The persona of the early modern philosopher

Hadotian and Foucauldian challenges to the sociopolitical analysis of persona as an office

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Abstract

This article provides a critical assessment of the scholarly analysis of the persona of the early modern philosopher. In particular, it examines the ways in which historians have tended to analyse the formation of philosophical personhoods in terms of spiritual exercises while at the same time subordinating this aspect of self-formation to larger institutional and sociopolitical contexts and levels of explanation. By presenting spiritual exercises as a prerequisite for or even as a means of shaping a self motivated to pursue and seize institutional and sociopolitical power, one risks trivializing the therapeutic function at the very core of those exercises' significance. The article examines the intellectual traditions and assumptions that have paved the way for this interpretation and argues for a more thorough analysis of the therapeutic context, an analysis that raises other research questions and ultimately paves the way for a rather different understanding of what it meant to be and live as a philosopher in the early modern period. Although the article focuses on the persona of the early modern philosopher, it also invites readers interested in persona, identity formation and spiritual exercise in other historical contexts.

Keywords: persona, identity, early modern philosophy, spiritual exercise, technology of the self, Pierre Hadot, Michel Foucault

Introduction

The analytical concept of *persona* has emerged in recent decades as a powerful tool for analyzing socially recognizable types or offices in early modern philosophy and science.[1] The aim of this article is to provide a critical assessment of this strand of analysis, its strengths and merits, its weaknesses and shortcomings, and its overlooked usages and potentials.

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Although the focus is on the persona of the early modern philosopher, many of the issues raised are relevant for the historical analysis of persona and identity formation more broadly. The assessment thus invites historians specializing in early modern philosophy and science as well as those interested in and working with these perspectives in other historical contexts.

In the discussion that follows, I focus on the tensions between the social constructivist approach to persona as an office and the increasingly popular perspective on philosophy as spiritual exercises and technologies of the self. While analyzing the self as socially constructed through and through, from the cultivation of specific cognitive capacities, skills and virtues to the ways in which this work mobilized powerful sociopolitical agents, historians have tended to subordinate the level of self-formation through spiritual exercises to larger institutional and sociopolitical contexts and levels of explanation. In doing so, they move away from the original project of the French historians and philosophers Pierre Hadot and Michel Foucault in first developing their conceptions of spiritual exercises and technologies of the self–that is, to analyse premodern philosophy as essentially therapeutic work on the self.[2] But what happens to this therapeutic core–the daily regimen pursued to relieve the mind of the passions associated with public life–if we reduce it to a mere prerequisite or means for achieving institutional and sociopolitical objectives?

The first part of the article examines what assumptions, starting points, problems and questions characterize the analysis of the early modern philosopher as an office, its strengths and advantages but also what has been lost by downplaying and reinterpreting the therapeutic contexts highlighted by Hadot and Foucault. I then turn to Hadot and Foucault to show that their therapeutic approach invites different research questions and ultimately a rather different understanding of philosophy and the philosopher. Taking an empirical turn, the last part of the article highlights the case of the Leibnizian philosopher Christian Wolff to show that, depending on which discourses and genres we look at, it is possible to distinguish two rather different regimens of spiritual exercises: *epistemic* exercises to cultivate intellectual capacities, skills and virtues conducive to the acquisition of sociopolitical authority and power, and *therapeutic* exercises explicitly crafted to temper and cure the mind of desires and passions associated with public life. The article suggests that this distinction helps not only to unravel some of the differences, tensions and contradictions in the scholarly analyses of the early modern philosopher but also to pose new, productive questions, opening up unexamined avenues for understanding what it meant to be and live as a philosopher during this period.

The early modern philosopher as an office

While social scientists have sometimes used persona to capture more or less superficial social roles or masks, adopted in different situations and for different purposes, the concept of persona as an office relies on the assumption that there is no real self behind the socially constructed self.[3] In the introduction to their anthology *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe*, the editors–Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger and Ian Hunter–draw on this usage when emphasizing that the volume focuses on "the contested character of philosophy, and the *persona* necessary for its practice, that is, the purpose-built 'self' whose cognitive capacities and moral bearing are cultivated for the sake of a knowledge deemed philosophical."[4] Such analysis requires that we attend both to the kind of practices that individuals have to perform in order to conduct themselves in a "philosophical" manner and to the ways in which this very work on the self is constantly shaped and negotiated in relation to larger institutional and sociopolitical contexts. To take this radically contextualist approach seriously means that we must analyse and link the level of self-formation through locally situated practices and exercises to the larger sociopolitical field, where different offices such as the *scholastic*, the *metaphysician*, the *experimentalist*, the *technocrat* etc., were engaged in a battle over the meaning of philosophy and what it meant to be and live as a philosopher. To explore how historians have construed these links, in this section I examine two particularly prominent and thorough accounts: Gaukroger's readings of Francis Bacon and Hunter's readings of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz.[5]

In *Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Early-Modern Philosophy* Gaukroger draws attention to how Bacon elaborated the new science in relation to the ancient concept of philosophy as *cultura animi*.[6] Accordingly, philosophy provided a cure for the mind perturbed by passions deriving from ignorance and misconceptions. While in its classical form the cultura animi was typically developed as a part of moral philosophy, Bacon redirected the task to natural philosophy. Thus seen, Bacon's famous idols emerge as diseases of the mind that are cured not through the traditional cultura animi but rather through the regimen provided by the new natural philosophy.[7] Methodical rules and prescriptions thus compensated for some of the natural inclinations that corrupted human knowledge and the human mind. While some scholars have argued that Bacon's cultura animi should indeed be understood as a therapeutic regimen in its own right, Gaukroger rather suggests that it was part of the much larger project of turning the hitherto mostly esoteric discipline of natural philosophy into a public science.[8] This goal required the reshaping

of natural philosophy as such; as Gaukroger points out, "[t]he object of this reform was both the practice and the practitioners of natural philosophy."[9] Rather than being on some philanthropic mission to educate and make knowledge universally accessible, Bacon envisioned a new practitioner of natural philosophy who produced and presented knowledge that served national interests and that was ultimately intended for and controlled by the monarch.[10] Situated in this larger context the reformation of the practitioners was a necessary and carefully calculated means to achieve sociopolitical objectives. In *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe*, Gaukroger paints a similar but broader picture, applying his analysis to the early modern natural philosopher more generally.

> In the early and middle decades of the seventeenth century, natural philosophy and philosophy more generally were seen as being in desperate need of radical reform in several quarters. Bacon, Descartes and Galileo saw this reform as being carried out by a new kind of person: a philosopher quite unlike the clerical scholastics who wrote and taught philosophy. These new kinds of philosopher were not simply people who carried out investigations in a different way from their predecessors. To carry out such investigations they needed to have a wholly different *persona*. The techniques of self-examination and self-investigation… opened up the possibility of a new understanding of one's psychology, motivation and sense of responsibility, and shaped one's personal, moral and intellectual bearing.[11]

Spiritual exercises are depicted here as conducive to the crafting of a certain persona, which in turn constituted a necessary condition for reform. That is, only by transforming the self on a deeply psychological and personal level could one become the kind of person necessary to reform philosophy.

A second example is Hunter's explicitly Hadotian reading of Leibniz in *Rival Enlightenments*.[12] Analyzing Leibniz's metaphysics of perfection, Hunter argues that there is a reciprocal relation between the knowledge of perfections and the perfection of the being who seeks this knowledge. That is, by perfecting his skills in mathematics, physics and metaphysics, the philosopher obtains increasingly perfect knowledge of the divine perfections, thereby becoming himself more and more perfect. This method, Hunter further argues, constitutes

> a spiritual exercise – a 'work of the self on the self' – aimed at forming a person who will relate to their concepts and themselves in this way. This exercise operates by inducing a (milieu-specific) state of metaphysical anxiety or longing for pure vision of the intelligibles, thence to resolve it through assiduous winnowing of the husks of empirical perception, leading finally to the contemplation of pure ideas as if they were the source of empirical experience. This is the ascesis lying behind Leibniz's claim that in order to know the pure ideas or 'hidden perfections' individuals must perfect themselves, as human understanding has to approach the same intensity or perfection of being as its spiritual object.[13]

That Leibniz's method of abstraction is a spiritual exercise pursued to access quasi-divine or rational truths also means that the acquisition of this knowledge is in fact inseparable from the formation of a particular persona: that of the self-purifying metaphysical sage. As the embodiment of a certain form of knowledge, the self-purifying sage was both instrumental to and an outcome of the process through which Leibniz channeled the authority of the *Schulmetaphysik* into a new conception of philosophy and the philosopher.

> Leibniz was engaged in a process both more contentious and less benign than that of making religion safe for reason, or vice versa. In fact he was attempting to transfer the philosophical mediation of the Christian faith – together with all of the power and prestige attaching to it – from the custodianship of confessional theologians to that of rationalist metaphysicians.[14]

There is an ambiguity in both Gaukroger's and Hunter's analyses insofar as the work on the self sometimes appears as a means to realize sociopolitical objectives, and sometimes as a mere prerequisite. Both interpretations may appear as logical consequences of the underlying assumption that even the most introverted spiritual exercise must be understood in relation to social norms and ideals as well as to the larger contexts of which these are part. Nonetheless, they do not represent the only options.

The tendency to situate analyses of philosophy as spiritual exercise within larger sociopolitical contexts should be understood in relation to both the contextual turn within intellectual history and the practice turn within history of science.[15] In both cases, narrow teleological histories of great men and revolutionizing abstract ideas have been revealed as anachronistic projections with little historical support. To understand philosophy and science one must instead take a broader approach and reconstruct practices, the personas involved in the practices and the larger institutional, social and political contexts of which they were part.[16] The analysis of spiritual exercises has aligned perfectly with these trends, and particularly with the practice turn, while the Hadotian claim that the exercises were part of a radically self-transformative quest for wisdom has been harder to accept.[17] Well aware that such a claim comes dangerously close to the heroification of reason and great men, historians have tended to recontextualize these self-proclaimed quests for wisdom as sociopolitical.

Thus seen, Bacon's cultura animi and Leibniz's metaphysical ascesis were inseparable from the sociopolitically motivated attempts to challenge established views of philosophy and the philosopher. While these readings certainly deliver many valuable insights, in the following section I turn to Hadot and Foucault, arguing that their perspectives open the way for a rather different but equally critical analysis.

Philosophy as a way of life and the limits of the sociopolitical

Reflecting on his own philosophical trajectory, Hadot recalls how, around 1960, he struggled to understand the many inconsistencies and contradictions that seem to mark ancient philosophical texts.[18] While these perceived shortcomings had traditionally been taken as indications of the embryotic state of philosophy at the time, Hadot started to suspect that in fact they reflected a radically different conception of philosophy. Since then, Hadot has shown in numerous studies that ancient philosophy was first of all a way of life devoted to spiritual exercise.[19] The function of philosophical texts was here to serve as supporting material, providing guidelines and reminders regarding the practice of such exercises. Ultimately, it is this usage that explains why texts were typically composed as slow, repetitive and often fragmentary variations on given themes rather than as coherent philosophical systems. To have the desired effects, spiritual exercises had to be practiced on a regular basis, preferably by being incorporated as a daily routine. Practitioners ought to start every morning by considering what they have to do during the day and what principles will guide and inspire these actions, and end the evening by evaluating their own thoughts and conduct.[20] Spiritual exercises thus constituted a part of philosophy, conceived as "a concrete attitude and determinate lifestyle, which engages the whole of existence… a conversion which turns our entire life upside down, changing the life of the person who goes through it."[21] Underlying the ancient conception of radical transformation was a distinction between normal human life and the philosophical life. As Hadot points out, the latter represents "a complete reversal of our usual way of looking at things. We are to switch from our 'human' vision of reality, in which our values depend on our passions, to a 'natural' vision of things, which replaces each event within the perspective of universal nature."[22] The distinction reflects the ancient view that human beings are diseased by passions, and that people are prevented from living a good life because they are dominated by desires and fears. It is against this background that spiritual exercises become relevant, as "[l]ittle by little, they make possible the indispensable metamorphosis of our inner self."[23] In

sharp contrast to traditional readings of the Hellenistic philosophical classics as beautiful but randomly compiled aphorisms, Hadot shows that they were in fact meticulously crafted spiritual exercises organized as variations on a number of main themes. Epictetus thus distinguished between three main functions of the soul–judgement, desire and impulse towards action. These could all, with the help of training, be controlled. And the one who learned to control them was fully in control of his own happiness, in the sense that no matter what happened, thoughts, feelings and actions were a matter of choice rather than an effect of external events. The vision of being in full control of the mind again highlights the radical nature of this turn from the normal to the philosophical way of life.

An important part of Hadot's work has been to uncover the historical process through which philosophy has gradually transformed into the kind of abstract theoretical activity that we are familiar with today. Adducing extensive historical evidence, Hadot shows that the Christian church fathers not only adopted the ancient philosophical exercises but also presented Christianity as a specific way of life.[24] In the monastic tradition, *philosophia* thus typically referred to a lived wisdom or way of life. In the Middle Ages this changed in two ways. On the one hand, in the new universities the somewhat confused relation between philosophy and theology crystalized into a hierarchical order in which the former was downgraded to a mere servant of the latter. As the principal function of philosophy became to provide a logical, physical and metaphysical foundation for theology, it ceased to be a way of life. On the other hand, at the same time as "we can say that philosophy in the Middle Ages had become a purely theoretical and abstract activity" spiritual exercises nevertheless "found themselves integrated into Christian spirituality."[25] That is, at the same time as philosophy became an abstract theoretical endeavor at the universities, it continued to prosper within spiritual and mystical traditions. In the early modern age, this latter heritage blossomed in spiritual blockbusters such as Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* (*Exercitia Spiritualia*, 1548). As Hadot has pointedly remarked, "Ignatius' *Exercitia spiritualia* are nothing but a Christian version of a Greco-Roman tradition."[26] The consequence of this genealogy is that it is first of all within the spiritual branch of the Christian tradition, rather than within academic philosophy, that we should look for the legacy of the ancient view of philosophy as spiritual exercise.

Around 1980 Hadot's reading inspired Foucault's analysis of pagan and Christian technologies of the self.[27] Foucault's interest in the self was the logical consequence of lifelong engagement with the relation between knowledge, power, truth and self. As such it did not break with his earlier work but represented a shift in focus: whereas the earlier studies explored

the way in which power operates on a social and institutional level by producing and organizing subjects, the later Foucault examined how power organized subjects so to speak from within, by instituting internal mechanisms of prohibitions and renunciation.

> I conceived of a rather odd project: not the evolution of sexual behavior but the projection of a history of the link between the obligation to tell the truth and the prohibitions against sexuality. I asked: How had the subject been compelled to decipher himself in regard to what was forbidden? It is a question of the relation between asceticism and truth.[28]

Hadot's approach offered a tool for analysing technologies of the self in a context that pre-dated and was radically different from that of modern society and its institutions. In the ancient pagan culture "[o]ne takes care of the self for oneself, and this care finds its own reward in the care of the self. In the care of the self one is one's own object and end."[29] It is precisely this "care of the self for oneself" that defines ancient subjectivity and that justifies its special role in the larger genealogy of the relation between truth and power. Summarizing the ancient practice of the self, Foucault distinguishes three principal functions.

> [a] First of all, a critical function. The practice of the self must enable one to rid oneself of all one's bad habits and all the false opinions one may get from the crowd or from bad teachers, as well as from parents and associates…. [b] But it also has a function of struggle. The practice of the self is conceived as an ongoing battle…. [c] But most of all this culture of the self has a curative and therapeutic function.[30]

Whereas these functions served the positive role of realizing a healthy and sound self in the pagan culture, Christianity implied a shift towards a hermeneutics of prohibition, self-exposure and renunciation. Fueled by the eschatology of the Fall and the corruption of human nature–notions that were foreign to the pagans–self-examination became a matter of identifying and exposing sins. Foucault thus points out that within Christianity

> [e]ach person has the duty to know who he is, that is, to try to know what is happening inside him, to acknowledge faults, to recognize temptations, to locate desires, and everyone is obliged to disclose these things either to God or to others in the community and hence to bear public or private witness against oneself.[31]

In this light, the Christian technology of the self appears as a concentration of the ancient approach to philosophy. It is against this background

that we should understand Ignatius' call for a life structured around systematic daily self-examination.

The sociopolitical reading of the cultura animi responds in a particular way to the Hadotian claim that philosophy entailed a complete reversal, "from our 'human' vision of reality… to a 'natural' vision of things."[32] To examine this response, it might be useful to distinguish between a strong and a moderate (or a more Hadotian) sociopolitical reading. According to a strong sociopolitical reading, the appeal to self-transformative spiritual exercises should be understood as merely a strategy to secure sociopolitical power. Thus seen, spiritual exercises were of little importance apart from serving a rhetorical function. Although Gaukroger's and Hunter's analyses are sometimes ambivalent, in that certain passages support the above perspective, they generally represent a moderate reading in which spiritual exercises form a philosophical self capable and motivated to pursue and seize sociopolitical authority and power.

Two points are particularly worth making here. First, the moderate sociopolitical reading welcomes the approach to philosophy as spiritual exercise while at the same time downplaying the more "idealistic" claims that these exercises served to completely transform the individual, or recontextualizing such claims as sociopolitical assertions. Second, while such a reading clearly avoids the pitfall of heroification, I think that it nevertheless comes at the cost of obscuring a central aspect of both Hadot's and Foucault's analyses. As Hadot has pointedly remarked,

> [t]he philosopher lives in an intermediate state. He is not a sage, but he is not a non-sage, either. He is therefore constantly torn between the non-philosophical and the philosophical life, between the domain of the habitual and the everyday, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the domain of consciousness and lucidity. To the same extent that the philosophical life is equivalent to the practice of spiritual exercises, it is also a tearing away from everyday life.[33]

The philosophical life took the form of a continuous and unceasing struggle against the desires that defined ordinary existence. To be a philosopher was in reality therefore not to be a sage but rather to be constantly torn between the philosophical and the non-philosophical, and to use spiritual exercises to effect a change in the direction of the former. This logic is aptly illustrated in Hadot's analysis of the stoic emperor Marcus Aurelius: being the most powerful sociopolitical agent of his time, Aurelius used stoic exercises not to increase and fortify power but rather as a form of therapeutic counter-regimen, a bulwark against exactly those desires and temptations that had plunged so many of his forerunners into ruin.[34] Rather than acknowledging spiritual exercises as a therapeutic counter-

regimen for a subject that was fundamentally torn between the philosophical and the non-philosophical, the moderate sociopolitical reading smooths over this opposition, presenting instead a deliberate and unified project of self-formation. Whereas Hadot suggests that spiritual exercises enabled the practitioner to handle the hardships of life, at the cost of configuring a partly divided identity, the moderate sociopolitical reading tends to see exercises as something that shape, unite and empower the philosopher as an agent. In other words, the two perspectives tend to start out from and produce rather different conceptions of the subject and of agency.[35] Turning to Foucault, we find a similar strand of analysis. That is, what marks the care of the self for itself is exactly its way of unfolding as a struggle or resistance. Here too a tension emerges in the attempt to frame spiritual exercises within sociopolitical readings: by subsuming self-criticism, internal conflict and therapy within larger sociopolitical objectives, we risk losing the absolutely central therapeutic function of philosophy and the philosophical life.

Epistemic and therapeutic regimens of spiritual exercises in early modern philosophy

At this point an objection might be that the moderate sociopolitical reading is in fact both historically justifiable and necessary. Since early modern philosophy no longer constituted a way of life in the ancient sense it is imperative to develop another kind of analysis. And this is exactly what the moderate sociopolitical reading accomplishes by approaching the philosopher as an office. Thus seen, the moderate sociopolitical reading represents a necessary shift for understanding the new conditions and roles of the philosopher. While there is certainly some truth to this claim, in this section I problematize it by distinguishing between two different regimens of spiritual exercises. The first features what can be referred to as *epistemic* exercises. Figuring mainly in metaphysical, logical and natural philosophical genres and discourses, these exercises served to cultivate and perfect epistemic abilities, skills and virtues associated with knowledge, competence and persuasiveness, and, by extension, with sociopolitical power. It was by means of these exercises that Leibniz shaped the persona of the metaphysical sage as a powerful sociopolitical agent. Second, there was a long and still highly vibrant tradition of *therapeutic* exercises to be performed daily, often at specific times, aimed at examining and curing the soul of desires and passions. These highly regulated exercises typically figured in various ethical genres and discourses, from extensive treatises to brief practical handbooks. The point of distinguishing between these two regimens is to highlight their contrasting attitudes toward

sociopolitical power. Whereas *epistemic* exercises were often depicted as a more or less direct route to sociopolitical objectives, *therapeutic* exercises were typically highlighted as a bulwark against excessive longing for wealth, status and power. By reinterpreting this latter strand as sociopolitical or even rhetorical one risks depriving the discourse of any real ability to perform its therapeutic function; to configure the kind of inward-oriented, divided subject that Hadot has referred to, a subject that by virtue of the philosophical discourse identifies its own natural inclinations and desires as diseases to be diagnosed, treated and cured.

To illustrate the relevance of this distinction for understandings of the early modern philosopher, I will turn to another concrete example discussed by Hunter.[36] The case in point is the Leibnizian philosopher Christian Wolff. Hunter argues that Wolff follows closely in the footsteps of his predecessor in portraying the world as a reflection of divine perfection and its inhabitants as reflecting the divine intellect. This perspective has ethical implications insofar as man is morally obliged to cultivate and perfect the self, preferably by practicing philosophy and science. "Like his predecessor, Wolff treats the contemplation of the divine perfections or concepts as the means by which humans perfect their intellectual natures, thereby aspiring to a condition of rational self-purification in which rational conduct and felicity are one and the same."[37] Hunter further argues that Wolff, in his political writings, deliberately merges the personas of the sage and the prince. "[A]s the true direction of government requires a ruler who has purified himself of all self-interest and thereby acts on the basis of rational insights alone, only the metaphysical sage is in a position to direct the government."[38] He then continues by linking Wolff's political discourse to his notorious conflict with the Pietists. The latter accused Wolff of being inimical to Cristian morality and finally succeeded in having him expelled from Prussia in 1723, an exile that lasted until King Frederick the Great reinstated him as a professor at the University of Halle in 1740. The Wolff affair has attracted a great deal of research; it is now well known that Wolff tailored his philosophy to suit the needs of the Prussian state, and that his bold vision of philosophy and the philosophical sage provoked and challenged the Pietists.[39] Drawing on some of this research, Hunter argues that in Wolff we see another, even more illustrative example of how the persona of the metaphysical sage was deliberately crafted to wrest authority and power from the confessional theologians. Here too Hunter pursues a moderate sociopolitical reading in which the shaping of the persona of the metaphysical sage through spiritual exercises becomes a prerequisite for and a means to achieve sociopolitical objectives.

Although Hunter acknowledges the purging of the passions from the mind, it is primarily an *epistemic* process, pursued to enable philosophical

knowledge and truth, and by extension powerful sociopolitical agency, rather than a *therapeutic* one, relieving the mind from worries and suffering. On closer scrutiny, however, Wolff's *German Ethics* (*Vernünfftige Gedancken von der Menschen Thun und Lassen*, 1720) reveals precisely this second type of therapeutic regimen, consisting of regular self-examinations.

> 1. When one wakes up early one shall consider what needs to be done during the day, and what else may occur as a result of it. 2. Thereupon one shall endeavor to examine what each of these actions contributes to the perfection of our inward and outward state or also how it may be detrimental to the same (§. 146.). 3. When one wants to go to sleep, one should reflect on everything one has done and omitted during the day, and finally, 4. examine how much we have contributed to the fulfilment of our final goal. If one continues this work unceasingly, then the desired habit will soon be there.[40]

While such exercises might appear as mere training in planning and efficiency, the context is rather the kind of therapy of desire and examination of conscience and moral conduct that Hadot and Foucault refer to. That this is indeed the case becomes increasingly clear as Wolff steers the discussion to the negative impact of the senses, imagination and the affects. The emerging picture is that of a struggle between these forces and reason. "Thus it is said that they are fighting each other, and when man resists the senses, the imagination, and the affects, or reason retains the upper hand, that he overcomes himself, and, having overcome himself, and thus having his free actions under his control, is master over himself."[41] The possibility of being in control of these forces led naturally to the question of how to achieve this.

> Whoever therefore wants to resist them and thereby maintain dominion over them (§ 184), must again be able to refrain from the prejudices of good and evil and keep his attention undisturbed. Both happen when a person 1. has a strong desire to do nothing but what is in accordance with the main intention of his life (§ 165 & seqq.): 2. acquires the skill to judge, in every case that occurs, whether our actions and omissions are in accordance with the main intention of the whole life or not (§ 146): 3. finally gets into the habit of considering all his actions and omissions (§ 173) and of remembering his good intention the whole day (§ 175).[42]

That the realization of the moral self was a matter of *forming* rather than *informing*, of diligent exercise rather than rote learning of abstract doctrines, was something Wolff repeatedly emphasized.

> And since all skill is acquired only through much exercise, while each of the rules that must be observed in order to assert dominion over the senses, imagination, and affections requires a special skill, it is not possible to obtain this dominion without much and long exercise. And it is therefore a great misfortune that one does not even think of such exercises and that one wants to attain virtue without them.[43]

Having stressed the importance of exercise, Wolff returned to and summarized the requirements of a life in accordance with natural law.

> Now it can finally be shown how one can bring oneself and others to live according to the law of nature. Namely, one must 1. arouse a strong desire to live according to it: 2. make one skilled to judge whether an action is according to the law of nature or not: 3. show how to discover the obstacles and finally 4. teach how to avoid them.[44]

Later in the treatise Wolff discussed in detail how to free oneself from the affects. "All affects arise from unclear conceptions of good and evil. Therefore, one finds that they subside when one frees oneself of confusion and tries to imagine the good or the evil clearly."[45] Since misconceptions continue to produce affects that eventually turn into bad habits and patterns of behavior, it was crucial to establish a regimen whereby misconceptions are systematically identified, treated and cured. Over time one would eventually learn to recognize recurring affects and to replace these with virtuous habits. To illustrate how specific affects could be cured through particular therapeutic exercises Wolff presented a number of concrete examples.

> Precisely because hatred arises when we perceive something in a person that arouses our displeasure, this vile affect cannot be eradicated unless we either recognize that that which we dislike is in fact not to be found in the person, or that which we find in him arouses displeasure in us without cause. . . . Since it arises from what we find displeasing in a person, we must always get into the habit of focusing on the good things we find in others and of turning the bad things to the best. Love for all people is also a good remedy for hatred.[46]

In another paragraph Wolff discussed how to get rid of envy. While envy stems from hatred and therefore typically disappears when hatred disappears, some particularly complex situations might require a more specific examination and curative prescription.

> For example, if one envies another because of his wealth, one must examine what else we possess that is good for the other, and consider whether we would be willing to exchange it for his wealth, especially if we find that

> with greater wealth we could not obtain more comforts of life than we now have. Then we will find that we envy him without cause, since we are not willing to exchange our condition with his.… As in our example, it can be argued that great wealth, especially in the circumstances in which we find ourselves, could not make us happier. Contentment is the surest remedy against envy.[47]

Regardless of the different affects and their causes, Wolff typically prescribed self-examination in combination with therapeutic exercises directed towards specific affects. To establish a daily routine of self-examination was a good start, but it was equally important to actually use these to analyse and confront one's actions, volitions, feelings and thoughts and to engage with those affects that threatened to corrupt the soul. Much like in Hadot and Foucault, spiritual exercises here appear as a therapeutic counter-regimen used to alleviate the desires and worries that constituted an inevitable part of human life.

In relation to the analytical framework discussed earlier, this therapeutic regimen can be interpreted in two strikingly different ways. The first would be to adopt Hunter's moderate sociopolitical reading, according to which the therapeutic care of the self becomes just another step in the pursuit of sociopolitical authority and power. However, as pointed out earlier, this reading downplays the capacity of the therapeutic discourse to configure a subject genuinely committed to critical self-examination. The second option would be to adopt a strong Hadotian reading by viewing Wolff's regimen as part of a long tradition of therapeutic exercises that ultimately aimed to temper the mind and protect it from the desires that were an inevitable part of public life. This reading entails a shift away from the kind of unified subject that the sociopolitical reading posits, and toward a view of the early modern philosopher as someone who, to borrow Hadot's words "lives in an intermediate state … constantly torn between the non-philosophical and the philosophical life," someone who values political engagement and influence but also recognizes the importance of maintaining a regular therapeutic regimen to avoid being corrupted by these very worldly pursuits.[48] These two possible readings reveal different understandings of what it meant to be and live as a philosopher in the early modern period.

Although Wolff is just one example, the distinction between epistemic and therapeutic exercises can be used to explain some of the tensions in the broader scholarly discussion of the identity of the early modern philosopher, and particularly of the applications and limits of the Hadotian reading. If we consider many of the most prominent moderate sociopolitical readings, it seems that they often operate by recontextualizing epistemological discourses in terms of practices and exercises (thereby

breaking with what Knud Haakonssen has referred to as the "epistemological paradigm") and by connecting these to larger sociopolitical contexts.[49] In this they are perfectly aligned with the overall historiographical turn to social practices and institutional and sociopolitical contexts. Given this interest, it makes perfect sense to focus on *epistemic* genres and discourses rather than *therapeutic* ones, on the cultivation of useful cognitive abilities rather than the interrogation of desires, motives and moral bearings that Hadot and Foucault have highlighted as the very core of the care of the self. Yet it seems to me that this strand of analysis nevertheless tends to obscure the fact that rather distinctive and often highly regulated therapeutic discourses and genres were still very much at work in early modern philosophy. Taking these into account would, I think, invite a new set of research questions and a complementary analysis of the early modern philosopher as a partly divided and struggling subject, a person who cultivates and refines the mind in pursuit of power, while also acknowledging the dangers involved in such a project, and thus the necessity of maintaining a regular therapeutic counter-regimen.

Conclusion

This article addresses challenges connected to the analysis of the persona of the early modern philosopher. At the core of this analysis is the assumption that the formation of a certain kind of self through spiritual exercises cannot be distinguished from the contexts in which this self was recognized. The analysis of persona as a social type or office has the advantage of smoothly conjoining the level of self-formation through exercises and technologies of the self with larger institutional and sociopolitical contexts. Thus seen, Bacon's and Leibniz's regimens of the mind are indistinguishable from the formation of a certain persona and from the institutional and sociopolitical battles in which this persona was involved and recognized as an actor. However, this interpretation comes at the cost of neglecting the self-critical therapeutic function that both Hadot and Foucault have highlighted as the very core of ancient philosophy.

What is at stake in this discussion is the status of spiritual exercises. Did they, as Hadot and Foucault have argued, constitute a form of therapeutic counter-regimen undertaken to help individuals cope with the distress that constituted a natural part of human life, or did they rather serve to craft powerful sociopolitical agents? Underlying these divergent approaches are different assumptions rooted in different intellectual traditions. Whereas Hadot and Foucault use the concept of spiritual exercises to analyse the philosopher as fragmented, struggling and torn between

opposing discursive logics, a perspective aligned with the French structuralist tradition, intellectual historians and historians of science inspired by turns toward context and practice have instead used the concept to analyse the formation of powerful sociopolitical agents.

To further explore the relation between these two strands of analysis, I distinguish between *epistemic* and *therapeutic* regimens of spiritual exercises. The case of the Wolffian philosophy exemplifies this distinction; depending on what discourses and genres we look at, one and the same philosopher can be reconstructed as a skilled, diligent and driven sociopolitical agent or as a person structuring life around daily therapeutic self-examinations. Thus the systematic distinction between epistemic and therapeutic regimens, connected to that between discourses and genres, can be used to highlight some of the empirical complexities that mark the subject matter and thus also contribute to ambiguities in the secondary literature.

This article acknowledges the merits of the moderate sociopolitical reading, particularly when it comes to examining how spiritual exercises configure and mobilize powerful sociopolitical agents, but argues that a strong Hadotian reading invites new and hitherto mostly overlooked research questions. These new questions target the very experience of being divided, torn and in crisis, of struggling with the desirability and moral effects of power. How did these different forms and functions of exercises interact and impact philosophical identity formation? What did it mean to advance an office through epistemic exercises while at the same time entertaining a regimen of therapeutic exercises that often spotlighted the desire for authority as a source of corruption and vice? To what extent can we, as is clearly the case with the early modern Christian context, talk about struggle and crisis?[50] What did such struggle and crisis look like? To what extent did the philosophical discourse configure a subject ready to make sacrifices in the name of philosophy, and how were such sacrifices made? Questions such as these would, I think, open the way for a complementary analysis of what it meant to be and live as a philosopher in the early modern period–an analysis that acknowledges that the philosophical discourse configured both a powerful sociopolitical subject and a deeply self-critical one.

Notes

1. For a selection of studies of the persona of the early modern philosopher see: *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe: The Nature of a Contested Identity*, eds. Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger, and Ian Hunter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Stephen Gaukroger, *Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Early-Modern Philosophy*

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Ian Hunter, "The History of Philosophy and the Persona of the Philosopher", *Modern Intellectual History* 4, no. 3 (2007): 571–600, DOI:10.1017/S1479244307001424 ; Ian Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments: Civil and Metaphysical Philosophy in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Andreas Rydberg, "The Persona of the Wolffian Philosopher in Early Eighteenth-Century Germany", *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44, no. 2 (2021): 189–204, DOI:10.1111/1754-0208.12749; Jacob Orrje, *Mechanicus: Performing an Early Modern Persona* (Uppsala Universitet: 2015); Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994); Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007).

2. Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Michael Chase (Malden: Blackwell, 1995); Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton, eds., *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988).

3. For discussions of persona as an analytical category and as a field of study see: Lorraine Daston and Otto H. Sibum, "Introduction: Scientific Personae and Their Histories", *Science in Context* 16, no. 1–2 (2003): 1–8, DOI:10.1017/S026988970300067X ; Herman Paul, "Introduction. Scholarly Personae: Repertoires and Performances of Academic Identity", *Low Countries Historical Review* 131, no. 4 (2016): 3–7, DOI:10.18352/bmgn-lchr.10261 ; David P. Marshall and Kim Barbour, "Making Intellectual Room for Persona Studies: A New Consciousness and a Shifted Perspective", *Persona Studies* 1, no. 1 (2015): 1–12, DOI:10.21153/ps2015vol1no1art464. For classic works on persona and self as social roles see: Marcel Mauss, "Une catégorie de l'esprit humain: La notion de personne. Celle de "moi". Un plan de travail", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 68 (1938): 236–81; Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1956); Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957); Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980).

4. Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger, and Ian Hunter, "Introduction" in *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe: The Nature of a Contested Identity*, eds. Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger, and Ian Hunter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 7, E-book, DOI:10.1017/CBO9780511490460.001 .

5. For other examples in which identity formation through spiritual exercises is analysed in relation to broader institutional and sociopolitical contexts see: Peter Harrison, *The Fall of Man and the Foundations of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Matthew L. Jones, *The Good Life in the Scientific Revolution: Descartes, Pascal, Leibniz, and the Cultivation of Virtue* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006). René Descartes is something of a special case in this context, as scholars have long been interested in how his education in Ignatian spiritual exercises influenced his epistemology. See for instance: Gary Hatfield, "The Senses and the Fleshless Eye: The Meditations as Cognitive Exercises", in *Essays on Descartes' Meditations*, ed Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 45–79; Zeno Vendler, "Descartes' Exercises", *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 19, no. 2 (1989): 193–224, DOI:10.1080/00455091.1989.10716477; Stephen Gaukroger, "Descartes's Early Doctrine of Clear and Distinct Ideas", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 53, no. 4 (1992): 585–602, DOI:10.2307/2709939; John Cottingham, "Descartes as Sage: Spiritual

Askesis in Cartesian Philosophy", in *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe: The Nature of a Contested Identity*, eds. Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger, and Ian Hunter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 182–201, E-book, DOI:10. 1017/CBO9780511490460.009 .

6. Gaukroger, *Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Early-Modern Philosophy*.

7. Gaukroger, *Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Early-Modern Philosophy*, 110–31.

8. For such readings see: Sorana Corneanu, *Regimens of the Mind: Boyle, Locke, and the Early Modern Cultura Animi Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011); Matthew Sharpe, "Georgics of the Mind and the Architecture of Fortune: Francis Bacon's Therapeutic Ethics", *Philosophical Papers* 43, no. 1 (2014): 89–121, DOI:10.1080/05568641.2014.901697.

9. Gaukroger, *Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Early-Modern Philosophy*, 6.

10. Gaukroger, *Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Early-Modern Philosophy*, 9.

11. Stephen Gaukroger, "The Persona of the Natural Philosopher", in *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe: The Nature of a Contested Identity*, eds. Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger, and Ian Hunter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 32, E-book, DOI:10.1017/CBO9780511490460.002 .

12. Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments*, 22.

13. Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments*, 111.

14. Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments*, 115.

15. *Science after the Practice Turn in the Philosophy, History, and Social Studies of Science*, ed. Lena Soler (New York: Routledge, 2014); *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, eds. Theodore R. Schatzki, K. Knorr-Cetina, and Eike von Savigny (New York: Routledge, 2001); Richard Whatmore, *What Is Intellectual History?* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2015); Richard Whatmore and B. W Young, *A Companion to Intellectual History* (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2016); John F. M. Clark, "Intellectual History and the History of Science", in *A Companion to Intellectual History*, eds. Richard Whatmore and B. W Young (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), 155–69, E-book, DOI:10.1002/9781118508091.ch12; Georg G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge, with a New Epilogue by the Author* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2005).

16. For the turn to practices and persona within history of science see particularly: Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); Shapin, *A Social History of Truth*; Daston and Sibum, "Introduction"; Daston and Galison, *Objectivity*.

17. While intellectual historians and historians of science in particular have tended to play down Hadot's more radical claims, there are also those who pursue a strong Hadotian reading of early modern philosophy as an essentially therapeutic endeavor. For a discussion of Hadotian readings of early modern philosophy see especially: Matthew Sharpe and Michael Ure, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: From Antiquity to Modernity* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021).

18. Pierre Hadot, "My Books and My Research", in *The Selected Writings of Pierre Hadot: Philosophy as Practice*, trans. by Matthew Sharpe and Federico Testa (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 34; Pierre Hadot, "Ancient Philosophy: An Ethics or a Practice?", in *The Selected Writings of Pierre Hadot: Philosophy as Practice*, trans. by Matthew Sharpe and Federico Testa (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 55–56.

19. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*; Pierre Hadot, *The Inner Citadel: The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*, trans. by Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Pierre Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, trans. by Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Pierre Hadot, *The Selected Writings of Pierre Hadot: Philosophy as Practice*, trans. by Matthew Sharpe and Federico Testa (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

20. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 85.

21. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 83.

22. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 83.

23. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 83.

24. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 82, 126–44, 264–76; Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 237–52.

25. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 270.

26. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 82. For Ignatius' reliance on ancient spiritual exercises see also: Paul Rabbow, *Seelenführung. Methodik der Exerzitien in der Antike* (München: Kösel-Verlag, 1954).

27. In addition to the 1982 seminar series "Technologies of the Self" and "The Hermeneutics of the Subject" Foucault also developed this analysis in parts two and three of *The History of Sexuality*. See *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, eds. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988); Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981-1982*, ed. Frédéric Gros (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure: Volume 2 of The History of Sexuality*, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990); Michel Foucault, *The Care of the Self: Volume 3 of The History of Sexuality*, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986). For Foucault's reliance on Hadot see: Arnold I. Davidson, "Introduction", in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. by Michael Chase (Malden: Blackwell, 1995), 1; Michael Chase, "Introduction", in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Ancients and Moderns: Essays in Honor of Pierre Hadot*, ed. by Michael Chase, Stephen R. L. Clark, and Michael McGhee (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 4.

28. Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self", in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, eds. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 17.

29. Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 177.

30. Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 495–96.

31. Foucault, "Technologies of the Self", 40.

32. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 83.

33. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 103.

34. Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*.

35. Since this article is a contribution to history rather than to philosophy, I have avoided, as far as possible, delving into basic philosophical positions. That said, it seems that the different positions regarding the subject reflect fundamental differences between the French poststructuralist tradition on the one hand and the more agency-oriented Cambridge school on the other.

36. Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments*, 265–73.

37. Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments*, 266–67.

38. Hunter, *Rival Enlightenment*, 267–68.

39. See in particular Simon Grote, "Wolffianism and Pietism in Eighteenth-Century German Philosophy," *Intellectual History Review* 33, no. 4 (2023): 673–701;

Johannes Bronisch, *Der Mäzen der Aufklärung: Ernst Christoph von Manteuffel und das Netzwerk des Wolffianismus* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010); Christopher M. Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600–1947* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006); Albrecht Beutel, "Causa Wolffiana: Die Vertreibung Christian Wolffs aus Preußen 1723 als Kulminationspunkt des theologisch-politischen Konflikts zwischen halleschen Pietismus und Aufklärungsphilosophie," in *Wissenschaftliche Theologie und Kirchenleitung: Beiträge zur Geschichte einer spannungsreichen Beziehung für Rolf Schäfer zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Ulrich Köpf and Rolf Schäfer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 159–202; Carl Hinrichs, *Preußentum und Pietismus: Die Pietismus in Brandenburg-Preußen als religiös-soziale Reformbewegung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971). I have explored this context myself, discussing how Wolff and the Wolffians presented epistemic regimens of exercise as a means of cultivating and sharpening a mind able to claim philosophical authority and power on the sociopolitical battlefield. This article further develops but also problematizes this reading by highlighting the ways in which therapeutic regimens also aimed to protect and cure the self from the kinds of desires and temptations associated with public life. See Rydberg, "Persona of the Wolffian Philosopher."

40. Christian Wolff, *Vernünfftige Gedancken von der Menschen Thun und Lassen, zu Beförderung ihrer Glückseligkeit, den Liebhabern der Wahrheit mitgetheilet*, ed. Hans Werner Arndt, Christian Wolff Gesammelte Werke, Abt. 1, Deutsche Schriften, Bd. 4 (Hildesheim: Olms, 2006), 105–6, §. 173. "1. Wenn man frühe erwachet, soll man bedencken was den Tag über nothwendig zu thun ist, und was durch dessen Veranlassung sonst etwan noch vorfallen kan. 2. Hierauf soll man sich bemühen zu untersuchen, was eine jede von diesen Handlungen zur Vollkommenheit unseres innerlichen und äußerlichen Zustandes beytragen, oder auch wie sie vielleicht selbiger nachtheilig seyn kan (§. 146). 3. Wenn man schlaffen gehen will, soll man sich auf alles besinnen, was man den Tag über gethan und unterlassen hat, und endlich 4. untersuchen, wie viel wir dadurch zu Erhaltung unserer letzten Absicht beygetragen. Wenn man diese Arbeit unausgesetzt forttreibet, so wird sich die verlangte Gewohnheit bald geben."

41. Wolff, *German Ethics*, 113, §. 185. "So saget man, daß sie wieder einander straiten, und wenn der Mensch den Sinnen, der Einbildungskraft und den Affecten wiederstehet, oder die Vernunft die Oberhand behält, daß er sich selbst überwindet, und, nachdem er sich überwunden, und also seine freye Handlungen in seiner Gewalt hat, Herr über sich selbst ist."

42. Wolff, *German Ethics*, 114, §. 186. "Wer demnach ihr wiederstehen und dadurch die Herrschafft über sie erhalten will (§. 184.), der muß sich wieder die Vorurhteile von dem Guten und Bösen verwahren und seine Aufmercksamkeit ungestöhret erhalten können. Beydes geschiehet, wenn man 1. Eine hefftige Begierde in sich erreget nichts vorzunehmen, als was der letzten Absicht seines Lebens gemäß ist (§. 165 & seqq.): 2. Die Geschicklichkeit erlanget in jedem vorkommenden Falle zu urtheilen, ob unser Thun und Lassen der Haupt-Absicht des gantzen Lebens gemäß sey oder nicht (§. 146.): 3. Sich endlich angewöhnet alle sein Thun und Lassen zu bedencken (§. 173.) und den gantzen Tag an seinen guten Vorsatz zu gedencken (§. 175)."

43. Wolff, *German Ethics*, 115, §. 188. "Und weil alle Fertigkeit erst durch viele Ubung erlanget wird (§. 525. Met), hingegen eine jede von denen Regeln, die zu Behauptung der Herrschafft über die, Sinnen, Einbildungskraft und Affecten in acht zu nehmen sind (§. 186.), eine besondere Fertigkeit erfordet; so ist nicht möglich, ohne viele und lange Ubung diese Herrschaft zu erhalten. Und demnach ist es ein grosses Versehen, daß man an dergleichen Ubungen gar nicht gedencket, und ohne dieselben zur Tugend gelangen will."

44. Wolff, *German Ethics*, 116, §. 189. "Nun lässet sich endlich zeigen, wie man sich und andere dahin bringen kan, daß man dem Gesetze der natur gemäß lebe. Nehmlich man muß 1. eine hefftige Begierde erregen demselben gemäß zu leben (§. 165. & seqq.): 2. einen geschickt machen zu urtheilen, ob eine Handlung dem Gesetze der Natur gemäß, oder zu wieder sey (§. 146.): 3. zeigen, wie die Hindernisse entdecken (§. 163. 183.) und endlich 4. lehren, wie man sie vermeiden soll (§. 186)."

45. Wolff, *German Ethics*, 262, §. 293. "Alle Affecten entstehen aus undeutlichen Vorstellungen des guten und des bösen (§. 441. Met.). Derowegen findet man, daß sie sich legen, wenn man sich aus der Verwirrung heraus wickelt und das Gute oder Böse deutlich vorzustellen trachtet."

46. Wolff, *German Ethics*, 273–74, §. 404. "Allein eben deswegen, weil der Haß entstehet, wenn wir bey einer Person wahrnehmen, was uns Mißvergnügen bringet (§. 454. Met.); so kan dieser wiedrige Affect nicht ausgerottet werden, als wenn wir entweder erkennen, dasjenige, woran wir Mißfallen haben, sey in der That nicht bey der Person anzutreffen, oder dasjenige was wir bey ihr antreffen, erwecke bey uns ohne Ursache Mißvergnügen. . . . Da er nun aus dem entstehet, was wir mißfälliges bey einer Person antreffen; so müssen wir uns gewöhnen allezeit auf das gute zu sehen, was wir bey andern antreffen, und das schlimme zum besten zu kehren. Es ist auch ein gutes Mittel wieder den Haß die Liebe gegen alle Menschen (§. Cit. Met.)."

47. Wolff, *German Ethics*, 275, §. 406. "Z. B. man beneidet einen andern wegen seines Reichthums: so hat man zu untersuchen, was wir sonst gutes für dem andern besitzen, und zu überlegen ob wir wohl gesonnen wären solches mit seinem Reichthume zu vertauschen, zumahl wen wir befinden, daß wir bey grösserem Reichthume uns nicht mehr Bequemlichkeiten des Lebens verschaffen könten, als wir jetzund haben können. Alsdenn werden wir finden, daß wir ihn ohne Ursachen beneiden, indem wir unsern Zustand mit seinem zu vertauschen nicht gesonnen. . . . Als in unserem Exempel kan man erwegen, daß grosser Reichthum, zumahl in den Umständen, darinnen wir uns befinden, uns eben nicht glücklicher machen konte. Die Vergnüglichkeit ist das sicherste Mittel wieder den Neid."

48. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 103.

49. Knud Haakonssen, "The History of Eighteenth-Century Philosophy: History or Philosophy?", in *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1-25, E-book, DOI: 10.1017/CHOL9780521867429.002 .

50. See for instance: Jonathan Strom, *German Pietism and the Problem of Conversion* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018); David Martin Luebke, "The Politics of Conversion in Early Modern Germany", in *Conversion and the Politics of Religion in Early Modern Germany*, eds. David Martin Luebke and others (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 1-13; Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993). See also the classic: William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience. A Study in Human Nature* (New York: Longmans, 1902). Historians and sociologists of religion have long explored religious experience, and particularly the lived experience of conversion and various forms of spiritual struggle. It seems to me that the analysis of philosophical identity formation has much to learn from these approaches.

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