument that it should be possible to express the content of the *Kritik* in accessible language is based on an understanding of philosophy which has strong parallels with Quintilian. Like Quintilian, he assumes the enterprise of philosophy to consist in a more sophisticated version of the thought of the non-philosopher. All areas of human reflection are ultimately linked by their basis in a shared faculty of 'common sense', which provides the final criterion for assessing the claims of philosophical arguments.

At the beginning of Garve's review, he observes that the difficulty of reading the *Kritik* is partly due to Kant's original terminology.<sup>174</sup> He concedes that this terminology is a necessary consequence of Kant's original argument. Some of the distinctiveness of the *Kritik* would inevitably be lost in any effort to express it in a different idiom: 'Es wird aber vielleicht [...] unmöglich seyn, die Gedanken des Verfassers in aller ihrer Eigenthümlichkeit mit Worten einer mehr populären Philosophie auszudrücken.'<sup>175</sup> However, the loss would not be fatal:

Unterdessen alle Kenntnisse dieser Art müssen doch auf eine oder die andere Art mit den bisherigen Vorstellungen zusammengehangen werden können, weil sie doch ganz unfehlbar, aus diesen, wenn auch nur gelegentlich, entstanden sind. Sie müssen sich also auch in eine gewöhnlichere Sprache, wiewohl vielleicht mit einigem Verlust ihrer Genauigkeit, übersetzen lassen.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> See Garve, 'Kritik', pp. 838-839.

<sup>175</sup> Garve, 'Kritik', p. 839.

<sup>176</sup> Garve, 'Kritik', p. 840.

Garve suggests that some loss of precision does not mean losing the substance of Kant's argument: it ought to be genuinely possible to express the major content of the *Kritik* in more familiar language. This claim about language is based in a more fundamental premise about the contents of Kant's thought. A more or less direct line of continuity must, Garve assumes, link these with more familiar concepts. 'Bisherige Vorstellungen' appear to stand for the notions which have hitherto been the stuff of philosophy; associating them with 'eine gewöhnlichere Sprache' suggests that these notions should be reasonably accessible to the layperson.

This basic claim is expanded and developed in 'Von der Popularität des Vortrags'. In this text, Garve articulates the understanding of philosophy which sustains his demand for popularity. The stylistic ideal of popularity means portraying a subject from its most basic elements upwards ('vollständig und von [den] Elementen an'<sup>177</sup>). This naturally excludes areas of study where new findings presuppose familiarity with the previous state of the question.<sup>178</sup> Mathematics is one such area.<sup>179</sup>

Philosophy, however, consists in reflection on experience:

Erfahrungen machen, und über diese Erfahrungen reflectiren, ist der Antheil aller Menschen. Ideen oder Sachen auf eine eigne Art verknüpfen: und diese Composita als die Elemente zu neuen Zusammensetzungen brauchen, ist nur die Sache weniger, welche ein eignes Talent dazu, und einen bestimmten Zweck dabey haben. Wenn, mit der Länge der Zeit, sich eine ganze Reihe solcher Ideen-Verknüpfungen in einander geschlungen hat: ist es keinem Menschen mehr möglich, die letzte derselben zu begreifen, der nicht die erste

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<sup>177</sup> GW 4.1, p. 345.

<sup>178</sup> GW 4.1, pp. 345-346.

<sup>179</sup> See GW 4.1, p. 347: 'Ich glaube alle Wissenschaften eintheilen zu können, in solche, worin nur über Erfahrungen *reflectirt* wird, – und solche, worin Ideen *combinirt* werden. Zu den ersten gehöret die eigentliche Philosophie, insbesondere die Seelenlehre und die Moral. Zu den letztern gehören, außer der Mathematik, alle die Wissenschaften, welche den mechanischen Künsten vorarbeiten.'

aus ihren einfachen Bestandtheilen, und sofort die folgenden aus den vorhergehenden, herzuleiten gelernt hat. Ein abgeriſſenes Stück aus der Moral, oder die Lehre vom Menschen, ist jedermann verständlich. [...] Um deßwillen also kann der *Philosoph* populär in seinem Vortrage seyn, d. h. er kann sich unmittelbar und jedem verständlich machen.<sup>180</sup>

According to Garve's model, mathematics and related areas of study (he cites physics as an example<sup>181</sup>) are inherently difficult for the non-expert. New discoveries follow directly upon previous discoveries. It follows that someone who is not extensively informed about previous work cannot understand the contents of new investigations: they cannot be presented in a manner accessible to the layperson. Philosophy is characterized by a different kind of intellectual procedure. Garve thinks of it in terms of ethics and anthropology, and enquiry in these areas is fundamentally reflection on experience. Experience and reflection on it are common to all: so philosophy should be – and is – the area of study which is best suited of all to popular presentation. The definition itself follows Quintilian: philosophy is an eminently practical and accessible enterprise.

Garve proceeds to make an apparent concession by returning to a point made earlier in his argument, namely that it is unreasonable to demand popular presentation of intellectual innovators ('die Erfinder neuer Ideen können selten im Vortrag derselben populär seyn'<sup>182</sup>). The new ideas may not yet be fully coherent in the thinker's mind, or they may indeed be the result of a complex and original train of thought; here,

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<sup>180</sup> GW 4.1, pp. 347-348.

<sup>181</sup> See GW 4.1, p. 346.

<sup>182</sup> GW 4.1, p. 348. See also p. 345: 'Populär kann also der Vortrag der Erfinder nie seyn, oder er ist es selten.'

Garve's argument evokes his comments on Kant's review.<sup>183</sup> Having made these concessions, however, Garve goes on to contend that popular presentation should still ultimately be possible:

Dessen ungeachtet giebt es, nothwendiger Weise, Grenzpuncte, wo diese esoterische Philosophie sich an die populäre anschließt. Irgendwo muß das künstliche System den Faden der Ideen, welchen der gemeine Menschenverstand darreicht, aufgefaßt haben. Und wer also von diesem Punkte anfängt, muß, wofern nicht jene eigenthümliche Form des Systems wirklich Abweichungen von der allgemeinen Menschenvernunft enthält, – (in welchem Falle sie zugleich Irrthümer verbergen müßte;) die ganze Reihe wissenschaftlicher Begriffe in solche populäre, als die waren, woraus sie herkommen, auflösen können.<sup>184</sup>

Even the most idiosyncratic ideas, Garve argues, are still fundamentally connected with the everyday reflection of ordinary human beings. The assumption is that all human reflection begins with *gemeiner Menschenverstand*, and can ultimately be traced back to it, enabling popular presentation. In the passage immediately preceding this one, Garve has aired the related assumption that ideas themselves are never truly original. Rather, the thinker asserts individuality by reconfiguring familiar ideas, in order to draw fresh conclusions from them.<sup>185</sup> If these conclusions are not ultimately linked with their more familiar premises, it is proof of error. The faculty of mind shared by all human beings is the ultimate arbiter of truth.

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<sup>183</sup> See GW 4.1, pp. 348-349: 'Diese Ideen entstanden in der Seele des Erfinders, als Eingebungen, als glückliche Einfälle, die sich ihm zwar, von einer gewissen Seite, in einem hellen Lichte zeigten, im Ganzen aber noch mit seinem übrigen Gedankensystem unverbunden blieben.' See also GW 4.1, p. 349: 'In diesem Falle wird auch eine eigne Sprache nöthig seyn, um, von einer ganzen Reihe von Begriffen, diese charakteristische neue Form auszudrücken. Es wird nöthig seyn, ein so eigenthümlich bestimmtes System, von seinen Elementen an, mitzutheilen, wenn es verstanden werden soll.'

<sup>184</sup> GW 4.1, p 350.

<sup>185</sup> See GW 4.1, p. 349: '[Die Ideen] entsprangen aus einem eigenthümlichen Ideengange ihres Urhebers, aus einer individuellen Form, in welche er, als Selbstdenker, alle seine Kenntnisse gebracht hatte, und unter welcher sie auf neue Folgerungen führten, ob sie gleich der Materie nach längst bekannt waren.'

Garve thus follows Quintilian, firstly by presenting philosophy as occupied with practical concerns and concrete experience, and secondly by asserting that its subject matter is fundamentally linked with the thought of the layperson. His model is slightly more sophisticated than Quintilian's, in that he is willing to concede that some levels of reflection may intervene between the thought of the general public and the work of the philosopher. He nonetheless follows Quintilian by rooting philosophy in a faculty of mind shared by all human beings; this is the basis for demanding that it be expressed in language accessible to all.

## Philosophy and Common Sense: Kant

Kant's counter-argument in the question of popularity is based upon an understanding of the philosophical enterprise which is very different to that shared by Garve and Quintilian. Instead of focusing attention on the earthy, practical concerns of ethics or anthropology, he is concerned with an inherently more abstract domain: metaphysics.<sup>186</sup> The abstract nature of his project is evident from its formulation in the preface to the *Kritik*: 'die Entscheidung der Möglichkeit oder Unmöglichkeit einer Metaphysik überhaupt und die Bestimmung sowohl der Quellen, als des Umfanges und der Grenzen derselben, alles aber aus Principien.'<sup>187</sup> Such a question is (to state the obvious) scarcely likely to occur to the layperson. Kant thus establishes a radical discontinuity between the thought of the professional philosopher and that of the general public, to the implicit disparagement of the latter's capacities. At various points in his work, he repeatedly excludes the shared human faculty of mind from serious intellectual work.

Kant's first move is to assign popular presentation to a specific stage in the process of developing ideas. This argument first appears in the preface to the *Prolegomena*, where he responds to criticisms of his work as difficult.

Nun gestehe ich, daß es mir unerwartet sei, von einem Philosophen Klagen wegen Mangels an Popularität, Unterhaltung und Gemächlichkeit zu hören, wenn es um die Existenz einer gepriesenen und der Menschheit unentbehrlichen Erkenntniß selbst zu thun ist, die nicht anders als nach den strengsten Regeln einer schulgerechten

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<sup>186</sup> See Kant, AA 4, pp. 7-8.

<sup>187</sup> Kant, AA 4, p. 9.

Pünktlichkeit ausgemacht werden kann, auf welche zwar mit der Zeit auch Popularität folgen, aber niemals den Anfang machen darf.<sup>188</sup>

In this passage, 'Popularität' appears to be a formal quality: Kant opposes it to 'die schulgerechte Pünktlichkeit'. The accusation that his work lacks 'Popularität' is thus an accusation brought primarily against his style. In response, Kant argues that it is unreasonable to demand that his work be an easy read. Given its scope and importance, it must be carried out with the formal apparatus of academic philosophy. Popular form is at most an option available to the philosopher who seeks a wider audience for his work. Kant's argument thus assumes that popularity and intellectual seriousness are mutually exclusive. By associating *Popularität* with 'Unterhaltung' and 'Gemächlichkeit', Kant locates it in the field of superficial entertainment rather than serious thought.

Kant expresses a similar argument in his letter to Garve, with some different nuances. Garve had explicitly claimed that it ought to have been possible to express Kant's ideas popularly, and Kant responds. He initially appears to make a concession towards Garve's position: 'In der That muß jede philosophische Schrift [der Popularität] fähig seyn, sonst verbirgt sie, unter einem Dunst von scheinbarem Scharfsinn, vermutlich Unsinn.'<sup>189</sup> However, he remains faithful to his position in the *Prolegomena* by relegating popular presentation to the end of the intellectual process:

Allein von dieser Popularität läßt sich in Nachforschungen, die so hoch hinauf langen, nicht der Anfang machen. Wenn ich es nur dahin bringen kan, daß man im schulgerechten Begriffe, mitten unter barbarischen Ausdrücken, mit mir eine Strecke fortgewandert wäre,

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<sup>188</sup> Kant, AA 4, p. 261.

<sup>189</sup> Kant to Garve, 7.08.1783, in Kant, AA 10, p. 339.

so wollte ich es schon selbst unternehmen (andere aber werden hierinn schon glücklicher seyn) einen populären und doch gründlichen Begriff, dazu ich den Plan schon bey mir führe, vom Ganzen zu entwerfen; vor der Hand wollen wir *Dunse* (doctores umbratici) heissen, wenn wir nur die Einsicht weiter bringen können, an deren Bearbeitung freylich der geschmaksvollere Theil des Publici keinen Antheil nehmen wird, ausser bis sie aus ihrer dunkelen Werkstatt wird heraus treten und mit aller Politur versehen auch das Urtheil des letzteren nicht wird scheuen dürfen.<sup>190</sup>

Here, Kant's concern is not primarily with the style of his work, but with its intended audience. He plans in time to produce a popular version of his work, and even argues that this version will have a measure of intellectual substance ( 'gründlich').

However, acceptance and support must initially be secured 'im schulgerechten Begriffe', which inevitably excludes the general public. As in the *Prolegomena*, Kant's argument rests on the assumption that what is of value to humanity automatically excludes popular presentation. The image of the workshop establishes a clear distinction between the place of intellectual labour and the social exposure which may follow. Again, the vocabulary subtly associates accessible presentation with superficiality. 'Geschmaksvoll' implies a commendation, but to claim that the public is influenced by 'Politur' suggests that it is more concerned with aesthetic appeal than with intellectual substance.

In the preface to the second edition of the *Kritik*, Kant contends that the argument of the *Kritik* cannot and need not be popular, because it deals with debates wholly internal to academic philosophy. His radical innovation in metaphysical thought will undermine only the excesses of scholastic philosophers, leaving the interest of

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<sup>190</sup> Kant to Garve, AA 10, pp. 339-340.

humanity unharmed.<sup>191</sup> His purpose, however, is not to remove the distinction between academy and public, but to give it a new basis.

[Der spekulative Philosoph] bleibt immer ausschließlich Depositär einer dem Publicum, ohne dessen Wissen, nützlichen Wissenschaft, nämlich der Kritik der Vernunft; denn die kann niemals populär werden, hat aber auch nicht nöthig es zu sein, weil, so wenig dem Volke die fein gesponnenen Argumente für nützliche Wahrheiten in den Kopf wollen, eben so wenig kommen ihm auch die eben so subtilen Einwürfe dagegen jemals in den Sinn.<sup>192</sup>

Kant distinguishes between popular reflection on metaphysical subjects and serious philosophical enquiry. In the passage immediately before this, he has claimed that the majority of people derive their convictions on the three great metaphysical questions (the immortality of the soul, the freedom of the will, and the existence of God) not from dogmatic philosophy but on the basis of probabilistic reasoning from experience.<sup>193</sup> Since the objects of Kant's attack in the *Kritik* are precisely these dogmatic arguments, the public have nothing to fear. His findings may be useful ('nützlich') to that public, but the work which produces these is a closed book to them. As before, Kant's distinction between academy and public implies a hierarchy of intelligence. In the course of the passage, Kant's term for the public shifts from 'Publicum' to 'Volk': 'Volk' has a wide range of reference, but the context suggests a

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<sup>191</sup> Kant, AA 3, p. 19: 'Der Verlust [den speculative Vernunft an ihrem bisher eingebildeten Besitze erleiden muß] trifft nur das Monopol der Schulen, keineswegs aber das Interesse der Menschen.'

<sup>192</sup> Kant, AA 3, pp. 20-21.

<sup>193</sup> See Kant, AA 3, p. 20: '[Es] hat vielmehr, was [den Fortdauer unserer Seele] betrifft, die jedem Menschen bemerkliche Anlage seiner Natur, durch das Zeitliche (als zu den Anlagen seiner ganzen Bestimmung unzulänglich) nie zufrieden gestellt werden zu können, die Hoffnung eines künftigen Lebens, in Ansehung [der Freyheit des Willens] die bloße klare Darstellung der Pflichten im Gegensatze aller Ansprüche der Neigungen das Bewußtseyn der Freyheit und endlich, was [das Dasein Gottes] anlangt, die herrliche Ordnung, Schönheit und Vorsorge, die allerwärts in der Natur hervorblickt, allein den Glauben an einen weisen und großen Welturheber, die sich aufs Publicum verbreitende Überzeugung, so fern sie auf Vernunftgründen beruht, ganz allein bewirken müssen.'

degree of condescension.<sup>194</sup> The general public are 'simple folk', and intellectual heavy lifting is to be left to the professionals who are capable of it. Kant thus proposes a fundamental distinction between the intellectual activity of academic philosophers and that of the general public. The former can engage with a higher level of complexity, and hence provide the sound intellectual foundation for the naively held beliefs of the latter.

Kant provided a more abstract basis for this distinction between the capacities of the philosopher and those of the layman in the preface to the *Prolegomena*. There, he discusses the relationship between common sense (*gemeiner Menschenverstand*) and critical reason (*kritische Vernunft*). He attacks the critics of David Hume for their appeal to the former: 'Diese Appellation [auf den gemeinen Menschenverstand] ist nichts anders als eine Berufung auf das Urteil der Menge; ein Zuklatschen, über das

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<sup>194</sup> 'Publicum' can be given a very broad sense, as illustrated by both Adelung ('alle mit uns zugleich lebenden Personen'), and the Grimms ('die gesamtheit der leute eines landes oder ortes, die leute, die menge'), but this broad sense is narrowed down by the strong connotation of 'public life': 'öffentlich' appears in Adelung, and the Grimms offer 'Öffentlichkeit' as a synonym, thus presumably restricting the term to those with the necessary resources, capacities, and culture to play a role in public life. The further restricted sense of the audience or readership of an orator, drama, or text also suggests that this audience have a minimum level either of literacy or of interest in culture and public affairs. 'Volk' could, again, carry a relatively indiscriminate sense (Grimm: 'eine unbestimmte Mehrheit von Personen'), but is closely associated in both Adelung and the *Deutsches Wörterbuch* with the condescending sense referring to the lowest social classes: 'Die untern Classen der Glieder einer Nation [...] welche sich von der Handarbeit nähren; wo es auch hier im gemeinen Leben und mit einem anklebenden verächtlichen Nebenverstande gebraucht wurde. Das Volk, das gemeine Volk, der große Haufe, gemeine Leute, die untersten Classen im Staat' (Adelung); 'die masse der bevölkerung, von der die höhere beamtenschaft, die schichten höherer bildung oder groszen besitzes, adel, geistlichkeit ausgeschieden sind. [...] die grosze masse der bevölkerung im gegensatz zu einer Oberschicht' (Grimm). It should be noted that the Grimms, though they cite Adelung, also observe some changes to the term's connotations: 'im allgemeinen aber ist zu beachten, dass die ganz verächtliche bedeutung in späterer zeit schwindet.' See art., 'Publicum, n.', and art., 'Volk, n.', in Adelung, online at <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Publicum,+das?hl=publicum> and <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Volk,+das?hl=volk>; see also art., 'Publicum, n.', and art., 'Volk, n.' in *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*, online at <http://woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB/?sigle=DWB&mode=Vernetzung&lemid=GP08181> and <http://woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB/?sigle=DWB&mode=Vernetzung&lemid=GV09940>. All articles accessed 21.03.2017.

der Philosoph erröthet, der populäre Witzling aber triumphirt und trotzig thut.<sup>195</sup>

The appeal is illegitimate because common sense has no authority in the question at issue:

Eine kritische Vernunft [hält] den gemeinen Verstand in Schranken, damit er sich nicht in Speculationen versteige, oder, wenn blos von diesen die Rede ist, nichts zu entscheiden begehre, weil er sich über seine Grundsätze nicht zu rechtfertigen versteht; denn nur so allein wird er ein gesunder Verstand bleiben. Meißel und Schlägel können ganz wohl dazu dienen, ein Stück Zimmerholz zu bearbeiten, aber zum Kupferstechen muß man die Radirnadel brauchen. So sind gesunder Verstand sowohl als speculativer beide, aber jeder in seiner Art brauchbar: jener, wenn es auf Urtheile ankommt, die in der Erfahrung ihre unmittelbare Anwendung finden, dieser aber, wo im Allgemeinen, aus bloßen Begriffen, geurtheilt werden soll, z. B. in der Metaphysik, wo der sich selbst, aber oft *per antiphrasin* so nennende gesunde Verstand ganz und gar kein Urtheil hat.<sup>196</sup>

Kant sets out the distinctive spheres of application of *kritische Vernunft* and *gemeiner Verstand*. The latter is properly used in the formation of judgements in everyday experience. Metaphysical speculation, by contrast, is the proper domain of critical reason; and critical reason is also charged with policing the border between the two domains. Kant illustrates this notion of distinctive spheres of application through an analogy from craftsmanship: different tasks require different implements. The rough ‘mallet and chisel’ of *gemeiner Verstand* are well suited to everyday thought, but metaphysical speculation, rather more sophisticated, calls for the ‘etching needle’ of critical reason.

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<sup>195</sup> Kant, AA 4, p. 259.

<sup>196</sup> Kant, AA 4, pp. 259-260.

## **Conclusion (chapter 1)**

The debate between Garve and Kant begins with a relatively simple question: is it possible to formulate complex philosophy so that the general public can understand it? This question leads, however, to the more profound one of whether the thought of the professional philosopher is connected at all with that of the layperson. Both Garve and Kant agree that there is such a thing as 'common sense', presumably shared by all human beings. However, they differ radically over whether this layperson's faculty can have any say over more sophisticated philosophical questions. For Garve, common sense is the criterion of truth; for Kant, it is a crude instrument, to be excluded from serious philosophical work. Thus the collision is ultimately one between two mutually exclusive concepts of philosophy. Garve's model, rooted in the rhetorical tradition of classical rhetoric, understands philosophy as fundamentally practical and arising from everyday human reflection. Kant's model sees philosophy quite differently, as abstract metaphysical enquiry. The philosopher's findings may eventually interest a wider public, but the process by which these findings are reached cannot. Garve and Kant's surface dispute over popularity thus becomes a clue to a more fundamental opposition between two ways of conceptualizing human thought.

## Chapter 2

### Public service and the reading public: Garve and Schiller on authorship

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1794, Friedrich Schiller wrote to his friend and confidant Christian Gottfried Körner, in the hope of securing Körner as a contributor to Schiller's new journal project, *Die Horen*. In the letter, Schiller seeks to tempt Körner with an enticing theme.

Eine sehr schöne Materie würde die Aufstellung eines Ideals der Schriftstellerei und ihres Zusammenhangs mit der ganzen Kultur seyn, und ich wüßte keine, die in so hohem Grade für Dich taugte. Schriftstellereinfluß spielt in der neuen Welt eine so entscheidende Rolle, und es wäre zugleich so allgemein interessant und so allgemein nöthig, darüber etwas Bestimmtes und aus der reinen Menschheit Hergeleitetes festzusetzen. Diese Materie stände mit der Einwirkung auf die Geister in dem nächsten Zusammenhange, und die reichhaltigsten Resultate der ganzen Philosophie würden darin zusammenfließen.<sup>197</sup>

Schiller writes with the enthusiasm of the willing salesman. Authorship would be the perfect theme for Körner, and it has great and wide-ranging significance: it is related to all of human culture and all of philosophy, and it plays a decisive role in the modern world.

The appeal to Körner was apparently fruitless, for one month later, Schiller made a similar pitch to Christian Garve. Garve had given an ambiguous reply to an initial sounding from Schiller the previous June: 'ich [trage] Bedenken, diesen Antrag unbedingt anzunehmen. [...] Demohnerachtet versage ich mir die Hoffnung nicht, daß ich auch einmahl einen kleinen Beitrag zu der von Ihnen veranstalteten Sammlung

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<sup>197</sup> Schiller to Körner, 1.9.94, in Schiller, *Werke. Nationalausgabe*, ed. Julius Petersen et al, 43 vols (Weimar: Böhlau, 1943-), vol. 27 [= SNA 27], p. 34.

werde liefern können.'<sup>198</sup> Interpreting Garve optimistically, Schiller pressed him further. As with Körner, he claimed to offer Garve a subject pregnant with interest:

Es ist noch eine Materie, die ich von Ihnen vorzugsweise beleuchtet wünschte, das Verhältniß des Schriftstellers zu dem Publikum und des Publikums zu dem Schriftsteller. In unsern Zeiten, wo ein so großer Theil der Menschen seine eigentliche Erziehung durch Lecture bekommt, und wo ein anderer nicht unbeträchtlicher Theil sich diese Erziehung durch Schriften zum Geschäft seines Lebens macht, scheint es mir eben so interessant als zweckmäßig, das Innere dieses wechselseitigen Verhältnisses aufzudecken, die Folgen die es für beide Theile hat, anthropologisch zu entwickeln, und es wo möglich, durch ein aufgestelltes Ideal von dem was es für beide Theile seyn könnte und sollte, zu reinigen und zu veredeln.<sup>199</sup>

Schiller conceives of the relationship between author and public as reciprocal, in the broadest terms. The question cannot be answered in a vacuum, but must take into account more general human considerations. Schiller also assumes that it is possible and desirable to ask not only what the relationship is like in practice, but what it ought to be. Here too, however, Schiller's appeal was unsuccessful.

Temperamentally inclined towards a low view of his capacity for work, Garve refused commission after commission from other acquaintances, and Schiller fared no better: 'Ich [sehe] keine Möglichkeit Ihnen, in diesem Winter, etwas zu Ihrem neuen Journale zu liefern. Setzen Sie sich selbst in meine Stelle. Meine wandelbare Gesundheit, und besonders mein krankes Auge hindert und beschwert alle meine Arbeiten.'<sup>200</sup>

Schiller was left to give readers of *Die Horen* his own answer to the question: the relationship between the author (in this case, the poet) and the public is one of the

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<sup>198</sup> Garve to Schiller, 28.6.94, in SNA 35, pp. 23-24.

<sup>199</sup> Schiller to Garve, 1.10.94, in SNA 27, p. 57.

<sup>200</sup> Garve to Schiller, 17.10.94, in SNA 27, p. 73.

themes woven together in his *Ästhetische Briefe*. It is perhaps a pity that Garve never did contribute anything on the subject; had he done so, it would surely have led to a fascinating exchange of views with his editor. In his reply to Schiller, he includes some notes towards a possible answer ('so wie ich mein Nachdenken auf diesen Vorwurf richte, zeigen sich mir neue Seiten davon'<sup>201</sup>). When these are placed alongside his statements on the subject elsewhere, the perspective which emerges is very different from Schiller's. Whether or not this was apparent to them at the time, both writers' comments indicate a clash between opposing positions.

The clash invites a reading alongside the exchange with Kant covered in chapter one, because it is a further manifestation of the same broad opposition between two different views of intellectual life. Garve's arguments about the author match the concerns of the humanist tradition, informed by rhetorical values; at several points, Schiller's arguments result in a rejection of this view. The specific point of difference here is the author's relationship to two facets of his society: the state and the reading public.<sup>202</sup> Garve represents the relationship as one of important continuities on both counts. The author is to be thought of as a public servant, identified with other people who fulfil civic-minded careers and engaged in the same task of contributing to society. Similarly, he is to be thought of as standing in continuity with the public to whom he speaks: the two are bound together by a shared faculty of reason. The claims evoke Cicero's thinking, the rhetorical tradition, and the guiding

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<sup>201</sup> SNA 35, p. 74.

<sup>202</sup> 'State' here has a broad reference, including public life in the broad sense (civil servants and politicians), as well as the various other careers which fell within the state's remit in Germany at the time, such as teaching and the clergy.

principles of Renaissance humanism: the intellectual is to contribute to society, and so to strengthen the bond of fellowship among men which is guaranteed by their shared reason and speech.

The *Ästhetische Briefe* offer a very different view. Schiller is no less concerned than Garve that the author should benefit his society, but he has a very different idea of what this would involve. When he discusses the poet's role, he typically presents him as opposed to political culture and the reading public in their present forms. The claim is informed by Schiller's interpretation of cultural history. The state is opposed to human fulfilment, but its improvement must begin within human beings: so the poet is expressly opposed to the agents of the state and attempts to improve society by intervention (reformist or violent) in public life. Similarly, the public is deprived: so the poet must impose upon it a distinctive way of thinking and set of values, which it is likely at first to reject.<sup>203</sup>

This conflict is charted in the chapter. Schiller's letter to Garve, quoted above, provides a starting point, and the chapter begins with the question of German authors' professional situation at the time. From this, it moves on to views of the author's vocation, drawing upon Garve and Schiller's comments to one another but also engaging with key statements elsewhere in their work. The two major themes of

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<sup>203</sup> Presenting Schiller's position in this way risks appearing reductionist: the *Ästhetische Briefe* have to do with a lot more than rejecting certain tenets of rhetorical or humanist thought, and the aspects of the *Briefe* covered here need not be the most important. The point of this chapter is, rather, to argue that Schiller's argument does conflict with certain assumptions which guided thought about the author's role, as based upon the humanist intellectual tradition, and that the *Briefe* thus constitute an important statement in light of the conflict between positions treated in the present thesis.

the author's relationship to both facets of society – the state and the public – are treated in succession. Garve and Schiller's views on both themes are placed alongside each other, together with relevant background material from the rhetorical and humanist traditions. Most of the material treated here does not come directly from the exchange; instead, it rather serves to illustrate points of contrast, hinted at in the exchange, by elaborating the positions Garve and Schiller adopt elsewhere in their work. The approach of placing the two positions in dialogue will illuminate how they engage with the same issues, but reach fundamentally different conclusions to one another, based on contrasting assumptions.

### Der freie Schriftsteller? Authorial career paths

Schiller supports his request for Garve to contribute to *Die Horen* with a comment about the socio-economic conditions of authorship. In their age, Schiller claims, not only do a great many people receive their education through reading; a correspondingly large number now support themselves financially by producing reading material. This first section of the chapter will consider Schiller's statement and Garve's response in light of authorship in Germany in the eighteenth century.<sup>204</sup> Contrary to Schiller's suggestion, the dominant conception of authorship in late eighteenth-century Germany was not that of the *freier Schriftsteller*, living exclusively from the sales of his work. Instead, most authors – and certainly most canonical authors – lived off income from employment in one of the various branches of church and state. This socio-economic fact had consequences for authors' thinking about themselves, and Garve bases his model of the author's role on it; that model will be investigated further in the next section of the chapter.

Schiller's claim to Garve is that a substantial number of people in their time have made writing into the main 'Geschäft' of their lives.<sup>205</sup> *Geschäft* is unlikely to carry specific commercial connotations, but it certainly has the sense of professional

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<sup>204</sup> Authorship has become a prominent concern in research on eighteenth century English literature, thanks in particular to the American scholar Dustin Griffin. See 'Introduction: Representing Authorship', in Dustin Griffin, *Authorship in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2014). On the German context, see recently Matthew Bell, 'The Economics of Authorship in Eighteenth-Century Germany and Britain', *Publications of the English Goethe Society* 86 (2017), pp. 172-82.

<sup>205</sup> See SNA 27, p. 57.

activity – and therefore, by extension, livelihood.<sup>206</sup> Schiller is suggesting that it is now possible to make writing into a primary career. This claim from a contemporary correlates with an assumption which is still prominent in research on the eighteenth century: the emergence of the *freier Schriftsteller*. As defined by Hans Jürgen Haferkorn, the *freier Schriftsteller* is able, unlike his predecessors, to make a living from his publications:

[Die Kommerzialisierung des literarischen Lebens] ermöglichte allererst die berufsmäßige Existenz des freien Schriftstellers [...]. Mit der kapitalistischen Freisetzung des Geldes auf dem Sachgütermarkt korrelierte also die Freisetzung des geistigen Kapitals der Schriftsteller auf dem literarischen Markt.<sup>207</sup>

According to the hypothesis, as literary life becomes commercialized, it also becomes lucrative. The writer is now able to sell his wares on the market, and to make a reasonable amount of money from doing so. He can thus make his writing career into a full-time career. He is no longer compelled, as his predecessors were, to find some other form of full-time employment in order to support himself.

This new kind of writer thus contrasts with what Haferkorn describes as the *ständischer Dichter*, who populated the German literary world in the middle of the century:

[Die ständischen Dichter] verstanden vielmehr ihr dichterisches Schaffen als Nebenbeschäftigung, denn hauptberuflich waren sie u. a. Beamte, Sekretäre, Hofmeister, Prediger, Ratsherren, Gelehrte und selbständige Bürger. [...] Da die ständischen Dichter durch ihre Ämter

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<sup>206</sup> See Adelung, art. 'Geschäft': 'Von dem Zeitworte schaffen, machen, hervor bringen, alles was man macht oder wirkt, was man zu thun, zu verrichten oder zu wirken hat, eine jede thätige Veränderung eines freyen vernünftigen Wesens; besonders solche, zu welchen man seines Amtes oder Berufes wegen verpflichtet ist.' Online at <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Geschäft,+das?hl=geschäft>. Article retrieved 09.08.2018.

<sup>207</sup> Hans Jürgen Haferkorn, *Der freie Schriftsteller: eine literatursoziologische Studie über seine Entstehung und Lage in Deutschland zwischen 1750 und 1800* (Frankfurt: Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens 5, 1963), p. 170.

in öffentliche Institutionen eingegliedert waren, wurde ihr Sozialprestige auch von dort her bestimmt und gesichert. [...] Das bekleidete Amt und nicht ihr literarisches Schaffen bildete den Schwerpunkt ihres Lebens und bestimmte ihre Verhaltensformen.<sup>208</sup>

The distinction between the two figures is one of professional position. The *ständischer Dichter* typically had some form of government employment; appointments to all the careers Haferkorn lists fell within the authority of the courts and the church.<sup>209</sup> He was thus integrated within the major institutions of society, and this provided the guiding framework for his perception of himself. Haferkorn argues that one of the great developments in late-century literary life was precisely '[die] Entlassung des Schriftstellers aus der früheren Amts- und Standessicherheit'.<sup>210</sup>

Haferkorn's work is now over half a century old, but the concept he framed of the *freier Schriftsteller* has remained influential. It is still a commonplace in research that writers in this period really did detach themselves from court society and began to live off the proceeds which their works gained in the 'literary marketplace', enjoying a newfound 'unabhängige schriftstellerische Existenz'.<sup>211</sup> Such narratives paint the eighteenth century as a process of emancipation, based on what Dustin Griffin describes as 'the progressivist assumption that the social and economic conditions of authorship improve over time'.<sup>212</sup> In the most recent edition (2011) of his survey of the history of the book trade in Germany, Reinhard Wittmann identifies the *ständischer Dichter*, in the employ of the state, as an intermediate stage, in the

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<sup>208</sup> Haferkorn, *Der freie Schriftsteller*, p. 190.

<sup>209</sup> See Nicholas Boyle, *Goethe: The Poet and the Age*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991-2000), vol. 1, *The Poetry of Desire*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>210</sup> Haferkorn, *Der freie Schriftsteller*, p. 138.

<sup>211</sup> Reinhard Wittmann, *Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels* (Munich: Beck, 2011), p. 155.

<sup>212</sup> Griffin, 'The Rise of the Professional Author?' in Griffin, *Authorship*, p. 172.

middle of the century, along the road of 'Autoremanzipation'.<sup>213</sup> As 'die Vorform des freien Schriftstellers', the *ständischer Dichter* falls between the beneficiaries of patronage and the authentic *freier Schriftsteller*.<sup>214</sup> Wittmann's narrative leads up to the passing of Germany's first copyright laws at the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>215</sup> The process he portrays is not without its challenges for the newly freed author, who still had to deal with the chaotic forces of the literary marketplace, but the story is nonetheless presented as one of emancipation: 'Nach einem kaum fünfzig Jahre umfassenden Prozeß schien um 1800 die Emanzipation des Schriftstellers gelungen.'<sup>216</sup> Other scholars appeal to the same concept. In an earlier work on authors and publics in German literary history, Lutz Winckler titles the relevant chapter on authors in the late eighteenth century 'Der freie Schriftsteller'.<sup>217</sup> Winckler also links the term with the hypothesis of an eighteenth-century 'bürgerliche Emanzipation'.<sup>218</sup> The term also features in research outside of the narrow sphere of book history. In the 2000 *Lessing-Handbuch*, Lessing's career trajectory is described as taking him from the status of a traditional *Gelehrter* to that of a modern *freier Schriftsteller*.<sup>219</sup>

The concept of the *freier Schriftsteller* does have the value of reflecting how some eighteenth-century authors sought to position themselves. One famous statement comes from Schiller himself, in the 1784 *Ankündigung* to his *Rheinische Thalia*. In the

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<sup>213</sup> See Wittmann, *Geschichte*, p. 156.

<sup>214</sup> See Wittmann, *Geschichte*, p. 155.

<sup>215</sup> See Wittmann, *Geschichte*, pp. 172-173.

<sup>216</sup> Wittmann, *Geschichte*, p. 173.

<sup>217</sup> See Lutz Winckler, *Autor-Markt-Publikum* (Berlin: Argument, 1986), pp. 70-102.

<sup>218</sup> Winckler, *Autor*, pp. 71, 72.

<sup>219</sup> Monika Fick, *Lessing-Handbuch* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2000), p. 9.

preface, Schiller traces his proposed stance as an author in the modern world, independent of the bonds of patronage. He recounts his early negative experiences of life under Duke Carl Eugen in Württemberg. At the austere *Karlsschule*, where he received his early education, he claims to have found little sympathy for his poetic stirrings: 'Neigung für Poesie beleidigte die Gesetze des Instituts, worin ich erzogen ward, und widersprach dem Plan seines Stifters.'<sup>220</sup> This pattern continued at the publication of *Die Räuber*, his first major work, which met with a largely hostile reception:

Dies Stück ist erschienen. Die ganze sittliche Welt hat den Verfasser als einen Beleidiger der Majestät vorgefodert. [...] Die Räuber kosteten mir Familie und Vaterland [...] mitten im Genuß des ersten verführerischen Lobes, das ungehofft und unverdient aus entlegenen Provinzen mir entgegenkam, untersagte man mir in meinem Geburtsort bei Strafe der Festung – zu schreiben. Mein Entschluß ist bekannt – ich verschweige das übrige.<sup>221</sup>

Carl Eugen was sufficiently annoyed by the play to threaten Schiller with imprisonment, if he wrote anything else. Court society in general was no more sympathetic: 'die ganze sittliche Welt' rounded on him to condemn him for lèse-majesté. On this, Schiller fled Württemberg in search of a more receptive audience – and marked out (at least in his own eyes) his identity as an independent author. He portrays the flight as a rejection of the social relationships he had hitherto known ('Familie und Vaterland'). He is released from the complex web of these relationships: 'Nun sind alle meine Verbindungen aufgelöst.'<sup>222</sup> Society is portrayed as restrictive, and the author a rebel against it.

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<sup>220</sup> FA 8, p. 897.

<sup>221</sup> FA 8, pp. 898-899.

<sup>222</sup> FA 8, p. 899.

This passage leads into the section of the *Ankündigung* which is often quoted in discussions of Schiller's attitude towards the public:

Das Publikum ist mir jetzt alles, mein Studium, mein Souverain, mein Vertrauter. Ihm allein gehör ich jetzt an. Vor diesem und keinem andern Tribunal werde ich mich stellen. Dieses nur fürchte ich und verehr ich. Etwas Großes wandelt mich an bei der Vorstellung, keine andere Fessel zu tragen als den Ausspruch der Welt – an keinen andern Thron mehr zu appellieren als an die menschliche Seele.<sup>223</sup>

The public appears as the counterpoint to the court of Carl Eugen. This public, Schiller proclaims, is the only point of reference for his literary work; its verdict alone matters to him, to it alone he will appeal. Throughout, he strengthens the direct contrast between the public and court society by employing the vocabulary of monarchy and feudalism, even hierarchy. The public is his 'Souverain', he stands before its 'Tribunal', he wears its 'Fessel' and appeals to its 'Thron'. Schiller claims that the aristocratic milieu, the home of these concepts, has been definitively displaced as the poet's audience. He is no longer enslaved by a noble patron. His only master now is the mass of humanity which he holds up as the readers of his work.

The preface to the *Rheinische Thalia* frames Schiller as a *freier Schriftsteller* in Haferkorn's sense. He is no longer enmeshed in the social institution of the court, and in that sense, he is indeed free from the restrictions it placed upon him: 'ich schreibe als Weltbürger, der keinem Fürsten dient.'<sup>224</sup> It is far from clear, however, that his self-positioning on this occasion can be treated as an interpretive key to the literary life of his time.

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<sup>223</sup> FA 8, p. 899.

<sup>224</sup> FA 8, p. 897.

In the first place, the *Ankündigung* alone is not a sound guide even to Schiller's views, in the mid-1780s, on the proper relationship between authors and court society. A more complex picture emerges from some of his other statements. After leaving Württemberg, Schiller went through a period of instability before finding a spiritual home in Weimar. Here, his work met with a more sympathetic reception. In December of 1784, Duke Carl August heard Schiller read from the play *Don Karlos*; the next day, Schiller was presented with the (unremunerated) title of *Weimarischer Rat*.<sup>225</sup> He expressed his gratitude fulsomely. In March 1785, the play *Don Carlos* was printed in the first volume of the *Thalia*, accompanied by a laudatory preface: 'Wie theuer ist mir zugleich der jetzige Augenblick, wo ich es laut und öffentlich sagen darf, daß Karl August der edelste von Deutschlands Fürsten, und der gefühlvolle Freund der Musen, jetzt auch der meinige seyn will, daß Er mir erlaubt hat, Ihm anzugehören, daß ich Denjenigen, den ich lange schon als den edelsten Menschen schätzte, als meinen Fürsten jetzt auch lieben darf.'<sup>226</sup> Far from being opposed on principle to court society, Schiller expresses wholesale devotion to a ruler who is willing to support his work. Seen in this light, the *Ankündigung* to the *Thalia* appears not as a wholesale rejection of the system whereby writers are enmeshed in relationships at court, but as a broadside against one particular court which had rejected Schiller.

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<sup>225</sup> Peter-André Alt, *Schiller: Leben – Werk – Zeit*, 2 vols (Munich: Beck, 2000), vol. 1 [= Alt, *Schiller* 1], p. 394.

<sup>226</sup> Schiller, 'Brief an Karl August', in *Rheinische Thalia* 1 (Leipzig: Göschen, 1787), unpaginated.

Schiller's case is just one example where applying the concept of the *freier Schriftsteller* risks oversimplifying a complex situation. There are grounds for doubting its usefulness as a guide to the socio-economic situation of writers more generally. As indicated above, scholars who use the concept tend to use it with the assumption that it was not only possible, but relatively common, for German authors in the late eighteenth century to live from the proceeds of their works. Such a question can only be conclusively settled by detailed empirical studies on the careers and economic circumstances of individual authors; the significance of the relatively late passing of copyright law in Germany is an important factor which cannot be treated here. It is notable, however, that many of the writers whose careers are presented in support of the hypothesis of the *freier Schriftsteller* were nothing of the sort; and if the evidence does not tell the story which it is supposed to tell, this surely raises questions about whether the story reflects any concrete reality.

Wittmann borrows from Haferkorn by titling his chapter on authorship in the late eighteenth century 'die Entstehung des freien Schriftstellers', and the arrival of the *freier Schriftsteller* is announced at the beginning of the chapter.<sup>227</sup> However, Wittmann proceeds to identify Wieland as the only truly successful *freier*

*Schriftsteller*:

Nur einem einzigen Autor jener Zeit gelang tatsächlich die Verwirklichung der erträumten Existenz als freier Schriftsteller, weil er bereit war, „seine Träume auf ein realisierbares Maß zu reduzieren“: Christoph Martin Wieland. Er gewann seine Unabhängigkeit durch die Gründung einer literarischen Zeitschrift, des „Teutschen Merkur“,

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<sup>227</sup> See Wittmann, *Geschichte*, p. 155. 'Entstehung' is used in Haferkorn's subtitle (see full citation above, n. 207).

dessen Verleger, Herausgeber, Redakteur, Kritiker und Hauptbeiträger in Personalunion war.<sup>228</sup>

If only one author from the period in question is truly a *freier Schriftsteller*, the concept cannot be said to shed much light on literary life at the time. Furthermore, even Wieland does not fulfil Wittmann's definition of a *freier Schriftsteller* as 'eine unabhängige schriftstellerische Existenz'.<sup>229</sup> Authorship was never his primary source of income. After a diverse career including spells as a teacher, a theatre director, and in government, he took up a position as tutor of the young prince Carl August of Weimar. When Carl August succeeded to the dukedom of Weimar in 1775, Wieland was granted a pension for life. He settled in Weimar in 1772, a year before he began to publish the *Teutscher Merkur*.<sup>230</sup> He thus cannot be called a *freier Schriftsteller* in anything like the sense that Wittmann appears to give that term.

Other examples, in Wittmann and elsewhere, are similarly problematic. Wittmann cites Klopstock as nobly refusing all 'Abhängigkeit von der Gnade eines fürstlichen Gönners [...] Klopstock erhob gegenüber der literarischen Öffentlichkeit erstmal den Anspruch, nur seinem dichterischen Amte zu leben.'<sup>231</sup> This certainly reflects a perception which was widespread among Klopstock's contemporaries, and Wittmann is able to cite Goethe in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*: 'Nun sollte aber die Zeit kommen, wo das Dichtergenie sich selbst gewahr würde, sich seine eignen Verhältnisse selbst schüfe und den Grund zu einer unabhängigen Würde zu legen

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<sup>228</sup> Wittmann, *Geschichte*, p. 171.

<sup>229</sup> Wittmann, *Geschichte*, p. 155.

<sup>230</sup> See the timeline, 'Wielands Leben', on the official website of the scholarly edition of his works: <http://www.wieland-edition.uni-jena.de/Christoph+Martin+Wieland.html> (article retrieved 9.11.2017).

<sup>231</sup> Wittmann, *Geschichte*, p. 158.

verstünde.<sup>232</sup> Goethe's Klopstock is the incarnation of an epochal change in the status of poets, who came to be recognized as independent geniuses. Nevertheless, such statements have more to do with authorial self-positioning and claims about literary creativity than with socio-economic realities. As Wittmann acknowledges, Klopstock received a generous pension from the Danish court at the age of 26, which saw him through all his later experiments with independent publishing.<sup>233</sup> Walter Bruford suggests that Klopstock might be regarded as 'the first professional writer of his country', but immediately adds that this is not really true: '[Klopstock] was not able, as Pope was, to make himself independent of private patrons because of the ready sale of his works among an admiring public. He required a Maecenas, and found one in the king of Denmark.'<sup>234</sup> Lessing, cited above as an example of the *freier Schriftsteller*, was much occupied with the professional status of authorship.<sup>235</sup> He too, however, moved between a variety of careers, again in the context of the state: these included spells as a secretary in Breslau and as ducal librarian in Wolfenbüttel. What Wieland, Klopstock, and Lessing do have in common is their involvement at one time or another in self-publication; this reality may have helped to make the hypothesis of the *freier Schriftsteller* so durable. However, the strategy had no future, and the book market in Germany, as in England, continued to be controlled by publishers rather than authors.<sup>236</sup> Lutz Winckler lists a number of authors for whom book sales became an increasingly important source of income, with the

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<sup>232</sup> Goethe, FA 14, pp. 433-434.

<sup>233</sup> See Wittmann, *Geschichte*, p. 158; see also Walter H. Bruford, *Germany in the Eighteenth Century: The Social Background to the Literary Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p

<sup>234</sup> Bruford, *Germany*, pp. 274-275.

<sup>235</sup> See Fick, *Lessing-Handbuch*, pp. 9-13.

<sup>236</sup> See Wittmann, *Geschichte*, pp. 161-173; see also e.g. Griffin, 'The Rise of the Professional Author?', pp. 179-183.

suggestion that these authors fit into the category of the *freier Schriftsteller*. Along with Klopstock and Wieland, he includes Schubart, Voss, Schiller, Goethe, Jean Paul, Garve, Knigge, and Becker. However, the majority of these examples cannot be called *freie Schriftsteller* in the sense that Winckler intends. Voss' writing was supported by employment in teaching positions at both school and university level. Knigge and Becker held government posts, as did Goethe – even though he (untypically) was not compelled by financial necessity.<sup>237</sup> After a brief period as a lecturer in Leipzig, Garve retired, his primary source of income not book sales but the proceeds from his late father's dye business.

Schiller's own career was something of a patchwork. Thanks mostly to the generosity of the publisher Cotta, his published works eventually proved lucrative, meaning that his family were left in material security when he died.<sup>238</sup> Alt notes that Cotta departed from the normal practice of booksellers at the time by guaranteeing Schiller not only a one-off fee for his manuscripts, but also royalties on later editions.<sup>239</sup> However, most of his literary career was characterized by financial instability. This appears to have exercised him greatly: Alt cites his fastidious record of household income and expenses.<sup>240</sup> On more than one occasion, Schiller had to be helped out of dire financial straits by generous friends. Streicher supported him after the flight from Württemberg, and Körner provided help when Schiller was released from his employment with the theatre troupe in Mannheim.<sup>241</sup> He also gained

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<sup>237</sup> See Boyle, *Goethe* 1, pp. 231-279.

<sup>238</sup> Peter-André Alt, *Friedrich Schiller* (Munich: Beck, 2004) [= Alt, *Schiller*], pp. 8-11.

<sup>239</sup> Alt, *Schiller*, p. 8.

<sup>240</sup> Alt, *Schiller*, p. 9.

<sup>241</sup> Alt, *Schiller*, pp. 13-14.

income from other sources. His lectures at the University of Jena brought fees from students (although the position was initially unpaid). From 1790, he received a modest annual stipend from Carl August of Weimar, and the Danish Duke of Augustenburg together with Count Ernst Heinrich von Schimmelmann supported him generously for 3 years from 1791. The *Augustenburger Briefe*, the precursor to the *Ästhetische Briefe*, were originally conceived of as a gesture of thanks for this support: 'Diesen Winter hoffte ich ganz gewiß, diese Arbeit [*sc. Augustenburger Briefe*] zu vollenden, und sie dann in die Hände derjenigen zu liefern, denen sie mit vollem Rechte zugehört; denn wem sonst als Ihnen beiden, meine Vortrefflichsten, danke ich das lang gewünschte und unschätzbare Glück, dem freien Hange meines Geistes folgen zu können?'<sup>242</sup> His socio-economic situation was thus complex, and labelling it with the designation of *freier Schriftsteller* is a reductionist move.

As indicated above, only empirical data can determine whether the concept of the *freier Schriftsteller* ultimately has any basis in reality. However, many of the better-known authorial careers at the time cannot be said to fit the model it implies. The contrasting model of supporting literary work with a full-time paid occupation, typically in some government or ecclesiastical capacity, was much more widespread.

Garve makes this point in his reply to Schiller:

Die Anzahl derer welche aus der Schriftstellerey ihr Hauptgeschäfte und gleichsam ihr Gewerbe machen, ist doch wirklich verhältnismäßig geringe. Und unter dieser Anzahl sind gerade nicht die achtungswürdigsten Schriftsteller. Die meisten Schriftsteller sind zugleich Lehrer auf Schulen, Universitaeten und in der Kirche. Dies ist der Fall bey allen Nationen, bey uns aber vorzüglich. Nur das Uebersetzen hat das Schriftsteller-metier aufgebracht. Denn jenes

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<sup>242</sup> FA 8, p. 491; see also FA 8, pp. 1379-1381.

kann man treiben, wann man will: eine eigne Schrift schreibt man nur, wenn man kann. Wenn gesammelter Stoff vorhanden ist, und eine Reihe Gedanken, die uns selbst gut scheinen, lebhaft geworden ist; dann nur sollen wir fürs Publicum schreiben.<sup>243</sup>

Garve clarifies Schiller's 'Geschäft' with 'Gewerbe', which carried the more precise sense of activities which secure a person's livelihood.<sup>244</sup> Garve claims that Schiller is wide of the mark when he asserts that a large number of people in German society at the time had made writing into their sole livelihood. Relatively few have, and they are the writers held in the lowest regard. Instead, the vast majority are employed as teachers or clergymen, and write only in their spare hours. This is particularly characteristic of Germany. Garve appeals to the cliché that writing for pecuniary motives is ignoble. Translation can legitimately be carried out as a means of making money, because it is a mechanical activity.<sup>245</sup> For independent intellectual production, however, the only legitimate motive is the desire to share one's fully-ripened thoughts with the public. Writing as a primary source of income is thus unusual, and (in Garve's eyes) not altogether commendable.

Garve's judgement no doubt reflects his individual preoccupations; it may be coloured by a desire to raise the prestige of the teacher, as he does not mention any of the other careers which writers characteristically inhabited. However, his basic thesis, that few writers made their living from literary activity, reflects the broad consensus in current historical research:

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<sup>243</sup> SNA 35, p. 73-74.

<sup>244</sup> Adelung defines 'Gewerbe' as 'der ganze Zusammenhang von Geschäften, womit jemand seinen Unterhalt erwirbet, so fern werben überhaupt Geschäfte verrichten bedeutet'. Adelung, online at <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/M/Vorrede>. Article retrieved 28.11.2017.

<sup>245</sup> An assiduous translator himself, Garve is unlikely to be degrading the work of translation in an absolute sense, but he certainly accords it a lower intellectual status than independent production.

The vast majority of German writers – regardless of their wage-earning occupation – thus remained dependent on the church, the governing body of a city or a principality, or a noble for their livelihood.<sup>246</sup>

Even into the late eighteenth century, the typical pattern was for German writers to have some other employment. This employment was still likely to be in the service of the great institutions of society: the church, local government, and the nobility.<sup>247</sup> As noted above, school and university teaching posts may also be included under government work, for appointments there were the responsibility of the local ruler; clergymen, too, were state appointees.<sup>248</sup>

Most authors in Germany at this time were, then, firmly integrated in the middling classes of civil servants and similar professions.

For philosophy, theology, and literature the most important consequence of the despotic constitution of the greater part of Germany in the eighteenth century was that the 'Beamtenstand', the class of officials, became not only practically coextensive with the politically significant middle class (the words for 'business' and 'man of affairs', 'Geschäfte' and 'Geschäftsmann' usually refer to official, not to commercial life) but coextensive with the intellectual class as well.<sup>249</sup>

For some, at least, this fact did much to influence their perception of themselves and of their role. The next section of the chapter will examine how Garve's notion of the author's mission is related to his comments about authors' professional situation.

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<sup>246</sup> W. Daniel Wilson, 'Eighteenth-Century Germany in its Historical Context', in Barbara Becker-Cantarino (ed.), *The Camden House History of German Literature Volume Five: The Eighteenth Century* (New York: Camden House, 2005), p. 269.

<sup>247</sup> See also Winckler, *Autor*, pp. 70-71, and Wittmann, *Geschichte*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>248</sup> Boyle, *Goethe 1*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>249</sup> Boyle, *Goethe 1*, p. 18.

### Authorship as public service: Garve

For some authors, at least, the socio-economic realities covered in the previous section had important consequences for how they conceived of their work. Garve's model of the author's mission is based upon the fact that most authors in Germany had full-time employment in some government capacity. In keeping with a wider trend among *Aufklärer*, he establishes an analogy between authorship and public service. Like his fellows in other civic-minded careers, the author is to contribute positively to society. This claim has a basis in the optimistic *Aufklärung* view of benevolent state activity. It also reflects important assumptions from the humanist and rhetorical intellectual traditions, namely a high view of public service and a positive assessment of human society more generally.

In Garve's letter to Schiller, he compares authorship with the kinds of government employment available to an intellectual:

Der Ruhm des Schriftstellers ist von der Ehre jedes andern geschickten und nützlichen Gelehrten sehr verschieden. Er ist ausgebreiteter, aber er ist für ihn selbst von weit weniger angenehmen und nützlichen Folgen. Der Lehrer, der Geschäftsmann nutzt Individuen, und durch diese erst dem Publicum: er erntet also auch den Dank einzelner Personen ein, und zwar derer, die nahe um ihn sind, und die wieder etwas zu seinem Nutzen, oder Vergnügen beytragen können. Der Schriftsteller arbeitet für das Publicum im Allgemeinen, und macht sich keine Person insbesondere verbindlich.<sup>250</sup>

The passage is a classic complaint about the social isolation of the author. His career is by definition a solitary one: he does not benefit the public directly and cannot

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<sup>250</sup> SNA 35, pp. 74-75.

hope for immediate personal recognition. However, Garve's argument rests on the assumption that literary careers do have something important in common with other public service careers; otherwise the comparison would be meaningless. He has already made the point that most writers have another primary career; he now argues that their vocation is not radically different from the vocation which all members of society share. They belong to a larger class of *Gelehrte*, possessed of skill – and useful to society. Like the teacher and the government official ('Geschäftsmann'), they are to benefit the public.<sup>251</sup> Authorship is one facet among many of the work of *Aufklärung*, and for all his disadvantages, the author enjoys a broader reach than people in other comparable professions: 'Durch die Schriftsteller allein, kann die Aufklärung bey einer Nation allgemein werden.'<sup>252</sup>

The view put forward by Garve was widespread; other *Aufklärung* authors thought about their vocation in similar terms.

Das Amt des Schriftstellers ist eines der ehrenvollsten im Staat und seine Verpflichtung ist eine der wichtigsten. [...] Will er seine Bestimmung erfüllen, so muß er wirken, d. h. er muß thätigen Antheil nehmen an der wirklichen Verbesserung des Publikums.<sup>253</sup>

The author has an *Amt*, one of the most important in all of society. In order to fulfil his vocation, he must contribute to the improvement of the public. This entails activity, like that of other public servants. The author is no isolated figure, but engaged in the same collective enterprise as they ('Antheil nehmen').

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<sup>251</sup> See Boyle, *Goethe* 1, p. 18.

<sup>252</sup> SNA 35, p. 75.

<sup>253</sup> Schwäbisches Museum 1 (1785), pp. vi, x, xii, quoted by Rudolf Vierhaus, 'Der aufgeklärte Schriftsteller', in Hans Erich Bödeker and Ulrich Herrmann (eds), *Über den Prozess der Aufklärung in Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), p. 57.

This claim for the author's vocation has an important background in the way many *Aufklärer* thought about public service more generally. Their view had roots both in contemporary theorizing and in the classical traditions to which humanists had appealed. One important context is the conviction, widely shared amongst the intellectual class, that the state was capable of exerting a positive influence on society.

The German Protestant Enlightenment was thus primarily a utilitarian reform movement deeply committed to the traditional social order. Relatively free from anti-clericalism and rarely opposed to any but the most capricious tyrants, the *Aufklärer* saw the state, and by implication the church which was subject to it, as the prime vehicle of reform. [...] They pursued the vision of a society where inevitable inequality could be made palatable by rational and benign government in a spiritual and material welfare state.<sup>254</sup>

Generally speaking, *Aufklärung* in Germany was not hostile to existing institutions. To a greater extent than elsewhere in Europe, this was a movement that relied on the established order of church and state for its support, and one of the distinguishing features of Enlightenment in Germany is its commitment to state activity as the proper means of improving society. This view received a theoretical foundation from the political philosophy of cameralism, with its view that the state must promote the common good while also furthering its own well-being.<sup>255</sup> 'The *Aufklärer* inherited the cameralist philosophy of government. For cameralism, with its emphasis on the utilitarian relationship between society and the state and its all-embracing interventionist notion of the police functions of government, provided an

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<sup>254</sup> Joachim Whaley, 'The Protestant Enlightenment in Germany', in Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (eds), *The Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 117.

<sup>255</sup> For the brief introduction to cameralist principles on which this is based, see James J. Sheehan, *German History 1770-1866* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 193-195.

almost ideal theoretical justification and practical guideline for the implementation of enlightened reform.<sup>256</sup> If the state could be seen as the driver of enlightenment in an abstract sense, it follows that the individual agents of improving society were the bureaucratic class.<sup>257</sup> The members of that class were thus presented with a ready-made legitimization for their activity as public servants.

In addition to this background, however, the German intellectual, engaged in the service of the state, could also draw on older intellectual resources to affirm the value of his work. One is the privileging of the *vita activa*. It is not uncommon to read eighteenth century figures framing public service in the way that the *Schwäbisches Museum* frames authorship, juxtaposing productive activity with leisure. Goethe cited this as his justification for entering the service of Carl August of Weimar:

Ich werd auch wohl dabeibleiben und meine Rolle so gut spielen als ich kann und so lang als mir's und dem Schicksal beliebt. Wär's auch nur auf ein paar Jahre, ist doch immer besser als das unthätige Leben zu Hause wo ich mit der größten Lust nichts thun kann.<sup>258</sup>

Government service involves fulfilling a role, and Goethe contrasts it with vegetation at home. He has chosen *negotium* over *otium*.

Garve makes use of this idiom as a defence of his work as an author. It is a compensation for being unable to engage actively in public life. In private

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<sup>256</sup> See Whaley, 'Protestant Enlightenment', p. 113.

<sup>257</sup> See also Richard van Dülmen, *Die Gesellschaft der Aufklärer* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1986), esp. ch. 4; Pamela Currie, *Literature as Social Action: Modernist and Traditionalist Narratives in Germany in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1995).

<sup>258</sup> Goethe to Johanna Fahlmer, 14.2.1776, in Goethe, FA 29, p. 22.

correspondence, he presents his poor health as prohibiting involvement in any of the typical public service careers:

Ich bin von Natur thätig, aber ich habe nicht Kräfte genug, es anhaltend zu sein. Einem solchen Posten mit Ehren vorzustehen, dazu gehört ein gesunder und geistvoller Mann, in der Blüthe seiner Jahre und seiner Kraft. Bey mir leuchten nur noch die Strahlen der untergehenden Sonne, die durch Nebel blicken.<sup>259</sup>

Being thus (as he claims) unable to engage practically in the business of public affairs, Garve frames writing as a compensation. Literary production is an alternative to the civic-minded activity of the typical *Aufklärer*:

Zwar sind [diese Arbeiten] nur Kleinigkeiten, deren das Publikum sehr wohl entbehren könnte. Aber ich kann nicht wohl der Genugthuung entbehren, etwas zum Dienste des Publikums wenigstens versucht zu haben. [...] Da ich doch die Schriftstellerey als meinen einzigen Beruf ansehe, so muß man, was der Beruf fordert, thun, so gut man kann.<sup>260</sup>

In the absence of any other, writing is Garve's sole career. *Beruf* in this sense is not a livelihood; it is contrasted immediately afterwards with the 'mehr mechanische, mehr Brot bringende Arbeit' of translation, which Garve needs to cover supplementary living expenses.<sup>261</sup> Instead, it is a vocation, almost synonymous with *Amt*.<sup>262</sup> Writing is the only public service in which Garve can engage, and hence the only means for him to achieve the satisfaction of fulfilling a vocation.

Garve and Goethe's claims evoke an ancient intellectual tradition which stressed the superiority of the active life and the moral responsibility to engage in public service:

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<sup>259</sup> Garve to Weiße, 15.4.1792, in GW 15.2, p. 61. What the post was is not clear, but Dohm is mentioned in the passage, which suggests that it was connected with the Prussian civil service.

<sup>260</sup> Garve to Weiße, 26.8.1791, in GW 15.2, pp. 31-32.

<sup>261</sup> GW 15.2, p. 32.

<sup>262</sup> For Adelung, 'Beruf' is at once synonymous with 'der feyerliche Ruf zu einem Amte'. A more general sense is 'dasjenige, wozu jemand berufen worden, in der weitesten Bedeutung dieses Zeitwortes, Amt, pflichtmäßige Lebensart'. See art., 'Beruf', in Adelung, online at <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Beruf,+der?hl=beruf>. Article retrieved 15.11.2017.

that of Cicero and the humanists.<sup>263</sup> Overwhelmingly, Italian Renaissance humanists were members of the governing class.<sup>264</sup> The *De officiis* supplied them with a philosophical foundation:

We are not born for ourselves alone, to use Plato's splendid words, but our country claims for itself one part of our birth, and our friends another. Moreover, as the Stoics believe, everything produced on the earth is created for the use of mankind, and men are born for the sake of men, so that they may be able to assist one another. Consequently, we ought in this to follow nature as our leader, to contribute to the common stock the things that benefit everyone together, and, by the exchange of dutiful services, by giving and receiving expertise and effort and means, to bind fast the fellowship of men with each other.<sup>265</sup>

Cicero traces his own Republican ethic of public service to its Stoic context. Nature has so ordained it that men are born for the sake of men: thus someone who fails to engage in 'contributing to the common stock' is in fact missing his human vocation. The claim is central for the humanist ideal. Activity in public life is a privileged means of benefiting one's fellow human beings, and so has a high moral value: 'Note, though, that the life of leisure is easier and safer, less troublesome to oneself or to others. Those, on the other hand, who have adapted themselves to great achievements in the service of the political community, lead lives more profitable to mankind and more suited to grandeur and fame.'<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> See thesis introduction, pp. 37-45.

<sup>264</sup> See Charles G. Nauert, *Humanism and the culture of Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 12-17, 25-36.

<sup>265</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.22, pp. 9-10.

<sup>266</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.70, p. 28.

Descriptions of the ideal orator are dependent upon the same high view of the active life. Cicero assumes that 'orator' and 'man of action' are co-extensive.<sup>267</sup> Public life in its various dimensions will be this figure's special sphere of activity:

We wish [the orator] to be the political leader of the nation, guiding the government and pre-eminent for wisdom and eloquence in the Senate, in the assembly of the people and in public causes.<sup>268</sup>

The orator will not retire to tend his estate and spend his days in idle speculation; instead, his intellectual powers will be put at the service of the Republic. Quintilian presents a similar view in his framing of the ideal:

The man who can really play his part as a citizen, who is fit for the management of public and private business, and who can guide cities by his counsel, give them a firm basis by his laws, and put them right by his judgements, is surely no other than our orator.<sup>269</sup>

Again, the orator is to engage in a wide range of activities, all of which benefit his society. The public good is to be his guiding light. Above all, he is to play his part as a citizen, contributing positively to the community. He is the supreme incarnation of the philosophical ideal which claims that intellectual activity should always, ultimately, be of public benefit.

When discussing the orator's education, Cicero warns against the schools of philosophy (he is surely thinking of Epicureanism) who teach that 'it is not the business of a wise man to take part in politics.'<sup>270</sup> Political institutions are not perfect, and Cicero suggests that sometimes, it may be tempting to follow the advice of the philosophy which 'gently and tactfully appeals to us to abandon the platform

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<sup>267</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* III.xvi.59, in vol. 2, p. 47.

<sup>268</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* III.xvii.63, in vol. 2, p. 51.

<sup>269</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* I.pr.10, in vol. 1, p. 57.

<sup>270</sup> Cicero, *De oratore*, III.xvii.64, in vol. 2, p. 53.

and the courts and parliament'; this is 'perhaps a wise invitation, particularly in the present state of public affairs.'<sup>271</sup> Nevertheless, the orator must persevere in public life as his proper sphere.

Eighteenth-century valuations of the active life draw upon this line of thinking. They also inevitably depend upon a closely related but more general assumption: an essentially positive view of human society as both civilized and civilizing. Again, statements to this effect can be found throughout Cicero's work. In the *De officiis*, he warns against the view which claims that the origins of society lie in crude necessity:

It is not true, as some claim, that men embarked upon communal life and fellowship in order to provide for life's necessities just because we could not manage, without others, to provide ourselves with our natural requirements.<sup>272</sup>

Society may help to meet basic needs, but this is not its primary purpose. It is, rather, an expression of the rational and sociable nature of man:

The same nature, by the power of reason, unites one man to another for the fellowship both of common speech and of life, creating above all a particular love for his offspring. It drives him to desire that men should meet together and congregate, and that he should join them himself.<sup>273</sup>

On the Ciceronian view, reason, expressed above all in speech, is the bond between human beings. The moral obligation to public service is thus based upon a central characteristic of human nature.

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<sup>271</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* III.xvii.63, in vol. 2, pp. 51-53.

<sup>272</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.158, p. 61.

<sup>273</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.12, p. 6.

A high view of rhetoric is a natural consequence of these convictions. Since society is based upon reason and speech, the discipline which focuses attention on speech is crucial in the formation of the bonds of human fellowship. In the *De oratore*, Cicero presents eloquence as fundamental to a stable and fair society:

To come, however, at length to the highest achievements of eloquence, what other power could have been strong enough either to gather scattered humanity into one place, or to lead it out of its brutish existence in the wilderness up to our present condition of civilization as men and as citizens, or, after the establishment of social communities, to give shape to laws, tribunals, and civic rights?<sup>274</sup>

Rhetoric is positioned as the great civilizing force in human history. Society, in turn, is associated with civilization over against savagery; this is true of society as a basic phenomenon, but also of the various apparatus of the state, seen as securing justice. The status of citizenship, as one who belongs to this civilized community, also has a high dignity.

When Garve and his contemporaries argue for an analogy between authorship and public service, their thinking is informed by intellectual traditions which validated the work of the bureaucrat. The cameralist philosophy of the *Aufklärung* offered grounds for confidence in the state's capacity to benefit society. More generally, humanism and the rhetorical tradition embodied a high valuation of public service, based upon an essentially positive assessment of sociability as a facet of man's rational nature. In the *Ästhetische Briefe*, Schiller frames the role of the poet against the background of a fundamentally different set of assumptions.

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<sup>274</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* I.viii.33, in vol. 1, p. 25.

## Authorship versus public service: Schiller

Caroline von Wolzogen suggests that Schiller harboured plans of entering public office in later life:

Für das Gute und Schöne im öffentlichen Leben hatte er ein tiefes Gefühl, so wie für die Mängel desselben. [...] Er gefiel sich oft in dem Gedanken, im vorgerückten Alter zu einem Staatsamte tüchtig zu sein, und glaubte, es mit Interesse und Nutzen verwalten zu können.<sup>275</sup>

Schiller did not live long enough to make good on his plans; but certainly the view of the state presented in the *Ästhetische Briefe* emphasizes its 'Mängel'. In that work, the state is the problem which forms the background to the poet's mission. In light of such a view, the poet is, naturally enough, not presented as analogous with other public servants. Instead, Schiller juxtaposes his aesthetic project with attempts to improve society by intervention in politics, whether reform-minded or more violent.

Cicero presented a rhetorically-based society and state as the guarantee of basic freedoms, but the *Briefe* are founded upon the premise that human freedom remains an ideal. The argument begins with the claim that the state – in its current manifestation – is not an expression of reason and civilization, but the result of necessity.

[Der Mensch] kommt zu sich aus seinem sinnlichen Schlummer, erkennt sich als Mensch, blickt um sich her, und findet sich – in dem Staate. Der Zwang der Bedürfnisse warf ihn hinein, ehe er in seiner Freiheit diesen Stand wählen konnte; die Not richtete denselben nach bloßen Naturgesetzen ein, ehe *er* es nach Vernunftgesetzen konnte. Aber mit diesem Notstaat, der nur aus seiner Naturbestimmung hervorgegangen, und auch nur auf diese berechnet war, konnte und

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<sup>275</sup> SNA 42, p. 391.

kann er als moralische Person nicht zufrieden sein – und schlimm für ihn, wenn er es könnte!<sup>276</sup>

Schiller argues that the origins of the state do not lie in the progress of human beings from a condition of barbarity to a condition of civilization.<sup>277</sup> It is the product of mere natural impulses, and it does not function according to the principles of reason. This *Notstaat* is fundamentally unsatisfactory. It is, by definition, opposed to human freedom; reason demands its replacement by the moral state.

So holt [der Mensch], auf eine künstliche Weise, in seiner Volljährigkeit seine Kindheit nach, bildet sich einen *Naturstand* in der Idee, der ihm zwar durch keine Erfahrung gegeben, aber durch seine Vernunftbestimmung notwendig gesetzt ist, leiht sich in diesem idealistischen Stand einen Endzweck, den er in seinem wirklichen Naturstand nicht kannte, und eine Wahl, deren er damals nicht fähig war, und verfährt nun nicht anders, als ob er von vorn anfinge, und den Stand der Unabhängigkeit aus heller Einsicht und freiem Entschluß mit dem Stand der Verträge vertauschte. [...] Auf diese Art entsteht und rechtfertigt sich der Versuch eines mündig gewordenen Volks, seinen Naturstaat in einen sittlichen umzuformen.<sup>278</sup>

A central question in the *Briefe* is the means by which this ideal can be achieved and the state can be made rational.

The foundation of the state is, then, opposed to true human freedom, as ‘das Werk blinder Kräfte’.<sup>279</sup> This has pressing consequences for reflection on matters such as public service and citizenship. To be active in the context of such a state is to share in its fragmented character:

Jene Polypennatur der griechischen Staaten, wo jedes Individuum eines unabhängigen Lebens genoß, und wenn es Not tat, zum Ganzen

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<sup>276</sup> FA 8, p. 561.

<sup>277</sup> Schiller’s argument engages with a lively early modern intellectual tradition; Hobbes’ *Leviathan* and Rousseau’s work are prominent examples. See Nils Ehlers, *Zwischen schön und erhaben: Friedrich Schiller als Denker des Politischen* (Göttingen: Cuvillier, 2011), pp. 130, 227-248.

<sup>278</sup> FA 8, pp. 561-562.

<sup>279</sup> FA 8, p. 562.

werden konnte, machte jetzt einem kunstreichen Uhrwerke Platz, wo aus der Zerstückelung unendlich vieler, aber lebloser, Teile ein mechanisches Leben im Ganzen sich bildet. [...] Wenn das gemeine Wesen das Amt zum Maßstab des Mannes macht, wenn es an dem Einen seiner Bürger nur die Memorie, an einem Andern den tabellarischen Verstand, an einem Dritten nur die mechanische Fertigkeit ehrt [...] darf es uns da wundern, daß die übrigen Anlagen des Gemüts vernachlässigt werden, um der einzigen, welche ehrt und lohnt, alle Pflege zuzuwenden?<sup>280</sup>

Schiller contrasts the modern state with an idealized ancient Greece. There, each individual could achieve wholeness, but in the current historical situation, the state is associated instead with fragmentation: it is inorganic, synthetic, mechanical.

Schiller's criticisms echo previous warnings about democracy from conservative critics of Enlightenment.<sup>281</sup> They also constitute a challenge to the philosophical tradition which took an essentially positive view of the state and its institutions. This kind of state cannot offer its inhabitants the chance to fulfil their vocation through involvement in public life. The argument robs the *Aufklärung* valuation of public service of its legitimacy: in such a flawed state, public service can have little meaning. Possessing an *Amt* does not entail making a positive contribution to the whole of society, but rather alienation from it. Citizenship is not equated with human fulfilment; the *Amt* is less than the human being.

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<sup>280</sup> FA 8, p. 573.

<sup>281</sup> See Gert Ueding, *Schillers Rhetorik: Idealistische Wirkungsästhetik und rhetorische Tradition* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1971), pp. 28-29: 'Schillers Kritik an diesem Staat wird bereits in der Metapher für ihn manifest: er wird das "Uhrwerk", auch "Räderwerk" genannt. Zunächst scheint das die bloße Adaption einer gebräuchlichen Barockmetapher zu sein, die auch in der nachfolgenden, vor allem konservativ-reaktionären Kritik am modernen, demokratischen Staat immer wieder auftaucht. [...] Die Ergebnisse der Naturwissenschaften, Handelsausweitung, Konzentration wirtschaftlicher Produktivkräfte in der Stadt und die Astronomie waren eine notwendige Voraussetzung für die diesseitig orientierte bürgerliche Kultur, für die rationale Fundierung des Staates; doch sie brachten auch das Moment der Vereinzelung mit hinein, mehr noch: gerade dies wurde konstitutiv für den modernen Staat und von hier aus auf alle bürgerlichen Berufe übertragen.'

Having thus painted the problem, Schiller claims to offer a solution; but the *Briefe* are founded upon the premise that this solution cannot be found in the sphere of political activity. Schiller explicitly dismisses this possibility in the first letter. He anticipates the objection that in a time of such extreme political upheaval, it is inappropriate to direct attention to the philosophy of art:

Ist es nicht wenigstens außer der Zeit, sich nach einem Gesetzbuch für die ästhetische Welt umzusehen, da die Angelegenheiten der moralischen ein soviel näheres Interesse darbieten, und der philosophische Untersuchungsgeist durch die Zeitumstände so nachdrücklich aufgefordert wird, sich mit dem vollkommensten aller Kunstwerke, mit dem Bau einer wahren politischen Freiheit zu beschäftigen?<sup>282</sup>

Concentrating on art risks neglecting the very real need to establish political freedom; political developments, especially those surrounding the French Revolution, appear so much more pressing and urgent.

Schiller goes on, however, to argue that dealing with art is not, in fact, a refusal to engage with the problems of the age. Instead, art offers the road to true freedom, through beauty:

Ich hoffe, Sie zu überzeugen, daß diese Materie [sc. die ästhetische Erziehung] weit weniger dem Bedürfnis als dem Geschmack des Zeitalters fremd ist, ja daß man, um jenes politische Problem in der Erfahrung zu lösen, durch das ästhetische den Weg nehmen muß, weil es die Schönheit ist, durch welche man zu der Freiheit wandert.<sup>283</sup>

Schiller juxtaposes the *Briefe* with other attempts to improve society by more obviously practical means. The first priority for the present age must not be a political solution, but precisely what the letters offer: an aesthetic education. This

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<sup>282</sup> FA 8, p. 558.

<sup>283</sup> FA 8, p. 560.

will culminate in an enlightened political settlement, but the order Schiller establishes is crucial to his argument. Attention to the aesthetic world is the precondition to solving the problems of the political world.

The importance of this aspect of Schiller's argument is well established. In the *Cambridge History of German Literature*, Nicholas Saul argues that for Schiller, 'aesthetic education, [...] is the alternative to failed reform and failed revolution.'<sup>284</sup>

Wolfgang Müller-Seidel presents a similar argument. Schiller's argument makes claims about political settlements, and would certainly have consequences for the political sphere, but it is not to be confused with direct political activity: 'Politische Ästhetik ist mit ästhetischer Politik nicht zu verwechseln. Auch ist, was die erstere angeht, an eine Teilhabe Schillers am politischen Geschäft nicht zu denken, wohl aber an die Absicht, Veränderungen im Bewußtsein durch Ästhetik und mit ästhetischen Mitteln zu bewirken.'<sup>285</sup> Nils Ehlers argues that Schiller ascribes practical value to aesthetic thought in the political sphere: 'Schiller kündigt damit an, dem ästhetischen Denken einen praktischen Nutzen beizugeben – in der Politik.'<sup>286</sup>

The natural corollary of this, however, is that activities which might appear useful, in the normal channels of public life, are in fact nothing of the sort. Aesthetic education is a means to an end. It is thus an implicit critique of attempts to achieve the same end by the alternative means of direct engagement in political activity.

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<sup>284</sup> Nicholas Saul, 'Aesthetic Humanism', in Helen Watanabe O'Kelly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of German Literature* (Cambridge: University Press, 1997), p. 207.

<sup>285</sup> Wolfgang Müller-Seidel, *Friedrich Schiller und die Politik: Nicht das Große, nur das Menschliche Geschehe* (Munich: Beck, 2009), p. 13.

<sup>286</sup> Ehlers, *Zwischen schön und erhaben*, p. 129.

Schiller's view denies ultimate value to the kinds of activity which Garve or the humanists might have framed as public service. He rejects outright the foundational *Aufklärung* assumption that the state was capable of exerting a beneficial influence on society.

Sollte diese Wirkung wirklich von dem Staat zu erwarten sein? Das ist nicht möglich, denn der Staat, wie er jetzt beschaffen ist, hat das Übel veranlaßt, und der Staat, wie ihn die Vernunft in der Idee sich aufgibt, anstatt diese bessere Menschheit begründen zu können, müßte selbst erst darauf gegründet werden. [...] Das jetztige Zeitalter, weit entfernt uns diejenige Form der Menschheit aufzuweisen, welche als notwendige Bedingung einer moralischen Staatsverbesserung erkannt worden ist, zeigt uns vielmehr das direkte Gegenteil davon. Sind also die von mir aufgestellten Grundsätze richtig, und bestätigt die Erfahrung mein Gemälde der Gegenwart, so muß man jeden Versuch einer solchen Staatsveränderung solange für unzeitig und jede darauf gegründete Hoffnung solange für schimärisch erklären, bis die Trennung in dem innern Menschen wieder aufgehoben und seine Natur vollständig genug entwickelt ist, um selbst die Künstlerin zu sein, und der politischen Schöpfung der Vernunft ihre Realität zu verbürgen.<sup>287</sup>

Gradual reform, emanating from within the state, cannot produce the rational settlement which the *Aufklärer* sought. The state is the problem; and the ideal *Vernunftsstaat*, which would constitute a solution, is itself dependent upon the prior improvement of humanity. Again, political intervention is deferred. First of all, the fragmentation within human beings must be dealt with; only then will it be possible to realize a truly beneficial change in the political sphere.

This argument not only dismisses the reform-minded orientation of Enlightenment in Germany; it also constitutes a comment on attempts to change society by more violent means. The French Revolution is absent by name from the *Ästhetische Briefe*,

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<sup>287</sup> FA 8, p. 578.

but it is an inescapable background to Schiller's reflection there. In the *Augustenburger Briefe*, it is rather more prominent.<sup>288</sup> He presents it as a grand bid to create the kind of state he advocates, founded on principles of reason: 'Eine Frage, welche sonst nur durch das blinde Recht des Stärkern beantwortet wurde, ist nun, wie es scheint, vor dem Richterstuhle reiner Vernunft anhängig gemacht.'<sup>289</sup> However, the results have simply served to demonstrate that the present condition of human beings prohibits this.

Schiller appears to have shared the initial enthusiasm of other German intellectuals for the Revolution.<sup>290</sup> The *Assemblée Nationale* went so far as to award him honorary citizenship of France as a supporter of the cause of freedom ('les hommes qui, par leurs écrits et par leur courage, ont servi la cause de la liberté').<sup>291</sup> However, the Revolution's descent into brutality disturbed him. In a letter to Körner, dated shortly after the execution of Louis XVI, he relates his feelings: 'Ich habe wirklich eine Schrift für den König schon angefangen gehabt, aber es wurde mir nicht wohl darüber, und da ligt sie mir nun noch da. Ich kann seit 14 Tagen keine französischen Zeitungen mehr lesen, so ekeln diese elenden Schindersknechte mich an.'<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> This is plausibly explained with reference to the pledge, in the *Ankündigung of Die Horen*, 'sich über das Lieblingsthema des Tages ein strenges Stillschweigen auferlegen [...] [diese Zeitschrift] verbietet sich alle Beziehungen auf den *jetzigen* Weltlauf und auf die *nächsten* Erwartungen der Menschheit.' FA 8, pp. 1001-1002.

<sup>289</sup> FA 8, p. 559-560.

<sup>290</sup> For a full account of Schiller's response to events in the context of German opinion, see Alt, *Schiller* 2, pp. 111-125.

<sup>291</sup> SNA 37.2, p. 316; see Alt, *Schiller* 2, p. 124.

<sup>292</sup> SNA 26, p. 183.

The Revolution ultimately becomes grist for Schiller's mill: its outcome proves that effective and beneficial political change is dependent upon the moral condition of the people involved.

Der Versuch des Französischen Volks, sich in seine heiligen Menschenrechte einzusetzen, und eine politische Freiheit zu erringen, hat bloß das Unvermögen und die Unwürdigkeit desselben an den Tag gebracht, und nicht nur dieses unglückliche Volk, sondern mit ihm auch einen beträchtlichen Teil Europens, und ein ganzes Jahrhundert, in Barbarei und Knechtschaft zurückgeschleudert. Der Moment war der günstigste, aber er fand eine verderbte Generation, die ihn nicht wert war, und weder zu würdigen noch zu benutzen wußte. Der Gebrauch den sie von diesem großen Geschenk des Zufalls macht und gemacht hat, beweist unwidersprechlich, daß das Menschengeschlecht der vormundschaftlichen Gewalt noch nicht entwachsen ist, daß das liberale Regiment der Vernunft da noch zu frühe kommt, wo man kaum damit fertig wird, sich der brutalen Gewalt der Tierheit zu erwehren, und daß derjenige noch nicht reif ist zur *bürgerlichen* Freiheit, dem noch so vieles zur *menschlichen* fehlt.<sup>293</sup>

The French Revolution served only to expose the deficiency of the people engaged in it. Whereas it had been welcomed as the herald of a new era of reason and human rights, it has descended into rank barbarism. What happened is symptomatic of a larger cultural malaise, which says something not only about the representatives of the Revolution, but about humanity itself ('das Menschengeschlecht'). The problem with the Revolution was, at heart, a human failing. The grand opportunity was lost, not because of circumstances, but rather because the 'Generation' who met it lacked the maturity to exercise freedom responsibly. Schiller argues that the prerequisite for political freedom is human freedom; because those involved in the Revolution lacked this, they could not achieve what they sought.

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<sup>293</sup> FA 8, p. 501.

In the *Ästhetische Briefe*, then, political change is deeply necessary, but also fundamentally dependent upon human character having been changed. This is the premise for the artist's mission:

Alle Verbesserung im politischen soll von Veredlung des Charakters ausgehen – aber wie kann sich unter den Einflüssen einer barbarischen Staatsverfassung der Charakter veredeln? Man müßte also zu diesem Zwecke ein Werkzeug aufsuchen, welches der Staat nicht hergibt, und Quellen dazu eröffnen, die sich bei aller politischen Verderbnis rein und lauter erhalten. Jetzt bin ich an dem Punkt angelangt, zu welchem alle meine bisherigen Betrachtungen hingestrebt haben. Dieses Werkzeug ist die schöne Kunst, diese Quellen öffnen sich in ihren unsterblichen Mustern.<sup>294</sup>

Art is the key to the problem which Schiller has articulated. It, and not political activity, is the necessary means to improving human character; it is necessary because the established political settlement is essentially perverse, and because any improvement must begin not within that settlement, but within the inner life of human beings. Thus the poet's role is introduced in opposition to both violent revolution and political reform. He is not to be conceived of analogously with public servants in other walks of life, but as an indictment of them. His role is essential, precisely because they are themselves bound up in the flawed state and therefore incapable of resolving its problems.

Schiller's argument about the poet's relationship with the state thus contrasts with Garve's at several points. Garve presented the author as a public servant, based on the humanist validation of involvement in public life. In the *Ästhetische Briefe*, Schiller implicitly rejects the assumptions which sustain this view. Here, the state is

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<sup>294</sup> FA 8, pp. 582-583.

not a product of human civilization, but rather essentially perverse: it is symptomatic of fragmentation, and it demands replacement by a rational political settlement. The need for the poet is expressly predicated upon the impossibility of improving society by more obvious means, whether bureaucratic reform or violent revolution. The work of change must begin not in the political sphere but through aesthetic education. Public service can have no meaning in such circumstances: the poet's vocation is not its analogy, but its necessary alternative.

### 'Der Richterstuhl des Publicums': Garve on the author and the public

Schiller's initial request to Garve was for an essay on the author's relationship to the public. Garve's comments in his reply do discuss one aspect of this, by comparing the author's relationship to the public with that of men in other public service careers.

However, they leave the central question largely unanswered: Garve's primary focus is on the author's professional position. On the question of the relationship between author and public, both authors' works again yield contrasting positions.

In the late essay, 'Ueber die öffentliche Meinung', Garve traces out his understanding of the author's relationship to the public, and the assumptions about the public which sustain this understanding. On the basis of internal evidence, the essay is probably to be dated to some point between 1794 and Garve's death in 1798; this would make it roughly contemporary with *Die Horen*, and so with the exchange between Garve and Schiller.<sup>295</sup> The argument fits within the range of responses by German intellectuals to the French Revolution.<sup>296</sup> In it, Garve is particularly concerned to investigate public opinion because some thinkers have

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<sup>295</sup> The essay refers to 'ein Aufsatz, den man für den letzten unsers unglücklichen Forsters ausgiebt' (GW 3, p. 295), strongly suggesting that it was composed after Georg Forster's death in 1794; the text of Forster's which Garve cites is the *Parisische Umriss*. See Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, p. 516, and Torsten Liesegang, *Öffentlichkeit und öffentliche Meinung: Theorien von Kant bis Marx (1780-1850)* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2004), p. 141.

<sup>296</sup> For general surveys of the topic, see Thomas P. Saine, *Black Bread – White Bread: German intellectuals and the French Revolution* (Columbia: Camden House, 1988); Zwi Batscha, *Despotismus von jeder Art reizt zur Widersetzlichkeit: die Französische Revolution in der deutschen Popularphilosophie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989); Maike Oergel, *(Re-)writing the Radical: Enlightenment, Revolution and Cultural Transfer in 1790s Germany, Britain and France* (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2012).

proposed it as the motivating force behind the Revolution.<sup>297</sup> The matter of public opinion leads him to reflect on the role of authors in public debate. He presents the author as a member of the intellectual leadership in society; he balances this, however, with the affirmation that the author excels in the faculty of reason which all human beings share. Author and public are united by a significant amount of intellectual common ground.

There are strong parallels between this view and arguments for the dignity of the orator in the rhetorical tradition. As indicated above, both Quintilian and Cicero conceive of the orator above all as a leader, a member of the governing class. Cicero describes his function as 'kingly'; he is to be active at the highest levels of government, responsible for maintaining justice and liberty in society.<sup>298</sup> In Quintilian, the orator's responsibility is to 'guide cities by his counsel, give them a firm basis by his laws, and put them right by his judgements'.<sup>299</sup> The orator belongs to the elite of society: to govern, to make laws, and to pass judgements are plainly the activities of a leadership caste.

However, in both authors, the orator's dignity is secured not merely by his involvement in the activities of the elite, but also by what he has in common with his

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<sup>297</sup> See GW 3, pp. 294-296: 'Besonders hat seit dem Anfange der Revolution, und schon zu der Zeit, als sie vorbereitet wurde, die öffentliche Meinung in den Reden und den Schriften derer, welche an ihr thätigen Antheil nehmen, eine große Rolle gespielt. [...] Nach ihnen war es die in den Gemüthern der Franzosen stillschweigend und allmählig vorgegangne Veränderung der Begriffe und Meinungen, welche die sichtbaren und plötzlichen Veränderungen ihrer Verfassung vorbereitet hatte. [...] Es ist also wohl der Mühe werth, zu untersuchen, ob hinter diesem neuen Ausdrücke [sc. öffentliche Meinung], der durch seine Anwendung so bedeutend geworden ist, etwas wirkliches stecke.'

<sup>298</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* I.viii.32, in vol. 1, p. 25.

<sup>299</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* I.pr.10, in vol. 1, p. 57.

fellow citizens. The point relates back to Garve's exchange with Kant on the question of common sense: the rhetorical tradition from which Garve drew his arguments was committed to a high valuation of shared human reason. The orator excels in a faculty common to all human beings.

For what is so marvellous as that, out of the innumerable company of mankind, a single being should arise, who either alone or with a few others can make effective a faculty bestowed by nature on every man?<sup>300</sup>

Is there not a splendour in the very fact of using our common understanding and the words that all use to achieve such praise and glory that you seem not just to be speaking or pleading, but, like Pericles, to 'lighten and thunder'?<sup>301</sup>

The orator's extraordinary intellectual capacities may be quantitatively different from his fellow citizens, but they are not qualitatively different. Language is a human universal, so too the faculty of reason, just as Cicero claimed in the *De officiis*: 'The same nature, by the power of reason, unites one man to another for the fellowship both of common speech and of life.'<sup>302</sup> The orator does not, at the fundamental level, embody qualities foreign to the people whom he represents and to whom he speaks. Instead, he exhibits the same capacities as they, but developed to a level beyond the ability of the majority. His distinctive position of leadership in society goes hand in hand with the assumption that his gifts actually serve to unite him with others.

Like the classical orator, Garve's model author is to provide leadership: here, the context is public debate. The claim has a pragmatic background. For practical

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<sup>300</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* I.viii.31, vol. 1, p. 23.

<sup>301</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* II.xvi.19, vol. 1, p. 377.

<sup>302</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.12, p. 6.

reasons, those whose writings are read by a large audience exert a significant influence.

Ohne Zweifel haben auch auf [die] öffentliche Meinung einzelne Personen, besonders die Weisern, die Geehrtern, und die Beredtern der Nation viel Einfluß. Und hier ist insonderheit der Einfluß der Schriftsteller bey einer lesenden Nation unverkennbar. – Selbstdenkende Menschen der Art, daß sie gar keine Belehrung von andern Menschen zum Grunde legten, giebt es gar nicht. [...] Der größere Theil vernünftiger Menschen bekommt durch Erziehung, Lecture und Umgang seine Prämissen und zieht durch eignes Nachdenken nur die eine oder die andre Schlußfolge. Und in sofern also Einer Viele belehrt, so können auch die Ideen dieses Einen unvermerkt in die noch so unabhängig scheinenden Meinungen der Andern einschleichen.<sup>303</sup>

No one, even among rational people, is immune from external influence in intellectual matters. For most, independent thought consists in productive adaptation of ideas derived from others.<sup>304</sup> It follows logically that the small minority who do write and publish exert a disproportionate influence over the majority who do not. This minority has the privilege of introducing important ideas into the intellectual atmosphere, where they can be appropriated, consciously or unconsciously, by the public. The argument recalls Garve's comment in his letter to Schiller: by producing written works, authors gain for themselves a much wider hearing and much greater influence than other comparable *Gelehrte*.<sup>305</sup>

According to Garve's model, authors thus represent the intellectual leadership in a society. He is careful to explain how exactly this leadership is to be conceived of.

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<sup>303</sup> GW 3, pp. 328-329.

<sup>304</sup> The principle here expressed is foundational for Garve's thought; see chapter 4 of this thesis, pp. 228-242.

<sup>305</sup> See above, pp. 114-115.

Authors represent the path breakers along the road of progress, a road along which their public can be expected to follow:

Dieß ist der Gang der Dinge, daß sich die menschliche Natur im Einzelnen, vervollkommnet, Einzelne zuerst die Wissenschaften erfinden und erweitern, Einzelne die Lehrer Vieler und ganzer Nationen werden. – Weiter, als diese hervorragenden Menschen, diese Lehrer des Menschengeschlechts in der Erforschung der Wahrheit und Erkenntniß der Irrthümer gekommen sind, wird die öffentliche oder gemeine Meinung wohl nie fortschreiten; und da diese gemeinlich nur die bekannten durch jene Lehrer ausgebreiteten Principien und Maximen auf die Vorfälle des Tages, und die Gegenstände, die unter ihren Augen sind, anwendet: so wird sie freylich irre gehen, wenn die Principien irrig sind. Dieser Mangel der öffentlichen Meinung ist aber eine unabänderliche Folge der menschlichen Schwachheit und der erst allmählichen und stufenweise vorgehenden Annäherung der menschlichen Meinungen zur Wahrheit.<sup>306</sup>

As before, Garve's perspective has the ring of pragmatic good sense. Although human beings must advance together, some few will, inevitably, be more advanced than others. It falls to this intellectual elite to act as teachers for their contemporaries; their influence brings with it a weight of responsibility. The important point, however, is that he casts the author's role against the background of confidence in the public's reason. The teachers are not to present their pupils with personal, individual insights, but to direct them towards a truth which they can perceive for themselves. This truth is the property of all, and all human beings are engaged in progress towards it, united by their shared 'menschliche Natur'.

Garve's portrayal of the role of the author thus depends upon a high view of the public's capacities. The relationship between the two is not based upon a category

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<sup>306</sup> GW 3, pp. 329-330.

difference of intellectual superiority. Instead, a basic continuity ties them together. They are on the same developmental path of enlightenment; the only difference between them is relative, in that the author has advanced further than the public along this path.

An optimistic view of the public's intellectual capacity is central to Garve's argument in the essay. It is a basic premise in 'Ueber die öffentliche Meinung' that the average person is intelligent enough to come to accurate conclusions without needing to be spoon-fed by intellectual superiors. The very concept of 'public opinion', as Garve defines it, consists in individuals testing for themselves the claims put forward in public discourse – not in blind adherence to a popular theory.

Da, wo nur *ein* Mensch *denkt* und *urteilt* und die übrigen ihm aufs Wort glauben, oder vielleicht bloß seinen Worten nachbethen, [...] da ist keine *öffentliche Meinung*; denn es ist nichts vorhanden, was *Meinung* heißen könnte, – die immer voraussetzet, daß der Mensch, der sie hägt, seiner eignen Natur, und den Eindrücken, welche die Dinge auf ihn machen, in seinem Urtheile folge.<sup>307</sup>

*Meinung*, Garve claims, consists in coming to one's own conclusions, not in simply embracing someone else's. There can be no public opinion in regurgitating authoritative pronouncements, no matter how intelligent and persuasive the authority may be. The high task of thinking is not to be delegated to external authority: intellectual process and conclusion are the shared business of all.

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<sup>307</sup> GW 3, p. 297 (italics in original).

Garve places a high degree of confidence in the power of truth to convince the whole spectrum of human beings. This is the basis of his optimism that the general public can come to accurate conclusions for themselves.

Daß es aber sehr wohl möglich sey, daß Menschen, die nichts von einander wissen, die sich nicht mit einander verabredet haben, und die unter keinem gemeinschaftlichen Einflusse des Ansehns stehen, doch von selbst in ihren Urtheilen über gewisse Gegenstände übereinstimmen: daran läßt uns die Natur der Wahrheit, so wie die Natur des menschlichen Geistes, nicht zweifeln. Beyde müssen sich, sobald der menschliche Geist hinreichend entwickelt ist, und die Natur der Dinge gehörig beachtet wird, zur Hervorbringung gemeinschaftlicher Begriffe und Ueberzeugungen von selbst vereinigen.<sup>308</sup>

Garve claims that the view he presents of public opinion is not a naïve one: it ought to be expected that, if something is true, the majority of people should perceive it to be so. His conviction rests on two foundations, one objective and one subjective. Human beings share a faculty of mind, so it is to be expected that all sorts of different people will produce the same thoughts. Truth, too, is the common property of all. Elsewhere in the essay, he defines it as the correspondence between a person's properly functioning perceptions and external reality: '[Die Wahrheit ist] der reine Effect, den ein Gegenstand an und für sich auf das Gemüth des Menschen macht, insofern dasselbe auch nur durch die wesentlichen und allgemeinen Gesetze seiner vernünftigen Natur bestimmt wird.'<sup>309</sup> Truth is thus external and public: it is not the preserve of a restricted elite. As an objective reality, it is available to faculties which all human beings possess. The notion is again sustained by the guiding conviction of a shared 'vernünftige Natur'.

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<sup>308</sup> GW 3, pp. 297-298.

<sup>309</sup> GW 3, pp. 304-305.

It is thus natural to expect the broad spectrum of people to come to the right conclusions, if they exercise the rational judgement which they possess as a human universal.<sup>310</sup> This assumption also provides Garve with a lens for interpreting historical events. Great cultural, political, and religious upheavals do not stem from the force of individual character, but from convictions based upon reason and shared by society. In this vein, an interpretation of the Reformation which sees the activity of the individual Martin Luther as its ultimate cause would be mistaken:

Der, welcher glaubt, daß die Predigten und Schriften Luthers die Veränderung in den religiösen Begriffen der Menschen zuerst *hervorgebracht* habe, welche sich von seiner Zeit herschreibt, – daß er der *Urheber* der Reformation sey; der schlägt die Kraft *eines* Mannes zu hoch an, und verkennt die Kraft der Wahrheit. Nein, eben weil schon vor Luthern, in mehrern Christlichen Ländern, eine große Anzahl von Menschen so dachte, wie er, die Ungereimtheiten bemerkte, welche er ins Licht setzte, sich von denjenigen Mißbräuchen gedrückt fühlte, gegen die er sich erhob, und die Wahrheiten, welche er laut predigte, wenigstens dunkel ahndete: eben deßwegen war sein Anhang so groß, und die Ausbreitung der Reformation gleich in den ersten Jahren seiner Erscheinung so schnell. [...] Daher der unerwartete Beyfall, welchen *der* Mann in der Welt fand, der diese gemeinschaftlichen Urtheile Vieler in seinen Schriften gleichsam nur sammelte und kundmachte. Er wurde der Vereinigungspunct, um den sich die schon vorhandne Parthey sammelte, wodurch ihre Größe sichtbar wurde; er war aber nicht der Stifter derselben.<sup>311</sup>

It was not the force of Luther which triumphed in the Reformation, but the force of truth. His protests against abuses within the church were not new or unique to him, but rather reflected a reality perceived by others. His evaluation ('Urtheile') of Rome was already that of the common human being ('gemeinschaftlich'). The proof of this, according to Garve, is that Luther's ideas found a ready hearing; this they could only

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<sup>310</sup> A significant part of the essay is concerned with the idiosyncrasies of time, place, and culture which function to prevent right and rational judgment, and with the circumstances under which public opinion may and may not be trusted. See GW 3, pp. 307-328.

<sup>311</sup> GW 3, pp. 300-301. Italics in original.

have achieved if they had already been at least semi-present in other minds. Luther is thus not the initial intellectual stimulus for the great event, but the point around which the majority view can crystallize. Garve does not mean to deny historical significance to Luther the individual, and he draws an important distinction between Luther and his subsequent followers. They may previously have intuitively felt ('fühlte', 'ahndete') problems, but had not expressed their concerns. Luther's achievement was to give this vague awareness a loud and explicit voice. Garve paints the relationship between Luther and the general public as reciprocal: each depends on the other. What distinguishes Luther is not his privileged insight, but his ability to express shared concerns on the public stage. This is necessary in order to bring the 'common judgement' from mere private conviction to the critical point where it is actually capable of causing social change.

Garve's Luther begins to resemble a classical orator, as the public voice who excels in the human capacity for language and is uniquely able to give expression to shared judgements. At the conclusion of the essay, Garve nudges the author's role in public debate further towards that of the orator in the public sphere of the Roman

Republic:

Nur dadurch können [die Schriftsteller] beytragen, über die Existenz einer öffentlichen Meinung, und welche sie sey, aufzuklären, daß, wenn sie den Gegenstand genauer bestimmen, darüber ihre eigne Meinung laut äußern und mit Gründen vortragen, die viele Leser an sich ziehen – dieses die schlummernden Gedanken Anderer bis zur Deutlichkeit erweckt, viel Reden und Schreiben über die Sache veranlaßt, und gleichsam die im verborgnen umlaufenden Actenstücke des Prozesses nach und nach vollständig vor den Richterstuhl des Publicums bringt.<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> GW 3, p. 331.

The author is not to pronounce *ex cathedra*, but to facilitate intelligent discussion. This is, of course, to assume that those who read authors are themselves capable of thinking intelligently about the points at issue. Garve frames the debate as a court case. Intellectuals function as lawyers, bringing the relevant files before the tribunal and making the case for their positions. This tribunal is constituted by the public: the prerogative of pronouncing final judgement is theirs. The illustration implies a high degree of confidence in the public's capacities. It also gives the intellectual a role analogous to the classical orator in a court of law.

At several points, then, Garve portrays the relationship between the author and the public in ways which unmistakably evoke the ideal classical orator. His argument also recalls Cicero's claim for language and mind as the basis of human fellowship. Like the orator, the author is a member of an intellectual elite within society; like the orator, too, however, the author excels in a shared faculty of language and mind. Garve's framing of the author's role is dependent at every stage upon an essentially optimistic view of the public's capacities and ability to perceive truth. In the *Ästhetische Briefe* and elsewhere, Schiller offers a perspective on the same theme – the poet's relationship to the public – but one which is guided by very different assumptions.

## 'Eine fremde Gestalt': Schiller on the poet and the public

This thesis will base its analysis of Schiller's view upon two key texts: the famous review of Gottfried August Bürger's poetry and the *Ästhetische Briefe*. Both texts base their claims about the poet's role on specific assumptions about the character of the public to whom he speaks. The assumptions which Schiller articulates conflict with those which guided Garve's argument. Garve stressed a basic continuity between the author and the public and took an optimistic view of the public's capacities; Schiller, by contrast, presents the public as essentially depraved, and the ideal poet as embodying very different values.<sup>313</sup>

In the Bürger review, the poet's role is cast against the explicit assumption that significant distinctions exist between the thought and feeling of diverse human beings. On Schiller's model of cultural history, fragmentation in society is characteristic of modernity. The current historical moment excludes the possibility of a unified public:

Unsre Welt ist die homerische nicht mehr, wo alle Glieder der Gesellschaft im Empfinden und Meinen ungefähr *dieselbe* Stufe einnahmen, sich also leicht in derselben Schilderung erkennen, in denselben Gefühlen begegnen konnten. Jetzt ist zwischen der *Auswahl* einer Nation und der *Masse* derselben ein sehr großer Abstand sichtbar.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> There is a contrast between Schiller's perspective here and what he says in the *Rheinische Thalia* preface, where the public is the poet's 'sovereign'. Explaining this with reference to Schiller's own changing thinking would be beyond the scope of the present chapter; the point here is to note how, in the *Ästhetische Briefe*, Schiller thinks of the relationship between author and public in very different terms to Garve.

<sup>314</sup> FA 8, p. 975.

It is impossible, Schiller argues, for the present age to produce a *Volksdichter* such as Homer or the troubadours. Those ages saw a public of unified taste and feeling. It might fairly have been claimed that all the different strata of society shared a common cast of mind, much as Garve claims all human beings do, and poets could thus write secure in the knowledge that their own concerns would match those of their audience. Schiller, however, presents this common mind as a lost ideal rather than a necessary postulate. He draws a caesura between this ideal and a present reality where a deep cleft divides the thought and feeling of a privileged elite from those of the great mass (precisely the people, in Schiller's argument, who read *Bürger*).

The task of the popular poet is to unify this divided public by appealing simultaneously to both sections ('den ungeheuern Abstand, der zwischen beiden sich befindet, durch die Größe seiner Kunst aufzuheben').<sup>315</sup> This entails a clear orientation towards the taste of the elite: 'Was den Vortrefflichen gefällt, ist gut; was allen ohne Unterschied gefällt, ist es noch mehr.'<sup>316</sup> Authentic popularity means bringing the masses up to the level of a cultural elite – not condescending to them. Schiller develops the idea further when framing the key criterion for judging the value of popular poetry: 'Ist der Popularität nichts von der höhern Schönheit aufgeopfert worden? Haben sie, was sie für die Volksmasse an Interesse gewannen, nicht für den Kenner verloren?'<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> FA 8, p. 975.

<sup>316</sup> FA 8, p. 977.

<sup>317</sup> FA 8, p. 978.

The key term, 'Schönheit', indicates Schiller's vision of the poet's task: to bring beauty to his audience. It is against this vision that Schiller measures Bürger, and finds him wanting.

Und hier müssen wir gestehen, daß uns die Bürgerischen Gedichte noch sehr viel zu wünschen übrig gelassen haben, daß wir in dem größten Teil derselben den milden, sich immer gleichen, immer hellen, männlichen Geist vermischen, der, eingeweiht in die Mysterien des Schönen, Edeln und Wahren, zu dem Volke bildend herniedersteigt, aber auch in der vertrautesten Gemeinschaft mit demselben nie seine himmlische Abkunft verleugnet. Hr. B[ürger] *vermischt* sich nicht selten mit dem Volk, zu dem er sich nur herablassen sollte, und anstatt es scherzend und spielend zu sich hinaufzuziehen, gefällt es ihm oft, sich ihm gleich zu machen.<sup>318</sup>

Bürger has failed, as Schiller sees it, to fulfil the poet's most fundamental responsibility. He is supposed to act as an initiate into the mysteries of the beautiful, noble, and true. 'Eingeweiht' and 'Mysterien' carry strong connotations of some kind of secret society; beauty is, then, the unique preserve of a special set of human beings, not the common property of all, nor yet something which they could be expected to perceive with their own faculties. Instead, the 'Volk' must have beauty revealed to them by someone who is not one of them. Bürger's damnation is that he has neglected to preserve this crucial distinction between poet and 'Volk'. Instead of elevating the masses, he has lowered himself to them, gratifying their debased tastes. In describing the role of the ideal poet, Schiller makes copious use of religious imagery. More even than a human being of superior enlightenment, the poet is described in terms which associate him with the realm of divinity. His origin is 'himmlisch', and so fundamentally distinct from that of the people to whom he speaks. He reaches out to them not as one of their own, but as an ambassador from

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<sup>318</sup> FA 8, p. 978. Italics in original.

a different and higher realm. Twice in two sentences, Schiller uses terms denoting this downward motion of condescension ('herniedersteigt [...] herablassen'). He also enjoys the privilege and responsibility of actively forming and shaping his hearers ('bildend'); this, too, carries strong connotations of the divine.

Schiller identifies a deep divide between what pleases a cultural elite and what pleases the masses. This condition is explained by positing a decline in cultural history: the unity of good taste which characterized ancient Greece has gone, and the contemporary German-speaking public can no longer be expected to appreciate what is good. That the general public's tastes are debased is assumed throughout: Schiller later makes reference to 'der zweideutige Beifall des großen Haufens'.<sup>319</sup> Schiller's claims for beauty run contrary to Garve's for truth: beauty is not (at least not currently) a common good, equally accessible to all. Instead, the poet as an elite figure initiates the general public into something previously a mystery to them. The relationship between poet and public is thus rigidly hierarchical. The two are not fellow-travellers on the way to a common goal: instead, the poet enjoys what is effectively divine status, and his task is to elevate the public to the plane of aesthetic refinement which he himself already occupies.

The relationship between poet and public is also a theme in the *Ästhetische Briefe*, and Schiller's argument there has some parallels with the Bürger review. In both cases, the opposition between the two is stressed. In the *Briefe*, this is set against

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<sup>319</sup> FA 8, p. 983.

the background of a more fully developed picture of depravity among modern humanity.

In seinen Taten malt sich der Mensch, und welche Gestalt ist es, die sich in dem Drama der jetzigen Zeit abbildet! Hier Verwilderung, dort Erschlaffung: die zwei Äußersten des menschlichen Verfalls, und beide in Einem Zeitraum vereinigt!<sup>320</sup>

Schiller portrays his age as alternately savage or simply flaccid: both of these are evidence of extreme decline. 'So sehen wir den Geist der Zeit zwischen Barbarei und Schlawheit, Freigeisterei und Aberglauben, Roheit und Verzärtelung schwanken, und es ist bloß das *Gleichgewicht der Laster*, was das ganze noch zusammen hält.'<sup>321</sup> This indictment includes not just the destructive primal drives which Schiller sees unleashed in the French Revolution, but also the failure of the supposedly civilized classes.

This portrayal of cultural depravity sets the scene for Schiller's portrayal of the artist.

In view of the condition of the age, the artist must be an oppositional figure:

Der Künstler ist zwar der Sohn seiner Zeit, aber schlimm für ihn, wenn er zugleich ihr Zögling oder gar noch ihr Günstling ist. Eine wohlthätige Gottheit reiße den Säugling bei Zeiten von seiner Mutter Brust, nähre ihn mit der Milch eines bessern Alters, und lasse ihn unter fernem griechischen Himmel zur Mündigkeit reifen. Wenn er dann Mann geworden ist, so kehre er, eine fremde Gestalt, in sein Jahrhundert zurück; aber nicht, um es mit seiner Erscheinung zu erfreuen, sondern furchtbar wie Agamemnons Sohn, um es zu reinigen.<sup>322</sup>

It is a guiding principle of Schiller's argument that the ideal artist inhabits a relationship of confrontation with the society around him. To do anything else would be to fail to fulfil his calling: the artist who seeks to please his generation, who takes

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<sup>320</sup> FA 8, p. 568.

<sup>321</sup> FA 8, p. 503.

<sup>322</sup> FA 8, pp. 583-584.

his instruction from it or (worse) panders to its whims, is misdirected. Instead, he must turn from his own age to the world of the ancient Greeks, representatives of an ideal humanity. The model of cultural history found in the *Ästhetische Briefe* juxtaposes the two ages to the detriment of the present day.<sup>323</sup> In embracing the values of the Greeks, the artist will automatically come into conflict with the prevailing values of his own generation. Towards them, his task is not to bring joy but to cleanse ('reinigen'). Schiller conceives of this in violent terms. He uses the example of Orestes, the vengeful murderer of his mother and her lover. The suggestion is that the artist should wreak destruction on a rotten culture. Into it, he must bring the beauty which it does not possess in itself.

Several implications flow from Schiller's framing of the relationship between artist and public as one of opposition. One is that the artist should not set too much store by what his society says about him:

Wie verwahrt sich aber der Künstler vor den Verderbnissen seiner Zeit, die ihn von allen Seiten umfängen? Wenn er ihr Urteil verachtet. Er blicke aufwärts nach seiner Würde und dem Gesetz, nicht niederwärts nach dem Glück und nach dem Bedürfnis.<sup>324</sup>

Society's character is reflected in its assessment of the artist's work. Since he is to oppose this character and its flaws, he must dismiss the judgements of his contemporaries; he must be inured against an initial negative reception. The

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<sup>323</sup> See FA 8, pp. 570-571: 'Bei einiger Aufmerksamkeit auf den Zeitcharakter muß uns der Kontrast in Verwunderung setzen, der zwischen der heutigen Form der Menschheit, und zwischen der ehemaligen, besonders der griechischen, angetroffen wird. [...] Zugleich voll Form und voll Fülle, zugleich philosophierend und bildend, zugleich zart und energisch sehen wir sie die Jugend der Phantasie mit der Männlichkeit der Vernunft in einer herrlichen Menschheit vereinigen. [...] Wie ganz anders bei uns Neuern! Auch bei uns ist das Bild der Gattung in den Individuen vergrößert auseinander geworfen – aber in Bruchstücken, nicht in veränderten Mischungen, daß man von Individuum zu Individuum herumfragen muß, um die Totalität der Gattung zusammen zu lesen.'

<sup>324</sup> FA 8, p. 584.

contrast between Schiller's position here and Garve's in 'Ueber die öffentliche Meinung' is evident. There, the public's judgement could be trusted, and the author was one of their own. Here, by contrast, Schiller presents the artist in direct opposition to his public. Echoing the Bürger review, he again frames the artist's mission in metaphysical terms. 'Aufwärts' and 'niederwärts' strongly connote an opposition between the spiritual and material realms. As a representative of ideal humanity, the artist has a high inherent dignity, and he must take his principles ('Gesetz') from something better than the world around him. Similarly, he must not allow his vision to be marred by other, baser concerns, whether success in the eyes of his current audience or financial reward.

The ninth letter concludes with a lengthy apostrophic passage addressing the young poet. As before, Schiller frames the poet's role with reference to the trajectory of cultural history, and the current condition of his generation.

Gib also, werde ich dem jungen Freund der Wahrheit und Schönheit zur Antwort geben, der von mir wissen will, wie er dem edeln Trieb in seiner Brust, bei allem Widerstande des Jahrhunderts, Genüge zu tun habe, gib der Welt, auf die du wirkst, die *Richtung* zum Guten, so wird der ruhige Rhythmus der Zeit die Entwicklung bringen. [...] Lebe mit deinem Jahrhundert, aber sei nicht sein Geschöpf; leiste deinen Zeitgenossen, aber was sie bedürfen, nicht was sie loben. [...] Denke sie dir, wie sie sein sollten, wenn du auf sie zu wirken hast, aber denke sie dir, wie sie sind, wenn du für sie zu handeln versucht wirst.<sup>325</sup>

The guiding assumption throughout is that the artist will stand in a relationship of conflict with his age. Its deficiencies make this inevitable. He is to expect 'Widerstand': indeed, Schiller's advice is meant to prepare him for it. Unlike Garve's

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<sup>325</sup> FA 8, pp. 585-586.

author, Schiller's poet does not inhabit the same intellectual spectrum as his public. He introduces a foreign element, the 'edler Trieb' which stands opposed to his 'Jahrhundert'; while he inhabits their context, he must reject its values. Conformity is warned against at every stage. The artist must always have in mind the ideal for his public, in contrast with their present state, and must not be drawn in by the latter. Where Garve stresses continuity between the author and his context, Schiller stresses discontinuity. Furthermore, he stresses the need for action. The artist is to exert an impact upon his fellow human beings, not simply to let them develop along current lines. Garve thought that most human beings would come to perceive truth for themselves, and the author was simply an aid in this process, but Schiller argues that it is the artist's responsibility to change his public. 'Der ruhige Rhythmus der Zeit' can only do its work once this has been achieved.

In 'Ueber die öffentliche Meinung', Garve stressed the continuity that unites the author and the public, and expressed confidence in the faculty of reason that they share. In both the Bürger review and the *Ästhetische Briefe*, Schiller conceives of the poet's mission against the background of a public whose taste and judgement is debased: the poet represents a very different set of values. Rather than portraying the poet analogously to the ancient orator, Schiller frames his mission in terms which resemble a prophet. He is an emissary from a distinct and higher realm, rather than the ideal incarnation of universal human capacities.

Schiller and Garve's differences on this point recall Garve's exchange with Kant. The two discussions are, in one respect, quite distinct from one another. Garve and Kant

deal with the nature of the philosophical enterprise and the possibility of popular expression, whereas Garve and Schiller differ over the proper attitude for the author to adopt towards his reading public. Kant had claimed that the philosopher should seek primary acceptance for his work in the academy, not communicating it to the public until this has been achieved. Between Schiller and Garve, by contrast, the debate is not over whether the author should engage with the public – he could scarcely do otherwise – but rather over what assumptions should guide him when he does. Nevertheless, the two episodes do have something important in common. Both are examples of a conflict between different views on how the thought of an intellectual elite relates to that of a wider public. In both cases, Garve contends for continuity. The philosopher and the author (who are perhaps no more than two different labels for the same figure) share in the public's common sense, and this enables the public to pass judgement on the intellectual's pronouncements. Kant and Schiller, by contrast, both stress discontinuity. Kant's philosopher deploys a faculty of critical reason which is quite foreign to the general public's thought. Schiller's poet, similarly, stands for values and a way of thinking which is fundamentally opposed to the public's current condition. The arguments have different roots: Kant's is based in fundamental assumptions about what philosophy is, while Schiller's is interwoven with his personal interpretation of cultural history. They result, however, in similar conclusions about the relationship of the intellectual elite to the public, and both are firmly opposed to Garve's view.

## Conclusion (chapter 2)

Schiller's unsuccessful attempt to entice Garve into contributing to *Die Horen* thus becomes a window upon a conflict between two very different views of the author's vocation, guided by contrasting assumptions. At several points, Garve's arguments about authorship reflect assumptions which he could have lifted from the rhetorical tradition, and from the intellectual tradition of humanism more generally. The author is a public servant, engaged in the shared human vocation of contributing to society. His role as a member of the intellectual 'governing class' is circumscribed by the awareness that his public share in his faculty of reason. Their conclusions must be their own: he is not to impose his views upon them but to facilitate their perception of truth. Schiller's arguments on these questions are rooted in his concept of cultural history, and logically constitute a rejection of Garve's underlying convictions. The poet's role is cast against a picture of cultural depravity. His significance lies precisely in the fact that he is not a public servant, nor anything of the sort: he represents an alternative to attempts to improve a failed state by means of reform or revolution. As for the public, they are depraved too, and he is to bring to them a view of beauty which they could not perceive for themselves – and which they are likely to reject on first acquaintance.

The episode thus becomes part of a fundamental clash between a view of the intellectual's role sustained by the assumptions of rhetoric and humanist philosophy, and a view which rejects these assumptions. It recalls the conflict between the views of Cicero and Plato, as indicated in the thesis introduction. Garve stands for a view of

the intellectual as being within the city, involved in public life and linked with the minds of his fellow citizens. Schiller's intellectual is present within the city, as that is where his vocation lies, but like Plato's philosopher, his mind is elsewhere – not because he is disinterested in public life, but because that public life is in many respects deeply flawed. The poet is not involved in its institutions, and stands in criticism of its values.

### Chapter 3

#### 'Ich appellire [...] an Ihre eigene Kenntniß der Kunst der Wohlredenheit und der

#### Poesie'<sup>326</sup>: Garve, Schiller, Manso, and Goethe

Wohl begreif ich es nun, wie Staatsparteyen sich morden,  
Da die Partey'n des Parnaß tödtliche Feindschaft entflammt.<sup>327</sup>

The above couplet was written by Christian Garve, as a comment on the literary feud surrounding Goethe and Schiller's *Xenien*. Garve, like many of his contemporaries, regarded the *Xenien* as symptomatic of tendencies of fragmentation in German culture, and modern research typically agrees:

Daß Schiller und Goethe die Diskussion um die „Horen“ in die „Xenien“, in die satirische Generalabrechnung mit dem zeitgenössischen Literaturbetrieb verwiesen, ohne ihr dort angemessenen Raum zu geben, trug dazu bei, die Gräben zwischen die Fronten noch mehr zu vertiefen und Verbindungspfade ganz zu verschütten.<sup>328</sup>

Der Xenienstreit [signalisiert] eine Krise der literarischen Öffentlichkeit, deren Gegensätze jetzt sichtbar aufbrechen.<sup>329</sup>

In this respect, the *Xenien* represented a decisive step away from Schiller's stated programme for his *Horen* journal, only a few years previously: 'die politisch geteilte Welt unter der Fahne der Wahrheit und Schönheit wieder zu vereinigen.'<sup>330</sup> He had presented that journal as an oasis of peace: 'Mitten in diesem politischen Tumult soll [diese Zeitschrift] für Musen und Charitinnen einen engen vertraulichen Zirkel

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<sup>326</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 137.

<sup>327</sup> Goethe, FA 1, p. 1164

<sup>328</sup> Regine Otto, 'Die Auseinandersetzung um Schillers "Horen"', in Hans-Dietrich Dahnke and Bernd Leistner (eds), *Debatten und Kontroversen*, 2 vols (Berlin; Weimar: Aufbau-Verlag, 1989), vol. 1, p. 440.

<sup>329</sup> Klaus Berghahn, 'Von der klassizistischen zur klassischen Literaturkritik', in Peter Uwe Hohendahl (ed.), *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturkritik* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1985), p. 72.

<sup>330</sup> FA 8, pp. 1001-1002.

schließen, aus welchem alles verbannt sein wird, was mit einem unreinen Parteigeist gestempelt ist.<sup>331</sup> Such pronouncements were a far cry from the 'Polarisierung' of the *Xenien*.<sup>332</sup>

For Goethe and Schiller, in particular, the *Xenien* were a key juncture in their decision to pursue an independent intellectual pathway. The *Horen* enterprise had been an attempt to unify German writers in a 'literarische Assoziation', and in this it signally failed.<sup>333</sup> Events appear to have dashed Goethe and Schiller's hopes that their aesthetic programme might gain the support of contemporaries. Writing to Schiller after both *Die Horen* and the *Xenien*, Goethe strikes a decisive pose: 'Auf alle Fälle sind wir genöthigt unser Jahrhundert zu vergessen wenn wir nach unsrer Ueberzeugung arbeiten wollen.'<sup>334</sup>

The sense of irreconcilable divergence which emerged from the events is particularly vivid in the case of Schiller's relationship with Christian Garve. When seeking to engage Garve for *Die Horen*, Schiller exhorted the older man to view him as 'einen alten Gefährten auf dem Wege zur Wahrheit.'<sup>335</sup> Three years later, however, Garve wrote to Schiller in dismay at the treatment of his friend, Johann Kaspar Friedrich Manso, in the *Xenien*; Manso had aroused Goethe and Schiller's ire through a highly critical review of *Die Horen*. Garve apparently assumed that Schiller would grasp the

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<sup>331</sup> FA 8, p. 1002.

<sup>332</sup> Friedrich Sengle, 'Die "Xenien" Goethes und Schillers als Dokument eines Generationskampfes', in Wilfried Barner, Eberhard Lämmert, and Norbert Oellers (eds), *Unser Commercium. Goethes und Schillers Literaturpolitik* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1984), p. 58.

<sup>333</sup> See FA 8, p. 999.

<sup>334</sup> Goethe to Schiller, 25.11.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 179.

<sup>335</sup> Schiller to Garve, 1.10.1794, in SNA 27, p. 56.

sense of his complaint, but he received the brief response that there was little point in seeking common ground between two people of such contrasting 'moralische Empfindung'.<sup>336</sup>

The developments from Garve's first exchange of letters with Schiller to the last, including both Manso's review and the *Xenien*, give this chapter its structure. The chapter has more of a narrative dimension than its predecessors: this is not primarily a portrayal of contrasting positions based on a synthesis of writers' statements, but an attempt to chart a series of events with their own historical logic. Also unlike previous exchanges, the conflict here is overt and explicit, and was experienced as such by participants (hence Schiller's famous reference to 'Zeiten der Fehde'); but if the *Xenienstreit* had many different backgrounds, the specific clash between Garve and Schiller is yet another battle in the long war over the intellectual values of humanism and rhetoric. As the rift opens up between the two sides (Garve and Manso on the one hand, and Goethe and Schiller on the other), the points of divergence have repeatedly to do with the stylistic ideal elaborated in the rhetorical tradition. While Garve and Manso argue on the basis of this ideal, Goethe and Schiller reject their arguments and the assumptions on which they are based. Garve chides Schiller for not upholding the rhetorical virtue of appropriateness, while Manso launches a polemical assault on the *Ästhetische Briefe* for their mingling of distinctive styles and their unnecessarily florid language. Garve later defends the validity of these criticisms to Schiller, assuming that Schiller will recognize the

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<sup>336</sup> Schiller to Garve, 6.11.1797, in SNA 29, p. 155.

authority of the rhetorical tradition; the titular quotation is from Garve's letter on this occasion. Goethe, however, brushes Garve's protests aside as symptomatic of a failed way of thinking.

The matters at stake initially appear narrower than in previous chapters: this is not, on the surface, a conflict between two views of how the intellectual should relate to the public, but a series of skirmishes over quite specific stylistic principles. Yet they ultimately relate back to the same issue. Among other things, the whole *Horen* episode has been interpreted as a break, not only with Goethe and Schiller's fellow intellectuals, but also with the reading public.

Goethe was probably not surprised by the fate of *The Horae*. [...] He sensed that the future of German literature lay with the new generation inspired by the new philosophy, who, whether they admitted it or not, could not rely on a mass public to share their concerns.<sup>337</sup>

The question of whether Schiller and Goethe might write so as to be understood by a broad general public is central to the exchange covered here. As it did with Kant, clarity plays a crucial role in the arguments exchanged, and just as it did there, clarity means accessibility. Garve objects to Schiller that the style of *Die Horen* is inappropriate for a journal meant (in Schiller's words) to make philosophical truths popular.<sup>338</sup> The journal thus fails to achieve the aim outlined in Schiller's *Ankündigung*: 'So weit es tunlich ist, wird man die Resultate der Wissenschaft von ihrer scholastischen Form zu befreien und in einer reizenden, wenigstens einfachen,

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<sup>337</sup> Nicholas Boyle, *German Literature: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 64.

<sup>338</sup> See Schiller to Garve, 25.1.1795, in SNA 27, p. 126.

Hülle dem Gemeinsinn verständlich zu machen suchen.’<sup>339</sup> Garve accuses Schiller of neglecting the humanist thinker’s responsibility to share his work with wider society.

The events here also demonstrate the complex character of the process which the thesis, as a whole, seeks to illuminate: namely the eliding of the humanist model of intellectual life – based on rhetoric and Ciceronian philosophy – from German philosophy and literature. This model and its representatives could survive as a ghostly presence in the work of those who rejected it. Schiller and Goethe are an inviting example. Though Schiller ultimately left behind Garve’s way of thinking, this did not prevent him from engaging with Garve’s work. To all appearances, Garve’s essays continued to provide him with a fruitful stimulus to reflection.<sup>340</sup> More significantly, the episode illustrates the distinct ways in which different writers could interact with the rhetorical tradition. Garve and Manso consistently treat the tradition as furnishing normative principles, based on a particular understanding of human nature and the ethical claims which flow from that understanding. Goethe and Schiller reject this position, but rhetoric continued to play an important role in their thinking. Many of the most important attacks against Manso in the *Xenien* derive their force from rhetorical concepts. This should not surprise: rhetoric was a central element in the pedagogical culture in which Goethe and Schiller (as much as Garve or Manso) were raised. It does serve, however, to illustrate that rejecting one understanding of rhetoric – as a normative ideal – left ample space for another

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<sup>339</sup> FA 8, p. 1002.

<sup>340</sup> See below, pp. 160-161.

understanding. The tradition's rich source of concepts could still be plundered by those who challenged its philosophical foundations.

## The problem of propriety: Garve and Schiller

Garve and Schiller first discussed Schiller's *Horen* project in a series of letters between June 1794 and January 1795. These letters contain several affirmations of intellectual common ground, but an important point of difference arises when Garve objects to Schiller on the grounds of the rhetorical virtue of clarity. On this occasion, both writers accept the need for clarity, but Garve argues that it is best achieved by following common language use; Schiller disagrees.

From Schiller's side, at least, it is not surprising that he should have looked to Garve as a likely intellectual fellow. He was certainly familiar with Garve's work, and a range of evidence indicates that it remained a lifelong influence on his own thought. He encountered Garve's translation of and commentary on Adam Ferguson's *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* at the *Karlsschule*.<sup>341</sup> His teacher, Jakob Friedrich Abel, covered the text in detail in the school year 1776.<sup>342</sup> Schiller quotes Garve's commentary in his medical dissertation, *Versuch über den Zusammenhang der thierischen Natur des Menschen mit seiner geistigen* (1780).<sup>343</sup> Caroline von Wolzogen's biography claims that the young Schiller was much impressed by Garve:

Philosophische Schriften zogen [Schiller] sehr an, Mendelssohn, Sulzer, Lessing, Herder, vorzüglich Garve, sein damaliger Liebling unter den Philosophen, dessen Anmerkungen zu Fergusons Moralphilosophie er beinahe auswendig wußte.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> See Richard Weltrich, *Friedrich Schiller. Geschichte seines Lebens und Charakteristik seiner Werke* (Stuttgart: 1885-1899), vol. 1, p. 839.

<sup>342</sup> See Alt, *Schiller* 1, p. 181.

<sup>343</sup> See SNA 20, p. 51; see also Alt, *Schiller* 2, pp. 119-120, 181-182.

<sup>344</sup> Caroline von Wolzogen, *Schillers Leben* (Stuttgart and Tübingen: Cotta, 1851), p. 13.

Peter-André Alt suggests that this interest continued beyond youthful enthusiasm; several of Schiller's later works engaged in depth with ideas he had first encountered in Garve.<sup>345</sup> Alt links Garve's essay on ancient and modern poets ('Betrachtung einiger Verschiedenheiten in den Werken der ältesten und neuern Schriftsteller, besonders der Dichter') with both the preface of *Die Räuber* and the later 'Ueber naive und sentimentalische Dichtung'.<sup>346</sup> He also argues that aspects of Schiller's argument in the *Ästhetische Briefe* should be traced to his reading of Garve's Ferguson translation.<sup>347</sup>

It seems that Schiller included something on his reading of Garve's work in his first letter (now lost), where he raised the possibility of Garve contributing to *Die Horen*.<sup>348</sup> Garve's reply, written in June 1794, suggests gratification at Schiller's request:

Von einem Manne, den ich selbst so sehr schätze, und von dessen Geistesproducten ich so oft bin vergnügt und belehrt worden, die Versicherung zu erhalten, daß auch meine Schriften auf ihn Eindruck gemacht haben, und selbst, wenn er mir nicht schmeichelt, ihm nützlich gewesen sind: das gehört unter die angenehmsten Belohnungen, die einen Schriftsteller, für die mit seiner Arbeit verbundene Anstrengung und Beschwerde, schadlos halten können. Es könnte mir auch, bey dem allgemeinen Beyfalle, den alles, was aus Ihrer Feder kömmt, erhält, und mit dem mein eignes Urtheil

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<sup>345</sup> The relationships Alt perceives between some of Schiller's works and earlier texts by Garve have parallels in an early article by Daniel Jacoby. See Jacoby, 'Schiller und Garve. Eine Untersuchung', in *Archiv für Litteraturgeschichte* 7 (1878), pp. 95-145.

<sup>346</sup> See Alt, *Schiller* 2, pp. 213-214: 'Es ist offenkundig, daß Schiller in den Spuren Garves wandelt, wenn er die Beziehung zwischen Antike und Moderne über den Gegensatz [der] auseinanderstrebenden Formen der Naturwahrnehmung bestimmt.' See also Alt, *Schiller* 1, pp. 377 and 516.

<sup>347</sup> See Alt, *Schiller* 1, p. 120: 'Im Grundsatz beschreiben [Garves entwicklungsphilosophische Überlegungen zu Fergusons Morallehre] ein Modell, von dem 15 Jahre später auch die Briefe *Ueber die ästhetische Erziehung* ausgehen (um es dann jedoch punktuell abzuändern): humane Zivilisation wird hier begriffen als Produkt einer Sublimierungsgeschichte, deren Logik sich in den Stationen der individuellen Reifung vom Stadium der Kindheit zum Status des Erwachsenen wiederspiegelt.'

<sup>348</sup> See the note on Garve's letter in SNA 35, p. 432.

übereinstimmt, nichts ehrenvoller seyn, als mich mit Ihnen, und einer Gesellschaft, die Sie gewählt haben zu einer gemeinschaftlichen Arbeit zu vereinigen.<sup>349</sup>

Garve frames the relationship between himself and Schiller as one of stimulating intellectual exchange. He stresses his high regard for Schiller's person and for his intellectual production. Schiller's works fulfil Horace's classic twofold requirement of simultaneously instructing (*belehren*) and pleasing (*vergnügen*) the reader. It is satisfying to learn that this experience has been mutual. Given this, Garve claims that he would be honoured to join in the 'gemeinschaftliche Arbeit' of *Die Horen*.<sup>350</sup>

Schiller's second letter came in October. He greeted Garve's initial reply with (misguided) optimism:

Die freundschaftlichen Gesinnungen, die in Ihrem Briefe athmen, und die wahre Sprache des Herzens, die in demselben nicht zu verkennen ist, haben mich höchlich erfreut [...] Ja, mein vortreflicher Freund, laßen sie uns einander von nun an nicht aus den Augen verlieren, und betrachten Sie mich als einen alten Gefährten auf dem Wege zur Wahrheit, auf dem man nicht genug Gesellschaft finden kann, und doch oft so vergeblich sucht.<sup>351</sup>

Schiller praises Garve as both a genuine friend and an intellectual fellow traveller. They are two old comrades on the way to truth. The impression given is that Schiller really does believe that he and Garve have something important in common, not merely a superficial convergence of views: he notes that it is difficult to find true intellectual companionship.

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<sup>349</sup> Garve to Schiller, 28.6.1794, in SNA 35, p. 23.

<sup>350</sup> The claim is somewhat disingenuous. Garve did not, in the event, join in the enterprise, and his reply to Schiller suggests that he had little genuine intent of ever doing so ('Ich [sehe] keine Möglichkeit Ihnen, in diesem Winter, etwas zu Ihrem neuen Journale zu liefern'). See the introduction to chapter 2, pp. 95-99.

<sup>351</sup> Schiller to Garve, 1.10.1794, in SNA 27, p. 56.

This theme of intellectual companionship is sustained throughout the letter. Schiller goes on to praise Garve's *Versuche*, a series of essays published in five volumes in the last decade of his life (the final volume posthumously). In particular, Schiller highlights the essay in volume one, 'Ueber die Maxime Rochefaucaults [*sic*]: das bürgerliche Air verliehrt sich zuweilen bey der Armee, niemahls am Hofe'.<sup>352</sup> In this essay, Garve takes up one of the *Maximes* of François de La Rochefoucauld: 'l'air bourgeois se perd quelquefois à l'armée, mais il ne se perd jamais à la cour.'<sup>353</sup> The essay uses the maxim as a spur to reflection on social formations, not only in seventeenth-century France but also in Garve's Germany. In it, Garve considers the distinctions between the nobility and the middle classes. He analyses these and suggests explanations; for example, that the nobility are more refined because they have the time and leisure to cultivate expertise in the art of social interaction.<sup>354</sup> He also looks forward to a day when such distinctions will be unimportant, because good taste will be based on reason and accessible to all strata of society.<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>352</sup> The essay is now in GW 1.1, pp. 295-452.

<sup>353</sup> François, duc de La Rochefoucauld, *Maximes*, ed. Jean Lafond (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1998), maxim 393, p. 127.

<sup>354</sup> See GW 1.1, pp. 312-316: 'Der Umgang ist eine Kunst, und wird, wie alle Künste, nur durch Uebung zur Vollkommenheit gebracht. [...] So muß in einer Gesellschaft von Menschen, wo der Umgang sehr verfeinert werden soll, sehr viel Umgang seyn; der Mensch, welcher ein guter Gesellschafter werden will, muß viel Zeit in Gesellschaft zubringen. [...] Nun gehört aber zum Genusse des Umganges Muße; und Muße setzt Befreyung von Nahrungssorgen voraus. Also kann häufiger Umgang nur unter den Wohlhabenden einer Nation seyn. Die größte Wohlhabenheit aber findet sich immer in der höchsten Classe: wenigstens findet sich dort die größte Muße.'

<sup>355</sup> See GW 1.1, pp. 446-447: 'Man kann hoffen, daß durch einen fernern Fortgang des Lichts, auch eine fortgesetzte Uebung des geselligen Umgangs in den höhern Classen, die Lebensart, welche man als die vornehme ansieht, immer mehr von den Fesseln willkührlicher Regeln befreyet, dem wesentlichen Wohlstande der menschlichen Natur, welcher in dem besten Ausdrücke ihrer Vollkommenheiten und in der besten Erfüllung der geselligen Pflichten liegt, noch näher gebracht werden wird. Dann wird es jedem Menschen, in welchem Stande er auch gebohren sey, wenn ihn seine Lage nur nicht verhindert, seinen Verstand aufzuklären, und sein Herz zu veredeln, mehr noch als jetzt möglich seyn, jene Lebensart durch sich selbst zu lernen, und vermittelst seines Nachdenkens und seiner moralischen Uebungen, den gesellschaftlichen Ton sich eigen zu machen, der auch in den höchsten Kreisen für den guten erkannt werden muß.'

Schiller indicates that this essay has proved particularly valuable to him, because he is currently working on something with a similar theme:

Ich habe nemlich den Versuch gemacht, in einem Aufsatz über den *aesthetischen* Umgang den Grundsatz der Schönheit auf die Gesellschaft anzuwenden, und den Umgang als ein Objekt der schönen Kunst zu betrachten. Da ich auf diesem Wege natürlicherweise darauf geführt werde, den sogenannten guten Ton, wie ihn Zeiten und Verhältnisse eingeführt haben, nach objektiven Principien des Geschmacks zu beurtheilen, so komme ich Ihnen sehr nahe, obgleich unsre beiden Felder nicht ineinander laufen. Aber es freute mich unendlich, zu sehen, daß meine Ideen über diese zarten und delikaten Phänomene, den Ihrigen begegnen, und daß wir in den Hauptpunkten sicher einverstanden sind.<sup>356</sup>

Schiller refers to an essay where he attempts to treat social interaction under the heading of beauty, as an artistic object.<sup>357</sup> He argues that in their respective texts, he and Garve are engaged in the same area of enquiry. Although their concerns do not overlap, they certainly intersect. Schiller also paints their positions as being in substantial agreement. This is striking: the phenomena of social life are highly delicate, making it unlikely that two different writers will come to similar conclusions about them. That Schiller perceives himself and Garve to have achieved this gives him cause to rejoice.

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<sup>356</sup> Schiller to Garve, 1.10.1794, in SNA 27, p. 56.

<sup>357</sup> Which text of Schiller's this might be is not clear from the letter. No surviving text bore the title 'Über den ästhetischen Umgang'. If this is a working title for a text eventually published under another name, the text in question is still not clear. Günter Schulz's note in the *National-Ausgabe* proposes 'Über den moralischen Nutzen ästhetischer Sitten' (see SNA 27, p. 288). In the commentary to the Frankfurt edition, however, Georg Kurscheidt points out that Garve's essay on La Rochefoucauld is explicitly mentioned in Schiller's text, 'Über die notwendigen Grenzen beim Gebrauch schöner Formen' (see FA 8, p. 695). Both of these texts appeared in *Die Horen*, in 1796 and 1795 respectively, so either would be a plausible candidate for a mention in a letter in October of 1794.

Garve's reply is dated to two weeks after Schiller's letter. The tone with which it begins recalls Schiller's enthusiasm, and Garve affirms his regard for Schiller's intellectual achievements:

Ich beantworte Ihren Brief so schleunig als ich kann, um Ihnen zu zeigen, wie lieb er mir gewesen ist.  
Ich freue mich sehr auf Ihre Abhandlung über den Umgang. Eine scharfsinnige Theorie, mit feinen Beobachtungen, und einer glücklichen, oft poetischen Darstellung, pflegt in Ihren philosophischen Aufsätzen verbunden zu sein.<sup>358</sup>

Garve has hurried to reply to the letter, because he was so pleased to receive it. He looks forward to reading the essay mentioned in Schiller's letter; he has derived much profit from Schiller's previous work.

However, Garve balances his praise with a reservation about the project Schiller has outlined.

Bey einer Materie, die ganz fürs größere Publicum gemacht ist, wünschte ich daß Sie sich derjenigen Ausdrücke [...] enthielten, die nur dem schulgerechten Philosophen bekannt sind. Selbst der Titel, von dem *aesthetischen Umgange*, ist gewiß einer Menge Menschen dunkel, denen doch Ihre Abhandlung sehr wichtig und sehr lehrreich seyn kann.<sup>359</sup>

Schiller is guilty of using the terminology of academic philosophy in an essay which purports to be aimed at the general public. This generates obscurity (*dunkel*) in his work. Since it demands some familiarity with technical vocabulary, he cannot reasonably expect that it will be accessible to a broad readership.

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<sup>358</sup> Garve to Schiller, 17.10.1794, in SNA 35, p. 72.

<sup>359</sup> Garve to Schiller, 17.10.1794, in SNA 35, p. 72.

*Dunkel* locates Garve's argument in the realm of the rhetorical discussion of style: obscurity is the opposite of clarity, a central stylistic virtue in the rhetorical tradition. Garve develops his objection further with reference to the specific quality of propriety, the guarantee of clarity. Not only does Schiller use technical terminology in a supposedly popular text; he also uses a key term, *aesthetisch*, with connotations foreign to its normal sense.

Ich weiß auch nicht, ob dieses Epithet [sc. *aesthetisch*], welches in neuen Zeiten den schönen Künsten gewidmet worden ist, ganz schicklich auf den Umgang angewandt werden kann, der doch im eigentlichen Verstande kein Kunstwerk sondern nur eine natürliche Handlung ist, die der Mensch nach und nach, wie alles, was um und an ihm ist, vervollkommnet hat. – Ich hoffe, und wünsche es, daß wir uns auf diesem Wege von neuem begegnen werden.<sup>360</sup>

*Aesthetisch* properly belongs to the lexical field of fine art, but Schiller applies it to the quite different field of social interaction.<sup>361</sup> Garve responds that this is not appropriate. Social interaction is not an 'art' in the sense of fine art, but rather an inherent disposition of human nature.<sup>362</sup> Again, the term used in Garve's criticism is a rhetorical one: *Schicklichkeit* was one of the possible German translations for the Latin *proprietas*.

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<sup>360</sup> Garve to Schiller, 17.10.1794, in SNA 35, pp. 72-73.

<sup>361</sup> Sulzer defines the adjective as follows: 'Die Eigenschaft einer Sache, wodurch sie ein Gegenstand des Gefühls, und also geschickt wird, in den Werken der schönen Künste gebraucht zu werden. Die Ausdrücke: ein ästhetischer Gedanken, ein ästhetisches Bild u. d. gl. bezeichnen solche Gedanken und Bilder, die bequem sind, in einem Werk des Geschmacks Platz zu finden. Die Ausdrücke: poetisch, mahlerisch, rednerisch und dergleichen, bezeichnen so viel besondere Arten des Aesthetischen.' Art., 'aesthetisch', in Johann Georg Sulzer, *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*, 2 vols (Leipzig: 1771 and 1774), vol. 1. Available online at <http://www.zeno.org/Sulzer-1771/A/Aesthetisch?hl=aesthetisch>. Article retrieved 12.2.2018.

<sup>362</sup> Garve does refer to social intercourse as an 'art' ('Kunst') in the La Rochefoucauld essay, but there, 'Kunst' has the sense of a craft with skills which can be learned and practised. See GW 1.1, p. 312: 'Der Umgang ist eine Kunst, und wird, wie alle Künste, nur durch Uebung zur Vollkommenheit gebracht.'

Garve understands this local point to have wider consequences for the relationship between his and Schiller's thought. Contrary to Schiller's previous strong affirmations of common ground, Garve implies that the problem he has raised signals some intellectual divergence. In the sentence following the above passage, he alludes to Schiller's previous letter and its claim that the two men are companions on the road to truth. Garve takes up the imagery of travel to express the hope that the two will 'meet' again: 'Ich hoffe, und wünsche es, daß wir uns auf diesem Wege von neuem begegnen werden.'<sup>363</sup> However, this assumes that their paths have parted, at least for the time being.

As noted above, Garve's objection is made against the background of the rhetorical model of good style. Obscurity, clarity, and appropriateness are key points of reference for rhetorical reflection on the subject. The first chapter of this thesis indicated how Garve's disagreement with Kant turned upon the question of clarity and related assumptions, and the notion rears its head again here. Quintilian defines clarity as follows:

Let us then take, as the primary virtue, Lucidity, 'proper' words, straightforward order, no long-delayed conclusion, nothing missing and nothing too much. This will lead to language acceptable to the learned and plain to the unlearned.<sup>364</sup>

Clarity is the defining characteristic of Quintilian's stylistic ideal; in practice, what this means is that good style will be accessible to an unlearned audience while also satisfying a learned one.

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<sup>363</sup> Garve to Schiller, 17.10.1794, in SNA 27, p. 73.

<sup>364</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* VIII.ii.22, in vol. 3, p. 339.

A key component in clarity is “proper” words’, that is to say, the narrower virtue of propriety or appropriateness. Quintilian’s definition of propriety comes several paragraphs earlier:

The most important characteristic of Lucidity in words is Propriety. But Propriety itself can be understood in more than one way. Its first sense is that of calling everything by its right name.<sup>365</sup>

Quintilian explains propriety as using words in the right relationship to their referents. In a good and clear style, all terms which appear will be used with their broadly accepted sense – the sense which most language users might reasonably expect them to bear. This is the charge that Garve brings against Schiller’s use of *aesthetisch*: it is not normally used in the way that Schiller means to use it.

The rule is quite general, and Quintilian observes that there are several exceptions to it. Metaphor is one, and it is not a virtue, for example, to call something by its proper name, if to do so would entail using obscene language.<sup>366</sup> His intention becomes more precise when he turns to warn against obscurity:

Obscurity results from words no longer in common use: suppose, for example, a man were to hunt through the records of the *pontifices*, ancient treatises, and obsolete authors, deliberately looking for unintelligibility in the extracts he makes from them. Some seek a reputation for erudition from this; they want to be thought to be the only people who know certain things. Words more familiar in certain districts or peculiar to certain professions are also misleading.<sup>367</sup>

The counterpoint of clarity and propriety, Quintilian claims, is the use of terminology which an audience might find obscure. Characteristically, Quintilian’s point of reference is common usage across the entirety of a linguistic community. Language

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<sup>365</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* VIII.ii.1, in vol. 3, p. 327.

<sup>366</sup> See Quintilian, *Institutio* VIII.ii.1-6, in vol. 3, pp. 327-329.

<sup>367</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* VIII.ii.12-13, vol. 3, p. 333.

which departs from this, whether obsolete expressions, idiosyncratic local usages or specialized technical terminology, is to be avoided.

A good style, on Quintilian's model, is above all clear; one of the implications of this is that it follows common linguistic usage. This latter point has particular relevance to Garve and Schiller's initial exchange, for Schiller goes on to challenge it. He responded to Garve's objections in a letter which came the following January, accompanied by the first volume of *Die Horen*:

In Ihrem letzten Briefe, für den ich Ihnen herzlich danke, machten Sie gegen den Gebrauch des Wortes: *aesthetisch* einige Einwendungen. Auch ich liebe es nicht, dem nichtgelehrten Leser das Verständniß einer Schrift, welche philosophische Wahrheiten popular machen soll, durch Einmischung von Kunstwörtern zu erschweren. Wenn aber der Zusammenhang der Sätze diese Kunstwörter erklärt, ja, wenn man denselben ihre Erklärung ausführlich beyfügt, wie ich in solchen Fällen immer beobachte, so halte ich es für einen Gewinn, solche Worte allmählig mehr in Umlauf zu bringen, weil dadurch die Bestimmtheit im Denken nothwendig befördert werden muß.<sup>368</sup>

Schiller grants that Garve does have a point. In principle, accessibility to a broad audience, learned and unlearned, is certainly desirable. The term *aesthetisch* could conceivably be difficult for certain readers, and this ought to be avoided if possible, since the text is meant to make philosophy *popular*. However, he responds by claiming that in context, *aesthetisch* and related terms should not cause the reader undue difficulty.<sup>369</sup> However, the following remark constitutes a subtle but significant challenge to the model of good style behind Garve's argument. Bringing philosophical vocabulary into public usage is in fact beneficial: far from causing

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<sup>368</sup> Schiller to Garve, 25.1.1795, in SNA 27, p. 126.

<sup>369</sup> In the remainder of the letter, Schiller goes on to explain and defend his usage of the term *aesthetisch*; see Schiller to Garve, 25.1.1795, in SNA 27, p. 126.

unnecessary obscurity, it actually promotes definition of thought. Even as he nods to the rhetorical value of clarity, Schiller implicitly rejects one of its basic assumptions. He acknowledges his intent to bring terminology into circulation (*Umlauf*) which is not already there, or (perhaps) to assign unfamiliar connotations to more established concepts. Unlike Quintilian and Garve, he does not accept common usage as a guideline, but rather seeks to adjust it.

In the context of what followed, this initial exchange has something of the character of a phoney war. It is conducted with evident mutual high regard. Even in this final letter, Schiller comments that he would welcome Garve's judgement on the *Ästhetische Briefe*: 'Ich würde mich sehr freuen, wenn das politische Glaubensbekenntniß, daß ich in dieser ersten Lieferung meiner Briefe, ablege, auf irgend eine Art mit dem Ihrigen übereinstimmte.'<sup>370</sup> However, it also offers an initial indication that, in spite of proclamations to the contrary, Schiller's thinking was already moving in a direction very different from Garve's. *Aesthetisch* is a central concept in his philosophical project, and he uses it in a way which is quite foreign to rhetorical prescriptions on good style. His affirmation of the virtue of clarity cannot conceal the fact that, while Garve understands that virtue much as Quintilian understood it, Schiller does not. In the course of subsequent events, this note of discord would develop into an outright conflict.

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<sup>370</sup> Schiller to Garve, 25.1.1795, in SNA 27, p. 125.

### 'Dunkel, geschraubt, und kostbar': Manso on *Die Horen*

A crucial development in the story of divergence between Garve and Schiller came from the pen of another writer: Johann Kaspar Friedrich Manso's review of *Die Horen*, a significant document in the journal's early reception.<sup>371</sup> Manso was a scholar, poet, and translator from Breslau, and also a friend and protégé of Garve's.<sup>372</sup> At the time when he wrote the review, he enjoyed a burgeoning reputation. He had, since 1790, been the *Direktor* of the *Magdalenäum* school in Breslau; in this role, he appears to have been a popular figure with both pupils and the scholarly community, his lectures well attended.<sup>373</sup> He had also gained a measure of wider recognition through translations of classical and modern authors, including Virgil and Tasso, and through a *Lehrgedicht*, 'Die Kunst zu lieben', modelled on both Wieland and Ovid.

In its intellectual background, the review reflects criticisms of *Die Horen* from both Manso and Garve in private correspondence. Both men's comments draw upon the rhetorical virtue of clarity. Garve gently chided Schiller after a first reading of the magazine:

Wenn ich in den Briefen über die aesthetische Erziehung und in einigen Aufsätzen von Humboldt mehr Schwierigkeit, und einen höhern Grad von Abstraction gefunden habe, als ich geglaubt hätte,

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<sup>371</sup> For a comprehensive anthology of source material relating to the contemporary reception of *Die Horen*, see Oscar Fambach (ed.), *Ein Jahrhundert deutscher Literaturkritik (1750-1850)*, 6 vols (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957), vol. 2: *Schiller und sein Kreis in der Kritik ihrer Zeit*. Regine Otto provides a narrative survey in Otto, 'Horen', pp. 385-450.

<sup>372</sup> For biographical background on Manso, see Carl Heinrich Jördens, *Lexikon deutscher Dichter und Prosaisten*, 6 vols (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1806-1811), vol. 6, pp. 799-819; art., 'Manso, Johann Kaspar Friedrich', Colmar Grünhagen, in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 20 (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1884), pp. 246-248.

<sup>373</sup> See Grünhagen, 'Manso', p. 246.

daß die Natur des Gegenstandes erfordert, oder die Absicht einer populären Schrift erlaubte, wenn mir im *Reiche der Schatten* manches gänzlich unverständlich geblieben ist: so kann dieß auch von der jetzigen Schwäche meines Kopfes herkommen.<sup>374</sup>

Various texts in the journal exhibit a high level of abstraction and make for difficult reading. Garve suggests that this is not particularly necessary, and conflicts with the journal's stated purpose of making philosophy accessible to a general audience. However, Garve underplays the criticism. His struggles may be due primarily to his own poor health, and the conditional clause ('als ich geglaubt hätte') gives the impression of modest reticence, relativizing Garve's judgement.

In a letter to Karl August Böttiger, written around the time *Die Horen* first appeared on the market, Manso criticizes the journal on similar grounds:

Wie denkt man in ihrer Gegend über Schillers Horen? Trotz der lobpreisenden Anzeige in der Literatur-Zeitung will hier doch niemand an ihre Vortrefflichkeit glauben. Die ästhetischen Briefe hatten bereits drei Wochen in der Journal-Gesellschaft cursirt, bis ich mich endlich ihrer erbarmte und sie aufschnitt. Alle Welt findet Schillers Stil dunkel, geschraubt und kostbar und wundert sich, wie man so etwas anstaunen kann.<sup>375</sup>

The *Ästhetische Briefe* had lain unread for three weeks in Breslau's *Lesegesellschaft*. No one had bothered to cut the pages in order to read beyond the first. Manso cites to Böttiger the chief objection against the text: Schiller's style is unnecessarily difficult and precious.<sup>376</sup> It is above all obscure (*dunkel*). Quintilian's understanding of clarity is, once more, the guiding norm.

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<sup>374</sup> Garve to Schiller, 18.4.1796, in SNA 36.i, p. 187.

<sup>375</sup> Manso to Böttiger, Spring (?) 1795, reprinted in Fambach 2, p. 168.

<sup>376</sup> 'Kostbar' here has the sense of 'unnatural', or 'affected'. See Fambach 2, p. 180. See also the reluctant inclusion of this sense in Adelung: 'Nach dem Muster des Franz. *precieux* haben einige neuere Schriftsteller [kostbar] von der gezwungenen Art gebraucht, mit welcher besonders Personen des andern Geschlechtes sich und ihren Reitzen in dem gesellschaftlichen Leben einen gewissen

Manso's review of *Die Horen* appeared anonymously in the *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste* in September of 1795, several months after the above letter. Its primary target was the *Ästhetische Briefe* (in a review of forty-seven pages, the *Briefe* occupy all but eight). Like the private verdicts of Manso and Garve, the review criticizes Schiller for his perceived transgression of rhetorical criteria of good style. On Manso's reading, Schiller fails to observe appropriate distinctions between styles, and displays an excess of ornamentation at the expense of intellectual content. However, while Manso's objections emerge from the same intellectual background as Garve's, they lack Garve's balance and politeness. The review moves the discussion into the realm of polemical attack.

Unlike Garve, Manso makes an explicit point of the rhetorical basis for his argument, in the context of criticizing Schiller for mingling distinctive styles. About halfway through the review, he observes that he has moved from discussing Schiller's main lines of thought to discussing his literary style. At this point, he quotes an extended passage (in Latin) from the famous discussion of style in book eleven of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*.

When we have acquired the capacity to write, to prepare a speech beforehand in the mind, and also, when necessary, to improvise (as explained in the last book), our next concern is to speak 'appropriately.' Cicero expounds this as the fourth virtue of Elocution; in my personal judgement it is the most essential. Oratorical Ornament is in fact varied and manifold, requiring different forms for different contexts; consequently, unless it is adapted both to circumstances and to persons, it will not only fail to lend distinction to

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Werth beyzulegen suchen, den sie doch nicht besitzen, wozu sich aber unser Deutsches Wort wegen seiner Vieldeutigkeit nicht füglich schicket.' Art. 'kostbar', in Adelung, available online at <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Kostbar?hl=kostbar>. Article retrieved 18.1.2018.

the oratory, but will ruin it and make the facts work against us. What is the use of words which are good Latin, meaningful, elegant, and even embellished with Figures and Rhythm, unless they accord with the views towards which we wish the judge to be guided and influenced?<sup>377</sup>

Quintilian discusses the rhetorical virtue of speaking appropriately (*dicamus apte*).

Appropriateness here means ensuring that all the stylistic devices in a speech are geared towards the purpose which the speech is intended to achieve. Quintilian argues that it is mistaken to equate the use of stylistic devices with 'good style'.

Although Quintilian does propose criteria for good style in the *Institutio*, it is ultimately determined on functional grounds. On any given occasion, the orator must apply his judgement in order to identify and deploy the stylistic devices best suited to his purpose.

Manso proceeds to attribute a general application to Quintilian's comments. They are relevant not only to oratory, but to any written composition: 'Was Quintilian hier dem Redner empfiehlt, empfiehlt er im Grunde jedem Schriftsteller, *qui lectorem duci formarique vult*.'<sup>378</sup> As the orator seeks to influence the judge, so the writer seeks to influence the reader. Manso thus explicitly identifies rhetoric as furnishing a conceptual framework for thinking about writing and reading.

An immediate consequence of Quintilian's doctrine is that there are texts and circumstances where the deployment of florid language is inappropriate. Manso commends French writers for observing this rule: 'Nie stellen sie das Kleine groß und

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<sup>377</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* XI.i.1-2, in vol. 5, p. 9. Manso's quotation is found in NB 55.2, p. 313.

<sup>378</sup> NB 55.2, pp. 313-314.

das Unbedeutende wichtig dar, nie drücken sie das Alltägliche geschmückt und das Gewöhnliche kostbar aus.<sup>379</sup> Their German neighbours have less to boast about:

Nichts ist [unsern Schriftstellern] anziehend, auszeichnend und hervorstechend, nichts stark, zierlich und bildlich genug. Daß es verschiedene Arten des Vortrags giebt, und daß jeder Styl seine eignen Gränzen und Schattirungen hat, wissen sie entweder nicht, oder scheinen es nicht wissen zu wollen. Man glaubt einen Philosophen zu lesen und liest einen Redner, man hat nach einem Geschichtsschreiber gegriffen und findet sich in der Gesellschaft eines Dichters.<sup>380</sup>

Manso indicts German writers generally as guilty of wanton use of ostentatious language. The underlying problem is a failure to observe proper distinctions between varieties of style. Manso argues that this failure is most apparent in philosophical writing and history. Texts meant to be expository in nature are laden with figures of speech which properly belong in poetry or in oratory. Manso continues here to signal the debt his argument owes to the rhetorical tradition. The passing reference to a 'Redner' locates his thinking in that tradition. More importantly, the notion of classifying different kinds of style is also a rhetorical one; Quintilian discusses it in book twelve of the *Institutio*.<sup>381</sup>

Schiller's historical essays are a particularly bad case in point for the phenomenon which Manso finds so bothersome. Manso's judgement is qualified ('Wir wollen [...] nicht [...] H[err] S[chillers] Verdienste um den bessern Vortrag der Geschichte

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<sup>379</sup> NB 55.2, p. 314.

<sup>380</sup> NB 55.2, p. 314.

<sup>381</sup> See Quintilian, *Institutio* XII.x.58, in vol. 5, p. 313: 'There is another division – also into three parts – by which distinctions can be made even between correct styles of speaking. One style is defined as plain (*ischnon*, the Greeks call it), a second as grand and robust (Greek *hadron*), and to these has been added a third, called by some "intermediate," and by others "flowery" (for the Greeks call it *anthēron*). The guiding principle, more or less, is that the first supplies the function of giving information, the second that of appealing to the passions, and the third, whatever name it is given, that of pleasing or, as others say, conciliating.'

verkleinern oder herabwürdigen'<sup>382</sup>), but it is ultimately emphatic. Schiller's taste is 'verderbt und verderbend'.<sup>383</sup> He is guilty of introducing into history and philosophy the kind of language which does not belong there, 'eine metaphysisch-ästhetische Sprache [...] die auf das Lob der Deutlichkeit so wenig, als auf das der Schönheit Anspruch zu machen hat'.<sup>384</sup> He fails in the basic rhetorical criterion of clarity, and this is not redeemed by poetic beauty.

Manso presses home his attack on Schiller. He bases a distinction between poetic and philosophical styles on two different kinds of intellectual procedure:

In der That kann man der Natur und dem Zwecke der Poesie [*sic*] nicht mehr entgegenhandeln, als wenn man dunkle und verworrene Begriffe, statt sie zu entwickeln und aufzuklären, in poetische Prosa hüllt oder in Metaphern kleidet, und sich der Pflichten des Philosophen durch die Uebertragung seines Amtes auf den Dichter zu entledigen denkt. Die Poesie kann bekannte und innerhalb den Gränzen der Erfahrung liegende Begriffe versinnlichen und durch ihre Bilder und Wendungen ihnen Würde, Anmuth und Neuheit verleihen. Aber metaphysische Erörterungen und Untersuchungen über die ersten Grundsätze erwarten und erhalten ihr Licht nicht von ihr, sondern gewinnen es durch einen deutlichen und bestimmten Vortrag in der gemeinen Sprache, durch Vermeidung unnöthiger Kunstwörter und durch die den abgezogenen Begriffen zur rechten Zeit und am rechten Orte angepaßten Erläuterungen und Beyspiele.<sup>385</sup>

Schiller, Manso claims, has been writing about philosophy in the kind of style which properly belongs to poetry – and this is a bad thing. The two enterprises are essentially different. Poetry deals with recognizable concepts; these may be abstract, but they do fall within the realm of experience. Poetic language uses imagery to

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<sup>382</sup> NB 55.2, p. 315.

<sup>383</sup> NB 55.2, pp. 316-317.

<sup>384</sup> NB 55.2, p. 317.

<sup>385</sup> NB 55.2, pp. 317-318. The context suggests that the first sentence of the passage should read 'Philosophie' rather than 'Poesie'; it is presumably the abuse of philosophy, rather than poetry, that Manso is criticizing.

make them both accessible and appealing to the senses. Poetry thus illustrates: it does not explain. This is the purpose of philosophy and dictates how the philosopher should write. Manso's concept of 'philosophical style' recalls the rhetorical model: it should be clear, sharply defined, and comprehensible, avoiding obscure technical terms, and promoting understanding through explanatory comment and examples. These definitions of poetry and philosophy are the foundation for Manso's claim. The *Ästhetische Briefe*, with their use of poetic expression to make claims about metaphysics, constitute a dereliction of the philosopher's duty. Their language serves to make their concepts more opaque rather than less.

Manso thus explicitly criticizes Schiller against the background of a set of assumptions drawn from the rhetorical tradition. As a contrary example, he praises Reinhold's *Briefe über die Kantische Philosophie* for their clarity ('Klarheit') and appropriateness ('Angemessenheit').<sup>386</sup> Reinhold fulfils the central rhetorical criteria of good style where Schiller does not.

Manso thus cites Quintilian's discussion of style as the background to one major criticism in his review. The rhetorical ideal also implicitly sustains another important criticism, namely that Schiller uses unduly difficult language to conceal a lack of intellectual substance. Book eight of the *Institutio* begins with the claim that elegance (*decorum*) is 'the finest thing in oratory, but only when it comes naturally,

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<sup>386</sup> See NB 55.2, p. 318: 'Mit welcher Behaglichkeit liest man diese Abhandlungen, deren schöne und sich immer gleiche Sprache das Bild eines ruhigen Geistes ist, der es weiß, daß der philosophische Vortrag durch nichts so reizend wird, als durch Klarheit, Angemessenheit und Eigenthümlichkeit des Ausdrucks.'

not when it is deliberately sought.<sup>387</sup> Quintilian warns against departures from plain speech in an effort to appear impressive:

The best words are the least farfetched, and resemble those simple words that spring from reality. Expressions which reveal the trouble they have cost, and strive to seem artificial and contrived, fail to achieve elegance and at the same time lose credibility – to say nothing of the fact that they cast a shadow over the sense and, as it were, choke the crop by their luxuriant growth. Our love of words makes us go round in circles to express what could be said directly, repeat what has been said already, load a thought with many words where one would make it clear, and often think it better to drop a hint than to speak out straight. [...] We borrow figures or metaphors from the most decadent of the poets, and take it that the unique sign of genius is needing a genius to understand us. And yet Cicero had laid down quite clearly that the greatest fault in public speaking was to distance oneself from ordinary language and our normal instinctive usage. But Cicero was a rude ignoramus; we have better ideas, we who look with distaste on anything that Nature dictates, we who seek not ornament but meretricious finery, and behave as though words could possess virtue without cohering with their subject!<sup>388</sup>

Good speech, in the rhetorical tradition, is not ostentatious. It seeks to communicate its sense in the simplest and clearest manner possible. It is of course part of the orator's responsibility to use figures of speech, but they must be used appropriately; any ornamentation which detracts from good communication ('meretricious finery') is to be shunned. Quintilian frames his ideal variously as 'simplicity', 'reality', 'credibility', 'directness', 'speaking straight', and 'nature', and references Cicero's *De oratore* as upholding it. The point of reference for this linguistic ideal is cast as 'ordinary language and our normal instinctive usage.' To depart from language accessible to all is to err.

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<sup>387</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* VIII.pr.18, in vol. 3, p. 317.

<sup>388</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* VIII.pr.23-26, in vol. 3, pp. 319-321.

This ideal of natural speech features repeatedly in Manso's criticism of Schiller. The review begins with a long summary of the content of the *Ästhetische Briefe*, followed by some initial comments on the political dimension of Schiller's argument.<sup>389</sup> Manso outlines what he takes to be Schiller's main point, then makes a first critical move:

Sehr wahre und richtige Gedanken, aber in der Form, in der sie erscheinen, sehr fremd und gesucht zugleich. Sollte in der That viel dadurch gewonnen seyn, daß Hr. Schiller einem so alltäglichen und so oft gesagten Satze diese gekünstelte Wendung und dieses abstrakte Ansehn gegeben hat? Bey dem ersten Anblick glaubt man freylich allerdings etwas nie Gesagtes zu lesen.<sup>390</sup>

Manso has no objection to bring against Schiller at the conceptual level. Already at this point, the criticism is made on stylistic grounds. Schiller is accused of taking ideas that are true, but banal, and making them appear exotic. He does this through use of linguistic artifice and a highly abstract register. What the *Briefe* present is no great intellectual innovation, but rather a lot of linguistic smoke and mirrors.

Manso proceeds to list examples of Schiller's bad habit: 'Ein Werk blinder Kräfte, das keine Autorität besitzt, vor welcher die Freyheit sich zu beugen brauchte; (zu deutsch, ein Naturstaat der zufällig entstanden und auf keinen vernünftigen Vertrag gegründet ist).'<sup>391</sup> He then drives home his point:

Alle diese und ihnen ähnliche Formeln überraschen anfänglich und lassen immer neue Weisheit und seltne Entdeckungen vermuthen. Allein diese Vermuthung nimmt in eben demselben Verhältnisse ab, in welchem man sich bemüht, die mühsam gemachten Abstractionen zu versinnlichen und die kunstvollen Versinnlichungen auf ihre einfachen und ursprünglichen Bestandtheile zurückzuführen. Dann bemerkt man nicht ohne Verwunderung, daß das Kleid den Gedanken gemacht hat, er selbst aber durch das Kleid weder jünger noch besser geworden ist; dann überzeugt man sich allmählig, daß auch in der

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<sup>389</sup> See NB 55.2, pp. 300-301.

<sup>390</sup> NB 55.2, p. 301.

<sup>391</sup> NB 55.2, p. 301.

Philosophie der Witz nicht selten die Stelle des Scharfsinns vertritt und die Pflicht, wahr und natürlich zu seyn, der Neigung, ungewöhnlich und glänzend zu scheinen, nachstehen muß.<sup>392</sup>

Schiller's manner of framing concepts gives them the appearance of brilliant original insight. Manso proceeds to claim that this appearance is, however, just that: an appearance. The aura disappears on closer investigation. Manso employs the metaphor of language as clothing for thought, another rhetorical inheritance.<sup>393</sup> In Schiller's case, Manso suggests that the gaudy language Schiller uses is more prominent than the contents of his thought. Manso traces this particular criticism to what he regards as a more fundamental confusion of intellectual priorities. He appeals to the technical distinction between *Witz* and *Scharfsinn*. The former faculty is concerned with clear and vivid imagery which appeals to the imagination (Sulzer contrasts it with *Verstand*, which is concerned with the substance of ideas).<sup>394</sup> *Schärf Sinn*, by contrast, appears to denote the faculty of judgement. The serious philosopher will display *Scharfsinn* in his contents, judiciously using *Witz* to make those contents appealing to his audience; Sulzer uses the analogy of *Witz* as the

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<sup>392</sup> NB 55.2, p. 302.

<sup>393</sup> The metaphor is prominent in the rhetorical tradition. See George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 5: 'It is characteristic of classical rhetoric to regard style as a deliberate process of casting subject into language; the same ideas can be expressed in different words with different effect.'

<sup>394</sup> Adelung frames the *Witz-Scharfsinn* distinction as between the faculty which relates items and that which distinguishes them: 'In der engsten, jetzt noch allein üblichen Bedeutung ist der Witz, das Vermögen der Seele, Ähnlichkeiten, und besonders verborgene Ähnlichkeiten, zu entdecken, so wie Scharfsinn das Vermögen ist, verborgene Unterschiede aufzufinden.' See Adelung, art. 'Witz', online at <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Witz,+der?hl=witz>. Accessed 18.06.2018. However, Manso's usage here appears to be closer to the definition offered by Sulzer: 'Der Witz [dringt] nicht tief in die Sachen hinein; der Schein befriediget ihn, wo der Verstand Wirklichkeit oder Realität sucht. Indessen kommt es auch hierbei auf den Grad des Scharfsinnes an, der mit dem Witz verbunden ist. Fehlet sie ihm, so artet dieser in Albernheit aus. Nichts ist verständigen Menschen ekelhafter und abgeschmackter als die Äußerungen einer lebhaften Einbildungskraft, die ganz von Beurteilung verlassen ist.' Art., 'Witz' in Sulzer 2, online at <http://www.textlog.de/3103.html>. Article retrieved 19.1.2018.

seasoning to a meal.<sup>395</sup> Overuse of it (Manso's charge against Schiller) neutralizes the good content of intellectual work.<sup>396</sup> The philosopher's duty is defined in such a way as to evoke Quintilian's norms. His use of language is to be 'true and natural'; showing off with unusual language betrays superficiality. Manso thus accuses Schiller of using florid language to conceal intellectual poverty, and so violating Quintilian's ideal of natural speech.

Manso makes a similar point with reference to the Kantian background of the *Ästhetische Briefe*. Here, too, Schiller is guilty of trying to impress through linguistic artifice rather than real intellectual substance. In this, he is not very different to the majority of Kant's followers, whom Manso frames as seekers of prestige: 'Es befremdet an dem großen Haufen der Nachbeter Kants nicht, daß sie überall Antinomien suchen, finden und lösen. Der Gebrauch seiner Kunstwörter und die Nachahmung seiner Einkleidung ist oft das Einzige, wodurch sie sich ein Ansehen geben können.'<sup>397</sup> It is perhaps not particularly surprising if minor intellects should attempt this strategy, but it is beneath Schiller's dignity:

Aber es ist befremdend an einem Schriftsteller, wie *Schiller*, wenn auch er seinen Genius, der sonst, der eigenthümlichen Kraft sich bewußt, frey und ungehindert einherschritt, nach den Vorschriften

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<sup>395</sup> 'Man muss überhaupt die Äußerungen des Witzes als ein Gewürz ansehen und gerade den Gebrauch davon machen, der bei Zurichtung einer Mahlzeit von diesem gemacht wird. Ganz von Gewürze wird kein Gericht gemacht; doch etwa ein kleines Schälchen, mehr zur Wollust als zur Nahrung, hingesezt. Aber jede zur Nahrung bestimmte Speise wird damit etwas erhöht; es sei denn, dass sie schon an sich hinlänglichen Reiz für den Geschmack habe. Gerade so verhält es sich mit dem Witze. Bloß witzig können kleinere zur Ergötzung und zum Scherz gemachte Werke der Kunst sein; aber in größeren Werken, die schon eine höhere Bestimmung haben, muss er niemals herrschend sein, sondern bloß der schon an sich wichtigen Materie einen etwas erhöhten Geschmack geben.' Sulzer, 'Witz'.

<sup>396</sup> 'Zu viel Witz, auch da, wo sein mäßiger Gebrauch nötig ist, ermüdet, unterdrückt die, den Geist und das Herz nährenden Kräfte, die schon in dem Stoff liegen und macht, dass das, was nützlich sein sollte, bloß angenehm wird.' Sulzer, 'Witz'.

<sup>397</sup> NB 55.2, p. 309.

eines fremden Genius zu wandeln zwingt, oder lieber in einer fremden Manier arbeiten, als seinen eigenen Eingebungen folgen will. [...] Der Verfasser mag sich vielleicht in seinen Kantischen Wendungen und Formeln ungleich tiefsinniger und philosophischer vorkommen, als in der ungezwungenen Einkleidung seiner Ideen über Anmuth und Würde; in dem unbefangenen Leser wird die späterschriebene Abhandlung [sc. *Ästhetische Briefe*] schwerlich einen günstigeren Eindruck zurück lassen, als die früher geschriebene. In der ganzen Untersuchung über den Einfluß der ästhetischen Cultur herrscht offenbar mehr Schein als Wahrheit und in dem Gange der Entwicklung mehr Künsteley als Natur.<sup>398</sup>

Manso acknowledges the gifts undoubtedly possessed by the editor of *Die Horen*, only to lament that the *Ästhetische Briefe* provide no evidence of these gifts.

Schiller's previous work has displayed an assured handling of Kantian material.

Manso cites the example of 'Über Anmuth und Würde', where Schiller makes productive use of the resources supplied by Kant ('Auch [diesem Aufsatz] liegen

Kants Ideen zu Grunde: aber wie sind sie ausgeführt und bearbeitet!').<sup>399</sup> The

*Ästhetische Briefe*, by contrast, wear their Kantianism heavily. Manso revisits his

earlier attack, suggesting that Schiller's ostentatious use of Kantian terminology is an

attempt to communicate the impression of intellectual seriousness. This is, however,

only an impression. As before, Manso claims that the affected language employed in

the *Briefe* clouds their lack of substance. It offends against rhetorical stylistic norms

by its lack of 'Wahrheit' and 'Natur'.

Two of the central points of Manso's attack on Schiller draw, then, upon rhetorical

canons, which Manso treats as normative. Schiller fails to observe proper

distinctions between styles, and violates the rhetorical ideal of natural, unaffected

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<sup>398</sup> NB 55.2, pp. 309-310. Italics in original.

<sup>399</sup> NB 55.2, pp. 309-310.

expression. In this respect, the review shares its intellectual background with Garve's criticisms, quoted above, of Schiller's difficult language. In another respect, however, it constitutes an important change in the tone of the debate, as the conflict between positions is articulated in more aggressive fashion. This difference in tone may be partly attributable to the two different media involved – the relative anonymity of a review offering more scope for intemperance than correspondence – but it is nonetheless striking. The review begins with the trenchant claim that it is not the 'Vortreflichkeit' of *Die Horen* that calls for attention, and the recurrent suggestion that Schiller's work lacks intellectual substance is primed to offend.<sup>400</sup> Whereas Garve, in the initial exchange, expressed high regard for Schiller, Manso polemicizes: '[Schillers] Styl ist nichts anders, als eine ununterbrochene widerliche Mischung von gelehrt aussehenden abstrakten und schöngeisterischen Phrasen, eine lange Reihe von rhetorischen Künsteleyen und ermüdenden Antithesen.'<sup>401</sup> The response which came from Schiller and Goethe amplified this polemical dimension.

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<sup>400</sup> See NB 55.2, pp. 283-284.

<sup>401</sup> NB 55.2, p. 318-319.

## 'Der Schulmeister zu Breslau': Manso in the *Xenien*

*Die Horen* had first appeared on the literary market under the sign of harmony.

According to the *Ankündigung*, its professed goal was 'die politisch geteilte Welt unter der Fahne der Wahrheit und Schönheit wieder zu vereinigen.'<sup>402</sup> One of the classical *Horai* was Irene, who signified peace. However, the atmosphere which quickly came to surround the journal was anything but peaceful. Reception in many quarters was hostile (Manso is just one example).<sup>403</sup> In response, Schiller – soon to be joined by Goethe – exchanged the *Ankündigung* idiom of peace for that of war.<sup>404</sup>

In November 1795, Schiller wrote to Goethe. His analogy for the situation in which

*Die Horen* found itself has become famous:

Wir leben jetzt recht in den Zeiten der Fehde. Es ist eine wahre *ecclesia militans* – die Horen meine ich. Außer den Völkern, die Herr Jakob in Halle kommandiert und die Herr Manso in der Bibliothek d[er] S[chönen] W[issenschaften] hat ausrücken lassen, und außer Wolfs schwerer Cavallerie haben wir auch nächstens vom Berliner Nicolai einen derben Angriff zu erwarten.<sup>405</sup>

Schiller paints a critical situation. *Die Horen* exists in an atmosphere of bitter conflict, with multiple parties allied against it. The journal itself is spiritualized as an *ecclesia*

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<sup>402</sup> FA 8, pp. 1001-1002.

<sup>403</sup> For a broad survey of responses from different perspectives, see Otto, 'Horen', pp. 385-441.

<sup>404</sup> It should be noted that, notwithstanding the claims of the *Ankündigung*, a certain belligerence was present in Schiller's discussion of the journal at a much earlier stage. In the summer of 1794, some time before the *Ankündigung* appeared, he wrote to Cotta, reporting his plans to engage Wieland as a contributor (Schiller to Cotta, 10.7.1794, in SNA 27, p. 21). The assumption is that *Die Horen* will wipe out all competitors: 'Alsdann rechne ich auch darauf, daß der [Teutsche] Merkur nach dem ersten Jahr der Horen von selbst fallen soll, so wie alle Journale, die das Unglück haben, von ähnlichem Inhalt mit den Horen zu seyn.' In light of this, the later emphasis on conflict in both Schiller and Goethe's comments simply brings to the fore an aspect which had been present in Schiller's thinking all along.

<sup>405</sup> Schiller to Goethe, 1.11.1795, in SNA 28, p. 93.

*militans*: charged with a great redemptive mission, it must assert itself against competing powers. Schiller proceeds to list these opponents in martial metaphor. He evidently knew Manso to be the author of the *Neue Bibliothek* review; other foes include Ludwig Heinrich von Jakob, Friedrich August Wolf, and Friedrich Nicolai.<sup>406</sup>

In a letter three weeks later, Goethe noted the same phenomenon and went on to propose retaliation. The specific provocation is Friedrich Leopold zu Stolberg's preface to his translation of Plato:

Die Blößen, die [Stolberg] darinne giebt sind so abgeschmackt und unleidlich, daß ich große Lust habe drein zu fahren und ihn zu züchtigen. Es ist sehr leicht die unsinnige Unbilligkeit dieses bornirten Volks anschaulich zu machen, man hat dabey das vernünftige Publikum auf seiner Seite und es giebt eine Art Kriegserklärung gegen die Halbheit, die wir nun in allen Fächern beunruhigen müssen. Durch die geheime Fehde des Verschweigens, Verruckens und Verdruckens, die sie gegen uns führt, hat sie lange verdient daß ihrer nun auch in Ehren und zwar in der Continuation gedacht werde.<sup>407</sup>

Goethe's choice of vocabulary serves to amplify the impression of conflict and entrench the opposition between the two positions. He takes up Schiller's analogy of a feud ('Fehde'), and like Schiller, he paints their opponents as the aggressors. The appropriate response is all-out war, a 'Kriegserklärung'. It is implied that the goal of this conflict will be the assertion of Goethe and Schiller's distinctive literary

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<sup>406</sup> Jakob was the editor of the *Annalen der Philosophie und des philosophischen Geistes*, which had published a negative review of *Die Horen* by Wilhelm Friedrich August Mackensen; see 'Tübingen in der Cottaischen Buchhandlung: *Die Horen*, eine Monatsschrift, herausgegeben von Schiller', in *Annalen der Philosophie und des philosophischen Geistes* (Halle and Leipzig), issues 118-122, 2.10.1795-12.10.1795, cols 937-970. Wolf is present by virtue of his defamation of Herder; in the *Allgemeine Litteratur Zeitung* of the 24<sup>th</sup> October, Wolf claimed that Herder's essay, 'Homer, ein Günstling der Zeit' had plagiarized his work. See the notes in SNA 28, pp. 428-429. Nicolai would eventually pronounce his own condemnation of *Die Horen* in the eleventh volume of his *Reisebeschreibung*. See Friedrich Nicolai, *Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz, im Jahre 1781. Nebst Bemerkungen über Gelehrsamkeit, Industrie, Religion und Sitten*, 12 vols (Berlin and Stettin: 1783-1796), vol. 11, pp. 240-304.

<sup>407</sup> Goethe to Schiller, 21.11.1795, in SNA 36.i, pp. 27-28.

programme. Already at the turn of the nineteenth century, 'züchtigen' appears to have had the narrow sense of literary polemic, but it also carries the connotation of correction, with a view to moral improvement.<sup>408</sup> Goethe suggests that he and Schiller are the representatives of a superior standard in literary life, and that Stolberg and others should be 'chastised' according to this standard. This implies, further, a particular attitude towards Goethe and Schiller's opponents, one which would be increasingly evident in the *Xenien*. Stolberg and his ilk are caricatured according to a determinate set of features, which serve as a negative counterpart to Goethe and Schiller's conception of themselves. Their opponents are limited ('bornirt'); collectively, they are defined as dilettantes ('die Halbheit', neither one thing nor the other).

This *Kriegserklärung* ultimately took shape in the *Xenien*. Manso's review had made him an inviting target and he features prominently. The Frankfurt edition of Schiller's works identifies a total of seventeen couplets directed against him.<sup>409</sup> These couplets elaborate a caricature of Manso, condemning him on various grounds. As they attack Manso, Goethe and Schiller draw upon the intellectual resources of the rhetorical tradition. They attack Manso's insipid style, and lampoon his *Lehrgedicht* 'Die Kunst

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<sup>408</sup> Adelung defines the term briefly as 'sinnliche Empfindung der Folgen seiner Vergehung zur künftigen Besserung verschaffen' (see art., 'Züchtigen' in Adelung, online at <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Züchtigen?hl=züchtigen>. Article accessed 25.1.2018.). Grimm gives a fuller account, including 'literarische rüge oder kritik'. However, one of the examples he chooses is Goethe's comment on Molière to Eckermann: 'Molière züchtigte die Menschen, indem er sie in ihrer Wahrheit zeichnete.' If used to describe the exposure of human folly in Molière's comedies, the term presumably still carries the sense of moral improvement. See art., 'Züchtigen', in Grimm, DWB, online at [http://woerterbuchnetz.de/cgi-bin/WBNetz/wbgui\\_py?sigle=DWB&mode=Vernetzung&lemid=GZ08744#XGZ08744](http://woerterbuchnetz.de/cgi-bin/WBNetz/wbgui_py?sigle=DWB&mode=Vernetzung&lemid=GZ08744#XGZ08744). Article accessed 25.1.2018.

<sup>409</sup> See FA 1, pp. 1272-1275.

zu lieben'; rhetorical reflection is present at both points. In this respect, whether intentionally or otherwise, the *Xenien* illustrate well the complexity of the rhetorical inheritance. Goethe and Schiller's comments elsewhere indicate men who did indeed reject the assumptions embodied in the rhetorical tradition. However, this did not stop them engaging productively with the rich store of concepts which it had bequeathed to them.

A major recurrent theme in the *Xenien* is that Manso is boring, his writing style dull and insipid. One example appears in the couplet, 'Der Fliegende Fisch':

Neckt euch in Breslau der fliegende Fisch, erwartets geduldig  
In sein wäßrigtes Reich zieht ihn Neptun bald hinab.<sup>410</sup>

The couplet evokes Manso's review of *Die Horen*, in order to dismiss him as an insignificant, ephemeral voice (as a flying fish, he will soon return to the water). It also contains a veiled jibe at his style. Through the eighteenth century and later, 'wäßrigt' was a term of abuse for an insipid style. In *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Goethe attacks Gottsched on these grounds: 'Das Gottschedische Gewässer hatte die deutsche Welt mit einer wahren Sündflut überschwemmt, welche sogar über die höchsten Berge hinaufzusteigen drohte [...] so brachte die Nachahmung des Seichten, Wäßrigen einen solchen Wust hervor, von dem gegenwärtig kaum ein Begriff mehr geblieben ist.'<sup>411</sup>

A more precise line of criticism is that Manso's style lacks any appeal. His translation of Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* is attacked on these grounds:

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<sup>410</sup> FA 1, p. 588.

<sup>411</sup> Goethe, FA 14, p. 279.

Ein asphaltischer Sumpf bezeichnet hier noch die Stätte,  
Wo Jerusalem stand, das uns Torquato besang.<sup>412</sup>

The great city painted by Tasso has become, in Manso's hands, a foul swamp of stinking tar. Manso's efforts at translation deprive the text of all its poetic splendour and aesthetic appeal. What emerges is lifeless and unattractive, and the greatness of Tasso's achievement is a mere memory.

A similar charge is raised against Manso's 'Über den Einfluß der Grazien', which appeared in the *Neue deutsche Monatsschrift* in 1795.<sup>413</sup>

Hexen lassen sich wohl durch schlechte Verse zitieren,  
Aber die Grazie kommt nur auf der Grazie Ruf!<sup>414</sup>

Manso's poetry could not possibly summon up the Graces, for it exhibits no trace of their presence and influence. He is an incompetent poet, his work deficient in imagination and aesthetic appeal – all the things which the Graces might provide.

The poverty of Manso's style is another recurrent charge. It is particularly prominent in two couplets which attack him by comparison with Wieland and Jean Paul.

Wieland, wie reich ist dein Geist! Das kann man nun erst empfinden  
Sieht man, wie fad und wie leer dein Caput mortuum ist.

Hieltest du deinen Reichtum nur halb so zu Rate, wie jener  
Seine Armut, du wärst unsrer Bewunderung wert.<sup>415</sup>

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<sup>412</sup> FA 1, p. 581.

<sup>413</sup> For this text, see *Neue Deutsche Monatsschrift* 1 (1795), pp. 316-325.

<sup>414</sup> FA 1, p. 581.

<sup>415</sup> Goethe, FA 1, p. 532.

In the first, Manso's poetry is dismissed as 'fad und [...] leer' where Wieland was 'reich'. In the second, his 'Armut' is contrasted explicitly with Jean Paul's 'Reichtum'. Manso is deficient on several grounds: he lacks taste, substance, and wealth.

All of the above criticisms engage with discussions of style in the rhetorical tradition. Quintilian warns against an excessive, misguided use of ornament, and this is the background to Manso's criticisms of Schiller, but plainness was not to be equated with dullness. A good style, for Quintilian, will appeal to the listener (or reader). It will not be insipid. He warns in book 8 against meanness of style, based on the Greek term *tapeinōsis*:

There is language which is dull, coarse, jejune, grim, unpleasing, or common; these faults will be clear enough if one thinks of the opposite virtues, which are respectively point, polish, richness, gaiety, charm, and refinement.

This fault will result in making our language dull, or coarse, jejune, heavy, unpleasing or slovenly, all of which faults are best realised by reference to the virtues which are their opposites, that is, point, polish, richness, liveliness, charm, and finish.<sup>416</sup>

The ideal of a plain or natural style had various elements, and it certainly did not exclude richness; Goethe and Schiller thus accuse Manso of lacking a quality which the rhetorical tradition demanded.

Richness (*copia*) could refer to an orator's store of words and ideas, but Quintilian also employs it to denote a particular stylistic virtue.<sup>417</sup> He cites Cicero as a shining example:

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<sup>416</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* VIII.iii.49, in vol. 3, p. 368.

<sup>417</sup> See Quintilian, *Institutio* X.i.5, in vol. 4, p. 255: 'Is there any doubt, then, that he must acquire some capital, as it were, which he can draw on whenever it is needed? Capital here means a stock of ideas and a stock of words [*copia rerum ac verborum*].'

Cicero, having devoted himself entirely to the imitation of the Greeks, succeeded in reproducing the forcefulness of Demosthenes, the abundance [*copia*] of Plato, and the elegance of Isocrates.<sup>418</sup>

Cicero himself was apparently not shy about declaring his virtues in this regard. In

*Brutus*, he cites Brutus' praise for his richness of style:

Friendly surely and splendid praise I consider it, to call you at once the pioneer and inventor of eloquence [*principem atque inventorem copiae*], and to add that you have deserved well of the name and prestige of Rome.<sup>419</sup>

The virtue of richness also features in Quintilian's description of the ideal orator in the preface to book 1: 'How then can there be any doubt that wherever intellectual power and fullness of diction [*copia dicendi*] are required, the orator has the leading role?'<sup>420</sup>

'Grazie', from the Latin *gratia*, also had a long history. The *Xenion* which mentions 'Grazie' has a mythological reference – one Grace might summon another – but this, too, was a virtue in the rhetorical model of style. Quintilian praises Horace for it:

Of the lyric poets, Horace is almost the only one worth reading; he can be lofty sometimes, but yet he is also full of charm and grace [*plenus est iucunditatis et gratiae*], versatile in his Figures, and felicitously daring in his choice of words.<sup>421</sup>

The passage is quoted and endorsed by Herder. He translates Quintilian's epithet as 'voll Anmuth und Grazie'.<sup>422</sup> At several points, then, Goethe and Schiller borrow the

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<sup>418</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* X.i.108, in vol. 4, p. 311.

<sup>419</sup> Cicero, *Brutus*, trans. G. L. Hendrickson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1952), LXXIII.254, p. 219.

<sup>420</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* I.pr.12, in vol. 1, p. 57.

<sup>421</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* X.i.96, in vol. 4, p. 305.

<sup>422</sup> See Johann Gottfried Herder, *Herders sämmtliche Werke*, ed. Bernhard Suphan, 33 vols (Berlin: Weidmann, 1877-1913), vol. 24, p. 199.

vocabulary of the rhetorical tradition in order to attack Manso's style as dull and deficient.

The tradition is also an important background to another line of criticism in the *Xenien*, one which focuses on Manso's *Lehrgedicht*, 'Die Kunst zu lieben'. Here, Goethe and Schiller evoke rhetorical reflection on the relationship between theory and practice, and that between the two conceptual poles of art and nature. The couplet 'Der Schulmeister zu Breslau' attacks Manso as a pedant:

In langweiligen Versen und abgeschmackten Gedanken  
Lehrt ein Präzeptor uns hier, wie man gefällt und verführt.<sup>423</sup>

The couplet joins in others' criticism of Manso's dull verse ('in langweiligen Versen und abgeschmackten Gedanken'), but it also attacks Manso's attempt to teach an 'art of love'. The two hemistichs of the second line emphasize the opposition between his pedantry and his subject matter, making him a laughing stock.

The discrepancy between the poem and Manso's experience is also attacked in the final published couplet.

Hekate! Keusche! dir schlacht ich die Kunst zu lieben von Manso,  
Jungfer noch ist sie, sie hat nie was von Liebe gewußt.<sup>424</sup>

The couplet appeals to a mythological frame of reference.<sup>425</sup> In Virgil's *Aeneid*, before entering into the underworld, Aeneas offered Proserpine a cow that had never borne calves. Hecate, whom Virgil portrays as the sister of Proserpine, was

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<sup>423</sup> FA 1, p. 582.

<sup>424</sup> FA 1, p. 620.

<sup>425</sup> See FA 1, p. 1326.

commonly associated with virginity, and this is how the couplet addresses her.<sup>426</sup>

The speaker offers Hecate the sacrifice of Manso's poem. Like Proserpine's cow, and like the figure of Hecate, the poem is virginal: it has known nothing of love.

Another couplet focuses upon a slightly different deficiency: not this time of experience, but of natural talent in love. The title of his poem exposes him:

Auch zum Lieben bedarfst du der Kunst? Unglücklicher Manso,  
Daß die *Natur* auch nichts, gar nichts für dich noch getan!<sup>427</sup>

The couplet plays on the opposition between natural talent and learned technical competence. Manso needs the latter because he has none of the former. This, too, serves to make him ridiculous: there is a clear suggestion that even to speak of 'art' makes a mockery of the primal reality of love.

The *Lehrgedicht* is also attacked on other grounds. Goethe and Schiller repeatedly accuse Manso of trying too hard in it to appear something that he is not.

Alles kann mißlingen, wir könnens ertragen, vergeben;  
Nur nicht, was sich bestrebt, reizend und lieblich zu sein.<sup>428</sup>

The worst of all failures, the distich claims, is the failure of obviously trying to replicate natural charm. The theme of Manso's awkward pedantry is developed, and he is characterized as clumsy and affected.

He is also mocked for attempting to replicate loose sexual morals:

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<sup>426</sup> See Sarah Iles Johnson, art. 'Hecate', in *Brill's New Pauly*, online at <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2134/entries/brill-s-new-pauly/hecate-e505900?s.num=150&s.start=140>. Article accessed 1.2.2018.

<sup>427</sup> FA 1, p 581.

<sup>428</sup> Goethe, FA 1, p. 532.

Was das entsetzlichste sei von allen entsetzlichen Dingen?  
Ein Pedant, den es jücker, locker und lose zu sein.<sup>429</sup>

‘Jücker’ is the key term. Manso, in ‘Die Kunst zu lieben’, poses as a Casanova, but his failure to do this effectively betrays the effort he has invested in it – he positively ‘itches’ to create the impression, and so inevitably appears ridiculous.

These distichs also play on the multiple facets of an idea with a long history in the rhetorical tradition. Manso is accused for attempting to teach a subject where theorizing is essentially out of place; he is particularly unsuited to this because of his own lack of experience of love. The argument echoes Quintilian’s discussion of the relationship between theory and practice in the *Institutio*:

No one however should expect from me the sort of rules that most writers of textbooks have handed down, or ask me to lay down for students a set of laws, as it were, bound by immutable necessity. [...] Rhetoric would be a very easy and trivial affair if it could be comprised in a single short set of precepts. In fact, almost everything depends on Causes, times, opportunity, and necessity. [...] For the time being, I do not want young men to think their education complete if they have learned by heart one of the little textbooks which are in general circulation, or to believe that the decrees of the technical writers will ensure their salvation. The art of speaking depends on much effort, continual study, varied kinds of exercise, long experience, profound wisdom, and unflinching strategic sense. But rules too are an aid to it, if they indicate the main road, and not just some one narrow track such that anyone who thinks it a sin to stray will need to walk as slowly as a tightrope walker.<sup>430</sup>

The orator has a task to accomplish, and all his decisions are to be governed by this eminently practical end. Theory can provide him with a useful guide, but only a guide, to be adapted and adjusted as expediency dictates. Quintilian stresses that understanding a textbook does not equate to aptitude in oratory, and this aptitude is

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<sup>429</sup> FA 1, p. 582.

<sup>430</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* II.xiii.1-2, 15-16, in vol. 1, pp. 340, 346.

not ultimately something that a teacher can communicate. Theory is not valueless; the *Institutio* is itself a textbook. However, its twelve books are frequently concerned with the question of how to balance theory with oratorical practice. Rules, the 'art' of rhetoric, are always subject to alteration according to the demands of experience.

Quintilian also engages with the problem of the relationship between education and natural talent. Manso is mocked for looking to 'Kunst' because nature has failed him, and both Quintilian and Cicero emphasize that education is no substitute for natural talent in producing a great orator. Quintilian deals with the subject in book two of the *Institutio*:

I am aware that the question is also commonly raised, whether nature or teaching contributes more to eloquence. This is indeed irrelevant to my proposed work (because the perfect orator cannot come into existence except by a blend of the two). [...] If you isolate one of the pair from the other altogether, nature will be able to do a lot without teaching, but without nature there can be no teaching. If they are equally matched, however, and both are unremarkable, nature, I think, will still have the greater influence, whereas perfect orators owe more to teaching than to nature. [...] In a word: nature is the raw material of teaching; the one forms, the other is formed. Without material, art can do nothing; material has a value apart from art; the highest art is better than the best material.<sup>431</sup>

Quintilian pronounces a balanced view. Both art and nature are necessary. Education is no use without natural talent, but on the other hand, the really outstanding orator owes most to the cultivation and refinement of education.

Cicero also discusses the relationship between the two elements which constitute an ideal orator. He, too, stresses both sides:

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<sup>431</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* II.xix.1-3, in vol. 1, pp. 399-401

In the first place natural talent is the chief contributor to the virtue of oratory. [...] For certain lively activities of the intelligence and the talents alike should be present, such as to be at once swift in invention, copious in expression and embellishment, and steadfast and enduring in recollection. [...] It would be a glorious state of things if art could even kindle or waken [these things] into life; engrafted and bestowed by art of a certainty they cannot be, for they are all the gifts of nature.<sup>432</sup>

I must have talent which has been cultivated, soil, as it were, not of a single ploughing, but both broken and given a second ploughing so as to be capable of bearing better and more abundant produce. And the cultivation is practice, listening, reading and written composition.<sup>433</sup>

On the one hand, again, natural talent does more than anything else to make someone an orator. The great orator requires a set of inherent skills which even the best education cannot provide. However, like Quintilian, Cicero stresses the value of education in refining natural talent. He appeals to agricultural or horticultural metaphors: fruitfulness is the result of hard work in cultivation.

Goethe and Schiller, then, make use of a rhetorical precept when they attack Manso for attempting to replace nature with art. The art-nature opposition is also relevant to their criticisms of Manso for appearing awkward as he tries too hard. It is a commonplace in the tradition that real artfulness consists in concealing the complex, intelligent process of composing a good speech. Naturalness is not only a stylistic ideal, but also the cloak for the orator's devices. Quintilian warns against affectation in the *Institutio*:

Nor should all kinds of gesture and movement be sought from the comic actors. Though the orator must indeed master both to a certain extent, he will keep well clear of staginess and of anything excessive in facial expression, or in the way he uses his hands or moves around.

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<sup>432</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* I.xxv.113-114, vol. 1, p. 81.

<sup>433</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* II.xxx.131, vol. 1, p. 293.

If speakers do possess an art of these things, its first rule is not to seem to be an art.<sup>434</sup>

The style of the Prooemium should be different from that of the Proofs, Commonplaces, and Narrative; it must not however always be finely spun or sophisticated, but often simple and apparently effortless, not promising too much either by the words or by the speaker's expression. An unobtrusive delivery (what the Greeks call *anepiphantos*) often worms its way into the mind better.<sup>435</sup>

The orator's skill consists precisely in not demonstrating the artfulness of his technique; if he is good at what he does, he will appear not to be trying at all. This applies both to his physical gestures and to his style. He will appeal most effectively to his hearers when he appears to be speaking naturally.

This notion had an influential afterlife in the theory of social interaction which was based on the rhetorical tradition. In Baldassare Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*, deliberate artlessness (nonchalance, *sprezzatura*) becomes the supreme virtue of social interaction:

I have discovered a universal rule which seems to apply more than any other in human actions or words: namely, to steer away from affectation at all costs, as if it were a rough and dangerous reef, and (to use perhaps a novel word for it) to practise in all things a certain nonchalance which conceals all artistry and makes whatever one says or does seem uncontrived and effortless. [...] So we can truthfully say that true art is what does not seem to be art; and the most important thing is to conceal it, because if it is revealed this discredits a man completely and ruins his reputation.<sup>436</sup>

The cultured man of society will avoid affectation and always appear effortless: this is key to his success.

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<sup>434</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* I.xi.3, in vol. 1, p. 237.

<sup>435</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* IV.i.60, in vol. 2, p. 209.

<sup>436</sup> Baldassare Castiglione, *The Courtier*, trans. George Bull (London: Penguin, 2003), accessed online at <https://bodleyan.idls.org.uk/accessnow/start.html>. Retrieved 24.5.2018.

When Garve discusses social interaction, he argues along similar lines. In the La Rochefoucauld essay (mentioned by Schiller), he characterizes the titular 'bürgerliches Air' negatively. Its chief defect is affectation.

Erstlich, ein affectirtes und ceremoniöses Wesen, welches die Pflichten der Höflichkeit übertreibt und weitschweifig macht, so daß sie dem Menschen, welcher sie leistet, beschwerlich, und der Gesellschaft, an welche sie gerichtet sind, lästig werden.<sup>437</sup>

To be bourgeois is to be socially incompetent. One of the chief ways in which this is expressed is in affectation, the clumsy exaggeration of forms of politeness. The offending person appears to struggle with a difficult task, rather than exhibiting the studied carelessness of the adept courtier. Garve affirms the rhetorical virtue of concealing one's art in order to appear effortless: precisely what Goethe and Schiller claim is absent from Manso's 'Die Kunst zu lieben'.

In their criticisms of his insipid style and in their diverse attacks against 'Die Kunst zu lieben', Goethe and Schiller's caricature of Manso is significantly informed by rhetorical reflection. As a source of concepts, the tradition could be plundered even by those who did not endorse its more general assumptions. The *Xenien* also take up and reinforce the polemical dimension present in Manso's review, further limiting the possibility of meaningful intellectual interaction. Garve and Schiller had exchanged arguments, but the couplets are an *ad hominem* attack. Manso's review of *Die Horen* – the cause behind Goethe and Schiller's ire – is almost invisible. 'Der Fliegende Fisch' could be construed as an oblique reference to it (the review is no

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<sup>437</sup> GW 1.1, p. 402.

more than an annoyance from the flying fish of Breslau) but all of the other couplets are plainly directed at Manso's poetry. He is discredited by means of ridicule. When Garve attempted to defend his friend on the grounds of the same rhetorical tradition which informs the *Xenien*, both Schiller and Goethe unequivocally rejected the attempt.

## 'Keine Spur eines ästhetischen Gefühls'?: Garve, Schiller, and Goethe on Manso

Garve wrote to Schiller in a letter dated to the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1797: 'Sie haben [...] meinen Freund Manso auf eine Weise, die er nicht verdient, angegriffen.'<sup>438</sup> Alt describes the letter as a significant development in the reception history of the couplets:

Die gewichtigste Kritik der *Xenien* stammt von Christian Garve, der, veranlaßt durch die scharfe Attacke gegen seinen Freund Manso, die polemische Anlage der Distichen als Ausdruck kleingeistigen Revanchedenkens jenseits der von den Verfassern sonst für sich beanspruchten Souveränität verwirft.<sup>439</sup>

Garve takes issue with Goethe and Schiller's strategy at several points. The letter is partly an expression of moral outrage ('wie können dieß Männer bey sich selbst entschuldigen?'), but it is also an attempt to counter the attack against Manso at the level of intellectual principles. Garve argues that Schiller and Goethe are guilty of a basic moral error: their attack on Manso was evidence of an unbecoming, vindictive spirit. He also argues that they are guilty of treating Manso's character and achievements unjustly. They ought to perceive his merits, and, by the same token, the flaws which Manso pointed out in *Die Horen*. The argument assumes the validity of the rhetorical principles which guided Manso's criticisms.

A central plank in Garve's argument is that the attack on Manso in the *Xenien* was not only harsh (perhaps an obvious point), but unjust. The letter begins with a diatribe to this effect:

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<sup>438</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 136.

<sup>439</sup> Alt, *Schiller* 2, p. 334.

Was könnte in der That mehr Tadel verdienen, als dieser Mißbrauch der schönsten Talente, diese Verbindung von Uebermuth, Parteygeist und unwürdiger Rache, mit Philosophie angenehmer Darstellung, richtigem Geschmacke, und selbst mit Gerechtigkeit im Urteilen und mit Tugendliebe. Menschen geflissentlich zu kränken, von denen man nie ist beleidigt worden, Verdienste herabzusetzen, die man wirklich innerlich hochachtet, das Gute, welches in anderer Schriften und Charaktere vorhanden ist, geflissentlich verkennen, und die Fehler über alle Wahrheit und über die innere Ueberzeugung vergrößern: wie können dieß Männer bey sich selbst entschuldigen, die selbst in der öffentlichen Achtung stehn, und deren höhere Geisteskräfte sie über alle solche Beleidigungen, oder Rivalitäten, durch welche Schriftsteller und Gelehrten von geringerm Range zu Ausbrüchen einer unedlen Rachsucht bewogen werden hinwegsetzen sollten.<sup>440</sup>

Goethe and Schiller's gifts ought to elevate them above the petty need for revenge, even if Manso deserved it. Worse still, however, is that he does not, and they know he does not: in the *Xenien* directed against him, they have wilfully refused to recognize his good characteristics. Garve assumes that Goethe and Schiller's own right judgement (*Urteil*) ought to lead them to perceive Manso's qualities. He does not call for mercy towards Manso's shortcomings, but for justice. He is not arguing, in his eyes, for one position over against another, but rather for assent to objective realities.

Garve thus identifies the key point at issue as a fair evaluation of Manso:

Sie haben meinen Freund Manso auf eine Weise, die er nicht verdient, angegriffen. Ich kann hierüber dreister und sichrer urtheilen, da ich die Person und den Charakter des Mannes in der Nähe kenne, und seine Talente, seine Gelehrsamkeit, und seine bisher erworbnen litterarischen Verdienste mit den Bewegungsgründen, die Sie haben konnten, gegen ihn mehrere Ihrer Pfeile, und mehr schmerzende Pfeile, als gegen andre abzudrücken ziemlich vollständig übersehe.<sup>441</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 136.

<sup>441</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 136.

Manso does not deserve the treatment meted out to him in the *Xenien*. 'Urtheilen' is the key term: Garve's knowledge of Manso makes him uniquely well placed to adjudicate in this matter. His will be a right judgement, based on accurate and comprehensive insight.

Garve presents himself as concerned with right judgement, here in the specific case of Manso's own merits as a writer. In this argument, there lurks a more implicit claim: namely that it ought to be possible to find an evaluation of Manso which both Garve and Schiller could endorse. Garve's defence of Manso makes little sense unless there are objective criteria according to which Manso might be judged. These are the basis for Garve's claim that Manso has 'Verdienste', which Schiller ought to have recognized. The letter's central thesis is not simply that Goethe and Schiller have been vengeful, but that they have been unfair: and this inevitably implies an objective standard of judgement which can determine the fairness (or lack thereof) of their attack.

The defence which Garve then mounts of Manso's character contains a hint of where objective criteria might be found. The argument echoes a rhetorical ideal:

Seine ausgebreitete Sprach- und Geschichtskennntnisse, sein tieferes Eindringen in die Quellen des Alterthums und zugleich in die Philosophie über dasselbe, und in die Philosophie über Menschen und Staaten überhaupt [...] werden ihn zu einem sehr lehrreichen Geschichtsforscher und immer auf die Nachwelt sich erhaltenden Schriftsteller machen. Und sein Charakter, seine Amtstreue, seine Fähigkeit zur Freundschaft machen ihn zu einem schätzbaren Menschen.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>442</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 136.

Garve praises Manso's qualities as a *Schriftsteller*, but the climax of his argument lies in the character of Manso as a *Mensch*. The positive qualities he cites are from the lexical field of civic virtue, both private (Manso is a good friend) and public (he has been faithful in discharging his official duties). The argument recalls *De Officiis*, with its claim that Manso has fulfilled his responsibilities in the various social relationships which human beings inhabit ('We are not born for ourselves alone [...] our country claims for itself one part of our birth, and our friends another.'<sup>443</sup>). It also evokes Quintilian's twofold framing of the ideal orator. Such a person must unite intellectual capacity with moral virtue: 'The perfect orator [...] cannot exist except in the person of a good man. We therefore demand of him not only exceptional powers of speech, but all the virtues of character as well.'<sup>444</sup> Garve's Manso, as a modern intellectual, fulfils Quintilian's ideal.

However, Garve not only hints at the rhetorical tradition as the basis for his case: he explicitly cites it. He defends Manso's review as an accurate appraisal of *Die Horen*:

Wären auch seine Urtheile ungerecht: so wäre die Strafe noch weit ungerechter. Aber sie sind es nicht. Sie erkennen sie selbst jetzt nicht dafür, da Sie hintendrein mit kaltem Blute über Ihre Gedichte und die Aeußerungen Ihrer Kunstrichter urtheilen. Ich appellire an Ihren so richtigen Geschmack und an Ihre eigene Kenntniß der Kunst der Wohlredenheit und der Poesie.<sup>445</sup>

Here, the question is not someone else's *Urtheil* of Manso, but rather Manso's own *Urtheile* concerning Schiller's work. Garve expresses certainty that when Schiller's hot head has cooled off and reason has been restored, he will come to see the sense

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<sup>443</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.22, pp. 9-10.

<sup>444</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* I.pr.9-10, in vol. 1, p. 57.

<sup>445</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, pp. 136-137.

in Manso's criticisms. Again, Garve's argument contains an implicit dimension. To claim that Manso's criticisms were just is to assume at least two things: that they do reflect genuine features of Schiller's work (Garve will go on to discuss this point), and that the principles which inform them are objectively valid. Garve assumes the second point here. When Schiller comes to assess Manso's review fairly, he should be guided by both good taste and – crucially – his knowledge of rhetorical principles ('die Kunst der Wohlredenheit und der Poesie'). Manso, on Garve's reading, was guided by these two things in his attack on Schiller, and they are not simply matters of personal preference. Garve's argument takes it as read that rhetoric furnished a theoretical framework for evaluating literary composition, that this framework lay behind Manso's review, and that Schiller will concede its validity. The last assumption is completely implicit; Garve does not even feel the need to defend it to Schiller, so obvious does its truth appear to him.

Garve goes on, in the letter, to explicitly affirm his endorsement of the major points of Manso's criticism. Having defended the rhetorical norms which guide them, he claims that Manso's application of these norms was justified. Schiller is indeed guilty of undue difficulty and abstraction:

Einige Ihrer Verse sind wirklich dunkel; eine tiefsinnige Metaphysik ist oft am unrechten Orte in die Belehrungen einer populären Philosophie und in die Scherze der poetischen Muse eingemischt.<sup>446</sup>

Garve echoes Manso by claiming that Schiller has mixed together things that ought to be distinguished, namely metaphysics on the one hand and popular philosophy on

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<sup>446</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 137.

the other. Schiller has offended against the canon of linguistic clarity (the key term *dunkel* appears again), and his choice of themes is equally inappropriate. It is unreasonable to expect a broad range of readers to understand such technical discussion.

The point is reinforced in the following passage, where Garve takes the step of personally identifying himself with Manso's judgements: 'Auch ich, ich gestehe es, habe in allen diesen Stücken so geurtheilt wie Manso.'<sup>447</sup>

Auch ich habe gefunden, daß die Horen, ihrer Absicht und ihrer Ankündigung nicht entsprechen; daß viele Aufsätze darin unverständlich, und für die Schwierigkeit der Begriffe welche sie vortragen, oder die Neuheit der Entdeckungen, welche sie enthalten, viel zu schwer im Vortrage sind und ein zu geheimnißvolles Ansehn haben.<sup>448</sup>

A recurrent claim in Manso's review was that Schiller was guilty of using florid language to generate a false impression of intellectual weight. Garve claims that the criticism was perfectly accurate. Linguistic ornament does, in fact, cloud the contents of the texts; plain language would have been better. The outcome, again, is that much of *Die Horen* is simply incomprehensible. It fails both Quintilian's test of good style and the journal's stated intention of making philosophical truth accessible.

The letter concludes by positioning Garve as a defender not only of individuals, but also of right standards in literary life:

Verzeyhen Sie mir meine eigene Dreistigkeit, und die wirklich vielleicht ungebührende Anmaßung, die ich bey meiner jetzigen Freymüthigkeit beweise. Aber meine Freundschaft und Hochachtung gegen Sie, meine Verehrung gegen alles Gute und Schöne, und selbst

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<sup>447</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 137.

<sup>448</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 137.

meine Pflicht gegen die Litteratur und gegen diejenigen Personen, welche ich gegen Sie in den Schutz nehme, mögen das Sonderbare und Auffallende dieses Schrittes entschuldigen. [...] Wenigstens übergeb ich meine Schrift Ihrem Urtheile desto dreister, je dreister ich selbst meine Urtheile geäußert habe.<sup>449</sup>

Garve's duty to literature, and to the good and the beautiful more generally, are the motivators behind his decision to write to Schiller. He presents his plea not as a personal request, but as a moral obligation. His reference to duty again implies that an objectively binding scheme of value obtains in the realm of 'Litteratur', and that the *Xenien* have violated this scheme of value. The question of right evaluation remains central. Schiller is welcome to correct Garve's *Urtheil* with his own; but this admission implies that their judgements should be dictated by the same standards, making a meaningful exchange of views possible.

Garve's argument in the letter contains more than is immediately apparent. He consistently makes use of the vocabulary of judgement: *Urtheil* is a central term. The letter claims that Schiller's evaluation of Manso has been unjust, while Manso's of Schiller was in fact fair and accurate. These are two distinct points, but both imply the existence of an objective set of criteria of judgement which did inform Manso's review, and which ought to have informed Schiller and Goethe's response. The letter's unifying theme is that the *Xenien* have offended against a framework of value which is objectively binding upon literary discourse; the source of this framework of value is the rhetorical tradition.

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<sup>449</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, pp. 137-138.

Garve locates the debate at the level of intellectual principles. This did not escape Goethe and Schiller, though they did not respond in the way that he might have hoped. Garve's letter concludes optimistically. He expresses hope that the disagreement between Schiller and himself will give way to harmony: 'Lassen Sie mich wenigstens aus einem freundschaftlichen Briefe erkennen, daß Sie mit mir einverstanden genug sind, um alles, was ich über diese Gegenstände gesagt habe, überflüssig zu machen.'<sup>450</sup> Schiller's response to Garve arrived two months later. It was much less positive about the possibility of a meeting of minds. Schiller expresses regret that he and Garve should be separated, but has little hope that their differences might be resolved:

Mich schmerzte längst dieser Gedanke, aber ich mußte es der Zeit überlaßen, sich hier ins Mittel zu schlagen, da in Sachen der moralischen Empfindung durch Erklärungen nicht viel ausgerichtet wird.<sup>451</sup>

The final clause of the sentence is a rejection of Garve's central thesis: there are no objective criteria of judgement which could guide fruitful discussion between Schiller and Garve. They have fundamentally different moral feelings. There is thus little point in attempting to reconcile their differences by explanation. There is no shared intellectual basis to make such an attempt possible.

Schiller's comment to Garve is terse; indicative, perhaps, of a reluctance to engage in debate with someone with whom he could find no common ground. At the same time, however, he was also communicating with Goethe about the same issue.

There, both Schiller and Goethe's attitude towards Garve's attempt to uphold

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<sup>450</sup> Garve to Schiller, 23.9.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 138

<sup>451</sup> Schiller to Garve, 6.11.1797, in SNA 29, p. 155.

objective values gains vivid expression. Schiller forwarded Garve's letter to Goethe with the comment that it exhibited characteristic features of German intellectual life: 'Hier die Garvischen Briefe, die Ihnen auf eine andre, doch verwandte Art, als der Brief des RäthselMannes die deutsche Natur vergegenwärtigen werden.'<sup>452</sup> The 'Brief des RäthselMannes' apparently refers to a now-lost text sent by Goethe that day.<sup>453</sup> Whatever its contents were, Goethe sent the text with the comment that it illustrated 'bornirte Deutschheit'. Schiller claims here that Garve's letters similarly exhibit the provinciality of German intellectual life.<sup>454</sup> This is already to assert that what Garve presented as objective standards are nothing of the sort: they are, instead, the values of a culture which Schiller and Goethe seek to reject.

Goethe develops this thought further in his reply to Schiller. He rejects Garve's attempt to impose one particular set of values on the interaction.

Bemerkst man doch bey diesem so guten und wackern Manne keine Spur eines ästhetischen Gefühls! Von einer Seite sind seine Urtheile grob materiell und von der andern tractirt er die Sache als Ceremonienmeister, um ja besonders den subordinirten Talenten ihr Plätzchen anzuweisen. [...] Wie natürlich es doch solche Sittenrichter finden, daß ein Autor zeit seines Lebens seine besten Bemühungen verkennen, sich retardiren, necken, hänseln und hudeln lasse, weil das nun einmal so eingeführt ist! Und dabey soll er geduldig, seiner hohen Würde eingedenk, mit übereinander geschlagenen Händen, wie ein ecce Homo dastehen, nur damit Herr Manso und seines gleichen, auch in ihrer Art, für Dichter passiren können.<sup>455</sup>

The terminology of intellectual and moral umpiring (*Ceremonienmeister*, *Sittenrichter*) mocks Garve's pose as an upholder of universally binding values. Garve

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<sup>452</sup> Schiller to Goethe, 22.11.1797, in SNA 29, p. 158.

<sup>453</sup> See SNA 29, p. 498; Goethe to Schiller, 22.11.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 176.

<sup>454</sup> Goethe to Schiller, 22.11.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 176.

<sup>455</sup> Goethe to Schiller, 24.11.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 178.

had assumed that Schiller's own good sense would lead him to recognize the validity of Garve's arguments, but Goethe frames the debate as a conflict between two mutually exclusive positions. Garve evidently cannot appreciate what Goethe and Schiller are trying to do. His attempt to defend the validity of an alternative set of values should be rejected. Goethe and Schiller hold a quite different view to Garve of what a poet is, and Goethe is not minded to assent to the established position.

Goethe was plainly much vexed by reading Garve; he felt the need to continue his letter on the following day. There, he responds further to Garve's claim by proposing the evident truth of his and Schiller's definition of poetry, something which Garve has signally failed to recognize:

Die Poesie ist doch eigentlich auf die Darstellung des empirisch pathologischen Zustandes des Menschen gegründet, und wer gesteht denn das wohl unter unsern fürtrefflichen Kennern und sogenannten Poeten? Hat ein Mann wie Garve, der doch auch zeitlebens gedacht haben will, und für eine Art von Philosophen galt, denn nur die geringste Ahnung eines solchen Axioms? Hält er Sie nicht darum nur für einen würdigen Dichter, weil Sie sich den Spaß gemacht haben die Aussprüche der Vernunft mit dichterischem Munde vorzutragen, was wohl zu erlauben, aber nicht zu loben ist. Wie gerne wollte ich diesen prosaischen Naturen erlauben vor den sogenannten unsittlichen Stoffen zurück zu schauern, wenn sie nur ein Gefühl für das höhere poetisch sittliche z. B. im Polikrates und Ibykus hätten und davon entzückt würden.<sup>456</sup>

Garve may have a claim to be a philosopher, and may have spent a lifetime engaged in intellectual work, but Goethe rejects wholesale the values which informed his thinking. Even his positive comments on Schiller's work have been guided by a mistaken understanding of what Schiller is really doing. He and his ilk have no

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<sup>456</sup> Goethe to Schiller, 25.11.1797, in SNA 37.i, p. 179.

appreciation for Goethe and Schiller's aesthetic project: Goethe accuses them of rather naïve moralizing, and 'prosaisch' asserts a fundamental lack of imagination. As Schiller claimed that he and Garve were divided by 'moralische Empfindung', so Goethe refers to Garve and his contemporaries as lacking the right 'Gefühl'. The difference between them is not a matter to be resolved by arguments, but depends on contrasting intuitions.

The letter becomes a plea to Schiller to hold true to Goethe and Schiller's own intellectual values. What Garve presented as objectively valid, Goethe portrays as inimical to his and Schiller's project.

Doch genug von diesen Armseligkeiten! Lassen Sie uns auf unsern Wegen immer beständig und rascher fortschreiten. [...] Auf alle Fälle sind wir genöthigt unser Jahrhundert zu vergessen wenn wir nach unserer Ueberzeugung arbeiten wollen. Denn so eine Saalbaderey in Principien, wie sie im allgemeinen jetzt gelten, ist wohl noch nicht auf der Welt gewesen und was die neuere Philosophie gutes stiften wird ist noch erst abzuwarten. [...] Lassen Sie uns [...] immer strenger in Grundsätzen und sichrer und behaglicher in der Ausführung werden! Das letzte kann nur geschehen wenn wir während der Arbeit unsere Blicke nur innerhalb des Rahmens fixiren.<sup>457</sup>

Garve's letter was supported throughout by the assumption that Schiller would perceive and acknowledge the truth of what he said. However, Goethe advocates to Schiller a definitive break with their age and its principles for thinking about literature. These principles are dismissed as a 'Saalbaderey': Adelung relates the term to quack medicine (*Quacksalberey*). Goethe claims (or strongly implies) that Garve and his ilk are to authentic poets what quacks are to real doctors. They are charlatans, who present their ideas as serious science when they are in fact

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<sup>457</sup> Goethe to Schiller, 24.11.1797 and 25.11.1797, in SNA 37.i, pp. 178-180.

nonsense. The letter puts paid to any prospect of finding intellectual common ground between Garve's position and that which Schiller and Goethe are beginning to carve out. What is required is not engagement with these ideas, but single-minded devotion to a distinctive and superior programme.

This final phase in the exchange between Garve and Schiller sounds the death-knell for any hope that the two sides might find a common understanding. By calling for justice for Manso, Garve makes his letter into a final bid to assert mutually binding and objectively valid criteria for evaluating literary work. Schiller and Goethe evidently grasped this, and rejected the attempt. The position which emerges from both of their comments on Garve's letter is clear: Garve is the representative of a system of values inimical to their project, and they refuse his attempt to enforce it upon them. That the debate has to do with competing intellectual frameworks is clear: Goethe himself appeals to the metaphor of a 'Rahmen' informing his and Schiller's work. From now on, they must go their own way, devotedly pursuing their own aesthetic programme and ignoring their misguided contemporaries.

### Conclusion (chapter 3)

This latter series of letters is, in one sense, a far cry from Garve and Schiller's initial exchange. Before Manso's review, both sides express mutual respect, accompanied by some optimism (more so on Schiller's side) about the possibility of finding real common ground. After Manso's review and the ensuing *Xenien*, Garve's plea to Schiller carries a suggestion of desperation; he may, in his repeated affirmations that Schiller will recognize the justice of Garve's judgements, be protesting too much. Certainly Goethe and Schiller thought so, and they are dismissive of Garve's perspective and the values which inform it. These values were, to an important extent, rooted in the rhetorical tradition; both Manso and Garve refer to it explicitly. Goethe and Schiller were certainly capable of engaging with that tradition, and do so in the *Xenien*, but they also reject Garve's attempts to assert the philosophical framework within which rhetorical concepts are located. The episode becomes a further scene in a conflict between two approaches to intellectual life. As a good humanist, Garve contends that Schiller ought to appeal to a broad general public. Goethe, by contrast, calls on Schiller to reject their age. In this claim there is a dim echo, in a slightly different key, of Plato's *Theaetetus*. While the philosopher might dwell in the city, his mind was to be elsewhere, and Goethe would have the philosophically-minded poet do much the same.

There is an interesting postscript to this episode in the verdicts found in contemporary research. In a conflict between two ways of thinking, there was a clear and undisputed winner: the history of events subsequently passed down is the one

written by Goethe and Schiller. Regine Otto sees Manso's review as exhibiting 'philiströse Selbstbeschränkung'.<sup>458</sup> In the same volume, Bernd Leistner comments that the picture painted of Manso in the *Xenien* is a fair one: 'Selbst noch ein Distichon wie das gegen den geschäftstüchtigen Johann Kaspar Friedrich Manso gerichtete Xenion, „Amor als Schulcollege“ ist ja, nimmt man es für sich, von schärfster Genauigkeit.'<sup>459</sup> The *Schiller-Handbuch* communicates effectively the same view, to the point of borrowing Leistner's descriptor for Manso. In the *Handbuch* article on the *Xenien*, Manfred Beetz argues that the shortcomings of the review, and of the reviewer, justified the polemical attack: 'Dass der geschäftstüchtige Philologe und Breslauer Gymnasiallehrer Manso die ihm gewidmete Xenien-Serie verdient hat, erscheint allenfalls aus seiner scharfen Kritik der *Ästhetischen Briefe* nachvollziehbar, die seinen Schulmeisterhorizont überschritten.'<sup>460</sup> The terms of evaluation are precisely those used by the *Xenien* authors, their polemical verdicts simply recapitulated. Manso has no idea of higher, aesthetic realities; Otto lambasts him for 'Beschränkung auf Empirie'. He is narrow-minded, deficient, and pedantic. 'Geschäftstüchtig' encapsulates this view: in contrast to the pyrotechnics of Goethe and Schiller, Manso is a mere 'workaday' writer – dutiful in his employment and a good citizen, but inescapably dull. Two centuries later, his opponents' criteria of judgement still exert a defining influence over German literary history.<sup>461</sup>

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<sup>458</sup> Otto, 'Horen', p. 400.

<sup>459</sup> Bernd Leistner, 'Der Xenien-Streit', in Dahnke and Leistner 1, p. 467.

<sup>460</sup> Matthias Luserke-Jaqui and Grit Dommes (eds), *Schiller-Handbuch* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2005), p. 275.

<sup>461</sup> There are, it should be noted, occasional exceptions. The article in the *Schiller-Handbuch* on *Die Horen* adopts a different view to that on the *Xenien*. See Luserke-Jaqui and Dommes (eds), *Schiller-Handbuch*, p. 526: 'Hatten die scharfen Kritiker Unrecht? Waren sie nicht in der Lage, die anspruchsvollen Impulse von Schillers ambitioniertem Projekt zu verstehen? Die heutige Perspektive ist nicht mehr geneigt, den Klassikern gegen die Tageskritik und die *poetae minores* automatisch Recht zu geben. Überzogen konnte ein Habitus wirken, der sich selbst auf eine souveräne Position

## Chapter 4

'Man [könnte] unmöglich etwas nachteiliges von Garven sagen, was er nicht [...]

selbst gesagt hat'<sup>462</sup>: Schlegel and Schleiermacher's reception of Garve

Christian Garve's reception at the hands of the Jena Romantics heralded a sea change in his reputation.

Garve was held in high regard by his immediate contemporaries. [...] This changed drastically, however, with the arrival of the early Romantics: [sc. Friedrich] Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher and Friedrich von Schlegel, in particular, thought that Garve was the role model of a shallow, superficial type of philosopher.<sup>463</sup>

Schleiermacher's review and the many fragments where Schlegel attacks Garve played a critical role in making sure that Garve – and the philosophy he stood for – would be excluded from subsequent German intellectual life.

Schlegel and Schleiermacher loom large in the sparsely populated landscape of Garve scholarship, their withering condemnations of him a reliably rich source of sound bites.<sup>464</sup> (Schleiermacher's unforgettable description of Garve's philosophy as 'das ganze unerschöpfliche Chaos von Unphilosophie und Geistlosigkeit' is just one

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jenseits des Parteienstreits zu katapultieren und mit der Abstraktion von den Gegensätzen der aktuellen politischen und sozialen Auseinandersetzungen eine geradezu olympische Position einzunehmen suchte.'

<sup>462</sup> The quotation is from Schleiermacher's review of Garve. See Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher, 'Garve's letzte noch von ihm selbst herausgegebene Schriften', in Schleiermacher, *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Hans-Joachim Birkner et al, (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 1979-), vol. 3 (= KGA 3), pp. 65-72, here: p. 72. Originally published in *Athenäum. Eine Zeitschrift von August Wilhelm Schlegel und Friedrich Schlegel*, vol. 3, part 1 (Berlin: 1800), pp. 129-139

<sup>463</sup> Falk Wunderlich, 'Christian Garve', in *The Bloomsbury Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century German Philosophers* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), p. 246.

<sup>464</sup> See Altmayer, *Popularphilosophie*, pp. 33-40; Koch-Schwarzer, *Populare Moralphilosophie*, pp. 279-286.

example.)<sup>465</sup> However, such scholarship tends to quote these verdicts without engaging in detailed analysis of them. This is unfortunate, because Schlegel and Schleiermacher's strategy in attacking Garve is certainly interesting enough to merit close attention. The following chapter will seek to rectify this deficit; its central thesis is that the Romantic polemic offers important insights into the conflict between their way of thinking and Garve's. If Garve was indeed the victim of a process by which one approach to philosophy was elided from German intellectual life in favour of another, then this is nowhere better illustrated than in Schlegel and Schleiermacher's comments upon him.

The episode is particularly useful in this way because of a striking feature: at one point after another, the attack on Garve bears upon some issue of importance to him, and on which he reflected at some length. There are a number of important correspondences between his assailants' caricature and central points in his project. The titular quotation, from Schleiermacher's review, hints at this – though it is also misleading. Garve would not, for example, have endorsed the description of his philosophy as empiricist 'Chaos'; but Schleiermacher's polemical verdict touches on a matter of central importance for Garve's philosophy, namely what he described as the 'observing method'. A parallel phenomenon is evident in other areas. In these cases, the two sides bring very different perspectives to bear upon the point at issue, making it possible to trace out where the conflicts lay.

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<sup>465</sup> See Schleiermacher, KGA 3, p. 68.

The chapter will trace these conflicts across four different areas. The first has to do with Garve's commitment to useful philosophy, which the Romantics dismiss as narrow and unimaginative. The second has to do with his tendency towards commentary, attacked as denoting unoriginality. The third deals with his treatment of the observing method. The fourth covers the ethical precept of moderation; here, the point is not primarily that the Romantics reject a particular tenet of Garve's thought, but rather that their criticism touches upon a concept of broad significance for him.

The matters at stake here have something in common with previous exchanges; the rhetorical and humanist traditions are important backgrounds once more. The conviction that philosophy should be practically useful was central to the humanist project, as was the practice of commentary. Other traditions also play a role, however, and cannot easily be included under the humanist banner. In the matter of observation, Bacon was an important influence for Garve – and he was no humanist, even if some of his concerns reflect theirs.<sup>466</sup> Many humanists had read their Cicero and would surely have recognized moderation as an important virtue, but it has a wide range of applications; when Cicero proclaimed it, he had an eye on older Stoic traditions.

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<sup>466</sup> The preface to Bacon's *New Organon* includes the following appraisal of antiquity: 'The wisdom which we have drawn in particular from the Greeks seems to be a kind of childish stage of science, and to have the child's characteristic of being all too ready to talk, but too weak and immature to produce anything.' As Nauert points out, no humanist could have said such a thing. See Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, ed. Lisa Jardine and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 6; Charles Nauert, *Humanism and the culture of Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 221-222.

The scope of the chapter is thus broader than that of previous chapters. Its approach is also more discursive. The previous three chapters have all been oriented around one historically specific exchange of views, but this is an attempt to draw out, from various texts, a range of common themes in both Garve's own work and the Romantics' attack on him. This approach, however, serves a specific purpose in light of the present thesis. Its broad coverage illustrates that the conflict between the Romantics and Garve was both wide-ranging and fundamental, bearing upon central aspects of his thought. In portraying the conflict in this way, the chapter also seeks to demonstrate the significance of what Schleiermacher and Schlegel were trying to do. They were concerned not merely to crush an unfortunate *Popularphilosoph*, but to drive more than one distinguished tradition from German intellectual culture.

## Utility and public service

A common feature in the Romantic polemic against Garve, and indeed against the *Aufklärung* more generally, was its commitment to utility. Utility is a casual aside in some of Friedrich Schlegel's fragments on Garve. Twice, Garve is cited as the representative of a wrong-headed approach to philology:

Nothwendigkeit der Philologie deducirt. Nicht die Nützlichkeit zu Allerley, wie bisher. Auch in diesem Stücke denkt man zur Zeit sehr Garvianisch.

Die Philologie ist nicht bloß so zu allerley Dingen nütze, wie Garve und Heyne und Rehberg meynen, sondern eine nothwendige Aufgabe der Menschheit.<sup>467</sup>

Schlegel associates Garve here with the practice of studying ancient texts as sources of practical instruction. This is implicitly presented as a reductionist enterprise; it is an inferior goal to studying the texts as necessary ends in themselves. In the second fragment, Garve is mentioned by name; in the first, he appears to feature less for his own sake than as a general label for a mistaken intellectual approach. Schlegel employs the same strategy of using Garve as a pejorative label elsewhere. The fragments on philology begin with a lament: 'Warum sind fast alle Philologen Garvianer?'<sup>468</sup>

Schlegel's accusation suggests that Garve's priorities are confused: a focus on usefulness neglects more important aims for intellectual work. This Romantic attitude finds its fullest expression in August Wilhelm Schlegel's Berlin lectures. The

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<sup>467</sup> KFSa 16, pp. 35, 45.

<sup>468</sup> KFSa 16, p. 35.

older Schlegel offers a caricature of *Aufklärung* philosophy as opposed to

Kantianism:

Die Aufklärung will nun zwar eine Art von Popularphilosophie vorstellen, aber keineswegs wissenschaftlich und abstract, oder richtiger ausgedrückt (denn das letzte Wort schreibt sich wohl hauptsächlich von der analytischen Philosophie her) speculativ seyn, weil sie darüber die allgemeine Verständlichkeit einbüßen würde, die sie von ihren Lehren verlangt und rühmt. Ferner empfiehlt sie freylich das Forschen und Zweifeln, aber nur bis auf einen gewissen Grad [...] Endlich geht der uninteressirte Wahrheitsforscher seinen Weg fort, unbekümmert bey welchen Resultaten er endlich anlangen wird; ihm ist, mit Aufopferung aller persönlichen Neigungen die Wahrheit immer lieb und recht. [...] Die Aufklärung bezeugt hingegen eine zärtliche Besorgniß um das, was sie zum Wohl der Menschheit rechnet; sie bestellt gern die Resultate der Untersuchung im voraus, damit ja nichts zerstörendes und gefährliches, nichts allzukühnes, oder dem Misbrauch unterworfenen zum Vorschein komme. Da sie folglich überall auf halbem Wege stehen bleibt, die Wahrheit an sich aber durchaus nur zu einem unbedingten Streben anregen kann, so muß es wohl etwas andres seyn, was sie von der Wahrheit will, mit einem Worte Brauchbarkeit und Anwendbarkeit. Hier zeigt sich nun schon die ganze verkehrte Denkart, das an sich Gute (wovon das Wahre ein Theil, eine Seite ist) dem Nützlichen unterzuordnen.<sup>469</sup>

Schlegel uses the term 'Popularphilosophie' as a label for the *Aufklärung* enterprise more generally. Hostile to abstraction and difficult technical terminology, it is committed to the much more tangible goal of the good of humanity. Any of its findings must be practically useful, with some obvious relation to human experience. This approach sounds self-evidently commendable, but Schlegel claims that it is intellectual suicide. By definition, it places illegitimate restrictions on the high enterprise of pursuing truth: if such truth risks being susceptible to abuse, the *Aufklärer* shuns it. The good, the highest goal, is subordinated to what is useful.

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<sup>469</sup> AWS 1, p. 532.

Schlegel condemns Enlightened utility as a reprehensible confusion of intellectual priorities.

Both Schlegels are certain: the belief that the measure of all intellectual work is its practical application is a false one, and fails to grasp the real point of philosophy.

Occupied as they are with pedestrian practicalities, the well-intentioned but misguided *Aufklärer* miss out on the most important thing, namely the quest for truth. The accusation therefore implies its own hierarchy of intellectual priorities. In this respect, August Wilhelm Schlegel echoes Plato.

It is only [the philosopher's] body that has its place and home in the city; his mind, considering all these things petty and of no account, disdains them and is borne in all directions, as Pindar says, 'both below the earth,' and measuring the surface of the earth, and 'above the sky,' studying the stars, and investigating the universal nature of every thing that is, each in its entirety, never lowering itself to anything close at hand.<sup>470</sup>

The philosopher should only be interested in truth: any other concerns, born from the life of the society he inhabits, are to be expunged from his mind. That practicality is not a noble goal for philosophy follows inevitably from this. The philosopher who pauses to ask questions about the relevance of his investigations is missing the point.

So said Plato, and so seem to think the Schlegels. However, to a different cast of mind, this claim would have seemed shocking, even morally objectionable. The whole point of intellectual work was precisely that it should be useful. Cicero is the

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<sup>470</sup> Plato, *Theaetetus*, 173.c-e, pp. 119-121.

ancient model here. For him, a suspicion hangs over any learning which does not contribute to public life. The highest priority is not truth in some abstract sense, but duty to society:

Learning about and reflecting upon nature is somewhat truncated and incomplete if it results in no action. Such action is seen most clearly in the protection of men's interests and therefore is concerned with the fellowship of the human race. For that reason this should be ranked above mere learning. [...] We realize that the duties of justice must be given precedence over the pursuit of knowledge and the duties imposed by that. For the former look to the benefit of mankind, and a man should hold nothing more sacred than that. But note that those who have devoted their entire life to learning things have, after all, managed to contribute to the benefits and advantages of mankind. They have educated many to be better citizens and more beneficial to their countries.<sup>471</sup>

Action (in public life) is superior to learning, and the value of learning depends on the extent to which it contributes to action. Plato gives the impression that learning about nature for its own sake would indeed be the highest goal of philosophy, but Cicero presents all such learning as incomplete. The kind of learning which he commends is practically-minded: it consists above all in the education of statesmen and citizens.

This view of learning is closely related to one of the more general claims in *De officiis*. Cicero identifies his position with Stoic philosophy:

We are not born for ourselves alone, to use Plato's splendid words, but our country claims for itself one part of our birth, and our friends another. Moreover, as the Stoics believe, everything produced on the earth is created for the use of mankind, and men are born for the sake of men, so that they may be able to assist one another. Consequently, we ought in this to follow nature as our leader, to contribute to the common stock the things that benefit everyone together, and, by the exchange of dutiful services, by giving and

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<sup>471</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.153-155, pp. 59-60.

receiving expertise and effort and means, to bind fast the fellowship of men with each other.<sup>472</sup>

Doing good in the community is nothing less, on this view, than fulfilling one's human vocation. Cicero proclaims that everything exists 'for the use of mankind', so to fail to be useful is to miss what one was created for. It is incumbent upon all men – philosophers or otherwise – to contribute positively to their society. The philosopher does this by ensuring that his intellectual labours issue in some practical benefit.

The contrast between this view and the perspective which the Schlegels assume is clear. On the one hand, the philosopher should be committed above all to truth, and therefore an interest in practicalities debases his endeavour; on the other hand, the philosopher's work is pointless unless it has practical value. The latter view, essential for the project of Renaissance humanism, has already played a prominent role in previous chapters' analysis of Garve's work, and it is important again here, both for Garve's own perspective and his reception by like-minded thinkers. Usefulness is not an excuse for substandard intellectual work, but is morally superior to abstract speculation.

Garve's obituary of Christian Fürchtegott Gellert exhibits this conviction. Gellert's orientation towards popular philosophy is presented as a virtue.

[Gellert] hatte in seinen ersten academischen Jahren die tief sinnige speculative Philosophie sehr geliebt, und mit Eifer getrieben. Aber in der That war es nur der Eifer eines an sich thätigen Geistes, der seinen wahren Gegenstand noch nicht gefunden hatte. Diese Philosophie

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<sup>472</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.22, pp. 9-10.

hatte gewiß auf seine Schriften und seinen Charakter wenig Einfluß. Aber er machte sich selbst in der Folge eine andere; eine, die dem bloß gesunden Verstande aller Menschen näher kommt; die in der Gesellschaft und der Welt besser gebraucht werden kann; und welche die Einbildungskraft nicht tödtet, sondern leitet.<sup>473</sup>

The transformation of Gellert's thought, after his initial studies, was a positive one.

Although not illegitimate, metaphysical speculation does not fulfil the duty of being useful to one's fellow human beings. Gellert's early dabbling in it is associated with immaturity, and intellectual zeal without knowledge. His maturer years supplied wisdom, and insight into the kind of philosophy which bears practically upon human life and is accessible to minds outside of the academic ivory tower. The Schlegels portray Garve's brand of philosophy as lacking in imaginative power, but here, Garve claims that it is in fact abstract philosophy which kills the imagination. A proper practical focus, by contrast, stimulates it.

The tenor of Gellert's philosophy (his 'Denkungsart') is usefulness to the community, and this is manifestly a virtue in Garve's eyes.

Sowohl seine natürlichen Kräfte, als seine erworbenen Einsichten, hatten den eignen Charakter der Gemeinnützigkeit. Seine Wissenschaft und sein Genie, anstatt daß sie sonst den Mann, dem sie in einem vorzüglichen Grade eignen werden, von den übrigen gemeinern Menschen entfernen, dienten nur dazu, ihn genauer mit denselben zu vereinigen. Da sie sonst oft nichts als eine Hochachtung auflegen, die immer mit einiger Eifersucht, und also mit einer Art von Widerwillen verbunden ist, so sollten sie bey ihm nur seiner Tugend Zutritt verschaffen. Sie leuchteten gleichsam vor ihm her, damit die Wirkung seines Charakters und seiner Menschenliebe sich auf Mehrere erstrecken könnte.<sup>474</sup>

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<sup>473</sup> GW 5.1, p. 190.

<sup>474</sup> GW 5.2, p. 185.

‘Gemeinnützig’ is more precise than ‘nützlich’.<sup>475</sup> Garve is not simply claiming that Gellert’s character and activity had positive consequences in some undefined sense, but that he made a noteworthy contribution to the welfare of his society. Garve avoids connotations of narrow utility to portray Gellert as someone who can communicate with the people around him and benefit them. Usefulness is the counterpoint not to imagination and profundity, but to the misanthropic isolation of scholars whose gifts serve only to alienate them.

Similar values informed Garve’s own reception by sympathetic contemporaries.

Johann Kaspar Friedrich Manso’s article begins by foregrounding precisely Garve’s commitment to the virtue of useful scholarship:

[Garve] hat nützlich für die Welt gewirkt, und in seinen letzten Jahren für sie gelebt, ohne daß sie für ihn lebte. Als der Jüngling mit der umgekehrten Fackel ihm nahte, fand er ihn wie einen Reisenden, der seinen Wohnort zu verlassen bereit ist, aber selbst die letzten Augenblicke seines Aufenthaltes benutzt, um sein Andenken den Zurückbleibenden theurer zu machen – er fand ihn noch bemüht, die Gedanken seines ermattenden Geistes zu sammeln und aufzuzeichnen. Gewiß, wenn es irgend ein Leben giebt, das zu einer dankbaren Erinnerung begeistert, so ist es das Leben des echten Weisen.<sup>476</sup>

Garve is commended for his unflagging desire to benefit his fellow men, even in the face of death. The key term, ‘nützlich’, reappears. For Manso, it does not denote

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<sup>475</sup> See Adelung, art. ‘Gemeinnützig’: ‘den gemeinen Nutzen, d.i. den Nutzen der ganzen Gesellschaft, zu welcher man gehöret, befördernd.’ Contrast Adelung, art. ‘Nützlich’: ‘Nutzen habend und bringend, doch nur in dem ersten Falle der dritten Bedeutung, durch seinen Gebrauch oder Genuß jemandes Absicht befördernd, und in engem Verstande, den Zustand anderer Dinge verbessernd; im Gegensatze des schädlich. Einem nützlich seyn, dessen Absichten, und in engerer Bedeutung, dessen Vollkommenheit befördern.’ Both in Adelung, online at <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Gemeinnützig?hl=gemeinnutzig> and <http://www.zeno.org/Adelung-1793/A/Nützlich?hl=nutzlich>. Articles retrieved 10.4.2018.

<sup>476</sup> Johann Caspar Friedrich Manso, ‘Christian Garve nach seinem schriftstellerischen Character’, in Manso, *Vermischte Abhandlungen und Aufsätze* (Breslau: Korn, 1821), pp. 109-110.

pedestrianism or narrowness, but productive activity. The view of Garve is one of admirable selflessness. He refused to descend into inertia, but resolved to contribute to society, even when he no longer gained anything from it.

Manso's article is much occupied with the values and priorities which informed Garve's work, and these consistently revolve around the central aim of benefiting his readers. Even if not always achieved, the goal is always evident:

Wenn einige [von Garves] Versuche sich auch mehr in das Gebieth der eigentlichen Gelehrsamkeit verlieren, oder an den Gränzen der Critik streifen, so ist doch selbst in ihnen das Bestreben nach Gemeinnützigkeit und Verständlichkeit unverkennbar, und die Seite, die er seinem Gegenstande abzugewinnen sucht, immer die fruchtbare und practische.<sup>477</sup>

As Garve commended Gellert's 'Gemeinnützigkeit', Manso commends Garve's. 'Verständlichkeit' is its corollary. Given Manso's view of the philosopher's enterprise, comprehensibility of style is not a convenient excuse to avoid intellectual hard labour, but a basic requirement. Garve could scarcely be useful to a non-academic audience if they could not understand what he was saying.

These priorities are what mark Garve out as a philosopher. His approach is defined by its commitment to themes with an obvious practical application rather than abstract speculation:

Es war [...] Garvens Sache nicht, die Fäden einer verwickelten Empfindung bis in ihre feinsten und zärttesten Bestandtheile zu zerlegen, und eine Erscheinung bis in die verschlungensten Gänge der Metaphysik zu verfolgen. [...] Aber einen Gegenstand der Seelenlehre, Moral und Politik, oder der Kunst und Schönheit, in allen den verschiedenen Beziehungen darzustellen, in welchen er für das

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<sup>477</sup> Manso, 'Garve', p. 111.

praktische Leben wichtig und für den Menschen nützlich werden kann, – das war und blieb das Unterscheidende seiner Philosophie. [...] Die feinen und eindringenden Unterscheidungen der Metaphysik waren ihm nicht unwillkommen, und erregten oft seine ganze Bewunderung, in so fern er in ihnen Eigenschaften des Geistes, die er, wenn er sie auch nicht selbst besaß, doch an andern schätzte, – ausdauernde Kraft und Tiefsinn, wahrnahm: aber sie galten ihm nie so viel, als Erörterungen practischer Gegenstände, und verloren an eigenthümlichem Werthe, je mehr sie aus der Sphäre des Begreiflichen und Brauchbaren in das Reich des Unbegreiflichen und Unanwendbaren übergingen.<sup>478</sup>

Garve was no metaphysicist, but Manso counters that he never sought to be – and with good reason. His own chief interest lay in studying the various aspects of human culture, with a pronounced practical emphasis. As Garve did with Gellert, Manso frames Garve’s decision to focus his attention on these subjects as a moral choice: Garve was always motivated by the good of his fellow human beings. The same principles apply to his evaluation of other philosophers’ work. Manso actually uses the term ‘Werth’: the value of philosophy consists in its practical benefit, as well as its comprehensibility.

Manso goes on to defend Garve’s brand of philosophy against those who would deny its claim to intellectual seriousness. His response is based upon the premise that the philosopher has a vocation towards the rest of society:

Treffe [Garve] daher immerhin der Vorwurf, daß er in seinen Untersuchungen nicht bis zum Aeußersten vordringt und die Spitze nicht erreicht, von wannen dem Blicke sich keine weitere Aussicht eröffnet! Wenn dieses Höchste überhaupt erreichbar ist, so ist doch nichts gewisser, als daß nur ein kleines Gefolge den Philosophen bis dahin begleiten kann, und daß diese Wenigen nicht die Einzigen sind, die seiner Leitung bedürfen. Das Sehenswerthe innerhalb dem großen Bezirke des Minerven-Tempels ist nicht bloß das verschleyerte Bildniß im Allerheiligsten; rund um den Tempel her liegen noch gar viele

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<sup>478</sup> Manso, ‘Garve’, pp. 125-126.

Hallen, reich an Schätzen und Kleinodien, die hervorgezogen zu werden verdienen, und die Mühe des Hervorziehens belohnen. Warum wollen wir ihnen diese Mühe nicht schenken, oder kaltsinnig vor denen vorübergehen, die sie belohnend finden?<sup>479</sup>

For Manso, the philosopher is first and foremost a teacher of his fellow human beings. With this in mind, it is not particularly important that Garve does not guide his reader to the limits of abstract speculation: few could follow him if he did, and Manso suggests that such an enterprise would be largely pointless. Manso does not deny that metaphysics comprises the profoundest and most difficult aspects of philosophy, but claims that it would be petty to deny philosophy's other insights to the public. Manso follows Garve by implying that the value of philosophical work depends on its benefit to wider society, outside of the academy, rather than on an assumed hierarchy of intellectual seriousness which places metaphysics above popular philosophy. Those who would restrict the title of philosophy to metaphysics are portrayed as inimical to the good of the public.

The article concludes with the claim that it is Garve's usefulness which guarantees his value for future generations. It is to be hoped that the approach he represents will become increasingly widespread:

Nicht nur einzelne große Abschnitte in Garvens Versuchen, selbst mehrere seiner ältern sowohl als neuern Abhandlungen enthalten einen Schatz von Weisheit, aus dem sich der geübte, wie der ungeübte Verstand zu allen Zeiten wahrhaft bereichern wird. Die Bemerkungen, die er in ihnen niedergelegt hat, tragen nicht bloß den Stempel der Gemeinnützigkeit und der Wahrheit; sie sind zugleich so fein und gehaltvoll, daß sie immer für gangbare Münze gelten und als solche nie im Umlauf verlieren werden. Wenn daher auch, wie wir alle hoffen und wünschen, das Philosophiren über practische Gegenstände sich immer weiter verbreiten, und gewisse, jetzt noch

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<sup>479</sup> Manso, 'Garve', p. 127.

auf einen engen Kreis beschränkte, Kenntnisse eine größere Sphäre gewinnen sollten, so wird doch selbst die edlere und gebildete Lesewelt ihn schwerlich so weit überholen, oder je so weit vor ihm vorausseilen, daß sie seiner Belehrung entbehren könnte, sondern zu ihm, wie die Engländer zu dem scharfsinnigen Hume, immer mit Vergnügen und Nutzen zurückkehren.<sup>480</sup>

Manso praises Garve's 'Gemeinnützigkeit', but hurries to add that 'Gemeinnützigkeit' is no barrier to intellectual seriousness. Garve's essays are rich in wisdom: as well as being beneficial to the general public, they are a source of sophisticated insights, and an academic audience can read them with profit too. The connotations of 'Nutzen' are altogether positive. When future generations take up Garve's work, they will find contents that are not merely of antiquarian interest but retain their practical value, even when Garve himself is long gone.

For the Romantics, the 'usefulness' of a philosophy is not a positive value. In the older Schlegel's Berlin lectures, it is associated with a lack of intellectual substance and connotes a serious confusion of intellectual priorities. However, for the concept of philosophy which took its orientation from Stoic ethics, usefulness is a central virtue. To do good to one's fellow human beings is an integral part of fulfilling one's vocation. Garve argues that investigating themes with a practical interest is not a means of avoiding hard intellectual work, but rather serves to fulfil the philosopher's moral duty towards his society. For all his claims to intellectual superiority, the metaphysicist locked in his ivory tower neglects to do what philosophy is supposed to do.

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<sup>480</sup> Manso, 'Garve', p. 131.

## Commentary and ‘Selbstdenken’

The Romantic attack on the Enlightened commitment to utility fits within the pattern established by previous exchanges in this thesis; it is a neat illustration of the conflict which goes back to Cicero and Plato.<sup>481</sup> Other themes in Schlegel and Schleiermacher’s polemic, though still related to the rhetorical tradition, are slightly further removed. Among these are the biting criticisms – particularly prominent in Schleiermacher, but also present in Schlegel – of Garve’s tendency towards commentary. Garve’s commentary constituted some of his best-known work. His translations of Cicero and Ferguson were accompanied by copious notes. Schleiermacher frames the practice of commentary as evident in Garve’s work more generally, and takes a dim view of it: to his mind, it displays a signal lack of originality.

Schleiermacher makes his position clear at the beginning of his review. His concern is ‘Garve’s letzte noch von ihm selbst herausgegebene Schriften’, and he begins by affirming the value of these late published works: ‘Obgleich der Tod alle [Garves] letzte Schriften auf eine oder die andre Art unterbrochen hat [...] so sind sie doch bey weitem das wichtigste, was wir von dem Verstorbenen besitzen.’<sup>482</sup> The next sentence tells the reader why the late works are a better source for Garve than what went before.

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<sup>481</sup> See thesis introduction, pp. 37-45.

<sup>482</sup> Schleiermacher, KGA 3, pp. 65-66.

Was er früher philosophirt hat, geschah immer nur in Anmerkungen zu fremden Gedanken und in Reflexionen über einzelne abgerißne Materien.<sup>483</sup>

Garve's earlier work provides fewer insights into his thought, because it consists 'only' in comments on the thoughts of others. Schleiermacher's 'nur' is crucial: it establishes a distinction of value, implying that Garve's commentary is of less worth than (presumably) independent, original thought. The suggestion is that for the majority of his career, Garve never produced any significant philosophy of his own – a serious accusation to lay at the door of someone acknowledged as an important intellectual.<sup>484</sup>

This strand of argument continues elsewhere in the review.

[Garve] kommt nie zu etwas Ganzem oder Ursprünglichem, sondern muß sich immer nur im Kreise des Abgebildeten und Einzelnen herumdrehen.<sup>485</sup>

Schleiermacher's accusation has two dimensions: Garve's work lacks both originality on the one hand and systematic coherence and wholeness on the other. 'Nur' appears again, presenting Garve's derivative work as inferior to Schleiermacher's idea of good original production. 'Abgebildet' carries strong connotations of copying something superior. Garve is characterized as a distinctly second-rate intellectual. His shortcomings cannot be interpreted positively as part of a deliberate strategy, but are the result of incapacity: he must go around in circles, prohibited by his own deficiencies from achieving anything greater.

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<sup>483</sup> Schleiermacher, KGA 3, p. 66.

<sup>484</sup> The other side of Schleiermacher's accusation (here and elsewhere), that Garve deals only with isolated topics in unsystematic fashion, is covered in more detail below. See pp. 241-245.

<sup>485</sup> Schleiermacher, KGA 3, p. 68.

Schleiermacher goes on to argue that Garve's driving tendency towards commentary entails another, converse failing: it prohibits serious intellectual engagement with the subjects Garve treats. This is particularly evident in Garve's fragments on Frederick the Great.<sup>486</sup>

In dem großen Abschnitt vom literarischen Charakter [Friedrichs] steht von diesem so gut als gar nichts, sondern hier ist der König recht Garvisch wie eine Stelle behandelt, über welche und aus Gelegenheit welcher er mancherlei Anmerkungen anbringt. Mit Unrecht sage ich *hier*, der König ist eigentlich überall so gebraucht.<sup>487</sup>

Where Garve claims to treat Frederick's literary achievements, these are in fact conspicuous by their absence. Instead, the king himself might as well be a passage in a text, and Garve acts as a commentator. He is less interested in what Frederick actually had to say than in the opportunities for reflection afforded him by Frederick's writing. This is true throughout Garve's text, and it is also typically 'Garvisch' in a more general sense. Schleiermacher regards Garve's practice of commenting on other writers as a definitive characteristic; his condemnation of this practice is clear.

This theme is more prominent in Schleiermacher's review than in Schlegel's diverse fragments on Garve, but it does find an airing there, too. A fragment in the *Philosophische Lehrjahre* discusses Garve's style of philosophy:

Schillers Prosa hat viel Aehnlichkeit mit der Garveschen. – Garve recensirt (in der gemeinen Bedeutung) die Objekte über die er philosophiren will.<sup>488</sup>

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<sup>486</sup> Garve, *Fragmente zur Schilderung des Geistes, des Charakters und der Regierung Friedrichs des Zweyten*, 2 vols (Breslau: 1798), now in GW 7.

<sup>487</sup> Schleiermacher, KGA 3, p. 70.

<sup>488</sup> KFS 18, p. 219.

The fragment begins with a criticism of Schiller; comparison with Garve is already enough to suggest a negative judgement. When Schlegel turns his attention to Garve, his specific point is that whereas Garve purports to philosophize, all that he actually does is to review. Instead of producing independent, original reflection, Garve merely evaluates and comments upon the thought of others. That these two activities are mutually exclusive is suggested by the opposition between Garve's intent and his execution. This opposition implies further a hierarchy of value: there is a great difference between the serious philosopher and the hack scribbler, churning out reviews to fill the pages of one of the many journals in German literary life at the time.

Schlegel and Schleiermacher both claim that most of Garve's philosophy consists in commentary upon other thinkers. Much like his commitment to usefulness, this is, in their eyes, self-evidently bad. As there, the force of the accusation rests on an assumed premise: namely that commentary is not intellectually serious and necessarily excludes independent thought. Garve articulates quite a different view; again, his position has roots in the claims of humanism and rhetoric. He contends for the value of commentary as demanding hard intellectual work; he also argues, more specifically, that thoughtful engagement with other texts is key to developing the capacity for independent thought.

Garve discusses the specific intellectual practice of commentary in 'Die Kunst zu denken'. The 'commentirende Methode' is among the methods he suggests for

young thinkers, and he argues that it does indeed constitute independent

intellectual work:

Der welcher die Meinungen anderer zu erklären und zu bestätigen sucht, faßt zwar nur fremde Einsichten auf: aber die Arbeit, durch welche er unter der Hülle der Worte, die verborgene Idee zu entdecken sucht – die, durch welche er sie bestimmt, entwickelt, mit den vorhergehenden oder folgenden in Zusammenhang bringt, durch historische Umstände erläutert, endlich gegen Einwendungen zu retten sucht – diese ganze Arbeit des Auslegers ist doch sein eigen; und er hat zum Gewinnste wenigstens die Hoffnung, seinem Verstand durch einen Zuwachs von Kenntnissen bereichert zu haben.<sup>489</sup>

Garve sketches the diverse intellectual exercises involved in commentary and exegesis. The source material may be from another author, but the enterprise of understanding this demands hard independent effort. Being from a very different cultural background, the text also promises the reward of new knowledge.

Commentary thus entails significant labour and profit.

Garve also argues that it reflects the general human learning process. Most thought in history has always been thought about someone else's ideas.

Einige wenige Männer, die fähiger oder glücklicher waren, als die übrigen, erfanden von Zeit zu Zeit neue Wahrheiten [...]. Aber auf jede solche Entdeckung folgte immer ein langer Zeitraum, in welchem eine weit größere Anzahl von Menschen sich begnügte, die Ideen des großen Mannes verstehen zu lernen und ändern verständlich zu machen; [...] mit einem Worte sie so zu bearbeiten, daß sie, als neue Werkstücke, zu dem bisher aufgeführten Baue der menschlichen Erkenntniß hinzugefügt werden könnten. Selbst jene Erfinder – einige wenige der ältesten ausgenommen – fingen damit an, zu lernen, was andre weise Männer vor ihnen gedacht und erfunden hatten. Und den Uebergang vom Lernen zum Selbstdenken machten sie gemeinlich durch die Auslegung – ich will sagen, durch die Entwicklung und Erörterung jener ältern Ideen.<sup>490</sup>

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<sup>489</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 380-381.

<sup>490</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 383-384.

Only a very small proportion of human beings have been capable of truly innovative contributions to knowledge: throughout history, the vast majority of intellectual activity has consisted in the scholarly labour of editing, analysing, clarifying, and communicating the findings of this select few. Even those who do go on to original intellectual production typically begin their careers by interpreting the work of others. Garve thus gives philology a crucial role in human intellectual development: it is the quintessential scholarly activity.

Garve goes on to cite the reason why commentary is so valuable. It leads people to do what they might not do of their own accord:

Die Menschen sind schwer zum Selbstdenken zu bewegen. Sie müssen dazu nach und nach gleichsam herangezogen werden. Und einer der bequemsten Wege dazu ist, sich an die Ideen andrer anzuschließen, diese bis auf ihre kleinsten Bestandtheile aus einander zu legen, sich von dem Inhalte der Sätze, so wie von den Worten und Redensarten, womit sie ausgedrückt worden sind, Rechenschaft zu geben; und mit einem auf die Sache gewandten Blicke, das, was von ihr gesagt und geschrieben worden ist, zu durchforschen.<sup>491</sup>

A thorough analysis of both the language and the contents of a text is a highly useful exercise. All of the effort involved in this process constitutes a significant help towards thinking for oneself. As this is something most people are reluctant to do, philology becomes very important indeed.

Garve continues to argue that the hard work of interpretation has intellectual value, apart from the value of the work analysed. A text does not need to be intellectually brilliant in order to be a useful object of study:

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<sup>491</sup> GW 1.2, p. 386.

Dadurch haben die alten Schriftsteller vielleicht noch mehr, als durch ihren Inhalt genutzt, daß sie uns zu dieser Vorübung des Denkens, zu der Arbeit des Auslegens, durch ihre, von der Verschiedenheit der Sprachen und der Zeiten herrührende, Dunkelheit, die mannigfaltigste Gelegenheit verschafft, und, durch ihr auf Alterthum und wirkliche Vollkommenheit gegründetes Ansehn, einen lebhaften Antrieb gegeben haben. Es hat uns oft mehr Mühe gekostet, sie zu verstehen, als das, was wir aus ihnen lernten, werth war. Aber eben deßwegen haben wir auch, auf die Lesung ihrer Schriften, weit mehr Fleiß und Sorgfalt gewendet, als wir sonst würden gethan haben, und haben uns dadurch zu einer anhaltenden Aufmerksamkeit, und zu der Betrachtung aller Seiten eines Gegenstandes gewöhnt.<sup>492</sup>

Texts from other times and places inevitably demand heightened effort if they are to be understood at all. Reading ancient texts provides training in disciplined attention, simply because of the cultural distance which separates them from the reader. This, perhaps more than the actual substance of their contents, is where their true value lies.

In Garve's view, then, commentary certainly counts as serious work. In particular, he justifies it with the claim that it is a convenient route to independent thought ('Selbstdenken'), contrary to what Schlegel and Schleiermacher assume. This particular claim has parallels elsewhere in his work. In the early essay, 'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk', he traces the process which leads from commenting on the work of others to thinking for oneself.

'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk' was published in Engel's *Der Philosoph für die Welt* in 1777.<sup>493</sup> The main body of the essay consists in a fictional father's advice to his

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<sup>492</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 386-387.

<sup>493</sup> The essay has not been published in Wölfel's edition of Garve's collected works. See *Der Philosoph für die Welt*, ed. J. J. Engel, vol. 2 (Leipzig: 1777), pp. 18-23. Also in Garve, *Popularphilosophische*

daughter on the honing of her intellectual faculties. This advice is grounded on a clearly articulated psychological theory:

Unsre Seele ist ein Maler, der entweder Originale nach der Natur, oder Kopien von guten Originalen malt. Jene sind ihre eignen Empfindungen, ihre eignen Beobachtungen und Schlüsse; diese sind alle die Begriffe, die wir durch Unterricht und Lektüre erhalten. Gute Meister verfertigen die Kopien nur als Schulen – so nenne sie ihre Uebungsstücke – um ein richtiges Auge und eine feste Hand zu bekommen: Schlechte bleiben dabey stehn und gründen darauf ihren ganzen Ruhm. [...] Ehe wir selbst denken, müssen wir erst einem andern nachdenken lernen.<sup>494</sup>

The soul is a painter; and a key component of learning to paint expertly is making copies of originals painted by others. This is only a means to an end – the end of painting originals for oneself – but it is still an important means, and the master will maximize the opportunity to improve his skills through assiduous practice. Applying the analogy, Garve claims that the ability to think independently is cultivated by careful imitation of other thinkers, which means reading their works. Garve goes so far as to use the vocabulary of ‘copies’ and ‘originals’; his purpose, however, is not to dismiss copies, but to argue for a proper understanding of their function. Though not the only element in intellectual training, copying is an inevitable first step (‘müssen’): the person who wants to become an original thinker cannot bypass active, intelligent reading.

Garve proceeds to explain the process of copying in more detail. The fictional addressee of the text has made a good beginning. ‘Du, mein Kind, hast schon den einen großen Schritt zur Weisheit gethan. Du hast Weise reden hören, oder hast das

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*Schriften*, ed. Kurt Wölfel, 2 vols (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1974), vol. 1, pp. 16-23. Quotations here are paginated according to the original.

<sup>494</sup> Garve, ‘Das Weihnachtsgeschenk’, p. 21.

gelesen, was du von ihnen gewünscht hättest zu hören.<sup>495</sup> However, passive reading, though a necessary condition for independent thought, is not a sufficient one. The young woman is to practise extracting the major lines of thought from what she reads, and reformulating them for herself ('Diese paar Worte schreibe nieder; sie sind alsdann dein, so wie der Gedanke, den sie ausdrücken'<sup>496</sup>). This will have far-reaching consequences:

Nicht lange werden diese Auszüge bloß abgekürzte fremde Gedanken seyn; du wirst in kurzem deine eigenen in ihnen entwickeln. Die Ideen entzünden einander, wie die elektrischen Funken. Wenn die Seele einmal in Arbeit und in Bewegung ist; wenn sie einmal den Faden des Denkens in der Hand hat; so geht sie geschwinde von der Nachbildung fremder Begriffe zur Hervorbringung eigener über. Ehe man sich versieht, kommt aus dem eigenen Schatz unserer Empfindungen ein Gedanke hervor, der für sich selbst zu schwach war emporzukommen, jetzt aber, weil er dem Gedanken des Verfassers nahe liegt, von diesem aufgeweckt und gehoben wird.<sup>497</sup>

Writing down the ideas of others is a means of appropriating them: once appropriated, they can act as stimuli to one's own thoughts. Garve uses several different analogies to illustrate a process which risks appearing abstract: electrical sparks igniting one another, a machine beginning to move, a thread of thought to be followed. The introduction of an external impetus, through reading, imparts energy to 'weak' ideas: these were already dimly present in the mind of the reader, but needed the assistance ('awakening') of related ideas. Thus Garve describes how it is that detailed, active engagement with intellectual content from others can lead directly to independent thought.

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<sup>495</sup> Garve, 'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk', p. 20.

<sup>496</sup> Garve, 'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk', p. 22.

<sup>497</sup> Garve, 'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk', pp. 22-23.

‘Das Weihnachtsgeschenk’ thus articulates the notion that intelligent reading can provide powerful stimulus for independent thought. This basic notion features in Garve’s framing of the notes to both Ferguson and Cicero. They model the process which ‘Das Weihnachtsgeschenk’ describes. The notes to Ferguson are presented as a kind of instruction manual:

Ich habe einige Fehler dieses Buches bemerkt, diese will ich hier anzeigen. Ich bin von einigen Stellen lebhafter gerührt worden, auf diese will ich den Leser aufmerksam machen. Die Gedanken des Verfassers haben einige bey mir selbst veranlassen. Die Sammlung derselben kann ohngefähr statt einer Anweisung dienen, wie man ein solches Buch lesen soll, oder statt eines Versuchs, wie ich es mit meinen jungen Freunden zu lesen wünschte.<sup>498</sup>

Garve’s ‘Anmerkungen’ record his personal response to reading the *Principles*, and highlight errors where he perceives them. The main content of the comments, however, consists in the thoughts which reading Ferguson has produced in Garve. By demonstrating intelligent engagement with the text, Garve intends to guide young thinkers on how they might read such works with profit for themselves.

The Cicero notes are prefaced similarly. Garve observes that their purpose is not (as might have been expected) to elucidate difficult passages: ‘Diese Anmerkungen sind zum Verstehen des Cicero nur an wenig Orten nothwendig.’<sup>499</sup> Instead, they are a loosely affiliated collection of the thoughts which reading Cicero has produced in Garve:

Diese Anmerkungen enthalten eine Reihe von Gedanken, die durch die Ideen des Cicero veranlassen worden sind, bald auf eine nähere, bald auf eine entferntere Weise mit ihnen verbunden, bald zur

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<sup>498</sup> Garve, ‘Anmerkungen des Uebersetzers’, in Adam Ferguson, *Adam Fergusons Grundsätze der Moralphilosophie*, trans. Garve (Leipzig: Dyck, 1772), p. 288. Now in GW 11.

<sup>499</sup> Garve *Philosophische Anmerkungen und Abhandlungen zu Cicero’s Büchern von den Pflichten*, 3 vols (Breslau; Leipzig: Korn, 1812), ‘Vorrede’ (unpaginated). Now in GW 10.

Erläuterung, bald zur Entwicklung derselben bestimmt; zuweilen bloß an sie angeknüpft; ungleich an Methode und in der Ausführung, und nicht frey von Wiederholungen.<sup>500</sup>

What Garve presents to his reader is neither a critical apparatus, nor a detailed exposition of Cicero's thought. Instead, he offers up a disparate series of ideas, widely varied in purpose, method, and execution, and not bound by a recognizable structure. Their only unifying feature is that they have some basis in the ideas of Cicero: the key term 'veranlassen' recurs. The notes are an extended demonstration (almost nine hundred pages' worth, across three volumes) of the process Garve outlines in 'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk', as the activity of Cicero's mind inspires Garve's in turn.

This same notion of reading as a stimulus to independent thought also informed the more sympathetic strand of Garve's reception. Like Schlegel and Schleiermacher, Manso perceives Garve's tendency towards commentary as important, but he interprets it as evidence of Garve's intellectual capacity. Garve's work enacts the process described in 'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk':

In der That, wenn es irgend einen Schriftsteller gab, der die Gabe besaß, sich dem Geiste eines andern anzuschmiegen, fremde Gedanken aufzufassen, fortzuführen und zu erläutern, ihnen nicht bloß eine anziehende Seite abzugewinnen, sondern ihnen selbst eine zu leihen, mit einem Worte, die Ideen anderer als Veranlassung zur Erfindung neuer Wahrheiten und zur Aufklärung dunkler Begriffe zu benutzen, so war es Garve. Man hat die Bemerkung gemacht, daß poetische Darstellungen, Gemählde und Gleichnisse nicht selten durch die Bearbeitung der zweyten Hand einen höhern Werth erhalten und an Vollkommenheit und Schönheit gewinnen. Mich dünkt, man könne dieß mit dem nähmlichen Rechte auch von den Behauptungen und Ideen der Philosophen sagen, die Garve

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<sup>500</sup> GW 10, 'Vorrede' (unpaginated).

erläuterte. Seine Gedanken sind gewöhnlich mehr werth, als diejenigen, durch welche sie geweckt und veranlaßt wurden.<sup>501</sup>

‘Veranlassung’ appears again. Manso acclaims Garve a master of the art of using others’ ideas as a stimulus to producing ideas of his own. All of his work is marked by imaginative, sympathetic engagement with other authors. Manso goes so far as to argue that Garve’s models actually gain from being appropriated by him. His intellectual response is frequently superior to the original which stimulated it, just as good imitation in poetry can surpass its models.<sup>502</sup>

The position which Garve develops, and which Manso echoes, looks back to claims in the humanist and rhetorical traditions. A fresh interest in philology was one of the defining characteristics of Renaissance humanism, and led to methodological conflicts with the scholastics:

Humanists studied philosophical works in the same way they dealt with literary or historical texts, that is, as philologists. As the name itself indicates, philologists were devotees (*philo*) of the study of words (*logoi*): they drew on their expert knowledge of the language, culture and history of Greece and Rome to determine the precise meaning of an ancient author’s words in a specific context. Philosophers, on the other hand, prided themselves on their devotion to the search for fundamental truths and timeless wisdom (*sophia*).<sup>503</sup>

Nauert identifies the assumptions behind this approach as definitive of the humanist enterprise:

Secular human history for Petrarch, therefore, does not consist of an undifferentiated flow of time and events as it had for even so gifted a

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<sup>501</sup> Manso, ‘Garve’, p. 116.

<sup>502</sup> For the broader intellectual tradition on which Manso’s comment draws, see e.g. Thomas M. Greene, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven: Yale, 1982).

<sup>503</sup> Jill Kraye, ‘Philologists and philosophers’, in Kraye (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 142. See also Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 11-12.

medieval thinker as Dante. Instead, it consists of discrete cultures, each of which has distinctive characteristics. Any literary work or other record of a particular age must be viewed in relation to the culture, and even the particular circumstances, from which it arose. This does not mean that past experience is irrelevant to present times, but it does mean that past experience can neither be used nor comprehended until it is seen in historical context. This historical-mindedness, this sensitivity to what texts, historical records, and even single words had meant originally, is the basis for the radically new way in which Renaissance humanists interpreted classical authors, even authors well known to the Middle Ages, such as Aristotle or Cicero or St Augustine.<sup>504</sup>

The humanists advocated a distinctively 'philological' approach to ancient texts, paying attention to linguistic features and assuming that effort was required to understand an author's original meaning. Garve's argument for the 'commenting method' in 'Die Kunst zu denken' recalls this position; for him, the cultural distance between the original text and the reader is precisely what gives commentary its unique intellectual value.

Garve's argument in 'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk' also evokes the rhetorical model of education. The essay describes reading as a process of intellectual imitation ('Ehe wir selbst denken, müssen wir erst einem andern nachdenken lernen').<sup>505</sup> The imitation of models was central to education for both Cicero and Quintilian. Cicero presents copying as essential for the budding student:

Let this then be my first counsel, that we show the student whom to copy, and to copy in such a way as to strive with all possible care to attain the most excellent qualities of his model. Next let practice be added, whereby in copying he may reproduce the pattern of his choice [...] He who is to proceed aright must first be watchful in making his choice, and afterwards extremely careful in striving to attain the most excellent qualities of the model he has copied.<sup>506</sup>

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<sup>504</sup> Nauert, *Humanism*, p. 20.

<sup>505</sup> Garve, 'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk', p. 21.

<sup>506</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* II.xii.90-92, vol. 1, pp. 265-267.

Quintilian assigns a similarly important role to imitation. He justifies it with reference to a more general claim regarding human learning processes:

It is from these and other writers worth reading that we must draw our stock of words, the variety of our Figures, and our system of Composition, and also guide our minds by the pattern they produce of all the virtues. It cannot be doubted that a large part of art consists of imitation. Invention of course came first and is the main thing, but good inventions are profitable to follow. Moreover, it is a principle of life in general that we want to do for ourselves what we approve in others. [...] In a word, we see the rudiments of every branch of learning shaped by standards prescribed for it. We obviously cannot help being either like the good or unlike them. Nature rarely makes us like them; imitation often does.<sup>507</sup>

Imitation is not only an essential exercise for the school pupil. Excellence in any field of activity involves modelling oneself on illustrious predecessors: this is a human universal. The vast majority of people begin their intellectual pathways by looking to those who have gone before them. Quintilian's argument has a pragmatic, labour-saving dimension; it makes little sense to do what someone else has already done.

Quintilian is, however, at pains to argue that imitation is not an end in itself.

Imitation alone is not sufficient, if only for the reason that a sluggish nature is only too ready to rest content with the inventions of others. For what would have happened in the days when models were not, if men had decided to do and think of nothing that they did not know of already? The answer is obvious: nothing would ever have been discovered. Why, then, is it a crime for us to discover something new? [...] It is a positive disgrace to be content to owe all our achievement to imitation. [...] Cast your eyes over the whole of history; you will find that no art has remained just as it was when it was discovered, nor come to a standstill at its very birth.<sup>508</sup>

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<sup>507</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* X.ii.1-3, vol. 4, p. 323.

<sup>508</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio* X.ii.4-8, vol. 4, pp. 77-79.

Intellectual achievement requires that one go beyond one's models, since without this, there can be no progress. Again, Quintilian bases his claim upon observable history. Human culture has always been advancing: models are there to be surpassed. The premise recalls what Garve said in 'Das Weihnachtsgeschenk': imitating others is a means to an end, the end of discovering things for oneself.

Schleiermacher and Schlegel charge Garve with unoriginality. They contrast his practice of presenting his own thoughts as comment on other writers with authentically independent thought. Garve's theoretical statements furnish a very different view, with strong parallels in humanist philology and the rhetorical model of education. For him, engagement with other authors is crucial to developing independent thought. He presents commentary, and the effort involved in understanding texts from other times and places, as serious intellectual labour. He argues further that imitation of models stimulates the mind to produce ideas of its own. Far from excluding independent thought, the commenting approach Garve models is, in his eyes, its necessary condition.

## System and observation

Some of Schleiermacher's attacks on Garve also expose the fissure in the two sides' thinking about the relationship between two basic kinds of philosophical procedure: system and observation. This dispute is something of a step further away from previous examples. It really bears upon scientific method; Bacon plays an important role. The technical debate over the heuristic value of the syllogism was also a central concern for eighteenth-century German philosophy.

Der wichtigste Lehrsatz, den Wolff sich aus der „Medicina mentis“ [von Ehrenfried Walther von Tschirnhaus] aneignete, und der somit seine Anfänge ganz in die Tradition Bacons, Descartes' und Weigels stellt, ist die [von] Tschirnhaus (wie ja auch von Thomasius und den „Anthropologisten“) vorgetragene Behauptung, der Syllogismus sei keine statthafte Methode zur Wahrheitsfindung. Da die Conclusio vor der Anwendung des Syllogismus bekannt sei, könne man durch den Syllogismus nichts erfinden, was man nicht zuvor schon wisse. Wolff wertet den Syllogismus von einer Erfindungsmethode zum Mittel, bereits erfundene und bekannte Wahrheiten zu beurteilen, ab. Während Wolff im Lebensbericht einigermaßen gewunden seine Sinneswandlung umschreibt – wohl um die ihm wenig sympathische Nähe zu Leibniz' Philosophie zu vermeiden – weist er in den „Übrigen kleinen Schriften“ mehrmals direkt auf Leibniz als den Urheber dieses geistigen Wandels hin. Leibniz nämlich hatte schon 1704 gegenüber Wolff den Syllogismus als Erkenntnismittel rehabilitiert: er sähe „die Schluß-Rede oder Syllogismum keineswegs als etwas unnützes zum Erfinden“ an.<sup>509</sup>

This particular question is thus broad in scope. It indicates how the differences between Garve and his opponents covered areas of enquiry outside of rhetoric, and even beyond the determinate philosophical assumptions articulated in Quintilian or

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<sup>509</sup> Gunter Grimm, *Literatur und Gelehrtentum in Deutschland. Untersuchungen zum Wandel ihres Verhältnisses vom Humanismus bis zur Frühaufklärung* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1983), p. 554. See also Charles Corr, 'Christian Wolff's Treatment of Scientific Discovery', in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 10.3 (1972), pp. 323-334; Stefanie Buchenau, *The Founding of Aesthetics in the German Enlightenment: The Art of Invention and the Invention of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Cicero. Yet the rhetorical and humanistic traditions continue as an important background. The humanists opposed rhetorical, probabilistic methods of argument to the syllogism, and Bacon's doubts about it have some affinity with theirs.

Empiricism was a common enough charge in the Romantic caricature of the *Aufklärung*; Ludwig Stockinger notes that in order to make Wieland a suitable object for their attacks, the Schlegel brothers were forced to cast him as 'ein bloßer Empirist'.<sup>510</sup> Garve's empiricism is the occasion for one of Schleiermacher's most memorable passages in the review. The passage follows a quotation from Garve's essay on popular style, where Garve distinguishes between two basic categories of scholarship: 'Ich glaube alle Wissenschaften eintheilen zu dürfen, in solche, worin nur über Erfahrungen reflectirt wird, – und solche, worin Ideen combinirt werden. Zu den ersten gehört die eigentliche Philosophie, insbesondere die Seelenlehre und die Moral. Zu den letztern gehören außer der Mathematik, alle die Wissenschaften, welche den mechanischen Künsten vorarbeiten.'<sup>511</sup> Schleiermacher treats the statement as representative of Garve's wholly misguided way of thinking:

In dieser einen Aeußerung liegt das ganze unerschöpfliche Chaos von Unphilosophie und Geistlosigkeit, wovon alle seine Schriften gleichsam nur Ausströmungen sind. Diese Art Erfahrungen und Ideen entgegensetzen, und das Gebiet der letztern auf die bloße Mathematik zu beschränken, ist der höchste Gipfel der Empirie, gleichsam der Realismus des Raisonnements, der das was durch das gemeine Denken gefunden ist, als absolut gegeben, als das schlechthin wahre und denkbare an sich ansieht.<sup>512</sup>

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<sup>510</sup> Ludwig Stockinger, 'Die Auseinandersetzung der Romantiker mit der Aufklärung', in Helmut Schanze (ed.), *Romantik-Handbuch* (Stuttgart: Kröner, 2003), p. 87. Stockinger refers to the article by Ernst Behler, 'Das Wieland-Bild der Brüder Schlegel', in Hansjörg Schelle (ed.), *Christoph Martin Wieland. Nordamerikanische Forschungsbeiträge zur 250. Wiederkehr seines Geburtstages 1983* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1984), pp. 349-392.

<sup>511</sup> GW 4.1, p. 347.

<sup>512</sup> Schleiermacher, KGA 3, pp. 68-69.

Empiricism is not the only flaw of Garve's cited here, but it is the most prominent. It is clear, moreover, that empiricism is indeed a flaw: when Schleiermacher calls the essay on popularity the peak of empiricism, he does not mean it as a compliment. It is associated with a naïve confidence in common sense, which Schleiermacher regards as an unreliable guide to reality, and with a lack of philosophical rigour. Garve's thought is a 'Chaos', not worthy of the esteemed title of 'Philosophie'.

The picture of Garve's empiricist approach as lamentably unscientific pervades the review. Schleiermacher later comes to discuss Garve's work on society ('unendlich langweilig') and his fragments on Frederick the Great.<sup>513</sup> In the former, Garve has approached his subject in completely the wrong fashion.

Es sollte eine Schilderung der geselligen Natur in ihren Wirkungen und Rückwirkungen enthalten; aber dazu hätten die großen Erscheinungen derselben combinirt, und in einer bestimmten Beleuchtung unter gewisse Hauptpunkte zusammengestellt werden müssen. Dahin kann aber Garve nicht kommen, sondern er nimmt nur die einzelnen Beobachtungen, wie sie aus dem gemeinsten Standpunkte genommen werden, nach einander vor, und dieser einförmige Prozeß geht an dem Geländer trivialer Ideen von Verstand, Charakter, Bildung, Glückseligkeit, über welche auch nicht reflectirt worden ist, um sich ihrer gehörig zu versichern, auf die uninteressanteste Weise fort.<sup>514</sup>

Schleiermacher outlines what a properly scientific treatment of Garve's theme would have looked like. Such a discussion would have engaged with the abstract concept of human sociability; it would also have exhibited rational, systematic organization of the data of human social formations. This, to Schleiermacher's

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<sup>513</sup> See Garve 'Über Gesellschaft und Einsamkeit' (2 parts), and 'Fragmente zur Schilderung des Geistes, des Charakters, und der Regierung Friedrichs des Zweyten' (2 parts), now GW 2 and GW 7. See also Schleiermacher, KGA 3, p. 69.

<sup>514</sup> Schleiermacher, KGA 3, p. 69.

chagrin, is precisely what Garve does not do. Instead, the reader of 'Ueber Gesellschaft und Einsamkeit' is confronted with one isolated empirical datum after another. Garve's information is only loosely classified; the perspective is not that of the serious scholar, but that of the common observer.

The same argument is applied to Garve's study of Frederick. Again, a really rigorous investigation would have resulted in something quite different:

Eine solche [Charakteristik eines bestimmten Individuums] soll das Individuum chemisch zerlegen, die innerlich verschiedenen Bestandtheile desselben von einander sondern, und in ihrem quantitativen Verhältniß darstellen, dann das innere Princip ihrer Verbindung, das tiefste Geheimniß der Individualität aufsuchen, und so das Individuum auf eine künstliche Weise nachconstruiren. Das kann aber freilich nur geschehen, wenn man die verschiedenen Erscheinungen desselben combinirt und vorher über die Idee, wie überhaupt Erscheinungen im Menschen combinirt werden müssen, einigermaßen reflectirt hat. Darauf versteht sich nun Garve nicht, weil so etwas gar nicht in der Sphäre seines Denkens liegt: daher nimmt er Handlungen nur einzeln, und so wie die gemeine Betrachtung sie auch findet und sondert, daß heißt nach dem Objekt auf welches gehandelt wird. Durch diesen Proceß wird das Individuum natürlich nur mechanisch zerstückelt, die Einheiten sind noch an mehreren Orten zerstreut, und in allem, was für einfach gegeben wird, ist noch die ganze Mannigfaltigkeit welche eigentlich aufgelöset werden sollte. Dies ist eine schlechte Operation, und bewährt sich als solche unter andern auch dadurch, daß sie gar keine Form annehmen will.<sup>515</sup>

Schleiermacher elaborates the steps in his ideal procedure in some detail. The scientific connotations of his language ('chemisch') are clear. Frederick must first be 'analysed' and then 'synthesised'. Synthesis, for Schleiermacher, implies reflection on procedure, and it is based upon the premise that the object of study has a fundamental coherence – there is an essence that makes Frederick to be Frederick.

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<sup>515</sup> Schleiermacher, KGA 3, pp. 69-70.

This connecting principle must then inform the writer's rational organization of the varied phenomena which constitute Frederick. Once more, this way of thinking is altogether foreign to Garve. Again he supplies the reader with a plethora of isolated observations. The only discernible organizing principle – Frederick's activity across a range of areas – is highly limited, and betrays little prior reflection on Garve's part; it simply imitates the manner in which anyone perceives external phenomena.

Garve's essay on Frederick prepares the way for a broadside from Schleiermacher against Garve's method more generally ('Anmerkungs-Philosophie').

Dies ist aber das Wesen der Anmerkungs-Philosophie, und man kann an Garve, der seiner Reinheit wegen recht zu einem Exempel gemacht ist, am besten zeigen, worauf sie sich zu beschränken hat, daß sie keine andern Werke hervorbringen kann als einfache Reflexionen über einzelne Data, je klarer je besser, daß alles was etwas anders zu sein scheint, doch nur ein Aggregat von dergleichen Monaden sein kann, daß es ihr nichts hilft große oder ganze Gegenstände vor sich zu nehmen, weil sie sie doch nicht als solche zu behandeln versteht, und daß es unmöglich ist, auch nur nach der „beobachtenden Methode“ Gegenstände, wie sie auf dem Standpunkte des gemeinen Lebens wahrgenommen werden in irgend einem Zusammenhange darzustellen oder über sie zu denken, wenn man nicht höhere Principien hat, die irgendwoher aus der Wissenschaft genommen sind, und wozu also eine höhere Ansicht der Wissenschaft gehört, als diese.<sup>516</sup>

Garve is treated as representative of a whole approach to philosophy. This approach is fatally limited: its limitations consist above all in a failure to work systematically. It does not locate the objects of its study within any coherent framework, nor does it apply guiding principles, such as a rigorous *Wissenschaft* might provide. All that such 'observing philosophy' can produce is simple reflection on a slender range of isolated

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<sup>516</sup> Schleiermacher, KGA 3, pp. 70-71.

data, which can scarcely lay claim to intellectual seriousness. Themes of any substance are excluded from its narrow compass.

Schleiermacher attacks Garve's empiricist approach as lacking intellectual rigour. Here, too, his criticisms are informed by other guiding assumptions: namely, that any intellectually serious investigation of a subject is by definition systematic, and that the empiricist approach personified by Garve can only think of external phenomena in simple terms. Garve's perspective on system and observation is informed by quite different assumptions. His argument emerges from a tradition which stressed that the kind of systematic rigour which Schleiermacher proposes is not always appropriate, particularly for areas of learning that deal with contingent human experience. Over against the syllogism, the classic implement of systematic thinking, this tradition proposed rhetorical methods of argument. A related criticism, equally relevant to Garve's work, was that of Francis Bacon, who stressed that a purely systematic approach cannot discover new knowledge about the external world. It is also deceptive: it imposes the order of the human mind on the intractable complexity of external phenomena.

Criticisms of syllogistic method from the rhetorical perspective can be found in antiquity; one example occurs in the *De oratore*. Crassus suggests that rhetoric is not really susceptible of the kind of systematic knowledge which might now be called 'scientific' (Crassus uses the term 'art'):

For if [...] an art is defined as consisting in things thoroughly examined and clearly apprehended, and which are also outside the control of mere opinion, and within the grasp of exact knowledge, then to me

there seems to be no such thing as an art of oratory. For all the kinds of language we ourselves use in public speaking are changeable matter, and adapted to the general understanding of the crowd. If however the actual things noticed in the practice and conduct of speaking have been heeded and recorded by men of skill and experience, if they have been defined in terms, illuminated by classification, and distributed under subdivisions – and I see that it has been possible to do this – I do not understand why this should not be regarded as an art, perhaps not in that precise sense of the term, but at any rate according to the other and popular estimate.<sup>517</sup>

The passage distinguishes between two kinds of knowledge. On the one hand, there is systematized, axiomatic knowledge. On the other hand, Crassus presents the kind of knowledge which involves organizing the data of experience. His point is to make a claim for the value of the second kind, on the grounds that it is suited to its subject matter. Rhetoric and similar subjects are fundamentally bound up with the contingencies of human experience and of human diversity: it is not possible to gain axiomatic certainty about them, as one might do for the truths of mathematics.

Later philosophers who traced their intellectual heritage to Cicero continued to share his doubts about syllogistic procedure. Charles Nauert identifies two lines of criticism in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance:

The syllogistic reasoning that formed the core of medieval teaching of dialectic had never been very effective at explaining how new propositions can be derived and proved true. [...] This weakness was already obvious to late-scholastic thinkers, and late scholasticism, almost wholly independently of humanist influence, produced during the period 1300-1600 a number of studies of the logic of scientific investigation that probed the thought processes by which sensory experiences could be analysed and then synthetically recombined into valid generalizations. [...] Humanist scholars had already joined in the criticism of scholastic logic in the fifteenth century, though on grounds very different from those applied by scholastic philosophers. [...] Their goal was not the pursuit of absolutely certain proofs but

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<sup>517</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* I.xxiii.108-109, vol. 1, p. 77.

rather guidance in making the kinds of decisions that arise in everyday life, where determination of eternally valid truth is rarely an issue. [...] Thus rhetorical argumentation, which in ancient authors like Quintilian dealt largely with judgement of probability, seemed more important to human need than formal syllogistic reasoning, which had little utility outside of the artificial disputations of the universities.<sup>518</sup>

The specifically humanist criticism matches Cicero's, and Nauert locates it in the rhetorical tradition. In the face of the complexity of experience, it is not necessary to derive generalized truths, but to reach the best judgement among competing alternatives: this is a question of probability. Humanist textbooks of logic, such as Lorenzo Valla's *Dialectical Disputations* and Rudolf Agricola's *On Dialectical Invention*, thus privileged rhetorical arguments over scholastic formal logic.<sup>519</sup>

However, Nauert also discusses the late scholastic criticism which sprang from a very different claim: the syllogism is a useful tool for organizing knowledge, but less useful for actually discovering new knowledge ('its strength was in demonstrating by deductive reasoning the consequences of propositions already accepted').<sup>520</sup>

In Nauert's analysis, this latter criticism contributed to prepare the way for Francis Bacon's treatment of scientific discovery in his *New Organon*.<sup>521</sup> The argument of the *New Organon* is based on the bankruptcy of syllogistic method. The syllogism, in and of itself, cannot hope to provide new knowledge: 'Current logic is good for

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<sup>518</sup> Nauert, *Humanism*, pp. 215-216.

<sup>519</sup> See Nauert, *Humanism*, p. 216. Valla, for example, criticizes Aristotelian philosophy as inadequate for the demands of practical life: '[Aristotle] paid no attention to the most important things by which distinguished men are generally recognized – not political debate, either in public or before the legislature, nor governing provinces or leading an army or arguing in court or practicing medicine or administering justice or interpreting decrees or writing histories or composing poems.' Lorenzo Valla, *Dialectical Disputations*, ed. and trans. Brian P. Copenhaver and Lodi Nauta, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), vol. 1, pp. 7-9.

<sup>520</sup> Nauert, *Humanism*, p. 216.

<sup>521</sup> See Nauert, *Humanism*, pp. 217, 221-222.

establishing and fixing errors (which are themselves based on common notions) rather than for inquiring into truth; hence it is not useful, it is positively harmful.<sup>522</sup> Syllogistic logic is useful as a regulator on the validity of one's conclusions, but not for discovery.

Instead, Bacon proposes his method as a new approach to gaining knowledge, one which is quite distinct from the syllogism.

There are, and can be, only two ways to investigate and discover truth. The one leaps from sense and particulars to the most general axioms, and from these principles and their settled truth, determines and discovers intermediate axioms; this is the current way. The other elicits axioms from sense and particulars, rising in a gradual and unbroken ascent to arrive at last at the most general axioms; this is the true way, but it has not yet been tried.<sup>523</sup>

Bacon's bipartite model assumes that both procedures must begin with the data of experience, but deal with this data in very different ways. Syllogistic procedure 'leaps' to general principles which then function as premises for further conclusions. His method, which he calls induction, moves gradually from the data of experience to increasingly general conclusions.<sup>524</sup>

The problem Bacon identifies with the kind of reasoning which jumps hastily towards general axioms, is that it fails to do justice to the complexity of the external world.

'The subtlety of nature far surpasses the subtlety of sense and intellect.'<sup>525</sup> The mind, by contrast, rushes to impose upon nature a structure of its own making: 'The

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<sup>522</sup> Bacon, *New Organon*, p. 35.

<sup>523</sup> Bacon, *New Organon*, p. 36.

<sup>524</sup> See Bacon, *New Organon*, p. 35: 'The only hope is true *induction*.'

<sup>525</sup> Bacon, *New Organon*, p. 34.

human understanding from its own peculiar nature willingly supposes a greater order and regularity in things than it finds, and though there are many things in nature which are unique and full of disparities, it invents parallels and correspondences and non-existent connections.<sup>526</sup>

In place of a procedure which is inadequate to complex phenomena, Bacon proposes his own method as a productive meeting between the mind and the external world.

Those who have treated of the sciences have been either empiricists or dogmatists. Empiricists, like ants, simply accumulate and use; Rationalists, like spiders, spin webs from themselves; the way of the bee is in between: it takes material from the flowers of the garden and the field; but it has the ability to convert and digest them. This is not unlike the true working of philosophy; which does not rely solely or mainly on mental power, and does not store the material provided by natural history and mechanical experiments in its memory untouched but altered and adapted in the intellect. Therefore much is to be hoped from a closer and more binding alliance (which has never yet been made) between these faculties (i.e. the experimental and the rational).<sup>527</sup>

Bacon is careful to distinguish his procedure from what might be termed naïve empiricism. The 'true philosophy' he advocates does not consist in experience without reflection, nor in reflection with no link to experience; it engages neither purposeless data-gathering nor in the imposition of grand fictional structures. Instead, it consists in purposeful organization of the data of experience and reflection on those data in an effort to make sense of them.

The humanist objections to the syllogism and Bacon's method of induction are the proper background to Garve's most important reflection on philosophical method,

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<sup>526</sup> Bacon, *New Organon*, p. 42.

<sup>527</sup> Bacon, *New Organon*, p. 79.

‘Die Kunst zu denken’. There, he defends the value of unsystematic and probabilistic knowledge from experience, in view of the necessarily complex character of external phenomena. In the essay, Garve frames two opposing philosophical approaches: the systematic method and the Socratic method. He describes the systematic procedure at some length:

In dieser Methode gehen die Definitionen vor allem voraus: auf sie folgen gewisse Grundsätze, die entweder als selbst evident, oder als, aus andern Wissenschaften und aus der gemeinen Erfahrung bekannt, angenommen werden. Aus diesen Grundsätzen, oder aus dem Zwecke der Untersuchung, werden die Gründe zu der Eintheilung der zuvor definirten Gegenstände hergeleitet; und diese Eintheilung bestimmt zugleich die Ordnung der Subsumtionen, und folglich der damit anzufangenden Schlußreihen. Die Beweise folgen auf die Sätze: und die Erläuterungen durch Beyspiele folgen auf die Beweise. Die Theorie wird vorangeschickt, und die Thatsachen, worauf sie sich stützt, folgen. Die abgezogensten Begriffe und Sätze machen den Anfang, und man schließt mit den concretesten.<sup>528</sup>

The method proceeds along a well-defined logical pathway from general, abstract definitions to concrete data. Garve outlines each stage on this pathway with reference to the appropriate technical terminology. Its defining feature is its deductive character, with conclusions drawn from a generally accepted theory.

As a didactic tool, the systematic method can be eminently useful: ‘Diese Methode ist allerdings, um, in einer schon erfundnen und geordneten Wissenschaft, Unwissende zu unterrichten, die beste.’<sup>529</sup> Giving some rational structure to data makes communication much easier: ‘Diese Methode des Nachdenkens ist [...] sehr wohl anwendbar, wenn das Nachdenken bloß die Absicht hat, Ideen, welche uns schon, durch den empfangenen Unterricht beygebracht, oder durch vorhergegangne

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<sup>528</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 332-333.

<sup>529</sup> GW 1.2, p. 333.

Meditationen eigen geworden sind, in ein gemeinschaftliches System zu verweben, und sie, zu einer deutlichen und ordentlichen Mittheilung an andere, vorzubereiten.<sup>530</sup> As a tool for the discovery of new knowledge, however, it is less useful. Its nature makes it ill-suited to enquiries in an unfamiliar field.

Wenn [die systematische Methode], bey eignen und neuen Untersuchungen, angewandt werden soll: so setzt sie zuerst, bey dem *Gegenstande* eine solche Beschaffenheit voraus, welche diesen Ideengang vom Allgemeinen zum Besondern, in seiner Untersuchung erlaubt. Sie erfordert, zweytens, bey der *Person* einen viel umfassenden, und mit seinem Blicke der Entwicklung seiner Ideen zuvorlaufenden Geist. [...] Das systematische Verknüpfen, selbst einer schon völlig bekannten und geläufigen Anzahl von Begriffen und Sätzen, ist kein leichtes Unternehmen, wenn die Anzahl derselben beträchtlich ist. Aber die erst aufgespürten Ideen, gleich bey ihrer Entstehung, systematisch ordnen, und nach einer eben so strengen Methode bey Meditationen, durch welche man *unbekannte* Seiten des Gegenstandes zu *erforschen* sucht, als bey dem wissenschaftlichen *Unterricht* über schon *bekante*, verfahren: das ist in vielen Fällen durchaus unmöglich, aber in allen nur den vorzüglichsten Denkern eigen.<sup>531</sup>

Not all subjects permit the deployment of the systematic method as a means to new knowledge in any case. Among those that do, the method makes severe demands on the person who practises it. Systematic thought is inherently difficult, and much more so as a guiding framework for the attempt to make new discoveries. It requires a rare capacity to maintain attention to all the various aspects of one's topic, and simultaneously to foresee what findings may arise. There is a great difference between research and teaching, and applying the same intellectual method to both activities verges on being unrealistic.

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<sup>530</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 334-335.

<sup>531</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 335-336.

Garve goes on to raise various further objections to the application of the systematic method as a heuristic device. Among these is the claim that a systematic approach can in fact hinder new discoveries.

Der systematische Denker ist wie ein Reisender, der zu einem bestimmten Ziele eilt, und der den Weg in der kürzesten Zeit zu machen sucht. Er muß nicht bloß auf die Dinge, die vor seinen Füßen, oder nahe um ihn herumliegen – er muß immer weit vor sich hinaus sehn; er muß sich weder durch angenehme Ruheplätze aufhalten, noch durch interessante Aussichten auf Nebenwege verleiten lassen. Der nicht systematische Denker ist einem Spaziergänger ähnlich, der Muße hat, jeden Gegenstand, nach dem Maße, als er ihn an sich zieht, oder ihm Belehrung verspricht, zu betrachten; der, mit ganzer Seele und mit voller Aufmerksamkeit, da ist, wo er ist, ohne einen anderen Zweck, als den, sich zu unterhalten, oder seinen Wohnort gelegentlich kennen zu lernen. Bey gleichen Fähigkeiten und bey gleicher Wißbegierde, wird der Reisende weit mehr Mühe haben, die Dinge richtig zu sehen, oder genau zu erforschen, als der in seiner Heimath Lustwandelnde.<sup>532</sup>

Garve uses the analogy of travel. Systematic thought entails purposeful progress towards a clearly defined goal; unsystematic thought resembles a leisurely stroll with no predetermined objective. The nature of the systematic enterprise forbids distraction by details, because the systematic thinker must always have the full extent of his subject in view. However, by limiting the attention he gives to the phenomena around him, he closes off many potential sources of new learning. The thinker whose attention roams free will be much more receptive to what is around him, and therefore more likely to discover new things. A thoroughly systematic approach, Garve claims, is by its nature less conducive to discovering data than an approach not thus constrained.

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<sup>532</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 337-338.

As a counterpoint to the systematic method, Garve offers what he calls the Socratic method. Its great advantage is its fidelity to the process by which human beings do, in fact, learn new things: it is 'die natürlichste und gewöhnlichste Methode der Ideen-Erfinder'.<sup>533</sup> There is an echo here of Schleiermacher – Garve adopts the perspective of the common observer – but for Garve, this is the perspective of the learner more generally. His explanation of the Socratic method is a defence of a less rigorous kind of knowledge, based on contingent experience and not aiming at absolute mathematical certainty.

[Die Sokratische Methode] fängt damit an, womit der Unwissende, der sich selbst unterrichten will, immer anfangen muß, mit einzelnen Thatsachen, die sie entweder als Beyspiele braucht, um Begriffe daraus abzuziehn; oder als Erscheinungen, zu deren Erklärung sie Hypothesen versucht. Zuweilen legt sie allgemein angenommene Meinungen, die Sagen der Vorwelt, oder die Aussprüche der Weisen ihren Untersuchungen zum Grunde. Indem sie den wahren Sinn derselben zu erforschen, oder ihre Wahrheit zu prüfen bemüht ist, kommt sie nach und nach zur Untersuchung der Gegenstände selbst. Sie versucht da, wo sie in den Behauptungen der Aelteren einen Irrthum wahrnimmt, ihnen durch eine Einschränkung, oder einem Zusatz mehr Richtigkeit zu geben; prüft diese Aenderung von neuem, – klärt weiter auf, was sie, in dieser veränderten Ansicht der Dinge noch dunkel findet; und so steigt sie, von einer Berichtigung ihrer Voraussetzungen zur andern, von einem aufgeworfnen und gehobnen Zweifel zum andern auf, bis sie endlich über die ganze Materie Licht verbreitet, und bey Behauptungen anlangt, die durchaus verständlich sind, alle Schwierigkeiten lösen und alle Gründe der Wahrscheinlichkeit in sich vereinigen.<sup>534</sup>

The Socratic method inverts the pathway followed by the systematic method.

Instead of beginning from abstract concepts and moving along a deductive chain to arrive at concrete examples, it begins with the concrete data and progresses inductively towards generalizing hypotheses. It treats received opinion as a

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<sup>533</sup> GW 1.2, p. 341. Italics in original.

<sup>534</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 341-342.

legitimate starting point, and moves incrementally towards a grasp of the truth. Its strategies are not the kind which generate absolute certainty: it moves tentatively, proposing explanations for phenomena rather than carrying out rigorous deduction from first principles. Its ultimate goal is probability; there is an implicit (and ironic) nod here to the sceptical, rhetorically-based philosophy which Socrates condemned in Plato's *Phaedrus*.<sup>535</sup>

All the other methods Garve describes hang together as a loose cluster, set in opposition to the systematic method. The Socratic method is their archetype: 'Alle folgenden Methoden der Meditation sind gewisser Maßen nur Unterarten der Sokratischen.'<sup>536</sup> The cluster concludes with the observing method ('die *bemerkende* oder *beobachtende* [Methode]'). Cicero claimed that all knowledge of rhetoric was derived from observation, and it is here that Garve makes the more general case for observation as a legitimate and valuable philosophical strategy. He returns to the limitations of a purely systematic approach.

Es giebt, in der That, in jedem Gegenstande der Betrachtung, *kleinere*, verstecktere *Theile*, welche, wenn wir schulgerecht über ihn nachdenken, und die Kenntniß des *Ganzen* in die Form einer Wissenschaft bringen wollen, uns auf unserm Wege der Meditation nicht aufstoßen; die uns aber sogleich in die Augen fallen, als wir unsre Aufmerksamkeit, ohne Zwang und ohne vorgezeichneten Plan, in dem ganzen Gebiete der ihn betreffenden Kenntnisse umherschweifen lassen. – Jeder Gegenstand hat gewisse Eigenschaften und Verhältnisse, die, weil sie selbst nicht innig unter einander und mit dem Ganzen verbunden sind, uns leicht entweichen, wenn wir unsre Vorstellungen, als Glieder einer einzigen Kette, ununterbrochen an einander hängen; zu deren Kenntniß hingegen uns eine unmethodische, stückweise vorgenommene Untersuchung,

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<sup>535</sup> See Plato, *Phaedrus* 267.B, p. 537: 'And shall we leave Gorgias and Tisias undisturbed, who saw that probabilities are more to be esteemed than truths [...]?'

<sup>536</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 350-351.

wenn dabey, mit Beobachtungs-Gabe, Verstand und Witz  
gemeinschaftlich wirken, weit eher verhilft.<sup>537</sup>

The argument rests on a discrepancy between systematic order and the intractable complexity of any conceivable object of study. The goal of the systematic method is to produce a *Wissenschaft*, which Garve defines in formal terms: it demands rational organization and coherence. Structuring knowledge of the external world in this way is inevitably misleading, because the objects of experience are never quite so rational and coherent as the system needs them to be. The subtlety of nature, as Bacon claimed, far surpasses the subtlety of intellect. This is where Garve claims that deliberately unmethodical, non-systematic observation is necessary, in order to perceive those awkward, irregular facets of reality which inevitably escape systematic presentation. A fragmented procedure, which shuns the form of scholarly rigour, is the perfect means of grasping what might otherwise be overlooked.

Garve proceeds to integrate these two possible approaches, the systematic method and the observing method. They are complementary stages in the enterprise of producing, securing, and disseminating knowledge.

Diese beyden Arten der Meditation – die beobachtende und die durch Schlüsse fortschreitende – beziehn sich auf zwey verschiedene Arbeiten, die zu der Vollendung des Gebäudes der menschlichen Erkenntniß gleich nothwendig sind. Der beobachtende Philosoph fängt in der Kindheit der Wissenschaften an, die Thatsachen zu sammeln – die Erscheinungen, welche zu erklären sind, und die Ordnung ihres Aufeinanderfolgens, wodurch ihre Erklärung vorbereitet wird, darzustellen. Auf sie folgt der systematische Philosoph, und macht aus diesen zerstreuten Kenntnissen eine Wissenschaft: indem er sie an einander knüpft, ihre Lücken ausfüllt, ihre Abhängigkeit unter einander und von höhern Principien zu zeigen sucht, und das Gesetz der Einheit und des Zusammenhangs, welches

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<sup>537</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 397-398.

in seinem eignen Geiste liegt, auf die Natur außer sich anwendet. Wenn diese große Ernte der wissenschaftlichen Kenntnisse vollbracht ist, kommt der beobachtende Philosoph zurück, um die Nachlese zu halten; wo er dann noch manche, von seinen Vorgängern vernachlässigte, reife Frucht findet, die vorzüglich geschickt ist, als Saamen, zu Hervorbringung künftiger Ernten, gebraucht zu werden.<sup>538</sup>

The construction of a *Wissenschaft* involves several phases: the initial accumulation of facts, the assimilation of these facts into a coherent body of knowledge, and the critical analysis of this body of knowledge for flaws or inconsistencies. Garve argues that the second major task is certainly the responsibility of the systematic thinker. Without the rational organization of data, there can be no *Wissenschaft*, properly so called. This enterprise, however, builds upon the initial findings discovered by the contrasting, non-systematic approach of the observing philosopher. Before there can be a system, there must be observation. Observation also corrects system. The observing philosopher is also tasked with surveying the completed *Wissenschaft*, on the assumption that his systematic colleague will have neglected some significant data. These data are the basis for beginning the process over again.

Schleiermacher assumes that any serious scientific procedure must, by definition, be systematic, and argues that Garve's method of observation can only take an essentially simple view of external phenomena. Garve, however, argues that a purely syllogistic approach does not do justice to the complexity of external phenomena, and is incapable of producing new knowledge. In its place, he proposes probabilistic reasoning from experience. Garve's approach expresses some of the concerns of humanistic thinking, but its primary model is Bacon. 'Die Kunst zu denken'

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<sup>538</sup> GW 1.2, pp. 398-399.

acknowledges the debt, citing him as the 'Vater und Stifter' of the observing method in modern philosophy.<sup>539</sup> Like Bacon, Garve argues that the external world is inevitably more complex than the mind, and a productive combination of observation and synthesis is necessary if human beings are to grasp anything of it.

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<sup>539</sup> GW 1.2, p. 427.

### 'Nichts zuviel': Moderation

The final theme from the Romantics' attack treated here is that in the matter of intellectual qualities, Garve possesses a little of everything. In itself, the criticism is quite general, but it touches upon an aspect of Garve's thought which had implications in a very wide range of areas: moderation.

Schlegel attacks Garve on these grounds more than once. The earliest occurrence is in a letter from Schlegel to his older brother, written in 1792:

Ueberall, die große Achtung gegen diesen Garve bey uns, ist ein Beweis, daß wir noch keinen guten Moralisten haben. – Er besitzt viele gute Eigenschaften, alle in sehr geringen Grade. – Er vereinigt sanftes Gefühl des Wohlwollens, und einen urbanen Vortrag, mit Weltkenntniß systematischer Ordnung und Entwicklung der ersten Gründe. Aber in Vergleich mit großen Metaphysikern und Systematikern ist er in letztern doch nur seicht und rhapsodisch.<sup>540</sup>

Garve has some good qualities, Schlegel admits, but all in limited measure. He is shallow and rhapsodic. The accusation suggests dilettantism: Garve flits between various areas without producing achievements of substance in any of them.

The same feature appears in the *Athenäum* caricature of Garve:

Garve ist nichts ganz, also auch nicht Buchstäbler.<sup>541</sup>

Garve is not even a complete pedant. He is constitutionally incapable of achieving any wholeness, even the perverse kind displayed in pursuing an intellectual vice as

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<sup>540</sup> Friedrich Schlegel to August Wilhelm Schlegel, 5.7.1792, in KFSa 23, pp. 56-57.

<sup>541</sup> KFSa 16, p. 95.

far as possible. The most important example for present purposes, however, is found in another *Athenäum* fragment.

Wenn nichts zuviel so viel bedeutet als alles ein wenig: so ist Garve der größte deutsche Philosoph.<sup>542</sup>

Schlegel borrows the ethical axiom ‘nothing in excess’, in order to take a positive quality – moderation – and recast it as a trivial dabbling in a wide variety of themes. Avoidance of excess becomes an inability to achieve comprehensiveness or intellectual depth in any area.

There is no particular need to read Schlegel here as rejecting the precept of moderation; the reference is a passing one. However, it suggests that he associated the precept with Garve, and he would have had good reason to do so. Garve’s moderation and stoical fortitude were an important element in his perception by others. The local comment serves to expose a more general phenomenon. By attacking Garve, Schlegel is engaging with a concept whose relevance to Garve’s thought is broad and multifaceted, and which played a crucial role in the human ideal he endorsed. ‘Nichts zuviel’ is not simply a trivial aside, but highlights a clash extending well beyond narrow debates over rhetorical principles: here, two quite distinct philosophies collide.

A classic formulation of the virtue of moderation appears in the *De officiis*.

Next we must discuss the one remaining element of honourableness. Under this appear a sense of shame and what one might call the ordered beauty of a life, restraint and modesty, a calming of all the agitations of the spirit, and due measure in all things. Under this is

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<sup>542</sup> KFSA 2, p. 219.

included what is Latin may be called *decorum* (seemliness); the Greek for it is *prepon*.<sup>543</sup>

Cicero's definition comprises various dimensions. It includes the popular sense of the term 'moderation' as the avoidance of excess in diverse areas of life. It also suggests an aesthetic perspective on human behaviour: a life lived well is characterized by 'ordered beauty'. Order and measure carry the sense of giving all aspects of life their proper place. Within this is included the authority of reason over impulses, the calming of the spirit. Cicero summarizes the character of the duty several paragraphs later: 'The duty which is derived from this follows above all the road that leads to agreeing with and preserving nature.'<sup>544</sup> The virtue which Cicero describes has diverse aspects, and various possible English equivalents. When he came to translate *De officiis*, Garve used the German *Mäßigung*; it, and related terms, recur frequently in his work.<sup>545</sup>

Decorum, as order and coherence, features as a stylistic ideal; the key concepts here are *Schicklichkeit* and *Anstand*.<sup>546</sup> Garve praises Gellert's work for its 'Schicklichkeit', the order and harmony which Cicero demands of virtuous behaviour. The implication in Schlegel's criticisms of Garve is that intellectual virtue lies in extremity: a good work is a work which takes a particular idea or quality as far as it will go. Garve, in contrast, sees virtue in a conciliatory middle way. 'Geschmack', such as Gellert possesses, is found in balance, and shunning extremes:

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<sup>543</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.93, p. 37.

<sup>544</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.100, p. 39.

<sup>545</sup> See in particular the Cicero translation and accompanying notes: GW 9, pp. 71-72, and GW 10, pp. 109-140.

<sup>546</sup> The same ideal of decorum or appropriateness is, of course, prominent in the rhetorical tradition. See also chapter 3 of this thesis for Garve's discussion of the concept with Schiller, esp. pp. 159-169.

Uns dünkt, wenn man das Ding, was man Geschmack nennt, irgendwo zu suchen hat, so ist es eben nicht an den äußersten Gränzen des Genies, sondern in [dem] Mittelpunkte, wo die verschiedenen Fähigkeiten, die in den Umkreis des menschlichen Geistes gehören, gleichsam zusammenstoßen und sich in gleichen Proportionen vereinigen. Genie nämlich soll eine ausnehmende Größe der Geisteskraft, die in einem Werke sichtbar ist, und Geschmack die Uebereinstimmung und Schicklichkeit aller Theile desselben anzeigen.<sup>547</sup>

A variety of qualities may be demanded of a literary work, related to the various intellectual faculties. The essence of good taste, according to Garve, is in an ideal 'middle point' where these diverse positive qualities meet harmoniously. A composition displays good taste when its diverse elements are combined in pleasing fashion, embodying the virtue of decorum.

Garve opposes this definition of 'Geschmack' to 'Genie' as extraordinary capacity in one area, but he does not present the two as equally valid forms of literary excellence. Instead, genius not moderated by taste leads to an undesirable imbalance:

Wenn nun jene Größe nicht sowohl darin besteht, daß das ganze System aller Fähigkeiten in gleichem Grade erweitert ist, als daß vielmehr nur Eine aus allen übrigen abgesondert und einzeln unter ihnen gleichsam hervorgezogen worden: so wird der Theil des Werks, der gerade durch diese Fähigkeit sich bearbeiten läßt, vortreflich, und vielleicht in einem höhern Grade vortreflich, aber alle übrigen (und kein Werk von gewissem Umfange läßt sich in allen seinen Theilen nur durch dieselbe Fähigkeit bearbeiten,) alle übrigen werden ohne Vergleich schlechter seyn. Ueberdieß wird es an der Verbindung und dem gehörigen Verhältnisse der Theile fehlen; und eben in dieser gleichen Ausarbeitung aller Stücke und in der richtigen Zusammenfügung liegt das Geschmackvolle. Man kann also wohl sagen, daß vielleicht kein deutscher Schriftsteller diese Eigenschaft so sehr seinen Werken mitgetheilt habe, als Gellert. Wenn seine Werke

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<sup>547</sup> GW 5.1, pp. 169-170.

nicht alle von gleicher Vortreflichkeit sind, so ist doch das Unanständige, Unschickliche in keinem.<sup>548</sup>

Garve's argument is based on a very different set of assumptions to those which sustained Schlegel's polemic against him. Gellert's merit does not arise from extraordinary brilliance in one isolated area, but from good taste, consisting in the relationship of different parts to one another. 'Das Unschickliche' here appears to denote not primarily a morally objectionable literary work, but one which lacks proper balance and proportion.

*Schicklichkeit* is thus a crucial feature in Garve's ideal of good taste. *Mäßigung* also informs his argument for the avoidance of specialism in intellectual matters. Here, too, he evokes the notion of decorum as order and coherence. All intellectual activity fits within a coherent framework, and moderation means not violating this framework:

Wer eine Wissenschaft und Kunst, oder die Cultur und Ausübung irgend eines Talents unmäßig, d. h. ohne Rücksicht auf Gesundheit, Vermögen, Familie, Freunde u. s. w. treibet, schätzt auch diese Wissenschaft, diese Kunst oder dieses Talent übermäßig, und erniedriget in seinem Urtheile die Verdienste und Talente anderer Art unter den Werth, welcher ihnen zukommt. Dadurch aber reißt er gleichsam seine Wissenschaft, und das in irgend einer Geistesarbeit erworbene Verdienst, aus dem allgemeinen Systeme der menschlichen Bestrebungen nach Vollkommenheit heraus, in Verbindungen mit welchem allein das ihm eigenthümliche Verdienst wahren Werth und Brauchbarkeit hat. Niemand treibt einen Zweig der Gelehrsamkeit auf die rechte Weise, welcher blind gegen den Zusammenhang ist, in welchem dieser Zweig mit noch größern Aesten und dem ganzen Stamme steht. Alle solche unbändig große Gelehrten sind Pedanten.<sup>549</sup>

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<sup>548</sup> GW 5.1, pp. 170-171.

<sup>549</sup> GW 8.2, pp. 105-106.

Single-minded devotion to one isolated area of learning has detrimental effects on other areas of human life, and also robs even the area studied of its meaning. Garve here stresses the 'Zusammenhang' of all scholarship: it forms a coherent whole, and is integrated within the all-encompassing realm of human efforts to achieve perfection ('Vollkommenheit'). Narrow specialism undermines this aim. A true genius is someone able to take an interest in things outside of their chosen field: 'selten waren große Genies unmäßige Arbeiter.'<sup>550</sup>

Moderation or decorum thus touches upon Garve's thought in a wide range of areas. Most importantly, however, the virtue is rooted in a distinctive human ideal. This much is clear from *De officiis*. Cicero's argument for moderation is buttressed by a particular understanding of human nature as rational:

Nor is it only the movements of the body that should be commended when they are suited to nature, but also those of the spirit when they too are adapted to her. For the power of the spirit, that is its nature, is twofold: one part of it consists of impulse, called in Greek *horme*, which snatches a man this way and that; the other of reason, which teaches and explains what should be done and what avoided. Reason therefore commands, and impulse obeys. All action should be free from rashness and carelessness; nor should anyone do anything for which he cannot give a persuasive justification: that is practically a definition of duty. One must ensure, therefore, that the impulses obey reason, and neither run ahead of it, nor through laziness or cowardice abandon it, and that they are calm and free from every agitation of spirit. As a result there will shine free in their fullness both constancy and moderation. [...] It is a great part of every enquiry about duty always to keep in view how greatly the nature of a man surpasses domestic animals and other beasts. They perceive nothing except pleasure, and their every instinct carries them to it. A man's mind, however, is nourished by learning and reasoning; he is always enquiring or acting, he is led by a delight in seeing and hearing.<sup>551</sup>

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<sup>550</sup> GW 8.2, p. 106.

<sup>551</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis* I.100-105, pp. 39-41.

On the Stoic view, all actions should be in conformity with nature, and it is in the nature of human beings for reason to govern over the passions. Cicero repeats this several times over. A person's activity should never be dictated by powerful impulses, or by the pull of pleasure, but only by the wise tuition of reason. Excess is deplorable precisely because it indicates that the passions have taken the place of reason. A man guilty of it has lowered himself to the level of the brute beasts.

When Schlegel refers to 'nichts zuviel' in connection with Garve's work, he is, then, evoking a particular understanding of what human beings are supposed to be, and how they are supposed to behave. This ethical ideal is highly prominent in Garve's reception. He is repeatedly praised for incarnating the Stoic ideal of a philosopher, temperate in all his dealings. Manso claims that the moderation so evident in his writing was equally evident in his behaviour:

Ich habe ihn im Umgange nie gespannt, in Lob und Tadel nie ausschweifend, in seinen Forderungen an die Menschen nie unbillig, ich habe ihn im Leben nie sich ungleich, sondern stets wahr gefunden, und so erscheint er mir auch in seinen Schriften. [...] Wenn überhaupt irgend ein Sterblicher, in Thaten und in Worten, die hehre Nemesis, die Göttinn des Maßes und Einhalts, ehrte, so war ers. Dafür hat sie ihm aber auch viel Liebe unter den Menschen verliehen, und ihn den Pfad des Ruhmes ruhiger und unbeneideter, als viele andere, wandeln lassen.<sup>552</sup>

The avoidance of excess is a central feature in Manso's characterization. Garve the man, like Garve the writer, is a paragon of moderation and appropriateness, if ever there was one.

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<sup>552</sup> Manso, 'Garve', p. 136.

In Schlichtegroll's *Nekrolog*, Garve's moral character is introduced with reference to this defining characteristic of moderation:

Er stellte in seinem ganzen Wesen das Bild eines sich selbst beherrschenden Weisen auf. Er war für Empfindungen offen, nie aber gingen sie in heftige Gemüthsbewegungen über; man sah ihn nie lustig, wohl aber vergnügt; nie erzürnt, aber wohl unwillig; nie vor Schrecken außer sich, sondern nur bedenklich. Wenn auch seine körperlichen Dispositionen ihm diese Mäßigungen erleichterten, so hatte doch seine Tugendkraft, dieß Produkt seines ruhigen Nachdenkens und seines auf sittliche Güte stets gerichteten Willens, einen noch größern Antheil daran.<sup>553</sup>

The specific thing that sets Garve apart as a wise man is his ability to control his feelings. If this may partly be the result of his natural temperament, Schlichtegroll lays much more stress on the self-control which Garve cultivated as a virtue. It is assumed that he would have been capable of extreme sensations, but that letting them have their full play would have been excess, to be regarded negatively. In all his behaviour, he demonstrates due measure.

The virtue of moderation thus played a central role in the framework of ethical values which many contemporaries applied to Garve. The same human ideal lies behind comments on an area of particular biographical significance for him: patience in suffering. His reception in many quarters – sympathetic and otherwise – laid great stress on his noble endurance of protracted ill health. It is the subject of his only appearance in the *Xenien*:

Hör ich über Geduld dich edler Leidender reden,  
O wie wird mir das Volk frömmelnder Schwätzer verhaßt.<sup>554</sup>

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<sup>553</sup> Friedrich Schlichtegroll, 'Christian Garve', in Schlichtegroll, *Nekrolog auf das Jahr 1798* (Gotha: Perthes, 1803), p. 237.

<sup>554</sup> FA 1, p. 597 (*Xenion* 156).

Siegismund Gottfried Dittmar portrays Garve as offering a moving spectacle to those who knew him:

Bis zur Wehmuth war es allen Menschenfreunden rührend, einen solchen Mann, der die Tugend durch sein Beyspiel verherrlichte, von einer schmerzhaften Krankheit, so viele Jahre gefoltet zu sehen. Ich erinnere mich, daß er zwanzig Jahre vor seinem Lebensende, als man ihn wegen seiner Kränklichkeit beklagte, die Worte aus Gresset erwiederte: *Savoir souffrir la vie, et voir venir la mort, / C'est le devoir du sage, et tel sera mon sort.*<sup>555</sup>

Many obituaries and tributes cite Garve's fortitude as he persevered in philosophical work, even on his deathbed. Schleiermacher's review begins with a mention of it.<sup>556</sup>

Schlichtegroll is another example:

So haben wir die überraschende Erscheinung, daß gerade seine letzten Jahre die allerfruchtbarsten an schriftstellerischen, zum Theil bedeutenden Unternehmungen waren. Unter diesen Arbeiten [...] rückte der edle Dulder der Befreyung von seinen Leiden immer näher. [...] Er war dieses und das folgende Jahr immerfort beschäftigt, diktirte, als er nicht gut mehr selbst schreiben konnte, und erleichterte durch diese beständige Richtung auf zusammenhängende Vorstellungen seinem Geiste die Herrschaft über seinen leidenden Körper. Seine Standhaftigkeit im Leiden, seine Gottergebenheit hielt aus bis ans Ende.<sup>557</sup>

For Jördens, Garve's noble resilience is among the marks of a true philosopher: 'Die Stärke seines Geistes und Herzens, womit er während der fürchterlichen Krankheit alle ihre Uebel ertrug und in seinen philosophischen Arbeiten unermüdet fortfuhr, [bestätigt] das Urtheil, was Kant von ihm fällte: Er war ein *Philosoph* in der ächten

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<sup>555</sup> Siegismund Gottfried Dittmar, *Erinnerungen aus meinem Umgange mit Garve, nebst einigen Bemerkungen über dessen Leben und Charakter* (Breslau: 1801), p. 152.

<sup>556</sup> See Schleiermacher, KGA 3, p. 65: 'Garve [hat] weder niedergedrückt noch abgestumpft, noch den Einfluß auf die Welt früher aufgebend als das Leben selbst, die letzten beschwerlichen Stunden desselben so unermüdet genutzt, und so fleißig geeilt, was er noch konnte von den Früchten seines Nachdenkens zu sammeln und den zurückbleibenden Zeitgenossen als das beste Denkmal seines Daseyns zum Aufbewahren zu übergeben.'

<sup>557</sup> Schlichtegroll, 'Garve', pp. 280-282.

Bedeutung des Wortes.<sup>558</sup> Schlichtegroll calls it his defining moral virtue: ‘Unter seinen Tugenden ist es vorzüglich die Geduld und die männliche, verständige Ertragung des Uebels, worinn er als Muster aufgestellt werden kann.’<sup>559</sup>

Garve himself spent some time reflecting on the nature of patience in suffering. Here, too, his argument depends on the value ascribed to moderation by Cicero: patience is a specific manifestation of the superiority of reason over the passions, and this is what makes it such an important virtue. The first volume of his *Versuche* opens with an essay on the subject, ‘Ueber die Geduld’ (surely the inspiration behind the above *Xenion*).<sup>560</sup> Garve’s argument begins with the claim that even the most spontaneous human activity is the result of external stimulus: ‘Der Mensch [muß] immer erst afficirt werden, ehe er seine Spontaneität äußern kann.’<sup>561</sup> Distinctive human dignity, however, depends on managing these stimuli effectively:

Der Mensch [verliert] unter den ihm aufgedrückten Modificationen, das Eigenthümliche seines Wesens und seine Vollkommenheit, wenn das Gefühl, und besonders das unangenehme Gefühl, in seiner Seele die Oberhand über die deutlichen Ideen bekommt.<sup>562</sup>

Garve defines that which sets human beings apart from other creatures in psychological terms. To be human is to be subjected to external forces, but amid these, it is imperative that the clear ideas of the rational mind retain their superiority over feelings. The echo of Cicero’s definition of man as rational is transposed to a different key, but it is nonetheless clear.

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<sup>558</sup> Karl Heinrich Jördens, ‘Christian Garve’, in Jördens, *Lexikon deutscher Dichter und Prosaisten*, 6 vols (Leipzig: Weidemann, 1806-1811), vol. 2, p. 13.

<sup>559</sup> Schlichtegroll, ‘Garve’, p. 290.

<sup>560</sup> Now GW 1.1, pp. 1-116. The German ‘Geduld’ is rendered throughout as English ‘patience’.

<sup>561</sup> GW 1.1, p. 96.

<sup>562</sup> GW 1.1, p. 96.

Garve defines the virtue of patience ('Gelassenheit und Geduld') accordingly. The label expresses the disposition ('Anlage') which is necessary in the face of powerful external impressions.<sup>563</sup> Garve assigns a broad sense to the term: 'Der gewöhnliche Sinn dieser Wörter ist eingeschränkter: aber die Natur der Sache verträgt und verlangt sogar eine weitere Ausdehnung.'<sup>564</sup> Patience has a psychological regulatory function:

Es kommt nämlich alles darauf an, dem Uebermaße in den passiven Veränderungen zu wehren, dem ersten Stoße der auf uns wirkende Dinge das Erschütternde zu benehmen [...] und in allen Fällen, wo wir stark afficirt werden, unsre eigne freie Thätigkeit aufrecht zu erhalten. Dies ist eben so sehr beim Vergnügen, als bei der Unlust [...] nöthig. Allenthalben, wo in unserm Erkenntniß- oder Begehrungsvermögen durch fremde Kraft etwas gewirkt wird: da muß diese Wirkung mäßig und der uns möglichen Reaction angemessen seyn, oder sie muß freywillig von uns gemildert werden, wenn nicht der Stoff, der uns dadurch zum Denken und Handeln geliefert wird, ungenutzt bleiben, und uns schädlich werden soll.<sup>565</sup>

Garve reiterates that external impressions furnish essential stimulus for thought and action, but that this stimulus has to be properly channelled if it is to be put to productive use. Above all, the person's free agency must be preserved. Patience consists in the capacity to regulate external stimuli and absorb their destabilizing force. He employs the conceptual vocabulary of moderation: the effect of external forces has to be made 'mäßig' and 'angemessen', in order to avoid an 'Uebermaß'.

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<sup>563</sup> See GW 1.1, p. 96: 'Mich dünkt, diese Tugend, die wir hier suchen, diese dem Menschen zu wünschende Anlage des Charakters, dieses ihm vorzusteckende Ziel ist durch kein Wort der Sprache so nahe auszudrücken, als durch den Nahmen der Tugend, von der wir hier reden, *Gelassenheit* und *Geduld*.'

<sup>564</sup> GW 1.1, p. 96.

<sup>565</sup> GW 1.1, pp. 96-97.

Garve goes on to affirm the classical background to the ethical framework he articulates:

Die Regel, welche uns dieses befiehlt, ist von dem ersten Moment an, da die Menschen sich mit der sittlichen Vollkommenheit abgaben, und auf Mittel zu Erweckung derselben dachten, anerkannt, und schon in den ältesten Sinnsprüchen der Weisen auf mannichfaltige Art ausgedrückt worden. Das μηδὲν ἄγαν, das *ne quid nimis*, das *nil admirari* – dies alles bezieht sich auf diesen *einen* Punkt: seine Freiheit unter den Einwirkungen der Objecte, welche Begierden erwecken, und die Klarheit seiner Verstandesbegriffe unter den Sensationen der Dinge, welche die Sinne und die Einbildungskraft lebhaft füllen, zu erhalten. Gelassen und stark in allen diesen Fällen *seyn*, ist eine Gabe der Natur: sich gelassen *machen*, ist das Bestreben des Weisen und Tugendhaften.<sup>566</sup>

The virtue Garve describes here is moderation. He calls it a crucial element in all virtue, recognized as such throughout history. Classical *sententia* are quoted to this effect: the Greek *mēden agan* and the Latin *ne quid nimis* are two equivalents to the German maxim quoted by Schlegel, ‘nichts zuviel’. Virtuous behaviour, in Garve’s framework, means behaviour according to the dictates of the free will (over against base appetites) and a clear mind (over against sensory impression). He equates moderation with the preservation of the mind’s freedom and of the authority of reason, in the face of potentially destabilizing external and internal forces.

The essay proceeds to make the link between patience and moderation explicit.

Patience is a specific application of this general ethical norm, the manifestation of moderation in the face of suffering:

Die Geduld in der Noth ist eine Unterart jener allgemeinen Mäßigung der Empfindungen, von der ich rede. Sie ist gewiß die Grundlage aller Tugenden, die sich in dem Zustande des Leidens ausüben lassen. Denn da alle auf der Besonnenheit beruhn, und den freien Gebrauch

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<sup>566</sup> GW 1.1, pp. 97-98.

der Vernunft voraussetzen: so ist ihre erste Bedingung, daß, durch die Heftigkeit des Uebels, die Besonnenheit nicht geraubt, und die Vernunft in ihren Functionen nicht gestört worden sey. Und diese Wirkung des Uebels zu verhüten, muß die Empfindung desselben gemäßigt seyn. Die verdrießlichen und traurigen Bilder, die durch die Association unwillkürlich sich zu der Empfindung gesellen, und am besten beitragen, das Gemüth zu benebeln oder es niederzudrücken, müssen beiseite geschafft und durch vorsätzlich erweckte fröhlichere verdrängt werden. Das innere unruhige und zwecklose Entgegenstreben, das die unangenehme Empfindung, welche dadurch weggeschafft werden sollte, nur verstärkt, muß unterdrückt werden. Dies alles umfasset die Tugend des Geduldigen.<sup>567</sup>

Garve's argument gives a central role to moderation (generally) and patience (specifically) in the exercise of virtue. Severe suffering produces intense sensations. Patience means dispelling, or cutting off at source, these sensations, and so preserving the clarity and freedom of the human mind. Given the concept of virtue outlined in Garve's essay, this capacity has enormous significance. All virtue, by definition, demands the free exercise of the rational will, and this is what patience achieves.

Schlegel dismisses Garve with a passing reference to the precept of moderation. In so doing, he touches upon a notion with vast significance for Garve's thought.

*Mäßigung*, in the sense of decorum, informs Garve's perspective on intellectual practice as well as on ethical questions. In the sense of reason's authority over the passions, it has wider implications still, not only for Garve's own reflection but also for the kind of person he was felt to be. Hailed by friend and foe as the ideal incarnation of the Stoic philosopher, bravely enduring intense physical suffering, he also proclaimed the definition of rational behaviour as virtuous. At various levels,

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<sup>567</sup> GW 1.1, pp. 99-100.

Garve thus endorses the human ideal presented in the *De officiis*: and this ideal is part of what the Romantics attack when they attack him.

## Conclusion (chapter 4)

This chapter has dealt with four important areas of Garve's thought which play a prominent role in the Romantic polemic against him: the commitment of philosophy to usefulness, the methods of commentary and of observation, and the ethical precept of moderation. It has used a broad brush in its attempt to identify the range of traditions for which Garve stood as a representative, and which were the targets of Schlegel and Schleiermacher's attack. That Garve was in some sense a representative figure here is clear from some of Schlegel's own comments. He belongs to a group of thinkers whom Schlegel regards as wholly negative:

Ich [glaube] jetzt, daß *Voß* und *Wieland* der Garve und Nicolai der Poesie sind. Es giebt jetzt offenbar ein wirklich böses Princip, einen Ahriman in der deutschen Litteratur. Das sind sie, die negativen Classiker. [...] [Ihre Poesie] hat gar keinen Werth, sondern wirklichen Unwerth, und muß also in Belagerungsstand erklärt werden.<sup>568</sup>

It is in this light that the episode must be read. Schlegel's fragments and Schleiermacher's review are not simply expressions of personal ire, but part of a strategy with broad implications. Their aim is to drive a particular set of intellectual values and convictions out of German intellectual culture. The set of values in question is perhaps best described as rhetorical humanism, but it incorporated other elements too: Bacon's method of induction is one example.

The Romantics thus bring to the surface the conflict which has been bubbling under the surface throughout the exchanges treated here. They make open war on Garve's

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<sup>568</sup> Friedrich Schlegel to Caroline Schlegel, 20.10.1798, in KFSa 24, p. 185.

model of philosophy, attempting to portray it as intellectually discredited. In the case of Garve, they were largely successful. Not all of the targets in the passage quoted fared equally badly. Wieland proved hard to eradicate, though some stench clung for a long time to Nicolai after Fichte described him as a 'literarisches Stinktier'.<sup>569</sup> As for Garve, the echo from Schlegel and Schleiermacher still resounds in the verdicts of scholars who ought to know what they are talking about:

Wer will bestreiten, daß [die Popularphilosophie] oft in Trivialitäten stecken blieben und daß es ihnen an denkerischer Originalität mangelte?<sup>570</sup>

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<sup>569</sup> See Frieder von Ammon, 'Kampfplätze der Literatur', in Stefanie Stockhorst, *Friedrich Nicolai im Kontext der kritischen Kultur der Aufklärung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), pp. 25-26. The reference is to Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Friedrich Nicolai's Leben und sonderbare Meinungen*, now in Fichte, *Ausgewählte Werke in sechs Bänden*, ed. Fritz Medicus (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962), vol. 3, p. 704.

<sup>570</sup> Rudolf Vierhaus, 'Christian Garve', in Vierhaus (ed.), *Aufklärung als Prozess* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1988), p. 135.

## Thesis Conclusion

This thesis has dealt with four distinct exchanges between the Breslau philosopher Christian Garve and several prominent intellectual contemporaries. With Immanuel Kant, Garve disputed the question of whether or not the contents of Kant's first *Kritik* could have been expressed in more accessible language. Garve argues that the philosopher's thought is fundamentally connected with the layperson's, but Kant disagrees. Garve and Friedrich Schiller later exchanged views on the author's role in society. They think of this role in very different ways. For Garve, the author is an ideal public servant who shares his readers' faculties of mind and language, but Schiller's poet is an implicit condemnation of a perverse political and aesthetic culture. Garve and Schiller later became embroiled in controversy over Johann Kaspar Friedrich Manso's review of Schiller's *Ästhetische Briefe*. Garve defended the stylistic norms on which Manso's arguments were based; Schiller (and Goethe) flatly rejected both them and Garve. Finally, the Romantic polemic against Garve repeatedly attacks central principles from his philosophical project.

The thesis has drawn out the contrasting assumptions which inform the arguments of Garve and his opponents. A repeated point of divergence lies in the two sides' very different ways of thinking about the intellectual's vocation. Garve consistently argues that the intellectual should carry out work which speaks to the concerns of his society: he should write accessibly, and deal with themes of practical interest to the public. In varying ways, all of his contemporaries differ with this point of view. Kant's philosopher employs a faculty which is completely distinct from that used in

everyday thought. Schiller's poet is not to condescend to his contemporaries, but to correct their perverse tastes; both Goethe and Schiller turn away from an intellectual framework way which demands accessible literary style. For Romanticism, the *Aufklärung* validation of practical philosophy was to be rejected as a confusion of priorities. Other areas of disagreement feature in these episodes, but this remains central.

The argument of the thesis has been that the quarrels detailed here are best thought of not as unequal battles between *Popularphilosophie* and Kantianism, but as local expressions of an age-old opposition. On one side stands the view expressed by Socrates in Plato's *Theaetetus*: the intellectual should not be interested in the life of his society, but only in the pursuit of truth, conceived of in abstract, metaphysical terms. This is the position with which the thesis, broadly speaking, has identified Kant and Garve's other opponents. On the other side stands the view held by Cicero and the Renaissance humanists: it is the intellectual's moral duty to be practically involved in the life of his society. The language and contents of his studies should be oriented towards this end. Garve's arguments repeatedly evoke this view, particularly as it was expressed in the values of classical rhetoric. The thesis has located the positions taken up by both sides with reference to rhetoric and the philosophy of Cicero. These individual quarrels thus take their rightful place within a long war between two sets of competing claims about human communication, thought, and life.

The long perspective applied here gives Garve's career historical significance.

However, he has a further claim to importance in the specific context of Germany.

The outcome of the conflict depicted here has done much to shape the distinctive character of German intellectual culture today.

Kantianism gained a decisive ascendancy in German philosophy around the time of Garve's death.<sup>571</sup> More generally, the values of Garve's opponents still hold sway.

They determine the dominant narrative of the period: Garve is remembered now as his enemies remembered him. Thinkers who are in some ways similar to him, but who belong to other contexts, have fared very differently. David Hume is an inviting example. A fragment of Schlegel's associates Hume with Garve as a representative of mediocrity.<sup>572</sup> Garve might have welcomed the comparison. In 'Die Kunst zu denken', Hume appears as the ideal incarnation of the observing philosopher: 'Hume scheint daher am meisten geschickt, Muster für diejenige Art der Philosophie, von der ich jetzt rede, zu seyn.'<sup>573</sup> Yet today, Hume's stature is secure, while it is still common to find research patronizing Garve as well-meaning but rather dim (witness Altmayer's biographical article). It might be retorted that this is partly due to Hume's sheer intellectual superiority; yet a difference in cultural values is surely also manifest in these verdicts. Hume and Garve are both representatives of an essayistic, morally-oriented philosophy which appeals to the general public.<sup>574</sup> The contrast in their

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<sup>571</sup> See e.g. art., 'Philosophie', in HWPh 7, col. 716: 'Kants Definitionen der Philosophie – als reine Vernunftwissenschaft, vor allem aber als Kritik – sind quasi irreversibel erfolgreich geworden.'

<sup>572</sup> See KFSa 18, p. 59: 'Kant ist überall *auf halbem Wege stehen geblieben*; auch in dem Grundsatz nicht nach dem Erfolg, sondern nach dem Ursprung zu urtheilen. Wenn er auch für nichts Sinn hat, so doch für gebildete vollendete Mittelmäßigkeit; Hume, Garve. Kant ist ein genialischer Pedant.'

<sup>573</sup> GW 1.2, p. 423.

<sup>574</sup> In this regard, Hume's statement of the function of essays – to unite the scholar and the general public – should be noted: "Tis with great Pleasure I observe, That Men of Letters, in this Age, have

fates invites the conclusion that this philosophy has retained its prestige in the English-speaking academy, but is largely discredited in Germany. History is written by the winners, and Garve was a loser. A different set of values has prevailed. German philosophy today does not dwell in the city: the attempt to send it back to heaven has been thoroughly successful.

This is reflected in contemporary perceptions of German intellectual culture. Canonical texts are seen as notably difficult; the culture as a whole is seen as reluctant to engage with a wider public. Andrew Bowie's *German Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* begins with a weary admission:

German philosophy has a sometimes deserved reputation for being both impenetrable and excessively speculative.<sup>575</sup>

Given this beginning, we are not surprised to find that Bowie's first chapter is titled 'Kant and modernity'. The turn of the nineteenth century plays a crucial role in the story he seeks to tell; the period from Kant to Romanticism supplies the first four of his nine chapters. The chapter on Kant begins on a similar note to the introduction. Its first sentence recalls Garve's criticisms: 'Anyone reading the works of Immanuel Kant is faced with a barrage of technical terms, such as "synthetic judgements a priori" and "transcendental unity of apperception".'<sup>576</sup>

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lost, in a great Measure, that Shyness and Bashfulness of Temper, which kept them at a distance from Mankind; and, at the same Time, That Men of the World are proud of borrowing from Books their most agreeable Topics of Conversation. 'Tis to be hop'd, that this League betwixt the learned and conversible Worlds, which is so happily begun, will be still farther improv'd to their mutual Advantage; and to that End, I know nothing more advantageous than such *Essays* as these with which I endeavour to entertain the Public.' David Hume, 'Of Essay-Writing', in Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1994), p. 535.

<sup>575</sup> Andrew Bowie, *German Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 1.

<sup>576</sup> Bowie, *German Philosophy*, p. 6.

The same experience of bafflement is also evident in more popular perspectives. The song 'Schiller' by the *a cappella* group, the Wise Guys, plays on its subject's dense verse:

Doch es ist Schiller,  
Schiller schreibt so schrecklich kompliziert und manchmal geradezu  
blasiert.  
Ja, es ist Schiller.  
Schiller macht mir Sterbenslangeweile.  
Ich les – jede – Zeile drei Mal.<sup>577</sup>

The song's purpose is comic, but it is presumably intended to resonate with listeners' experience. Schiller's poetry is presented as forbiddingly difficult, even threatening: the song is based upon Michael Jackson's *Thriller*, and live performances include an ominously-voiced passage from Schiller's poem, 'Die Bürgschaft'. The intellectual demands posed by reading Schiller are stressed. The final stanza includes an admission of defeat: 'Schiller zeigt, / meine grauen Zellen zählen nicht gerade zu den schnellen.'<sup>578</sup>

Not only is canonical German intellectual culture often felt to be inaccessible; that culture's present-day inheritors are, similarly, felt to be disposed against engagement with a broader public. Dirk Siepmann's article on academic writing and culture in English, French, and German identifies a 'Teutonic' intellectual style: more abstract than its 'Saxonic' or 'Gallic' counterparts, this style privileges 'fundamental

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<sup>577</sup> Wise Guys, 'Schiller', released on the album 'Frei' (Pavement Records, 2008). Music by Rodney L. Temperton, lyrics and arrangement by Daniel Dickopf.

<sup>578</sup> Wise Guys, 'Schiller'.

issues of theory formation and deductive reasoning'.<sup>579</sup> Siepmann goes on to suggest that German academic writing assumes 'reader responsibility: the reader is assumed to share the writer's subject knowledge'. English and French, by contrast, assume 'writer responsibility': the writer's task is to guide a less knowledgeable reader through the text.<sup>580</sup> German academic writing is distinguished by a tendency towards abstraction; it is certainly not oriented towards the non-expert reader. The picture Siepmann paints recalls Garve's criticisms of Kant and Schiller.

Siepmann's hypothesis about the German academy finds anecdotal support in an event which took place in May 2017. The philosopher Richard David Precht took part in a celebrity edition of the television programme *Wer wird Millionär*. (Although hotly tipped to excel, Precht was undone by a question on English sport.) An article by Stuart Jeffries in the magazine *Foreign Policy* detailed the response which followed from some of Precht's contemporaries.

Though he raised a significant sum for charity, for some, Precht's appearance on the show was just another signal that something has gone wrong with German philosophy. Other German philosophers have certainly been snuffy about Precht's media-friendliness. Markus Gabriel calls Precht a 'philosophy performer', while Peter Sloterdijk calls Precht a 'popularizer by profession'.<sup>581</sup>

Precht's self-proclaimed goal is to extend the reach of German philosophy: 'As one of the most prominent — and sought after — figures in a new wave of German philosophy, he has argued that in order for the discipline to remain relevant, it must

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<sup>579</sup> Dirk Siepmann, 'Academic Writing and Culture: An Overview of Differences between English, French and German', in *Meta* 51 (2006), vol. 1, p. 133.

<sup>580</sup> Siepmann, 'Academic Writing and Culture', p. 142.

<sup>581</sup> Stuart Jeffries, 'German Philosophy Has Finally Gone Viral. Will That Be Its Undoing?', in *Foreign Policy*, 24.07.2017. Accessed online at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/07/24/german-philosophy-has-finally-gone-viral-will-that-be-its-undoing-precht-habermas/>. Article retrieved 06.06.2018.

come down from the ivory tower and commune with the masses.<sup>582</sup> The article details other efforts he has made in this regard. His most popular book, *Wer bin ich – und wenn ja wie viele?*, has sold over a million copies and been translated into 32 languages; his weekly television show regularly attracts a million viewers.<sup>583</sup> In the eyes of many practitioners, however, Precht has surrendered his credibility. Serious intellectual work is incompatible with popularization. Jeffries cites the background to this controversy, indicating the approach that Precht is trying to escape. The key names are predictable: ‘Words like “delightful,” “beguiling,” and “easily consumable” would never have been used when speaking of Immanuel Kant or Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.’<sup>584</sup>

Whether Garve might have appeared on *Wer wird Millionär* is a question whose answer must (regrettably) lie shrouded in the mists of time. But the response to Precht’s sally forth indicates that Garve’s quarrels still have something important to say. Modern German thought is frequently perceived to be both inherently difficult and hostile to engagement with the general public. The roots of this perception go back to a pivotal period around the turn of the nineteenth century. This thesis has outlined a major quarrel in that period between two sets of values: one stresses the intellectual’s duty to engage with the public, and the other regards such engagement as intellectual suicide. The latter set of views triumphed; its triumph remains crucial to the character of modern German intellectual culture. Christian Garve, now largely forgotten, thus becomes a key to a story whose effects are still very present today.

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<sup>582</sup> Jeffries, ‘German Philosophy’.

<sup>583</sup> Jeffries, ‘German Philosophy’.

<sup>584</sup> Jeffries, ‘German Philosophy’.

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