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Hamann's *Socratic Memorabilia*

Socrates lured his fellow citizens out of the labyrinths of
their learned Sophists to a truth in the inward being,
to a wisdom in the secret heart . . .
—Hamann

The great Hamann is a deep sky full of telescopic stars
with many a nebula which no eye will resolve.
—Jean Paul
Vorschule der Aesthetik

HAMANN'S
SOCRATIC MEMORABILIA

A Translation and Commentary

James C. O'Flaherty

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For Lucy and Daniel
never failing sources of inspiration

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FOREWORD

The following work is divided into two parts. Part I consists of a monographic study of the *Socratic Memorabilia* by Johann Georg Hamann (1730–1788), preceded by an introduction to his life and work. The author hopes that, in addition to making a contribution to Hamann studies, the present investigation will also serve to introduce to a wider circle of readers what is perhaps the least well known and understood of the undisputed classics of German literature. Part II consists of a translation of the work, accompanied by the original German text and notes. Since no translation of the entire treatise into English—or in fact into any other language—has previously appeared, this volume is an attempt to fill a genuine need. (Sergio Lupi's Italian translation in *Scritti e frammenti di estetica* [Florence, 1938], pp. 221–41, is, however, only slightly abridged; Ronald Gregor Smith has translated approximately one-third of the work into English in *J. G. Hamann: A Study in Christian Existence* [New York, 1960], pp. 176–84.)

The presence of the German text facing the translation should be especially helpful in view of the inaccessibility of the original to many readers. Further, it is to be hoped that the difficulty of understanding Hamann's remarkable prose may be somewhat lessened by the juxtaposition of his ideas in the two languages. The text here reproduced is that of Josef Nadler in *Johann Georg Hamann, Sämtliche Werke* (Vienna, 1950), pp. 57–82. For the convenience of readers wishing to consult the German original of the quotations from the *Memorabilia* which appear in Part I, Nadler's pagination and lineation have been retained in the German text, as well as in the references to that text throughout this volume. In order to reach as wide a circle of readers as possible, in Part I the passages quoted from German works have been translated into English in the text, but not in the notes. Explanatory notes of the translator follow the translation itself.

Unfortunately, space does not permit the inclusion of much material accumulated over a period of several years in my study of the text. Therefore, only those terms and allusions which seemed

most to need comment and which could not be illuminated by cross-references to Part I were annotated. Those who desire more information should turn to the works of Unger, Nadler, Blanke, and the other commentators who will be mentioned.

It is important to say a word here about the general procedure adopted in the translation. It was my purpose to render the original as literally as possible without violating the English idiom. This method is not necessarily to be defended as ideal, but simply as the only feasible one in the present case. There is, however, an important exception to the general policy. Wherever Hamann uses a Biblical expression whose literal translation differs materially from its counterpart in the English version of the Scriptures, I have utilized the latter instead of a literal translation. Hence, the reader will notice a number of non-literal renderings of such expressions. For instance, when Hamann writes: "Niemand ist gleichwol so klug solche zu glauben, als der, wie Moses zuverstehen giebt, von Gott selbst gelehrt wird zu *bedenken, daß er sterben* müsse," the translation reads thus: "Nevertheless, no one is wise enough to believe it except the one who, as Moses makes clear, is taught by God himself *to number his days*" (my italics indicate words from Psalm 90:12, ascribed to Moses).

The inordinate difficulty of translating Hamann will be recognized by anyone at all familiar with his writings, and scarcely needs comment. Nevertheless, the detailed analysis of his style and of his philological procedure which is presented in the following chapters will further illuminate the reasons for his obscurity. Much of this is ground upon which angels (if translators can be reckoned among them!) have hitherto feared to tread. Let us hope that the temerity of the present translator has not been too great and that the intriguing qualities of the original are not too greatly diminished in the translation.

I should like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to those who, in various ways, have furthered the present undertaking. Professor Fritz Blanke, of Zürich, originally urged me to carry out my plan of investigating the dramatic elements of the

Socratic Memorabilia, and Professor Isaiah Berlin, of All Souls College, Oxford, showed continuing interest in the project. Professor Robert M. Helm, of Wake Forest College, made valuable suggestions concerning important passages of the manuscript, and Dr. Reinhold Meier, of Wake Forest College, was of considerable help in determining the correct reading of the Kleuker manuscript. Thanks are also due to Dr. Karlfried Gründer, of the University of Münster, who made it possible to secure the photograph of Hamann reproduced on the dust jacket. Further, I should like to thank the University Library of Bonn for furnishing a microfilm of its rare copy of the first edition of Hamann's treatise, and the university libraries of Kiel and Munich for microfilms of J. F. Kleuker's manuscript and Wolf Hertel's dissertation, respectively, as well as the British Museum for a microfilm of the German edition of Charpentier's work on Socrates. The staff of the library of Wake Forest College were most helpful, particularly Miss Minnie S. Kallam, Reference Librarian, who kindly and efficiently assisted in procuring books for this study. My thanks also must go to Mrs. Robert Beck, for her patient and efficient typing of the manuscript. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation for the cooperation I have received from The Johns Hopkins Press, which has manifested a rare combination of efficiency and consideration for the point of view of the author. Mrs. Jean Owen of the editorial staff should be especially mentioned in this connection.

I began the translation and serious study of Hamann's memorabilia of Socrates during a Fulbright research year in Heidelberg, 1960–1961. Since that time valuable financial assistance has been provided by the Research and Publication Fund of Wake Forest College. Publication of the present volume was made possible by a joint grant from that Fund and the Piedmont University Center.

Above all, my gratitude must go to my wife, Lucy Ribble O'Flaherty, for her scrupulous critical reading of the manuscript, which resulted in material improvement of the text, as well as for her constant encouragement and support of the project.

J. C. O'F.
August, 1966

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

B Fritz Blanke. *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten*. Vol. II of *J. G. Hamanns Haupschriften erklärt*. Gütersloh, 1959.

Ch *Das Leben Socratis, aus dem Frantzösischen des Herrn [François] Charpentier ins Teutsche übersetzt von Christian Thomasius*. 2d ed. Halle, 1720.

DW *Deutsches Wörterbuch*. Edited by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. Leipzig, 1854–1961.

G C. H. Gildemeister. *Hamann's Briefwechsel mit Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi*. Vol. V of *Johann Georg Hamann's, des Magus im Norden, Leben und Schriften*. Gotha, 1868.

HE *J. G. Hamanns Hauptschriften erklärt*. Edited by Fritz Blanke and Karlfried Gründer. Gütersloh, 1956–63. Vols. I, IV, V, VII. [Volume II is indicated separately above as *B* because of frequent citation.]

K Friedrich Kainz. "Klassik und Romantik," in *Deutsche Wortgeschichte*. Edited by F. Maurer and F. Stroh. Berlin, 1959. Vol. II, pp. 223–408.

L August Langen. "Der Wortschatz des 18. Jahrhunderts," in *Deutsche Wortgeschichte*. Edited by F. Maurer and F. Stroh. Berlin, 1959. Vol. II, pp. 23–222.

LC Loeb Classical Library. Edited by T. E. Page *et al*. London, New York, Cambridge, Mass.

N Josef Nadler, ed. *J. G. Hamann. Sämtliche Werke*. Historical-critical edition. Vienna, 1949–57. Vols. I–VI. [References to the *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten*, which appears in Vol. II, pp. 57–82, are to this volume and are cited by page and line number only.]

NB Josef Nadler. *J. G. Hamann. Der Zeuge des Corpus mysticum*. Salzburg, 1949.

R Friedrich Roth and G. A. Wiener, eds. *Hamann's Schriften*. Berlin, 1821–43. [Roth edited Vols. I–VII, Wiener Vol. VIII.] References to Vol. II, pp. 1–50, containing text of the *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten*, omit the volume number.

U Rudolf Unger, *Hamann und die Aufklärung*. Jena. 1911. Vols. I–II.

ZH Walther Ziesemer and Arthur Henkel, eds. *J. G. Hamann. Briefwechsel*. Wiesbaden, 1955–59. Vols. I–IV.

Part I

THE CONCEPT OF FORM IN THE *SOCRATIC MEMORABILIA*

INTRODUCTION

Of all the unresolved questions of cultural history none is more disputed or more difficult than that of the relationship of Christianity to classical antiquity, especially to the seminal culture of Greece. The problem is whether the advent of Christianity represented a breach with the central traditions of Hellenic culture or whether it represented rather an absorption and further development of those traditions. Since the time of the Apostle Paul different answers to the questions have, of course, been given. Julian the Apostate, Roman emperor and nephew of Constantine the Great, gave perhaps the most dramatic of the negative answers by trying to revive the old pagan religion of Greece and Rome and to substitute it for Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire. It is reported that Julian sent an emissary to Delphi, receiving in response the last of the oracles:

> Tell the king, the fairwrought hall has fallen to the ground. No longer has Phoebus a hut, nor a prophetic laurel, nor a spring that speaks. The water of speech even is quenched.[1]

This is in effect the lament of all those who see in Christianity and Hellenism irreconcilable adversaries, and for whom, like Heine and Nietzsche, the victory of the Galilean over the gods of Olympus was a tragedy.

But had the "water of speech" really been quenched? Had it not sought and found other subterranean channels, only to reappear on the surface in a new environment? In other words, was it not possible that Christianity had caught up and transformed the best in Hellenic religion? The following pages are concerned with the literary creation of one who believed ardently in the continuity of Hellenism and Christianity rather than their dis-

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[1] Quoted by Herbert W. Parke, *A History of the Delphic Oracle*, p. 295. As the author says: ". . . it was reckoned as one of the offences of Julian the Apostate that he tried to revive the oracle at Delphi. He sent there a famous doctor, named Oribasius, who was acting as imperial quaestor. But the attempt failed, for Oribasius only brought back the answer" (see text above).

pressive manner. The work with which we are concerned focuses our attention on Socrates, the central figure of Greek thought, and more particularly on his significance for the Christian revelation. For the manner or style of Socrates' life and teaching afforded in Hamann's eyes intimations of One who was yet to come, and who was to claim the religious allegiance of the Western world for centuries.

In the eighteenth century, an age which was zealous to exalt reason above faith, and during which the fortunes of Christianity drained away to their lowest ebb, Socrates was not only the most famous but also the most admired philosopher. One might even say that he became the patron saint of the age, venerated by almost all factions from the Enlighteners at one extreme to the Pietists at the other. In the present work we are concerned with the literary portrait of the Attic philosopher which was created by a man who was neither an adherent of the Enlightenment nor of Pietism, though much closer to the latter than to the former. This man was Johann Georg Hamann (1730–88), a German philosopher, theologian, and literary critic from Königsberg in East Prussia, widely known by the singular epithet, "*Magus in Norden.*"[2] It is one of the exciting facts of cultural history that in

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[2] The epithet "*Magus in Norden*" was applied to Hamann by Karl Friedrich von Moser (1723–98), Hessian statesman and writer on political subjects. In calling Hamann by this name he was ascribing deep religious faith to the Königsberger: "Sie haben," he announced to Hamann, "den Stern gesehen, lassen Sie andere Irrwischen nachlaufen." The reference is to the Star of Bethlehem and to the Magi of Matthew 2:2. For a discussion of Hamann's relationship to von Moser, see *U*, I, 418 ff. *et passim*; *NB*, 161–62 *et passim*. (Abbreviations used in footnotes are listed in the Key to Abbreviations.) More recently, Wilhelm Koepp has published a very valuable study of the Magus epithet, in which he says:

> Gewiß hat ein fremder Geist [von Moser] Hamann als "Magus in Norden" in die Existenz gerufen. . . . Gewiß hatte Hamann seinerseits den Ruf vernommen und ihn langsam angenommen und sich als einen neuen Magus in Norden Europas gefühlt, der seinerseits dem Stern zur Krippe des Kindes folgte. Aber er hatte den Ruf nicht immer festgehalten, hatte ihn auch mit den andern Zügen eines Magiers vermengt, hatte ihn auch unsicher fallen lassen und ihn öffentlich halb geleugnet. . . . Bestenfalls schien der große Stotterer ein Stotterer auch der Magusmaske zu sein.

Der Magier unter Masken. Versuch eines neuen Hamannbildes, p. 114. Other forms of the epithet are "*Magus im Norden*"; "*Magus aus Norden*"; "*Magus des Nordens.*"

the year 1759, exactly at the time when the Enlightenment was at the zenith of its influence, Hamann published his *Socratic Memorabilia*, a treatise presenting a version of Socrates in direct contrast to the portrait of that philosopher presented by the Enlightenment. The author contends—and with remarkable power—that the Enlighteners misunderstood and misrepresented Socrates. Although the little work constituted a telling frontal attack on the prevailing rationalism, it is by no means primarily negative in character. Indeed, by presenting a masterful, self-consistent literary portrait of Socrates, Hamann achieved what, for instance, the baroque Rubens, the neoclassical David, or the romantic Delacroix achieved with their latter-day portrayals of the Greek philosopher, namely, artistic creations which effectively exploit the quite different possibilities inherent in their respective points of view.

As we shall see in the following pages, in an age of unbelief Hamann was an ardent believer in Christianity. Further, it happened that he himself was a convert from the fashionable rationalism, which had spread throughout Germany from France, to an evangelical version of Christianity. Shortly after his conversion in London in the year 1758, two of his friends dramatically challenged him to renounce his newly won faith and to return to his former state. One of the friends was later to become a most celebrated philosopher, scarcely less famous in our day than Socrates himself —Immanuel Kant. Confronted in such a way by the universal challenge of the times and by the personal challenge of his two friends, Hamann chose the figure of Socrates with which to answer them, employing a literary device which he preferred to call "metaschematism." His answer constituted a polemic dialogue with the Enlightenment which was to continue until his death in Münster in 1788.

In appealing to Socrates, Hamann cast his vote for an alliance with the classical heritage. In radically reinterpreting Socrates, however, he served notice that he did not understand that heritage after the manner of the rationalists. He thus agreed with the Enlighteners in looking back to ancient Greece for wisdom, but he disagreed sharply with them as to what could be seen there. This difference comes into sharp focus in his *Memorabilia*, where

Socrates is understood as the forerunner of Christ, not as the only rational alternative to Christ.[3] This thought is, of course, not original with Hamann. It had been held by many of the church fathers, including Justin Martyr, Lactantius, Minutius Felix, and others. In Hamann's own century a representative of the religious Right like Count Zinzendorf could appeal quite naturally to the memory of Socrates as a religious reformer who anticipated the Christ.[4] On the other hand, a representative of the religious Left like the freethinking theologian Johann Christian Edelmann (1698–1767) could assert that Socrates was no mere forerunner of the believing Christian but was imbued with the selfsame spirit.[5] In spite of the prevailing habit of invoking the shades of Socrates, very few of those who did so actually succeeded in saying much of abiding value about the Greek philosopher. But Hamann's version of Socrates is unique in several important respects. For instance, it is generally recognized that he was the first to equate the inspiration of genius with the daimon or tutelary spirit of Socrates.[6] Further, as Josef Nadler maintains, "Hamann was the first to point out the relationship between the Socratic and the Pauline doctrine of true ignorance and knowledge from the standpoint of intellectual history" (*N*, VI, 357). It is the purpose of

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[3] Ulrich Mann's stimulating work on the anticipation of the Christian revelation in Greek culture, *Vorspiel des Heils. Die Uroffenbarung in Hellas*, owes much to Hamann. *Cf.* especially pp. 15, 132, 333, 397, n. 46.

[4] Thus Benno Böhm: "So ist Sokrates für Zinzendorf der Reformer, der das innere Gottesbewußtsein als Forderung zur Bekämpfung der Wissenschaft in die Tat umsetzt, und zugleich für die Echtheit seines Strebens der Bekenner, dessen Schicksal überzeitlich ist." *Sokrates im achtzehnten Jahrhundert. Studien zum Werdegange des modernen Persönlichkeitsbewußtseins*, p. 162. The title of the work by Nikolaus Ludwig Count von Zinzendorf on Socrates is *Der teutsche Socrates, das ist: Aufrichtige Anzeige verschiedener nicht so wohl unbekannter als vielmehr in Abfall gerathener Haupt-Wahrheiten*. Of Hamann's relationship to Zinzendorf Nadler makes the following interesting remarks (*N*, VI, 417):

> Zinzendorf scheint sehr stark auf den jüngeren Hamann gewirkt zu haben, möglicherweise zumal auf seine Londoner "Erweckung" und auf seine "Gewissensehe." Vielleicht hängen die grundlegenden sexuellen Anschauungsformen und Ausdrucksformeln seines Geisteslebens damit zusammen. Am deutlichsten in der "Sibylle über die Ehe." In seinen Schriften meidet H. sorgfältig alle Hinweise auf Zinzendorf, wie übrigens auch auf Böhme.

[5] Böhm, *Sokrates im achtzehnten Jahrhundert*, pp. 164–65.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 260.

the present work to demonstrate some other unique aspects of the *Socratic Memorabilia* which have been generally overlooked.

The Enlighteners had represented Socrates as the inquirer after truth who rejected all authority, and who would accept no proposition which did not pass the test of strict reasoning. In exposing the ignorance of others, he engendered so much enmity that he was finally condemned to death. Hamann agreed with this interpretation, with the exception of the ascription of strict rationalism to Socrates. He felt that it was an unjustifiable distortion of the facts to represent the Greek philosopher simply as a thoroughgoing rationalist of the eighteenth-century variety, when as a matter of fact he was a prototype of Christ and in certain senses also of the Christian believer. Hamann's problem then was to present his corrected version of Socrates in such a way as to confute his enemies. The result was his treatise with the curious baroque title, *Socratic Memorabilia, Compiled for the Boredom of the Public by a Lover of Boredom*. It is necessary to inquire more specifically into its genesis and to analyze its contents to determine whether Hamann succeeded in his purpose.

Critics have frequently stressed the inseparability of form and content in the writings of Hamann. This is, for example, the meaning of Hegel's statement in his review of the Roth edition of Hamann's works in 1828: "Hamann's writings do not *have* a characteristic style so much as that they *are* style through and through."[7] Rudolf Unger also emphasizes that in Hamann's literary productions "content and form, conceptual subject matter and stylistic representation, spirit and form"[8] are uncommonly fused. If this is true, it follows then that a study of the literary form or style of this author should yield uncommon results, affording as a by-product of the principal investigation valuable insight into the content of his writings. In any event, it is the contention here that such a study of the *Socratic Memorabilia* does illuminate in a special way the content of the work, and that it constitutes

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[7] G. W. F. Hegel, "Hamanns Schriften," p. 226.
[8] *U*, I, 482.

the necessary propaedeutic for a systematic investigation of the philosophical and theological import of the treatise.

Before proceeding to a consideration of the work itself, however, it may be desirable to indicate what course the investigation will take. In the present interpretation form[9] is understood as appearance, which in turn confronts us with the problem of its philosophical correlate, reality. We shall, then, be concerned with the problem of appearance and reality as aesthetic categories, and shall understand them in a non-Platonic sense.[10] Art can, of course, be understood in terms of other categories, and doubtless under certain circumstances should be, but at least for the purpose of this study the categories of appearance and reality shall serve in so far as the study is systematic. In the following pages the stimulating and sometimes fascinating way in which Hamann uses certain key terms in dealing with his subject will be considered. In order to orient the reader in this approach to the problem of Socratic

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[9] Rudolf Unger says in connection with the problem of form in Hamann's writings (*U*, I, 499):

> Ein Schritt über die Schriften des Jahres 1758 hinaus, und wir stehen den "Sokratischen Denkwürdigkeiten," der Ouverture der Hamannischen Autorschaft im engeren Sinne, gegenüber. E i n Schritt nur—nicht bloß in zeitlicher, auch in stilistischer Hinsicht. Und doch scheint sich gerade um ihn alle Problematik der "Form" dieser Schriftstellerei zu konzentrieren. Denn in und mit den "Denkwürdigkeiten" wird der Magus, wie er selbst sagt zum "ästhetischen Nachahmer," zum "Mimiker," mit einem Worte: zum K ü n s t l e r , findet er seinen "Stil" im Sinne bewußten literarischen Gestaltens.

One may accept Unger's last statement here only with very strong reservations. It is doubtful whether Hamann became an "artist" in the sense Unger intends. The only "conscious literary activity" or "shaping" in which Hamann engages is to imitate the divine revelation as he understood it. God is for him the great Author (*N*, I, 5: 1), and men only write wisely and well when they write as the divine Writer does. Nevertheless, Unger's emphasis on the artistry of the *Mem.* is well taken and needs to be made.

[10] Plato posits a reality which is eternal and unchanging, and which is reflected in the entities of the phenomenal world. When an artist copies or imitates such empirical phenomena, his artistic production is thus at the third remove from reality. Hence, a work of art is a copy of a copy, and therefore quite inferior. (*Cf. Republic* x. 4.) In other words, when Plato says that art deals with "appearance," he is speaking in a distinctly deprecatory manner. I am, on the contrary, using the term along with its correlate "reality" in a neutral sense, that is, simply as a critical tool. Thus, in this usage appearance and reality are not metaphysical first principles, but are principles of literary criticism (which do, to be sure, have implications for other areas, as has been suggested here and there in this study).

form, however, certain questions which are inevitably bound up with the subject of Socrates should be discussed briefly.

There is an ancient Greek legend which can be helpful at this point. It is the legend of the Silenus or satyr, Marsyas, who was presumptuous enough to challenge Apollo to a musical contest, and upon being defeated in the contest was flayed alive for his pains. Let us ignore the main narrative of the legend, however, and focus our attention on one small aspect of it only, for it is this aspect which can be useful in explicating my point of view. The legend tells us that the goddess Athena played for a time upon a flute but gave it up because it distorted her features.[11] After she discarded the instrument, Marsyas found it, and succeeded in playing upon it such sweet music as to think he might challenge Apollo himself to a musical contest. Marsyas had no compunctions about distorting his features as he made music, for they were already distorted. It is clear that Athena was unwilling to pay the price necessary to coax music from the instrument, that is, she was unwilling to spoil the beauty of her face in the interest of another and more spiritual kind of beauty. Paradoxically, it was the physically repellent Marsyas who became the source of that more spiritual beauty, and, at least in this small part, excelled the goddess herself.

On one occasion Alcibiades likened Socrates to Marsyas in form and feature,[12] but Socrates may be compared with him in one other regard also: both transcended themselves by becoming the source of beauty, the one of musical, the other of ethical and spiritual beauty, and in so doing they became living embodiments of a paradox for the Greeks. A cherished belief of the Greeks in the Age of Pericles was the conviction that a necessary harmony exists between the appearance of the body and the reality of the soul which resides in it. The conviction was, as Plato has Socrates

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[11] See *N*, VI, 241, for an account of the Marsyas legend by Hamann's uncle, Johann Georg Hamann, from his *Poetisches Lexikon*. Hamann's own references to Marsyas are simply to his flaying by Apollo. *N*, II, 378: 22–23; IV, 387: 30.

[12] *Cf.* Plato, *Symposium*, *LC*, p. 219 (215, b).

declare in the *Republic*, "that a good soul by its virtue renders the body the best that is possible."[13]

The noblest spirit ever to appear among the Greeks, however, presented a sharp challenge to this idea. For, as one classical scholar says of Socrates:

> . . . he was very far from being handsome or well-made. Aristophanes compared his walk to the strut of a water-fowl, and made fun of his habit of rolling his eyes; Plato and Xenophon both allude to the breadth of his nostrils and the marked snubness of his nose, as well as to some peculiarity of his eyes, which may be either their prominence or the breadth of the space between them.[14]

Yet within a short time after his death this physically repellent Greek was almost universally acknowledged to have possessed the most beautiful soul of all his countrymen. As if to underscore this discrepancy between appearance and reality, Socrates was inclined to cast his teachings in a homely or grotesque form—a form which contrasted strongly with their ultimate meaning. If an appeal to Alcibiades' testimony may again be made, the sayings of Socrates were like the satyr images which might be bought in the statuary shops of Athens, for, although outwardly grotesque, inwardly the satyrs were filled with likenesses of the gods. As Julius Disselhoff, commenting on Hamann's portrait of Socrates, summarizes it: "His manner of speech conformed to his life. His body was ugly, like that of a Satyr, but divine power dwelt in him."[15] The advent of a

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[13] *LC*, I, 265 (iii. 13).

[14] A. E. Taylor, *Socrates*, pp. 43–44.

[15] *Wegweiser zu J. G. Hamann, dem Magus in Norden*, p. 165. That the grotesque figures of Greek popular religion could become the symbols of the deepest religious truths for Hamann is shown by his representing the head of Pan, the god of flocks and shepherds, on the title page of one of his most important works, *Kreuzzüge des Philologen* (the illustration is repeated on the title page of his *Essais à la Mosaïque* of the same year, 1762). The amazement of his readers at this apparently capricious procedure is quite understandable. *Cf.* *ZH*, III, 67: 10–14, 414: 27–28. But as Wilhelm Koepp has shown, Pan is used here as a mask designed to inspire fright ("*Schreckmaske*"), deriving its symbolic credentials, as it were, from the fact that the woodland deity of Greek mythology often inspired *panic* in those who encountered him suddenly in the forest. The image of Pan is, then, a symbol of the fear and trembling which one should experience before the living God of the Bible. "Der Pan der 'Kreuzzüge des Philologen,'" says Professor Koepp, "ist das Entsetzen des Menschen vor dem Schöpfer." *Der Magier unter Masken*, p. 78. In the *Mem.* Hamann identifies

Socrates did not, however, shake the belief of his compatriots that spiritual beauty was of necessity accompanied by physical beauty. They continued to believe, as Hamann says, that beauty and strength of body and mind were "symbols of divine qualities and footprints of divine presence."[16] Yet the fact of Socrates' existence and teaching remained as the massive, unresolvable flaw in the idea, and no Greek could escape the disturbing paradox which he represented.[17]

When Plato set about to write his account of the life and work of Socrates, he remained true in practice to the Greek ideal of the harmony between internal and external beauty, between reality and appearance, and presented the spiritual beauty of Socrates in a form famous for its consummate artistry. Thus, we are confronted with the paradox that a disciple who would only do honor to his master has in effect endorsed a theory of which his master was a living contradiction. It is true that Plato faithfully reports the fact of Socrates' unpleasing appearance and the homeliness of

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himself with the daimonic Socrates, who is traditionally associated with the satyrs, and thus associates himself indirectly with these earthy mythological figures. But in the *Kreuzzüge* and the *Essais* he identifies himself directly with one of them, Pan. In so doing he is simply adhering to the principle we have already discussed.

[16] 68: 10–11 (italic page and line numbers refer to Nadler's edition of the *Mem.*; his numbering has been retained in the German text, Part II of this volume). It is reported that Socrates accepted this notion himself, although he was a living contradiction of it. His basic acceptance of the idea is reflected in the literary source which Hamann utilized. Charpentier, after reporting Socrates' admission of his own ugliness, continues:

> So bate er auch die Götter über alles, daß sie ihm doch die innerliche Schönheit geben wolten, und er war gewohnet zu sagen, daß junge Leute sich öffters in dem Spiegel besehen solten, damit, wenn sie schöne waren, sie sich bemüheten, daß sie die guten Eigenschaften ihrer Seelen mit der Schönheit des Leibes übereinkämen, und wenn sie heßlich wären, daß sie sich bemüheten, ihre Heßlichkeit mit dem Glantz der Tugend zu bedecken.

Ch, 138; *cf.* also *Mem.*, 67: 34–36, and n. *c.*

[17] Micheline Sauvage says in this connection: "Our school textbooks take polite note of his [Socrates'] ugliness as an accepted fact. . . . But we cannot dismiss this ugliness so easily." Of the reaction of contemporaries to Socrates' appearance, Sauvage says: "Those men did not make the distinction, which to us seems so essential, between a man's interior and his exterior; those whom we used, at least, to call 'gentlemen' they called *kalokagathoi,* 'beautiful and good,' and beauty was to them the outward manifestation of a virtue." *Socrates and the Human Conscience,* pp. 83–88.

his similitudes, but the form which he gives to his account of Socrates' spiritual reality is a surpassingly beautiful one. That Plato was himself disturbed by this discrepancy can be inferred from his generally depreciatory attitude toward the literary art. As J. G. Warry says: "We must conclude that Plato counted his own literary genius as nothing beside the spoken word and personal example of Socrates."[18] Warry ascribes Plato's employment of such a style in the depiction of Socrates to weakness or self-indulgence.[19] It apparently does not occur to this otherwise very perceptive writer that the predominant art of classical Greece, with its emphasis on harmony, balance, and grace—in short, with its essential rationality—was the only real possibility for a man like Plato. Genuinely anti-classical forms of literature were not at home in the Greece of his day. Therefore, if Plato were to make use of any literary style at all, it had perforce to be one which conformed to the prevailing aesthetic canons. Whether the putative statement of Plato in the Second Epistle that he had remade the historical Socrates and rendered him more beautiful than he really was is genuine or not,[20] it well expresses the point I am making. For as has already been observed, Plato presents his Socrates in a philosophical prose unsurpassed for its harmoniousness and clarity, in short, for its classical beauty.

What if there were a literary form, however, which more closely corresponded to the true nature of Socrates, but which ran counter to the conventional Greek notion of beauty? Such a form need not be the opposite of beautiful, that is, ugly, but its beauty should be of such a nature that it would appear imperfect, fragmentary, even obscure, pointing to that which is necessary for its understanding and completion. Such a form would thus witness to the truth that any reality which is significant for the human spirit always transcends its representations. Its very obscurity would be the emblem of our limited understanding of the deeper realities of life. It would transcend or beckon beyond itself, and would not,

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[18] *Greek Aesthetic Theory*, p. 55.
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] *Cf.* Philip Merlan, "Form and Content in Plato's Philosophy," p. 414, n. 30.

like the more rationalistic classical art, with its striving for perfection, balance, and clarity, imply that the subject had been exhausted and that it constituted an appearance which perfectly represented the reality for which it stood. Its beauty would be hidden to a great extent, and would therefore be invisible to the superficial eye, but would nevertheless be real and organically related to its visible aspects, and hence accessible to those who would take the trouble to discover it.

In the *Memorabilia* Hamann was obviously striving to create such a work of literary art. In this area, as well as in his knowledge of Socrates' life and teaching, Hamann could not of course vie with Plato. But Hamann could and did seek the literary *form* which could not only be truer to the spiritual reality of Socrates but which would also conform to the paradox of the *Knechtsgestalt Christi*, that is, the contradiction of Christ himself appearing in lowly form, in the "form of a servant," as the Apostle Paul says in his letter to the Philippians (2:7). Further, Hamann believed that the frequent metamorphoses of the Greek deities into lower forms had anticipated the advent of Christ in the form of a servant.

In his effort to create an aesthetic form which might correspond more closely to the paradoxical nature of Socrates, Hamann may have been mistaken. It may very well be that an account of Socrates' life and work needs to be presented with all the graces of classical art at its best. But this is really beside the main point. The question of whether or not Hamann presents a historically justifiable account of Socrates is not important here. The significant fact is that he presents a distinctive portrait of Socrates which he felt at the same time to be a portrait of himself, at least in its main features. As Fritz Blanke says of the composition of the *Socratic Memorabilia*: "Hamann's identification of himself with Socrates extends to the stylistic form."[21] And that style, according to Hamann, had to be a very special one.

In the following pages we shall look closely at the form of the work in which Hamann treats of Socrates, as well as at certain

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[21] "J. G. Hamann und Sokrates. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Sokratesdeutung," p. 30.

aspects of its rich contents.[22] If the treatment seems at times too technical and exhaustive, such a procedure is necessary to reach beneath the surface and to explore the depths of Hamann's conception of Socrates, and for this no apology is offered. A work which deals with the father of Western philosophy, and indirectly with the founder of the Christian religion, ought, if it possess any merit at all, to claim our full attention. That Hamann's work possesses considerable merit many have believed, among them Herder, Goethe, and Kierkegaard, and what these have believed I shall not gainsay.

Concerning the method adopted in the present study the following observations should be made. First of all, it has been my aim to consider Hamann's treatise from the standpoint of its internal evidence. Indeed, the concern with artistic shape or form would in any event make a study of the work itself a primary necessity. This method has, therefore, been pursued in some detail, and I trust that the results justify the effort expended. The study of the essay as an entity divides into two parts: first, an investigation of its inward and, second, of its outward form. The answer to the question of its outward form has been sought by making use of traditional stylistic categories; the question of its inward form, however, has required the use of a major category which is, at least in its present formulation, original, namely, the concept of "essential unity." The other categories utilized to illuminate the inward form are traditional.

In Chapter 4 certain terms have been studied which I believe throw special light on Hamann's thought as well as on his interesting philological procedure. Word studies are, of course, traditional,

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[22] Herbert Cysarz is certainly in error when he says: "Hamanns vigilante Romantikerschmiegsamkeit, ohne Formensinn und Scheidungsbedürfnis, findet kein mehr als stoffliches Verhältnis zur Antike." *Erfahrung und Idee, Probleme und Lebensformen in der deutschen Literatur von Hamann bis Hegel,* p. 42. One can come to such a conclusion only by failing to recognize any alternative to the harmonious ideal of classical art. As indicated, it is our purpose in the present study to show that it is precisely Hamann's concept of form which links him to certain important elements in the classical tradition.

but the difference between the conventional approach and the one adopted here lies in the fact that the words and phrases selected are those whose importance is determined by the linguistic "field" afforded by the work under consideration. Thus words which might normally appear quite unimportant may assume a special significance within a given context; conversely, words of general cultural importance may be relegated to an insignificant role within the framework of a given piece of writing. In both cases the point of view adopted in the work determines the relative importance of the individual terms which it embraces.

The study of words whose meaning presented special difficulties proceeded on three levels, in addition to the use of standard dictionaries such as those of Grimm, Adelung, and Trübner. First—and most important—Hamann's contemporaneous use of such terms was determined as far as possible. (The pioneering work of Unger and Blanke has been of great assistance here.) Second, Hamann's earlier and especially his later usage was consulted and cited where it seemed particularly helpful—although no claim is made to have been exhaustive in this regard. Third, the writings of contemporary authors were on occasion consulted in order to determine general eighteenth-century usage. Nevertheless, it should be reiterated once more that the major emphasis of Part I has remained upon the gathering of evidence from the work itself. Toward this end I have, on the one hand, paid the closest attention to the details of the work, and, on the other hand, made the broadest generalizations possible on the basis of the actual results of the investigation. Thus, the middle ground of interpretation, such as paraphrasing, for instance, has not been emphasized, as valuable as that procedure is under other circumstances.

Chapter 1

HAMANN'S LIFE AND WORK

On October 18, 1827, Goethe gave a tea party in honor of the philosopher Hegel, who had come to Weimar to visit him. Although each of the men genuinely respected the achievements of the other, we know from a first-hand report of the discussion that the radical difference in their basic philosophical positions emerged in sharp outline in the course of the dialogue. The poet's deep distrust of abstract reasoning and the philosopher's uncompromising commitment to such reasoning scarcely provided a basis for any real congeniality. Indeed, the only subject on which they discoursed with obvious mutual pleasure was that of the life and work of Johann Georg Hamann. "A great deal was said about Hamann," reports Eckermann, "with respect to whom Hegel was chief spokesman, displaying a deep insight into this extraordinary mind, such as could only have arisen from a most earnest and scrupulous study of the subject."[1] In this part of the discussion Goethe played the role of willing listener, for in general he respected Hegel's ability as a critic;[2] in the latter part, however, Goethe launched upon a polite but nevertheless barbed attack on "dialectics," an attack which Hegel accepted in good spirit, no doubt out of respect for his venerable host. The truth is that both Goethe and Hegel had important connections with Hamann; the former had been con-

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[1] *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann and Soret*, p. 302.

[2] "Hegel . . . has written, in the Berlin *Jahrbücher*, a criticism upon Hamann, which I, of late, have read over and over again, and must highly praise. Hegel's judgments as a critic have always been excellent." To Eckermann, February 17, 1829, *ibid.*, p. 369.

siderably influenced by the Magus in his youth through the mediation of Johann Gottfried Herder,[3] and the latter was just then preparing to publish an exhaustive and brilliant review of Hamann's collected works, a review which appeared the following year.[4]

Who was the man who furnished on this occasion the only agreeable topic of conversation to Germany's greatest poet and one of her very greatest philosophers? If one seeks to answer that question in terms of Hamann's influence on various cultural developments in Germany, he is astonished at the extent and depth of that influence on such movements as the Storm and Stress in the eighteenth century,[5] on romanticism[6] and the religious revival (*Erweckungsbewegung*) in the nineteenth,[7] and on existentialism,[8] dialectical theology,[9] and literary expressionism in the twentieth.[10]

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[3] Consult Goethe's account of his relationship to Herder, especially in the Tenth Book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, and to Hamann in the Twelfth Book. *Cf.* also Josef Nadler, *Die Hamannausgabe*, esp. pp. 91–108, 130–32; *NB*, esp. 468–72, 479–81 (abbreviations used in the footnotes are listed in the Key to Abbreviations); T. C. van Stockum, "Goethe und Hamann." Professor Arthur Henkel demonstrates Hamann's influence on an important poem of the young Goethe in *Wandrers Sturmlied. Versuch, das dunkle Gedicht des jungen Goethe zu verstehen*. Here one is able to see in some detail what effect the Magus had on the creativity of the developing poet.

[4] Hegel, "Hamann's Schriften."

[5] *Cf.* Jacob Minor, *J. G. Hamann in seiner Bedeutung für die Sturm- und Drangperiode*; *U*, I, II; Ferdinand Josef Schneider, *Die Deutsche Dichtung der Geniezeit*, esp. pp. 57–62, 67 f., 79 f., *et passim*.

[6] *Cf.* Erich Ruprecht, *Der Aufbruch der romantischen Bewegung*, pp. 88 ff., 103–89.

[7] Karlfried Gründer, "Geschichte der Deutungen," *Die Hamann-Forschung*, in *HE*, I, 35 ff. The following volumes of this important series have appeared: VII (1956), II (1959), V (1962), IV (1963).

[8] Hamann's influence on existentialism was mediated through Kierkegaard, the main source of the movement. Consult Walter Lowrie's *Johann Georg Hamann: An Existentialist*, pp. 4–5, and *Kierkegaard*, pp. 164 ff., 256; Wilhelm Rodemann, *Hamann und Kierkegaard;* Gründer, "Geschichte der Deutungen," pp. 47–51; Lars Bejerholm, *Meddelelsens Dialektik. Studier i Søren Kierkegaards teorier om språk, kommunikation och pseudonymitet*, pp. 41 ff., 83 f., 168, 173.

[9] Again Kierkegaard is the main link between Hamann and the movement in question. But see Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, p. 294, where the author speaks of the fertilizing effects of "irregular," that is, non-professional, theologians like Hamann.

[10] *Cf.* Paul Pörtner, *Literaturrevolution 1910–1925. Dokumente. Manifeste. Programme*, p. 5.

Or, if one speaks in terms of individuals decisively influenced, he might also name, in addition to Herder and Goethe, whom we have already mentioned, F. H. Jacobi,[11] Jean Paul Richter,[12] Sören Kierkegaard,[13] and in our own day Ernst Jünger[14] as perhaps the most outstanding. During the greater part of the nineteenth century, when naturalism and positivism prevailed, Hamann was generally neglected by leading scholars, but within the last few decades there has developed what some have called the "Hamann renaissance."[15]

Thus, the historical-critical edition of Hamann's collected works appeared under the editorship of the well-known scholar Josef Nadler during the years 1949–57.[16] The letters of the Magus, which Goethe praised and which provide a hitherto untapped source of important material for the scholar, are appearing under the editorship of Professor Arthur Henkel, who is carrying on at Heidelberg the redactional labors of the late Walther Ziesemer.[17] An event of considerable importance in the field of Hamann research is the publication of a series of exhaustive commentaries on

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[11] Hamann's important and extensive correspondence with Jacobi is to be found in C. H. Gildemeister, *G, V. Cf.* Wilhelm Dilthey, "Johann Georg Hamann," p. 2; Renate Knoll, *J. G. Hamann und Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi*; Valerio Verra, *F. H. Jacobi, Dall' Illuminismo all' Idealismo.*

[12] *Cf.* J. Wirth, "J. G. Hamann und Jean Paul"; *NB*, 472–73.

[13] *Cf.* n. 8 above.

[14] *Cf.* Chapter 3, n. 18, below. Jünger was an enthusiastic subscriber to *The Hamann News-Letter*. In a letter of August 6, 1954, he wrote to me as editor:

> Aus Sardinien zurückkommend, fand ich die zweite Nummer der Hamann News-Letters vor, für die ich Ihnen meinen herzlichen Dank sage. Ich finde es erfreulich, daß gerade in Amerika eine solche Publikation erscheint, der ich unter meinen Hamanniana einen besonderen Platz einräumen will. . . . Da ich annehme, daß Sie auch Hamanniana sammeln, möchte ich Ihnen dabei behilflich sein, und Ihnen auch gelegentlich meinen Katalog zusenden. Ich habe in Laufe der letzten zwanzig Jahre eine gute Anzahl von Büchern und Schriften zusammengebracht. . . .

The offer of the catalog was gratefully accepted.

[15] Writing in 1955 Fritz Blanke said: "Man darf jetzt schon von einer Wiederkehr Hamanns sprechen." From the introduction to *HE*, I, 5. Also *cf.* Ronald Gregor Smith's *J. G. Hamann: A Study in Christian Existence*, p. 17; and "The Hamann Renaissance." Isaiah Berlin says in this connection that Hamann was "a man of original opinions, the importance of which has become apparent only in our own time." *The Age of Enlightenment*, p. 272.

[16] *J. G. Hamann. Sämtliche Werke* (Vienna, 1949–57), Vols. I–VI.

[17] *J. G. Hamann. Briefwechsel* (Wiesbaden, 1955–59), Vols. I–IV.

Hamann's principal works under the general editorship of Professor Fritz Blanke of Zürich.[18] In addition to Nadler's detailed and (despite some criticism) generally authoritative biography of 1949, *Johann Georg Hamann. Der Zeuge des Corpus mysticum* [*Witness of the Mystical Body*], there have appeared a large number of monographs, dissertations, journal articles, and anthologies devoted to Hamann in recent years.[19] Walter Leibrecht calls attention to an article of 1959 in which it was stated that more books about Hamann were published in Europe in the preceding eight years than about any other philosopher or theologian.[20] These more recent developments were anticipated, however, by a remarkable scholar earlier in the century, Rudolf Unger, particularly in his monograph on Hamann's theory of language, which appeared in 1905, and his monumental two-volume work, *Hamann und die Aufklärung* [*Hamann and the Enlightenment*] (Jena, 1911). This publication, which is still indispensable for Hamann research, despite the fact that it was based on only the published material available at the time of its writing, is important on another and broader score: it is a classic of interpretation from the standpoint of the history of ideas, or what the Germans call *Geistesgeschichte*; even if one were not especially interested in Hamann, it would still be a rewarding work to study as a model of its type of scholarship.

Although Hamann's influence continues to be felt in numerous fields and in various ways today, his relevance to contemporary thought would seem to be primarily to two areas. The first is that of the philosophy of language, for it is here that his present importance is most clearly recognized. One writer has in fact credited

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[18] *Cf.* n. 7 above.

[19] For an exhaustive bibliography of Hamanniana to 1956, see *HE*, I, 141–76. Publications on Hamann in English are listed in my "Hamann in America: The Present Situation." *Cf.* n. 20 below.

[20] *God and Man in the Thought of Hamann*, p. 3. The author refers here to a statement by Valerio Verra in "Neue Wege der Hamann-Forschung." Especially valuable for orientation in Hamann's philosophy is the Introduction to Leibrecht's book, entitled, "The Significance of Hamann's Thought for Contemporary Theology and Philosophy," pp. 3–23. The Bibliography (pp. 201–8) is excellent for orientation in the important literature of the field.

Hamann with having effected a "Copernican revolution" in the theory of language.[21] While it is true that scholars do not as yet agree on the main outlines of that theory, we can nevertheless look forward to a widening and deepening of its influence in the future, since the still-untapped resources which it offers for a better understanding of the symbolic nature of language, religion, and art are considerable.[22] The second area in which we can look for increasing concern with Hamann's thought is that of the study of sex. Josef Nadler has called attention to the ineluctable fact of Hamann's unusual concern with the subject and, indeed, to its central role in his thought.[23] It is interesting that, while Hamann treats sexuality within a supernaturalistic context instead of within the naturalistic context of, say, a Freud or a Havelock Ellis, he arrives at valuable insights into its nature. For instance, according to Hamann language and cognition arise, no less than the body itself, from a sexual act.[24] He thus not only anticipates the modern discovery of the omnipresent but often hidden influence of sex upon all human behavior, but also rediscovers and revitalizes the vocabulary of sexuality which had been handed down within the

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[21] See the article "Sprachphilosophie," by Hermann Schweppenhaüser, in *Das Fischer-Lexikon: Philosophie*, p. 320.

[22] One writer sees Hamann as anticipating the Jungian "archetypes." See George Boas, *Dominant Themes of Modern Philosophy*, p. 462.

[23] Thus, in connection with Hamann's essay *Versuch einer Sibylle über die Ehe* (*N*, III, 197–203), Nadler writes that sex is for Hamann "die Wurzel der Welt, die Feuerwurzel, aus der sie aufbrannte und aus der sie ausbrennen wird. Das Geschlecht verbindet Schöpfer und Schöpfung." *NB*, 244. *Cf.* the following studies for a clarification of Hamann's thought in this area: Evert Jansen Schoonhoven's commentary on *Versuch einer Sibylle über die Ehe* (*HE*, V, 12–163); Martin Seils's commentary on *Schürze von Feigenblättern* (*ibid.*, pp. 263–372); H. A. Salmony's *Johann Georg Hamanns metakritische Philosophie*, pp. 105 ff. *et passim*.

[24] Nadler characterizes Hamann's thought on this subject thus (*NB*, 252–53):

> Vom geschlechtslosen Gott der Trinität geht es durch den Logos zum Geschlecht und vom Geschlecht durch Sprache zum geschlechtlichen Menschen, der Trias Leben—Sprache—Vernunft. Wie das Leben sind auch Sprechen und Erkennen Akte des Geschlechts. Hamann konnte hier auf die "Gebärmutter" der Vernunft, auf die Sprache hinweisen, in deren Schoße die Wörter für Erkennen und Erzeugen einer und gleicher Wurzel sind.

Judaeo-Christian tradition from the days of Philo,[25] while at the same time making his own contributions to it.

Having briefly considered Hamann's role as a forerunner of certain modern cultural developments and his promise for the future, we should note the main outlines of his life.[26] He was born on August 27, 1730, in Königsberg, East Prussia, the son of Johann Christoph Hamann, a barber-surgeon (*Bader*) who enjoyed great popularity among the citizens of Königsberg. His paternal grandfather had been a village pastor in Lusatia, and his paternal grandmother a pastor's daughter from the same region. The older brother of Hamann's father, also named Johann Georg (1697–1733), was a writer and editor of no mean ability who lived first in Leipzig and later in Hamburg. He composed the second part of the popular baroque novel *The Asiatic Banise* and published a *Poetic Lexicon* which was reprinted as late as 1765. Hamann's mother, Maria Magdalena, née Nuppenau, had been born and reared in Lübeck and was, therefore, like his father, a newcomer to Königsberg. Although she suffered from tuberculosis for many years, she survived until Johann Georg was in his twenty-sixth year. A second son, Johann Christoph, was born two years after Johann Georg. The Hamann household was characterized by genuine religiousness and a congeniality which expressed itself within the family circle as a sense of contentment despite their modest means and the ill health of the mother. The household was an unusually hospitable one and the circle of friends was large; the young Johann Georg was thus initiated early into the art of friendship, an art in which he was to become a virtuoso in his mature years. If one were to find any fault with the domestic atmosphere, it would have to be on the score that the children were given too much rather than too little attention.

Hamann's elementary and secondary education was desultory in the extreme. At first he was tutored at home by visiting students, some of whom were paid for their services, while others repaid the

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[25] *NB*, 253.

[26] The account of Hamann's life which follows draws chiefly on *Gedanken über meinen Lebenslauf* (*N*, II, 11–53), the letters, and Nadler's biography.

hospitality shown to them by sharing their knowledge with the young Johann Georg and his brother Christoph. In such a way he absorbed bits of Greek, French, and Italian as well as some instruction in music, dancing, and painting. Apparently this kind of tutoring went on simultaneously with and as a supplement to more formal schooling. Nadler states that it was the father's policy to keep the children out of the public schools as long as possible (*NB*, 34). In any case, Johann Georg attended two hedge-schools ("*Winkelschulen*"), the first of which was conducted by a deposed priest and which brought together pupils "of both sexes and of all ages."[27] After seven years at this private school Hamann was sent to another of the same type, except that the teacher, a public school man who conducted his private classes on the side, pursued the opposite method to the first, requiring mechanical manipulation of the subject matter rather than any real comprehension. Of his training here, Hamann later wrote: "I could translate a Roman author into German without understanding either the language or the author's meaning."[28] He deplored the fact that he had had no instruction in history, geography, or the writing of prose or poetry. "I have never been able to make up for the lack of the first two, developing my taste for both the latter too late, and find it a great effort to organize my thoughts and to express myself with ease."[29] He went so far with this indictment of his training as to say that its unmethodical nature had robbed him of any sense of order or desire for it.

When it was too late to correct the pedagogical mistakes from which the young Johann Georg suffered, he finally entered the Kneiphof Gymnasium. The rector of the school, Daniel Salthenius, was also a university professor of theology, and had been connected with the famous and influential orphanage (*Waisenhaus*) at Halle. Hence it was only natural that he would use that institution as a model for the conduct of the Kneiphof school. But here the Pietistic influence was not oppressive, and the gaps in the youth's knowl-

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[27] *N*, II, 12: 38–39.
[28] *N*, II, 13: 21–22.
[29] *N*, II, 14: 10–14.

edge of the basic subjects which had been neglected earlier began to be filled in. The pupil found it difficult at first to keep pace in the new environment, but in his last year he stood at the head of his class. He was, however, confined to his home for a great part of that year because of eruptions of the skin. This gave him the time and opportunity to follow his inclinations in reading and study and, as a consequence, he dabbled in philosophy, mathematics, theology, and Hebrew. "My brain," he wrote concerning his activity in this period, "became a fair-booth full of brand new wares. I brought this conglomeration with me to the university where it really belonged, and where I was matriculated as an academic on March 30, 1746."[30]

Hamann was inscribed on the university records as a student of theology, subsequently transferring to the faculty of law. Writing later under the influence of his religious conversion, he says of his attitude in this period:

> While I was wandering about in the vestibules of the sciences, I lost the calling which I had thought I had for divinity. I found an obstacle in my tongue [a tendency to stammer], in my weak memory, and I found many hypocritical obstacles in my manner of thought, in the corrupt morals of the clergy, and in the importance which I attached to them. . . . What spoiled my taste for theology and all serious sciences was an inclination which had developed in me toward antiquities, criticism—then to so-called belles-lettres, poetry, novels, philology, the French writers and their gift of creative writing, of painting with words, of vivid description, of pleasing the imagination and so forth. . . .[31]

After giving these specific reasons for abandoning theology, he confesses that he really had no more interest in law than in divinity, and that he had transferred to the former merely for the sake of appearance. He continues: "My folly caused me to see a kind of magnanimity and nobility in not studying for a profession but according to inclination, for amusement and out of love for the sciences themselves, believing that it was better to be a martyr than a day laborer and a hireling of the muses" (*N*, II, 21: 21–25). In all justice to the young Hamann, however, it should be noted

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[30] *N*, II, 19: 14–17.
[31] *N*, II, 20: 4–9, 21: 1–6.

that the University of Königsberg did not at that time provide the opportunity to pursue his quite legitimate interests in literature and philology, either in ancient or contemporary studies. Leipzig at least had Gottsched and Gellert, who for all their faults were living proof of their university's greater appreciation of belles-lettres and criticism.

Of Hamann's professors at the university two stand out as having made the greatest impression upon him. The first, Martin Knutzen (1713–51), was the outstanding scholar of the university at that time. Hamann attended his lectures on mathematics and philosophy, even becoming a member of a "physico-theological" group sponsored by the professor, which, however, never met.[32] Knutzen was one of a rather large number of intellectuals who sought to combine the thoroughgoing rationalism of Christian Wolff with Pietistic religion, and he published a book in 1740 which purported to demonstrate the truth of the Christian religion but which in spite of its rationalism contained a strong infusion of Pietistic faith.[33] His deviation from the strict Leibnizian-Wolffian position on pre-established harmony (by his position that physical influences originating in the body may influence the mind) appealed to the young Hamann, who had already developed a dislike of Leibniz. It was Knutzen who just a few years earlier had exercised the profoundest influence on the young Immanuel Kant both inside and outside the lecture halls. Hamann's admiration of this professor was, however, exercised from afar, for it is in connection with his mention of Knutzen in his autobiography that he laments his wasted opportunities at the university.

But it was another professor at the university, Karl Heinrich Rappolt (1702–54), for whom Hamann cherished a genuine affection. This docent wrote about such diversified things as amber, prehistoric discoveries, and waterspouts (*NB*, 36). An aggressive opponent of Pietism, it was, nevertheless, the positive side of his

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[32] *N*, II, 19: 20–21.

[33] *Philosophischer Beweis von der Wahrheit der christlichen Religion*. For a succinct account of Knutzen's life and work, see C. Prantl, "Martin Knutzen," in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*.

nature—his sense of humor, his dedication to Latin humanism, and his poetizing—which made him most attractive to the young Johann Georg. It is interesting to note that even after his conversion Hamann spoke of Rappolt as a "Christian philosopher" (*N*, II, 19: 40). In spite of these and some other benign intellectual influences Hamann profited very little from his formal academic training at the university. Most of his energies seemed to have been absorbed by what we would today call extracurricular activities.

Of such activities the principal one was his collaboration with student friends on a weekly periodical for women, entitled *Daphne*, which was published for somewhat over a year, apparently from March, 1749, to June, 1750.[34] The little journal was patterned after English models such as the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, and was influenced by the poetic constellation of Hagedorn, Gellert, and others. Although all contributions to *Daphne* were submitted under pseudonyms, those which undoubtedly stem from Hamann provided the more serious ethical and religious notes which were sounded from time to time. On this point Nadler says: "Hamann's attitude is religious and believing, attuned rather to austere Pietism than to secularly oriented reason. His contributions breathe the spirit of the psychological and progressive literature of France as they appeared at the time when it was preparing the European revolution" (*NB*, 43). During his university days Hamann took instruction in lute-playing, and continued to pursue the avocation zealously for a number of years. It was also in this period that a quality emerged which was to characterize Hamann till the end of his days, his unusual capacity for friendship. At the university he found comrades who were to remain loyal friends for life, men like Johann Christoph Berens (1729–92), Johann Gotthelf Lindner (1729–76), and Samuel Gotthelf Hennings (1725–87). Later the friendship between Hamann and Herder ripened into one of the most admirable and, culturally speaking, most influential relationships in German history. Goethe, who never met Hamann, never-

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[34] Bernhard Gajek shows how Hamann's contributions to *Daphne* foreshadow later attitudes. See his "Hamanns Anfänge."

theless illuminates an important facet of this characteristic: "He [Hamann] seems to me to have been very perceptive about the circumstances of life and of friendship and to have sensed quite correctly the relations of other people to one another and to himself."[35]

In 1752 the twenty-two-year-old Hamann left the university without a degree, to spend the greater part of the next four years as a tutor on the estates of various German *Junker* families in the Baltic provinces. His first position ended in a fiasco when he attempted to tell the mother of his young charge the truth about her spoiled son; the second position was a far happier one, and Hamann remained on excellent terms with the family. In these years he was frequently in Riga, where he spent a good deal of time with members of the Berens family. Johann Christoph Berens, his university comrade, returned from his trip to Paris after Hamann had been nearly two years in the Baltic area, and by the summer of 1756 the latter gave up his tutorial post to enter into some sort of contractual relationship with the Berens family, which owned a firm engaged in the wholesale trade.

While Hamann was obviously a conscientious tutor with a genuine interest in pedagogical theory and practice,[36] he spent much of his time pursuing his favorite studies, particularly philosophy. He translated a considerable part of René de Rapin's history of philosophy and Shaftesbury's essays, reading widely in both ancient and modern philosophy, Descartes in particular. But it was Johann Christoph Berens who incited him to the main literary production of these years, an essay on political economy. The treatise was appended to a translation from the French of Plumard de Dangeuil's *Remarks on the Advantages and Disadvantages of France and Great Britain with regard to Commerce and Other*

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[35] *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Twelfth Book.

[36] The implications of Hamann's thought for educational theory are dealt with by Karl Seiler in his Leipzig dissertation, *Johann Georg Hamanns Bedeutung für die Pädagogik* (1906). The author sees Hamann as the real pioneer in Germany of a pedagogical theory which, joining forces with Rousseauism, was to find practical realization in the work of men like Pestalozzi. Seiler describes the Magus as a "*Gefühlspädagogen*" (p. 3).

Sources of State Power, and was published in 1756.[37] Curiously enough, this *Beilage* or "Supplement" was until quite recently the only work of Hamann's available in English.[38] The treatise is illuminating on two scores: first, as a valuable document of the self-consciousness of the German middle class at the time of its conception, and second, as an expression of the practical ideals of the Enlightenment against which the author himself was destined to do battle for most of his life, beginning with the *Socratic Memorabilia*. Taking the mercantilistic outlook as his point of departure, Hamann moved beyond purely economic interests to a discussion of the humanistic ideals which he envisaged as realized in the activities of trade and commerce—such values as peace, liberty, civic virtue, and a nobility based on achievement rather than on feudal privilege. It is significant that he emphasized the humane values which he considered to be fostered by the new age of the merchant as opposed to the old and now outmoded age of the warrior-hero. Though he soon repudiated the rationalistic and materialistic elements in this point of view, its idealism nevertheless foreshadowed his later devotion to the life of the spirit. Especially instructive is his excoriation of the Prussian bureaucracy (*N*, IV, 229: 44–230: 1):

> The arrangement of our public offices has likewise served to divert the spirits of men from the common welfare. In order to appear worthy of an appointment, which can seldom excite the desire of a reasonable person, one submits early to I know not what kind of contortion. How many a one decides for the sake of his daily bread and from the fear of men to grovel slavishly and to become a perjurer.

Eleven years later the author of these lines was destined to become a minor civil servant himself, and faced the problem of maintaining his own integrity in the very bureaucratic machine which he here judges so harshly. His later attacks on the bureaucracy may be suspect in the eyes of many, since he was existentially involved;

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[37] Contained in *N*, IV, 225–42. Philip Merlan has published an interesting interpretation of this work in the *Journal of the History of Ideas*. entitled "J. G. Hamann as Spokesman of the Middle Class."

[38] Translated anonymously as "The Merchant," in *Prose Writers of Germany* (New York, 1856), pp. 121–27.

the present attack is as objective as it can be, proceeding as it does from detached observation. Hamann's statement years later that he was almost ashamed to recognize the "Supplement to Dangeuil" as his own work is certainly an understandable one in the light of his altered religious and philosophical views,[39] but the truth is that this feeling has more psychological than logical force, for he retained throughout his life many of the specific opinions expressed in the work.

By June, 1756, Hamann had entered into a contract with the Berens firm in Riga, the terms of which we do not know. We do know that he was sent in that year to London at the expense of the firm on a rather mysterious mission, a journey which was to lead straight to the most decisive event of his life—his religious conversion. Whether the purpose of his trip was principally commercial or whether it had political overtones, as Nadler thinks, cannot be determined.[40] It is certain that it was partly intended as an educational experience, or what the Germans call a *Bildungsreise*. At the end of June, 1756, Hamann left for Königsberg because of the impending death of his mother, which occurred in mid-July. On October 1, the new employee of the house of Berens in Riga boarded the stagecoach for Berlin, where he was to see old friends and to make new acquaintances among the young and vigorous leaders of the Enlightenment such as Moses Mendelssohn, J. G. Sulzer, and K. W. Ramler. This pleasant encounter with the proponents of a movement which he would soon attack root and branch and would continue to subvert for the rest of his life heightens the drama of the critical events of the months

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[39] Writing years later, Hamann speaks of "Dangeuil, den ich beynahe mich schäme, für meine Arbeit zu erkennen." Letter to J. G. Scheffner, January 25, 1785; *R*, VII, 202.

[40] Nadler thinks that the Berens family expected Frederick II to lose East Prussia in the then raging Seven Years' War. In that case they hoped to secure a sort of Hanseatic independence for the Baltic ports through an agreement with England and Russia. Nadler believes that Hamann was sent to England with a special assignment in this matter, since his business necessitated his contacting the Russian embassy upon his arrival in London. If Hamann had such a mission, it was foredoomed to failure by the political events which had taken place even before his arrival in London. See *NB*, 73–74.

that followed. From Berlin Hamann proceeded to Lübeck, where he spent considerable time with relatives of his mother. After another prolonged interruption of his journey, this time in Amsterdam, he finally arrived in London on April 18, 1757. (The London sojourn and the sequence of the main events leading to the composition of the treatise on Socrates are discussed below in Chapter 2, and will therefore not be treated here.)

By the end of July, 1758, Hamann had returned to Riga, where he was surprisingly well received by the Berens family. In March of the following year he was back in Königsberg, living with his father, and indeed remained there for the next four years without formal employment. This period was, however, one of great intellectual activity—extensive and intensive reading and study, writing, and stimulating conversation and correspondence with friends and acquaintances. It was in a real sense Hamann's own "Socratic" period, for the Athenian philosopher also led an idle existence in the eyes of his fellow citizens, dedicated to the pursuit of truth as he conceived it. But such commitment exculpated neither Socrates nor Hamann in the eyes of their compatriots, who saw only apparent idleness. When the reasons for Hamann's unemployment at this time are considered, however, one important factor should be taken into account: the Russian army occupied Königsberg during the entire four-year period, and it appears that he did not want to enter the civil service—the only regular employment open to him in the city—under such circumstances. The Peace of Hubertusberg (February 15, 1763) ended the Seven Years' War and the Russian occupation of Königsberg; it also put an end to Hamann's reluctance to seek a government post. In July, 1763, he sought and obtained a position as copyist in the municipal administration. He remained in this job, however, only three weeks, transferring to the Department of War and Crown Lands (Kriegs- und Domänenkammer), where he worked as a chancery clerk and copyist until January, 1764. On the twenty-fifth of that month Hamann's father suffered a stroke, and Johann Georg gave up his position to help in caring for him.

In June, 1764, Hamann made a journey to Darmstadt to see Karl von Moser, going by way of Lübeck, Basel, and Frankfurt,

and returning home in September. The purpose was to gain a post as tutor through the mediation of von Moser, who had in the previous year actually offered him such a position in a princely family. Unfortunately Hamann missed the Hessian statesman, who happened to be away on a trip, and he therefore returned home emptyhanded. In the summer of the following year he became secretary to a lawyer in Mitau, Christoph Anton Tottien, and spent the fall and part of the winter of 1765–66 with his employer in Warsaw. A fortunate result of Hamann's residence in Mitau was his proximity to Herder, who was at the time employed at the cathedral school in Riga. Hamann's restless wanderings in these years strike one as very curious until he realizes that they undoubtedly represented a flight from a sexual involvement at home, a situation which will be discussed below.

In January, 1767, Hamann returned to Königsberg, where he was to spend the next two decades. Through the instrumentality of Immanuel Kant he obtained the job of clerk and translator (*secrétaire-traducteur*) with the General Excise and Customs Administration (Administration générale des accises et péages). This particular government bureau was literally an importation from France. In order to extract more money from his subjects after the long financial drain of the Seven Years' War and as a result of the international financial crisis several years earlier, which had greatly affected the Germanies,[41] Frederick the Great brought in, on the advice of the French statesman Claude Adrien Helvetius, about two hundred specialists in tax collecting from France.[42] Working under them, for the most part, were about eighteen hundred German tax officials, among whom Hamann occupied a

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[41] The bankers of Amsterdam, believing that the Dutch merchants had extended too much credit to merchants in Germany and neighboring lands at the end of the Seven Years' War, precipitated a financial crisis by refusing for a time to discount bills of exchange from the foreign merchants. This action made the need for cash in the German lands a very urgent one and was felt with special keenness in Prussia. See C. M. Davies, *The History of Holland and the Dutch Nation*, pp. 432–33.

[42] Albert Lotz says: "Die Zahl der neuen Akzisenbeamten belief sich auf etwa 2000, von denen 200 französische waren." *Geschichte des Deutschen Beamtentums*, p. 196. Lotz gives a succinct account of the main factors involved in this ill-starred enterprise of Frederick II. *Ibid.*

minor position. Through such highhanded measures as searching citizens on the public streets of Königsberg and invading the privacy of their homes, these Frenchmen soon made the system universally hated even among those who were most loyal to the King. It was Hamann's duty to translate documents from French into German and vice versa. He continued in this work until 1777, when fortune smiled slightly and he obtained the somewhat more profitable and less arduous position of Superintendent of the Customs Warehouse (*Packhofverwalter*). In 1787 he petitioned the King for a leave, and was as a result peremptorily retired on a small pension.

Hamann was never married in the legal and ecclesiastical sense, but in 1763 he entered into a so-called marriage of conscience (*Gewissensehe*) with an uneducated peasant girl, Anna Regina Schuhmacher (1736–89), who had joined the Hamann household as a housekeeper the previous year. One son and three daughters were born to this common-law marriage, and if the outward and visible signs of the marriage bonds were lacking, the inner and spiritual graces of wedlock and the practical domestic arrangements were not. This liaison turned out to be a most stable and happy one, despite the great intellectual and, to some extent, social gulf between the two partners and the straitened financial circumstances in which the family had to live.

There were of course criticisms of the "marriage of conscience," especially vigorous at first, and Hamann was not able to satisfy all his friends with his explanations of the matter, though he did not seem loath to discuss it. Perhaps the reason for it was his former love for Katharina Berens, Johann Christoph's sister, whom he had wooed in Riga and would have won for his bride had it not been for the disapproval of the Berens family. She had been destined for him, he believed, as the "bride from the hand of God," and he was no doubt deeply hurt when she was refused to him. Yet his life with Anna Regina was obviously a happy one. It is quite typical of Hamann that he referred to her as his "hamadryad"[43] or

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[43] *N*, II, 354: 3. For a recent and illuminating discussion of Hamann's relation to Anna Regina, see Wilhelm Koepp, *Der Magier unter Masken. Versuch eines neuen Hamannbildes*, pp. 136–45.

tree nymph, an apt allusion to her rustic origin and elemental attractiveness. Nevertheless, in this "marriage of conscience" we have but another strange facet of this strange life.

If one regards Hamann's failure to marry Anna Regina as a weakness from one point of view, from another it appears as strength to have achieved what he did in this "marriage" in spite of the disapproval it encountered. When one considers further that this household was a friendly haven to Johann Christoph, Hamann's brother, from his long mental decline to his death on August 25, 1778, he is further convinced of its inner soundness.

The eighteenth century was an age which cherished the idea, and in fact appears to have practiced the art, of friendship to an unusual degree. We have already remarked on the singular capacity for friendship shown by the Magus, one which Goethe found striking even in the eighteenth century. At this point it will be well to note those relationships which were particularly important from the literary and philosophical standpoint, for in such a way we gain a special understanding of Hamann's position and influence. We have already spoken of the great significance of his friendship with Herder. Second only to that friendship was his relationship with Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, the "philosopher of faith." Within the environs of Königsberg it was his relationship with Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel, author of the well-known *Lebensläufe in aufsteigender Linie* and mayor of Königsberg, which was one of the most pleasant and satisfactory of Hamann's life. Of this association Nadler says, "Hamann's significance for Hippel was, from the intellectual standpoint, infinitely great" (*NB*, 314).

His relationship with Immanuel Kant—the early years of which are so important for the present study—is of great general significance not only for a faithful biographical account of both men, but even more for the history of philosophy. It was very complex, and cannot be neatly summed up in a brief space; nevertheless, there developed between the two men an element of genuine friendship in spite of the philosophical and religious gulf which separated them. We should also take note of another significant personal relationship in the city. Christian Jakob Kraus (1753–

1807), who became professor of practical philosophy and of economics at the University of Königsberg and who was indeed, next to Kant, the most brilliant docent there, in Hamann's later years became one of his closest friends. Hamann had befriended Kraus during the latter's student days, and as the younger man matured the friendship kept pace. Kraus was probably closer to Hamann than any other friend, not excepting Herder. When away from Königsberg he corresponded frequently with Hamann, so that the friendship was kept very much alive.

As Hamann's reputation grew, the stream of visitors from the far corners of the German-speaking lands continued to increase. It is intriguing to note the variety of temperaments and philosophies represented by his visitors. Among the more interesting were Johann Heinrich Merck of Darmstadt, the critic and mentor of the young Goethe, who came in 1773; Friedrich Karl von Moser, the Hessian statesman, who originally applied to Hamann the epithet of *Magus in Norden* (1773); Christoph Kaufmann (1753–95), "God's hunting dog," protégé of Lavater and ardent apostle of the gospel of Storm and Stress (1777); Moses Mendelssohn (1777); Viktor Leberecht Plessing (1752–1806), the young man who had become the occasion of Goethe's Harz journey and poem on the subject (1780); Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752–1814), musician and director of the Royal Symphony Orchestra in Berlin (1782); Johann Christian Schmohl (1756–83), Reichardt's cousin and author of a forbidden book on America and democracy, who later emigrated to America and was shipwrecked in the Bermudas (1782); Friedrich Leopold Count von Stolberg (1785); and numerous others. It was no doubt often embarrassing to Hamann and Anna Regina to receive distinguished and sometimes noble visitors in their modest and crowded home; but it was always done, nevertheless, with the ease and grace of genuine hospitality.

In view of Hamann's unusual capacity for friendship it appears as a fortunate stroke of destiny that he was to spend the last year of his life as the center of a circle of newly won friends and disciples, and that his intercourse with them was such as to throw into strong relief the basic contours of his character. These friends

formed what was known as the "Münster Circle,"[44] and, seen from the vantage point of the present day, constituted one of the important elements of the cultural life of eighteenth-century Europe. The group originally gathered around Franz Friedrich von Fürstenberg, the first statesman of the episcopal principality of Münster in Westphalia, whose school reform had evoked considerable admiration throughout the Germanies; somewhat later the Princess Amalia von Gallitzin (1748–1806), who had withdrawn from circles of the nobility to devote herself to the rearing of her children and to her own self-perfection through philosophy and religion, became a moving spirit of the circle. She had read the *Socratic Memorabilia* and was deeply impressed. The upshot of her reading of this and other writings of the Magus was that she invited him to visit her, an undertaking which was actually made possible by the generosity of Franz Kaspar Buchholtz (1756–1812), the young Westphalian aristocrat who had become an ardent admirer of Hamann and who several years earlier had given Hamann a considerable amount of money for the education of his children.

In spite of his failing health—obvious to all from his swollen legs—Hamann made the long, arduous trip from one end of Germany to the other from June 21 to July 16, 1787, accompanied by his twenty-year-old son, Johann Michael, and his doctor and long-time friend, G. E. Lindner. Father and son were alternately guests of Buchholtz, of Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi in Düsseldorf, and of the Princess Gallitzin. While in Münster Hamann also became acquainted with Fürstenberg, with Franz Hemsterhuis, the Dutch philosopher and former mentor of the Princess, and with Johann Michael Sailer and other luminaries of the Münster Circle. From the cultural standpoint the main importance of the visit was undoubtedly the impact which the Magus made on the Princess

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[44] *Cf.* Detlev Schumann, "Goethe and the Stolbergs: A Friendship of the Storm and Stress," and "Goethe and the Stolbergs after 1775"; Pierre Brachin, *Le Cercle de Münster (1779–1806) et la Pensée Religieuse de F. L. Stolberg*; Erich Trunz (ed.), *Fürstenberg, Fürstin Gallitzin und ihr Kreis*; Fritz Blanke, "J. G. Hamann und die Fürstin Gallitzin." Blanke includes a comprehensive list of independent studies of Hamann's relation to the Princess (p. 113).

Gallitzin, who continued to exert her considerable influence in religious and philosophical circles in Germany for almost two decades. She reports how Hamann caused her to view the striving for ethical and religious perfection in a new light. After referring to the series of mentors and spiritual counselors to whom she had listened, she writes (*NB*, 453–54):

> Finally there came Hamann and showed me the heaven of true humility and submission—a child-like attitude toward God. . . . All my other friends, including Fürstenberg, had previously regarded my strong urge toward perfection as the most amiable thing, indeed as something fine about me, which was to be admired. . . . But Hamann saw in it pride and told me so. . . . It seemed to me that an only crutch was being snatched from me as from a cripple, but I loved and honored him too profoundly not to receive his declaration into my soul.

Obviously Hamann, the "most Christian Eulenspiegel,"[45] as he dubbed himself, was in danger for the first time in his life of being canonized by his friends; fortunately his healthy realism, and above all his humor and irony, saved him from any temptation to adopt his admirers' view of himself.

Hamann, who had long been an arch-hypochondriac in an age of hypochondria, was now really ill. During his year at Münster he was frequently confined to bed, and the shock to his friends was not too great, therefore, when at the age of fifty-eight he died, on June 21, 1788, in the presence of his son, the Princess Gallitzin, Fürstenberg, and his two doctors. Shortly thereafter he was buried in the garden of the Princess in Münster.[46] Inscribed in Latin on his tombstone were the words from I Corinthians 1:23, 25, con-

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[45] *N*, II, 117: 18.

[46] In 1851 Hamann's remains were transferred to the Catholic cemetery (Ueberwasserfriedhof) in Münster. His grave is located close to the graves of his friends Fürstenberg and Overberg. The Catholic clergy of the city raised no objection to the interment of the ardent Lutheran Hamann in consecrated ground. See Karl Carvacchi, *Biographische Erinnerungen an Johann Georg Hamann, den Magus im Norden*. The following comment from the *Bischöfliches Generalvikariat* of Münster is interesting in the present connection: "Das Begräbnis nichtkatholischer Christen auf katholischen Friedhöfen war . . . so ungewöhnlich nicht. Schon 1748 hatte Fürstbischof Clemens August von Bayern dieses unter betimmten Voraussetzungen durch Erlaß verpflichtend angeordnet." Letter to the author, November 4, 1966.

cerning the paradox of the divine revelation: "Unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness . . . because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

With the exception of the London compositions of 1758, *Tagebuch eines Christen* [*Diary of a Christian*] and *Gedanken über meinen Lebenslauf* [*Thoughts concerning My Life*], Hamann's literary activity is usually divided into three periods. The first was from 1759 to 1763, the second from 1772 to 1776, and the third from 1779 to the end of his life. The writings of the first period chiefly treat aesthetic and literary subjects; those of the second, the subject of language and the religious mysteries; those of the third, philosophy and theology. It is customary to observe that Hamann's writings are "occasional," that is, that they arose in response to external stimuli, provided by the publications of his intellectual or spiritual adversaries. This is true, if one has in mind the writings after 1758; it would not be true of these prior to or during that year such as his contributions to *Daphne*, the "Supplement to Dangeuil," and the important and relatively copious London writings. Hamann considered his career as a writer, which he called his "*Autorschaft*," to have begun with the *Socratic Memorabilia* and to have ended with *Entkleidung und Verklärung. Ein Fliegender Brief an Niemand, den Kundbaren* [*Divestiture and Transfiguration, a Flying Scroll to Nobody, the Well-Known*] (1786). The latter work was not only a reckoning with the critics of one of his later publications but also a ceremonious farewell to his *Autorschaft* as a whole, a sort of literary last will and testament. Noteworthy writings of the first period are *Wolken. Ein Nachspiel Sokratischer Denkwürdigkeiten* [*Clouds. A Sequel to the Socratic Memorabilia*] (1761), in which the author inveighs in semi-dramatic form against the critics of his essay on Socrates, and *Mosaic Essays*, which were composed in French under the title *Essais à la Mosaïque* (1762), in which he comes to terms early with what he considered to be the materialistic culture of France and the godless state of Frederick the Great, which harbored and indeed propagated that culture in Germany.

Next to the two Socratic writings, however, the most important publication of the first period was the collection known as *Kreuzzüge des Philologen* [*Crusades of the Philologist*] (1762). It was precisely this miscellany along with the Socratic works which helped to launch the Storm and Stress period of German literature. Of these compositions perhaps the most important is *Aesthetica in nuce. Eine Rhapsodie in kabbalistischer Prosa* [*Aesthetics in a Nutshell. A Rhapsody in Cabalistic Prose*]. This essay, which is indeed rhapsodic, nevertheless contains the main ideas of Hamann's aesthetics as far as the symbolism or language of art is concerned.[47] It is here that we encounter the flaming manifesto of the new generation of rebels against the older, rationalistic order (*N*, II, 197: 10–17):

> Not a lyre! —nor painter's brush! a winnowing shovel for my muse to sweep the threshing-floor of sacred literature. . . . Poetry is the mother-tongue of the human race; as gardening is older than agriculture; painting, than writing; song, —than declamation; parable, —than deductions; barter, —than trade.

Thus, in an age of prose, for such was the eighteenth century, the author exalts poetry; in an age which despised or neglected history, he reminds his contemporaries that some human activities are older and therefore more fundamental than others; in an age which all but worshiped reason, the emotions are rehabilitated (*N*, II, 208: 20–24):

> Emotion alone gives to abstractions and hypotheses hands, feet, wings; —to images and signs, spirit, life and tongue. Where are swifter deductions? Where is the pealing thunder of eloquence produced and its companion, monosyllabic lightning?

In the second period one should note especially *Des Ritters von Rosenkreuz letzte Willensmeynung über den göttlichen und menschlichen Ursprung der Sprache* [*The Last Will and Testament of the Knight of the Rose-Cross concerning the Divine and Human Origin of Language*] (1772), in which Hamann comes to terms with what he considered to be Herder's errors in the latter's

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[47] Hamann's strictures against abstract language in the *Aesthetica in nuce* were directed primarily against the rational biblicist Johann David Michaelis (1717–91), Professor of Oriental Languages in Göttingen. *Cf.* my "J. D. Michaelis: Rational Biblicist."

prize-winning essay on the origin of language. For our particular purposes it would be well to mention a publication of the year 1773, *Beylage zun Denkwürdigkeiten des seligen Sokrates* [*Supplement to the Memorabilia of the Canonized Socrates*]. In this treatise Hamann defends Socrates against a recently published rationalistic interpretation, just as he had done fourteen years before in his *Memorabilia*. In *Ueber die neueste Auslegung der ältesten Urkunde des menschlichen Geschlechts* [*Concerning the Newest Interpretation of the Oldest Document of the Human Race*] (1774), Hamann polemicizes against Kant's criticism of Herder's recent *Oldest Document*. In the *Hierophantische Briefe* [*Hierophantic Letters*] (1775), he undertakes to defend Christianity against the anti-historicism of the Enlighteners.

The first outstanding work of the third and last period was *Konxompax. Fragmente einer apokryphischen Sibylle über apokalyptische Mysterien* [*Konxompax. Fragments of an Apocryphal Sibyl on Apocalyptic Mysteries*] (1779). Here the Magus denies that reason can descry the essence of the ancient mystery religions, which he considers to be forerunners of Christianity, but which nevertheless share the same error as the rationalism of the Enlightenment—the idea that man can ascend to God through his own efforts. In two important writings Hamann reveals his critical estimate of Kant's philosophy as expressed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The first is a review of Kant's work and was published in the year of its appearance, 1781; the second is entitled *Metakritik über den Purismum der Vernunft* [*Metacritique of the Purism of Reason*] and, though written in 1781, was not published during Hamann's lifetime. During the course of the years his criticisms of Kant's philosophy have been taken more and more seriously. For instance, in pointing to Kant's neglect of the problem of language Hamann called attention to a weakness in the former's epistemology which is widely recognized today in scholarly circles (*N*, III, 286: 1–10):

> If it therefore still remains [he wrote in the *Metacritique*] a principal question as to *how the capacity to think* is possible—the capacity to think, to the right of and to the left of, before and without, with and beyond experience, no deduction is necessary to establish the genealogical priority

of language and its heraldry over the seven sacred functions of logical propositions and conclusions. Not only the entire capacity to think rests on language . . . but language is also the center of the misunderstanding of reason with itself. . . .

In the next important work, *Golgotha und Scheblimini. Von einem Prediger in der Wüsten* [*Golgotha and Scheblimini. By a Voice Crying in the Wilderness*] (1784), which was a polemic against Moses Mendelssohn, Hamann emphasizes the role of ordinary language or the language of nature as opposed to the abstract and therefore non-veridical language of the philosophers: "The abuse of language and of its natural testimony is the grossest perjury, and makes the transgressor of this first law of reason and its legitimacy the worst misanthropist, traitor, and adversary of the plain sincerity and candor upon which our dignity and felicity rest" (*N*, III, 301: 28–33).

In this treatise (which Hegel considered Hamann's most important work) we find Hamann's philosophy of history more clearly stated than elsewhere. In *Jerusalem or Concerning Religious Power* (1783), Mendelssohn had sought to set forth the idea of a plurality of truths in religion—a point of view immortalized in literature by Lessing's famous play *Nathan the Wise*—and in so doing had reduced Judaism from a religion dependent upon truths revealed in history by a transcendent God to a purely rational religion, the truths of which might be discovered at any time through the proper use of reason. Here we find the strange spectacle of Hamann, a Christian, defending Judaism as a genuinely historical religion against Mendelssohn, a Jew, albeit an adherent of the rationalistic school. Hamann argues that the differences between Judaism and Christianity are historical differences, not differences of approach (*N*, III, 304: 27–36):

> The characteristic difference between Judaism and Christianity concerns therefore neither immediate nor mediate revelation in the sense in which this is taken by Jews and naturalists—nor eternal truths and dogmas—nor ceremonial and moral laws, but simply temporal historical truths which occurred at one time, and shall never return—facts, which through a confluence of causes and effects, became true at one point of time and in one place, and therefore can be conceived as true only from this point of time and space. . . .

If one were inclined to regard Hamann's philosophy as a rationale of subjectivity, a study of this work alone, which stresses to the utmost the objectivity of revelation, would disabuse him of such a notion.

In addition to the major published works mentioned, notice should also be taken of Hamann's letters, for, as Goethe remarked, they are "excellent and much clearer than his writings."[48] His correspondence with Herder and Jacobi is of inestimable importance for the cultural history of Germany, as are certain individual letters such as the one of July 27, 1759, to Kant. Less important, but nevertheless worthy of mention here, is Hamann's activity as a journalist and translator. Earlier his connection with the moralistic weekly *Daphne* was mentioned. But from 1764 to 1776 he was editor of the semi-weekly journal *Königsbergsche Gelehrte und Politische Zeitungen* [*Königsberg Literary and Political News*], published by J. J. Kanter. In addition to the translation of Dangeuil referred to earlier, three other translations indicate the range of his interests. First, as a favor to Josef Green, Kant's close friend, Hamann translated Ferdinando Warner's *A Full and Plain Account of the Gout*, in 1770. This labor was not entirely altruistic, for the hypochondriac Hamann had his own interest in the project. Further, as the son of a barber-surgeon, he always retained a lively interest in things medical.

In 1774 Hamann published a volume of essays by Henry St. John Bolingbroke, Jacob Hervey, and Thomas Hunter, on the subject of history. His most important translation, however, was that of David Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, in 1780, a rendering praised by Kant but never published because of a rival translation which appeared first. For many years Hume had been at one and the same time Hamann's ally and adversary in his running battle with deism and with the Enlightenment in general. Moreover, the English philosopher is of great importance for the development of the *Memorabilia*: "I was full of Hume [Hamann wrote to Jacobi], when I wrote the *Socratic Memorabilia*,

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[48] *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Twelfth Book.

and the following passage of my little book has reference to that: 'Our own existence and the existence of all things outside us must be believed and can in no other way be determined' " (*G*, V, 506).

Nadler sees in Hamann's collecting of books, some of them in the finest editions, his only indulgence in luxury. Yet it is doubtful whether one should consider it in this light. Books are after all the essential tools of a man of letters. This was particularly true for Hamann, who was a polyhistor of the first water. True, he loved books as books with a consuming passion and doubtless often acquired finer editions than necessary for the tools of his trade. But one thing is certain: Hamann would not have been Hamann without his books. Fortunately we know the precise contents of his private library. In 1776 Johann Gotthelf Lindner died, leaving behind the request that his close friend Hamann should sell his considerable library at auction on behalf of his estate. Since Hamann himself, now the father of three children and trying to eke out an existence on a small salary, found himself in great financial need, he decided to sell his library along with Lindner's. Consequently he compiled and published in 1776 a common catalogue of both libraries, indicating the ownership of each volume.

Hamann was saved from this painful sacrifice through the timely generosity of Herder, but without this minor crisis in his life we would not have the accurate record of his library, which is important from several standpoints. According to the catalogue it contained 1,356 books in the fields of classical literature, theology, philology, history, philosophy, politics, poetry, prose fiction, and miscellanea. Shortly after the death of the Magus a writer of local history in Königsberg described the collection as "a very respectable library, rich in works on philology and criticism" (quoted in *NB*, 269). Hamann's willingness to part with his beloved books for the sake of his family, as well as Herder's openhanded and discreet financial aid in the crisis, throws further light on Hamann's character and on the quality of his friendship with Herder.

When we reflect on the meaning of Hamann's life as a whole, we are aware of its singularly paradoxical nature. It should be remembered above all that he spent some twenty years of his adult life as a *Staatsbeamte* or civil servant in the employ of the Prussian

monarchy, ten of them in a customs office. His own nickname for this latter function was "Charon," the boatman of the netherworld who, in the Greek legend, ferried the shades of the dead across the river Acheron, and nothing could speak more eloquently of his distaste for the work than this grim epithet.[49] His distress was due not only to the routine drudgery, to the near-starvation wages, nor to the fact that he had to serve under foreign administrators who were brought to Prussia for no other purpose than that of fleecing the populace. Thomas Carlyle in his monumental *History of Frederick the Second* makes abundantly clear how widespread was the hatred of the system, from the Princess Royal of Prussia down to the lowliest subject, but it is significant indeed that the only person whose words he quotes in indictment of it is Hamann. Thus Carlyle:

> All Prussia, or all of it that fell under this Helvetius Excise-system, united to condemn it, in all manner of dialects, louder and louder: here, for instance, is the utterance of Herr Hamann, himself a kind of Custom-house clerk (at Königsberg, in East Preussen), and on modest[!] terms a Literary man of real merit and originality, who may be supposed to understand this subject: "And so," says Hamann, "the State has declared its own subjects incapable of managing its Finance-system; and in this way has intrusted its heart, that is, the purse of its subjects, to a company of Foreign Scoundrels, ignorant of everything relating to it!"[50]

Yet the main offense in Hamann's eyes was the fact that these foreign administrators, these experts in "*Arithmétique politique*," as he called it, were ever-present reminders of the contemporary subservience of the Germans to French culture in its most frivolous aspects.

But the "poor devil"[51] of a subaltern in the remotest and least-esteemed province of the kingdom was to have his say on this

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[49] Hamann's use of the name "Charon" involves a pun which is possible in German but not in English. The German word (*Uebersetzer*) means both "ferryman" and "translator," though accented differently in each case. He thus conceived of himself as the Charon or ferryman who transports ghoulish cargo from one language to another under the supervision of a "foreign Pluto." *N*, III, 328: 36–37. Elsewhere he says that for ten years he had "wie ein unverdrossener Charon, auf einem Uebersetzer Schifflein gerudert. . . ." *N*, III, 333: 28–29.

[50] (New York, n.d.), VI, 284.

[51] "Je suis un pauvre Diable . . ." are the first words of Hamann's petition to Frederick II, *Au Salomon de Prusse*. *N*, III, 57: 2.

matter, and to top it all off, was to have that say in French, the language of the enemy. For in the corpus of Hamann's writings the collection of those composed in French, beginning as early as 1762 (hence before his connection with the Administration Générale) and scattered over a dozen years, constitute a significant social and philosophical commentary on the times. A passage from his letter of 1772 to the King, entitled "Au Salomon de Prusse" (though not published in the lifetime of either), will give some of the feeling of these writings:

> Because the Eternal has loved His people, Solomon has been established king over all the Prussians. But where are the temples? the altars? the priests consecrated to the religion of the Supreme Being of Prussia? The sublime taste of Your Majesty, like the spirit of the Christians, wishes no other worship than that of the spirit and of truth, no other altars than the hearts of his subjects, no other ministers than those who love and preach truth, who love and practice virtue. Where is that elect race? that holy nation? that devoted people? . . . Your age, Sire, is nothing but a day of anxiety and of reprehensibility and of blasphemy. . . .[52]

Thus in making a final reckoning of Hamann's life one should not merely contrast the important literary, philosophical, and theological writings which flowed from his pen with his pathetically restricted outer existence. This is, of course, the central fact, and one which eloquently reminds us that a soul-crushing bureaucracy need not extinguish creativity in other areas. One can, to be sure, find examples of this sort of contrast with fair frequency in the history of literature. But Hamann did not escape entirely into a realm of letters foreign to his everyday existence. He also addressed himself to the quality of the external life he was compelled to lead and to the forces which shaped his environment. It is true that his indictments of the machine-like state of Frederick II were couched in careful terms, and that he openly attacked only the influences surrounding the King rather than the person of the King himself. Nevertheless, the rapier-like thrusts at the King are there and, though the work quoted above was not published at the time; but only circulated among friends, other severe indictments of the

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[52] *N*, III, 57: 17–26, 34–35.

monarch were a part of the published record, and more perceptive censors would have detected them and would have dealt summarily with the author. If Hamann's writings are timely today (and the rising tide of publications dealing with him suggest that they are), the record of his life also has special meaning for the present age, for if the individual of the eighteenth century stood in danger of losing his own soul in an inexorable process of depersonalization, how much more does the man of the twentieth century stand in such a danger!

Hamann's greatest importance lies, however, in the field of philosophy. If one were to summarize, as briefly as possible, his greatest achievement in this area, it would have to be the manner in which he surmounts the difficulty posed by the subject-object dualism[53]—a problem which has plagued most Western philosophy since Descartes. For whenever a metaphysical status is assigned to these categories, one immediately faces certain strictly limited choices: like a Spinoza or a Hegel, one may hold that objectivity alone is ultimately real, or, like a Kierkegaard, one may reverse that proposition and hold that subjectivity alone possesses ultimate validity. Or again, like a Leibniz, one may have recourse to the only possible remaining solution, namely, the idea of a pre-established harmony between the two. To be sure, various compromises between these logical extremes are possible, but such compromises always occur at the expense of basic consistency.

In philosophical terms we may say that Hamann escapes the dilemma by refusing to assign metaphysical status to subject and object; instead, they are finally reduced to mere psychological categories. Here indeed is the basis of Hamann's well-known insistence on wholeness and his strictures against the rationalists for their

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[53] Hamann's overcoming of the subject-object dualism is attested in different ways by different writers, depending upon the interpretational categories which are invoked. A systematic treatment of the problem, however, is to be found in Herbert Schirmer, *Die Grundlagen des Erkennens bei Johann Georg Hamann.* As Gründer points out (*HE*, I, 98), Schirmer approaches his subject from the standpoint of neo-Kantianism and suffers from the limitations (and, incidentally, enjoys some of the advantages) of that approach. *Cf.* Leibrecht, *God and Man in the Thought of Hamann.*

excessively analytical tendencies: "The philosophers have always given truth a bill of divorcement in that they have put asunder that which nature has joined together and vice versa." Goethe's famous lines on this subject aptly sum up Hamann's view: "The main principle to which all Hamann's statements may be referred is the following: 'All that a man undertakes to perform, whether by deed, by word, or otherwise, must proceed from all his powers united; everything isolated is worthless.' "[54]

The key to Hamann's thought on this subject is the notion that the ideas of subject and object do not arise simply in relation to each other, but always in relation to a third element. To state it differently, they represent two discrete responses, an inner and an outer, to that which transcends both. The transcendent element, to which men respond in this dual fashion, may be called an "essence" for want of a better term, provided that it is not identified with the scholastic idea of essence and provided that it is equated with the "word" in Hamann's sense rather than with an abstract idea. (In his conception, "every phenomenon of nature was a word" from the beginning. *N*, III, 32: 21–22.) Hamann himself gives us no philosophical term for it, but the concept is clearly central to his thought. The transcendence involved here is of two kinds: first, there is the absolute transcendence of deity, and, second, there is the limited or relative transcendence of the various elements which make up human experience. For Hamann, God is absolute transcendence, to which man may respond inwardly (subjectively) in his thoughts, emotions, and will, or outwardly (objectively) in his words and behavior. This response is made possible because of the divine initiative in overcoming the infinite gulf between God and man.

The same principle of a twofold response to a transcendent element or essence is also valid for man's relation to nature. For nature is not to be regarded merely as an object, as in the thought of a Newton, nor should it be merely a stimulus of romantic feeling, as in the thought of a Rousseau. Man does justice to the fullness of nature only when he responds with the totality of his being,

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[54] *The Autobiography of Goethe*, pp. 446–47.

that is, with both aspects of his personality. The principle is also true of man's relation to his fellow man. Hamann would certainly agree with Kant that all men should be treated as ends in themselves and not as means to an end, for to treat them as means to an end is to reduce them to the status of objects with which we are not subjectively involved, but he would disagree with Kant as to the source of the right behavior in this regard. Unlike Kant, Hamann finds the roots of right behavior in the non-rational aspects of human nature and not in reason alone. In all three instances, God, nature, and man, the response of the whole man is called for over against the onesided response of all those who cling to the idea of either subjectivity or objectivity as being ultimately real. One may, then, in the attempt to understand Hamann's thought, speak of the *dual response of individual existences to a given essence*. To use scholastic terminology in this context does not mean the identification of Hamann's thought with that of any particular medieval philosophy, though admittedly it suggests a *parallel* with certain tendencies of that philosophy. Actually one can identify what has been called essence to a great extent with *spirit* in connection with many aspects of Hamann's philosophy. As our study of a particular literary work of Hamann's will indicate, this approach to cognition in general—which I believe to be essentially Hamannian—is also illuminating when utilized in a systematic way at certain points in critical literary analysis. In other words, this metaphysical first principle also has its application in the field of aesthetics as a principle of literary criticism. Hence, it is my belief that in the following study Hamann is interpreted to a great extent on his own philosophical terms.

Chapter 2

GENESIS OF THE ESSAY

In 1759, the year in which Hamann published his memorabilia of Socrates, the *ancien régime* was still very much intact throughout Europe. Louis XV was to occupy the throne of France for another fifteen years; George II was still sovereign in England and Elizabeth Petrovna in Russia; Frederick the Great was engaged in his seven-year struggle with Maria Theresa and her allies. But the struggle for the minds of men was far more significant, if less dramatic, than Frederick's aggressive campaigns. In France Diderot's rationalistic *Encyclopédie*, with its formidable list of contributors—Montesquieu, Rousseau, Voltaire, and others—was still in the process of appearing and it was the year in which *Candide* scandalized the faithful and delighted the scoffers. Pope Clement XIII had the misfortune to incur not only the inevitable hostility of freethinkers everywhere but also of the heads of state in Catholic countries, and as a consequence the Papal See was now beleaguered on all sides. Nicholas Count Zinzendorf, on the other hand, was infusing new life into his Pietistic followers at Herrnhut, followers whose evangelical ardor and missionary zeal were being felt around the world. Fifteen years after Klopstock published the first three cantos of his *Messias*, the general state of German letters continued to be unimpressive, but there were definite portents of things to come. Four years earlier Lessing had published *Miss Sara Sampson*, and in 1759 he inaugurated the revolutionary *Briefe, die neueste Literatur betreffend*. Winckelmann's *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke* had appeared several years previously, and now the author was at work on his epoch-making history

of ancient Greek and Roman art. But in Hamann's Socratic year, the year in which Goethe was only ten years old and Schiller was born, the world would have to wait a while for the beginning of the golden age of German literature.

The smoke of the battle of Kunersdorf of August 12, 1759, had scarcely cleared away when in Königsberg the twenty-nine-year-old Johann Georg Hamann began to write his treatise on Socrates.[1] His monarch, Frederick of Prussia had suffered a severe defeat in that conflict at the hands of the Russians and Austrians, but there is none of the smoke of that battle or of its heroism to be discerned in the young author's work. It was concerned with another kind of battle and another kind of heroism. Indeed, it constituted an attack on the variety of rationalism cherished and propagated by the Prussian monarch. There is no reason to believe that Hamann either grieved or rejoiced at the news of Frederick's military defeat, but we can be certain that he would have rejoiced at the defeat of the "enlightened" philosophy which emanated from Sans Souci and which pervaded all Prussia. The *Socratic Memorabilia* was but a small missile to hurl against the giant of rationalism; yet it was to have its effect.

As has been mentioned, in 1757 the young Hamann was sent to London by the commercial house of Berens in Riga on a mission whose precise nature is unknown to us, and he remained there for some time after the failure of his undertaking. As his funds began to vanish, Hamann thought of earning some money from his lute-playing, and as a result became involved with an Englishman who, it turned out, was being supported by a rich friend for immoral purposes. The young Hamann's guilt or innocence in this matter

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[1] For many years the definitive edition of the *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten* was that contained in the second volume of *Hamann's Schriften* edited by Friedrich Roth, published in Berlin in 1821. Not until the mid-twentieth century was Roth's edition of the Socratic essay superseded by that of Josef Nadler in *N*, II, 57–82. For a list of other printings of the *Mem.*, both complete and slightly abridged, see *B*, 47–48. Blanke also reprints the complete Nadler text in the same volume, providing it with important notations on the variations from the *Erstdruck* of 1759 and on Hamann's own glosses.

has been the subject of lively debate in recent years,[2] but it is very unlikely that he himself had a homosexual experience. His situation was now quite desperate. He had failed in his original mission, and had frittered away many months in London; his health was beginning to suffer from the irregular life he had been leading, and, to top it all off, he had fallen unwittingly into thoroughly disreputable company. Obviously, it was time for a change. The turning point came when, on February 8, 1759, he rented a room in a decent and friendly household. Here he closeted himself with his books and lived on a meager diet, which fortunately was a boon to his health. In his very real distress he soon turned to the Bible, the book which was to remain the object of his attention for some time. It was in the ensuing weeks of studying the Scriptures, of meditation, and of painful soul-searching that Hamann underwent his religious experience, an experience which was so important not only for him as an individual but also for the cultural life of eighteenth-century Germany.

Because of the central importance of the experience of conversion, not only for his life and thought in general but also for this study in particular, it is helpful to note at least a few of his statements about its nature and meaning, since they were recorded very soon after the experience (*N*, II, 41: 8–15, 23–24):

> I could no longer conceal it from my God that I was the fratricide, the fratricide of his only begotten son. The spirit of God continued to reveal to me more and more the mystery of divine love and the blessing of faith in our gracious and only Savior in spite of my great weakness, in spite of the long resistance which I had until then offered to his testimony and his compassion. . . . I feel now, thank God, my heart calmer than ever before in my life.

The author's tendency to identify himself so closely with the events of Biblical history, with both its general course and with a particular episode such as Cain's murder of his brother, is of particular interest for the present study, since it relates to and provides a firm

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[2] *Cf.* H. A. Salmony, *Johann Georg Hamanns metakritische Philosophie*, pp. 75–76, 78 ff., who argues that Hamann had a homosexual experience in London. The other side is argued by Professor Wilhelm Koepp, in "Hamanns Londoner Senel-affäre, Januar 1758," and in "Hamanns Senel-affäre und Erleuchtung."

basis for his later interest in typology and his use of a literary device which he liked to call "metaschematism." Although these subjects will be discussed in detail later, at this point it should be noted that they have their roots in nothing less than the most decisive event of his entire life, the conversion experience, when God, as he said, had poured him "from one vessel into another" (*N*, II, 42: 22–23).

In the weeks following the conversion, Hamann wrote more copiously than at any other time in his life. In a period of approximately two months during the spring of 1758, in one great outburst of intellectual and spiritual energy he produced the *Biblical Reflections, Thoughts Concerning My Life, Reflections on Hymns of the Church, Fragments Left Over*, and other writings. This is not the place to discuss these works and their relation to his developing thought, but the extent to which his conversion resulted in literary activity is important. Hamann's writings remained intensely personal in this period, even when, as in the case of the *Biblical Reflections*, they were ostensibly objective in reference. In *Thoughts Concerning My Life* he describes in some detail the reflections and feelings which accompanied his conversion. A striking feature of this religious awakening is the manner in which the repentant sinner identifies himself with certain objective events of the Biblical record, events remote from him in time and space, which befell an alien and primitive people. The repeated reading of the Bible provided the background and the immediate instrument of the conversion. After reading the Old Testament through once and the New Testament twice, he read the entire Bible through again, this time with new eyes (*N*, II, 40: 14–41: 1):

> I forgot all my books in so doing; I was ashamed of ever having compared them with God's book, of ever having placed them on the same level with it, indeed of ever having preferred another book to it. I found the unity of the divine will in the redemption of Jesus Christ; I recognized my own crimes in the history of the Jewish people; I read the record of my own life, and thanked God for his forbearance with this his people, because nothing but such an example could entitle me to such a hope. . . . Amid these reflections, which seemed to me very mysterious, I read on the evening of the thirty-first of March the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, fell into deep thought, reflected on Abel of whom God said: the earth has opened her mouth to receive your brother's blood.

Any reader of Hamann's writings after his conversion is struck by the intense personal involvement which they reflect. Apparently the spark of his literary concern could only be struck by some challenge to his integrity—ethical, intellectual, or spiritual. The greatest of all challenges was, of course, that offered by his encounter with the Word of God in London. The great literary productivity which resulted from the confrontation has already been mentioned. Just as important, however, is the fact that his religious awakening was to constitute a sort of spiritual capital from which he was to draw strength for the rest of his life, along with a whole generation of his compatriots. Perhaps Josef Nadler goes too far when he says, "With this experience of Hamann's in London there was born the new intellectual Germany of his century" (*NB*, 76). But one cannot gainsay the fact that it was of considerable importance for the cultural developments of the next decades in Germany.

Despite the failure of his business in London, upon his return to Riga Hamann was received in a friendly fashion by members of the Berens family; but they did not conceal their considerable displeasure at his conversion to evangelical Christianity. Johann Christoph Berens (1729–92), Hamann's close friend from university days, was nothing less than appalled and disgusted by this turn of events. Yet he still hoped that his faltering friend might be redeemed from his error. If Berens had read the *Diary of a Christian*, as Hamann originally called the writings of the conversion period in London, and had really sounded its theological and philosophical depths, it is highly doubtful whether he would have continued to entertain the thought of changing his friend's mind. For it would have become eminently clear to him that in the young Hamann he was dealing with a religious thinker of the first magnitude who had attained to an informed certainty granted to few men. But Berens was not destined to see this religious "diary," which, indeed, was to wait until the mid-twentieth century for full publication.

By the spring of 1759 Hamann had returned to Königsberg. It happened that Johann Christoph Berens was in St. Petersburg on a business mission when Hamann departed from Riga and was therefore unable to bring the pressure to bear on his friend which

he hoped would make of him a rational and useful citizen again. With the resoluteness of a genuine man of action, Berens appeared in Königsberg about the middle of June in order to dissuade Hamann from his recently adopted point of view. What is more, he had a plan: he would enlist the aid of his friend, Immanuel Kant, who was at that time a young university professor at Königsberg.

In order to understand somewhat better the nature of the encounter between Hamann and his spiritual adversaries, it is instructive to take a closer look at the two men who embarked on the singular undertaking of "re-converting" an erring son of the Enlightenment. Johann Christoph Berens belonged to that group of eighteenth-century rationalists who believed that the salvation of both the individual and society arises from material wealth, created and dispensed by those who understand the place of culture and general enlightenment in the scheme of human living, and who are seriously dedicated to their propagation. After completing his university studies at Königsberg and Göttingen, Berens traveled widely in Germany, the Netherlands, and France, met many of the leading literary lights of the day, and became an enthusiastic devotée of the Paris theater. He then returned to Riga, where he zealously dedicated himself to the practical realization of his ideals.[3] Given his philosophical standpoint, his tendency to do "missionary" work in the interest of enlightenment, and his genuine affection for Hamann, there is small wonder that he was alarmed at his friend's conversion to beliefs which could only appear to him as superstition and pious emotionalism. As a result of Hamann's conversion, the young patrician from Riga stood to lose not only a cherished friend but also one whose literary ability he had hoped to see employed in the service of the pragmatic ideals of the Enlightenment. Further, in losing Johann Georg to his rationalistic cause, he would be losing one in whom he had already made a considerable financial investment, although one must say

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[3] Berckholz, "Johann Christoph Berens," in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, p. 359.

to Berens' credit that he was always more interested in Hamann as a friend than in the money he had expended on him.

Immanuel Kant, the other actor in the little drama which was developing, was at the time thirty-five years old, and still in his so-called dogmatic or precritical period. His chief interests were cosmocentric, and were directed to what we would now call the philosophy of science. Of his most important publication up to this time, *Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* (1755) and its relation to Newton's work, one commentator says: "He eliminated the religious myth [concerning the origin of the world] from even the most remote frontiers of natural knowledge, and resolved the ultimate miracle into an event of natural law. What Newton had still celebrated in pious doxologies now became an object of scientific knowledge. On this fact was based the extraordinary significance of this work."[4] In other words, what Newton had left for God to do, namely, to create the law-abiding physical universe, the young Kant would take away. "Give me matter," he writes, "and I will show you how a world should arise from it." One can imagine how presumptuous such a view of human reason would appear to an ardent believer in the Christian revelation who had just felt in his own life the power of God, whose foolishness is wiser than the wisdom of men.

We know that on the second of July, 1759, Hamann and his friend Berens spent a pleasant evening together. We also know that sometime early in July a curious meeting between Berens, Hamann, and Kant took place outside of Königsberg in a rural inn, the purpose of which was to re-convert Hamann from his newly won religious standpoint to a sane variety of rationalism.

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[4] M. Kronenberg, *Kant. Sein Leben und seine Lehre,* p. 104. Readers desiring basic information on the relationship between Hamann and Kant will do well to consult especially *NB*, 95–100, 224–25, 315–18, 348–54 *et passim*; Heinrich Weber, *Hamann und Kant. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Philosophie im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*; Josef Nadler, *Hamann, Kant, Goethe*; Erwin Metzke, *J. G. Hamanns Stellung in der Philosophie des 18. Jahrhunderts*, pp. 43–47, 142–44, *et passim*; Elfriede Büchsel, "Aufklärung und christliche Freiheit; J. G. Hamann contra Kant"; treatments in English may be found in my *Unity and Language: A Study in the Philosophy of Hamann*, pp. 81–91 *et passim*, and in Walter Leibrecht, *God and Man in the Thought of Hamann*, pp. 14–17, 20–21, 136 ff., 161 ff., *et passim*.

On the twelfth of July, 1759, Hamann wrote to his brother: "I was at the beginning of the week in the company of Mr. B and Master Kant at the Windmill where we ate a country dinner together in the tavern there. . . . Confidentially, our association does not yet have the former intimacy, and we both impose on ourselves the greatest restraint to avoid all appearance of it."[5] On July 24 Kant visited Hamann in the company of Berens and made the suggestion that Hamann translate some articles from the French *Encyclopédie*. A further conference two days later between Hamann and Kant was then agreed upon, but it never took place. Instead Hamann wrote on the twenty-seventh of July the letter to Kant which is famous in the cultural history of Germany (*ZH*, I, 373–81). In it he not only rejected the suggestion that he translate articles from the *Encyclopédie*, but repudiated the whole rationalistic standpoint of his friends. In the latter connection he invoked the English philosopher Hume against his philosophical adversaries. It is interesting that Hamann opened the letter with a reference to Socrates. He suggested that, if Kant was to be cast in the role of Socrates and Berens in the role of Alcibiades in his proposed re-conversion, then Kant would need the voice of a genius or daimon to guide him. He thereupon suggested that he himself was best fitted for this role, at least as far as the matter at hand was concerned. Later we shall see that he identified himself with Socrates, and reserved the role of genius or daimon for divinity.

The letter of July 27 was, however, but the prelude of Hamann's answer to the friendly attack of Kant and Berens. The *Socratic Memorabilia* comprises the main composition, and *Clouds. A Sequel to the Socratic Memorabilia* (1761), in which he settles accounts with his reviewers, may be regarded as the postlude.[6] It is indeed

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[5] *ZH*, I, 362.

[6] *N*, II, 83–109. In addition to the all-important reaction of Kant and Berens to the *Mem.*, three published reviews form the background for the composition of the *Wolken*. The first was a generally favorable review by Moses Mendelssohn in the *Briefe, die neueste Literatur betreffend* (113, 6. Teil, pp. 385 ff., reprinted in *G*, 675–77). In spite of the reviewer's praise he manages to criticize the strongest points of the essay. For instance, he accuses Hamann of sophistry in stating that one needs no proof for what he believes and, conversely, that one may not believe what has been irrefutably proven. (This kind of paradoxical

ironical that in the end Hamann probably influenced Kant more than Kant did Hamann. Hamann's constant invocation of Hume against Kant, from 1759 on, must have had its effect.[7] When Kant years later was awakened from his "dogmatic slumber" by Hume, as he said, it is inconceivable that Hamann, who had so long been a spokesman for Hume in Germany and who had so often turned the Humeian arguments against Kant, should have had nothing to do with that awakening.

It was but natural that Hamann should adopt the mask of Socrates in his struggle with the militant rationalism of the Enlightenment. As we have already observed, Socrates was the most cherished philosopher of the eighteenth century. No thinker

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thinking is obviously alien to Mendelssohn, the true *Aufklärer*. Further, he feels that Hamann becomes too bitter and misanthropic in the concluding paragraph ["*Schlußrede*"].) Here again it is the paradox—this time in the area of ethics—which annoys the reviewer. Yet his positive statements about the treatise are particularly interesting (quoted in *G*, 675):

> Die Schreibart hat viel Aehnlichkeit mit der Winckelmannschen. Derselbe körnigte aber dunkle Styl, derselbe feine und edle Spott, und dieselbe vertraute Bekanntschaft mit dem Geiste des Alterthums; insbesondere werden Sie bemerken, daß unser Verfasser die naive Laune des Socrates sehr glücklich gefaßt hat. Die Schilderung, die er von dessen Charakter macht, scheint nach dem Leben zu sein.

The second review, likewise favorable, was presumably written by J. J. C. Bode (though unsigned, like the Mendelssohn review). It appeared in the *Staats- und Gelehrte Zeitung des Hamburgischen unpartheyischen Correspondenten* (June 25, 1760). The third, which Hamann reprinted in the *Wolken* (*N*, II, 86–89), was written by Christian Ziegra, and is a scurrilous attack on both the *Mem.* and its author. "Kein Alchymist, kein Jacob Böhme, kein wahnwitziger Schwärmer kann unverständlicheres und unsinnigeres Zeug reden und schreiben als man da zu lesen bekomt." The work is the "unnatürliche Ausgeburt eines verwirrten Kopfes. . . . Wir glauben die lange Weile hat ihn verwahrloset. Möchte man ihm doch, um sie ihm zu vertreiben, und zum besten seines kranken Körpers und Kopfes in ein Spinn- und Raspelhaus bringen." Hamann's purpose in reprinting the review was, of course, to lampoon it by means of emphasizing to a ludicrous degree certain words and by appending witty footnotes. In spite of the venomous nature of Ziegra's attack he does recognize, albeit unfavorably, an aspect of the *Mem.* which is often overlooked, namely, its aesthetic side. This is implied in his statement that the little work is to be compared to "einem japanischen und chinesischen Gemälde . . . , worauf man tolle und gräuliche Figuren gewahr wird. . . ." The truth is that Hamann's procedure was not entirely alien to that of those Oriental artists who adopt striking, almost surrealistic, symbolism in their works. Any critic, even if quite hostile, who thus calls attention to the artistic quality of the *Mem.* renders a service.

[7] See *NB*, 20–23, 98, 101, 108, 336–48 *et passim*, for the relationship between Hamann and Hume. *Cf.* Philip Merlan, "From Hume to Hamann."

ancient or modern could vie with him for first place in the affections of those with any pretensions to philosophy. As Benno Böhm says in his study of the image of Socrates in the eighteenth century, "Socrates is the touchstone by means of which one first attains to clarity about himself and his abilities, an infernal fire through which the man of the eighteenth century had to pass, unless he was intellectually quite differently oriented."[8] Thus the figure of Socrates could serve a very useful purpose in Hamann's argument: in appealing to the Greek philosopher he knew that his contemporaries would listen, at least at first; once having gained their ears, it might be possible to persuade some of them that they were mistaken about Socrates and indeed about Christianity itself. For Christ and Socrates had a much closer affinity, he felt, than his rationalistic opponents would concede. And so the die was cast. In answering "the two," Kant and Berens, and in defending his own newly won position, he would appeal not to the incarnation of rationalism admired by the Enlighteners and their cohorts but to the real Socrates, the individual whose sincerity and commitment to truth caused him to lead a heroic life and to die a martyr's death, and whose life had a genuinely prophetic meaning.

Hamann's interest in Socrates was not a recent development. In his period as private tutor in the Baltic provinces he had translated René de Rapin's (1651–87) tome on the history of philosophy, a work which treated Socrates with great respect despite the fact that Rapin was a Jesuit scholar.[9] We have further evidence in the

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[8] *Sokrates im achtzehnten Jahrhundert. Studien zum Werdegange des modernen Persönlichkeitsbewußtseins*, p. 3. Nadler reiterates this thought succinctly: Sokrates war der Mann des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts." *NB*, 105. In his unpublished dissertation Wolf Hertel stresses the reverence with which the poets of the Enlightenment, particularly Wieland, treated Socrates. Although Hertel refers to Herder several times, he fails to mention Hamann at all! See his "Socrates in der deutschen Dichtung der Aufklärung. Ein Beitrag zur Geistesgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts."

[9] *Réflexions sur l'Eloquence, la Poétique, l'Histoire et la Philosophie* (1686). Although this work is not immediately helpful in the interpretation of the *Mem.*, it was important for the development of the young Hamann's interest in the history of philosophy. *Cf. N*, IV, 467, for an evaluation of the influence of the book; *cf. ibid.*, pp. 43–129, for Hamann's translation. A few of Rapin's remarks are, however, quite in the spirit, if not in the form, of Hamann's observations on Socrates. Thus: "Er [Socrates] schien mit nichts beschäftigt zu seyn, ob er sich mit allem beschäftigte . . . Weil er niemals wie ein witziger

letters of the period prior to his conversion that Hamann's interest in Socrates after leaving the university in 1752 had been constant, though not profound. Thus, in turning to Socrates, the young Hamann was turning to an old acquaintance, if not yet an old friend.

The chief source for Hamann's memorabilia of the life of Socrates was a work entitled *The Likeness of a True and Non-Pedantic Philosopher, or the Life of Socrates, Translated into German from the French of M. Charpentier*, by Christian Thomasius (2d ed.; Halle, 1720) (hereafter abbreviated as *Ch*), a tendentious and unimaginative paraphrasing of Xenophon, which Hamann was nevertheless able to utilize with remarkable effectiveness. Years later Hamann wrote that he had also used John Gilbert Cooper's *The Life of Socrates* (London, 1749), but, as Blanke has shown, he depended almost exclusively on Charpentier in the writing of the *Memorabilia*, with some recourse to Christoph Heumann's three-volume work, *Acta Philosophorum* (Halle, 1715–23). In spite of Hamann's mention of the pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Alcibiades II* in the Socratic year, it is unlikely that it became a source of his treatise.[10]

That a voracious reader like Hamann, especially one so well acquainted with classical literature in general, should not have read Xenophon and Plato before writing about Socrates is naturally surprising, but his later reading of Greek sources, especially of Plato, only confirmed him in his early interpretation of the father

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Kopf jederzeit als ein rechtschaffener Mann redte; so war sein Scherz immer edel." *Ibid.*, 50: 4–9.

[10] Unger not only claims that *Alcibiades II* was an important source for the *Mem.* but goes so far as to ascribe its style to a great extent to the pseudo-Platonic dialogue. *U*, I, 503–5; *cf.* 282 ff. and also Unger, "Johann Georg Hamann," in *Die Großen Deutschen*, p. 285. If Unger's view were correct, one would expect to find stylistic evidence in the essay itself. But such is not the case. When one recognizes the extent to which Biblical passages and expressions are demonstrable in the work, for instance, one must seriously question claims for the influence of another work which cannot be philologically or stylistically traced in it. (A cursory glance at Appendix B to this volume will reveal at once the great influence of the Bible on Hamann's prose.) Or again, Blanke has shown, passage by passage, throughout his commentary the manner in which Hamann utilized Charpentier's biography of Socrates. It is not possible, however, to demonstrate the influence of *Alcibiades II* in any such manner. Moreover, the burden of the present study is to demonstrate that the *Mem.* is essentially characterized by a style which can only be properly described as "anti-Platonic."

of Western philosophy. "I could have written down half of Plato," he wrote to Lindner on October 10, 1761, "without having read him" (*ZH*, II, 117: 34–35). Though he continued to add glosses to his original composition, and though he acknowledged some errors of fact in the original version, the picture remained true to its original outlines.

Chapter 3

OUTWARD FORM: STYLE

In his dedication to Kant and Berens, "To the Two," Hamann calls attention immediately to the fact that, although his work will appear as "mold" (*61*: 7) to the ordinary reader, he hopes that a feeling of friendship will prompt them to discover in his pages the "microscopic forest" (*61*: 9) which they contain.[1] In other words, Hamann is saying that, despite the unlikely appearance of his work, it contains a significant and complex structure, which will emerge clearly for those who scrutinize it closely. Rudolf Unger and Fritz Blanke agree with Hamann on this score: Unger calls it "the best composed writing of those which Hamann

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[1] In comparing his treatise to a "microscopic forest," Hamann utilizes an organic analogy. The concealed worth of the treatise is the life it contains, eccentric though it may be. Some years later he will again use the word "*Schimmel*" in the same way as in the present passage, and will be more explicit as to the nature of the "micro-forest," if we may coin a word here. Writing in the *Beurtheilung der Kreuzzüge* (1763) concerning his own *Aesthetica in nuce*, he says: "Hier ist der Verfasser in seinem Elemente und der Schimmel seiner Einfälle ist in der That nichts anders als ein mikroskopisches Wäldchen von satyrischen Erdschwämmen, witzigen Pfifferlingen, blühenden Isop, der an der Wand wächst, aufgedunsenen Melonen, kritischen Nüssen." *N*, II, 272: 33–37. Thus, the growths hidden in the micro-forest are far from beautiful, but they are very much alive and constitute something much more significant than the mold which they appear to the naked eye to be. August Langen has pointed out that the simile of the tree, so important in the literature of the *Sturm und Drang*, may be extended to embrace the concept of a forest (as with Heinse), in which case the original idea of organic unity suggested by the tree is preserved. "Der Einheitsgedanke bleibt auch hier erhalten," he writes, "denn auch der Wald ist ein Naturorganismus." *L*, II, 75. Although Hamann is speaking of a minuscule forest, the same principle applies: unity is here preserved because we are dealing with a *Naturorganismus*.

himself published";[2] Blanke says that the treatise is "quite logically *durchkomponiert* in detail and as a whole" (*B*, 41).

The question arises as to the nature of this "microscopic forest" and in precisely what sense it is *durchkomponiert*. On another occasion, Hamann refers to the covert nature of his work, but this time in an aesthetic frame of reference. In his discussion of Socrates' early life he stated that the great Athenian had created sculptures of the three Graces but, following an earlier custom, he had clothed them, though the contemporary style was to portray them nude. For this, Hamann assumes, Socrates was criticized by his contemporaries. The Magus then likens his memorabilia to the clothed Graces of Socrates, indicating that "*diese neugekleideten Gratien*" will also evoke opposition (*67: 13*). Thus Hamann indicates that hidden worth characterizes his composition on two scores: in the first instance, the allusion is to the realm of organic nature; in the second, to the classical heritage. In both cases, however, the value implied is obscured for the casual observer, appearing in the first instance as mold and in the second as a concealment of beauty. Hamann's own word for the style of the *Memorabilia* is "*mimisch*" or "mimetic,"[3] by which he means not only that he has assumed the mask of Socrates but also that his composition is characterized by several levels of typological meaning, a subject which we shall consider below.

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[2] "Einführung," in *J. G. Hamann, Sibyllinische Blätter des Magus in Erzieher zu deutscher Bildung*, V, ix. On another occasion Unger refers to the *Mem.* as "*die geniale Ouverture*" of Hamann's literary works. *U*, *I*, 282; see also *NB*, 103.

[3] *61: 16–17* (italic page and line numbers refer to Nadler's edition of the *Mem.*; his numbering has been retained in the German text, Part II of this volume). In a letter to J. G. Lindner, August 31, 1759, Hamann says of the *Mem.*: "Das ganze Werk ist mimisch. . . ." *ZH*, I, 404: 11. Some weeks earlier he had written to Immanuel Kant: "In meinem mimischen Style herrscht eine strengere Logic und eine geleimtere Verbindung als in den Begriffen lebhafter Köpfe" (letter of July 27, 1759; *ZH*, I, 378, 24–25), but he seems to contradict himself on this matter in other contemporary letters (*cf. ZH*, I, 396: 29–34; 411: 2–5; 431: 29–30). In using the word "*mimisch*" in this latter context Hamann reveals that it is to be understood as descriptive of his general stylistic habit of making obscure allusions, since it was written before the Socratic treatise. Years later, however, he continues to describe his style in the same terms, referring to himself as "*dem mimischen Schriftsteller*" in contrast to the rationalists. *Zweifel und Einfälle*, 1776; *N*, III, 188: 22. For a discussion of the mimetic style of the *Mem.*, see *B*, 13–18, 76.

Although this analysis reveals certain elements in the *Memorabilia* which are characteristic of classical art, the fact that the author creates such elements only to obscure them forthwith renders the work anti-classical at the last. Nevertheless, a full appreciation of it requires the discovery of any underlying balance or harmony which it may possess. Hamann himself calls attention to the hidden beauty of the work when he refers to it on the one hand as a forest in miniature and on the other as the classical Graces, though draped in such a way as to obscure their beauty. The reader's task may be viewed, then, either as the application of the lens of the microscope to the tiny forest or as the unveiling of the Graces! In either case, we shall find—to pursue the author's analogies further—the beauty of a living organism, rather than a lifeless artifact.

On one occasion Hamann employs the word microcosm not in its usual sense of man as opposed to the universe, but as will be seen, in connection with his writings. It is well to observe, however, that this idea or any variation of it is helpful in interpreting his work only if one bears in mind that the microcosm—here equated with the "microscopic forest"—never adequately represents the perfection of its macrocosm. Hamann's literary microcosm must always appear imperfect or defective to the superficial glance. As in the case of organic "mold," the ordinary appearance is quite different from the reality which may, with the right kind of vision, be discovered. It is instructive to consider the difference between Hamann's conception and that of, say, Neoplatonism. Whereas the latter holds that earthly beauty is simply a pale reflection of eternal spiritual beauty, Hamann's notion is that earthly beauty may appear to the beholder even as the contradiction of spiritual beauty. Therefore, his aesthetic "little world" may seem to be at odds with the greater reality which it represents. Precisely here, then, we find an important difference between the traditional viewpoint and that of Hamann.[4]

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[4] In only one instance is Hamann somewhat inconsistent in representing this point of view. Thus, in connection with the maieutic process of Socrates, he writes: "Wie der Mensch nach der Gleichheit Gottes erschaffen worden, so scheint der Leib eine Figur oder Bild der Seelen zu seyn." *66: 9–10.* The words

At this point the question arises of the literary genre of the *Socratic Memorabilia*. Blanke deals with this question in his commentary, but I believe that we can be somewhat more specific. Blanke correctly underscores Hamann's missionary intent in writing about Socrates, indicating that his choice of subject matter involves an accommodation to the spirit of the times. He then concludes, concerning the *Memorabilia*, that "it is, seen within the framework of the history of Christian literature, a missionary tract, a testimony designed to win converts in the guise determined by its missionary purpose."[5] This is, of course, quite true as far as it goes. The difficulty, however, is that a missionary tract is not a basic literary genre or type, and therefore Blanke really leaves the question open.

It appears justifiable, however, to identify the little work as an *essayartige Abhandlung*, or treatise approaching the form of the essay.[6] Hamann himself refers to it as an "*Abhandlung*"[7] or an "*Aufsatz*" (*ZH*, I, 400: 15), but does not seem aware of attempting to classify it one way or the other. If we understand an essay to be a more or less limited and personal treatment of a significant sub-

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"der Leib eine Figur oder Bild der Seelen" are borrowed from Luther, as Hamann acknowledges in his footnotes. *66: 35–40*. This idea, which is of course ultimately Platonic in origin, does not vitiate the main thesis of the present study, since Hamann nowhere else in the *Mem.* implies that there is a genuine congruence between appearance and reality. It should be noted further that this idea is introduced in connection with Socrates' pedagogical method only, where it serves the purpose of making reasonable the proposition that concepts ("*Begriffe*") already present in the learner are brought out with the maieutic assistance of the interlocutor. Finally, one may remark that the emphasis in this paragraph is on the hiddenness of the body as it develops in the womb of the mother, as well as on the hiddenness of the concepts in the understanding ("*Verstand*"; *cf. 66: 12–14*).

[5] I have translated Blanke's term "*Missionsschrift*" as "missionary-tract." Elsewhere he employs the word "*Werbeschrift*" in the same connection. *Cf.* "J. G. Hamann und Sokrates. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Sokratesdeutung," p. 29.

[6] In Hamann's day the essay was not a recognized literary type, despite the fact that Montaigne, Bacon, Addison, Steele, and others had utilized the form most effectively. See the section "Literarisches Sachwörterbuch" in the *Kleines Literarisches Lexikon*, ed. Wolfgang Kayser, Vol. I.

[7] After sketching an outline of the *Mem.* in a letter to J. G. Lindner, September 11, 1759, Hamann wrote: "Als einem Freunde kann ich es Ihnen sagen, daß ich an dieser Abhandlung mit Lust gearbeitet, und daß sie mir nach Wunsch gerathen." *ZH*, I, 410: 23–24. We may note in passing that the outline provided for Lindner is helpful in interpreting the whole essay.

ject in an aesthetically pleasing literary form,[8] then the work we are studying would constitute something like an essay. Although its ostensible subject is the life and death of Socrates, it is a personal document, since throughout most of the work its author identifies himself with Socrates. It is indeed so personal that Hegel refers to the Socratic subject matter as possessing merely the "appearance of an objective content."[9] Thus the personal reference of the work has never been in doubt, nor has its limited, fragmentary nature and its "open" form. Its specific aesthetic merits have not, however, been so clearly recognized, and therefore the burden of the argument here rests on its aesthetic qualities.

Every analysis of Hamann's work must forthwith come to terms with an aesthetic problem, the question of his style, for it is the Magus' literary style which presents a massive problem for the reader who concerns himself with Hamann. If this assertion does not hold true for all of his writings, it is true for the majority, and certainly for his most significant compositions. This extraordinary emphasis on style is unusual for a writer who is primarily a philosopher and critic, and is in strong contrast, for example, with the works of a Hume, Locke, or Kant, where style is definitely of secondary importance. Even Plato and Nietzsche, both famous for their excellent styles, do not focus attention on the manner of writing as constantly as does Hamann. The reason for this is, of course, the inordinate difficulty of his style. As Salmony says, "No other work in the German language is as hard to understand as

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[8] My statement appears to harmonize with the consensus of the definitions of the term "essay" in the literary lexicons and handbooks. Fritz Martini's pronouncement on the subject is one of the best: "Der Essay stellt sich als eine künstlerische geformte Prosa dar, die, einen allgemein interessierenden und innerlich gewichtigen Gegenstand behandelnd, zwischen der philosophisch-historischen Untersuchung und Abhandlung einerseits, dem plaudernden-geistreichen Feuilleton andererseits eine eigne, theoretisch schwer fixierbare Form verwirklicht." *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturgeschichte*, p. 408. In view of the predominantly aphoristic nature of Hamann's style in the *Mem.*, it is interesting to note the connection between the aphorism and the essay, which is asserted by Martini, following R. M. Meyer: "Die spezifisch 'offene Form' des Essays ermöglicht den Wechsel mehrerer Perspektiven ohne einen endgultigen Abschluß, so daß der Essay überhaupt als ein erweiterter Aphorismus, bezeichnet werden könne." *Ibid.*

[9] Hegel, "Hamann's Schriften," p. 246.

any one of Hamann's writings. Any comparison with other German texts misses the point, even the comparison which is made from time to time with texts of the mystics."[10] Even Hamann himself confesses in his letters that often he could not understand later what he had written.[11] Much has been said about his style, and no doubt will continue to be, for it presents a fascinating, if difficult, subject. Extended treatments of Hamann's style are to be found in Unger,[12] Nadler,[13] and Eric Blackall,[14] though brilliant observations on the subject may be gleaned from numerous creative writers of the first magnitude—from Goethe,[15] Hegel,[16] and Jean Paul[17] to Jünger,[18] to name only a few.

This analysis of the style of the *Memorabilia* shall for the most part confine itself to certain specific points. Of generalities we have had enough; what is needed is a more exact description of the nature of the difficulties encountered, for only in this way can they be dealt with effectively. Characterizations of his style which suggest meaningless chaos, rather than merely difficult literary counterpoint, can be avoided. To regard Hamann's obscurity as stemming simply from ineptitude is unfortunate, and in the sequel I hope to show how at least some of the major difficulties can be resolved.

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[10] H. A. Salmony, *J. G. Hamanns metakritische Philosophie,* pp. 15–16.

[11] For example, on July 2, 1780, Hamann wrote to J. C. Häfeli (*ZH*, IV, 202: 1–11):

> Es geht mir sehr oft, daß ich meine eigne Hand nicht lesen kann, und mir wird bey dem, was ich selbst geschrieben so übel und weh als dem Leser, weil mir alle Mittelbegriffe, die zur Kette meiner Schlüße gehören, verraucht sind und so ausgetrocknet, daß weder Spur noch Witterung übrig bleibt. Ich habe mich in eine solche Manier zu schreiben hineinstudiert, die mir weder selbst gefällt noch natürlich ist—und weil von S. Paulo die Rede ist, so wünschte ich auch lieber fünf Worte im Publico mit meinem Sinn, denn sonst 10 000 Worte mit Zungen und dem Geist. Unterdeßen muß jeder Vogel mit dem Wuchs seines Schnabels zufrieden seyn.

[12] *U*, I, 482–575 *et passim.*

[13] *Die Hamannausgabe*, pp. 18–21; *NB*, 462–66.

[14] *The Emergence of German as a Literary Language*, pp. 426–50. The author's treatment of Hamann's style is especially perceptive.

[15] See the twelfth book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit.*

[16] See Hegel, "Hamanns Schriften," *passim.*

[17] See especially the *Vorschule der Aesthetik, Werke*, V, 64, 379.

[18] See *Das abenteuerliche Herz, Aufzeichnungen bei Tag und bei Nacht*, pp. 79, 186; *Blätter und Steine*, p. 226; *Sprache und Körperbau*, pp. 36, 43; *Strahlungen*, pp. 131, 284, 435.

Hamann delights in posing for his readers a riddle in the form of a title. In his view, the title of a work is intended to reflect its essence or theme, but this parallel is apparent only to the initiated; all readers feel the impact of his titles, but only a few understand them. "For me," he wrote to F. H. Jacobi, "the title is not simply a sign to hang out, but the *nucleus in nuce*, the mustard seed of the whole growth."[19] Such a title, he wrote on another occasion, is "a microcosmic seed, an Orphic egg" (*N*, III, 373: 31). Just as the essay on Socrates is a microcosm of Christianity, so the title is a microcosm of the essay; the title, then, is a microcosm of a microcosm. The task of the sincere reader, therefore, is to ferret out the hidden meaning of the title.

In speaking of the title of a work, Hamann actually had in mind the entire title page, including the title proper, subtitles, mottos, dedicatory material, and place of publication and date. As a rule, he personally supervised the make-up of the page so that it would convey precisely the impression he desired (*NB*, 102). "For me," he wrote to Jacobi later in life, "the title is the face and the preface the head on which I spend the most time," adding that he, like Jacobi, became more and more interested in the beginning than in the end (*G*, V, 501). Such references obviously pertain to the title in the broadest sense, as does his statement that for the true author "the inscription of his work is at the same time the signing of his name" (*N*, III, 372: 21–22). This mixture of seriousness, irony, raillery, and at times even sublimity in a given title is typical of Hamann. Perhaps his most felicitous expression for the title is "microcosmic seed," for the title contains all the essential elements of the work, even if on a minuscule scale.

Bearing in mind Hamann's principle regarding the titles of literary works, the title of the *Socratic Memorabilia* may now be paraphrased thus: the essay to follow contains noteworthy things about Socrates, which the author desires to call to the attention of the public and of two persons in particular. The author has com-

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[19] Letter of November 12, 1785; *G*, 137–38.

posed the work to banish the boredom[20] of the public, indicating that he knows full well how to deal with that state, since he himself is a lover or connoisseur of leisure;[21] but at the same time he reveals his contempt for the anonymous and obtuse public by applying the term "*Niemand*" to it. Thus Hamann anticipates in his quaint title those things which are to be treated in the main body of his essay. Though some of his later titles embody the principle of the microcosmic seed more fully, the title affixed to his memorabilia of Socrates remains nevertheless a good example of his general procedure.

Following are some of the major reasons for the obscurity of style in the *Memorabilia*, though it must be remembered that this work is by no means Hamann's most difficult. First we should note the frequent classical allusions,[22] which are to be expected in a

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[20] In the expression "*für die lange Weile*" the word "*für*" has the force of the German "*gegen*." Hence, the phrase means "as a remedy for boredom." (*Cf. 62: 29–30* and *65: 16* for the same usage; also *ZH*, I, 368: 6–7.) That this meaning for the expression was common in the eighteenth century we may see from the remark of the trumpeter in *Wallensteins Lager*: "[the generals and commandants] sind nicht für die Langweil herbemüht." I, 2. Julius Disselhoff interprets the expression in question erroneously (as Blanke points out, p. 55) in taking it to mean that Hamann intended to create boredom in the reader. *Wegweiser zu J. G. Hamann, dem Magus in Norden*, p. 142.

In the second phrase, "*von einem Liebhaber der langen Weile*," Hamann infuses a new meaning into the words "*der langen Weile*"; here the expression means no longer "boredom" but "leisure." Consider his use of the word in this latter sense in *ZH*, I, 329: 2. (For a thorough discussion of the reasons for this sudden shift in meaning, see *B*, 55–58; see also p. 30 above.)

[21] As indicated in the preceding note, we must interpret the second use of "*lange Weile*" in the title as "leisure." One would naturally expect the author to use "*Muße*" or a synonym for it when he means leisure, but the ambiguity here is obviously intended. Several years later, before he has sought and found regular employment and when he is feeling the pressure from his friends to do so, he speaks rather ironically of "*die Schmach der Muße*." *N*, II, 354: 12. That the young Hamann considered *Muße* as indispensable to the proper understanding of philosophy we know from his reference in the *Mem.* to the "müßiger Zuschauer ihrer olympischen Spiele." *63: 19*; *cf.* also the letter to J. G. Lindner, March 21, 1759 (*ZH*, I, 304: 2), and the letter to his brother, June, 1759 (*ZH*, I, 347: 20–25).

[22] The following alphabetical list contains the classical names occurring in the main text of the *Mem.* A name enclosed in brackets is based on a clear allusion; when a name appears more than once, the number of occurrences is given in parentheses: Achilles, Aesop (2), Aesculapius, Alcibiades (4), Alexander (2), Apollo (5), [Aristippus], Aristophanes, Aristotle (2), Caesar (2), Celsus, Chaerephon, Crito (2), Cyclopes, Diana, Euripides, Heraclitus, Homer

treatise on a classical subject, but which nevertheless are rather numerous for such a short work. With regard to Biblical references the situation is especially interesting and significant. Although few proper names from the Bible are mentioned, allusions to Biblical passages are frequent. They range from the literal quotation of verses in both Greek and German to phrases and images which only a reader well acquainted with the Lutheran version of the Bible would recognize.[23] By far the largest number of Biblical references, however, are submerged and therefore are not immediately obvious. This fact is in keeping with the author's tendency to say more than appears on the surface. Hamann had a special reason for veiling the scriptural references, however. Since his purpose was to bear witness to the Christian faith, in a hostile environment he felt it necessary to adopt an indirect approach. But classical and Biblical references are not the only ones appearing in the work, for throughout the names of writers and thinkers of the modern age are encountered. It is instructive to observe that he rarely, if ever, refers to the moderns for the purpose of mere ornamentation, but rather in order to come to terms with their ideas.[24] The difficulty of Hamann's style is heightened not only

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(4), Julian the Apostate, Kyrsas, Lysippus, Medusa, Minerva, Persius (title page), Plato (3), Pompey, Pygmalion, Sertonius, Simias, Simon the Tanner, Sophocles, Vespasian, Xanthippe, Xenophon (3). Those appearing in the footnotes are omitted because they were for the most part later additions. Of the forty-eight footnotes added, thirty-one contain classical allusions; only five of the additions are Biblical.

[23] *Cf.* Appendix B.

[24] Following is an alphabetical list of names from the modern period occurring in the text proper. Names which do not appear in the text but are simply alluded to are indicated by brackets; when a name appears more than once, the number of occurrences is given in parentheses: Francis Bacon, Georg Ludwig von Baar, [Charles Batteux], Pierre Bayle (2), Thomas Blackwell, Henry St. John Bolingbroke (2), James Bradley, Johann Jakob Brucker (2), George-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, Medici family, John Gilbert Cooper, Robert François Damiens, A. F. B. Deslandes, Charles Pinot Duclos, Desiderius Erasmus, [François Girardon], [Albrecht von Haller], John H. Hill, David Hume, Jean de La Fontaine, Antony van Leeuwenhoek, [Louis XIV] (2), Louis XV, Meta Klopstock, Marquis de Mirabeau, Charles de Secondat Baron Montesquieu, Isaac Newton, [Peter the Great], [Armand Jean du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu], Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Thomas Stanley (2), François Vincent Toussaint. If one compares this list of names with those in note 22, he will notice that the two lists almost balance with regard to number: here thirty-three names,

by the frequency of the references we have considered, but even more by the characteristically oblique and eccentric manner in which he makes them.

Often the reference involves what is technically called "antonomasia," that is, the substitution of an epithet or another noun for a proper name or class of persons, as, for example, "the philosopher" (59: 23) for Aristippus, or "polyhistorian" (70: 22) for sophist.[25] Even more difficulty is created by Hamann's very frequent use of another stylistic device, periphrasis, or the substitution of a whole phrase, sometimes quite long, for a proper name or class of persons. For instance, on the title page itself he does not give his own name but refers to himself with the periphrastic expression, "a lover of boredom"; Louis XIV of France becomes "a monarch, whose name became the name of a whole century" (62: 5); Pygmalion is "a sculptor of his wife" (62: 19). Sometimes the periphrasis is quite long and complex. The following reference is to Peter the Great of Russia: "the Scythian . . . who traveled in the interest of his trade, and, like Noah or the Galilean of the schemer Julian, became a carpenter in order to be the god of his people" (62: 8–9).[26]

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there thirty-four names. This is a sort of statistical confirmation of the general impression which one receives from reading the treatise that the author, in attempting to demonstrate the parallel between his times and those of Socrates, devotes approximately as much attention to the one as to the other. It is interesting, however, that although the ultimate reference of the work is theological, only seven Biblical proper names appear in the text (Adam, Eve, Moses, Noah, Barnabas, Paul, and Simon Peter). Christ is, of course, alluded to several times, but then only periphrasis or some other device. As is seen in Appendix B to this volume, however, references to scriptural passages are quite numerous, though most often veiled.

[25] Other examples of antonomasia are: "Zween," for Kant and Berens (title page); "Philosoph," for Heraclitus (61: 29); "Galiläer," for Christ (62: 8); "Apollos," for gods (68: 35); "Kreter," for Enlighteners (69: 7); "der Gott," for Apollo (71: 4); "ein Hume," for a sceptic (73: 32); "ein Sophist," for Berens (74: 32); "Bradleys und Leuwenhoeks [sic], for natural scientists (75: 21–22); "Peripatetiker," for an Aristotelian (79: 4). Various antonomastic expressions are used for Socrates himself: "unser Bildhauer" (70: 3); "ihr [the Enlighteners'] Muster" (76: 11–12); "unser Meister" (76: 14–15).

[26] Further examples of periphrasis are: "ein Gott, wie Du," for the Dragon image at Babylon (59: 25); "ein Paar Deiner Anbeter," for Kant and Berens (59: 26); "der französische Staatsminister," for Richelieu (62: 1–2); "ein grosser Künstler," for Girardon (62: 2); "ein Schöpfer seines Volkes," for Peter the Great (62: 17); "der Schöpfer der schönen Natur," for Charles Batteux

This phrase involves double periphrasis, since it includes a reference to Christ, "the Galilean of the schemer Julian." Hamann never refers to Christ by name in the essay, though the whole work points to him; nevertheless, there are important periphrastic allusions to him throughout. It is instructive that these allusions are more conventional than most of his others; it is as though the author wanted to be certain that these particular periphrases would be understood by his readers.[27] On the whole, however, both antonomasia and periphrasis simply constitute one of the means whereby Hamann veils his subject.

Finally, Hamann's unusual or obscure use of epithets should be noted. In his reference to the French historian of philosophy A. F. B. Deslandes, he describes this writer as "an author of encyclical intellect" (63: 3), and this is roughly the train of thought involved here: Julian the Apostate once reproached the Jews for their deficient knowledge of the comprehensive literature of the Greeks, but Deslandes, a thoroughgoing contemporary rationalist, possessed the knowledge which the Jews lacked and which Julian admired. This compliment to Deslandes is undoubtedly ironic, since Hamann had little regard for the wisdom stemming from such knowledge alone. Just how little regard he had for such wis-

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(63: 5); "ein Herold des Ruhms . . . wie der blinde Minnesänger" (64: 3) and "der Vater der Dichtkunst" (65: 21), for Homer; "einige gegen das menschliche Geschlecht und dessen Aufkommen gar zu witzig gesinnten Patrioten," for German admirers of Socrates (67: 16–17); "der Vater der Weltweisheit" (65: 20) and "der Held von der Leuctrischen Schlacht" (78: 21), for Socrates; "der Gott der Weisheit," for Apollo (70: 34); "die grösten Weltweisen und Dichter," for men like Voltaire and Klopstock (74: 12–13); "der grosse Lehrer der Heyden," for the Apostle Paul (74: 22); "die Sokraten unseres Alters, die kanonischen Lehrer des Publicums und Schutzheiligen falsch berühmter Künste und Verdienste," for Enlighteners (76: 9–11); "der erste Claßische Autor unserer Schulen," for Xenophon (79: 14); "der Vatermörder des allerchristlichsten Königes, Ludwich des Vielgeliebten, der ein Urenkel Ludwich des Grossen ist," for Robert François Damiens, the man who attempted to assassinate Louis XV (82: 14–16). In Nadler's edition the footnotes identify Girardon, Louis XIV, and Peter the Great in connection with their respective periphrases, but these did not appear in the first edition; hence, to the readers of the original edition the allusions were obscure.

[27] Thus: "des Zimmermanns Sohn" (67: 19); "der Schönste unter den Menschenkindern . . . ein Mann der Schmerzen, voller Wunden und Striemen, . . . der Held ihrer Erwartung" (68: 17–18, 19–20); "der sanftmüthige und herzlich demüthige Menschen-Lehrer" (79: 31–32).

dom we can gather from the *Clouds*, where he develops the present thought further. With delicious irony he charges that critics like Julian and his eighteenth-century counterparts are really accusing the Greeks of the desecration of true knowledge, as well as of shallowness and banality, for they would translate the poetry of original thought into the prose of the coffeehouses and gaming tables, and would allow the mysteries of Eastern wisdom to degenerate into palatable fairy tales and readily comprehensible systems (*N*, II, 94: 19–25). The point here, however, is that so much hidden predication is bound up with the little word "*encyclisch*."[28] Certainly no one could guess that this is the case without more information than that available in the sentence itself. Such epithets involving hidden predication are quite common in the *Memorabilia*, as indeed throughout Hamann's writing in general.[29]

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[28] In the first edition the word "*encyclopisch*" stands for "*encyclisch*," a version which Hamann later declared in the *Wolken* to be a printer's error; he then goes on to explain that the source of the word itself was Julian the Apostate: "Dies kryptische Beywort scheint mir auf eine gewisse Stelle Julians zu zielen, wo dieser gekrönte Weltweise den jüdischen Schriftstellern einen großen Geist nicht abspricht, jedoch an ihnen auszusetzen findt, daß es denselben an der encyclischen Literatur der Griechen fehle." *N*, II, 94: 15–19. In his personal printed copies of the *Mem.* the author inserted the corrected form, which, of course became the basis for Nadler's version (*cf. N*, II, 385, *Apparat zu* 63: 3). The matter might rest there, if it were not true that Hamann later plays with the similarity of the words "*Cyclopen*" and "*Encyclopedisten*" (*N*, III, 72: 27–28), asserting that both are "one-eyed" ("*Einäugigten*," 72: 26). By this he obviously means that the rationalistic Encyclopedists suffer from inadequate vision in a philosophical sense just as the mythological Cyclopes did in a literal sense. Nadler suggests that Hamann's idea at this point may be derived from Kant's statement, "Die bloße Polyhistorie ist eine cyclopische Gelehrsamkeit, der ein Auge fehlt, das Auge der Philosophie." *N*, VI, 113, under "*encyclisch*." Hence, in spite of Hamann's statement that "*encyclopisch*" was merely a printer's error, one may at least raise the question whether there were not overtones of *cyclopisch* in his thought at the time of the writing. If there were originally such overtones, it may be that he rejected them later because of a different, more approbative evaluation of the Cyclopes elsewhere in the text (63: 6–8); moreover, the later autograph addition at the beginning of the dedication to the public (59: 4–5) is in the same meliorative vein. This is, of course, conjecture; but it has at least the virtue of explaining Hamann's contradictory uses of the term. (*Cf.* Chapter 5, pp. 111–12 and nn. 6–7 above.)

[29] Metonymy is so characteristic of the present work that to list all instances of it would be to quote a great part of the whole. A few further examples will suffice, however, to make his procedure in this connection quite clear: "die neugekleideten Gratien unserer heutigen Dichtkunst" (67: 13–14), for *So-*

In generalizing on the style of the mature Hamann, Josef Nadler mentions the predominance of substantives and the great paucity of verbs.[30] While this is no doubt a valid generalization with regard to works like the *Aesthetics in a Nutshell*, it scarcely applies to the *Memorabilia*. Nadler observes further that the Magus is able to use the compound noun most effectively,[31] an observation which, on the other hand, is confirmed in almost every paragraph of the *Memorabilia*. It should be noted, however, that Hamann indulges in very few original combinations, but when he does create them they are always striking, e.g., "*Eroberungswuth*" ("a frenzy to conquer," *63: 35*); "*Göttersystem*" ("system of divinity," *67: 6–7*); "*Staatsseher*" ("court astrologers," *70: 27*); "*Heuchel-trug*" ("hypocrisy," *73: 16*). But one must bear in mind that the style of the Socratic essay necessarily differs from most of Hamann's other writings in that it deals with subject matter which is, ostensibly at least, objective. Hence, any characteristically subjective tendencies are restrained somewhat by his historical material.

It would create an entirely erroneous impression to suggest that Hamann's style is compounded of pure difficulty. The truth is that scattered among the difficult passages are sentences and indeed whole paragraphs which offer no lexical, syntactical, or other difficulty. These are the maxims and pregnant aphorisms which one finds quoted in anthologies and here and there in fleeting references to the Magus, aphorisms such as the famous dictum, "Just as nature was given to us to open our eyes, so history was given to us to open our ears" (*64: 12–13*); "To dissect a body and an event into its primary elements means attempting to detect God's invisible being, His eternal power and Godhead" (*64: 13–15*); "A man who knows nothing and a man who has nothing are twins of a single destiny" (*70: 19–20*); "Socrates seems to have talked as much about his ignorance as a hypochondriac about his imagined illness" (*70: 28–29*); "Like numbers, words derive their

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kratische Denkwürdigkeiten; "die artige Welt" (*67: 29*), for the age of Rococo and Enlightenment; "die Schnörkel unserer Alpendichter" (*69: 4*), for Albrecht von Haller's poem *Die Alpen*; "die Schoos einer reinen Jungfrau" (*75: 11–12*), for the womb of the Virgin Mary.

[30] *Die Hamannausgabe*, p. 20.

[31] *Ibid.*

value from the position which they occupy, and their concepts are, like coins, mutable in their definitions and relations, according to time and place" (*71: 32–34*); "The ignorance of Socrates was sensibility. But between sensibility and a theoretical proposition is a greater difference than between a living animal and its anatomical skeleton" (73: *10–12*); "Our own existence and the existence of all things outside us must be believed, and cannot be determined in any other way" (73: 21–22); "Faith is not the work of reason, and therefore cannot succumb to its attack, because faith arises just as little from reason as tasting and seeing do" (*74: 2–5*); "The philosopher is just as subject to the law of imitation as the poet" (*74: 9–10*); "What replaces for a Homer ignorance of the rules of art which an Aristotle devised after him, and what replaces for a Shakespeare the ignorance or transgression of those critical laws? Genius is the unanimous answer" (75: 3–6); "I can accomplish no more than the arm of a signpost, and am too wooden to accompany my readers in the course of their reflections" (76: 25–27). Not one of the preceding passages presents any lexical or syntactical difficulty. One understands them immediately; yet each arouses the unique pleasure afforded by the masterfully turned phrase, as well as being a stimulus to fruitful reflection.

Nadler speaks of Hamann's "aphoristic philosophy" (*NB*, 411), and when Hamann himself compares the sentences of Heraclitus to "a group of small islands for whose community life the bridges and ferries of system were lacking" (*61: 30–31*), he is really describing his own style. This description doubtless prompted Ernst Jünger to create his own felicitous aphorism concerning Hamann's style: "Hamann thinks in archipelagoes with submarine connections."[32] There can be no question of Hamann's virtuosity in creating the aphorism and the pregnant passage. That these should be archipelagoes with submerged connections is probably inevitable for anyone given to brilliant, momentary flashes of insight.

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[32] *Blätter und Steine* (Aphorism No. 87), p. 226. In a letter to Moses Mendelssohn (1762) Thomas Abbt compared Hamann's mind to an archipelago in which everyone is a neighbor to everyone else, but each can reach the other only in ships. *Vermischte Schriften*, Teil 3, pp. 95–96, quoted by Rudolf Unger in *Hamanns Sprachtheorie im Zusammenhange seines Denkens*, p. 25.

Regarding the desultory nature of his own thought and expression, Hamann wrote to Kant in a letter of July 27, 1759: "Every animal has its own gait in thinking and writing. The one goes in leaps and bounds like a grasshopper; the other in a consistent manner like a snail in a rut on account of the safety which its structure requires" (*ZH*, I, 379: 24–27). The first analogy clearly applies to Hamann, the second to Kant. While it is true that Hamann's thought is characteristically expressed in the aphoristic manner, such is not always the case, as will be seen below. But it seems safe to say that his creative impulse found its expression chiefly in the aphorism.

Hamann's tendency to aphoristic or fragmentary thinking arises from his great distrust of discursive reason. In effect, he reverses the syllogistic operation. Instead of unfolding the meaning implied in a given sentence or premise step by step, he seeks to pack more and more meaning into it; and all too often the new wine of his thought bursts the old bottles of traditional language. Hamann's emission of thought may be said to occur in quanta rather than as a steady flow, if I may borrow an analogy from modern physics. This tendency was somehow bound up with his innermost nature.

At this point it is important to note a contradiction involved in general characterizations of Hamann's style. His style has been alternately asserted to be anti-Ciceronian or Senecan, and to be Ciceronian. It has become commonplace to describe Hamann's style as "aphoristic," so common indeed that even the literary handbooks are beginning to use his writings as prime examples of the aphoristic style.[33] On the other hand, Rudolf Haym, the great Herder scholar, asserted Hamann's style to be the opposite of the aphoristic manner. In comparing the literary styles of Herder and Hamann, he wrote: "The sentence structure is in the case of the latter [Hamann] dominated throughout by the striving for correct, more or less Latinizing periodicity. The old-fashioned, stiff regularity of the grammatical constructions forms a curious contrast to

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[33] Thus, in the handbook edited by Gero von Wilpert, *Sachwörterbuch der Literatur* (3d ed.; Stuttgart, 1961), Hamann, Lessing, and Nietzsche are named as the chief German heirs of Seneca, under the rubric of *"Aphoristischer Stil."*

the rule-defying spirit, to the compressed content of the Hamannian writings."[34] One must disagree with Haym's assertion that Hamann's writings are characterized throughout by the striving for Latin periods, for it is precisely his most compressed thoughts which are expressed in compressed sentences. These are the sentences which constitute the chief bearers of the "compressed content of the Hamannian writings." Haym has underscored an important characteristic of Hamann's writing, however, and one which has not been properly related to the Senecan or aphoristic mode which is so often held to be characteristic of him.

In his treatise on Hamann's theory of language Rudolf Unger stated that Hamann possessed the double face of a Janus, the one looking to the past, the other to the future.[35] Precisely the same assertion can be made of his literary style. On the one hand, it looks back to the Ciceronian chancery language (*Kanzleistil*), which had been the prevailing style in the Germany of his youth;[36] on the other, it looks forward to the newly emerging anti-Ciceronian or Senecan language of the future. Eric Blackall calls attention to the mixture of styles in the *Biblical Reflections* thus: "In its stylistic

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[34] *Herder*, I, 211.

[35] *Hamanns Sprachtheorie*, p. 257.

[36] The terms anti-Ciceronian, Senecan, and baroque are here used as synonyms. They refer to a style which avoids the symmetrical periods and stately cadences of Ciceronian prose, with its suspension of meaning until the end of the sentence. The sentence structure of anti-Ciceronian or baroque prose tends to parataxis, in contrast to the hypotaxis of Ciceronian prose. It is a loose or open form, in contrast to the closed form of the periodic sentence. Baroque stylists found classical models in Seneca and Tacitus, but Hamann's inspiration in this area undoubtedly derived from the Bible, particularly from the style of the Old Testament, which has much in common with the paratactic or loose style of the baroque writers, even though the ornateness of the latter is, of course, lacking in Biblical prose. Our definition of baroque follows the usage of Morris W. Croll, "The Baroque Style in Prose," in *Studies in English Philology: A Miscellany in Honor of Frederick Klaeber*, pp. 427–56. For a critical discussion of the term "baroque" as applied to prose, see Gilbert Highet, *The Classical Tradition*, pp. 447 ff. Informative as Highet's discussion is, however, his extension of the concept of baroque to include symmetrical as well as asymmetrical prose seems to this writer only to becloud the matter and to nullify the perspicacious distinctions made by Croll (see esp. p. 654, n. 4). Blackall points out (*German as a Literary Language*, p. 436) the difference between Hamann's imagery and the customary baroque imagery; nevertheless, as far as the structure of Hamann's aphoristic prose is concerned, it must be considered baroque in the sense of the definition above.

tension between conventional ciceronianism and highly irrational use of Biblical imagery, we have the roots of Hamann's style."[37] In spite of this perceptive formulation with regard to one of Hamann's early works, Blackall seems to assume that Hamann's later style was consistently aphoristic.[38] This is by no means the case. Hamann never really abandoned the chancery style, and it even predominates in some of his later works. To be sure, there are times when, under the impact of great passion and explosive mental energy, he does succeed in breaking away almost entirely from Ciceronian periodicity, as, for example, in the rhapsodical *Aesthetics in a Nutshell* of 1762. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that his Ciceronian style is always associated with his less original and important utterances. Such an assumption in connection with his later philosophical writings like the *Metacritique of the Purism of Reason* (1784) and *Golgotha and Scheblimini* (1784) would be utterly false, for they are to a great extent cast in the mold of the chancery language.

The present study is, of course, primarily concerned with the style which characterizes the *Memorabilia*. Although it is clear that here Hamann's most characteristic and original thoughts are expressed in the aphoristic manner, he nevertheless does on occasion rise to heights of impassioned eloquence within the framework of Ciceronian prose. But such flights are not as likely to contain his original thoughts as are those couched in the baroque or Senecan style; the Ciceronian passages are more likely to represent his appeal to traditional values. For instance, the very last sentence of the *Memorabilia* is a good example of a statement framed after the manner of Cicero (*82: 8–16*):

> If it is true that God himself, as he says in the good confession which he made before Pilate; if it is true, I say, that God himself became a man, and came into the world to bear witness to the truth, if so, no omniscience would be necessary to foresee that he would not escape from the world as well as a Socrates, but would die a more ignominious and cruel death than the parricide of the most Christian king, Louis the Beloved, who is a great-grandchild of Louis the Great.

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[37] *Ibid.*, p. 435.
[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 447 ff.

The recognition of the Ciceronian elements in Hamann's prose in no way diminishes appreciation of his virtuosity in creating the striking aphorism and the memorable maxim. One may conclude with Blackall that Hamann "tended towards the aphorism as his natural means of expression."[39] At the same time, however, it is only realistic to face the inconsistency inherent in Hamann's manner of writing, and in doing so one discovers yet another reason for the notorious difficulty of his style. The approximately half-dozen Ciceronian passages in the *Memorabilia* result in a mixture which, while not felicitous, is by no means calamitous.[40] This type of unintentional *Stilbruch* points up the fact that the kinetic, indeed, explosive, aspect of his thought is at odds with another aspect, namely, his steadfast adherence to traditional values. This paradox is after all highly characteristic of the Magus' thought in general, and not simply of his prose style.

A further characteristic feature of Hamann's style is his intentional use of *Stilbruch*. The more elevated the concept, for instance, the more he seems to delight in juxtaposing to it that which is lowly, eccentric, or even trivial. For instance, in referring to the Virgin Birth of Christ he invokes the name of a notorious English quack doctor who had propounded an absurd theory of virgin birth.[41] On another occasion, he tells of a man named Kyrsas, who,

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[39] *Ibid.*

[40] The passages which I have identified as Ciceronian in the *Mem.* are as follows: *67: 7–11*; *68: 37–69: 20*; *72: 10–17, 22–29*; *75: 14–31*; and the already cited *82: 8–16*.

[41] *75: 11.* John Hill (1716[?]–75) engaged in the professions of apothecary, botanist, physician, and writer; he also tried his hand unsuccessfully at acting and the writing of opera. Regarded by his contemporaries as a gifted but disreputable character, he was engaged in many a controversy, the most colorful one being with David Garrick, the famous actor, who wrote these lines of Hill:

For physic and farces, his equal there scarce is,
His farces are physic, his physic a farce is.

Upon failing to become a member of the Royal Society, Hill wrote in retribution *Lucina sine concubitu. A Letter Humbly Addressed to the Royal Society* (London, 1750), in which he maintains that it is possible for a virgin to conceive a child through the action of wind rather than by the normal method. The work was translated into German in 1752. Hill also published voluminously, chiefly anonymously or under pseudonyms, on scientific and literary subjects. His writings, except for some in the field of botany, have been described as "mere trashy compilations." *See* George F. R. Barker, "John Hill," in *Dictionary of*

unaware of Socrates' death, attempted to pay him a visit, encountered the spirit of the departed philosopher, and engaged in conversation with it. After relating this inspiring episode, Hamann then states that Kyrsas returned home to Chios, a region famed for its wine (*81: 12–17*). Finally, in the passage cited above, he compares the martyrdoms of Socrates and Christ to the cruel execution of the obscure Frenchman who made an attempt on the life of Louis XV in 1744; but the exalted religious mood is countered further by the mention of a prosaic fact about the ancestry of Louis XV. When one reflects that this incidence of *Stilbruch* occurs at the very end of the *Memorabilia*, he realizes something of the importance of this literary device in the total composition.

The reasons for Hamann's use of such contrasts are far-reaching and quite important for an understanding of his total world view. This is not the place to discuss them in detail, but it should be noted that they are associated with the metaphysical doctrine of *coincidentia oppositorum* and the theological doctrine of *Knechtsgestalt*. According to the latter, divinity most often appears in lowly form, and therefore one may fail to recognize it. Hence the relating of spiritual beauty to the unlovely, the eccentric, or the grotesque may not be amiss after all. In such a way we arrive at a paradoxical view of reality, and no thinker understood the vital importance of the paradox in religion more clearly than did the Magus.[42] In his

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National Biography, pp. 848–52. For another reference of Hamann's to Hill's mock theory of virgin birth in the present connection, see *ZH*, 359: 6–13. Hamann changed the title "*Doctor*" of the first edition to "*Wurmdoctor*" (*75: 11*). I have translated the latter as "quack," following *DW*. (Blanke equates it with *Apotheker*. *B*, 154, n. 72.) For "*Wurmdoctor*" as used in Hamann's essay, see the first speech of Spiegelberg in Schiller's *Die Räuber* (Act II, Scene 3).

[42] Although Hamann's conviction that religious truth must be expressed in paradoxical form derived principally from the New Testament, he was also convinced that early Greek religion had anticipated this insight, and that the rationalistic "Sophists" had emasculated it. They accomplished this by undermining the faith of their compatriots in "the cleverly devised myths of their poets," who presented their truth in paradoxical form. "Die Heyden," he wrote in this connection, "waren durch die klugen Fabeln ihrer Dichter an dergleichen Wiedersprüchen gewöhnt; bis ihre Sophisten, wie unsere, solche als einen Vatermord verdammten, den man an den ersten Grundsätzen der menschlichen Erkenntnis begeht." *68: 20–24*. Hamann calls attention to two contradictions concerning Socrates. First, it was paradoxical that the best of Greeks should be

case, the contrasts involved in *Stilbruch* stem from his notion of the brokenness and incompleteness of human nature and of the world, and thus from the profoundest depths of his religious faith.[43] His use of this literary device has therefore little in common with, for instance, Heine's, for in the case of the poet it sprang merely from romantic irony. It is true that irony plays an important part in the present work, as it must, since it deals with Socrates, the master of irony. Yet Hamann sees even the Socratic irony as ultimately derived from deep religious faith.

Let us turn now to an aspect of Hamann's style which is at the same time aesthetically pleasing and theologically important, namely, his use of typology in the main body of the essay. It is necessary at the outset to be clear about the meaning of typology. Strictly speaking, it is a method of interpreting Scripture which

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homosexual (*67: 22–68: 2*); second, it was paradoxical that the oracle should pronounce the man who was most aware of his own ignorance to be the wisest of men. Hamann draws a parallel between Socrates' homosexuality (which he assumed) and Christ's appearance in a form offensive to the Jews ("ein Mann der Schmerzen, voller Wunden und Striemen," *68: 19*). The juxtaposition of Socrates' moral flaw and the lowliness of Christ's incarnation seems odd indeed, but Hamann nevertheless makes his point clear. With regard to the oracle's pronouncement, Hamann would have us note the contradiction involved and at the same time the inconsistency of the eighteenth-century Enlighteners who repudiated the paradox in the case of Christ but accepted it in the case of Socrates. See *68: 27–30*. As if to emphasize further his belief that the Greeks had anticipated the intimate relation between the paradox and religious truth, Hamann implies that even the pagan god Apollo accommodated himself to the weakness of man in order to inculcate his truths through the Delphic oracle. See *68: 32 ff*. Thus, at least in this one respect, Apollo became a prototype of Christ. Years later Hamann stated with regard to the paradox in religion: ". . . so wird zwar die Wahrheit Gottes durch die innere Lügen oder Widersprüche der Vernunft herrlicher zu Seinem Preis. . . ." *Konxompax*; *N*, III, 227: 17–18.

[43] I have characterized the Magus' religious faith in a general way in "Some Major Emphases of Hamann's Theology." It is misleading, I believe, to maintain, as one commentator does, that Hamann's paradoxical and obscure language derives from the fact that he was an outsider. Thus Rudolf Schwarzenbach:

> Hamann steht außerhalb der Gesellschaft. Er kann nicht die Sprache der andern reden, weil er nicht mehr zu ihnen gehört. Der Durchbruch zu seinem subjecktiven Glauben hat eine Kluft zwischen ihn und seine Freunde gerissen, eine Kluft, die weder zu überbrücken noch zu überreden ist. Hier er—dort die Sophisten. Mit dem Blick auf seinen Glauben möchte man sagen, er sei aus der Zeit hinaus ins Uberzeitliche getreten.

"Hamanns Prosa," p. 649. Hamann's faith did not cause him to become, in effect, incommunicado but compelled him to speak the one veridical language, the language of paradox and obscure allusion.

identifies in the Old Testament an object, event, or person foreshadowing or prefiguring its analogue in the New Testament. Thus the Paschal Lamb in the Old Testament foreshadows the sacrifice of Christ or, more specifically, the Eucharist in the New; to cite another example, Adam prefigures Christ. The Paschal Lamb or Adam are spoken of as "types" or "prototypes"; Christ and the Eucharist are referred to as "anti-types." Typology is to be distinguished from allegory, which does not require the historicity of the events to which it refers. Though extensively used as a hermeneutic device in the early days of the Church and throughout succeeding centuries in varying degrees, typology was generally discredited in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries among responsible Biblical scholars, who were committed to the historical-critical method. In recent years, however, there has been a revival of interest in typology as a hermeneutic method,[44] and here again we become aware of Hamann's tendency to foreshadow certain modern developments. Typology was traditionally utilized to demonstrate the unity of the Old and New Dispensations. Hamann uses it, however, to demonstrate the spiritual unity which he believed overarched both the pagan Greek world and the world of Christianity. In such a way Greek history becomes, along with Jewish history, a prelude to the Gospel, though in a special sense. He utilizes the typological method further in connection with profane as well as sacred history, but in so doing does not break with tradition. As Karlfried Gründer says, "In the history of hermeneutics typology has its important place. Hamann's method of exegesis derives, in spite of considerable abstruseness in detail, by no means from private eccentricity but renews an old and great tradition of theology."[45] In the *Memorabilia* typology plays an important role on two scores: first, the chief argument of the treatise depends upon an acceptance of the typological method of interpretation, for Socrates is generally the type or prototype of which Christ is the anti-type (at times he is the type of the Christian believer

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[44] See Karlfried Gründer, *Figur und Geschichte. J. G. Hamanns "Biblische Betrachtungen" als Ansatz einer Geschichtsphilosophie*, pp. 118, 127–31.

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 134.

rather than of Christ); second, the typological approach to the lives of Socrates and Christ also provides an aesthetic quality, a certain underlying symmetry, which the essay could not otherwise possess, for Hamann has provided each division of the *Memorabilia* with typological or quasi-typological themes.

The fact that the typological material strengthens the aesthetic quality of the *Memorabilia* is not surprising when one considers the role which typology has played in religious art.[46] As one writer on the subject says, the "connection of typology with Christian art suggests the very close association of typology with aesthetics."[47] Just as the main typological argument of the *Memorabilia* suggests the essential religious unity of the pagan Greek and Christian worlds, so the use of typology in the work itself adds to its artistic unity. The juxtaposition of analogous historical events provides a kind of repetition which lends a pleasing symmetry to the work, once their meaning is clarified. Although it is true that the presence of typological materials provides symmetry and balance, and therefore causes the essay to tend toward classicism, the fact that Hamann deliberately renders his references obscure results in their becoming finally an anti-classical feature. It is as if an artist had created a perfectly symmetrical and balanced picture like, let us say, Raphael's "School of Athens" but, unlike Raphael, had cast one half of the composition in deep shadows, so that the shadowed figures and the colors were discernible only upon very close scrutiny. In other words, symmetry and harmony would be there, but hidden from the superficial glance. Baroque painters frequently did this very thing,[48] but I have chosen to appeal to a purely classical work of art as the starting point for the analogy and to suggest its modification in the imagination of the reader in order to stress the underlying and generally obscured symmetry which results from Hamann's typology.

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[46] See Jean Paul Richter and A. Cameron Taylor, *The Golden Age of Classic Christian Art*, pp. 9 ff.

[47] J. R. Darbyshire, "Typology," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, p. 503.

[48] Rembrandt's "The Night Watch," Ruisdael's "The Jewish Graveyard," and Terbrugghen's "The Calling of St. Matthew" illustrate this principle.

The typological passages in the *Memorabilia* may relate to Christ, to the Holy Spirit, to the Christian believer, or simply to secular events which are pregnant with spiritual meaning. An example of the first kind of parallel is to be found in the Peroration: just as Socrates was martyred because of his witness to truth, so was Christ martyred because of his witness to truth (*82: 8–16*). An example of the second type occurs at the end of the Second Section, where we read that the daimon of Socrates guided him into truth, just as the Holy Spirit was later to guide believers in Christ into truth (*76: 6–9*). An instance of the third type, referring to the anticipation of the posture of the true believer, is found at the beginning of the Second Section. There Hamann draws a parallel between the Delphic oracle's declaration that Socrates was the wisest of men because he recognized his own ignorance, and the Apostle Paul's declaration that those men are wise who recognize their own ignorance (*74: 20–75: 2*). Finally, the author's dedication, "To the Two," provides an example of the utilization of parallel events drawn from profane or secular history. There we read that, while the general public in Athens failed to understand Aristotle's work on the natural history of animals, Alexander the Great, who was a friend of Aristotle's, did understand it.[49] Likewise, Hamann concludes, the general public in Germany will fail to understand the present essay on Socrates, but a feeling of friendship will enable Kant and Berens to discover its true worth (*61: 5–9*). Other instances of typological references in the *Memorabilia* are given, along with the foregoing, in Table A of the Appendix. By consulting this table, one may see at a glance the distribution of such parallels throughout the work.

Hamann's stylistic procedure in the *Memorabilia* illustrates a basic principle of his thought, namely, that a given reality should always exceed its phenomenal appearance. That this is true in the areas of ethics and religion will be seen in a subsequent chapter. That it is true in the area of literary form or style, however, has already been observed. We have seen that Hamann utilizes with great virtuosity certain technical stylistic devices to conceal his

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[49] For an explanation of this passage, see Blanke, p. 72, n. 3.

underlying meaning, with its supporting logic. So the many contemporary and classical allusions, as well as the rhetorical devices of antonomasia, periphrasis, and obscure epithets, are simply means by which he veils his thought from the uninitiated. His aphoristic, or what might be called (following his own analogy) "archipelagic," style also serves admirably to submerge his meaning. Further, the natural tendency of the aphorism to concentrate more and more meaning into fewer and fewer words must frequently result in obscurity. The effect of *Stilbruch* is always to raise a question in the reader's mind as to the author's real intention, a question which can only be resolved by further reflection, by penetration beyond the self-contradictory appearance. Finally, we have seen that Hamann's use of typology also involves concealment, since his typological references are frequently obscure. The very literary genre which Hamann chose as a vehicle for his memorabilia of Socrates is suggestive of the incompleteness, the inconclusiveness, and the openness of what he has to say. In other words, all the elements which characterize the outward form of the work are designed so as to transcend themselves, to point beyond themselves to a greater reality. Years later Hamann emphasized this principle as characteristic of his writings in general, and not simply of the *Memorabilia*: "The inner or invisible part of my few writings may indeed ever remain the most excellent part. . . ."[50] Such a procedure was for him symbolic of God's dealing with man and hence in his view was more veridical than classical art, with its rationalistic implication of being an adequate and exhaustive surrogate for that which it represents.

In the attempt to understand Hamann's view of his own procedure, we can do no better than to consider the lines he wrote in 1773 to Friedrich Carl von Moser:

> Your Excellency has had the grace to sympathize most cordially with the invisible aspect of my writings. . . . Socrates' vocation of transplanting morality from Olympus to the earth and of rendering it visible in a practical way coincides with my own in that I have sought to profane a higher sanctuary and, to the proper umbrage of our lying, sham, and boastful

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[50] Letter to J. G. Herder, March 20, 1773; *ZH*, III, 40: 4–5.

prophets, to make it commonplace in an analogous way. In short, all my *opuscula* taken together comprise an Alcibiadean shell. Everyone has found fault with the form of the satyr or Pan, and no one has taken notice of the old relic of the smaller Luther catechism. . . .[51]

In the preceding pages the attempt has been to show how Hamann's "*unsichtbare Autorschaft*" may, to a great extent, be rendered visible, and further, how fruitful a study of his conception of aesthetic form may be as a way of approaching his thought in general.

[51] December 1; *ZH*, III, 66: 35–67: 12.

Chapter 4

INWARD FORM: ESSENTIAL AND DRAMATIC UNITY OF THE WORK

When one turns from a consideration of the outward form of the *Memorabilia*, that is, from the question of its literary species and style in the traditional sense, to the question of its inward form, he finds that it is fruitful to view the latter from two angles: first, it may be regarded from the standpoint of what I shall call its essential unity or essence, by which is meant the organic relation of all its parts to the central idea;[1] second, one may consider it from the standpoint of the inchoate dramatic elements which it contains. In the latter case we shall speak of the "proto-plot" or "proto-drama," for, as we shall see, the main body of the treatise does provide the potential stuff for a dramatic account of the life and death of Socrates. In so far as it does this, it possesses a certain dramatic unity. This chapter, then, is concerned with both the essential and the dramatic unity of Hamann's Socratic essay, or, to put it another way, with two facets of its inward form.

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[1] In this connection one might be tempted to utilize the word "thematic," inasmuch as our use of the word "essence" will correspond in great part to what is traditionally called the "theme." Since the latter term bears a rather well-established (and limited) meaning in literary criticism, however, it is not employed here. The reasons for not utilizing it will become clear in subsequent paragraphs of the present chapter. Suffice it to say at present that the concept of "theme" is not usually related to the concept of form, whereas in our usage the word "essence" will be so related. Helen Gardner speaks of the critical importance of a literary work's "quiddity or essence, its individuality, as a particular expression of a personal response to experience, a personal vision of the world." *The Business of Criticism*, p. 21. Elsewhere in the same work she well states: "The discovery of a work's centre, the source of its life in all parts, and response to its total movement . . . is to me the purpose of critical activity." *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Rudolf Unger relates the question of the inward form of Hamann's writings to the latter's principle of "*Metaschematismus.*"[2] In order to understand what Hamann meant by this term it is necessary to turn to the passage of the New Testament in which Paul exhorts the members of the Church at Corinth to lay aside their dissensions and their tendency to form cliques. Instead of referring directly to the various disputants at Corinth, he writes about his own relationship to Apollos and about the relationships of those who would follow him and those who would follow Apollos. He does this in order to lead them by an indirect method to an understanding of their own general predicament: "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that none of you should be puffed up for one against the other" (I Cor. 4:6). Employing Paul's Greek word, meaning to "transfer in a figure,"[3] Hamann calls the process "*metaschematisieren,*"[4] and extends its meaning.

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[2] *U*, I, 501 ff. Unger writes:

> Die typologisierende und allegorisierende Auffassung Hamanns, so sehen wir mit zunehmender Deutlichkeit ist hier am Werk, das halb historische, halb sagenhafte Bild des attischen Denkers im selben Sinne ihren besonderen Zwecken gemäß zum Prototyp und symbolischen Verkünder christlicher Gestalten und Bewußtseinstatsachen zu formen, wie es die "Biblischen Betrachtungen" so häufig mit Persönlichkeiten des alten Bundes tun. Volle Lebendigkeit aber erlangt dieser Prozess doch erst durch das Einwirken eines neuen Gedankenmotivs, das wir freilich ebenfalls bereits in jener Schrift, vor allem aber im "Lebenslauf" wirksam sehen und das nun überhaupt für die innere Form der Autorschaft des Magus von größter Bedeutung wird: nämlich der Figur des "Metaschematismus."

Ibid., 501. (In his earlier publication, *Hamanns Sprachtheorie*, Unger had stressed the "*Formlosigkeit*" of Hamann's writings [pp. 24 ff.], but most of his strictures, as indeed those of Hamann himself, really apply more to the traditional idea of form, especially of outward form, than to the idea which Hamann seems to have unconsciously followed, and which I have sought to delineate in these pages.) See also Paul Ernst, *Hamann und Bengel*, pp. 82–89, for a discussion of metaschematism; further, Wilhelm Koepp, *Der Magier unter Masken. Versuch eines neuen Hamannbildes*, pp. 180 ff.

[3] Μετεσχημάτισα.

[4] Hamann refers indirectly in the following passage to his own use of metaschematism following the model of the Apostle Paul: "Wo der Schulweise Schlüsse spinnt, und der Hofsirach [Voltaire] Einfälle näht, ist die Schreibart des Liebhabers [Hamann] Leidenschaft und Wendung. Unter allen seinen Redefiguren bedient er sich am glücklichsten, so viel ich weiß, derjenigen,

For Hamann to metaschematize meant to substitute a set of objective relationships for an analogous set of personal or existential relationships or the reverse, in order to determine, through the insight born of faith, their common meaning.[5] On January 28, 1776, he wrote to Herder: "You know that this unknown figure is one of my cherished advantages in writing, especially in regard to that which I call the economy of the plan and which is called in poetry the fable" (*ZH*, III, 215: 15–18).[6] Thus Hamann's literary method requires *direct* personal involvement and *indirect* communication. The fables of an Aesop or a La Fontaine, for example, are not metaschematic, although they are a method of indirect communication. This is so for two reasons: first, they do not relate in any way to objective facts; second, they do not bespeak the personal involvement of their authors, that is, there is no speaking of an "I" to a "thou" through their instrumentality. They

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welche in den vertraulichen Briefen eines Originalautors [Paul] Metaschematismus (I. Kor. IV, 6) genannt wird." *Nachschrift* (*Klaggedicht*), *N*, II, 150. *Cf.* also the passage where he, rather ironically, accuses the Enlighteners of engaging in metaschematism in their own way: "Worrin bestehen denn die Wirkungen des Theismus und seiner Legion—denn ihrer ist viel, die Witz Scharfsinn, Geschmack und Gelehrsamkeit verschwenden ihn plausibel, populair, ja gar orthodox zu machen, und in das schmeichelhafteste Licht oder Engelgewand der Vernunft, der Rechtschaffenheit und der Andacht einzukleiden oder metazuschematisiren." *N*, III, 144: 11–16. For a commentary on the passage, see Evert Jansen Schoonhoven, *Mysterienschriften*, *HE*, V, p. 62.

[5] Martin Seils censures Unger for holding that metaschematism requires for Hamann, as for the Apostle Paul, the transfer of an "ursprünglich objektiv gedachten Ideenverbindung auf die eigene Person des Sprechers" (*U*, I, 502) rather than the reverse. *Theologische Aspekte zur Gegenwärtigen Hamann-Deutung*, p. 74. It is true that both Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, and Hamann, in his discourse on Socrates, gain their insight from within, not from a set of objective facts; hence, in so far as this is true, one must agree with Seils's emphasis on the movement from the subject, enlightened by faith, to the object, and must concede that this is the basic process of metaschematism. On the other hand, the literary form of the variety of indirect communication which Hamann calls metaschematism may utilize either subjective terms (as in the case of Paul's letter) or objective terms (as in the case of Hamann's Socratic treatise). Here the distinction between the basic cognitive process and the literary precipitate of that process is of the essence. We may observe in passing, however, that Seils's treatment of the subject of metaschematism is, in general, a very helpful one. See *ibid.*, pp. 73–77.

[6] "*Fabel*" means here "fable" rather than "plot." For the Magus' more or less contemporary use of the word in addition to its occurrence in the *Mem.* (*68: 21*), see *ZH*, I, 266: 33, 396: 27; II, 129: 25; *N*, II, 367: 30; III, 201: 18.

do, however, share with Hamann's procedure one important feature: their real meaning is to be sought beneath the surface appearance.

Genuine insight into any spiritual reality does not, according to the Magus, spring directly from either the objective or the subjective facts of a given situation alone, but from the interpretation made possible by transferred or metaschematized relationships illuminated by faith. In the *Memorabilia* Hamann is in effect saying: my relationship to Berens and Kant as typical representatives of the present rationalistic age is essentially the same as that of Socrates to the Sophists of fifth-century Athens. Therefore, I will translate our personal relations into the objective historical relations of Socrates in order to bring my adversaries to a full awareness of their true situation. In so doing I shall be following the example of Paul vis-à-vis the Corinthians, who, in order to make plain to them the true state of affairs, says, as it were, that he will consider their general divisiveness in terms of a division between Apollos and himself. Paul Ernst describes the Hamannian metaschematism as "appearing unexpectedly in the armor of the enemy and at the same time appropriating his weapon for one's own defense and demanding conformity to one's own position."[7] This metaphorical statement accurately reflects Hamann's procedure in the *Memorabilia*, for the Enlighteners' admiration of Socrates may be considered the "armor of the enemy," and the author certainly utilizes the enemy's "weapon," the Socratic irony, in his own defense and as a challenge to his adversaries to change their course.

It is obvious from the foregoing that metaschematism is closely related to typology, and indeed it may be considered a variety of that method in so far as it involves an appeal to objective events in space and time. For our purposes it is important for two reasons: first, its requirement that the speaker be personally involved in the

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[7] ". . . dem Gegner unerwartet zur eigenen Verteidigung durch gleichzeitiges Entwenden seiner Waffen in dessen Rüstung zu erscheinen und nun die Nachfolge der eigenen Haltung zu fordern. . . ." Ernst, *Hamann und Bengel*, p. 85.

dialogue goes one step beyond mere typology;[8] second, it is the principle which determines the inner form of Hamann's writings. As Unger has well said, metaschematism constitutes "the unitary principle of organization which lends inner form to what seems at first glance to be the chaotic tangle of ideas in his writings," adding that the principle applies in particular to the *Memorabilia,* to both its genesis and its final form.[9] There can be no question but that Unger is correct in seeing in metaschematism the source of whatever unity and inner form Hamann's works possess. As the Magus himself wrote in the Socratic year to J. G. Lindner: "I have had to write a great deal and about difficult things; therefore I have exerted myself to be brief and I have not been able to make my thoughts clearer otherwise than by expressing their main features as strongly as possible and by transferring them to foreign objects (*ZH*, I, 324: 22–26).

Before proceeding to the central concern of this chapter, however, it should be noted that in dealing with the dramatic qualities of the work we are coming to terms with an aspect of it which has generally been overlooked. Such qualities have been hinted at by various commentators on Hamann; however, none has placed any particular emphasis upon it.[10] This is all the more surprising when

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[8] Aside from the general metaschematic subject of the *Mem.*, there are at least three typological references in the work which are also clearly metaschematic: *59: 24–27; 61: 5–9; 67: 1–4.*

[9] *U*, I, 502. The Danish commentator Tage Schack also discusses metaschematism briefly in connection with the *Mem.* in *Hamann,* pp. 106–7. See also William M. Alexander's unpublished dissertation, "Johann Georg Hamann: The Relation of Philosophy to Faith as an Introduction to His Theology," pp. 266–68.

[10] In fact Nadler, who treats the *Mem.* chiefly from the theological and philosophical standpoints, would imply that the three main "*Abschnitte*" lack essential unity: "Von den drei 'Abschnitten' ist jeder ein runder Essay über ein abgeschlossenes Thema." *NB*, 107. This opinion becomes untenable as soon as one adopts the aesthetic point of view, a fact which is demonstrated in the present study. Erwin Metzke stresses that the *Mem.* is a "*Kampfansage,*" or challenge to the spirit of the times (*J. G. Hamanns Stellung in der Philosophie des 18. Jahrhunderts,* p. 37), but does not recognize the essentially dramatic nature of the work itself. Sven-Aage Jørgensen, on the other hand, recognizes the importance of dialogue in the *Mem. J. G. Hamann. Fünf Hirtenbriefe das Schuldrama betreffend,* pp. 111–12. Even Fritz Blanke, the general excellence of whose commentary on the *Mem.* cannot be questioned, has not dealt with the

we realize that Goethe researchers have long recognized the *Memorabilia* as the source of the young Goethe's projected plan for a drama on the life of Socrates. Toward the end of the year 1771 the young poet wrote to Herder from Frankfurt:

> I am now studying the life and death of another hero and am conceiving a dialogue in my head. It is still only an obscure idea. Socrates, the heroic spirit of a philosopher, "a frenzy to conquer all lies and vices which are not recognized as such nor desire to be"; or rather the divine calling to be a teacher of men, the εξουσιαν [authority] of the Μετανοειτε [Repent ye], the crowd that gapes, the few who have ears to hear, the pharisaical philistinism of the Melituses and Anytuses, not the cause, only the circumstances of the gravitation and the final preponderance of baseness. I need time to develop that into a feeling. And yet I do not know whether I am related to Aesop and La Fontaine in so far as they sympathize, according to Hamann, with the genius of Socrates; whether I can rise from the service of the idol-image which Plato depicts and gilds, before which Xenophon burns incense, to the true religion, to which a great man appears instead of a saint, whom I press to my heart with love-enthusiasm and cry: my friend and my brother. And to be able to say that confidently to a *great* man! —If I were only Alcibiades a day and a night, then I would wish to die.[11]

The phrases "heroic spirit of a philosopher" and "a frenzy to conquer all lies and vices" are taken directly from the *Memorabilia*. Further, several of the key concepts in the passage are obviously derived from the work, and it is quite patent that even the poet's style is affected here by the obscurity of the Magus' writing, a phase which fortunately lasted for only a short period. As long ago as 1918 Julius Zeitler commented on the young Goethe's plan of writing a drama on the life of Socrates, indicating the probable outlines of the projected work thus: "He did not desire to dramatize the idol of his [Socrates'] followers but the "heroic spirit of a philosopher" in the struggle with the philistine stupidity, with the pharisaism of the time. His drama would have breathed hatred for pharisaical sophistry without placing the similarity with Christ

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dramatic aspects of the work. Indeed, it was Professor Blanke from whom I received encouragement to undertake the present study. In a letter to me of November 6, 1962, he wrote: "Ihre Betrachtungsweise—die Aufzeigung der dramatischen Struktur der SD [*Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten*]—scheint mir tatsächlich Züge herauszustellen, die bei mir zu kurz kommen."

[11] *Werke*, II, pp. 11–13.

in the foreground."[12] Although the dramatic impetus which Hamann's little work afforded to the youthful Goethe thus has long been recognized, scant attention has been paid to its intrinsic dramatic qualities, as has been indicated, and the analysis presented here is the first of its kind.

If we wish to state the essence of Hamann's *Socratic Memorabilia*, it would be Socrates' confession of ignorance.[13] The author gives the clue himself in the statement, "From this Socratic ignorance readily flow the peculiarities of his manner of teaching and thinking" (75: 32–33). In another passage of the work he reiterates the same idea in most vivid images: "All of Socrates' ideas, which were nothing more than expectorations and secretions of his ignorance, seemed as frightful to them as the hair of Medusa's head, the knob of the Aegis."[14] Thus, if the confession of ignorance is taken as the center from which the important elements derive, it is possible to recognize the source of the dramatic action. For it is precisely the confession of ignorance which evokes from each of the characters of the proto-drama a subjective and an objective response, which together make up the total response of the individual to the challenge presented by the confession. The felicitous phrase "the charter [*Urkunde*] of his ignorance" (*76: 12–13*), referring to Socrates' confession, well expresses the central importance of the Socratic ignorance in the present work.

Let us consider now the manner in which the characters involved respond to the challenge presented to them by Socrates. Crito, the patron of Socrates, is unhappy that Socrates still con-

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[12] *Goethe-Handbuch*, p. 342. See also *B*, 33–35; T. C. van Stockum, "Goethe und Hamann," pp. 300–8; Fritz Blanke, "Zur Wirkungsgeschichte der Sokratischen Denkwürdigkeiten," p. 10.

[13] Thus, Tage Schack says of the *Mem.*, "Socrates' ignorance is the main theme of the little book." *Hamann*, p. 102. Another non-German commentator has also well stated: "This motive of ignorance, of which we are able to find the greatest variations throughout the history of philosophy, theology, and mysticism, becomes for Hamann the fundamental feeling in the life of Socrates." Nicola Accolti Gil Vitale, *La Giovinezza di Hamann*, p. 160.

[14] 73: 6–9. In the outline of the *Mem.* which the Magus wrote for J. G. Lindner, September 11, 1759, he speaks of the "Sonderbarkeiten seiner [Socrates'] Lehr- und Denkart als Corollaria seiner Unwißenheit." *ZH*, I, 409: 25–26.

siders himself ignorant after the expensive schooling which he has provided for the former sculptor (*70: 9–14*):

> The succession of men and women teachers who were assigned to Socrates, and whose fees Crito doubtless had to pay, is impressive enough; and yet Socrates remained ignorant. The impertinent confession of ignorance was to a certain extent an insult, which, nevertheless, one seems to have forgiven the honest client and candidate, because it reflected most seriously upon him.

Although Crito felt himself insulted, he evidently indicated by his actions or his words that he forgave Socrates his confession of ignorance without being converted to the latter's point of view. Both Plato and Xenophon, on the other hand, inwardly applaud Socrates' confession and act accordingly: "In the works of Xenophon there prevails a superstitious reverence, and in Plato's an enthusiastic reverence . . ." (*61: 15–16*). Therefore, the objective behavior of both Plato and Xenophon in writing their approbative works on Socrates is matched subjectively by their genuine inner enthusiasm for him,[15] and hence they are not hypocritical in expressing their admiration for the Athenian philosopher. The Sophists, both ancient and modern, are, however, quite hypocritical,[16] for inwardly they reject the Socratic ignorance but outwardly pretend to admire it (*73: 13–24*):

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[15] A further word about the use of the terms "subjective" and "objective" is perhaps in order here. Because we often contrast works or mere lip service with deeds or performance, we may be inclined to regard the former as subjective and only the latter as objective. But what we are dealing with here is actually two kinds of objectivity, which may or may not agree with one another. For a word is, after all, an objective event in either space or time: the written word is an event in space; the spoken work is an event in time. Hence, it is wrong to ascribe subjectivity to verbal formulations even though they may be revelatory of subjective states. Hamann's thought seems to follow this line of reasoning. Further, the idea of the word as an objective reality is emphasized by Ferdinand Ebner in his treatise, *Das Wort und die geistigen Realitäten*. Whether we accept Ebner's theology or not, we may acknowledge the correctness of his view of subjectivity and objectivity as applied to language: "Das Wort als das 'objektive' und die Liebe als das 'subjektive Vehikel' des Verhältnisses zwischen dem Ich und dem Du gehören zusammen." *Schriften* (*Fragmente, Aufsätze, Aphorismen*), p. 124.

[16] It may very well be that the historical Sophists have suffered grievously in becoming prototypes of hypocrisy and special pleading, with no concern for objective truth. In any case the words *Sophist, Sophisterei,* and *sophistisch* have been used in Germany since the Renaissance as strongly condemnatory terms. Thus, Ulrich von Hutten speaks of "*sophistrie*" as the "kunst einen zu

The ancient and modern skeptics may wrap themselves ever so much in the lion skin of Socratic ignorance; nevertheless they betray themselves by their voices and ears. If they know nothing, why does the world need a learned demonstration of it? Their hypocrisy is ridiculous and insolent. Whoever needs so much acumen and eloquence to convince himself of his ignorance, however, must cherish in his heart a powerful repugnance for the truth of it.

We have spoken of the *essence* of the present work as providing an insight into its inward form and thus into its characteristics as a work of art.[17] For our purposes a work of art may be defined as

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betrügen." Hans-Friedrich Rosenfeld, "Humanistische Strömungen," in *Deutsche Wortgeschichte*, p. 349. A more damning use of the word cannot be found than that in *Faust* where Mephistopheles (already in the *Urfaust*) tries to persuade Faust to commit perjury by suggesting that, as a professor, he has repeatedly pontificated to his students about things of which he was quite ignorant. Faust thereupon replies: "Du bist und bleibst ein Lügner, ein Sophiste." Line 902 in *Urfaust*, 3050 in *Faust*. Hamann had also described Satan as a "sophist," calling the theory of the knowledge of good and evil according to nature "eine Mausfalle des alten Sophisten, der die ganze Welt verführt. . . ." *N*, II, 189: 19–20. For his numerous references to the Sophists and sophistry, see the indexes in *R*, VIII, and *N*, VI. In our text Hamann uses Sophist in a dual sense: first, it refers to the Sophists proper, that is, to the contemporaries of Socrates; second, it refers to the eighteenth-century Enlighteners, the contemporaries of Hamann. The word is found in the *Mem.* with the first meaning as follows: *68: 22, 70: 4, 73: 4, 77: 6, 79: 29, 80: 19*; it is found with the second meaning as follows: *68: 22, 74: 32, 75: 25*. Hamann continued to use the word throughout his life in mentioning the Enlighteners. *Cf. N*, II, 358: 33, 359: 2; III, 180: 31, 301: 3, 308: 16. Typical of such later references is a passage from *Golgotha und Schehlimini* (1784): "Die Juden aber waren gegen seine [Gottes] Wohltaten und besonders diejenige Anstalten, welche durch ihre Vermittelung zur Palingenesie der Schöpfung beytragen sollten, ebenso gesinnt wie unsere *illustres ingrats* und heillose Sophisten. . . ." *N*, III, 313: 38–314: 1. It is further helpful in understanding Hamann's use of Sophist as applied to his contemporaries in the *Mem.* to observe that at one time he is thinking of their failure to understand the historical Socrates (*75: 25*), and at another, their equivalent failure to understand the Christ of whom Socrates is the forerunner (*68: 22, 74: 32*).

[17] It appears helpful at this point to make a distinction between what may be called *static* and *dynamic* essence with regard to a work of the literary art. A static essence (or theme) may be defined, in so far as tragedy is concerned, as one in which harm comes to the protagonist because he has violated a moral law conceived as eternal and immutable. A dynamic essence, on the other hand, is defined as one in which an immoral and corrupt age destroys the protagonist who is fundamentally good; in this case the hero is one of those of whom the world is not worthy, though he is by no means a saint. Such a hero would be able to survive in an ideal environment, whether it be conceived as a "golden age" of the past or an Utopian age of the future. (In this sense we may say that *Richard the Third* and *Wallenstein* have static essences, while the essences of *Hamlet* and Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* are dynamic.) It is clear that

an entity in which the subjective and objective elements are so related to a central motif or essence as to evoke an aesthetic response.[18] No attempt is made to define "aesthetic," since it is assumed to be categorical and therefore irreducible to more basic concepts. The essence of a work of literary art is the one element present in it which transcends all the others, but which nevertheless stands in a direct relationship to each of them individually,[19] very much as the spokes of a wheel are all directly

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Hamann's Socrates is a protagonist of the latter type: his world destroys him because it was not worthy of him. Earlier in this study the various ways in which Hamann provided his *Socratic Memorabilia* with a dynamic outward form were considered; here we see that its essence may likewise be conceived as dynamic. Thus, both its inward and outward forms agree in attesting to its dynamic character.

[18] In the *Poetics* Aristotle defines the plot or *mythos* of a tragedy as "the arrangement of the incidents" (vi. 8), and, to stress its importance, he calls it "the soul of the tragedy" (vi. 19–20). But if Aristotle's "plot" be replaced by "essence" as we have defined it, we find that his elements of "thought" and "character" may be related to the substituted term in precisely the same manner in which we have suggested that the subjective and objective aspects of the individuals in the drama are related to the essence. In other words, what we have called the essence or main motive is not simply to be equated with Aristotle's plot, but if it is, *we find that the other two important parts or elements fall into a most meaningful relationship to it and to each other.* It is true that Hamann was in an important sense anti-Aristotelian, and therefore to apply Aristotelian categories to his own creation might seem at first blush unwarranted, but, as some Hamann scholars are beginning to realize, the Magus was not indiscriminately anti-Aristotelian. See Jørgensen, *J. G. Hamann,* pp. 44–49. He is only opposed to so-called Aristotelian imitation theories, which insist on the imitation of particulars rather than universals or on the imitation of the external form rather than the spirit of a work of art. (The foregoing translations of phrases from Aristotle are those of W. H. Fyfe, *LC.*)

[19] This formulation is apparently parallel to Heinrich Wölfflin's concept of baroque art, for in comparing it with classical art he maintains "daß der klassische Stil seine Einheit gewinnt, indem er die Teile zu freien Gliedern verselbstständigt, und daß der barocke Stil die gleichmäßige Selbstständigkeit der Teile zugunsten eines mehr einheitlichen Gesamtmotivs aufhebt. Dort Koordination der Akzente, hier Subordination." *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Das Problem der Stilentwickelung in der neueren Kunst,* p. 167. He states further that in the case of baroque art "man hätte nicht mehr den Eindruck eines gegliederten Ganzen. . . ." *Ibid.,* p. 168.

At this point it may be well to state briefly the premises on which this analysis of artistic unity is based. It is assumed that as far as inward form is concerned both types of unity which have been discussed are potentially present at one and the same time. As the work of art assumes outward form, however, it must conform to the one type of unity or the other, that is, it must manifest either non-articulated structure (which I have called "essential unity") or articulated

related to the hub, or—to improve the analogy by appealing to a living organism—as the petals of a flower are arranged around a common center. We have noted that the confession of ignorance is to be regarded as the essence of Hamann's study of Socrates, and at the same time as that which evokes a subjective and an objective response from each character or type of character involved in the narrative.[20] In the case of Socrates himself Hamann tells us

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structure. Perhaps an analogy from nature will make the notion clearer: let us imagine the chrysalis of a butterfly. The larva or caterpillar, which is characterized on the whole by a non-articulated type of organization or structure, has disappeared into the crysalis, whereas the imago or butterfly, which is characterized by articulated structure, has not yet emerged. Both types of structure are now hidden from view, and even though one is disintegrating and the other coming into being, they coexist within the chrysalis for a time. Thus it is with the inward form of a work of art: it has the potentiality of emerging, as it were, from its chrysalis as the one type of structure or the other. Unlike the actual chrysalis, from which only the structured imago can emerge, our metaphorical chrysalis, representing inward form, can produce either of the two possible artistic structures or outward forms. It is interesting to observe that at least one Renaissance literary critic saw clearly that there can be two types of artistic unity, corresponding to the classical and the baroque, to the articulated and the non-articulated, namely, Giambattista Giraldi (1504–73) in his *Discorso intorno al comporre dei romanzi* (written in 1549, published in 1554). Professor Henry L. Snuggs, translator and interpreter of the *Discorso*, to whom I am indebted for this reference, writes: "That which distinguishes Giraldi as a critic perhaps more than anything else is his really great and emancipating statement that there can be a unity not of the Aristotelian type. . . ." "Giraldi Cintio on Romances." Giraldi argues that in addition to the single-action fable of Aristotle and his disciples there can also be a multiple-action fable which, in spite of apparent digressions, nevertheless possesses real unity.

[20] From the strictly philosophical standpoint also Hamann treats the Socratic ignorance as that which transcends and gives meaning to the individual existences which are related to it. If we paraphrase the pronouncement, "Aus dieser sokratischen Unwissenheit flüssen als leichte Folgen die Sonderbarkeiten seiner [Sokrates'] Lehr- und Denkart" (75: 32–33), we may say that from the Socratic ignorance there arise the peculiarities of Socrates' objective behavior (exemplified in his method of teaching, or *Lehrart*) and of his subjective orientation (exemplified in his manner of thinking, or *Denkart*). Hamann also refers to these aspects of Socrates' character as "corollaries" of his ignorance. *ZH*, I, 409: 26. The Socratic confession of ignorance creatively overarches and determines the nature of Socrates' objectivity and subjectivity. The confession serves, however, not only as a touchstone for his own spiritual existence but also for that of the others who were confronted with it. The transcendent element in Hamann's understanding of the Socratic thought, which we have called the essence, can only be functionally defined as we have already seen, namely, as that to which the individual existences may respond inwardly and outwardly, or subjectively and objectively. On this view subjectivity and objectivity lose their metaphysical status and are reduced to mere aspects of human existence. On the other hand, an undefined

that "the ignorance of Socrates was sensibility."[21] By this he meant that Socrates, in contrast to the hypocritical Sophists, was absolutely sincere when he said, "I know nothing." As Blanke puts it: "In their hearts the sceptics were opposed to ignorance. Socrates was in his heart precisely for it. Ignorance had its seat in the center of his being. With him it was not an intellectual matter, theory, principle, but concern and experience of the whole man" (*B*, 137).

Hamann underscores the sincerity of Socrates in his anecdote about an honorable man who, when invited to a game of cards by a group of clever swindlers, declined the invitation because he knew they would not play honorably, even though they would make every pretense of doing so. If the company of rogues had, however, invited him to a contest of skill to determine who was the best prestidigitator among them, perhaps he would have accepted the challenge, for he himself happened to be an expert at sleight of hand. As it was, he refused the invitation with a sharp rebuff (72: *18*–73: *4*). In sketching this quaint but effective parable illustrating the relation of Socrates to the contemporary Sophists, Hamann implies that Socrates could have beaten the Sophists at their own deceptive game, if he had been so inclined. His earnestness of character, however, would never have allowed him to be as hypocritical as his adversaries.

In order to render Socrates' preoccupation with his ignorance as graphic as possible, Hamann compares the philosopher's confession to the hypochondriac's obsession with his imaginary illness: "Socrates seems to have talked as much about his ignorance as a hypochondriac about his imagined illness (70: 28–29). Although the hypochondriac is, of course, not really ill, there can be no question about his sincerity: he does believe in his illness. Likewise,

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and indefinable transcendent element or essence gains quasi-metaphysical status. Thus Hamann effectively overcomes the subject-object dualism, and it is perhaps here that the roots of his life-long opposition to the dichotomy of the subject and object can be found. Such at least seem to this writer to be the broader philosophical implications of those ideas which have been useful in the aesthetic interpretation of the *Mem.*

[21] Philip Merlan suggests that "*Empfindung*" might well be translated as "live attitude." See "From Hume to Hamann," p. 12.

Socrates believed in his own ignorance, and felt the compulsion to talk constantly about it.

Bound up with the question of Socrates' ignorance is the subject of his daimon or tutelary spirit. "Indeed, Socrates could very well afford to be ignorant; he had a tutelary genius, on whose science he could rely, which he loved and feared as his god, . . . whose voice he believed . . ." (*75: 6–10*). In other words, not only do we find in Socrates all the external earmarks of sincerity concerning his profession of ignorance, but also every reason for him to accept his condition of essential ignorance, for the daimon which dwelt in him functioned in the place of knowledge at crucial times. (The voice of the daimon was thus a sort of inner oracle, which he faithfully obeyed.) For instance, Socrates long refrained from an active role in public affairs because "reverence for the word in his heart, to whose sound he was always attentive, excused him from attending political meetings" (*78: 11–13*). While we are not in the present work specifically concerned with the nature of the Socratic daimon, it is helpful to observe that Hamann's emphasis on the phenomenon harmonizes with and reinforces his general accent on the inwardness of Socrates' commitment, the important subjective counterpart of his objective behavior.[22] It may indeed

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[22] Even before the writing of the *Mem.* Hamann seems to have formulated a concept parallel to that of the Socratic daimon. For example, he wrote in the *Biblische Betrachtungen* that there is ". . . im Abgrund unsers Herzens eine Stimme, die uns der Satan selbst nicht hören läst, die aber Gott hört, und auf die er uns gleichfalls aufmerksam zu machen sucht." *N*, I, 78: 6–9. It is significant that he makes this observation in connection with his reading of the Scripture, thus anticipating on Biblical grounds the doctrine of daimonic inspiration. Consider also the passage from the *Brocken*, written later the same year (*N*, I, 304: 6–14):

> Könnte man nicht von Socrates, wenn er sich auf seinen Schutzgeist bezog, eben das sagen, was von Petrus steht: er wuste nicht was er sagte; oder von Caiaphas, der prophezeyte und göttliche Wahrheiten verkündigte, ohne daß er, noch seine Zuhörer, das Geringste von dem wahrnahmen, was Gottes Geist durch ihn redte. Dies ist in der merkwürdigen Geschichte Sauls und Bileams vorgestellt, daß unter den Abgöttern selbst, ja in den Werkzeugen der Hölle die Offenbarung Gottes vor Augen liegt und daß er sie selbst dazu braucht, um seine Diener und Knechte zu seyn wie Nebucadnezar.

be true, as one commentator maintains, that Hamann's tutelary genius is "the least Biblical element of his irrational world-view."[23] If this be so, it was surely not Hamann's intention, for he would see in the daimon an anticipation of the Holy Spirit (*75: 7–15*). Germane to the present purpose, however, is the emphasis on inwardness which the genius implies. In stressing the daimonic element in Socrates' thought, Hamann was of course also heightening the contrast between his portrait of the Athenian philosopher and that of his "enlightened" contemporaries.[24]

Schleiermacher says in speaking of Socrates that the "true and proper opposite of knowledge is presumption of knowledge."[25] This is, however, not quite correct, for the opposite of knowledge is still ignorance. Hamann's implied distinctions here are clearer. Both Socrates and his pretentious followers agree in their outward behavior: they both confess their ignorance. But for Socrates this presumption is matched subjectively by an utter sincerity ("*Empfindung*"); therefore, in his case there is an inward presumption of ignorance. For his canting followers, however, there is no such sincerity present, only an inward presumption of knowledge (Schleiermacher's "*Dünkelwissen*"). The Magus is able to attain to this clarity because of his emphasis on the distinction between the inner and outer response of the individual to the Socratic confession.

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[23] Karl Justus Obenauer, "Johann Georg Hamann," in *Jahrbuch des freien deutschen Hochstifts*, p. 59. Whether Obenauer is correct in his opinion of Hamann's daimon or not, it is obvious that Hamann believed he was on solid Biblical grounds at this point. Blanke appears to agree with the Magus here: "Es ist . . . ganz klar, daß Hamann die Farben, mit denen er das Bild des sokratischen Dämons ausmalt, aus dem Neuen Testament bezogen hat und daß er also den Genius (Dämon) des Sokrates aus der Sicht der Bibel versteht und deutet." *B*, 154.

[24] It is interesting to note that Philip Merlan regards Hamann as having something important to say concerning the interpretation of the historical Socrates. In his article "Form and Content in Plato's Philosophy," p. 417, he writes: "I am inclined to think that only the interpretation of Hamann and Kierkegaard, both of whom were possessed by an eminent sense of the demonic, does full justice to the demonic element in the Platonic . . . Socrates."

[25] Friedrich E. D. Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, p. 38.

Let us now turn to the structure of the proto-plot contained within the *Denkwürdigkeiten,* its content having already been considered from the standpoint of our general definition of a work of art. It is now necessary to relate the concept of the drama to that definition. This can be done by observing that a drama requires a sequence of objective events, so that it manifests, in the words of Aristotle, a "beginning, middle, and end" (*Poetics* vii. 27). Our general definition of a work of art does not require any sort of temporal distinctions, for according to it we are dealing with the logical coherence of aesthetic elements, and not primarily with objective events in space and time. To put it another way, certain particulars are related to an overarching universal, which we have called the essence. As far as dramatic action is concerned, however, we are dealing with the relation of particulars, which present a visible movement toward a climax, followed by a resolution of the dramatic conflict. It is important to note that the same drama can be viewed either from the standpoint of the general definition we have given or that of the specific definition of the drama. The internal shape which the viewer finds present in a given work depends, then, upon the spectacles through which it is seen. Since we are dealing with inward form, an abstraction, and not with external or outward form, it is quite possible for the same work to manifest more than one kind of form. In the following paragraphs we shall change our spectacles, so to speak, and examine Hamann's Socratic essay from the standpoint of the articulated structure of its proto-plot, which is characterized by a "beginning, middle, and end."

The main body of the *Memorabilia* is contained in three "*Abschnitte,*" or sections. These sections may be said to provide an embryonic or potential plot, which we have called the proto-plot; the dedications and Introduction may be regarded as a prologue. Without subscribing to the dogma of the five-act division as normative for the drama, in the main body of the essay the essential ingredients of a five-act drama can nevertheless be clearly recognized. In other words, one may say that its inward form is such that it could be outwardly expressed in terms of something like the five-act drama. Hence, as a matter of convenience, I shall follow

the scheme suggested by Gustav Freytag for explicating the five-act structure.[26]

In the First Section one finds material suggestive of the traditional exposition of a first act. Here we are introduced to Socrates, instructed somewhat in the background from which he sprang, and told of his early occupation as a sculptor. Near the end of this section there is even the suggestion of a so-called initial impulse (*erregendes Moment*) in the author's anticipatory mention of the fateful pronouncement of the Delphic oracle: "We find such a contradiction [that truth appears in a paradoxical form] in the Delphic oracle, who recognized him as the wisest who nevertheless confessed of himself that he knew nothing. Did Socrates belie the oracle or the oracle belie him?" (*68: 25–28*). As Emil Staiger points out, the prophecy of the ancient oracle is one of the most effective devices for creating dramatic tension or "*Spannung*," which is in his opinion the essence of dramatic style.[27]

At the beginning of the Second Section we encounter material suitable for a second act, in which the dramatic complication develops: Socrates is re-educated by the Sophists at the expense of his rich patron, Crito, a process which results only in Socrates' awareness of his own vast ignorance and likewise of the ignorance of his fellow men. Socrates antagonizes many of his compatriots by exposing their essential ignorance as well as by confessing his own. Nevertheless, the Oracle at Delphi, speaking in the name of Apollo, pronounces Socrates the wisest of men, precisely because of his awareness of his own ignorance (*71: 14–15*):

> The god [Apollo] doubtless laughed under his golden beard, when the ticklish task was presented to him in the days of Socrates of determining who among all the people living at that time might be the wisest. Sophocles and Euripides would not have become such great models for the stage without the art of analyzing the human heart. Socrates excelled them both in wisdom, however, because he had advanced further in self-knowledge than

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[26] *Cf. Die Technik des Dramas*, pp. 170 ff. In connection with the subject of potential act structure in the *Mem.*, it is interesting to note that Hamann gave to the *Wolken* a semi-dramatic form by dividing it into a prologue, three acts, and an epilogue. These divisions, incidentally, would seem to parallel the Introduction, three sections, and Peroration of the *Mem.*

[27] *Grundbegriffe der Poetik*, p. 175.

they, and knew that he knew nothing. Apollo answered everyone even before the threshold as to who was wise, and how anyone could become so. Now the question remained: who knew himself? and upon what could one rely in this examination? Go, Chaerephon, learn it from your friend.

It is clear that the judgment of the oracle is a genuine turning point in the life of the Hamannian Socrates, just as it undoubtedly was in the case of the historical Socrates. It sets him steadily on the tragic course leading inexorably to his death. At the end of the Second Section we thus encounter the stuff for a potential third act, providing the climax of the entire proto-drama. Although the Athenians delight in discussion and debate, their encounter with the irony of the Socratic confession is too much for them, appearing as repellent as the serpentine hair of Medusa's head (73: 6–9). All the more annoying is his self-assurance and air of authority, a demeanor resulting largely from the guidance of his tutelary spirit or daimon (75: 3 *ff*.; 78: *11–13*). At the end of this section occurs the passage which, dramatically speaking, provides the climax or peripety, and, philosophically speaking, provides the "intellectual center of gravity" (*U*, I, 511) of the entire work (77: 5–*15*):

In short, Socrates lured his fellow citizens out of the labyrinths of their learned Sophists to a truth in the inward being, to a wisdom in the secret heart, and away from the idol-altars of their pious and politically shrewd priests to the worship of an unknown God. Plato told the Athenians to their faces that Socrates had been given to them by the gods to convince them of their follies and to encourage them to emulate his virtue. He who would not suffer Socrates among the prophets must be asked who the Father of Prophets is and whether our God has not called himself and shown himself to be a God of the Gentiles.

In the Third Section of the treatise the material is provided for our hypothetical fourth act, the act which should portray the reversal of the protagonist's fortune. Here the hostility which the great Athenian evoked is discussed. Although some of it was ascribable to his personal shortcomings and misfortunes—such as his tendency to fall into a trance, his occasional wild outbursts of anger, and his quarrels with Xanthippe—most of the opposition he encountered was grossly unfair and resulted from his considerable virtue rather than from his vices. His unrelenting exposure of

sham knowledge and his incorruptibility in matters of public policy incurred the enmity of many. In the latter part of the Third Section Hamann treats of Socrates' trial and execution, which, of course, would provide the fitting subject for the catastrophe of a final act.

The proto-plot may be stated more simply, however—again appealing to Freytag's scheme—in terms of the so-called pyramidal structure: the rising action is found in the First Section and in the beginning of the Second; the climax or crisis in the latter part of the Second Section; and the falling action in the Third. To simplify even further, Hamann's embryonic plot has a beginning, middle, and end.

From the preceding summary of the proto-plot, it is clear that it suggests the unity of action. The unities of time and place are, of course, lacking. The dramatic action leads up naturally to Socrates' visit to the oracle at Delphi, and from that climax it leads downwards to the catastrophe which resulted from his search for genuine wisdom. In such a way it becomes obvious that the main body of the *Memorabilia*, in spite of its lack of stageability or even dialogue, possesses a certain dramatic structure, albeit hidden from immediate view. Such dramatic unity is less important for an understanding of the work than the essential unity which was discussed above. After all, we are dealing with an essay, not an actual drama, and the essay is a literary genre which is primarily reflective, not narrative or dramatic in nature. But in spite of the body of submerged classical material in the essay, in both its inward and outward form the work remains non-classical. Again one finds however, that the reality exceeds the surface appearance, and that Hamann's essay is indeed like an archipelago which rises above the surface of the ocean in the form of isolated islands which are, nevertheless, connected beneath the surface by submarine masses.

In the attempt to identify the dramatic elements in Hamann's essay, let us consider finally the humorous but nevertheless striking and convincing reference to catharsis at the very beginning of the work. As Gerald Else says in his study of Aristotle's *Poetics*, the plot is "the agent of the 'emotional work' of the tragedy,"[28] namely,

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[28] *Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument*, p. 423.

catharsis; hence a discussion of Hamann's treatment of the matter would seem in order here. In his dedication "*An das Publicum*," Hamann compares the public to an idol, which he proceeds to describe in none too complimentary terms. He is willing to bring an offering to the idol, and indeed does so, but his offering consists of "laxative pills,"[29] by which he means the treatise which he has just written for his friends. He asks the idol to give them to his two friends, reminding it that Daniel once caused an idol image at Babylon to burst by seething together pitch, fat, and hair and casting it, in the form of lumps, into the open mouth of the idol. Upon witnessing this spectacle, King Cyrus of Babylon, who had given Daniel permission to test the deity, was purged of his faith in the false god. So Hamann hopes that his friends Kant and Berens through his laxative pills will be purged of their idolatry of the public. "My gift consists of nothing but the lumps from which a god like you once burst. Give it therefore to a pair of your worshipers, whom I desire to purify[30] from the bondage of your

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[29] The original German is "*Küchlein*" which literally means "little cake," but which is used in the present passage with the special meaning of a little cake baked in spherical or pill-like form, as if it referred to little spherical objects (*Kügelein*). Such cake-pills were used as remedies for worms, as laxatives (*Purgirküchlein*), etc. *DW*. In our passage, however, the word is translated "lumps," following the language of verse 27 of *Bel and the Dragon*, in order to retain the Biblical flavor: "Then Daniel took pitch, and fat, and hair, and did seethe them together, and made lumps thereof: this he put in the dragon's mouth, so the dragon did eat and burst asunder: and Daniel said, Lo, these are the gods ye worship." *AV*. Perhaps Hamann's suggestion that his "*Küchlein*" be given to the "Two" is intended to parallel the action of the priests and their families consuming food offered to Bel.

[30] Hamann employs the word "*reinigen*" here in an approbative sense. Later in his life he used it in another and distinctly pejorative context, in connection with Kant's attempted purification ("*Reinigung*") of philosophy. *Cf. N*, III, 284: 7 ff. For a discussion of this subject in English, see my *Unity and Language: A Study in the Philosophy of Hamann*, pp. 85–86. It is also instructive to note concerning the meliorative use of *reinigen* in the eighteenth century that it became a key term for Weimar Classicism, with, to be sure, a meaning somewhat different from Hamann's usage. "Das Wort *reinigen*," writes Friedrich Kainz, "ist kennzeichnender Terminus der klassischen Kunstanschauung. Damals findet sich mehrfach und programmatisch die Wendung *den Geschmack reinigen* . . . das geschieht am besten durch das Studium der Alten." See *K*, II, 268. Hamann also believed that a proper study of the ancients will "purify" the taste, but in a different sense from that of Goethe and Schiller in their so-called classical periods. The word as Hamann uses it in the present passage is, however, an important one for the interpretation of the whole essay.

vanity by means of these pills" (*59: 24–27*). Though highly facetious, this is as unequivocal a statement of cathartic intent as one could find! That the catharsis is intended especially for his two friends by no means renders it less effective for any sympathetic reader.

At the end of the dedicatory section Hamann returns to the subject of the intended catharsis, this time with even more scurrilous humor than before: "Because these lumps must not be chewed but swallowed, like those which the Medici family placed in their coat of arms, they are not intended for the palate. As far as their effect is concerned, Vespasian first became acquainted with the good fortune of your name when experiencing a similar feeling, and is said to have cried aloud on a seat that was not his throne, 'Woe's me. Methinks I'm turning into a god'" (*60: 18–24*). Whether one accepts the so-called medical theory of catharsis, which asserts that the emotions of the spectators are purged by pity and fear, or whether, as in the case of some interpreters, catharsis is considered to be something which happens to the actors rather than to the spectators is immaterial.[31] We have here what is obviously a traditional understanding of catharsis, and we know from evidence elsewhere in Hamann's writings that he accepted the traditional view.[32]

In delineating the dramatic qualities of the essay at hand, I hope to have suggested the reasons for the impact of the work on Germany's greatest poet in one of his most creative periods. That Hamann's influence did not result in an actual drama from the pen of the young Goethe does not diminish the fact of the latter's great interest in the subject. Doubtless there were many factors which held him back from the task. Certainly it was a time when many strong and varied impressions were crowding in upon the

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[31] For a thorough discussion of the subject of the tragic catharsis in Aristotle, consult Else, *Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument*, esp. pp. 224–32, 423–47.

[32] In *Konxompax* (1779) Hamann states that Aristotle had declared *την τοιουτων παθηματων καθαρσιν* to be the "*mystichen Zweck des Trauerspiels.*" *N*, III, 219: 27–28. Tragic drama can only have purposiveness for the spectators; hence, it is obvious that the Magus accepts the so-called medical theory of catharsis here.

youthful poet and competing for his attention. But perhaps the most important factor was the emphasis which the Magus had laid upon Socrates as a prototype of Christ. Though Goethe was prepared to accept the Greek philosopher as a paragon of wisdom and virtue, he was not prepared then, or indeed at any time in his life, to accept Christ as the second person of the Trinity, as "*Gott Selbst*" (82: 8), a key concept in Hamann's *Memorabilia*.

Before leaving the subject of the influence of the specifically dramatic elements of Hamann's treatise on later writers, one other important example may be mentioned. It is well known that the Danish writer Søren Kierkegaard admired and drew upon Hamann's writings at crucial points, but it is not so well known that he was acquainted with Hamann's work on Socrates when he wrote his master's thesis, *On the Concept of Irony with Constant Reference to Socrates*, in 1841.[33] Kierkegaard's study is, to be sure, not a drama, but in it is found the conception of the man of faith as possessing heroic dimensions, which appears to be a variant of Hamann's idea of "*philosophischen Heldengeist*."[34] If one assumes

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[33] Emanuel Hirsch says in the introduction to his German translation of Kierkegaard's master's thesis: ". . . die Aufmerksamkeit auf die Begriffe der Ironie und des Humors ist bei Kierkegaard 1837 entstanden im Zusammenhang mit der Lektüre Hamanns und unter Anregung durch die Schrift des Hegelianers J. E. Erdmann über Glaube und Wissen. . . ." "Geschichtliche Einleitung zur einunddreißigsten Abteilung," p. ix. *Cf.* also Hirsch, *Kierkegaard-Studien*, II, 530 ff.

[34] This is not the place to enter upon a comparison of the text of the *Mem.* with that of Kierkegaard's master's thesis, but such a comparison would yield interesting internal evidence of a connection between the two works. Thus, in the very first paragraph of Kierkegaard's treatise the linking of the concept "enthusiasm" ("*Svaermerei*") with the "philosophical knight" ("*philosophiske Ridder*") provides a remarkable parallel to Hamann's linking of "enthusiasm" ("*Schwärmerey*") with "philosophical heroism" ("*philosophischen Heroismus*") and the "heroic spirit of a philosopher" ("*der Heldengeist eines Weltweisen*"). Søren Kierkegaard, "Om Begrebet Ironi med stadigt Hensyn til Socrates," p. 113. When we remember that this parallel occurs in treatises on Socrates, one can scarcely escape the conclusion that the earlier author influenced the later one. Further, we may note that Hamann twice refers in the *Mem.* to the curiosity of the Athenians in connection with the Socratic confession of ignorance (72: *12* and 77: *1*), implicitly referring to Acts 17:20–21, while Kierkegaard refers to the "curious Athenians" ("*nysigne Athen*," "Om Begrebet Ironi," p. 123n), also in connection with Socratic ignorance. Otto Mann asserts Hamann's general influence on Kierkegaard, describing him as one "der überall mit Hamannschem Gute wuchert." *Hamann Hauptschriften*, p. xv. It is nevertheless

that the two most influential conceptions of Socrates in the modern world are those of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, one must see Hamann as the inspirer of the one and as providing an important counter-interpretation to the other.[35]

The significance of the work which we have been studying is, however, by no means exhausted in its *Wirkungsgeschichte*. It possesses the kind of unity characteristic of a work of the literary art, and this unity may be profitably viewed from two distinct angles, which may in turn be regarded as the two aspects of its inward form. The more or less hidden artistry of the *Memorabilia* accounts in part for its impact on Hamann's contemporaries and for its continuing appeal. The theological and philosophical ideas contained in the work can, of course, stand very well on their own. But it seems justified to conclude that Hamann's peculiar artistry greatly enhances their effectiveness.

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important to bear in mind that there is a significant difference between Hamann's and Kierkegaard's conception of Socrates. As Hans Urs von Balthasar says: ". . . für Kierkegaard ist Sokrates, die sokratische Hebammenkunst und das sokratische Nichtwissen das Kennzeichen des Menschlichen in seinem scharfen Gegensatz zum Gottmenschlichen, Christlichen. Für Hamann dagegen ist Sokrates mit seiner Maieutik das unmittelbare Transparent Christi selber. . . ." "Hamanns Theologische Asthetik," p. 38.

[35] Despite Hamann's different evaluation of Socrates, Nietzsche was able to appreciate the *Mem*. Thus, we read in *Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen* concerning Hamann's treatise:

> Die Menschheit bringt so selten ein gutes Buch hervor, in dem mit kühner Freiheit das Schlachtlied der Wahrheit, das Lied des *philosophischen Heroismus* [my italics] angestimmt wird—und oft vergehen diese Bücher rasch. Doch wollen wir nicht klagen, vielmehr uns selbst die Abfertigungs- und Trostworte Hamanns gesagt sein lassen, die er an die Gelehrten richtet, die über verlorene Werke klagen.

Nietzsche then refers to Hamann's anecdote in the *Mem*. about lentils and the documents preserved from antiquity. *64: 35–65: 2*. It is quite interesting to note that not only the young Goethe and Kierkegaard but also Nietzsche adopt Hamann's notion of "*philosophischen Heroismus*" in significant contexts. See *Gesammelte Werke,* IV, 161. It was Johann Friedrich Kleuker (1749–1827), the Kiel theologian and admirer of the Magus, who perhaps best expressed the reason for the great impact of this idea. In his unpublished notes on the *Mem*. Kleuker refers to it as "nobly expressed" ("*edel ausgedruckt*" [sic], MS, p. 3).

Chapter 5

THE WORD AS SOCRATIC FORM

We have seen in the preceding chapters that Hamann's "archipelagic"[1] style of composition gives us a profound insight into his concept of Socratic form. But there is still another way of regarding the use of language in addition to studying a literary composition, or indeed even a complete sentence, as a whole. An alternative approach is to consider the manner in which a writer employs the individual words or phrases which function as elements of a sentence. As Kierkegaard has aptly said of Hamann, "With all his life and soul, to the last drop of blood, he is concentrated in a single word. . . ."[2] Therefore an investigation of certain key terms in a given work of Hamann's is especially illuminating. Nowhere in his writings is this more evident than in the *Memorabilia*, which,

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[1] Nadler expresses the same idea, having recourse to a metaphor involving light and darkness: "Hamanns gewollte Dunkelheit liegt darin, daß der Gedanke nur teilweise auf Sprache trifft, wo er aufleuchten und also sichtbar werden kann. Das meiste bleibt außerhalb des sprachlichen Lichtnetzes und muß ertastet werden." *Die Hamannausgabe*, p. 20. Nadler also recasts the idea in a logical framework and maintains that it is the omission of the "conceptual middle terms" ("*gedanklichen Mittelglieder*") which is decisive. *Ibid.* Arthur Henkel, who since Nadler's death is, by virtue of his important redactional work, in the best position to speak with authority on Hamann's prose, says of the style of the Hamannian essays: "Die Dunkelheit war ihm nur verschlüsselte Klarheit; abbrevierter Centostil als gemäße Rede von den Mysterien." *In telonio sedens. J. G. Hamann in den Jahren 1778–1782*, p. 11. Commentators have sought various ways of expressing the idea that for Hamann the reality must always exceed the appearance, but most significant is the fact that they generally agree on the basic principle, no matter what figures of speech they may employ to express it.

[2] *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 224.

because of its subject matter and its position in Hamann's career, is worthy of special study.

The procedure in this chapter will be to study Hamann's use of selected pejorative terms, which may be called for this purpose "negative terms." We find that such words are of two kinds: first, those that refer to a reality greater than their ordinary meaning would indicate, and hence form a kind of understatement; second, those that actually retain their ordinary meaning, but are surprisingly derogatory in their context. In the first case we encounter again the principle with which we have become familiar, namely, that a lowly form may become the sign or symbol of a higher reality. In the second case we find the author saying in effect: the reality to which I refer is normally regarded with great admiration, but such admiration is misplaced. It does not deserve such applause, for it is in point of fact a fraud. Therefore, says Hamann, I shall unmask its duplicity by referring to it with an appropriate designation; my negative term will actually be more veridical than the usual terminology. In pursuance of this aim Hamann's use of expressions from the areas of aesthetics, ethics, and religion will be examined, for in each of these areas he makes a clear division between the sheep and the goats. A scrutiny of these expressions leads, as it were, straight into the philological workshop of the Magus, and throws valuable light on his thought in general.

The two main branches of logic, the Megarian-Stoic, dealing with the meaning of entire sentences, and the Platonic-Aristotelian, dealing with the meaning of single terms or concepts, both trace their origin to Socrates,[3] for the dialectic of the historical Socrates was such that it contained within it the seeds of both developments, or, as Prantl says, "die Real-Potenz aller philosophischer Logik."[4] The present study is not, to be sure, concerned with the nature and history of logic, but it may be interesting to observe in passing

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[3] *Cf.* C. Prantl, *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande*, p. 29; *cf.* also Günther Patzig, "Logik," in *Das Fischer-Lexikon: Philosophie*, p. 153.

[4] *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande*, p. 29. Socrates carried out the various operations of logic without a formal investigation of their nature. This was to come later. His disciples as well as his contemporaries in general understood him either onesidedly or not at all when they set about to formalize his logic. *Ibid.*

that this *philological* study manifests parallels to the *logical* aspects of the Socratic teaching. Hence, the investigation thus far may be compared with the Megarian-Stoic logic, which is concerned with whole sentences and their relations. The proposed investigation of the present chapter, on the other hand, may be compared to the Platonic-Aristotelian logic, which is concerned with single terms and their relations. If it is necessary to recognize the dual aspect of the dialectic of the historical Socrates in order to do it full justice, we would do well to recognize its philological analogue in the Hamannian version of Socrates in order to do it full justice.

Since Hamann's concern with aesthetics is confined chiefly to literature, most of the aesthetic terms with which we are concerned refer directly or indirectly to style. First, let us turn our attention to his use of certain expressions which in normal usage are pejorative. These are the words and phrases which he has chosen precisely for their negative connotations in order to ennoble them by transmuting them into surrogates for a higher reality. For instance, in referring to the effect of the rationalistic aesthetic doctrines of Charles Batteux[5] on the artistic creativity of the French, Hamann charges: "The creator of beautiful nature [Batteux] seems to have condemned the greatest minds of France, just as Jupiter formerly condemned the Cyclopes to the blacksmith shop, to pro-

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[5] Abbé Charles B. Batteux (1713–80) was a French aesthetic philosopher who exerted considerable influence in Germany. Especially important among his works were *Les beaux arts, réduits à un même principe* (1746) and *Cours de belles-lettres ou principes de la littérature* (1747–50). K. W. Ramler translated the latter work into German and became, with Gottsched, a devotée of the author's ideas. The Magus once reproached Batteux with being merely a borrower of Aristotle's ideas (*ZH*, II, 211: 6), but the French writer modifies Aristotle considerably when he urges not simply the imitation of nature, but imitation of only the beautiful aspects of nature. Batteux was actually the high priest of both rococo letters and the plastic arts. Unger says of Hamann's opposition to Batteux's program: "Gegen die intellektualisierende und formalisierende 'Verschönerung' der Natur sträubt sich die religiöse wie die realistische Tendenz seines Naturalismus gleichermaßen. Denn beide beziehen sich auf die ursprüngliche, unverfälschte, elementare Natur, an deren Stelle der Rationalismus das abstrakte Gespenst der 'schönen' setzen möchte." *U*, I, 254. Throughout the *Sturm und Drang* period Batteux continued to be a favorite whipping boy of the *Genies*. Thus, both the young Goethe and the young Schiller refer disparagingly to Batteux's aesthetics, the former in *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (letter of May 17, 1771) and the latter in the second "*Vorrede*" of *Die Räuber*.

duce the flashes and squibs that he needs for pale sheet lightning and ethereal fireworks" (63: 5–8). Here the Magus uses a clearly pejorative term, "*Cyclopen*,"[6] in an approbative way. The Cyclopes were the one-eyed cannibalistic monsters of Greek mythology, originally a crude shepherd race, who were condemned by Jupiter to assist Vulcan or Hephaestus at his forge. Once powerful and independent giants, in their captivity they could only express themselves, says Hamann, by producing the "flashes and squibs" which the father of the gods needed for "pale sheet lightning and ethereal fireworks." Such was the fate of those Frenchmen who might have been Titans of literature and the arts, had their powers not been shackled by the rules of pseudoclassicism. As it was, they were condemned to produce mere precious ornamentation.

There is an oil painting by François Boucher hanging in the Louvre—painted but a dozen years before the composition of the *Memorabilia*—which admirably illustrates Hamann's point. The picture is entitled "Venus at the Forge of Vulcan," and presents a doll-like goddess of love with a tiny mouth beside a handsome and well-made Vulcan, whose muscular body strikes a rather soulful pose. A rococo cupid, accompanied by doves, adds to the preciosity of the picture. Nothing in the background figures suggests ruggedness any more than do the figures of Venus and Vulcan. In general, one can say that the painting is characterized by the prettified delicacy of the rococo style. Any suggestion of the elemental power and robust strength which one would expect in a representation of the celestial smithy is ruled out in the name of *die schöne Natur*, the quintessence of preciosity. Over against such falsification of nature on the part of the French Enlighteners and their German imitators, Hamann would elevate the primordial creative power represented by the uncouth but elementally powerful Cyclopes.[7]

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[6] For Hamann's negative use of the terms pertaining to the Cyclopes, see *N*, III, 72: 26–27, 234: 6; IV, 267: 42, 374: 21.

[7] On another occasion in the *Mem.* the Magus alludes to the most famous of the Cyclopes, namely, Polyphemus, the dupe of Odysseus. He quotes a line from the Satyric drama of Euripides at the beginning of the dedication "An das Publicum oder Niemand, den Kundbaren." Odysseus, having told Polyphemus that his name was "Nobody," later succeeds in blinding the one eye of the

Hamann does not of course always use depreciatory or negative terms as symbols of a higher reality. In other words they are not always "archipelagic" in the sense I have assigned to that word. Indeed, he uses negative terms in the *Memorabilia* quite often as instruments of criticism, designed to reveal the true state of affairs with regard to an inflated claim. Thus they become essentially a means of discrediting a person or an idea. In this case the pejorative word is supposed to correspond exactly to the reality for which it stands; therefore the surface appearance affords a precise parallel to the reality beneath the surface, and does not point to a greater but obscured reality. This use of language is, to be sure, a normal and quite frequently recurring phenomenon. Though such acidulously critical use of language always possesses a certain intrinsic appeal in the hands of a master, it has in Hamann's usage a special fascination because of his twofold use of pejorative or negative terms.

Cyclops. Polyphemus, crying out in pain and rage, demands of the chorus: "Where's Nobody?"

This episode deriving from Homer is usually regarded, of course, as evidence of the stupidity of the monster. But Hamann does not use it in this way. Instead he employs it to express his own contempt for the general public, which he had identified as "*Niemand*." This is, to be sure, but another example of the kind of raillery which is generally characteristic of Hamann's essay. But here again we have an instance of the author's turning the tables on the conventional reader, for in this instance he implies that even the dull-witted Cyclops may properly have contempt for that monstrous but impotent idol, the public. Although the Euripidean quotation is a later gloss of a printed copy of the first edition of the *Mem.*, it is nonetheless in agreement with his approbative reference to the Cyclops, discussed above. It is obvious that Hamann would transform these none too attractive creatures into effective symbolic indictments of an excessively rationalistic age.

Goethe illustrates vividly the crude creative power of the Cyclopes in *Faust* II, when Phorkyas (Mephistopheles) describes Faust's medieval castle to Helen. He contrasts the architectural excellence of that residence with the enormous but rude structures of Mycenae in Homeric times (ll. 9018–22):

> Und seine Burg! Die solltet ihr mit Augen sehn!
> Das ist was anderes gegen plumpes Mauerwerk,
> Das eure Väter, mir nichts dir nichts aufgewälzt,
> Cyklopisch wie Cyklopen rohen Stein sogleich
> Auf rohe Steine stürzend; dort hingegen, dort
> Ist alles senk- und wagerecht und regelhaft.

Hamann might have observed with some irony that it was Mephistopheles who disparaged that which is "*cyklopisch*" and praised that which is "*senk- und wagerecht und regelhaft*"!

We shall now proceed to examine the verbal darts which Hamann hurls against those learned writers whose literary manner has offended him. One first observes that he is severely critical of those scholars who compile pedantic tomes on the history of philosophy which, though impressive in size, are in the final analysis only lifeless entities. In the Introduction he singles out an Englishman named Stanley,[8] who had published a three-volume history of philosophy, and a German named Brucker,[9] who had published a five-volume work on the same subject, asserting that they had, in actuality, created only "*Kolossen*" (62: 23).[10] The public in both England and Germany, says Hamann, has received these monstrosities well, simply because it has no better critical taste. It is clear that the word *Kolossen* is a derogatory reference to the attempt of the authors to impress their readers with size alone. The German word *Koloß* means any gigantic statue, the most famous being of course the Colossus of Rhodes, and is often used negatively in German.[11] In any case, it is clear that Hamann uses

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[8] Thomas Stanley (1625–78) was the last of the so-called metaphysical poets of England. He was also a translator of poetry and a historian of philosophy. For many years his *History of Philosophy* (1655–62) was the standard work in English in its field. Hamann refers to the first three volumes of the work (1655–61), which had appeared in Leipzig in 1711 in an enlarged Latin version. Had he known the fourth volume (*History of Chaldaick Philosophy*, 1662), which was not included in Olearius' version, he would have been even more strongly convinced of Stanley's propensity for literary elephantiasis. See Sidney Lee, "Thomas Stanley," *The Dictionary of National Biography*.

[9] Johann Jakob Brucker (1696–1770) was a Lutheran clergyman and philosopher. At Jena he was influenced by J. F. Buddeus to specialize in the history of philosophy. After a rectorate at Kaufbeuren, he became senior minister of the church of St. Ulrich at Augsburg, where he remained until his death. The work to which Hamann refers is *Historia critica philosophiae a mundi incunabulis ad nostram usque aetatem deducta* (Leipzig, 1742–44), in five volumes, and is written from the Wolffian standpoint. Despite Hamann's strictures, however, it has had considerable influence in its field, partly because it was a pioneering venture (it was actually the first history of philosophy in Germany) and partly because of the amplitude of the material which it contains. See the article on Brucker, signed "v. Hertling" in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, p. 397.

[10] The plural form *Kolossen* is obsolete; the modern plural is *Kolosse*.

[11] Examples of the negative use of the noun are: *Koloß auf tönernen Füßen*, *Koloß des Nordens* (Russia, according to Fichte, cited in *DW*), "*Emmy der weibliche Koloß*" (from Joachim Ringelnatz's [Hans Bötticher's] grotesque poem, "Die Riesendame der Oktoberwiese."

the word in the present context in the sense of a monstrosity.[12] As Blanke says, the works of Stanley and Brucker constitute for Hamann "enormous idol images, i.e., thick and deadly tomes" (*B*, 84).

But Hamann goes further. He makes use of an anecdote about the Greek painter Zeuxis,[13] who, commissioned by the city of Croton to decorate the temple of Hera, decided to paint a picture of Helen, the ideal beauty. The tomes of Stanley and Brucker are just as "strange and incomplete" as that picture of Zeuxis. Just why Hamann refers to Zeuxis' picture of Helen as "incomplete" is not clear. In order to paint his picture of the ideal female beauty, the Greek artist chose five of the most beautiful maidens of Croton to be his models; he then selected the best features of each and blended them in his ideal portrait. Apparently Hamann thought Zeuxis' procedure could only fail, a conclusion which must appear curious, since, as far as this writer can tell, the ancient sources agree in praising Zeuxis for this accomplishment. In any event, the Magus describes Stanley's and Brucker's colossal compilations, as well as Zeuxis' picture of Helen, as "masterpieces which might always have been very much admired and sought after by learned connoisseurs of the arts, but on the other hand secretly ridiculed by sensible people as fantastic growths and chimeras or even imitated for the sake of whiling away the time and in theatrical drawings" (*62: 26–30*). It is obvious that, in Hamann's eyes, all three works have one thing in common: they are strange creations with no organic unity, and hence no life of their own. He draws these analogies in order to expose ponderous and pretentious scholarly compilations.

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[12] For Hamann's further use of the word in a pejorative sense, see *Versuch einer Sibylle über die Ehe*, where he indicts the laws of Frederick the Great, *Corpus juris Fridericiani*, as "*ein güldener Coloß*," which he conceives of in terms of Nebuchadnezzar's idol as described in the third chapter of Daniel. *N*, III, 200: 2.

[13] Zeuxis, a native of Heraclea (presumably a town in southern Italy), flourished from about 420 to 390 B.C. Although none of his works are preserved, descriptions of a number of them are extant. Zeuxis is supposed to have been a pioneer in the use of light and shadow in the place of stark outline. His realistic effects have become legendary; thus, we hear of his representation of grapes, so convincing that birds flew toward it.

Colossal pedantry is not, however, the only way in which learned gentlemen succeed in emasculating history. The French, for instance, are writers who, in contrast to the English and Germans, specialize in elegance. In referring to the *Critical History of Philosophy* by A. F. B. Deslandes,[14] Hamann describes it as a "Chinese mantelpiece figurine for the cabinet of Gallic taste." The combination of preciosity with an oriental motif attests to the author's modishness, for the rococo style often exhibited oriental, especially Chinese, influence.[15] The word "*Kaminpuppe*" (mantelpiece figurine) is, of course, not pejorative in itself, but in the present context clearly has that connotation.

The "Gallican taste" which Hamann decries was shaped, of course, by aestheticians like Charles Batteux, whom Hamann refers to metonymically as "the creator of beautiful nature." Such critics suffer only those aspects of nature which correspond to their idea of the beautiful to be represented in art. But for them the beautiful includes only nature's delicate, effeminate, and playfully ornamental aspects. Representation of crude and unadorned nature is to be avoided, for it cannot pass through the fine filter of the pseudoclassical rules of art. To sum up, then, while ponderousness characterizes the one type of scholarship which Hamann attacks,

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[14] André François Boureau Deslandes (1690–1757). Although born in India, Deslandes settled in France while still young. He became a naval commissary, first at Rochefort, then at Brest. His voluminous writings range over such subjects as naval and marine affairs, the life of the Prime Minister of Siam, philosophy, and poetry. Although influenced by Malebranche, he was basically committed to the sensationalism of Condillac. That Hamann's judgment of the three-volume *Histoire critique de la Philosophie* (Amsterdam, 1737) was not amiss is suggested by the following critique: "In spite of the praises which this work evoked, the first of its type to be published in France, it is deficient not only in its extent but also because of the superficiality of its criteria, which at times raises doubts as to whether or not he [the author] understood the passages he cites, especially from the Greek authors." "Deslandes," in *Enciclopedia universal ilustrada Europeo-Americana*, p. 554.

[15] In Hamann's day Chinese influence on art and architecture was considerable throughout Europe. Thus, in 1757 Frederick the Great had built at Sans Souci the so-called *Chinesisches Haus*. But Chinese motifs were especially popular in interior decoration and in all forms of *Kleinkunst*. In 1779 Marie Antoinette could present to Pope Pius VI a Chinese desk with the assurance that it would be an appropriate gift for the Pontiff. For Hamann's relation to Chinese culture, see *N*, VI, 75, *s.v.* "China."

fashionable elegance characterizes the other. The one type has produced huge monstrosities or colossi, the other fragile figurines. But all these productions have one thing in common: they are not living organisms but are rather lifeless artifacts, which deceive no one.

If we would consider similar expressions from the area of ethics, we would do well to look to the very end of the work, to the so-called "Peroration," where the author sums up his central argument and makes his final appeal (82: *1*–*7*):

> He who does not know how to live on crumbs and alms nor on prey, or to renounce everything for a sword, is not fit for the service of truth. Let him become forthwith a reasonable, useful, agreeable man in the world or learn to bow and scrape and to lick plates; in such a way he will be safe his life long from hunger and thirst, from the gallows and wheel.

In this impassioned passage the words "crumbs," "alms," and "prey" are examples of negative terms into which the author infuses a positive meaning. The German word for crumbs, *Brosamen*, derives from the Biblical passage: "aber doch essen die Hündlein unter dem Tisch von den Brosamen der Kinder" (Mark 7:28). In modern German the word has an archaic and Biblical flavor, but is used in the Gospel simply as the everyday expression for crumbs.[16] In the present context the word refers to the least remnants of a meal, indeed those that are so small and insignificant that they fall unnoticed to the ground, where the dogs may eat them freely at the feet of the master. It is obvious that when Hamann wrote this line he had the passage from the Gospel of Mark in mind. Hence, he uses the Biblical word as one which can have only a depreciatory meaning.

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[16] *Die Brosame* (sometimes *der Brosam*) with the plural *Brosamen* is usually replaced in modern German with another word for crumb or morsel, e.g., *die Krume*, *der Brösel*, or *das Bröckchen*. The older term remains current, however, in the fixed expression *letzte Brosamen*, meaning "remnants," which is used in both prose and poetry. See *Trübners Deutsches Wörterbuch*, II, *s.v.* "*Brosame*." *Cf.* *N*, I, 79: 18 for Hamann's contemporary use of the word in a religious context. For a non-religious but quite negative use of the term, see *N*, III, 300: 8 and 333: 29, where Hamann refers many years later to the pitifully small income and perquisites which he received in connection with his work as a customs official. He toiled for twenty years for the *Brosamen*, which he had predicted in the *Mem.* would be the lot of those who served the truth!

When we turn our attention to the word "*Allmosen*,"[17] we find that it has a negative connotation only when one speaks of receiving alms, not of giving them. To give alms is a Christian duty and an outward expression of Christian charity, but to receive alms can be, and usually is, painful for the recipient.[18] It is clear, of course, from the wording of the text that Hamann was thinking of the receiving of alms, since his ideal spiritual hero is constrained to live by such charity. In connection with this passage he had in mind the verse from the Acts of the Apostles (3:2): "And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, who they laid daily at the gate of the temple . . . to ask alms of them that entered into the temple."

The last word of our present group, "*Raub*,"[19] is somewhat difficult to interpret. Its ordinary meaning is "robbery, prey, or booty." To say that the devotee of truth should live by any one of these seems curious indeed. In a letter to J. G. Lindner of April 27, 1759, Hamann had written concerning his outwardly idle existence: "I go after prey ["*Raub*"] with fierceness and magnanimity like a lion" (*ZH*, I, 329: 22). Perhaps he borrowed the imagery of this sentence from Psalm 17:12, where the psalmist laments that his enemy compasses him about "like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places." Blanke is probably correct in interpreting the word "*Raub*" as "begging" ("*Bettel*"; *cf. B*, 189). Whatever the exact meaning intended, however, the word is clearly a negative term—the fact which most concerns us here.

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[17] The modern spelling calls for one "l": thus, *das Almosen*, plural *die Almosen*. The meaning of this word is always "charitable gift" (*milde Gabe*). We read in *Trübners*: "Amtliche Geltung ist dem Wort versagt; um so klarer bleibt ihm der christliche Klang und ein altertümlich feierlicher Hauch. . . ."

[18] This fact is attested by the common expression, "In meinen Augen ist dies kein Geschenk, sondern ein Almosen." *Cf. Der Große Duden: Stilwörterbuch.*

[19] As one would expect, the word *Raub* is normally associated—as far as its religious connotation is concerned—with Philippians 2:6, where we read in the Lutheran version concerning Christ that "ob er wohl in göttlicher Gestalt war, hielt er's nicht für einen Raub, Gott gleich sein." In later writings Hamann uses the word with the meaning derived from this passage. *Cf. N*, III, 199: 25 and 314: 7. On another occasion he uses the Greek word for *Raub* from the same passage. *N*, III, 224: 25.

When Hamann says that he who would serve the truth must be willing to live on crumbs, alms, and prey, he means that such a one must be willing to sacrifice everything in the service of truth. In employing the sword as a symbol of absolute dedication to the word of God,[20] he has in mind the admonition of Jesus to his disciples on the eve of the Crucifixion: "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one" (Luke 22:36). Crumbs, alms, and the ordinary prey of a lion, lowly and unremarkable things in themselves, are transformed into most efficacious symbols of the life of absolute dedication.

Thus, things that are least in the moral universe have become first; the lowly has indeed been exalted to a high degree. This particular appeal of the Magus is earnest, solemn, and passionate, lacking entirely in that persiflage which elsewhere he is wont to inject into the most exalted subjects. For here he is speaking of the utter devotion of Socrates as he went to his death; even more important, he sees in that devotion and in that death the foreshadowing of a greater devotion and a greater death which was destined to take place in Galilee. The man who is not willing to sacrifice in such a way, he says flatly, is not fit for the service of truth. But he goes further than this. He has a suggestion for such a man, one which is actually a compressed formula for worldly success. First, he must never do anything which offends reason and common sense; second, he must make himself useful, and not

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[20] Hamann's use of the sword as a symbol is generally patterned after the Bible. Thus, he uses it as the symbol of divine punishment and war in connection with Leviticus 26:25: "Das Schwerdt der Pestilenz soll euch in euren Ringmauern aufsuchen und das Schwerdt des Krieges außer denselben." *N*, I, 58: 7–8. In connection with Genesis 31 he combines the symbolism of the "flaming sword which turned every way" (Gen. 3:24) with that of the "word of God" (Heb. 4:12): "Das Wort Gottes ist gleich jenem flammenden Schwerdt, das allenthalben sich hinkehrt, oder gleich dem Lichte, das alle Farben in sich hält." *N*, I, 38: 20–22; *cf.* also 85: 24. In our passage the sword, nevertheless, symbolizes the suffering which arises from the faithful service of God's word, as in Luke 2:35. Disselhoff is surely wrong when he says of our passage from the *Mem.*: "Er [the man who serves truth] darf vor allem nicht vernünftig noch brauchbar sein für den Götzen Publicum, noch vor ihm sich beugen; sondern muß statt von vernünftigen Systemen, von Brosamen und Almosen leben und von dem Raube, den er mit dem Schwerte sich erjagt, das er allezeit gegen das Publicum in Händen hat." *Wegweiser*, p. 165.

engage in pursuits which do not contribute to the cause of enlightenment and bourgeois prosperity, for these are the cynosures of the age as well as of his friendly antagonists, Kant and Berens; third, in his relationship with others he must always be affable or congenial, never giving offense, for to do so inhibits progress up the ladder of success.

Hans Wolff, commenting on this passage, writes:

> Hamann distinguishes between two life forms, one of which is devoted to external success and one to the service of truth. In Hamann's conception man cannot serve his own belly and truth at the same time; therefore, a choice between both life forms is necessary. The man of the Enlightenment serves, in Hamann's sense, the belly, for he seeks truth only in so far as he can become by means of it an agreeable man, who is useful in the affairs of the world; for him it is not an end but only a means. True culture does not serve, but demands service, service in the sense of complete devotion as Hamann demonstrates in the example of Socrates. In so doing Hamann also espouses the doctrine of an objective vocation of man, but it is called the service of truth in contrast to the service of one's neighbor advocated by the Enlightenment; only he who recognizes this vocation and strives to fulfill it can lay a claim to true humanity, whereas he who restricts himself to the service of others, to his profession, is only an inferior human being.[21]

So far in this formula Hamann has used expressions which are not in themselves negative, and indeed are usually positive in meaning: "*vernünftig*" ("reasonable"),[22] "*brauchbar*" ("useful"), "*artig*" ("agreeable").[23] But now he shifts his tactics and employs stronger terminology, declaring that the task of the man who would save his own skin is to learn "*Bücklinge machen*" and "*Teller lecken.*" The first expression, though often used neutrally, may also have the meaning of "bowing and scraping," that is, toadying

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[21] *Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung in geschichtlicher Entwicklung*, pp. 229–30.

[22] Though most of his contemporaries use the adjective *vernünftig* approvingly, Hamann of course does not. His writings after the conversion experience constitute one long-sustained attack on *Vernunft* and everything associated with it.

[23] We have already encountered the adjective *artig* in the *Mem.* (67: 29), where Hamann speaks contemptuously of the elegant and corrupt society of eighteenth-century France. Many years later he wrote to F. H. Jacobi: "Ich verstehe von allem, das zur artigen Welt und schönen Natur gehört nicht ein lebendiges Wort. . . ." Letter of June 8, 1786, *G*, 347. In *Zweifel und Einfälle über eine Vermischte Nachricht* (1776) Hamann speaks of rationalists who "mit vieler Artigkeit das Christentum aus dem Lande predigen." *N*, III, 183: 4–5.

to one's betters, and it is here so used; the second phrase, meaning "to lick plates," is of course, scathingly pejorative, and bespeaks a shamefully cringing attitude toward the powers of this world (*cf. DW*). "Licking plates" signifies in the present context being content with what the mighty in the land allow their lackeys, however trifling a remnant it may be. Thus, with surpassing irony the Magus condemns the whole system of subservience and sycophancy in eighteenth-century German society, an attitude of mind which characterized most of those who fancied themselves most scientific or "enlightened," and therefore most free. With regard to the ethical implications of the Socratic ignorance, it is interesting to consider the words of a recent interpreter of the historical Socrates:

> Socrates is not very likely to have thought himself worthy of the god's [Apollo's] commendation if his "ignorance" was to be regarded merely as a necessary propadeutic to scientific method; the divine wisdom which he contrasts with human wisdom is not that of the logician or professional philosopher—primarily an intellectual trait of mind—but in some sense a quality that has a moral value.[24]

Hamann emphasizes the moral aspects of the Socratic ignorance in two ways: first, by his insistence on the utter sincerity of Socrates' confession, as we have seen, and second, by his emphasis on the uprightness of Socrates' behavior in the face of persecution.

When we pass from the area of ethics to that of religion, we encounter a paradox. Hamann departs from the high seriousness with which he has treated ethical commitment in his consideration of the most sacred concept, the divine revelation and the faith necessary for its reception. In the Second Section, where he relates Socratic ignorance to the New Testament concept of man's ignorance as a precondition for the reception of God's wisdom, he states: "as far as this the nose of a Sophist does not reach. No molehill must it be, but a tower of Lebanon which gapes toward Damascus" (74: 32–75: 2). The phrase "a tower of Lebanon which gapes toward Damascus" seems indeed a curious expression when one realizes that it refers to the relation of the individual believer

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[24] Arthur Kenyon Rogers, *The Socratic Problem*, p. 67.

to the Christian revelation. In the first place, it derives from the Song of Solomon, where the description of the beauty of the beloved includes the statement: "Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus" (7:4). The author has substituted the word "*gaft*" for the word "*sieht*" in the Lutheran translation. The facetious turn which he gives the expression is, of course, entirely his own doing, and is quite characteristic of his style. In all probability he was particularly drawn to this verse of Scripture because of its reference to Damascus, a city which undoubtedly symbolized for him Paul's conversion to Christianity—the dramatic encounter with the risen Lord on the road to Damascus which was to become a prototype for Christians of all ages. But two elements of the ludicrous in this phrase should be noted: first, the simile describing the beloved's nose in Solomon's canticle, which introduces a highly eccentric note; second, the replacing of the word for "looks" with one meaning "gapes" or "gawks."[25] In the first instance, one might defend Hamann's usage on the grounds of an allegorical interpretation of the Biblical passage—certainly an orthodox procedure. But as if to leave no doubt that he intends to introduce a comical note, he personifies the tower as an individual gazing stupidly toward Damascus, the locus of salvation.

In this passage Hamann is able to introduce humor into his avowals of faith because of the firmness and assurance of his belief. He was convinced of nothing if not of the existence of God and of the legitimacy of His revelation in Christ. Given this assurance and his native inclination to humor even in religious matters, it is not surprising to find him mixing the farcical with the sublime. One might say that his procedure exemplifies further his first principle of the *coincidentia oppositorum*. Then too, since the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, we, as beings who are

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[25] According to *Trübner* the basic meaning of *gaffen* is "mit offenem Mund anstarren." Important for the study of the word in the present context is the following statement: "Der Nebensinn des Müßigen ist . . . vom nhd. *gaffen* nicht zu trennen, das hat schon Stieler 1691 gesehen . . . während Wieland unser Sprachempfinden verletzt, wenn er Anwendung ohne tadelnden Nebensinn versucht. . . ." *Ibid.*

essentially ignorant, can only turn the eyes of faith toward the divine truth. Hence, as we behold the truth of what God has wrought for our salvation, our very stance and posture are bound to reflect our amazing incomprehension, indeed our openmouthed wonderment at the miracle. Surely this is an implicit rebuke also to those believers who would assume a sophisticated attitude toward the revelation, as though they had understood that it should be so from the beginning, and who thereby lose their child-like astonishment at its greatness.

On the other hand, the word "*Maulwurfshügel*" or "molehill," a word which is used in German "contemptuously for a low hill" (*DW*), is an example of a negative term which Hamann uses in an entirely negative sense.[26] By this term he means, of course, the ludicrously low vantage point which the much-vaunted reason of the Enlighteners is able to offer. Faith, like the mountains of Lebanon, provides a lofty eminence from which we can glimpse our salvation from afar, and thus descry the road to our spiritual destination, but we shall miss it entirely if we merely mount a molehill to take our spiritual bearings.

In the preceding pages Hamann's twofold use of negative or pejorative terms has been examined. In the one instance, the negative terms retain their normal depreciatory connotation; in the other, they take on the opposite of their normal meaning, and become surrogates for a loftier reality. It is this latter usage which involves what we have called "Socratic form," that is, a form in which the reality far transcends the appearance. Thus, Fritz Blanke speaks in this connection of the "ennobling light" which is thrown on the lowly external form of Socrates' parables precisely by their sublime content (*B*, 179).

Whereas in the case of normal usage of derogatory terms Hamann means what he says, in the case of the meliorative or approbative usage of such terms he means something quite different from what he at first blush seems to say. Normal procedure would have required that he use meliorative terms for that which he

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[26] *Cf. N*, II, 261: 18, for another example of Hamann's use of this expression.

admired and pejorative terms for that which he reprobated. But the Magus is rarely, if ever, trite in his approach, and his whole method of indirect communication is intended to prick the reader awake. A still deeper reason for this procedure is his intention to follow the divine example of transforming that which is of low degree into an emblem of truth. This is a witness to the ultimate incompetency of autonomous reason, on the one hand, and to the mystery of God's ways with man, on the other. Hamann's thought in this connection is simply an extension of the Pauline formulation to the effect that he who was *in forma Dei* took upon himself the *formam servi* in order to express most fully his identification with and love for mankind (Philippians 2:6–11). The study of Hamann's philological procedure affords but another confirmation of the fact that Socratic form transforms the lowly and rejected into that which is of high degree.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters Hamann's interpretation of Socrates has been seen to exemplify the aesthetic principle that appearance, which constitutes from our standpoint the actuality of a work of art, should always point to a reality greater than itself. The literary devices with which he accomplishes his purpose have been considered in some detail; the composition has been analyzed from the standpoint of its submerged but nevertheless genuine aesthetic unity; and, finally, the manner in which he often transmutes the pejorative terms of ordinary language into symbols of a higher spiritual reality has been analyzed. Certainly the work is remarkable in organization and detail, exemplifying its own peculiar concinnity or harmony of parts. Nevertheless, one must concede that in the last resort it represents a unique achievement—I had almost said a tour de force—rather than a pioneering literary innovation which points the way for others, and beckons them to follow its lead. A thought which the author expressed in this connection seems especially relevant here: "If the vanity of becoming a model should tempt me, I would be the first to laugh at it. Nothing shall discourage me from the obligation of being an original. An original discourages imitators and produces models."[1] No one will deny that Hamann was "an original" or that he succeeded eminently in discouraging imitators. Yet he saw clearly that such a one as he could produce "models," as he indeed did in the case of a Herder and, to a lesser extent, in the case of others.

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[1] Letter to Johann Gotthelf Lindner, March 29, 1763; *ZH*, II, 203, 9–12.

Although my principal concern has been to illuminate the *Memorabilia* by means of aesthetic categories, a method of interpretation which I trust is justified by its results, nevertheless the principle underlying this study is equally applicable to Hamann's ethics, philosophy, and theology. For in the case of his ethics one must recognize that the genuinely moral man is always better than he appears to be—the "hypocrite reversed."[2] In the area of philosophy we find that authentic knowledge is not a product of overweening reason but of ordinary language, which occupies a humbler station in the scheme of things than the *ratio*.[3] As for theology, we have seen that divinity appears most redemptively in lowly, despised, or foolish form, *in forma servi*. A systematic treatment of the Magus' thought in these areas lies outside the scope of this study. Nevertheless, I believe it to be obvious from the analysis that an understanding of both the formal and dramatic qualities of the work provides the most fruitful avenue of approach to its implications for these other areas—that an aesthetic approach to the work constitutes not only the alpha of its initial interpretation, but also the omega to which one must finally return.

Critical as Hamann was of Kant's earlier and later philosophy, his own philosophical position affords a striking parallel to the Kantian position. For whereas Kant insisted on space and time as the a priori conditions of human cognition, Hamann insisted, as we have seen, on some variety of *Knechtsgestalt* as the inescapable precondition of valid aesthetic, ethical, and religious knowledge. If the concept of Socratic form in the Hamannian sense be accounted of little or no value to the logico-mathematical sciences, this in Hamann's eyes would be no tragedy, for in his view these disciplines have little or nothing to say to the human spirit. Moreover, their attempt "to dissect a body and an event into its primary elements" constitutes the audacious attempt "to detect God's invisible being, His eternal power and Godhead."

Upon even slight reflection it is obvious that Hamann's implied principle of appearance and reality requires faith as its correlate.

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[2] *N*, III, 410: 20; IV, 462: 17; *cf.* also *G*, 624.

[3] See my *Unity and Language: A Study in the Philosophy of Hamann.*

Conclusion

If there is an absolute correspondence between appearance and reality of the kind sought in all rationalistic formulations and in classical art, faith is thereby virtually ruled out. In such a case nothing is really obscured or hidden; the representation, whether a logical sign or an aesthetic symbol, is designed to exhaust, that is, to represent fully and adequately, the reality for which it stands. On the other hand, faith is logically necessary as the subjective correlate of the Hamannian symbol, for, as we have seen, the symbol is essentially fragmentary and obscure, often merely hinting at the significant reality for which it acts as a surrogate. Further, the type of unity which we have found to be characteristic of the *Memorabilia*, essential unity, is such that its center is related immediately to all its parts. This relationship forms a close parallel with the relationship of all individual existences and objects to God in Hamann's theology. For, as Walter Leibrecht says, "in Hamann's opinion there are no earthly things that do not stand in an immediate relationship to God."[4] Thus Hamann's very idea of aesthetic unity not only parallels his theology but is in fact grounded in it. In view of the logical connections of Hamann's aesthetics with faith, it is not at all surprising to find him stressing its importance in the *Memorabilia*, and providing us with valuable insights into its nature.

But it was by no means logical necessity alone which led him to represent Socrates as a man of faith. It was rather his own conviction of its central importance, born out of an anguished personal experience and buttressed by the philosophy of Hume (or at least by Hamann's understanding of that philosophy) which led him to identify the "*Empfindung*" or sensibility of Socrates with faith,[5] and to see in the Socratic daimon a prototype of the Holy Spirit. While a treatment of this subject does not fall within the scope of the present study, it is obvious that it leads inevitably to the threshold of such an investigation. It is surely one of the ironies of cultural history that Johann Georg Hamann, the fervent champion of religious faith in an age of unbelief, should have become

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[4] *God and Man in the Thought of Hamann*, p. 96.
[5] But not always; see *ZH*, I, 292: 4.

the high priest of a literary movement characterized by the cult of unbridled emotion, namely, the *Sturm und Drang*.

On several occasions it has been necessary to call attention to certain baroque features of the *Socratic Memorabilia*—the open form of the essay, the syntax (with few exceptions), the overlay of classical allusions in the footnotes as if for mere ornamentation, and finally the obscured typology. With regard to its inward form we have seen that it is characterized chiefly by what I have called essential unity, and that its dramatic unity, though genuine, is not immediately apparent. But despite the rather impressive list of features which must be regarded as basically baroque, the over-all treatise is by no means in that style. For baroque art, despite its loosening of classical form and tendency to complexity so great that it often results in eccentricity, does not on that account become anti-rational. This is a fact readily attested by the music of a Bach, the painting of a Rubens, or the architecture of a Fischer von Erlach.

The burden of Hamann's essay is, on the other hand, essentially anti-rational in the sense that he would dethrone autonomous reason and replace it with feeling or, to use his term, sensibility and faith in a transcendent reality. If this is not perfectly clear from the work itself, it becomes clear when one recalls that the *Socratic Memorabilia* constituted the spark which ignited the fires of the *Sturm und Drang*; and surely no literary movement which exaggerated the importance of feeling as did that one could have been launched by a treatise which was rationalistic at its core, however cleverly such rationalism might be disguised. The close interweaving of classical motifs in the texture of a literary work intended to exalt personal religious faith is, however, simply another way in which Hamann demonstrates his conviction of the implicit harmony of Hellenism and Christianity.

Because of Hamann's historical connection with and apparent natural affinity for certain irrational movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,[6] it may not be amiss to notice in passing

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[6] *Cf.* Chapter 1, n. 10, above.

the considerable gulf that separates him from such movements. One must observe, for instance, that, although in his emphasis Hamann does seem to suggest many of the tendencies of the modern cult of anxiety, despair, and nihilism in philosophy, as well as the cult of the ugly, the contemptible, and the painful in modern art, this apparent parallel is illusory. As we have seen, he by no means abolishes the distinction between the high and the low, between the sublime and the base. What he does, however, is to recognize that the base elements of life may, if transformed, serve as more effective symbols of the spirit than those elements which are by nature noble. This conception did not originate with Hamann, but is derived from the Biblical revelation and from Christian theology (though, as has been shown, he considered the Greek myths before the ancient rationalists succeeded in emasculating them as an anticipation of the Christian point of view). What is original with Hamann, however, is the application of the Biblical doctrine of *Knechtsgestalt* to aesthetics. It should be said, however, that those who prefer the ugly and painful side of life, unredeemed by religious faith, for its own sake have little in common with the Magus. Whether faith is abolished in the name of rationalism or irrationalism matters little: in Hamann's conception it is a tragedy either way.

Even Nietzsche, possessed as he was of rare acumen in matters of cultural history,[7] failed to see that Christianity does not abolish the distinction between the high and the low, between the noble and the ignoble, but that the God of the Christians demonstrates his power and his redemptive love precisely in elevating that which is lowly to a high estate. Nietzsche's famous distinction between "*Herrenmoral*" and "*Sklavenmoral*" is based on the questionable

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[7] Nietzsche's conception of Socrates as an arch-rationalist and consequently the disrupter of the fruitful union of the "Dionysian" and "Apollonian" elements in Greek culture is of course quite different from Hamann's. Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates ranges him, at least on this particular score, with the eighteenth-century Enlighteners. For a discussion of the relation of the Hamannian Socrates to the irrational aspects of Greek culture, see Erich Ruprecht, *Der Aufbruch der romantischen Bewegung*, pp. 88 ff. Apart from the author's emphasis on the peculiar affinity of the Germans for Socratic irrationalism, his treatment of the subject is quite helpful.

assumption that Christianity engages in a simple inversion of values or in a complete leveling process. Certainly this is not true of Hamann's interpretation of the Christian revelation, and there is no reason to believe that his version fails to do justice to the genius of Christianity.

It is true that the *Socratic Memorabilia* can never yield the kind of pleasure afforded by certain other pieces of great literature—the feeling of satisfaction at having contemplated a work of the literary art whose content and form combine to delight and instruct. Instead, even after a close and informed study, his work leaves one with the impression that here are depths which will never be adequately sounded. This is true partly because of the impenetrable mysteries which it touches upon or, to use a phrase of Goethe's, because of "something secret, unfathomable" which characterizes it,[8] and partly because of the author's gnarled eccentricity. We must conclude that, for better or worse, Hamann has in fact created an aesthetic form corresponding to the actuality that was Socrates, an individual whose outward appearance belied his inward nobility, and whose rough-hewn figures of speech were most effective vehicles of truth. One may describe this aesthetic form as "anti-Platonic" in the sense implied by the earlier discussion (see pp. 10–13 above). In any event, the understanding of the classical heritage revealed by Hamann's version of Socrates is undeniably a valuable and instructive one.[9] At the same time, one

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[8] In *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Bk. XII, *Werke*, XXIII, 106.

[9] In her controversial but nevertheless stimulating book, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany*, E. M. Butler maintains that, while Goethe's youthful writings had arisen under the influence of his "daimon," he nevertheless rejected that source of inspiration in his so-called classical period in favor of Winckelmann's interpretation of Greek culture. This was in Miss Butler's opinion a regrettable development, and she believes that Goethe would have done better to continue to heed the voice of his daimon. Moreover, she makes it clear that Hamann was responsible for Goethe's belief in a tutelary spirit in the first place: "The daimon of Socrates, rediscovered and reinterpreted by Hamann, the intuitive all-knowing, all-powerful genius, found its way straight to the one spirit alive which could harbour it, and forthwith began dictating terms." P. 94; *cf.* pp. 154, 332.

It is certainly true that Hamann's attitude toward the Greeks is quite different from Winckelmann's. For the Magus the Greeks and the Romans were but "broken wells" in comparison with "that which is authentic in the realm of

has the feeling that it is important, even urgent, to think out to their logical conclusion many of the stimulating insights contained in the work. As Hamann says in the *Memorabilia*: "I can accomplish no more than the arm of a signpost, and am too wooden to accompany my readers in the course of their reflections" (76: 25–27). However "wooden" he may at times be—and the adjective is a felicitous one to describe various aspects of his style—there can be no doubt but that he guides the responsive reader into new and promising paths, but they are paths which the reader must thereafter, despite the many hazards, travel alone.

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nature." Letter to J. G. Lindner, May 5, 1761. *ZH*, II, 84: 22–23. He says in the second letter of the *Clover Leaf of Hellenistic Letters* (1760): "Perhaps the ancients bear the same relationship to nature that the annotators bear to their author. Whoever studies the ancients without being acquainted with nature is reading notes without the text." *N*, II, 177: 16–18. Hamann thus escapes any "tyranny" which the ancients might impose, since he is interested in that to which Greco-Roman culture is but a series of footnotes.

Part II

TRANSLATION AND NOTES

Johann Georg Hamann, 1759.



Sokratische
Denkwürdigkeiten
für die lange Weile
des Publicums
zusammengetragen
von einem Liebhaber
der langen Weile.

Mit
einer doppelten Zuschrift
an Niemand und an Zween.

O curas hominum! o quantum est in rebus inane!
Quis leget haec? - - - Min' tu istud ais?
Nemo hercule - - Nemo? -
Vel DVO vel NEMO - - -

FERS.

Amsterdam, 1759.

Socratic
Memorabilia

Compiled
for the Boredom
of the Public
by a
Lover of Boredom.

With
a Double Dedication
to Nobody and to Two.

O the vanity of mankind! How vast the void in human affairs!
Who will read stuff like that? Is it to me you are speaking?
Not a soul, by Hercules! What, nobody?
One or two perhaps, or nobody.

Pers[ius]

Amsterdam, 1759

An das Publicum,
oder
Niemand, den Kundbaren.

— οδ' ΟΥΤΙΣ, πϑ 'στιν; — —

Eurip. Κυκλωψ.

Du führst einen Namen, und brauchst keinen Beweis Deines Daseyns, Du findest Glauben, und thust keine Zeichen denselben zu verdienen, Du erhältst Ehre, und hast weder Begrif noch Gefühl davon. Wir wissen, daß es keinen Götzen in der Welt giebt. Ein Mensch bist Du auch nicht; doch must Du ein menschlich Bild seyn, das der Aberglaube vergöttert hat. Es fehlt Dir nicht an Augen und Ohren, die aber nicht sehen, nicht hören; und das künstliche Auge, das Du machst, das künstliche Ohr, das Du pflanzest, ist, gleich den Deinigen, blind und taub[1]. Du must alles wissen, und lernst nichts; Du must alles richten, und verstehst nichts, lernst immerdar, und kannst nimmer zur Erkenntnis der Wahrheit kommen[2]; Du dichtest, hast zu schaffen, bist über Feld, oder schläfst vielleicht, wenn Deine Priester laut ruffen, und Du ihnen und ihrem Spötter mit Feuer antworten solltest. Dir werden täglich Opfer gebracht, die andere auf Deine Rechnung verzehren, um aus Deinen starken Mahlzeiten Dein Leben wahrscheinlich zu machen. So eckel Du bist, nimmst Du doch mit allem für lieb, wenn man nur nicht leer vor Dir erscheint. Ich werfe mich wie der Philosoph zu den erhörenden Füssen eines Tyrannen. Meine Gabe besteht in nichts als Küchlein, von denen ein Gott, wie Du, einst barst. Ueberlaß sie daher einem Paar Deiner Anbeter, die ich durch diese Pillen von dem Dienst Deiner Eitelkeit zu reinigen wünsche.

Weil Du die Züge menschlicher Unwissenheit und Neugierde an Deinem Gesichte trägst; so will ich Dir beichten, wer die Zween sind, denen ich durch Deine Hände diesen frommen Betrug spielen will. Der erste arbeitet am Stein der Weisen, wie ein Menschenfreund,

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[1] Sp. Sal. IX. 13.
[2] 2 Tim. III. 7.

To the Public,[a]
or
Nobody, the Well-known.

"Where's Nobody?"
Eurip[ides] *Cyclops.*[b]

You have a name and need no proof of your existence, you find faith, and give no signs to earn it, you receive honor, and have no concept or feeling of it. We know that an idol has no real existence. Nor are you a human being either; yet you must be a human image, which superstition has deified. You have eyes and ears, which nevertheless do not see, do not hear; and the artificial eye which you form, the artificial ear which you plant, is, like your own, blind and deaf.[1] You must know everything, and learn nothing; you must judge everything, and understand nothing, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth;[2] you are musing, you have work to do, you are on a journey or peradventure are asleep, when your priests cry aloud, and you ought to answer them and their mockery with fire. Sacrifices are offered to you daily, which others consume at your expense, in order by means of your heavy meals to make your existence seem probable.[c] However fastidious[d] you may be, you nevertheless tolerate everything, provided only that one does not appear before you emptyhanded. Like the philosopher, I throw myself at the beneficent feet of a tyrant.[e] My gift consists of nothing but the lumps[f] from which a god like you once burst. Give it therefore to a pair of your worshipers,[g] whom I desire to purify[h] from the bondage of your vanity by means of these pills.

Because you bear the expression of human ignorance and curiosity on your face, I will therefore confess to you who the two are on whom I desire to practice through your hand this pious fraud. The first[i] works on the philosopher's stone[j] like a benefactor of mankind[k]

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[1] Prov. 9:13.
[2] II Tim. 3:7.

der ihn für ein Mittel ansieht, den Fleiß, die bürgerliche Tugenden und das Wohl des gemeinen Wesens zu befördern. Ich habe für ihn in der mystischen Sprache eines Sophisten geschrieben; weil Weisheit immer das verborgenste Geheimnis der Politick bleiben wird, wenn gleich die Alchymie zu ihren Zweck kommt, alle Menschen reich zu machen, welche durch des Marqvis von Mirabeau fruchtbare Maximen bald! Frankreich bevölkern müssen. Nach dem heutigen Plan der Welt bleibt die Kunst Gold zu machen also mit Recht das höchste Project und höchste Gut unserer Staatsklugen.

Der andere möchte einen so allgemeinen Weltweisen und guten Münzwaradein abgeben, als Newton war. Kein Theil der Kritick ist sicherer, als die man für Gold und Silber erfunden hat. Daher kann die Verwirrung in dem Münzwesen Deutschlands so groß nicht seyn, als die in die Lehrbücher eingeschlichen, so unter uns gäng und gebe sind. Es fehlt uns an richtigen Verhältnis-Tabellen, die uns bestimmen, wie viellöthig an Korn und Schrot ein Einfall seyn müsse, wenn er eine Wahrheit gelten soll u. s. w.[3]

Weil diese Küchlein nicht gekaut, sondern geschluckt werden müssen, gleich denjenigen, so die Cosmische Familie zu Florenz in ihr Wapen aufnahm; so sind sie nicht für den Geschmack gemacht. Was ihre Wirkungen anbetrift; so lernte bey einem ähnlichen Gefühl derselben Vespasian zuerst das Glück Deines Namens erkennen, und soll auf einem Stuhl, der nicht sein Thron war, ausgeruffen haben: VTI PVTO, DEVS FIO!

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[3] Ω Zευ, τι δη χρυσϑ μεν ος κιβδηλος η,
Τεκμηρι' ανϑρωποισιν ωπασας σαφη·
Ανδρων δ' οτῳ χρη τον κακον διειδεναι
Ουδεις χαρακτηρ εμπεφυκε σωματι·
Euripides Medea.

who regards it as a means of promoting industriousness, the bourgeois virtues, and the common welfare. I have written for him in the mystical language[a] of a Sophist, since wisdom will always remain the most hidden secret of political economy, even if alchemy achieves its purpose of making all men rich who, by means of the fruitful maxims of the Marquis de Mirabeau,[b] must soon populate France. According to the present order of the world, the art of making gold remains therefore properly the highest project and the highest good of our wise statesmen.

The other[c] would like to play the role of universal philosopher and competent Warden of the Mint just as Newton did.[d] No part of analytical chemistry is more certain than that which has been invented for gold and silver. Hence, the confusion in regard to coinage in Germany[e] cannot be as great as that which has crept into the textbooks which are current among us. We do not have proper conversion tables to determine what alloy content[f] an idea may have if it is to pass for truth, and so forth.[3]

Because these lumps must not be chewed but swallowed, like those which the Medici family[g] placed in their coat of arms, they are not intended for the palate. As far as their effect is concerned, Vespasian first became acquainted with the good fortune of your name when experiencing a similar feeling; he is said to have cried aloud on a seat that was not his throne, "Woe's me. Methinks I'm turning into a god."[h]

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[3] O Zeus ah wherefore hast thou given to men
Plain signs for gold which is but counterfeit,
But no assay-mark nature-graven shows
On man's form, to discern the base withal?
Euripides *Medea* [lines 516–19].

An die Zween.

— — σμικρα μεν ταδ', αλλ' ομως
ά 'χω — — —
Sophocles in Electra.

Das Publicum in Griechenland laß die Denkwürdigkeiten des Aristoteles über die Naturgeschichte der Thiere, und Alexander verstand sie. Wo ein gemeiner Leser nichts als Schimmel sehen möchte, wird der Affect der Freundschaft Ihnen, Meine Herren, in diesen Blättern vielleicht ein mikroskopisch Wäldchen entdecken.

Ich habe über den Sokrates auf eine sokratische Art geschrieben. Die Analogie[4] war die Seele seiner Schlüsse, und er gab ihnen die Ironie zu ihrem Leibe. Ungewißheit und Zuversicht mögen mir so eigenthümlich seyn als sie wollen; so müssen sie hier doch als ästhetische Nachahmungen betrachtet werden.

In den Werken des Xenophons herrscht eine abergläubische, und in Platons eine schwärmerische Andacht; eine Ader ähnlicher Empfindungen läuft daher durch alle Theile dieser mimischen Arbeit. Es würde mir am leichtesten gewesen seyn denen Heyden in ihrer Freymüthigkeit hierin näher zu kommen; ich habe mich aber bequemen müssen meiner Religion den Schleyer zu borgen, den ein patriotischer St. John und platonischer Shaftesbury für ihren Unglauben und Misglauben gewebt haben.

Sokrates war, meine Herren, kein gemeiner Kunstrichter. Er unterschied in den Schriften des Heraklitus, dasjenige, was er nicht verstand, von dem, was er darin verstand, und that eine sehr billige und bescheidene Vermuthung von dem Verständlichen auf das Unverständliche. Bey dieser Gelegenheit redete Sokrates von Lesern, welche schwimmen[5] könnten. Ein Zusammenfluß von Ideen und Empfindungen in jener lebenden Elegie vom Philosophen machte desselben Sätze vielleicht zu einer Menge kleiner Inseln, zu deren Gemeinschaft Brücken und Fähren der Methode fehlten.

Da Sie beyde meine Freunde sind; so wird mir Ihr partheyisch Lob und Ihr partheyischer Tadel gleich angenehm seyn. Ich bin ꝛc.

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[4] Analogy, man's surest guide below.
Young. Night 6.

[5] Atque hic tam docilis ad cetera, natare nesciit. Sueton de Caligula.

To the Two.[a]

"Such a small offering, yet all I have!"
Sophocles in *Electra*.[b]

The public in Greece read the memorabilia of Aristotle on the natural history of animals, and Alexander understood them.[c] Where an ordinary reader might see only mold, the feeling of friendship, gentlemen, may perhaps disclose to you a microscopically tiny forest in these pages.[d]

I have written about Socrates in a Socratic manner. Analogy[4] constituted the soul of his reasoning, and he gave it irony for a body. Uncertainty and confidence may be as characteristic of me as they will; here they must nevertheless be regarded as aesthetic imitations.[e]

In the works of Xenophon there prevails a superstitious reverence, and in Plato's an enthusiastic[f] reverence; a vein of similar sensibility runs, therefore, through all parts of this mimic work. It would have been easiest for me to approach more closely the heathen in their ingenuousness; I have had, however, to be satisfied with borrowing for my religion the veil which a patriotic St. John[g] and a Platonic Shaftesbury[h] have woven for their unbelief and misbelief.

Socrates was, gentlemen, no mean critic. He distinguished in the writings of Heraclitus what he did not understand from what he understood, and drew a very proper and modest inference from the comprehensible to the incomprehensible.[i] On this occasion Socrates spoke of readers who were able to swim.[5] Thus, a confluence of ideas and sensations in that living elegy of the philosopher[j] transformed his sentences perhaps into a group of small islands for whose community life the bridges and ferries of system were lacking.

Since you are both my friends, your biased praise and your biased censure will be equally pleasant for me. I am, etc.

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[4] "Analogy, man's surest guide below."
[Edward] Young *Night* [*Thoughts*], VI [line 734].[k]

[5] "And yet varied as were his accomplishments, the man could not swim."
Suetonius [Gaius] *Caligula*.[l]

Einleitung.

Der Geschichte der Philosophie ist es wie der Bildsäule des französischen Staatsministers ergangen. Ein grosser Künstler[6] zeigte seinen Meissel daran; ein Monarch[7], der Name eines ganzen Jahrhunderts, gab die Unkosten zum Denkmal und bewunderte das Geschöpf seines Unterthanen; der Scythe[8] aber, der auf sein Handwerk reisete, und wie Noah oder der Galiläer des Projektmachers, Julians, ein Zimmermann wurde, um der Gott seines Volks zu seyn, dieser Scythe begieng eine Schwachheit, deren Andenken ihn allein verewigen könnte. Er lief auf den Marmor zu, both grosmüthig dem stummen[9] Stein die Hälfte seines weiten Reichs an, wenn er ihn lehren wollte, die andere Hälfte zu regieren. Sollte unsere Historie Mythologie werden; so wird diese Umarmung eines leblosen Lehrers, der ohne Eigennutz Wunder der Erfüllung gethan, in ein Mährchen verwandelt seyn, das den Reliquien von Pygmalions Leben ähnlich sehen wird. Ein Schöpfer seines Volkes in der Sprache unsers Witzes wird nach einer undenklichen Zeit eben so poetisch verstanden werden müssen, als ein Bildhauer seines Weibes.

Es giebt in dem Tempel der Gelehrsamkeit würklich einen Götzen, der unter seinem Bilde die Aufschrift der philosophischen Geschichte trägt; und dem es an Hohenpriestern und Leviten nicht gefehlt. Stanley und Brucker haben uns Kolossen geliefert, die eben so sonderbar und unvollendet sind als jenes Bild der Schönheit, das ein Grieche aus den Reitzen aller Schönen, deren Eindruck ihm Absicht und Zufall verschaffen konnte, zusammensetzte. Meisterstücke, die von gelehrten Kennern der Künste immer sehr möchten bewundert und gesucht; von Klugen hingegen als abentheuerliche Gewächse und Chimären in der Stille belacht oder auch für die lange Weile und in theatralischen Zeichnungen nachgeahmt werden.

Weil Stanley ein Britte und Brucker ein Schwabe ist: so haben sie beyde die lange Weile des Publicums zu ihrem Ruhm vertrieben; wiewohl das Publicum auch für die Gefälligkeit, womit es

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[6] Girardon.
[7] Ludwig XIV.
[8] Peter der Große.
[9] Habacuc III, 19.

Socratic Memorabilia.

Introduction.

The history of philosophy and the statue of the French minister of state[a] shared a common fate. A great artist[6, b] demonstrated the power of his chisel on it; a monarch,[7] whose name became the name of a whole century, provided the expenses for the monument, and admired the creation of his subject; the Scythian,[8] however, who traveled in the interest of his trade, and, like Noah or the Galilean of the schemer Julian, became a carpenter in order to be the god of his people, this Scythian indulged in a weakness, the memory of which alone could immortalize him. He ran toward the marble image, offering magnanimously to the dumb[9] stone the half of his vast kingdom, if it would teach him how to rule the other half. If our history should become mythology, this embracing of a lifeless teacher, who unselfishly performed miracles of achievement, would be transformed into a fairy tale which would seem similar to the relics of Pygmalion's[c] life. In the language of our wit[d] a creator of his people will after an inconceivable time have to be understood, just as poetically, as a sculptor of his wife.

Indeed, there is an idol in the temple[e] of learning which bears beneath its image the inscription, "The History of Philosophy," and which has not lacked for high priests and Levites. Stanley[f] and Brucker[g] have provided us with colossi which are just as strange and incomplete as the image of beauty which a Greek[h] composed from the charms of all the beautiful maidens who were intentionally and accidentally provided for him—masterpieces which might always have been very much admired and sought after by learned connoisseurs of the arts, but on the other hand were secretly ridiculed by sensible people as fantastic growths and chimeras or were even imitated for the sake of whiling away the time, and in theatrical drawings.[i]

Since Stanley is a Briton and Brucker a Swabian, they have both entertained the public in the interest of their fame, although the public also deserves to be praised for the complaisance with which it

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[6] [François] Girardon.
[7] Louis XIV.
[8] Peter the Great.
[9] Hab. 3:19.

die ungleichen Fehler dieser Nationalschriftsteller übersehen, gelobt zu werden verdient.

Deslandes, ein Autor von encyclischen[10] Witz hat eine chinesische Kaminpuppe für das Kabinet des gallicanischen Geschmacks hervorgebracht. Der Schöpfer der schönen Natur scheint die grösten Köpfe Frankreichs, wie Jupiter ehmals die Cyclopen zur Schmiede der Strahlen und Schwärmer verdammt zu haben, die er zum tauben Wetterleuchten und ätherischen Feuerwerken nöthig hat.

Aus denen Urtheilen, die ich über alle diese ehrliche und feine Versuche von einem kritischen System der philosophischen Geschichte gefällt, läßt sich mehr als wahrscheinlich schlüßen, daß ich keines davon gelesen; sondern blos den Schwung und Ton des gelehrten Haufens nachzuahmen, und denjenigen, zu deren Besten ich schreibe, durch ihre Nachahmung zu schmäucheln suche. Unterdessen glaube ich zuverläßiger, daß unsere Philosophie eine andere Gestalt nothwendig haben müste, wenn man die Schicksale dieses Namens oder Wortes: Philosophie, nach den Schattierungen der Zeiten, Köpfe, Geschlechter und Völker, nicht wie ein Gelehrter oder Weltweiser selbst, sondern als ein müßiger[11] Zuschauer ihrer olympischen Spiele studiert hätte oder zu studieren wüste ως γραφευς τ' αποσταθεις[12].

Ein Phrygier, wie Aesop, der sich nach den Gesetzen seines Klima, wie man jezt redt, Zeit nehmen muste, klug zu werden, und ein so natürlicher Tropf, als ein La Fontaine, der sich besser in die Denkungsart der Thiere als der Menschen zu schicken und zu verwandeln wuste, würden uns an statt gemalter Philosophen oder ihrer zierlich verstümmelter Brustbilder, ganz andere Geschöpfe zeigen, und ihre Sitten und Sprüche, die Legenden ihrer Lehren und Thaten mit Farben nachahmen, die dem Leben näher kämen.

Doch sind vielleicht die philosophischen Chroniken und Bildergallerien weniger zu tadeln, als der schlechte Gebrauch, den ihre Liebhaber davon machen. Ein wenig Schwärmerey und Aberglauben würde hier nicht nur Nachsicht verdienen, sondern etwas von diesem Sauerteige gehört dazu, um die Seele zu einem philosophischen Heroismus in Gährung zu setzen. Ein durstiger Ehrgeitz nach Wahrheit und Tugend, und eine Eroberungswuth aller Lügen und Laster, die nämlich nicht dafür erkannt werden, noch seyn wollen; hierinn besteht der Heldengeist eines Weltweisen.

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[10] S. Wolken. S. 94.
[11] Ein Mensch ohne Geschäfte heißt auf griechisch Argus.
[12] Eurip. Hecuba.

overlooks the unequal faults of these national writers.

Deslandes,[a] an author of encyclical[10, b] intellect, has produced a Chinese mantelpiece figurine[c] for the cabinet of Gallic taste, The creator of beautiful nature[d] seems to have condemned the greatest minds of France, just as Jupiter formerly condemned the Cyclopes[e] to the blacksmith shop, to produce the flashes and squibs that he needs for pale[f] sheet lightning and ethereal fireworks.

From the judgments I have passed on all these honorable and fine essays concerning a critical system of the history of philosophy, it is to be concluded as more than probable that I have read none of them, but seek merely to imitate the verve and tone of the scholarly crowd, and to flatter by imitation those on whose behalf I am writing. Meanwhile, I believe more firmly that, if one had studied or knew how to study the fate of this name or word, philosophy, according to the coloring of the times, minds, races, and peoples, not as a scholar or philosopher even, but as an idle[11] spectator of their Olympic games, "standing off like a painter,"[12] our philosophy would necessarily have another form.

A Phrygian like Aesop, who, as one now says, had to take time to grow wise in accordance with the laws of his climate,[g] and such a natural simpleton as a La Fontaine,[h] who knew better how to accommodate himself to and to adopt the manner of thinking of the animals than of men, would show us, instead of the paintings of philosophers or their decoratively mutilated busts, quite different creatures, and would imitate their customs and wise sayings, their didactic and heroic legends, in colors that would be more lifelike.

Nevertheless, the philosophical chronicles and picture galleries are perhaps less to blame than the ill use which their fanciers make of them. A little enthusiasm and superstition here would not only deserve indulgence, but something of this leaven is necessary in order to put the soul in the ferment required for a philosophical heroism. A thirsty ambition for truth and virtue, and a frenzy to conquer[i] all lies and vices which are not recognized as such nor desire to be; herein consists the heroic spirit of a philosopher.[j]

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[10] See *The Clouds*, p. 94 [of Nadler text].
[11] A man without any occupation is called "Argus" in Greek.
[12] Eurip[ides] *Hecuba* [line 807].

Wenn Cäsar Trähnen vergießt bey der Säule des macedonischen Jünglings, und dieser bey dem Grabe Achills mit Eyfersucht an einen Herold des Ruhms denkt, wie der blinde Minnesänger war: so biegt ein Erasmus im Spott sein Knie für den heiligen Sokrates, und die helleniſtiſche Muſe unſers von Bar muß den komischen Schatten eines Thomas Diafoirus beunruhigen, um uns die unterirrdische Wahrheit zu predigen; daß es göttliche Menschen unter den Heyden gab, daß wir die Wolke dieser Zeugen nicht verachten sollen, daß sie der Himmel zu seinen Boten und Dollmetschern salbte, und zu eben den Beruf unter ihrem Geschlechte einweyhte, den die Propheten unter den Juden hatten[13].

Wie die Natur uns gegeben, unsere Augen zu öfnen; so die Geschichte, unsere Ohren. Einen Körper und eine Begebenheit bis auf ihre ersten Elemente zergliedern, heißt, Gottes unsichtbares Wesen, seine ewige Kraft und Gottheit ertappen wollen. Wer Mose und den Propheten nicht glaubt, wird daher immer ein Dichter, wieder sein Wissen und Wollen, wie Buffon über die Geschichte der Schöpfung und Montesquieu über die Geschichte des Römischen Reichs.

Wenn kein junger Sperling ohne unsern Gott auf die Erde fällt; so ist kein Denkmal alter Zeiten für uns verloren gegangen, das wir zu beklagen hätten. Sollte seine Vorsorge sich nicht über Schriften erstrecken, da Er Selbst ein Schriftsteller geworden, und der Geist Gottes so genau gewesen den Werth der ersten verbotenen Bücher aufzuzeichnen, die ein frommer Eyfer unserer Religion dem Feuer geopfert? Wir bewundern es an Pompejus als eine kluge und edle Handlung, daß er die Schriften seines Feindes Sertorius aus dem Wege räumte; warum nicht an unserm HErrn, daß er die Schriften eines Celsus untergehen lassen? Ich meyne also nicht ohne Grund, daß Gott für alle Bücher, woran uns was gelegen, wenigstens so viel Aufmerksamkeit getragen als Cäsar für die beschriebene Rolle, mit der er in die See sprang, oder Paulus für sein Pergamen zu Troada[14].

Hatte der Künstler, welcher mit einer Linse durch ein Nadelöhr traf, nicht an einen Scheffel Linsen genung zur Uebung seiner erworbenen Geschicklichkeit? Diese Frage möchte man an alle Gelehrte thun, welche

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[13] Ce St. Thomas de l'Ecole n'auroit-il point été choisi pour etre *l'Apôtre* de la Nation des Peripateticiens, qui n'etoit pas encore bien assujettie et bien domtée? Nation presdomptueuse, et mutine, qui defère si peu à l'autorité, qui se fonde toujours en raison, qui demande toujours *pourquoi cela est.* —— Il me semble, que cette dernière *Mission* n'a pas été inutile. *Socrate Chretien* par *Balzac* Discours V.

[14] 2 Tim. IV. 13.

When Caesar sheds tears at the statue of the Macedonian youth,[a] and the latter jealously recalls at the grave of Achilles what a herald of glory the blind minnesinger[b] was; so an Erasmus mockingly bends his knee to the saintly Socrates, and the Hellenistic muse of our von Bar[c] must disturb the comic shade of a Thomas Diafoirus[d] in order to preach to us the subterranean truth: that godly men did exist among the heathen, and that we should not despise the cloud of these witnesses, that heaven has anointed them as its messengers and interpreters, and consecrated them to precisely that vocation among their people which the prophets had among the Jews.[13]

Just as nature was given us to open our eyes, so history was given to us to open our ears. To dissect a body and an event into its primary elements means attempting to detect God's invisible being, His eternal power and Godhead. Whoever does not believe Moses and the prophets always becomes, like Buffon[e] writing on the history of creation and Montesquieu[f] on the history of the Roman Empire, a poet against his knowledge and intention.

If a young sparrow shall not fall to the earth without our God, no monument from ancient times has been lost to us which we should lament. Should not His providence extend to writings, since He himself became a writer, and since the Spirit of God was at such pains to record the value of the first forbidden books, which a pious zeal on behalf of our religion sacrificed to the fire? We admire Pompey's destroying the writings of his enemy Sertorius as a wise and noble action; why not admire our Lord's allowing the writings of Celsus to perish? I think, therefore, not without reason, that God showed at least as much vigilance concerning all the books which have any importance for us as Caesar did for the written scroll with which he jumped into the sea or Paul for his parchment at Troas.[14]

Did not the artist who succeeded in throwing a lentil through the eye of a needle have in a bushel of lentils enough for the exercise of his acquired skill?[g] One would like to put this question to all scholars who

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[13] "Was not the scholastic Thomas perhaps chosen to become the apostle to the Peripatetics who had not yet submitted to the faith and were not yet tamed? A conceited and self-willed company, averse to authority, always building on reason and always inquiring after the Why. —I believe that this last mission of Thomas Aquinas was not futile." *The Christian Socrates*, by Balzac [Jean Louis Guez de], Discourse V.

[14] II Tim. 4:13.

die Werke der Alten nicht klüger, als jener die Linsen zu brauchen wißen. Wenn wir mehr hätten, als uns die Zeit hat schenken wollen; so würden wir selbst genöthiget werden unsere Ladungen über Bord zu werfen, unsere Bibliothecken in Brand zu stecken, oder es wie die Holländer mit dem Gewürz zu machen[15].

Mich wundert daß noch keiner soviel über die Historie gewagt, als Bacon für die Physik gethan. Bollingbroke giebt seinem Schüler den Rath, die ältere Geschichte überhaupt wie die heydnische Götterlehre und als ein poetisch Wörterbuch zu studieren. Doch vielleicht ist die ganze Historie mehr Mythologie, als es dieser Philosoph meynt, und gleich der Natur ein versiegelt Buch, ein verdecktes Zeugnis, ein Räthsel, das sich nicht auflösen läßt, ohne mit einem andern Kalbe, als unserer Vernunft zu pflügen.

Meine Absicht ist es nicht, ein Historiograph des Sokrates zu seyn; ich schreibe blos seine Denkwürdigkeiten wie Düclos dergleichen zur Geschichte des XVIIIten Jahrhunderts für die lange Weile des schönen Publicums herausgegeben.

Es liesse sich freylich ein so sinnreicher Versuch über das Leben Sokrates schreiben als Blackwell über den Homer geliefert. Sollte der Vater der Weltweisheit nicht dieser Ehre näher gewesen seyn als der Vater der Dichtkunst? Was Cooper herausgegeben ist nichts als eine Schulübung, die den Eckel so wohl einer Lob- als Streit-Schrift mit sich führt.

Sokrates besuchte öfters die Werkstätte eines Gerbers[16], der sein Freund war, und wie der Wirth des Apostel Petrus zu Joppe Simon hieß. Der Handwerker hatte den ersten Einfall die Gespräche des Sokrates aufzuschreiben. Dieser erkannte sich vielleicht in denselben besser als in Platons, bey deren Lesung er gestutzt und gefragt haben soll: Was hat dieser junge Mensch im Sinn aus mir zu machen? — — Wenn ich nur so gut als Simon der Gerber meinen Held verstehe!

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[15] V. Melanges interessans et curieux. Tom. X.
[16] S. Wolken S. 95.

do not know how to use the works of the ancients more sensibly than that person knew how to use lentils. If we possessed more than time has chosen to give us, we ourselves would be compelled to throw our cargoes overboard, to set fire to our libraries, or to proceed like the Dutch with their spices.[15, a]

I am surprised that no one has yet undertaken to do as much for history as Bacon[b] has accomplished for physics. Bolingbroke[c] gives his pupil the advice to study ancient history in general as heathen mythology and as a poetic lexicon. But perhaps all history is more mythology than this philosopher thinks, and is, like nature, a book that is sealed, a hidden witness, a riddle which cannot be solved unless we plow with another heifer than our reason.

It is not my intention to be Socrates' historiographer. I am simply writing his memorabilia just as Duclos[d] published a comparable work on the history of the eighteenth century to alleviate the boredom of the polite public.

Just as clever an essay could be written on the life of Socrates as that which Blackwell[e] has provided on Homer. Should not the father of philosophy be more entitled to this honor than the father of poetry? What Cooper[f] has published is nothing but a school exercise, which is characterized by the offensiveness of a eulogy on the one side and a polemic writing on the other.

Socrates often visited the workshop of a tanner[16] who was his friend, and, like the host of the Apostle Peter at Joppa, was named Simon. The artisan was the first to have the idea of writing down the conversations of Socrates. The latter perhaps recognized himself better in them than in those of Plato, upon the reading of which he is supposed to have asked in surprise, "What does this young man intend to make of me? —If I only understand my hero as well as Simon the Tanner!"

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[15] See *Interesting and Curious Miscellanea*, Volume X.

[16] See *The Clouds*, p. 95 [of Nadler text].

Erster Abschnitt.

Sokrates hatte nicht umsonst einen Bildhauer[17] und eine Wehmutter zu Eltern gehabt. Sein Unterricht ist jederzeit mit den Hebammenkünsten[18] verglichen worden. Man vergnügt sich noch diesen Einfall zu wiederholen, ohne daß man selbigen als das Saamkorn einer fruchtbaren Wahrheit hätte aufgehen lassen. Dieser Ausdruck ist nicht blos tropisch, sondern zugleich ein Knäuel vortreflicher Begriffe, die jeder Lehrer zum Leitfaden in der Erziehung des Verstandes nöthig hat. Wie der Mensch nach der Gleichheit Gottes erschaffen worden, so scheint der Leib eine Figur oder Bild der Seelen zu seyn[19]. Wenn uns unser Gebein verholen ist, weil wir im Verborgenen gemacht, weil wir gebildet werden unten in der Erde; wie viel mehr werden unsere Begriffe im Verborgenen gemacht, und können als Gliedmassen unsers Verstandes betrachtet werden. Daß ich sie Gliedmaassen des Verstandes nenne, hindert nicht, jeden Begrif als eine besondere und ganze Geburt selbst anzusehen. Sokrates war also bescheiden genung seine Schulweisheit mit der Kunst eines alten Weibes zu vergleichen, welches blos der Arbeit der Mutter und ihrer zeitigen Frucht zu Hülfe kommt, und beyden Handreichung thut.

Die Kraft der Trägheit und die ihr entgegengesetzt scheinende Kraft des Stolzes, die man durch so viel Erscheinungen und Beobachtungen veranlasset worden in unserm Willen anzunehmen, bringen die Unwissenheit, und die daraus entspringende Irrthümer und Vorurtheile nebst allen ihren schwesterlichen Leidenschaften hervor. Von dieser Seite ahmte also Sokrates seinen Vater nach, einen Bildhauer, der, indem er wegnimmt und hauet, was am Holze nicht seyn soll, eben dadurch die Form des Bildes fördert[20]. Daher hatten die grossen Männer seiner Zeit zureichenden Grund über ihn zu schreyen, daß er alle Eichen ihrer Wälder fälle, alle ihre Klötzer verderbe, und aus ihrem Holze nichts als Späne zu machen verstünde.

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[17] Sophroniscum Socrates exspirare non patitur. Seneca de Benef. Lib. III.

[18] προσφερϐ ϐν προς με ως προς μαιας υιον και αυτον μαιευτικον. pp. Socrates zum Thaetet im Plato.

[19] Siehe die folgende Anmerkung.

[20] Worte unsers Kirchenvaters Martin Luthers, bey dessen Namen ein richtig und fein denkender Schwärmer jüngst uns erinnert hat, daß wir von diesem grossen Mann nicht nur in der deutschen Sprache, sondern überhaupt nicht so viel gelernt als wir hätten sollen und können. Klopstock im Nordischen Aufseher.

It was significant that Socrates had a sculptor[17] and a midwife as parents. His teaching has always been compared with the art of midwifery.[18] One is still content to repeat this idea without allowing it to develop like the seed of a fruitful truth. This expression is not merely figurative, but is at the same time a clew of excellent concepts that every teacher needs as a guiding thread in the education of the understanding. As man was created after the likeness of God, the body seems to be a figure or image of the soul.[19] If our frame is hidden from us, because we were made in secret, because we are wrought in the depths of the earth, how much more are our concepts evolved in secret, and subject to being regarded as members of our understanding. That I call them members of the understanding does not prevent our regarding each concept as a special and complete birth in itself. Socrates was, therefore, modest enough to compare his theoretical wisdom with the skill of an old woman who merely comes to the aid of the mother's labor and her timely birth, and renders assistance to both.

The power of indolence and its apparently antithetical power of pride, which we have been forced, by virtue of so many phenomena and observations, to assume as present in our will, produce ignorance as well as the errors and prejudices which spring from it with all their related passions. In this connection Socrates therefore imitated his father, a sculptor, who, by removing and cutting away what should not be in the wood, precisely in so doing, furthers the form of the image.[20] Therefore, the great men of his time had sufficient reason to cry out against him that he was cutting down all the oaks of their forests, spoiling all of their logs, and that he only knew how to make chips out of their wood.

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[17] "It is Socrates that does not allow the name of Sophroniscus to die." Seneca *On Benefits* iii.

[18] "Apply, then, to me, remembering that I am the son of a midwife and have myself a midwife's gifts. . . ." Socrates to Theaetetus, in Plato.

[19] See the note following.

[20] "Words of our church father Martin Luther, at the mention of whose name a correct and clear-thinking enthusiast has recently reminded us that we have not learned from this great man as much as we should and could have, not only in the German language, but in general." Klopstock, in the *Nordischer Aufseher*.

Sokrates wurde vermuthlich ein Bildhauer, weil sein Vater einer war. Daß er in dieser Kunst nicht mittelmässig geblieben, hat man daraus geschlossen, weil zu Athen seine drey Bildsäulen der Gratien aufgehoben worden. Man war ehmals gewohnt gewesen diese Göttinnen zu kleiden; den altväterischen Gebrauch hatte Sokrates nachgeahmt, und seine Gratien wiedersprachen der Costume des damaligen Götterssystems und der sich darauf gründenden schönen Künste. Wie Sokrates auf diese Neuerung gekommen; ob es eine Eingebung seines Genius, oder eine Eitelkeit seine Arbeiten zu unterscheiden, oder die Einfalt einer natürlichen Schaamhaftigkeit gewesen, die einem andächtigen Athenienser wunderlich vorkommen muste; weiß ich nicht. Es ist aber nur gar zu wahrscheinlich, daß diese neugekleideten Gratien so wenig ohne Anfechtung werden geblieben seyn als die neugekleideten Gratien unserer heutigen Dichtkunst.

Hier ist der Ort die Uebersichtigkeit einiger gegen das menschliche Geschlecht und dessen Aufkommen gar zu witzig gesinnter Patrioten zu ahnden, die sich die Verdienste des Bildhauers im Sokrates so groß vorstellen, daß sie den Weisen darüber verkennen, die den Bildhauer vergöttern um desto füglicher über des Zimmermanns Sohn spotten zu können. Wenn sie in Ernst an Sokrates glauben; so sind seine Sprüche Zeugnisse wieder sie. Diese neuen Athenienser sind Nachkommen seiner Ankläger und Giftmischer, abgeschmacktere Verläumder und grausamere Mörder dann ihre Väter.

Bey der Kunst, in welcher Sokrates erzogen worden, war sein Auge an der Schönheit und ihren Verhältnissen so gewohnt und geübt, daß sein Geschmack an wohlgebildeten Jünglingen uns nicht befremden darf. Wenn man die Zeiten des Heydenthums[21] kennt, in denen er lebte; so ist es eine thörichte Mühe ihn von einem Laster weiß zu brennen, das unsere Christenheit an Sokrates übersehen sollte, wie die artige Welt an einem Toußaint die kleinen Romane seiner Leidenschaften als Schönfleckchen seiner Sitten. Sokrates scheint ein aufrichtiger Mann gewesen zu seyn, dessen Handlungen von dem Grund seines Herzens, und nicht von dem Eindruck, den andere davon haben bestimmt, werden. Er leugnete nicht, daß seine verborgene Neigungen mit den Entdeckungen des Gesichtsdeuters einträfen; er gestand daß dessen Brille recht gesehen hätte. Ein Mensch, der überzeugt ist, daß er nichts weiß, kann, ohne sich selbst Lügen zu strafen, kein Kenner seines guten Herzens seyn. Daß er das

[21] Röm. I.

Socrates presumably became a sculptor because his father was one. That he did not remain mediocre in this art has been inferred from the fact that his three statues of the Graces were preserved at Athens. It had been the custom earlier to clothe these goddesses. Socrates had imitated the outmoded custom, and his Graces contradicted the fashionable system of divinity prevailing at that time and the fine arts based upon it. How Socrates arrived at this innovation —whether it was an inspiration of his genius or a bit of vanity designed to make his works distinctive or the simplicity of a natural modesty, which must have appeared odd to a pious Athenian—I do not know. It is, however, only too probable that these newly dressed Graces remained just as little without opposition as the newly dressed Graces[a] of our contemporary poetry.

This is the place to requite the myopia of some patriots who are entirely too facetious about the human race and its emergence, who imagine the merits of the sculptor in Socrates to be so great that, as a result, they fail to recognize the philosopher, who deify the sculptor in order to ridicule more conveniently the son of the carpenter. If they seriously believe in Socrates, then his sayings are witnesses against them. These modern Athenians are the progeny of his accusers and poisoners, more absurd slanderers and more cruel murderers than their forebears.

Socrates' eye was, as a result of the art in which he had been trained, so accustomed to and practiced in beauty and its relationships that his taste for handsome youths should not surprise us. If one is acquainted with the pagan age[21] in which he lived, it is fatuous to attempt to absolve him of a vice which our Christianity ought to overlook in Socrates, as the elegant world overlooked in a Toussaint[b] his little novels of passion, regarding them as beauty spots of his morals. Socrates seems to have been a sincere person, whose actions were determined from the depth of his heart and not from the impression which others had of them. He did not deny that his hidden inclinations corresponded with the discoveries of the physiognomist;[c] he confessed that the spectacles of the latter had seen correctly. A man who is convinced that he knows nothing cannot, without giving the lie to himself, be a connoisseur of his good intentions.

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[21] Rom. 1[:27]

ihm beschuldigte Laster gehaßt, wissen wir aus seinem Eyfer gegen dasselbe, und in seiner Geschichte sind Merkmale seiner Unschuld, die ihn bey nahe loßsprechen. Man kann keine lebhafte Freundschaft ohne Sinnlichkeit fühlen, und eine metaphysische Liebe sündigt vielleicht gröber am Nervensaft, als eine thierische an Fleisch und Blut. Sokrates hat also ohne Zweifel für seine Lust an einer Harmonie der äusserlichen und innerlichen Schönheit, in sich selbst leiden und streiten müssen. Ueberdem wurden Schönheit, Stärke des Leibes und Geistes nebst dem Reichthum an Kindern und Gütern in dem jugendlichen Alter der Welt für Sinnbilder göttlicher Eigenschaften und Fußstapfen göttlicher Gegenwart erklärt. Wir denken iezt zu abstrakt und männlich die menschliche Natur nach dergleichen Zufälligkeiten zu beurtheilen. Selbst die Religion lehrt uns einen Gott, der kein Ansehen der Person hat; ohngeachtet der Misverstand des Gesetzes die Juden an gleiche Vorurtheile hierinn mit den Heyden gebunden hielt. Ihre gesunde Vernunft, woran es den Juden und Griechen so wenig fehlte als unsern Christen und Muselmännern, stieß sich daran, daß der Schönste unter den Menschenkindern ihnen zum Erlöser versprochen war, und daß ein Mann der Schmerzen, voller Wunden und Striemen, der Held ihrer Erwartung seyn sollte. Die Heyden waren durch die klugen Fabeln ihrer Dichter an dergleichen Wiedersprüchen gewohnt; bis ihre Sophisten, wie unsere, solche als einen Vatermord verdammten, den man an den ersten Grundsätzen der menschlichen Erkenntnis begeht.

Von solchem Wiederspruch finden wir ein Beyspiel an dem Delphischen Orakel, das denjenigen für den weisesten erkannte, der gleichwol von sich gestand, daß er nichts wisse. Strafte Sokrates das Orakel Lügen, oder das Orakel ihn? Die stärksten Geister unserer Zeit haben für diesmal die Priesterinn für eine Wahrsagerinn gehalten, und sich innerlich über ihre Aehnlichkeit mit dem Vater Sokrates gefreut, der es für gleich anständig hielt einen Idioten zu spielen oder Göttern zu glauben. Ist übrigens der Verdacht gegründet, daß sich Apoll nach den Menschen richte, weil diese zu dumm sind sich nach ihn zu richten: so handelt er als ein Gott, dem es leichter fällt zu philippisiren oder zu sokratisiren als uns Apollos zu seyn.

Die Ueberlieferung eines Götterspruches will aber so wenig als ein Komet sagen für einen Philosophen von heutigem Geschmack. Wir müssen nach seiner Meynung in dem Buche, welches das thörichste Volk auf uns gebracht, und in den Ueberbleibseln der Griechen und Römer, so bald es auf Orakel, Erscheinungen, Träume und dergleichen

That he hated the vice of which he was accused we know from his zeal in opposition to it, and there are in his personal history evidences of his innocence that almost exonerate him. One cannot feel a lively friendship without sensuousness, and a metaphysical love sins perhaps more grievously against the nervous fluid[a] than does an animalistic love against flesh and blood. Thus, Socrates doubtless had to suffer and strive inwardly with himself as a result of his delight in a harmony of external and internal beauty. Moreover, beauty, strength of body and mind, as well as an abundance of children and goods, were, in the early age of the world, declared to be symbols of divine qualities and footprints of divine presence. We now think too abstractly and in too masculine a fashion to judge human nature according to such contingencies. Even religion teaches us to believe in a God who shows no respect of persons, although misunderstanding of the law kept the Jews bound to the same prejudices as the heathen in this connection. Their common sense, which the Jews and Greeks lacked no more than do our Christians and Moslems,[b] was offended that the fairest of the sons of men was promised to them as a redeemer, and that a man of sorrows, full of wounds and stripes, should be the hero of their expectations. Through the cleverly devised myths of their poets, the heathen were accustomed to such contradictions until their Sophists, like ours, condemned such things as a parricide which one commits against the first principles of human knowledge.

We find such a contradiction in the Delphic oracle, who recognized him as the wisest who nevertheless confessed of himself that he knew nothing. Did Socrates belie the oracle or the oracle belie him? On this occasion the most capable intellects of our time considered the priestess to be a prophetess, and they inwardly rejoiced at her similarity with Father Socrates, who regarded as equally respectable playing the role of a naïve person[c] and believing in gods. If, incidentally, the suspicion that Apollo accommodated himself to men because the latter were too stupid to accommodate themselves to him is well founded, then he acts like a god for whom it is easier to Philippize or to Socratize than it is for us to be Apollos.

The transmission of a divine oracle means, however, as little as the appearance of a comet for a philosopher of modern taste. In the book which the most foolish people handed down to us and in the relics of the Greeks and Romans we must, just as soon as it is a matter of oracles, appearances, dreams, and such

Meteoren[22] ankommt, diese Mährchen unserer Kinder und Ammen (denn Kinder und Ammen sind alle verfloßne Jahrhunderte gegen unser lebendes in der Kunst zu erfahren und zu denken)[23] absondern, oder selbige als die Schnörkel unserer Alpendichter bewundern. Gesetzt, dieses würde alles so reichlich eingeräumt; als man unverschämt seyn könte es zu fordern: so wird Bayle, einer ihrer Propheten, zu dessen Füssen diese Kreter[24] mit so viel Anstand zu gähnen[25] gewohnt sind, weil ihr Gamaliel[26] gähnt, diesen Zweiflern antworten; daß, wenn alle diese Begebenheiten mit dem Einfluß der Gestirne in gleichem Grade der Falschheit stehen, wenn alles gleichartig erlogen und erdacht ist, dennoch der Wahn, die Einbildung und der Glaube daran zu ihrer Zeit und an ihrem Ort würklich grössere Wunder veranlaßt habe und veranlassen könne, als man den Kometen, Orakelsprüchen und Träumen selbst jemals zugeschrieben hat noch zuschreiben wird. In diesem Verstande sollten aber die Zweifler mehr Recht als unsere Empyriker behalten, weil es menschlicher und Gott anständiger aussieht, uns durch unsere eigene Grillen und Hirngespinste, als durch eine so entfernte und kostbare Maschinerey wie das Firmament[27] und die Geisterwelt[28] unseren blöden Augen vorkommt, zu seinen Absichten zu regieren.

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[22] Plinius lib. 28. c. 2 machte schon den Schluß: *ostentorum vires* in nostra potestate esse, ac prout quaeque accepta sint, ita valere —— In *Augurum* certe disciplina constat, neque diras neque vlla auspicia pertinere ad eos, qui quamque rem ingredientes, obseruare se ea negauerint. Quo *munere diuinae indulgentiae* maius nullum est.

[23] Das heißt Essays und Pensees oder Loisirs zu schreiben.

[24] Φιλοσοφια εστι παλαιοτατη τε και πλειστη των Ελληνων εν Κρητη τε και εν Λακεδαιμονι, και σοφισται πλειστοι γης εκει εισιν· αλλ' εξαρνευνται και σχηματιζονται αμαθεις ειναι, ινα μη καταδηλοι ωσιν, οτι σοφια των Ελληνων περιεισιν. Sokrates in Platons *Protagoras.*

[25] Critias in Platons *Charmides.* ο Κριτιας ακεσας ταυτα και ιδων με απορευντα, ωσπερ οι τες χασμωμενες κατ' αντικρυ ορωντες ταυτον τετο ξυμπασχεσι, κακεινος εδοξε μοι υπ' εμε απορευντος αναγκασθηναι και αυτος αλωναι υπο απορίας.

[26] Bayle eyferte für die Religionsduldung wie dieser Pharisäer Act. V.

[27] Matth. II. 2.

[28] Luc. II. 9. 13.

meteors,[22] remove, in his opinion, these fairy tales of our children and nurses (since all past centuries are, in comparison to our present one, children and nurses in the art of experience and thought)[23] or admire them as we do the flourishes of our Alpine poets.[a] Suppose we grant all this as freely as impudence could demand: in such a case, Bayle,[b] one of their prophets, at whose feet these Cretans[24] are accustomed to yawn[25] with so much decorum because their Gamaliel[26] yawns, will answer these doubters that, if all these events involving the influence of the stars are false to the same degree, if everything is fabricated and invented equally, nevertheless, the illusion, the imagination, and belief in them in their time and place has actually caused greater miracles, and is still able to cause them, than one has ever ascribed or will ever ascribe, even to comets, oracles, and dreams. In this sense, however, the doubters should turn out to be more correct than our empiricists, because it appears more human and decent of God to govern us according to His purposes by means of our own whims and fancies rather than by means of such remote and costly machinery as the firmament[27] and the spirit world[28] seem to our weak eyes.

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[22] Pliny xxviii. 2, concluded "that the power of omens is really in our own control, and that their influence is conditional upon the way we receive each. At any rate, in the teaching of the augurs it is a fundamental principle that neither evil omens nor any auspices affect those who at the outset of the undertaking declare that they take no notice of them; no greater instance of the divine mercy could be found than in this boon."

[23] That is, to write essays and leisurely thoughts.[c]

[24] "Now philosophy is of more ancient and abundant growth in Crete and Lacedaemon than in any other part of Greece, and sophists are more numerous in those regions: but the people there deny it and make pretense of ignorance, in order to prevent the discovery that it is by wisdom that they have ascendancy over the rest of the Greeks. . . ." Socrates, in Plato's *Protagoras*.

[25] Critias, in Plato's *Charmides*. "Now when Critias heard this and saw me in a difficulty, he seemed to me—just as the sight of someone yawning opposite causes people to be affected in the same way—to be compelled by the sense of my difficulty to be caught in a difficulty himself."

[26] [Pierre] Bayle was zealous in the cause of religious toleration like this Pharisee. Acts 5.

[27] Matt. 2:2.

[28] Luke 2:9, 13.

Zweyter Abschnitt.

Ein Mann, der Geld zu verlieren hatte, und vermuthlich auch Geld zu verlieren verstand, den die Geschichte Kriton nennt, soll die Unkosten getragen haben unsern Bildhauer in einen Sophisten zu verwandeln. Wer der etymologischen Mine seines Namens traut, wird diesen Anschlag einem weitsehenden Urtheil, ein leichtgläubiger Schüler der täglichen Erfahrung hingegen einem blinden Geschmack an Sokrates zu schreiben.

Die Reyhe der Lehrmeister und Lehrmeisterinnen, die man dem Sokrates giebt, und die Kriton ohne Zweifel besolden muste, ist ansehnlich genung; und doch blieb Sokrates unwissend[29]. Das freche Geständniß darin war gewissermassen eine Beleidigung, die man aber dem aufrichtigen Klienten und Kandidaten scheint vergeben zu haben, weil sie auf ihn selbst am schwersten zurück fiel. Das Loos der Unwissenheit und die Blöße derselben macht eben so unversöhnliche Feinde als die Ueberlegenheit an Verdiensten und die Schau davon. War Sokrates wirklich unwissend, so muste ihm auch die Schande unwissend seyn, die vernünftige Leute sich ergrübeln, unwissend zu scheinen.

Ein Mensch, der nichts weiß und der nichts hat, sind Zwillinge eines Schicksals. Der Fürwitzige und Argwöhnische zeichnen und foltern den ersten als einen Betrüger; wie der Gläubiger und Räuber den letzten, unterdessen der Bauerstolz des reichen Polyhistors beyde verachtet. Eben daher bleibt die philosophische Göttin des Glücks eine bewährte Freundinn des Dummen, und durch ihre Vorsorge entgehen die Einfälle des Armen den Motten länger als blanke Kleider und rauschende Schlafröcke, als die Hypothesen und Formeln der Kalender- System- und Projektmacher der Stern- und Staatsseher.

Sokrates scheint von seiner Unwissenheit[30] so viel geredt zu haben als ein Hypochondriaker von seiner eingebildeten Krankheit. Wie man dies Uebel selbst kennen muß um einen Milzsüchtigen zu verstehen und aus ihm klug zu werden; so gehört vielleicht eine Sympathie der Unwissenheit dazu von der sokratischen einen Begrif zu haben.

Erkenne dich selbst![31] sagte die Thür jenes berühmten Tempels allen denen, die hereingiengen dem Gott der Weisheit zu

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[29] κινδυνευομεν, ω Μενων, εγω τε και συ φαυλοι τινες ειναι ανδρες, και σε τε Γοργιας, ουχ ικανως πεπαιδευκεναι και εμε Προδικος.
Sokrates in Platons Menon.

[30] Alcibiades in Platons Symposio.

[31] Kritias in Platons Charmides.

Second Section.

A man who had money to lose, and presumably understood also how to lose money, whom history calls Crito, is said to have borne the expenses of transforming our sculptor into a Sophist.[a] Whoever trusts the etymological mien of his name[b] will ascribe this project to a farsighted judgment, but on the other hand a credulous student of everyday experience will ascribe it to a blind predilection for Socrates.

The succession of men and women teachers who were assigned to Socrates, and whose fees Crito doubtless had to pay, is impressive enough; and yet Socrates remained ignorant.[29] The impertinent confession of ignorance was to a certain extent an insult, which, nevertheless, one seems to have forgiven the honest client and candidate, because it reflected most seriously upon him. The fate of ignorance and its privation make just as irreconcilable enemies as superiority in achievements and the display of them. If Socrates was really ignorant, the shame which reasonable people feign in order to appear ignorant was necessarily unconscious with him.[c]

A man who knows nothing and a man who has nothing are twins of a single destiny. The meddlesome and the suspicious brand the former as a deceiver, just as the creditor and the robber do the latter, while the boorish pride[d] of the wealthy polyhistorian despises both. For precisely this reason does the philosophical goddess of good luck remain a proven friend of the simpleton, and as a result of her foresight the poor man's ideas escape the moths longer than fine clothes and rustling dressinggowns, longer than the hypotheses and formulas of the makers of calenders, systems, and projects among the astronomers and court astrologers.[e]

Socrates seems to have talked as much about his ignorance[30] as a hypochondriac about his imagined illness. Just as one must know this malady himself in order to understand a hypochondriac and to make sense of him, so perhaps a sympathy with ignorance is required in order to have an idea of the Socratic ignorance.

Know thyself![31] the door of that famous temple proclaimed to all those who went in to sacrifice to the god of wisdom,

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[29] "I fear, Meno, you and I are but poor creatures, and Gorgias has been as faulty an educator of you as Prodicus of me." Socrates in Plato's *Meno*.

[30] Alcibiades, in Plato's *Symposium*.

[31] Critias, in Plato's *Charmides*.

opfern und ihn über ihre kleinen Händel um Rath zu fragen. Alle lasen, bewunderten und wusten auswendig diesen Spruch. Man trug ihn wie der Stein, in den er gegraben war, vor der Stirn, ohne den Sinn davon zu begreifen. Der Gott lachte ohne Zweifel unter seinen güldenen Bart, als ihm die küzliche Aufgabe zu Sokrates Zeiten vorgelegt wurde: Wer der weiseste unter allen damals lebenden Menschen wäre? Sophokles und Euripides würden nicht so grosse Muster für die Schaubühne, ohne Zergliederungskunst des menschlichen Herzens, geworden seyn. Sokrates übertraf sie aber beyde an Weisheit, weil er in der Selbsterkenntnis weiter als jene gekommen war, und wuste, daß er nichts wuste. Apoll antwortete jedem schon vor der Schwelle; wer weise wäre und wie man es werden könne? jezt war die Frage übrig: Wer Sich Selbst erkenne? und woran man sich in dieser Prüfung zu halten hätte? Geh, Chärephon[32], lern es von Deinem Freunde. Kein Sterblicher kann die Achtsamkeit und Entäusserung eines Lehrmeisters sittsamer treiben, als womit Apoll seine Anbeter zum Verstande seiner Geheimniße gängelte. Alle diese Winke und Bruchstücke der ältesten Geschichte und Tradition bestätigen die Beobachtung, welche Paulus und Barnabas den Lykaoniern vorhielten, daß Gott auch unter ihnen sich selbst nicht unbezeuget gelassen, auch ihnen vom Himmel Regen und fruchtbare Zeiten gegeben[33]. Mit wie viel Wahrheit singt also nicht unsere Kirche:

Wohl uns des feinen HErren!

Ein sorgfältiger Ausleger muß die Naturforscher nachahmen. Wie diese einen Körper in allerhand willkührliche Verbindungen mit andern Körpern versezen und künstliche Erfahrungen erfinden, seine Eigenschaften auszuholen; so macht es jener mit seinem Texte. Ich habe des Sokrates Sprüchwort mit der Delphischen Ueberschrift zusammen gehalten; jezt will ich einige andere Versuche thun, die Energie desselben sinnlicher zu machen.

Die Wörter haben ihren Werth, wie die Zahlen von der Stelle, wo sie stehen und ihre Begriffe sind in ihren Bestimmungen und Verhältnissen, gleich den Münzen nach Ort und Zeit wandelbar. Wenn die

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[32] Χαιρεφων η νυκτηρις *Aristoph.* Ορνιθες — — Σωκρατης ο Μηλιος κα Χαιρεφων, ος οιδε τα ψυλλων ιχνη. Id.

[33] Apostelgesch. XIV.

and to ask him for advice concerning their petty affairs. Everyone read, admired, and knew this saying by heart. They wore it on their foreheads, like the stone on which it was engraven, without understanding the meaning of it. The god doubtless laughed under his golden beard, when the ticklish task was presented to him in the days of Socrates of determining who among all the people living at that time might be the wisest. Sophocles and Euripides would not have become such great models for the stage without the art of analyzing the human heart. Socrates excelled them both in wisdom, however, because he had advanced further in self-knowledge than they, and knew that he knew nothing. Apollo answered everyone even before the threshold as to who was wise, and how anyone could become so. Now the question remained: who knew himself? and upon what could one rely in this examination? Go, Chaerephon,[32] learn it from your friend. No mortal can practice the attentiveness and renunciation of a tutor more ethically than Apollo did in leading his worshipers gradually to an understanding of his mysteries. All these hints and fragments of the most ancient history and tradition confirm the observation which Paul and Barnabas made to the Lycaonians that, even among them, God had not left himself without a witness, that he had also given them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons.[33] How truthfully, therefore, does our church sing:

Blessed are we in our gracious Lord!

A careful interpreter must imitate the natural scientists. Just as the latter place a body in all sorts of arbitrary combinations with other bodies, and devise artificial experiences in order to determine its properties, so the former does with his text. I have placed the saying of Socrates beside the Delphic inscription; I shall now make other attempts to render its energy more perceptible.

Like numbers, words derive their value from the position which they occupy, and their concepts are, like coins, mutable in their definitions and relations, according to time and place. When the

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[32] Chaerephon is called the "bat." Aristoph[anes] *The Birds*. "Socrates from Melos and Chaerephon who knows the trail of the fleas." *Ibid*.

[33] Acts 14[:17].

Schlange der Eva beweiſet: Ihr werdet ſeyn wie Gott, und Jehova weisſagt: Siehe! Adam iſt worden als Unſer einer; wenn Salomo ausruft: Alles iſt eitel! und ein alter Geck es ihm nachpfeift: ſo ſieht man, daß einerley Wahrheiten mit einem ſehr entgegen geſetzten Geiſt ausgeſprochen werden können.

Ueberdem leidet jeder Satz, wenn er auch aus einem Munde und Herzen quillt, unendlich viel Nebenbegriffe, welche ihm die geben, ſo ihn annehmen, auf eben die Art als die Lichtſtrahlen dieſe oder jene Farbe werden nach der Fläche, von der ſie in unſer Auge zurück fallen. Wenn Sokrates dem Kriton durch ſein: Nichts weiß ich! Rechenſchaft ablegte, mit eben dieſem Worte die gelehrten und neugierigen Athenienſer abwieß, und ſeinen ſchönen Jünglingen die Verleugnung ihrer Eitelkeit zu erleichtern, und ihr Vertrauen durch ſeine Gleichheit mit ihnen zu gewinnen ſuchte: ſo würden die Umſchreibungen, die man nach dieſem dreyfachen Geſichtspunkte von ſeinem Wahlſpruche machen müſte, ſo ungleich einander ausſehen, als bisweilen drey Brüder, die Söhne eines leiblichen Vaters ſind.

Wir wollen annehmen, daß wir einem Unbekannten ein Kartenſpiel anböthen. Wenn dieſer uns antwortete: Ich ſpiele nicht; ſo würden wir dies entweder auslegen müſſen, daß er das Spiel nicht verſtünde, oder eine Abneigung dagegen hätte, die in oekonomiſchen, ſittlichen oder andern Gründen liegen mag. Geſetzt aber ein ehrlicher Mann, von dem man wüſte, daß er alle mögliche Stärke im Spiel beſäſſe und in den Regeln ſo wohl als verbotenen Künſten desſelben bewandert wäre, der ein Spiel aber niemals anders als auf den Fuß eines unſchuldigen Zeitvertreibes lieben und treiben könnte, würde in einer Geſellſchaft von feinen Betrügern, die für gute Spieler gelten, und denen er von beyden Seiten gewachſen wäre, zu einer Parthey mit ihnen aufgefordert. Wenn dieſer ſagte: Ich ſpiele nicht, ſo würden wir mit ihm den Leuten ins Geſicht ſehen müſſen, mit denen er redet, und ſeine Worte alſo ergänzen können: „Ich ſpiele nicht, nämlich, mit ſolchen als ihr ſeyd, welche die Geſetze des Spiels brechen und das Glück desſelben ſtehlen. Wenn ihr ein Spiel anbiethet; ſo iſt unſer gegenſeitiger Vergleich den Eigenſinn des Zufalls für unſern Meiſter zu erkennen, und ihr nennt die Wiſſenſchaft eurer geſchwinden Finger Zufall, und ich muß ihn dafür annehmen, wenn ich will, oder die Gefahr wagen euch zu beleidigen, oder die Schande wählen euch nachzuahmen. Hättet ihr mir den Antrag gethan mit einander zu verſuchen, wer der beſte Taſchenſpieler von uns in Karten wäre; ſo hätte ich anders antworten, und vielleicht mitſpielen wollen, um euch zu

serpent says to Eve: "You will be like God"; and Jehovah prophesies: "Behold! Adam has become like one of us"; when Solomon cries out: "All is vanity!" and an old fop[a] parrots it after him, then one sees that the same truths can be expressed in quite the opposite spirit.

Moreover, every sentence, even if it proceeds from the same mouth and heart, is subject to an infinite number of subordinate notions, which are given to it by those to whom it is addressed, in precisely the same way as rays of light become this or that color to our eyes depending upon the surface from which they are reflected. If Socrates rendered an accounting to Crito with his statement: "I know nothing," if he turned away, with precisely this dictum, the learned and curious Athenians, and, while seeking to make it easier for his handsome youths to renounce their vanity, he sought to gain their confidence through his equality with them, then the restatements of his motto which one would have to make according to this threefold point of view would appear as different as three brothers who are sons of the same father sometimes do.

Let us assume that we invited an unknown person to a game of cards. If this person answered us, "I don't play," we would either interpret this to mean that he did not understand the game or that he had an aversion to it which arose from economic, ethical, or other reasons. Let us imagine, however, that an honorable man, who was known to possess every possible skill in the game, and who was well versed in its rules and in its forbidden tricks, but who could like a game and participate in it only when it was an innocent pastime, were invited into a company of clever swindlers, who were known as good players and to whom he was equal on both scores, to join them in a game. If he said, "I do not play," we would have to join him in looking the people with whom he was talking straight in the face, and would be able to supplement his words as follows: "I don't play, that is, with people such as you, who break the rules of the game, and rob it of its pleasure. If you offer to play a game, our mutual agreement, then, is that we recognize the capriciousness of chance as our master; and you call the science of your nimble fingers chance, and I must accept it as such, if I will, or run the risk of insulting you or choose the shame of imitating you. If you had proposed to me that we hold a contest to determine which one of us was the best sleight-of-hand artist at cards, then I would have wanted to answer differently, and perhaps to join in a game in order to

zeigen, daß ihr so schlecht gelernt habt Karten machen, als ihr versteht die euch gegeben werden nach der Kunst zu werfen.“ In diese rauhe Töne läßt sich die Meynung des Sokrates auflösen, wenn er den Sophisten, den Gelehrten seiner Zeit, sagte: Ich weiß nichts. Daher kam es, daß dies Wort ein Dorn in ihren Augen und eine Geissel auf ihren Rücken war. Alle Einfälle des Sokrates, die nichts als Auswürfe und Absonderungen seiner Unwissenheit waren, schienen ihnen so fürchterlich als die Haare an dem Haupte Medusens, dem Nabel der Egide.

Die Unwissenheit des Sokrates war Empfindung. Zwischen Empfindung aber und einen Lehrsatz ist ein grösserer Unterscheid als zwischen einem lebenden Thier und anatomischen Gerippe desselben. Die alten und neuen Skeptiker mögen sich noch so sehr in die Löwenhaut der sokratischen Unwissenheit einwickeln; so verrathen sie sich durch ihre Stimme und Ohren. Wissen sie nichts; was braucht die Welt einen gelehrten Beweis davon? Ihr Heucheltrug ist lächerlich und unverschämt. Wer aber so viel Scharfsinn und Beredsamkeit nöthig hat sich selbst von seiner Unwissenheit zu überführen, muß in seinem Herzen einen mächtigen Wiederwillen gegen die Wahrheit derselben hegen.

Unser eigen Daseyn und die Existentz aller Dinge auser uns muß geglaubt[34] und kann auf keine andere Art ausgemacht werden. Was ist gewisser als des Menschen Ende, und von welcher Wahrheit gibt es eine allgemeinere und bewährtere Erkenntnis? Niemand ist gleichwol so klug solche zu glauben, als der, wie Moses zuverstehen giebt, von Gott selbst gelehrt wird zu bedenken, daß er sterben müsse. Was man glaubt, hat daher nicht nöthig bewiesen zu werden, und ein Satz kann noch so unumstößlich bewiesen seyn, ohne deswegen geglaubt zu werden.

Es giebt Beweise[35] von Wahrheiten, die so wenig taugen als die Anwendung, die man von den Wahrheiten selbst machen kann[36]; ja man kann den Beweiß eines Satzes glauben ohne dem Satz selbst Beyfall zu geben. Die Gründe eines Hume mögen noch so triftig seyn, und ihre Wiederlegungen immerhin lauter Lehnsätze und Zweifel: so

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[34] Δει γαρ πιστευειν τον μανθανοντα. Aristoteles περι σοφιστικων ελεγχ lib. 1. cap. 2.

[35] Δυο ειδη θωμεν πειθυς, το μεν πιστιν παρεχομενον ανευ τυ ειδεναι (πειθυς πιστευτικης) το δε επιστημην (πειθυς διδασκαλικης) Sokrates in Platons Gorgia.

[36] Ein Philosoph laß über die Unsterblichkeit der Seelen so überzeugend, daß seine Zuhörer vor Freuden Selbstmörder wurden, wie uns Lactanz erzählt. Augustinus de Civit. Dei I. 22. Cic. Tusc. Quaest. I. 39.

show you that you have learned to fix cards as poorly as you understand how to play those that are dealt to you according to the rules of the game. The opinion of Socrates can be summarized in these blunt words, when he said to the Sophists, the learned men of his time, "I know nothing." Therefore these words were a thorn in their eyes and a scourge on their backs. All of Socrates' ideas, which were nothing more than expectorations and secretions of his ignorance, seemed as frightful to them as the hair of Medusa's head, the knob of the Aegis.[a]

The ignorance of Socrates was sensibility.[b] But between sensibility and a theoretical proposition is a greater difference than between a living animal and its anatomical skeleton. The ancient and modern skeptics may wrap themselves ever so much in the lion skin of Socratic ignorance; nevertheless they betray themselves by their voices and ears. If they know nothing, why does the world need a learned demonstration of it? Their hypocrisy is ridiculous and insolent. Whoever needs so much acumen and eloquence to convince himself of his ignorance, however, must cherish in his heart a powerful repugnance for the truth of it.

Our own existence and the existence of all things outside us must be believed,[34] and cannot be determined in any other way. What is more certain than the end of man, and of what truth is there a more general and better attested knowledge? Nevertheless, no one is wise enough to believe it except the one who, as Moses makes clear, is taught by God himself to number his days. What one believes does not, therefore, have to be proved, and a proposition can be ever so incontrovertibly proven without on that account being believed.

There are proofs[35] of truths which are of as little value as the application which can be made of the truths themselves;[36] indeed, one can believe the proof of a proposition without giving approval to the proposition itself. The reasons of a Hume[c] may be ever so cogent, and the refutations of them only assumptions and doubts;

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[34] "For he who is learning must take things on trust." Aristotle *On Sophistical Refutations* i. 2.

[35] "Then would you have us assume two forms of persuasion—one providing belief without knowledge, and the other sure knowledge?" Socrates, in Plato's *Gorgias*.

[36] A philosopher lectured so convincingly on the immortality of the soul that his hearers joyfully became suicides, as Lactantius tells us. Augustine, *The City of God*, I, 22. Cic[ero] *Tusculan Disputations* i. 39.

gewinnt und verliert der Glaube gleich viel bey dem geschicktesten Rabulisten und ehrlichsten Sachwalter. Der Glaube ist kein Werk der Vernunft und kann daher auch keinem Angrif derselben unterliegen; weil Glauben so wenig durch Gründe geschieht als Schmecken und Sehen.

Die Beziehung und Uebereinstimmung der Begriffe ist eben dasselbe in einer Demonstration, was Verhältnis und Symmetrie der Zahlen und Linien, Schallwürbel und Farben in der musikalischen Composition und Malerey ist. Der Philosoph ist dem Gesetz der Nachahmung so gut unterworfen als der Poet. Für diesen ist seine Muse und ihr Hieroglyphisches Schattenspiel so wahr als die Vernunft und das Lehrgebäude derselben für jenen. Das Schicksal setze den grösten Weltweisen und Dichter in Umstände, wo sie sich beyde selbst fühlen; so verleugnet der eine seine Vernunft und entdeckt uns, daß er keine beste Welt glaubt, so gut er sie auch beweisen kann, und der andere sieht sich seiner Muse und Schutzengel beraubt, bey dem Tode seiner Meta. Die Einbildungskraft, wäre sie ein Sonnenpferd und hätte Flügel der Morgenröthe[37], kann also keine Schöpferinn des Glaubens seyn[38].

Ich weiß für des Sokrates Zeugnis von seiner Unwissenheit kein ehrwürdiger Siegel und zugleich keinen bessern Schlüssel als den Orakelspruch des grossen Lehrers der Heyden:

Ει δε τις δοκει ειδεναι τι ϖδεπω ϖδεν εγνωκε καθως δει γνωναι· Ει δε τις αγαπα τον ΘΕΟΝ ϖτος εγνωται υπ αυτον.

So jemand sich dünken läßt, er wisse etwas, der weiß noch nichts, wie er wissen soll. So aber jemand Gott liebt, der wird von ihm erkannt[39]. —

—— als Sokrates vom Apoll für einen Weisen. Wie aber das Korn aller unserer natürlichen Weisheit verwesen, in Unwissenheit vergehen muß, und wie aus diesem Tode, aus diesem Nichts das Leben und Wesen einer höheren Erkenntniß neugeschaffen hervorkeimen[40]; so weit reicht die Nase eines Sophisten nicht. Kein

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[37] *Fidei* hoc cum *crepusculo* commune obtigit, quod ad utrumque tenebrarum admixtio necessaria sit, quum alias copiosiori accedente luce, illa in *scientiam,* hoc in *diem* transeat. Quaedam mysteria — in quibus Fides intellectui felicius facem praeferre soleat — quam hic ad procreandam fidem viam munire. Rob. Boyle Cogitationes de S. S. Stylo.

[38] Socrates im Phädro.

[39] 1 Kor. VIII.

[40] Dans son propre neant il puisse la sagesse. Poesies diverses. Epitre V. à d'Argens.

thus faith gains and loses equally with the cleverest pettifogger and most honorable attorney. Faith is not the work of reason, and therefore cannot succumb to its attack, because faith arises just as little from reason as tasting and seeing do.

The connection and agreement of concepts is precisely the same in a logical demonstration as is the relation and symmetry of numbers and lines, sound and colors in a musical composition and painting. The philosopher is just as subject to the law of imitation[a] as the poet. The muse of the latter and its hieroglyphic phantasmagoria is just as true for him as reason and its doctrinal structure is for the former. Let fate thrust the greatest philosopher and poet into circumstances where they have a shattering experience; in such a case one[b] disavows his reason and discloses to us that he does not believe in the best of worlds, however well he can prove it, and the other sees himself robbed of his muse and guardian angel in the death of his Meta.[c] Even if the power of imagination were a steed of the sun-chariot and had the wings of the morning,[37] it cannot become on that account a creator of faith.[38]

For the testimony which Socrates gave of his ignorance, therefore, I know no more honorable seal and at the same time no better key than the oracle of the great teacher of the Gentiles:

Ει δε τις δοκει ειδεναι τι ουδεπω ουδεν εγνωκε καθως δει γνωναι· Ει δε τις αγαπα τον ΘΕΟΝ ουτος εγνωται υπ αυτον.

If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if one loves God, one is known by him.[39]

—just as Socrates was known by Apollo to be a wise man. But how the grain of all our natural wisdom must decay, must perish in ignorance, and how the life and being of a higher knowledge must spring forth newly created from this death, from this nothing[40]—as far as this the nose of a Sophist does not reach. No

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[37] "Faith being like a Twilight, a Mixture of Darkness being necessary to both; one vanishing into Knowledge, as the other does into day. [There are] certain mysteries on which faith is accustomed to shed light for the intellect rather than the intellect preparing the way for faith." Robert Boyle, *Of the Style of the Scriptures.*

[38] Socrates, in *Phaedrus.*

[39] I Corinthians 8[:2–3]

[40] "Out of his own nothing he brings forth wisdom." *Diverse Poetic Works.* Fifth letter to d'Argens.

Maulwurfshügel, sondern ein Thurn Libanons muß es seyn der nach Damesek gaft[41].

Was ersetzt bey Homer die Unwissenheit der Kunstregeln, die ein Aristoteles nach ihm erdacht, und was bey einem Shakespear die Unwissenheit oder Uebertretung jener kritischen Gesetze? Das Genie ist die einmüthige Antwort. Sokrates hatte also freylich gut unwissend seyn; er hatte einen Genius, auf dessen Wissenschaft er sich verlassen konnte, den er liebte und fürchtete als seinen Gott, an dessen Frieden ihm mehr gelegen war, als an aller Vernunft der Egypter und Griechen, dessen Stimme er glaubte, und durch dessen Wind, (wie der erfahrne Wurmdoctor Hill[42] uns bewiesen) der leere Verstand eines Sokrates so gut als der Schoos einer reinen Jungfrau, fruchtbar werden kann.

Ob dieser Dämon des Sokrates nichts als eine herrschende Leidenschaft gewesen und bey welchem Namen sie von unsern Sittenlehrern geruffen wird, oder ob er ein Fund seiner Staatslist; ob er ein Engel oder Kobold, eine hervorragende Idea seiner Einbildungskraft, oder ein erschlichner und willkührlich angenommener Begrif einer mathematischen Unwissenheit; ob dieser Dämon nicht vielleicht eine Queckfilberröhre oder den Maschinen ähnlicher gewesen, welchen die Bradleys und Leuwenhoeks ihre Offenbarungen zu verdanken haben; ob man ihn mit dem wahrsagendem Gefühl eines nüchternen Blinden oder mit der Gabe aus Leichdornen und Narben übelgeheilter Wunden die Revolutionen des Wolkenhimmels vorher zu wissen, am bequemsten vergleichen kann: hierüber ist von so vielen Sophisten mit so viel Bündigkeit geschrieben worden, daß man erstaunen muß, wie Sokrates bey der gelobten Erkenntniß seiner Selbst, auch hierinn so unwissend gewesen, daß er einem Simias darauf die Antwort hat schuldig bleiben wollen. Keinem Leser von Geschmack fehlt es in unsern Tagen an Freunden von Genie, die mich der Mühe überheben werden weitläuftiger über den Genius des Sokrates zu seyn.

Aus dieser sokratischen Unwissenheit flüssen als leichte Folgen die Sonderbarkeiten seiner Lehr- und Denkart. Was ist natürlicher, als daß er sich genöthigt sahe immer zu fragen um klüger zu werden; daß er leichtgläubig that, jedes Meynung für wahr annahm, und lieber

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[41] Hohelied Salom. VII. Apostelgesch. IX. 3. Kein Ort in der Welt kann eine so wunderbare Verbindung von Marmor und Unflat, von Grösse und Niedrigkeit aufweisen als Damaskus; sagt Maundrell in seiner Reisebeschreibung von Aleppo nach Jerusalem.

[42] Lucina sine concubitu.

molehill must it be, but a tower of Lebanon which gapes[a] toward Damascus.[41]

What for a Homer replaces ignorance of the rules of art which an Aristotle devised after him, and what for a Shakespeare replaces the ignorance or transgression of those critical laws? Genius[b] is the unanimous answer. Indeed, Socrates could very well afford to be ignorant; he had a tutelary genius,[c] on whose science he could rely, which he loved and feared as his god, whose peace was more important to him than all the reason of the Egyptians and Greeks, whose voice he believed, and by means of whose wind (as the experienced quack-doctor Hill[42, d] has proven to us) the empty understanding of a Socrates can become fruitful as well as the womb of a pure virgin.

Whether this daimon of Socrates was only a ruling passion, by whatever name it is called by our teachers of ethics, or whether it was an invention of his political cunning; whether an angel or familiar spirit, a distinctive idea of his imagination, or a surreptitious and arbitrarily assumed concept of a mathematical ignorance; whether this daimon was not more like a thermometer or the machine to which the Bradleys[e] and Leeuwenhoeks[f] owe their revelations; whether one can compare it most readily with the prophetic feeling of a sober blind man or with the gift of foretelling the revolutions of the beclouded sky by means of corns and scars of badly healed wounds: so much has been written about this by so many sophists with such conclusiveness that one must be astonished that Socrates, in spite of his celebrated self-knowledge, could also be so ignorant in this matter that he would not answer Simias about it. No cultivated[g] reader of our day lacks talented friends who will spare me the effort of going into more detail about Socrates' tutelary spirit.[h]

From this Socratic ignorance readily flow the peculiarities of his manner of teaching and thinking. What is more natural than that he always felt himself compelled to ask and to become wiser; that he pretended to be credulous, accepted everyone's opinion as true,

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[41] Cant. 7[:5]. Acts 9:3. No place in the world can offer such a wonderful mixture of marble and filth, of grandeur and baseness, as Damascus, says Maundrell in his *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*.

[42] Lucina without cohabitation.

die Probe der Spötterey und guten Laune als eine ernsthafte Untersuchung anstellte; daß er alle seine Schlüsse sinnlich und nach der Aehnlichkeit machte; Einfälle sagte, weil er keine Dialectick verstand[43]; gleichgültig gegen das, was man Wahrheit hieß, auch keine Leidenschaften, besonders diejenigen nicht kannte, womit sich die Edelsten unter den Athenienſern am meisten wusten; daß er wie alle Idioten, oft so zuversichtlich und entscheidend sprach, als wenn er, unter allen Nachteulen seines Vaterlandes, die einzige wäre, welche der Minerva auf ihrem Helm säße — — Es hat den Sokraten unsers Alters, den kanonischen Lehrern des Publicums und Schutzheiligen falsch berühmter Künste und Verdienste noch nicht glücken wollen, ihr Muster in allen süssen Fehlern zu erreichen. Weil sie von der Urkunde seiner Unwissenheit unendlich abweichen; so muß man alle sinnreichen Lesearten und Glossen ihrs antisokratischen Dämons über unsers Meisters Lehren und Tugenden als Schönheiten freyer Uebersetzungen bewundern; und es ist eben so mislich ihnen zu trauen als nachzufolgen.

Jetzt fehlt es mir an dem Geheimnisse der Palingenesie, das unsere Geschichtschreiber in ihrer Gewalt haben, aus der Asche jedes gegebenen Menschen und gemeinen Wesens eine geistige Gestalt heraus zu ziehen, die man einen Charakter oder ein historisch Gemälde nennt. Ein solches Gemälde des Jahrhunderts und der Republik, worinn Sokrates lebte, würde uns zeigen, wie künstlich seine Unwissenheit für den Zustand seines Volkes und seiner Zeit, und zu dem Geschäfte seines Lebens ausgerechnet war[44]. Ich kann nichts mehr thun als der Arm eines Wegweisers und bin zu hölzern meinen Lesern in dem Laufe ihrer Betrachtungen Gesellschaft zu leisten.

Die Athenienſer waren neugierig. Ein Unwissender ist der beste Arzt für diese Lustseuche. Sie waren, wie alle neugierige, geneigt mit-

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[43] Thrasymachus in Platons Buch von der Staatskunst. — — nihil ipse (Socrates) afferre ad persuadendum volebat, sed ex eo, quod sibi ille dederat, quicum disputabat, aliquid conficere malebat, quod ille ex eo, quod jam concessisset, necessario approbare deberet. Cicero de Inv. Rhet. Lib. I. — — Dum ad discendum semper se pauperem credidit, ad docendum fecit se locupletissimum. Valer. Max. Lib. VIII. Cap. 7.

[44] Parrhasius verfertigte, wie es scheint, ein hogarthsches Gemälde, welches das Publicum zu Athen vorstellen sollte, und wovon uns folgender Kupferstich oder Schattenriß in Plinius übrig geblieben: Pinxit & δημον Atheniensium, argumento quoque ingenioso. Volebat namque *varium, iracundum, iniustum inconstantem:* eundem *exorabilem, clementem, misericordem, excelsum, gloriosum, humilem, ferocem, fugacemque & omnia pariter* ostendere. Hist. Nat. Lib. XXXV. Cap. X.

preferred a mocking and humorous exhibition to a serious investigation; that he made all of his logical deductions according to sensation and analogy; that he expressed his sudden ideas, because he understood no sophistical logic,[43] indifferent to what was called truth, also knew no passions, especially those which characterized the noblest of the Athenians most strongly; that he, like all naïve persons,[a] often spoke as confidently and decisively, as if among all the night-owls of Athens he were the only one that perched on the helmet of Athena. —Our present-day Socratics, the canonical teachers of the public and patron saints of unjustly famous arts and merits, have not yet succeeded in measuring up to their model in all his pleasant shortcomings. Because they deviate infinitely from the charter of his ignorance, one must admire all the ingenious versions and glosses of their anti-Socratic daimon concerning our master's doctrines and virtues as the ornaments of free translations, and it is just as precarious to trust them as to follow their lead.

Now I lack the secret of palingenesis, which enables our historiographers to evoke from the ashes of every given individual and every state an intellectual configuration which is called a character or a historical picture. Such a picture of the century and the republic in which Socrates lived would show us how ingeniously his ignorance was calculated for the condition of his people and his time and as his life's work.[44] I can accomplish no more than the arm of a signpost, and am too wooden to accompany my readers in the course of their reflections.

The Athenians were inquisitive. An ignorant person is the best physician for this venereal disease. Like all inquisitive people, they were inclined to communicate;

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[43] Thrasymachus, in Plato's book *Politicus*. ". . . he (Socrates) wished to present no argument himself, but preferred to get a result from the material which the interlocutor had given him—a result which the interlocutor was bound to approve as following necessarily from what he had already granted." Cicero *De Inventione* i. ". . . He considered himself so poor that he believed that he had to continue to learn." Valer[ius] Max[imus] viii. 7.

[44] Parrhasius painted, it seems, a picture after the manner of Hogarth, which was supposed to depict the people of Athens, and concerning which the following engraving or silhouette is preserved in Pliny: "His picture of the people of Athens also shows ingenuity in treating the subject, since he displayed them as fickle, choleric, unjust and variable, but also placable and merciful and compassionate, boastful, lofty and humble, fierce and timid—and all these at the same time." *Natural History* xxxv. 10.

zutheilen; es muste ihnen also gefallen, gefragt zu werden. Sie besassen aber mehr die Gabe zu erfinden und vorzutragen, als zu behalten und zu urtheilen; daher hatte Sokrates immer Gelegenheit ihr Gedächtnis und ihre Urtheilskraft zu vertreten, und sie für Leichtsinn und Eitelkeit zu warnen. Kurz, Sokrates lockte seine Mitbürger aus den Labyrinthen ihrer gelehrten Sophisten zu einer Wahrheit, die im Verborgenen liegt, zu einer heimlichen Weisheit, und von den Götzenaltären ihrer andächtigen und staatsklugen Priester zum Dienst eines unbekannten Gottes. Plato sagte es den Athenienſern ins Gesicht, daß Sokrates ihnen von den Göttern gegeben wäre sie von ihren Thorheiten zu überzeugen und zu seiner Nachfolge in der Tugend aufzumuntern[45]. Wer den Sokrates unter den Propheten nicht leiden will, den muß man fragen: Wer der Propheten Vater sey? und ob sich unser Gott nicht einen Gott der Heyden genannt und erwiesen?

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[45] Vergl. Platons Euthydemus, Alcibiad. δευτερον, Philebum, Protagoram, Kritian und Clitophon.

so they had to put up with being asked questions. But they possessed more the gift of invention and delivery than of retention and judgment. Therefore, Socrates always had the opportunity to represent their memory and their critical faculty, and to warn them against frivolity and vanity. In short, Socrates lured his fellow citizens out of the labyrinths of their learned Sophists to a truth in the inward being, to a wisdom in the secret heart, and away from the idol-altars of their pious and politically shrewd priests to the worship of an unknown God. Plato told the Athenians to their faces that Socrates had been given to them by the gods to convince them of their follies and to encourage them to emulate his virtue.[45] He who would not suffer Socrates among the prophets must be asked who the Father of Prophets is and whether our God has not called himself and shown himself to be a God of the Gentiles.

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[45] *Cf.* Plato's *Euthydemus, Alcibiades ii, Philebus, Protagoras, Critias,* and *Clitophon.*

Dritter Abschnitt.

Sokrates soll drey Feldzüge mitgemacht haben. In dem ersten hatte ihm sein Alcibiades die Erhaltung des Lebens und der Waffen zu danken, dem er auch den Preis der Tapferkeit, welcher ihm selbst zukam, überließ. In dem zweyten wich er wie ein Parther, fiel seine Verfolger mitten im Weichen an, theilte mehr Furcht aus, als ihm eingejagt wurde und trug seinen Freund Xenophon[46], der vom Pferde gefallen war, auf den Schultern aus der Gefahr des Schlachtfeldes. Er entgieng der grossen Niederlage des dritten Feldzuges eben so glücklich wie der Pest, die zu seiner Zeit Athen zweymal heimsuchte.

Die Ehrfurcht gegen das Wort in seinem Herzen, auf dessen Laut er immer aufmerksam war, entschuldigte ihn Staatsversammlungen beyzuwohnen. Als er lange genung glaubte gelebt zu haben, bot er sich selbst zu einer Stelle im Rath an, worinn er als Mitglied[47], Aeltermann[48] und Oberhaupt[49] gesessen, und wo er sich mit seiner Unschicklichkeit in Sammlung der Stimmen und andern Gebräuchen lächerlich[50], auch mit seinem Eigensinn, den er dem unrechten Verfahren einer Sache entgegen setzen muste, als ein Aufrührer verdächtig gemacht haben soll.

Sokrates wurde aber kein Autor, und hierinn handelte er übereinstimmig mit sich selbst[51]. Wie der Held von der Leuctrischen[52] Schlacht keine Kinder nöthig hatte; so wenig brauchte Sokrates Schriften zu seinem Gedächtnisse. Seine Philosophie schickte sich für jeden Ort und zu jedem Fall. Der Markt, das Feld, ein Gastmal, das Gefängnis waren seine Schulen; und das erste das beste Quodlibet des menschlichen Lebens und Umganges diente ihm den Saamen der Wahrheit auszustreuen. So wenig Schulfüchserey er in seiner Lebensart beschuldigt wird, und so gut er auch die Kunst verstand die besten Gesellschaften selbst von jungen rohen Leuten zu unterhalten, erzählt man gleichwol von ihm, daß er ganze Tage und Nächte unbeweglich gestanden, und einer seiner Bildsäulen ähnlicher als sich selbst gewesen.

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[46] Laches in Platon.
[47] Prytan.
[48] Proedrus.
[49] Epistates. Die Prytanen musten die Versammlung zusammenberufen, die Proedri den Vortrag thun, und der Epistates die Stimmen sammeln und nach deren Mehrheit sprechen. Real im allgem. Grundriss der Staatskunst p. 262.
[50] Sokrates in Platons Gorgia.
[51] S. den Phädrus und Gorgias.
[52] S. Wolken S. 95.

Third Section.

Socrates is said to have taken part in three campaigns. In his first his friend Alcibiades owed him the preservation of his life and arms, to whom he also turned over the prize for bravery which had fallen to himself. In the second he retreated like a Parthian,[a] attacking his pursuers in the midst of the retreat, inspiring more fear than he himself felt, and carried his friend Xenophon,[46] who had fallen off a horse, on his shoulders away from the danger of the battlefield. He was fortunate enough to escape the great defeat of the third campaign as well as the pestilence which afflicted Athens twice in his lifetime.

Reverence for the voice in his heart, to whose sound he was always attentive, excused him from attending political meetings. When he believed that he had lived long enough, he offered himself for a position on the town council, in which he sat as a member,[47] speaker,[48] and official.[49] Here he is supposed to have made himself ridiculous on account of his clumsiness in the collecting of the votes and in other customs,[50] and to have brought himself under suspicion of being a seditious person on account of the obduracy with which he had to oppose an unjust procedure.

Socrates, however, did not become an author and in this regard he acted in harmony with himself.[51] Socrates had as little need for written works as the hero of the Leuctrian[52, b] battle had for children. His philosophy was suitable for every place and every situation. The market, the field, a banquet, the prison were his schools, and whatever medley of human life and intercourse he happened to encounter served him as a place to sow the seed of truth. As little as he was accused of pedantry in his mode of living, and as well as he understood the art of entertaining the best gatherings even of robust young people, it is nevertheless related of him that he stood motionless for whole days and nights at a time, and was more like one of his own statues than himself.

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[46] Laches, in Plato.

[47] "*Prytanis.*"

[48] One who sits in the first place, president.

[49] Official in charge of records and treasury. It was the duty of the *prytanes* to convene the assembly, of the presidents to speak, of the *epistates* to collect the votes and report the will of the majority. Real, *General Outline of Statecraft*, p. 262.

[50] Socrates, in Plato's *Gorgias*.

[51] See *Phaedrus* and *Gorgias*.

[52] See *The Clouds*, p. 95 [of Nadler text].

Seine Bücher würden also vielleicht wie diese seine Soliloquien und Selbst-Gespräche ausgesehen haben. Er lobte einen Spatziergang[53] als eine Suppe zu seinem Abendbrodt; er suchte aber nicht wie ein Peripatetiker die Wahrheit im Herumlaufen und hin- und hergehen.

Daß Sokrates nicht das Talent eines Scribenten gehabt, liesse sich auch aus dem Versuche argwohnen, den er in seinem Gefängnisse auf Angabe eines Traums in der lyrischen Dichtkunst machte. Bey dieser Gelegenheit entdeckte er in sich eine Trockenheit zu erfinden, der er mit den Fabeln des Aesops abzuhelfen wuste. Gleichwol gerieth ihm ein Gesang auf den Apoll und die Diana.

Vielleicht fehlte es ihm auch in seinem Hause an der Ruhe, Stille und Heiterkeit, die ein Philosoph zum Schreiben nöthig hat, der sich und andere dadurch lehren und ergötzen will. Das Vorurtheil gegen Xantippe, das durch den ersten Claßischen Autor unserer Schulen[54] ansteckend und tief eingewurzelt worden, hat durch die Acta Philosophorum nicht ausgerottet werden können, wie es zum Behuf der Wahrheit und Sittlichkeit zu wünschen wäre. Unterdessen müssen wir fast ein Hauscreutz von dem Schlage annehmen, um einen solchen Weisen als Sokrates zu bilden. Die Reitzbarkeit seiner Einfälle konnte vielleicht aus Mangel und Eckel daran von Xantippen nicht behänder gedämpft werden als durch Grobheiten, Beleidigungen und ihren Nachtspiegel. Einer Frau, welche die Haushaltung eines Philosophen führen, und einem Mann, der die Regierungsgeschäfte unvermögender Großviziere verwalten soll, ist freylich die Zeit zu edel, Wortspiele zu ersinnen und Blumen zu reden. Mit eben so wenig Grunde hat man auch als einer Verläumdung einer ähnlichen Erzählung von Sokrates eigener Heftigkeit wiedersprochen, mit der er sich auf dem Markte bisweilen die Haare aus dem Haupte gerauft und wie außer sich gewesen seyn soll. Gab es nicht Sophisten und Priester zu Athen, mit denen Sokrates in einer solchen Verstellung seiner selbst reden muste? Wurde nicht der sanftmüthige und herzlich demüthige Menschen-Lehrer gedrungen ein Wehe über das andere gegen die Gelehrten und frommen Leute seines Volkes auszustossen?

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[53] Alcibiades in Platons Gastmal.

[54] Xantippe war ein' arge H——
und 10 mal 10 macht hundert nur.
Sokrates soll in der Bigamie gelebt haben; Xantippe die Mutter des Lamprocles, und Myrto (welche ihm Gesner abspricht) die Mutter des Sophroniscus und Menexenus gewesen seyn.

Hence, his books would probably have looked like his soliloquies and monologues. He praised a walk[53] as a valuable after-dinner pleasure; but he did not seek the truth like a Peripatetic,[a] in walking around and sauntering back and forth.

That Socrates did not have the talent of a scribe could also be suspected from the attempt he made in prison to give an account of a dream in lyrical verse form. On this occasion he discovered in himself an aridity with regard to invention, which he remedied by using the fables of Aesop. Nevertheless, he succeeded in composing a song in honor of Apollo and Diana.

Perhaps his house lacked the peace, quiet, and cheerfulness that a philosopher, who desires to teach and delight himself and others, finds necessary for writing. The prejudice against Xanthippe, which has been contagiously and deeply implanted by the first classical author of our schools,[54, b] could not be eradicated by the *Acta Philosophorum*,[c] as would be desirable in the interest of truth and morality. Meanwhile, we must assume her to have been almost a termagant of that type in order to educate such a philosopher as Socrates. Because of Xanthippe's shortcomings and her disgust, the irritation he occasioned by his sudden ideas could not perhaps be more quickly checked than by means of uncouthness, insults, and her chamber-pot. To a woman who has to keep house for a philosopher and a man who is supposed to administer the governmental affairs of impecunious grand viziers, time is indeed too valuable to spend devising puns and employing figures of speech. A tale of Socrates' own impetuosity, which is said to have compelled him to pull out his hair sometimes in the marketplace and to act as if beside himself, has been contradicted as a libel with equally little justification. Were there not Sophists and priests in Athens to whom Socrates was compelled to speak with such a self-disguise? Was not the teacher of mankind, gentle and lowly in heart, forced to utter one denunciation after the other of the scribes and the pious ones among his people?

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[53] Alcibiades, in Plato's *Symposium*.

[54] Xanthippe was a contemptible wh - - -
And ten times ten make one hundred—no more.
Socrates is said to have been bigamous; Xanthippe is said to have been the mother of Lamprocles, and Myrto (which Gesner denies) the mother of Sophroniscus and Menexenus.

In Vergleichung eines Xenophons und Platons würde vielleicht der Styl des Sokrates nach den Meissel eines Bildhauers ausgesehen haben und seine Schreibart mehr plastisch als malerisch gewesen seyn. Die Kunstrichter waren mit seinen Anspielungen nicht zufrieden, und tadelten die Gleichnisse seines mündlichen Vortrages bald als zu weit hergeholt, bald als pöbelhaft. Alcibiades[55] aber verglich seine Parabeln gewissen heiligen Bildern der Götter und Göttinnen, die man nach damaliger Mode in einem kleinen Gehäuse trug, auf denen nichts als die Gestalt eines ziegenfüßigen Satyrs zu sehen war.

Hier ist ein Beyspiel davon. Sokrates verglich sich[56] mit einem Arzte, der in einem gemeinen Wesen von Kindern die Kuchen und Leckerbissen verbiethen wollte. Wenn diese Hofbecker, sagte er, den Arzt vor einem Gerichte verklagen möchten, das aus lauter Kindern bestünde: so wäre sein Schicksal entschieden. Man machte zu Athen so viel Anschläge an der Ruhe der Götter Theil zu nehmen, und gleich ihnen weise und glücklich zu werden, als man heut zu Tage macht nach Brodt- und Ehren-Stellen. Jeder neue Götzendienst war eine Finanzgrube der Priester, welche das öffentliche Wohl vermehren sollte; jede neue Secte der Sophisten versprach eine Encyclopedie der gesunden Vernunft und Erfahrung. Diese Projecte waren die Näschereyen, welche Sokrates seinen Mitbürgern zu vereckeln suchte.

Athen, das den Homer als einen Rasenden zu einer Geldbusse verdammt haben soll, verurtheilte den Sokrates als einen Missethäter zum Tode.

Sein erstes Verbrechen war, daß er die Götter nicht geehrt und neue[57] hätte einführen wollen. Plato läßt ihn gleichwol in seinen Gesprächen öfterer bey den Göttern schwören als ein verliebter Stutzer bey seiner Seele oder ein irrender Ritter bey den Furien seiner Ahnen lügt. In den letzten Augenblicken seines Lebens, da Sokrates schon die Kräfte des Gesundbrunnens in seinen Gliedern fühlte, ersuchte er noch aufs inständigste seinen Kriton einen Hahn zu bezahlen und dem Aeskulap zu opfern. Sein zweytes Verbrechen war ein Verführer der Jugend gewesen zu seyn, durch seine freye und anstössige Lehren.

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[55] S. Hippias, Callicles in Platons Gorgias und das Symposion. Hierocles soll gesagt haben, κυβοις εοικεναι τȣς τȣ Σωκρατȣ λογȣς, απτωτας γαρ ειναι πανταχȣ, οπȣ αν πεσωσι. *Suidas.* Ορθως γε τȣτ' Αλκιβιαδης ετραυλισεν Aristophanes Σφηκες.

[56] Conf. *Gorgias.*

[57] το ΧΑΟΣ τȣτι και τας ΝΕΦΕΛΑΣ και την ΓΛΩΤΤΑΝ. ΤΡΙΑ ταυτι Aristoph. Nubes. Plato de republica Lib. III.

Third Section.

In comparison with that of Xenophon and Plato the style of Socrates would perhaps have appeared as if executed by the chisel of a sculptor, and his manner of writing would perhaps have been more plastic[a] than picturesque. The critics were not satisfied with his allusions, and censured the similes of his oral discourse at one time as being too farfetched and at another time as vulgar. Alcibiades,[55] however, compared his parables to certain sacred images of the gods and goddesses, which were carried, according to the custom of that time, in a small case, on the outside of which only the form of a goat-footed satyr was visible.[b]

Here is an example of that. Socrates compared himself[56] to a doctor, who, in a state populated by children, desired to forbid cakes and good things to eat. If the bakers should bring an action against the doctor in a court that consisted of no one but children, his fate would be sealed. In Athens the people made as many bids to participate in the repose of the gods and, like them, to become wise and happy as they make today for positions providing a livelihood and honor. Every new form of idol worship was a financial mine for the priests, who were supposed to augment the public welfare; every new sect of the Sophists promised an encyclopedia based on reason and experience. These projects were the sweetmeats that Socrates sought to spoil for his fellow citizens.

Athens, which is said to have imposed a fine on Homer for madness, sentenced Socrates to death as a transgressor.

His first crime was that he had not honored the gods, and desired to introduce new ones.[57] In his dialogues Plato has Socrates swear by the gods more often than an enamored dandy tells a lie while swearing by his soul, or a knight-errant while swearing by the furies of his ancestors. In the last moments of his life, when Socrates already felt the potency of the mineral spring in his limbs, he was still interested in beseeching his Crito most earnestly to pay for a cock and to sacrifice it to Aesculapius. His second crime was having been a seducer of youth because of his free and scandalous doctrines.

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[55] See Hippias, Callicles, in Plato's *Gorgias* and the *Symposium*. Hierocles is supposed to have said: "'The words of Socrates are like dice, which always lie wherever they fall.' SUIDAS: 'Well lisped! and rightly, Alcibiades!'" Aristophanes *Wasps*.

[56] *Cf. Gorgias*.

[57] "Chaos, the Clouds and the Tongue, these three alone." Aristophanes *The Clouds*. Plato *Republic* iii.

Sokrates antwortete auf diese Beschuldigungen, mit einem Ernst und Muth, mit einem Stolz und Kaltsinn, daß man ihn nach seinem Gesichte eher für einen Befehlshaber seiner Richter, als für einen Beklagten hätte ansehen sollen.

Sokrates verlor, sagt man, einen giftigen Einfall[58], und die gewissenhaften Areopagiten die Gedult. Man wurde also hierauf bald über die Strafe einig, der er würdig wäre, so wenig man sich vorher darüber hatte vergleichen können.

Ein Fest zu Athen, an dem es nicht erlaubt war ein Todesurtheil zu vollziehen, legte Sokrates die schwere Vorbereitung eines dreyssigtägigen Gefängnisses zu seinem Tode[59] auf.

Nach seinem Tode soll er noch einem Chier, Namens Kyrsas erschienen seyn, der sich unweit seines Grabes niedergesetzt hatte und darüber eingeschlafen war. Die Absicht seiner Reise nach Athen bestand, Sokrates zu sehen, der damals nicht mehr lebte; nach dieser Unterredung also mit desselben Gespenste, kehrte er in sein Vaterland zurück, das bey den Alten wegen seines herrlichen Weins bekannt ist.

Plato macht die freywillige Armuth des Sokrates zu einem Zeichen seiner göttlichen Sendung. Ein grösseres ist seine Gemeinschaft an dem letzten Schicksale der Propheten und Gerechten[60]. Ein Bildsäule von Lysippus war das Denkmal, das die Athenienser seiner Unschuld und dem Frevel ihres eigenen Blutgerichts setzen liessen.

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[58] Er dictirte sich im Scherz selbst die Strafe auf Unkosten des Staats zu Tode gefüttert zu werden.

[59] Sokrates soll den Giftbecher an eben dem Tage, als der Tempel zu Ephesus das erstemal abgebrannt, ausgetrunken haben.

[60] Matth. XXIII, 29.

Socrates answered these accusations with a seriousness and courage, with such a pride and indifference, that, judging by his facial expression, one would have held him to be a commanding officer of his judges rather than an accused person.

Socrates, they say, lost a poisonous idea,[58] and the conscientious Areopagites their patience. Soon after that they were, therefore, unanimous regarding the punishment which he deserved, however little they had been able to agree on it earlier.

A festival at Athens, during which time it was forbidden to carry out a sentence of death, imposed upon Socrates the difficult preparation for death of a thirty-day imprisonment.[59]

After his death a Chian named Kyrsas is said to have appeared and to have sat down near his grave, falling asleep beside it. The purpose of his journey was to see Socrates, who was then no longer living; after a conversation with the ghost of Socrates he returned to his homeland, which was known among the ancients for its splendid wine.

Plato interpreted the voluntary poverty of Socrates as a sign of his divine mission. A greater one is his sharing in the final destiny of the prophets and the righteous.[60] A statue by Lysippus was the monument which the Athenians erected to his innocence and to the wickedness of their own sentence of death.

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[58] He dictated jokingly the punishment for himself of being fed for the rest of his life at the expense of the state.

[59] Socrates is said to have drunk the cup of poison on the very day on which the temple at Ephesus burned down the first time.

[60] Matt. 23:29.

Schlußrede.

Wer nicht von Brosamen[61] und Allmosen, noch vom Raube zu leben, und für ein Schwert[62] alles zu entbehren weiß, ist nicht geschickt zum Dienst der Wahrheit; Der werde frühe! ein vernünftiger, brauchbarer, artiger Mann in der Welt, oder lerne Bückslinge machen und Teller lecken: so ist er für Hunger und Durst, für Galgen und Rad sein Lebenlang sicher.

Ist es wahr, daß GOtt Selbst, wie es in dem guten Bekenntnisse lautet, das er vor Pilatus ablegte; ist es wahr, sage ich, daß Gott Selbst, dazu ein Mensch wurde und dazu in die Welt kam, daß er die Wahrheit zeugen möchte: so brauchte es keine Allwissenheit vorher zu sehen, daß er nicht so gut wie ein Sokrates von der Welt kommen, sondern eines schmählichern und grausameren Todes sterben würde, als der Vatermörder des allerchristlichsten Königes, Ludwich des Vielgeliebten, der ein Urenkel Ludwich des Grossen ist.

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[61] S. den Schluss von Hippias major.

[62] Μαχαιραν; αστειον γε κερδος — — — —
Υπερβολος δ' εκ των λυχνων πλειν η ταλαντα πολλα
Ειληφε δια πονηριαν, αλλ' ε μα Δι' ε μαχαιραν.
Aristoph. Nubes.

Peroration.

He who does not know how to live on crumbs[61] and alms nor on prey, or to renounce everything for a sword,[62, a] is not fit for the service of truth. Let him become forthwith a reasonable, useful, agreeable man[b] in the world or learn to bow and scrape and to lick plates;[c] in such a way he will be safe his life long from hunger and thirst, from the gallows and wheel.

If it is true that God himself, as he says in the good confession which he made before Pilate; if it is true, I say, that God himself became a man, and came into the world to bear witness to the truth, no omniscience would be necessary to foresee that he would not escape from the world as well as a Socrates, but would die a more ignominious and cruel death than the parricide[d] of the most Christian king, Louis the Beloved, who is a great-grandchild of Louis the Great.

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[61] *See* the conclusion of *Greater Hippias*.

[62] A sword indeed! a wondrous meed the unlucky fool obtained.
Hyperbolus the Lamp-maker hath many a talent gained
By knavish tricks which I have taught: but a sword, no, no!
Aristoph[anes] *The Clouds*.

Translator's Notes

Hamann indulged in the habit of emphasizing words, phrases, and sometimes whole sentences in what appears to be a capricious manner. In the first edition of the *Mem.* such expressions are set in boldface type (*Fettdruck*). In the Roth, Nadler, and Blanke editions they appear with spaced letters (*gesperrt*). However, we have not indicated Hamann's emphasis in the translation or in quoting the original German elsewhere. Blanke maintains that the boldface type of the first edition corresponds to quotation marks (*B*, 47) but even so it is difficult to see why Hamann uses them as he does. For instance, the quoting of proper names would seem for the most part to have no rhyme or reason.

Title Page

[a] "*Langen Weile*": see p. 68, n. 20, above.

[b] Aulus Persius Flaccus (A.D. 34–62), Roman satirist and adherent of the Stoic philosophy, was always one of Hamann's favorite poets, and on one occasion he even calls him the first among his favorites. *N*, III, 132: 22 (abbreviations are listed in the Key to Abbreviations). The quotation on the title page of the *Mem.* is from the opening lines of *Satire I*; the English translation is that of G. G. Ramsay, *LC* (1957), p. 317. The first line of the quotation is borrowed from a lost work of the early satirist Lucilius. It is striking that Hamann gives us on the title page a sample of the metaschematic method which he will employ in the work as a whole. To be sure, mottos are always important adjuncts to his titles, but in this case the motto has the additional interest of illustrating an important literary device. Let us see how it works. Here Hamann identifies himself with a Roman poet who felt himself to be at odds with the spirit of the times; furthermore, the poet had written a satire which he admitted few, if any, would read—remaining undaunted by this prospect, however. If we attribute to Hamann the words spoken by the poet, and to an imaginary eighteenth-century Enlightener the words spoken by the poet's interlocutor, we would be fulfilling the requirements of metaschematism, and at the same time unlocking the true meaning of the passage. Thus, Persius-Hamann: "O the vanity of mankind! How vast the void in human affairs." Enlightener: "Who will read stuff like that?" Persius-Hamann: "Is it to me you are speaking? Not a soul, by Hercules." Enlightener: "What, nobody?" Persius-Hamann: "One or two perhaps, or nobody." (I have followed G. G. Ramsay's assignment of the lines in the dialogue, although I have not reproduced his punctuation.)

In such a way the author not only anticipates the metaschematism which he will utilize in the body of his work, but also repeats in the motto what he has already done in the title proper, that is, he has provided another key to what follows. It is not at all surprising that the Magus admired Persius, for, as one writer puts it: "Persius strikes the highest note that Roman satire reached; in earnestness and moral purpose rising far superior to the political rancour or good natured persiflage of his predecessors and the rhetorical indignation of Juvenal, he seems a forerunner of the great Christian Apologists." "Persius," *Encyclopaedia Britannica* [1941], XVII, 612.

In an important context Hamann quotes with approbation the line from Persius, "It is very little that I strive to know" ("Minimum est, quod scire laboro"). *Satire II* i. 17. Apparently the Magus meant by this to censure his contemporaries for their obsession with acquiring knowledge without wisdom. For other important references to Persius by Hamann, see *R*, VII, 203, 314; *G*, 175; *N*, III, 348: 31–32. Blanke discusses fully the Persius motto of the *Mem.* in *B*, 59–60; *cf.* also Lothar Schreiner, *HE*, VII, 172–73. Unger gives a list of Hamann's references to Persius in *U*, II, 729, n. 109.

[c] The place of publication is fictitious, probably the result of a whim of the publisher. Permission to publish had been obtained from the authorities in Berlin, and therefore there was no need for concealment of the fact that Königsberg was the place of publication. See *N*, III, 348: 28; *B*, 61.

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[a] "*An das Publicum*": Hamann would address a communication not directly but indirectly to his two friends, Kant and Berens. He chooses, therefore, to speak to them via the public, that is, by means of a published essay. But since he has in actuality only contempt for the anonymous entity known as the public, he employs considerable irony in the dedication of his work to it. He considers the public an insensate idol which unthinking persons worship, in so far as they slavishly follow the fashion it dictates. (*Cf.* the dictatorship of "*das Man*" in Martin Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*: "Wir genießen und vergnügen uns, wie *man* genießt; wir lesen, sehen und urteilen über Literatur und Kunst, wie *man* sieht und urteilt; wir ziehen uns aber auch vom 'großen Haufen' zurück, wie *man* sich zurückzieht; wir finden 'empörend' was *man* empörend findet." Pp. 126–27.) As an afterthought Hamann added, perfectly in the spirit of baroque ornamentation, the quotation from Euripides to underscore, as it were, his contempt for and mockery of the public which he conceived to be an eminently appropriate subject for burlesque humor.

[b] "*Eurip.* Κνκλωψ": see pp. 112, n. 7, and 72, n. 28.

[c] "*Dein Leben wahrscheinlich zu machen*": in the apocryphal book of

Bel and the Dragon we read: "Now the Babylonians had an idol, called Bel, and there were spent upon him every day twelve great measures of fine flour, and forty sheep, and six firkins of wine." Verse 3, AV. The priests of Bel with their wives and children secretly ate the food offered to the idol. Hamann utilizes not only the story of Daniel's overthrowing the image of Bel but also his destruction of the so-called Dragon, another idol at Babylon. It is this latter image which Daniel, having previously overthrown Bel, causes to burst. (See p. 105, n. 29, above.) Lines 1–23 of Hamann's dedication to the public refer to features of Bel; lines 24–27, to the Dragon; lines 28–29, to Bel. Thus, Hamann's picture of the idol (public) is a composite one, combining features drawn from the apocryphal stories of both Bel and the Dragon at Babylon.

[d] "*Eckel*": this word (modern spelling *ekel*) meant in the eighteenth century "empfindliche, kritische, wählerische, nicht leicht befriedigte Geistesart." *K*, 227. But the Magus uses the nominal form later in the *Mem.* with the modern meaning. *65: 22* (italic page and line numbers refer to Nadler's edition of the *Mem.*; his numbering has been retained in the German text).

[e] "*Zu den erhörenden Füssen eines Tyrannen*": Hamann here refers to the obsequiousness of Aristippus, the disciple of Socrates and hedonistic philosopher (*fl.* ca. 370 B.C.), who attached himself to the court of Dionysius the Elder, tyrant of Syracuse. The reference is explained by an anecdote recorded by Diogenes Laertius in his *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* ii. 8: "He [Aristippus] made a request to Dionysius on behalf of a friend and, failing to obtain it, fell down at his feet. And when someone jeered at him, he made reply, 'It is not I who am to blame, but Dionysius who has ears in his feet.' " *LC* (1959), I, 207.

[f] "*Küchlein*": see p. 105, n. 29, above.

[g] "*Einem Paar Deiner Anbeter*": Johann Christoph Berens (1729–92) and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804).

[h] "*Reinigen*": see p. 105, n. 30, above.

[i] "*Der erste*": Berens.

[j] "*Stein der Weisen*": "Der Stein der Weisen (lapis philosophorum) war nach dem Glauben der Alchemisten ein Mineral, mit dem man gewöhnliche Metalle in Gold verwandeln und andere geheime Künste vollführen konnte; übertragen bezeichnet er etwas Unmögliches." *Trübners Deutsches Wörterbuch,* eds. Alfred Götze and Walther Mitzka (Berlin, 1955). Hamann uses it here in the last mentioned or figurative sense. Nadler, in commenting on the present passage, says that the philosopher's stone was "für Berens ein Wundermittel zum wirtschaftlichen Aufschwunge." VI, 366, *s.v.* "*Stein der Weisen*"; see this entry also for some other uses of the expression by the Magus. Years later Hamann transferred the term from Berens' economic theories to Kant's critical philosophy. *N*, III, 284: 17.

[k] "*Menschenfreund*": see n. *b* to page 60.

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[a] *"Mystischen Sprache"*: Hamann used the word *"mystisch"* pejoratively throughout his entire career to refer ironically to rationalistic thinking. For example, years later he applied the term to Kant's critical philosophy! *N*, III, 285: 15–16. By declaring that he will speak "in the mystical language of a Sophist" he probably means that he is willing to argue on rational terms in order to build a bridge of communication between himself and his opponents. The fact that Hamann had such ready recourse to the word, however, was doubtless due to its widespread use in a rather loose sense in eighteenth-century Germany. Thus, Langen, in discussing various words referring to the irrational and occult current at the time, says: "Auch *mystisch* ist ein solches Lieblingswort der Zeit und wohl auch wiederum der geheimen Gesellschaften." *L*, 143.

[b] Victor Riquetti, Marquis de Mirabeau (1715–89), French writer on political economy, was the father of the famous revolutionary statesman of the same name. An adherent of the physiocratic ideas of Quesnay, the elder Mirabeau defended them in *L'Ami des Hommes ou Traité de la Population* (Paris, 1755), as well as in numerous less well-known works. The physiocrats held, in opposition to the mercantilists, that the economic system of a country should not be primarily concerned with preserving a balance of trade but should be patterned on the laws of nature, which they understood in a Newtonian sense. Here Hamann is referring to Mirabeau's doctrine that the larger the number of people in a given country, the more prosperous it may become.

[c] *"Der andere"*: Kant.

[d] Isaac Newton (1642–1727) became Warden of the Mint (1695), and later Master of the Mint. It was his duty in this office to examine the coins of the realm periodically for any deficiency in weight or quality. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* [1941], XV, 579.

[e] *"Verwirrung in dem Münzwesen Deutschlands"*: in Hamann's day there was still no standard coinage for Germany, a situation which lasted until 1871. See *71*: 34, for a reference to *Münzen;* see also *N*, III, 146: 33, for a comparison of the false philosophers of the eighteenth century with the worst of all fiscal charlatans, the *Kipper und Wipper* of the seventeenth century. Consult also Hans Gebhart, *Die deutschen Münzen des MA und der Neuzeit.*

[f] *"Korn und Schrot"*: the gross weight of a coin is called in German *Schrot*; the weight of the precious metal it contains is called *Korn*. The familiar expression *"von echtem Schrot und Korn"* has two meanings, one literal, referring to coinage, the other figurative, meaning "of the good old sort" as applied to people. In the present passage Hamann exploits the double meaning of the phrase, reversing, however, the usual order of the nouns, and predicating it of ideas.

[g] "*Cosmische Familie*": many leading members of the Medici family bore the given name Cosimo. The Medici coat of arms contained spherical objects which are said to have represented pills, quite appropriately it would seem, since the name Medici is identical with the Italian word for physicians. Nadler says of Hamann's reference here, "verstehe die Familie Berens in Riga." *NB*, 104.

[h] "*Deus fio*": in this passage the Magus is referring to an anecdote which he had read in Francis Bacon's essay "Of Death." Bacon had written: "It is no less worthy to observe how little alteration in good spirits the approaches of death make; for they appear to be the same men till the last instant." After citing several examples, he continues with "Vespasian in a jest; sitting upon the stool, *Ut puto Deus fio*. . . . I suppose I am becoming a God." See *The Works of Francis Bacon*, p. 85. Bacon combined an anecdote from Suetonius (*Lives of the Caesars* 23) with another also drawn from ancient sources. Hamann used the Latin translation of Bacon's essay, which he owned. *Cf.* Nora Imendörffer, *Hamann und seine Bücherei*, p. 106. When challenged by a critic of the *Mem.* as to the historicity of this anecdote, Hamann refers to it as characterized by "impudence" ("*Frechheit*") like a "dithyrambic figure of speech," while at the same time indicating his reliance upon Bacon. *N*, II, 95: 1–10.

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[a] "*An die Zween*": to Kant and Berens.

[b] "*Sophocles in Electra*": the Sophoclean quotation is from the translation of F. Storr, *LC* (1919), p. 161, ll. 450–51. The context is as follows: Electra has repudiated the impious offerings sent by her mother to the grave of Agamemnon, and offers instead a lock of her own hair and her girdle. The quotation did not appear in the first edition, but was an autograph addition of Hamann's.

[c] "*Alexander verstand sie*": Hamann refers here to a statement by Francis Bacon to the effect that Alexander the Great criticized Aristotle for publishing his *Natural History* because he felt that the philosopher had thereby divulged mysteries to the general public which he should not have. In actuality Bacon had named the wrong work in this connection, for, as most ancient authorities report, the work in question was the *Metaphysics*. Hamann concludes from his reading of the Baconian version that, although Alexander understood the treatise which Aristotle published, the common people did not. As for the expression "Denkwürdigkeiten . . . über die Naturgeschichte der Thiere," that is undoubtedly Hamann's ironical further alteration of the title. See Francis Bacon, *De dignitate et augmentis scientarum*, Bk. II, in *Works* (1871), II, 304; cited in *B*, 72.

[d] "*Schimmel . . . mikroskopish Wäldchen*": see pp. 61 f. and 87, n. 1, above.

[e] "*Aesthetische Nachahmungen*": see n. *a* to page 74.

[f] "*Schwärmerische Andacht*": Berens and Kant had undoubtedly charged that Hamann had become *abergläubisch* and *schwärmerisch* after his conversion in London. This conjecture is strengthened by his use later on in the essay of the nominal forms *Schwärmerey und Aberglauben. 63: 31. Cf.* the letter to J. G. Lindner, March 21, 1759: "Wenn unser Freund [Berens] meine jetzige Gemüthsverfassung für sehr bedaurenswürdig ansieht, so laß er meine Schwärmerey nicht als ein *alienum quid* ansehen, das ihn nicht befallen könne." *ZH*, I, 307: 13–15; see further 420: 7–8, and 423: 30. In the present passage of the *Mem.* Hamann is saying in effect that even Xenophon and Plato can be charged with the same weakness, if weakness it be.

Earlier Hamann had in fact turned the word *Schwärmer* against the rationalists; thus in the *Biblische Betrachtungen* we read: ". . . unsere Zeiten haben einige Schwärmer des Unglaubens hervorgebracht, die der Vernunft wie die Päbstler nur der Maria gehuldigt haben." *N*, I, 21: 29–31.

It is worth noting that the word *schwärmen* and its variant forms were applied during the Reformation to those heretical believers who carried religious enthusiasm to an extreme. See Martin Luther, *Daß diese Wort Christi noch fest stehen widder die Schwermgeister,* 1527. In fact the word *Schwärmer* became a favorite term of Luther's. *DWB.* Later it was predicated of any unrealistic and exaggerated enthusiasm, whether religious or secular. See *Trübners Deutsches Wörterbuch.*

[g] "*Ein patriotischer St. John*": Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678–1751). English statesman, at one time Secretary for War, later Secretary of State. He is credited with providing the philosophical background for Pope's *Essay on Man.* The title of two works by St. John account for Hamann's use of the adjective "*patriotisch*" in connection with him: *The Idea of a Patriot King* (1748) and *Spirit of Patriotism* (1749). Hamann refers to St. John often; see "Bolingbroke," *N*, VI, 59, for references.

[h] "*Platonischer Shaftesbury*": Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713). Member of the English Parliament and influential English philosopher. His most important work is *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711). Although Shaftesbury had been tutored by Locke, his basic philosophical position was that of Platonism. Hamann refers to him often and in fact translated some of his essays. Both Bolingbroke and Shaftesbury reject the supernatural basis of religion and morals; hence Hamann's opposition. See *N*, VI, 353, for references in Hamann's writings. Lawrence M. Price, in his generally valuable *English Literature in Germany*, fails to note Hamann's concern with Shaftesbury. This is

especially surprising because he does take notice of the Magus' interest in other important English writers. Price also erroneously attributes the maxim "Poesie ist die Muttersprache des menschlichen Geschlechts" to the *Mem.* (p. 137).

[i] "*Auf das Unverständliche*": Hamann probably drew this anecdote from Charpentier, where Socrates' interlocutor was Euripides. *Cf. Ch*, 26. Consider also Hamann's statement of the previous year in the *Biblische Betrachtungen*: "Die Vernunft muß sich mit dem Urteil jenes Philosophen über des Heraklitus Schrift begnügen: was ich verstehe ist vortreflich, ich schlüße daher eben so auf dasjenige, was ich nicht verstehe." *N*, I, 14: 5–7.

[j] "*Philosophen*": Heraclitus.

[k] Edward Young (1683–1765), the author of this line, was an English divine and writer who exerted considerable influence on Hamann. The poem from which the present quotation comes, *The Complaint,* or *Night Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality* (1742), was widely read throughout Germany, and the youthful Hamann placed a quotation from it on the title page of the memorial to his mother in 1756. *Denkmal*, *N*, III, 233. When Young's *Conjectures on Original Composition* was published in the spring of 1759, it was eagerly received in Germany. The work anticipates to a great extent Hamann's ideas on imitation, on rules in literary composition, and on genius. John L. Kind says in this connection: "Hamann . . . in his views on originality and individualism, owes the greater part of his material to Young. His own opinion that nearly all his ideas were taken from the 'Night Thoughts' would read more correctly if he had said they were taken from the 'Conjectures'; for upon examination there are few passages that can be said to come unmistakably from 'Night Thoughts.'" *Edward Young in Germany*, p. 40. Further, Young appeals to Homer and Shakespeare as prime exemplars of the power of creativity in defiance of literary convention, and Hamann, of course, follows him in this regard. See 75: 3–5.

The line quoted in the *Mem.*, a later autograph addition of Hamann's, is from "Night the Sixth" of *Night Thoughts*. Young has just been discoursing on the necessity of reasoning from analogy if one would understand man's place in the great chain of being which stretches "unbroken upward, to the realms of incorporeal life" (ll. 24–25).

[l] "*Sueton de Caligula*": this footnote, which Hamann added to the first edition, is a good example of his tendency toward baroque ornamentation. But it is typically Hamannian in its implications, which might be interpreted thus: even Caligula, who was normally skillful in bodily exercises, did not learn to swim. Likewise, there are many people who should know how to read such writers as Heraclitus (and Hamann!) but do not.

To refer to a sadistic tyrant like Caligula in the present context can only be ironical or facetious, for what greater contrast can there be than that

between a depraved monarch of a mighty realm and a selfless philosopher like Socrates—one who foreshadows the Galilean!

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[a] "*Des französischen Staatsministers*": Armand Jean du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu (1585–1642).

[b] "*Ein grosser Künstler*": François Girardon (1630–98). Hamann refers to a much admired sculpture by this artist which still can be seen in the church of the Sorbonne.

[c] "*Pygmalion*": this legendary figure is said to have been artist-king of Cyprus. Having fashioned in ivory the beautiful image of a maiden, Pygmalion fell in love with it. Aphrodite heard his prayer that the image might receive the breath of life.

[d] "*Sprache unsers Witzes*": Hamann always uses "*Witz*" and "*witzig*" negatively in the *Mem.* (For other internal evidence, consult *62: 3* and *67: 16.*) As Kainz points out, *Witz* meant *Scharfsinn* or *Verstand* in the eighteenth century (*K*, 229), but since it was construed as ruling out all emotional and spiritual connotations, it became anathema to the Magus. Moreover, it was associated closely with the French *esprit* (Hamann translated Montesquieu's *Esprit des lois* as "*Witz der Gesetze*"; *N*, III, 158: 17; *cf.* Jansen Schoonhoven, *HE*, V, 102–3). Before his conversion, however, Hamann's attitude was different. Thus, in his *Daphne* period he had appeared as an apostle of *Witz* in Germany. See G. J. Sahme's letter to him of August 20, 1751; *ZH*, I, 1–2. But in the *Beylage zu Dangeuil* he seems to be well on the way to his later attitude in his use of *witzig* and *Witz*. *N*, IV, 230: 19, 31; for his employment of these words in the Socratic year, consult *ZH*, I, 354: 14, 16; 376: 21; 410: 30.

[e] "*Es giebt in dem Tempel*": *cf. N*, II, 394, for several of the ten fragmentary attempts by Hamann to exegete for the Princess Gallitzin the paragraph beginning with these words.

[f] "*Stanley*": see p. 114, n. 8, above.

[g] "*Brucker*": see p. 114, n. 9, above.

[h] "*Ein Grieche*": Zeuxis. See p. 115, n. 13, above.

[i] See above, p. 115, for a discussion of a passage beginning "Meisterstücke" and ending: "nachgeahmt verden."

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[a] "*Deslandes*": see p. 116, n. 14, above.

[b] "*Encyclischen*": see p. 72, n. 28, above.

[c] "*Chinesische Kaminpuppe*": see p. 116 and n. 15, above.

[d] *"Der Schöpfer der schönen Natur"*: Charles B. Batteux (1713–80). See p. 111n, above.

[e] *"Cyclopen"*: see p. 112 and nn, above.

[f] *"Taub"* is used here in the same sense as in the statement "das Metall ist taub," meaning, "the metal is dull" or "lacks luster."

[g] *"Klug zu werden"*: the allusion is to the proverbial dull-wittedness of the Phrygians.

[h] Jean de La Fontaine (1621–95) was famous for his fables.

[i] *"Eroberungswuth"*: when Hamann desired, some years later than the *Mem.*, to express his approval of Herder's *Oldest Document of the Human Race,* he indicated that the author had approached his material with *"Eroberungswuth."* *N*, III, 126: 19–20.

[j] *"Der Heldengeist eines Weltweisen"*: see pp. 92–93, 107–8 and nn. 34–35, above.

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[a] *"Des macedonischen Jünglings"*: Alexander the Great.

[b] *"Der blinde Minnesänger"*: Homer.

[c] *"Unsers von Bar"*: Georg Ludwig von Bar (1702–67), a German who wrote in French. He was praised by Gottsched for his literary merit. See *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie,* II, 44.

[d] Comical figure of Molière's *Malade imaginaire*. Von Bar wrote a poem in which Thomas Diafoirus praises the great figures of Greece and Rome as the counterparts of the prophets among the Jews.

[e] George Louis Leclerc, Count de Buffon (1707–88), a French naturalist and author of *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière* (1749–1804), in forty-four volumes. Hamann appreciated Buffon's work in certain regards, but he was of course finally hostile to it because of Buffon's thoroughgoing naturalism. "Hamann hat klar das Neue erkannt, das in Buffons Naturgeschichte zu Tage tritt. . . . Er will nur Gelehrter sein und reine Wissenschaft bringen. Daher schließt er aus seinem Werk die Religion und Gott vollständig aus. . . ." Saemann, *J. G. Hamann und die französische Literatur*, p. 55. Buffon's observations on style were, on the other hand, important for Hamann. *Ibid*; *cf.* especially *ZH*, I, 307: 10–12.

[f] Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755). Miss Saemann refers to the present passage of the *Mem.* in the following apt formulation regarding Hamann's relation to Montesquieu: "Als Historiker hat Hamann den Franzosen allerdings nicht sehr geschätzt, denn er hält ihn auf diesem Gebiete nicht für objektiv genug, er sei 'ein Dichter wieder sein Wissen und Wollen,' da er schon in der Darstellung der Schöpfung von der historischen Quelle der Bibel abweiche." *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[g] *"Hatte der Künstler . . . zu gebrauchen wissen"*: the literary reference in this passage is obscure. See p. 108n above.

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[a] Blanke writes concerning this passage: "The Dutch were accustomed to destroy their harvests in Indonesia, if they were too abundant, in order to keep the prices up artificially." *B*, 100.

[b] Francis Bacon (1561–1626) was one of the philosophers most influential in the shaping of Hamann's thought. Shortly before the composition of the *Mem.* he wrote to J. G. Lindner (July 3, 1759): "so ist jetzt Bacon mein Philosoph, den ich gleichfalls [as well as Hume] sehr schmecke." *ZH*, I, 356: 28. He used Bacon's empiricism against those who would make an abstract system of nature: "Eure mordlügnerische Philosophie hat die Natur aus dem Wege geräumt . . . Bacon beschuldigt euch, daß ihr sie durch eure Abstractionen schindet. Zeugt Bacon die Wahrheit; wohlan! so werft mit Steinen—und sprengt mit Erdenklößen oder Schneeballen nach seinen Schatten." *Aesthetica in nuce*, *N*, II, 206: 4–5, 13–15. For a discussion of Hamann's relation to Bacon, see Metzke, pp. 117–18, and Sven-Aage Jørgensen, "Hamann, Bacon, and Tradition."

[c] "Bollingbroke": see n. *g* to page 61.

[d] Charles Pinot Duclos (1704–72). His best work is *Considérations sur les moeurs de ce siècle* (1751), but Hamann refers in the present passage to *Mémoire pour servir à l'histoire des mœurs du XVIII.e siècle* (1751), which is purely anecdotal. Hamann's spelling of the name with an umlaut is an idiosyncrasy.

[e] Thomas Blackwell (1701–87). Hamann possessed his *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer* (published anonymously in 1735). Although Blackwell manifests a genuine appreciation of Homer, his work suffers from a lack of method.

[f] See p. 59 above.

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[a] *"Die neugekleideten Gratien"*: see pp. 62 ff. above.

[b] *"Einem Toußaint"*: François Vincent Toussaint, author of *Les moeurs* (1748) and *Histoire des Passions* (1751).

[c] *"Des Gesichtsdeuters"*: Zopyrus. Thus Charpentier: "Und ein anderer, so Zopyrus hiesse, urtheilete gleichmaßig aus seiner [Socrates'] Gesichts-Bildung, daß er lasterhaft seyn müsse, und er gestand es auch, daß seine natürliche Zuneigung lasterhaft wäre, aber daß er dieselbige durch die Welt-Weißheit gebessert habe. So bate er auch die Götter über alles, daß sie ihm doch die innerliche Schönheit geben wolten. . . ." *Ch*, 137–38.

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[a] "*Nervensaft*": Webster defines "nervous fluid" as "a hypothetical fluid formerly thought to circulate through nerves, and regarded as the essential functional part."

[b] By "*Muselmännern*" Hamann means anti-Trinitarian Christians. See *N*, III, 152: 15.

[c] Nadler says concerning "*Idioten*": "Der Privatmann im Gegensatz zum Staatsmann und Politiker, daher der gemeine Mann; der Laie, der Ungebildete, der Tor. Bei Hamann im Sinne des Sokrates und Paulus, der 'weise Tor'." *N*, VI, 188; see also Salmony, pp. 175, 304.

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[a] "*Die Schnörkel unserer Alpendichter*": probably a reference to Albrecht von Haller's poem, *Die Alpen* (1729).

[b] Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), author of the famous *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697). Bayle's philosophy, rooted in Cartesianism and issuing in a militant anti-ecclesiasticism, was always anathema to Hamann.

[c] "*Loisirs zu schreiben*": this footnote appeared in the first edition. Blanke maintains that Roth and Nadler changed what was originally "*der*" into "*oder*" in the note without apparent reason. *B*, 121. As far as I can tell from the copy of the first edition available to me (University of Bonn Library copy on microfilm), it appears that a letter has been struck out where the "*o*" would occur. But if one assumes that he is dealing here with a misprint that Hamann corrected, which seems likely, there is no reason to reproduce the original error. In any event, the sentence makes no sense as it stands in the Nadler edition. After changing the sentence to read: "Das heißt Eßays und Pensees der Loisirs zu schreiben," and after pointing out that the footnote is to be conceived as a continuation of lines 2–3 of the main text, Blanke interprets the sentence thus: "Hamann will sagen: Man rühmt sich heute, wir hätten es im Erfahren und Denken so weit gebracht. In Wirklichkeit haben wir es aber nur dazu gebracht, Schriften über Erfahrung (Essais) abzufassen und in unseren Mußestunden (Loisirs) Gedanken (Pensees) aufzuzeichnen. . . . Es ist der Gegensatz zwischen Literatur und Leben, zwischen Schreiben und Existieren, der Hamann hier vorschwebt." *Ibid.*

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[a] "*Sophisten*": see pp. 94–95 and n. 16, above.

[b] "*Seines Namens*": the proper name "Kriton" has the same Greek root as *kritisch*; hence, the name of Socrates' patron would suggest, on the basis of its etymology, that he had good judgment.

[c] *"Unwissend zu scheinen"*: of this passage Blanke aptly says: "Sein [Socrates'] Nichtwissen war kein Scheinen, sondern ein Sein, und das war es eben, was ihm erbarmungslose Feinde verschaffte." *B*, 126. Yoshimu Sugiyama rightly calls the Socratic ignorance in the *Mem.* the *"Geheimnis seiner* [Socrates'] *Existenz,"* but transfers too mechanically and sketchily alien categories to Hamann's thought (especially from Karl Heim's theology). "J. G. Hamanns 'Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten,' eine geistesgeschichtliche Betrachtung," p. 18 *et passim*.

[d] *"Bauerstolz"*: Blanke cites Adelung's definition (1793) of *Bauerstolz*: "auf eine ungeschickte und ungesittete Art stolz." *B*, 127. Schiller uses the adjectival form of the compound word, however, in two of his early plays. Thus, in *Die Verschwörung des Fiesko zu Genua* (1783), he describes Gianettino Doria as *"bäurischstolz." Schillers sämmtliche Schriften*, p. 7. In *Kabale und Liebe* (1784), the simple-minded but ambitious Frau Miller is characterized with the same word. Act I, Scene 2; *ibid.*, III, 362: 11.

[e] In the lines beginning "Eben daher bleibt" and ending "Projektmacher der Stern- und Staatsseher," we have a statement which, taken superficially, seems to express only a rather commonplace notion, namely, that ideas are more durable than the most sumptuous garments and the most pretentious systems. But if one pays close attention to the manner in which Hamann expresses this notion, he finds that it yields important insights. Franz Vonessen has pointed out that it is a widespread assumption of the world's religions that sacrifice constitutes the genuine adornment of gods and men. See "Das Opfer der Götter," pp. 270 ff., 282. Hence *"die Einfälle des Armen"* may be said to constitute Socrates' everlasting adornment, in contrast to the transitory adornment of *"blanke Kleider und rauschende Schlafröcke."* The sacrifice of Socrates was his renunciation of riches and the fleshpots in favor of voluntary poverty. But this was only one side of the coin. The other side was Socrates' refusal to construct a system, to be a *Projektmacher*; for one who follows exclusively the vocation of philosopher this is a genuine renunciation or sacrifice. That the idea of sacrifice and adornment do indeed go together in Hamann's thought we have evidence in the following: toward the end of his life he wrote that Luther, the German Elijah and the restorer of true Christianity, gave, in a Socratic mood, to the tutelary deity of the Reformation the cabalistic name of *"Scheblimini"* which he (Hamann) had presumed to adopt and to oppose to his *"Golgotha"* in order to comfort the reader with the symbolic relationship of the earthly crown of thorns and the heavenly crown of stars, and the relation of the deepest abasement to the sublimest elevation of the two opposed natures of Christ. *Ein Fliegender Brief an Niemand, den Kundbaren*, Zweite Fassung; *N*, III, 405–7: 23–3.

Thus, some adorn themselves with shining raiment, others with cosmic or macrocosmic systems; whether they are scientific astronomers or super-

stitious astrologers makes no difference when they claim for their systems and calendars a spurious finality. (The Magus' attitude toward scientific dogmatism is exemplified in a letter to Herder of May 23, 1768: ". . . da ich vor wenig Abenden bey meinem Freunde Green träumte, und Kant versichern hörte, daß man keine neue, wichtige Entdeckung in der Astronomie mehr erwarten konnte wegen ihrer Vollkommenheit, fiel es mir wie im Schlafe ein, daß ich den neuen Hypothesen der Sternkunst so gehässig war, ohne sie zu verstehen, daß ich ihnen, ohne zu wissen warum, nach dem Leben stand, vielleicht weil sie mich bloß in meiner Andacht störten." *ZH*, II, 416: 29–35.) The important truth is that the material possessions of the rich and the elaborate systems of the intellectually clever fall a prey to the ravages of time, but the modest wisdom of the Socratic ignorance endures, and may be regarded as the invisible but imperishable adornment of the one who confesses it. Here we have an anticipation within the natural order of Christ's sacrifice, which is of the supernatural order, and knowledge of which is dependent on faith and revelation.

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[a] The "*alter Geck*" is Lord Chesterfield (Philip Dormer Stanhope, Fourth Earl of Chesterfield, 1694–1773). Hamann later appended to the passage "*Alles ist eitel*" the following quotation: " 'This truth is never sufficiently discovered or felt by mere speculation, experience in this case is necessary for conviction, though perhaps at the expence of some morality.' Lord Chesterfield's Miscellaneous Works Vol. II. Lond. 1778. Letters to his friends Book II. Letter XLI. to the Bishop of Waterford. p. 507." *R*, VIIIa, 42.

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[a] "*Dem Nabel der Egide*": the Aegis was the shield of Athena. At the center of it was portrayed the head of Medusa with her frightful serpentine locks. Athena's purpose in placing such an image on her shield was to keep the importunate at a distance, and thus to warn of her inviolability. The Aegis, then, is a fitting symbol of the Socratic ignorance as Hamann understood it, for it serves to fend off those who approach it in the wrong spirit, just as did the shield of Athena. Years later Hamann will again utilize the symbol. In the *Versuch einer Sibylle über die Ehe* (1775) he avers that he would consecrate the work to Katharina Berens to wear as a "*Medusenbild.*" *N*, III, 203: 12; *cf.* IV, 418: 21. Since he had once sought her hand in marriage in vain, the *Medusenbild* doubtless signifies her inaccessibility to him.

[b] "*Empfindung*": see pp. 100, 127–28, and 98n, above. See also Unger, "Hamann und die Empfindsamkeit," for the background of the word *Empfindung* in the eighteenth century.

[c] David Hume (1711–76) played a key role in the thought of Hamann as well as of Kant, and provided a catalyst for both, which had, however, diametrically opposed results in the philosophy of each. In the case of Hamann, Hume's philosophy served as a buttress to faith; in the case of Kant, it served the cause of skepticism by arousing him from his "dogmatic slumber." For the *Mem.* Hume is of primary importance from the philosophical standpoint, both for its genesis and its content. "Ich war von Hume voll," Hamann wrote to Jacobi on April 27, 1787, "wie ich die Socr. Denkw. schrieb, und darauf bezieht sich S. 49 meines Büchleins. Unser eigen Dasein und die Existenz aller Dinge außer uns muß geglaubt und kann auf keine andere Art bewiesen werden." *G*, 506; see also *ibid.*, 492–93. Hamann's personal faith was, of course, Biblically derived, not due to the merit of Hume; apparently what he did appreciate in Hume was the fact that the Scottish philosopher took faith seriously from the philosophical standpoint: "Hume ist immer mein Mann, weil er wenigstens das Principium des Glaubens veredelt und in sein System aufgenommen. Unser Landsmann [Kant] wiederkaut seine Causalitätsstürmerey ohne an jenes zu gedenken." Letter to J. G. Herder, May 10, 1781; *ZH*, IV, 294: 7–10. Yet his attitude toward Hume had of necessity to remain a most ambivalent one. See esp. *ZH*, I, 379: 30–37. Hamann translated Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1779), but it was never published; it is reprinted in *N*, III, 245–74. For the relationship of Hamann to Hume, see Metzke, pp. 75–78 *et passim*; Philip Merlan, "From Hume to Hamann"; *B*, 141–42.

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[a] "*Gesetz der Nachahmung*": Blanke emphasizes the difficulty of explaining this passage, and offers two possible interpretations, without indicating his preference for either. *B*, 143. In the first he would understand Hamann as rejecting imitation in favor of a "genial creativity." (Blanke weakens his antithesis, however, by opposing to creativity what he calls "merely an external imitation.") Here we have the conceptual opposites of *expression* and *imitation* set against each other, with Hamann represented as rejecting the latter and embracing the former. In the second possible interpretation Blanke opposes a "superficial imitation" to the process of understanding and of representing nature "from the inside" ("*von innen heraus*"). Here the antithesis no longer involves expression but two kinds of imitation, the one spurious, the other genuine. In this connection Blanke is not careful to rule out a rationalistic interpretation of imitation "from the inside." But

his formulations underscore a basic difficulty inherent in Hamann's thought on the subject of imitation or mimesis in general, namely, that the roots of two divergent artistic tendencies lie side by side in his thought. They are (1) self-expression, and (2) a modified form of mimesis. Blanke is wise in not choosing between his alternative interpretations, for either taken *alone* would be wrong. Let us attempt to formulate briefly the outlines of Hamann's thought on this subject: his idea of artistic creation is ultimately rooted in his idea of God as the one who reveals himself *in forma servi* in nature and in his revelatory word. But He reveals himself only in part, and speaks a language to us which is always more affective than rational. The true artist will imitate God, who is the "Poet at the beginning of days." It is sheer presumption when the artist (or the philosopher) tries to proceed more rationally than God himself. This actually happens, however, whenever the critic fashions prescriptive norms or rules for the poet and whenever the poet seeks to follow them. This procedure is wrong not only because it always turns out to be abortive, but because it is really rebellion against the divine order of things. The authentic artist responds to what experience (which ultimately comes from God) reveals to him. Hence, he is both objective and subjective in his response—objective in so far as he is reacting to external experience, subjective in so far as he is responding in terms of his unique individuality to that which originates outside of himself. The artist thus holds a mirror up to nature, but the significant fact is that the mirror is so constituted as to add something specifically its own and aesthetically important to the image which it reflects. This distortion, which we may see as having an aesthetic quality, really springs from the imperfection of the human mind, an imperfection to which God condescends in his revelation. Hamann rejects the imitation of the particulars of either nature or of a given artistic work, but admits the imitation of *universals conceived as spirit* rather than as rationalistic formulations. See *N*, II, 174: 7. Such universals are not accessible to reason alone, but are chiefly intuited by faith or feeling. In the *Memorabilia* Hamann uses the term "*nachahmen*" in its literal sense of the imitation of particulars as well as in the special sense just mentioned. In the following passages it is used with its literal meaning: *63: 9–14, 26–30; 66: 24–27; 67:5*. Otherwise, it has the specifically Hamannian sense: *63: 21–28; 71: 25*. The word "*Nachahmung*" occurs twice, both times in the Hamannian sense: *61: 12–14; 74: 9–10*. (See *N*, II, 14: 15–18; 16: 15–16, for an approbative use of *nachahmen* in this period.) We may now venture an interpretation of the particular passage in question: Hamann means what he says when he states that both the philosopher and the poet are subject to the law of imitation, but imitation must be understood in a special sense. In other words, both the philosopher and the poet are subject to the law of the Biblically derived theory of aesthetic imitation. (For a further discussion of the Magus' idea of imitation, see Jørgensen, pp. 44

et passim; and Walter Hilpert, *J. G. Hamann als Kritiker der deutschen Literatur*, pp. 64–68.)

[b] "*Der eine*": Voltaire is meant here. Hamann refers to the former's change from optimism (based on reason) to pessimism (against which reason is of no avail) as a result of the Lisbon earthquake in 1755.

[c] Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724–1803), the great German poet, lost his wife Meta, nee Moller (born 1728), on November 28, 1758. Since her death was universally mourned in Germany, and since her husband was inconsolable, Hamann still has this occurrence in mind when writing the *Mem*. Thus, the man of reason, Voltaire, and the man of creative imagination, Klopstock, are equally lost without faith when confronted by the fact of death.

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[a] "*Thurn . . . der . . . gaft*": see pp. 121–23 and 122n, above.

[b] "*Genie*": see *U*, 275–305, for a thorough discussion of Hamann's *Geniebegriff*.

[c] See pp. 99–100 above.

[d] "*Wurmdoctor Hill*": see pp. 78–79 and n. 41, above.

[e] James Bradley (1693–1762), English astronomer. He is famous for his discovery of the aberration of light (1729) and of the mutation ("nodding") of the earth's axis (1748). The reference to Bradley does not appear in the first edition but was an autograph addition.

[f] Anthony van Leeuwenhoek (1632–1723), inventor of the microscope, with which he discovered bacteria, infusoria, and spermatazoa; he was also the first to give a full description of red blood cells. Born in Delft, Netherlands, he spent most of his life in Amsterdam.

[g] Hamann's ironical use of the term "*Geschmack*" in this passage is worth noting. There are several important reasons why he rejected the idea of "good taste," which is implied here. Not the least of these reasons was its association with the rationalism of the Enlightenment, which insisted upon clear ideas as opposed to sincerity and depth of feeling. J. C. Gottsched, through representing an extreme viewpoint, nevertheless expresses the spirit of the Enlightenment when he identifies *Geschmack* as "das nach der bloßen sinnlichen Empfindung eingerichteter Urtheil von Sachen, davon wir kein deutliches, sondern nur ein klares Erkenntnis haben." *Kritische Dichtkunst*, p. 123, quoted by the author in *Beobachtungen über den Gebrauch und Misbrauch vieler deutscher Wörter und Redensarten*, p. 104. For Gottsched a "clear" (*klar*) idea is one which is correct, but for which no reasons can be given; a "distinct" (*deutlich*) idea is one for which reasons can be given. But for Hamann the only good taste is derived from a sensitivity to the Logos. (*Cf. N*, I, 92: 1–4, 311: 14–15; *ZH*, I, 384:

31–32, where he paraphrases Ps. 34:9; and *ZH*, II, 9: 36–37.) Since God took upon himself full human nature, not simply its beautiful aspects, genuinely good taste must approve much that is banned by the rationalistic aesthetics of the eighteenth century. "Ueber die deutlichen Begriffe," he wrote in 1783, "werden die Gerichte kalt und verlieren den Geschmack." *G*, 7; *cf. ZH*, II, 144: 16. In the *Mem.* Hamann uses the word *Geschmack* four times—once in a non-ironical sense (*67: 26*), and ironically in the present instance and on two other occasions (*63: 4*; *68: 37*). See *R*, VIIIb, under "*Geschmack*" for numerous references. See *U*, I, 298 ff., for a comprehensive investigation of Hamann's critique of good taste.

[h] Erik Abma considers this paragraph a good summary of the various theories advanced to explain the Socratic daimon despite the elements of caricature it contains. See his *Sokrates in der deutschen Literatur*, p. 130.

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[a] "*Idioten*": see n. *c* to page 68.

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[a] "*Wie ein Parther*": the Parthians, who inhabited the area southeast of the Caspian Sea, were unique warriors. "Their tactics, of which the Romans had fatal experience in the first wars with them, became so celebrated as to pass into a proverb. Their mail-clad horsemen spread like a cloud around the hostile army, and poured in a shower of darts; and then evaded any closer conflict by a rapid flight, during which they still shot their arrows backward upon the enemy." *Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities*, ed. H. E. Peck (N.Y., 1962), p. 1181.

[b] In the first edition Hamann had erroneously written "*Schlacht bey Marathon*" for "*Leuctrischen Schlacht.*" He acknowledged this error in the *Wolken*, corrected it with a marginal gloss, and supplied a footnote reference to the proper passage of the *Wolken* (page number changed by Nadler to conform to his edition).

Page 79

[a] "*Ein Peripatetiker*": an Aristotelian. Hamann accepts the notion that the word "peripatetic" derives from Aristotle's habit of walking back and forth while teaching.

[b] "*Den ersten Claßischen Autor unserer Schulen*": Xenophon.

[c] C. A. Heumann's three-volume work on the history of philosophy (1715–23). See p. 59 above.

Page 80

[a] The word "*plastisch*" probably means in the present context "crude," i.e., not lovely. If Blanke is correct, it would describe what we have called Socratic form. See *B*, 178–79.

[b] "*Die Gestalt eines ziegenfüßigen Satyrs*": see pp. 9 ff. above.

Page 82

[a] "*Brosamen . . . Allmosen . . . Raube . . . Schwert*": see pp. 117–19 and nn., above.

[b] "*Vernünftiger, brauchbarer, artiger Mann*": see p. 120 and nn. 22–23, above.

[c] "*Bücklinge machen . . . Teller lecken*": see pp. 120–21 above.

[d] "*Vatermörder*": Robert François Damiens (born 1714) attempted to assassinate Louis XV ("*Le Bien-Aimé*") on January 5, 1757. Damiens was tortured for several months before he was most cruelly executed.

Addendum to Hamann's Notes

Almost all the following notes are either translations of Biblical passages referred to in Hamann's annotations or are acknowledgments of translations from the Greek and Latin. Biblical quotations preceded by *(E)* are referred to in the first edition of 1759, although not quoted there. The others are later marginal glosses by Hamann which are included in the Nadler text.

[1] "A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing." (Prov. 9:13 [AV].) This quotation does not refer to the sentence which Nadler has indicated in the text, but to the first part of the following sentence, which reads: "Du must alles wissen, und lernst nichts. . . ." (See *B*, 64, n. 5, for Blanke's comment on this.)

[2] "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (II Tim. 3:7 [AV].)

[3] Trans. Arthur S. Way, *LC* (1946), p. 323.

[5] Trans. J. C. Rolfe, *LC* (1924), I, 487.

[9] Hamann is in error here. The reference is to Habakkuk 2:19, and reads: "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it" (AV).

[12] Trans. Arthur S. Way (1920), p. 311.

[14] *(E)* "The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments." (II Tim. 4:13.)

[17] Trans. John W. Basore, *LC* (1935), p. 189.

[18] Trans. H. N. Fowler, *LC* (1921), p. 39.

[21] *(E)* "And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet." (Rom. 1:27 [AV].)

[22] Trans. W. H. S. Jones, *LC* (1963), p. 13.

[24] Trans. W. R. M. Lamb, *LC* (1962), p. 195.

[25] Trans. W. R. M. Lamb, *LC* (1927), p. 65.

[27] (There came wise men) "Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." (Matt. 2:2 [AV].)

[28] "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." (Luke 2:9.)

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying." (Luke 2:13 [AV].)

[29] Trans. W. R. M. Lamb, *LC* (1952), p. 357.

[32] Trans. Benjamin B. Rogers, *LC* (1924), p. 253.

[33] *(E)* "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:17 [AV].)

[34] Trans. E. S. Forster, *LC* (1955), p. 15.

[35] Trans. W. R. M. Lamb, *LC* (1961), p. 287.

[37] Trans. in part by Richard Boulton, *The Theological Works of the Honourable Robert Boyle, Esq. Epitomized* (London, 1715), p. 134.

[39] *(E)* The Biblical quotation in the text is from the Revised Standard Version.

[41] *(E)* ". . . thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus." (Cant. [Song of Solomon] 7:5 [verse 4 in AV].) H. Maundrell, *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem* (Oxford, 1699, 1714). (This work not cited in the first edition.)

[43] Trans. H. M. Hubbell (Cicero *De Inventione* i. 31), *LC* (1949), p. 95.

[44] *(E)* Trans. H. Rackham (Pliny *Natural History* xxxv), *LC* (1961), p. 313.

[55] Trans. of Aristophanes *Wasps*, Benjamin B. Rogers, *LC* (1960), p. 413.

[57] Trans. anonymous, *Greek and Roman Classics in Translation*, ed. Charles T. Murphy *et al.* (New York, 1949), p. 299.

[60] *(E)* "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous." (Matt. 23:29 [AV].)

[62] Trans. Benjamin B. Rogers, *LC* (1960), p. 363.

Appendix A

Typological Themes

An das Publicum

Daniel caused idol at Babylon to burst by putting lumps made of boiled pitch, fat, hair into the mouth of the idol, thus destroying the faith of King Cyrus in it.	Page 59 lines 24–27	Hamann would purge Kant and Berens for their faith in the idol, *das Publicum*, by means of his laxative pills (*Küchlein*) in the form of his little treatise.

An die Zween

The general public in Athens failed to understand Aristotle's work on the natural history of animals, but Aristotle's friend, Alexander the Great, understood it.	Page 61 lines 5–9	The general public in Germany will fail to understand Hamann's treatise and will see in it only "mold," but perhaps a feeling of friendship will prompt Kant and Berens to discover in it a "microscopic forest."

Einleitung

Noah and Christ both demeaned themselves to become carpenters in the interest of saving their followers.	Page 62 lines 7–9	Peter the Great demeaned himself to the extent of becoming a carpenter in order to become the true leader of his subjects.
God's providence preserved the monuments of secular history necessary for an understanding of its meaning.	Page 64 lines 21–31	God's providence preserved the sacred books necessary for our salvation.

Erster Abschnitt

Although Socrates was a teacher in his own right, he was also a prototype of Christ.	Page 67 lines 15–20	Christ the antitype of Socrates.

Socrates created artistically excellent statues of the three Graces, but did not depict them nude, as was the custom; instead, he clothed them in accordance with earlier custom. For this he was criticized.	Page 67 lines 1–14	Hamann has veiled his intentions in the *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten,* which he refers to as "these newly clothed Graces," and predicts that they will also evoke opposition.
Socrates misunderstood the parodox of *Knechtsgestalt* as the form of spiritual beauty, hence was led into error (pederasty).	Page 67, line 24– page 68, line 24–	The Jews misunderstood the parodox of *Knechtsgestalt* as the form of spiritual beauty, and were led into the error of not recognizing Christ as their expected hero.
Zweyter Abschnitt		
Through the oracle, Apollo pronounces Socrates the wisest of men, because he confessed his own ignorance.	Page 74, line 20– page 75, line 2	Through the Apostle Paul, God pronounced those men wise who recognize their ignorance.
Socrates' daimon guided him into truth.	Page 75, lines 6–10	The Holy Spirit guides the Christian into truth.
The empty understanding of a Socrates is made fruitful through the inspiration of his daimon.	Page 75 lines 10–13	The womb of the Virgin [Mary] is made fruitful through the Holy Spirit.
Dritter Abschnitt		
Socrates became enranged at the Sophists on occasion.	Page 79 lines 25–34	Christ became enraged at the Scribes and Pharisees at times.
Schlußrede		
Socrates martyred because of his witness to the truth.	Page 82 lines 8–16	Christ martyred because of his witness to the truth.

Appendix B

Biblical References

The following Biblical references may be to literal quotations of some length or to very brief but nevertheless clear allusions. Blanke's list of references serves as the basis of the following tabulation. Numbers in parentheses refer to page and line of Nadler text. The Biblical references in boldface type are those appearing in the *Erstdruck;* the others were later autograph editions by Hamann and were printed by Nadler.

Old Testament

Genesis
- 3:5 (71: 35)
- 3:22 (71: 36–37)

Exodus
- 23:15 (59: 23)

Numbers
- 33:55 (73: 5)

Judges
- **14:18** (65: 13)

I Samuel
- 10:11–12 (77: 14–15)

I Kings
- 18:27–28 (59: 19)

Psalms
- 17:12 (82: 3)
- 34:19 (74: 4–5)
- 45:3 [2 AV] (68: 18)
- 51:8 [6 AV] (77: 8)
- 90:12 (73: 26)
- 94:9 (59: 13)
- 115:4–7 (59: 12)
- 139:9 (74: 18)
- 139:15 (66: 12)

Proverbs
- 9:13 (59: 14)

Ecclesiastes
- 1:2 (71: 37)

Canticles
- **7:5** (75: 1–2)

Isaiah
- 53:3 (68: 19)
- 53:5 (80: 23–24)

Habakkuk
- 3:19* (62: 11)

Apocrypha

Bel and the Dragon
- 26 (59: 20, 25)

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* Actually 2:19; Hamann's error.

New Testament

Matthew
1:18 (75: 10–13)
2:2 (69: 19)
10:29 (64: 19)
11:29 (79: 32)
23:23 (79: 33–34)
23:29 (81: 20)
Mark
6:15 (69: 6–7)
7:28 (82: 2)
Luke
2:9, 13 (69: 19)
16:29 (64: 15)
22:36 (82: 3)
22:60 (80: 31)
John
12:24 (74: 29)
18:37 (82: 10–11)
Acts
3:2 (82: 2)
5 (69: 8)
7:22 (75: 10)
9:3 (75: 2)
14:17 (71: 22)
17:20–21 (76: 28)
17:21 (72: 11–12)
17:22 (67: 10–11)
17:23 (77: 9)
19:19 (64: 24)
26:24 (80: 22)
Romans
1:20 (64: 15)
1:27 (67: 27)
2:11 (68: 13)
3:29 (77: 15)
8:21 (59: 27)
I Corinthians
1:28 (74: 30)
8:2–3 (74: 23–27)
8:4 (59: 10)
Philippians
4:7 (75: 10)
I Timothy
1:9 (82: 14)
2:7 (74: 22)
6:12 (82: 9)
II Timothy
1:10 (74: 31)
3:7 (59: 16)
4:13 (64: 31)
Titus
1:12 (69: 7)
I Peter
1:16 (68: 21)

Appendix C

Graphic Representation of the Essential Unity of the Work

Arrows pointing toward or away from the column "Socratic Ignorance" indicate the inner and outer orientation to it of the persons named. Thus, Plato and Xenophon openly applaud it and are sincere in their applause. Crito is the opposite of these, since he rejects the notion and admits as much. The Sophists, according to Hamann, outwardly accepted the Socratic ignorance, but were insincere in their protestations.

Inner Orientation* (Subjective)		Essence†	Outer Orientation‡ (Objective)
Plato	→	Socratic	←
Xenophon	→	Ignorance	←
Crito	←		→
Sophists	←		←

* Corresponds to the Aristotelian "thought" (*dianoia*).
† Corresponds, in part, to the Aristotelian "plot" (*mythos*), but in part only.
‡ Corresponds to the Aristotelian "character" (*ethos*).

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