A. G. Baumgarten and G. F. Meier on Proper Names and their Poetic Effect*

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Introduction

Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714–1762), the Leibniz-Wolffian philosopher, founded aesthetics as a philosophical discipline. He attempted to include beauty, art, and sensibility—which appear as individual concrete things—into the subject of philosophy, while incorporating the logical and mathematical argumentation methods introduced by Christian Wolff (1679–1754), the vanguard of Enlightenment rationalism. Baeumler characterized eighteenth-century German philosophy prior to Kant as encapsulating two tendencies—Wolff's tendency toward abstraction and Baumgarten's focus on the individual—and called Baumgarten's aesthetics "Logic of the Individual" (*Logik des Individuellen*) (Baeumler 1974, 208; 212). An eye for the individual is the essence of Wolffian aesthetics.

This paper discusses the problem of the individual in Wolffian aesthetics, especially that of proper names, from the perspective of its representation of the individual in literary works. Previous studies have frequently indicated that Baumgarten describes the individual and its sign, the proper name, as "extremely poetic" in his habilitation thesis *Philosophical Reflections on Several Issues Concerning Poetry* (1735). However, what has not been examined in detail is the type of effect the proper name has in poetry.[1] The paper further clarifies the Wolffian theory of proper names by focusing on the work of Baumgarten's disciple, Georg Friedrich Meier (1718–1777), who elaborates on what is not explicitly stated by Baumgarten. His theory can help us examine the poetic effect of proper names. Meier is often underestimated as a "trivializer" or "popularizer" of his master: his texts have often been regarded as a guide to reading Baumgarten's few writings and have never been examined in the debate on proper names. However, this paper clarifies the vital role Meier plays in the theory of proper names.

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[1] There are insightful studies that precisely summarize Baumgarten's theory on individuals, such as Pimpinella (2000, 226f.) and Campe (2014, 131f.). However, Baumgarten's statement that proper names are poetic because individuals have complete determination is often merely repeated. This is due to the lack of description by Baumgarten, as pointed out in Section 1 of this paper. Peres (2000, 227) explains that while representations of individuals and proper names, as logical expressions, fall into "double defects," sacrificing intensive and extensive clarity (i.e., distinctness and the fullness of notes), they escape these defects as aesthetic expressions. While this is particularly important, more detailed explanations have not been provided. Bahr (2004, 97f.) also refers to the individual in a discussion on Baumgarten's thoughts of abstraction and concreteness. Further, Bahr characterizes Baumgarten's concept of the individual in three ways: concreteness, inexhaustible complexity, and potentiality. Though the latter two ways are roughly in line with the view argued in this paper, based on Meier in Section 3, Bahr's argument merely relies on the concept of complete determination applied to individuals (S. 97).

Section 1 summarizes Baumgarten's views on individuals and proper names, and makes clear that a gap still exists in the application of ontological concepts to aesthetic problems. To bridge this gap, Section 2 argues Meier's definition of proper names as a form of "emphasis." Section 3 focuses on Meier's statement that the representation of an individual contains a mathematically infinite number of notes. Relying on Meier, an explanation is provided for the poetic effect of proper names, which was unwritten in Baumgarten.

1. Strengths derived from complete determination

Both Baumgarten and Meier recommend representing the individual (*individuum*) in literature with particular emphasis on the proper names (*nomina propria*). This claim is grounded in two concepts: the "complete determination" (*omnimoda determinatio*) of the individual in ontology, and the "extensive clarity" (*claritas extensiva*) of representation in empirical psychology. These are developed in Baumgarten's main work *Metaphysics* (first edition 1739, fourth edition 1757), in Part I "Ontology" and Part III "Psychology," respectively, and in *Reflections*, wherein he first proposed the idea of aesthetics. This section organizes the path that Baumgarten uses in these texts, to insist that the representations of individuals and proper names are highly "poetic" (*poeticus*) or "strong" (*fortis*).

First, we summarize the ontological or logical concept of "complete determination." In Wolffianism ontology, individuals are distinguished from universals as being "completely determined" (*omnimode determinatum*) (MT4 § 148),[2] whereas genera or species can be applied to more than one entity because they have undetermined parts. A determination means a "note" (*nota*) or a "character" of a thing (MT4 § 36; § 67). It is important to note that complete determination does not simply indicate an abundance of determinations, but that every individual should include all events, actions, and states that relate to oneself in the past, present, and future, in advance.[3] Because determination is also called "predicate" (*praedicatum*) (MT4 § 36) and is often considered in the propositional model, the concept of the complete determination of individuals can be logically explained as follows: the concept of a certain individual contains, in advance and without omission, the concepts that can become predicates in a true proposition that has the individual as its subject. In Section 3, we discuss whether we can and should recognize all determinations of each individual.

Meanwhile, we examine the epistemological concept of "extensive clarity." In the empirical psychology of Wolffianism, cognition is divided into three broad categories—"clear and distinct," "clear and confused," and "obscure"—and cognition is said to be more perfect in this order (cf. PE §§ 31f.; §§ 38f.; DM §§ 198-215; MT4 § 510; §§ 520f.; MK2 § 485). Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) and Wolff placed distinctness at the top of the hierarchy. Wolff explicitly

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[2] Baumgarten's definition of complete determination is "[t]he collection of all determinations compossible in a being" (MT4 § 148). "Compossible" means that the mutually contradictory predicates of a certain subject, A and non-A, do not exist at the same time (MT4 § 7). Hence, "the collection of all determinations compossible" can be said to be the collection of true predicates for a subject. A similar definition also can be found in Wolff's Logic (LL § 75; cf. LO §§ 225f.).

[3] Cf. Leibniz (1686, § 3; §§ 8-9).

sought to arrive at "clear and distinct" cognitions, dismissing the "clear and confused" and "obscure" ones as uncertain (DM § 281). Following their categorization, Baumgarten insisted that the hierarchy can be reversed by introducing the following criterion: the force of cognition is proportional to the number of notes. In contrast to Wolff, Baumgarten believed that confused representations can be higher in strength than distinct representations, or obscure representations are higher than clear representations. The following citation is from Chapter 1 of "Empirical Psychology," in Part 3 of *Metaphysics*:

> The more notes a perception [i.e., cognition] embraces, the stronger it is. Hence, an obscure perception comprehending more notes than a clear one is stronger than the latter, and a confused perception comprehending more notes than a distinct one is stronger than the latter. (MT4 § 517)[4]

When a clear and confused representation contains many notes, Baumgarten calls it an "extensively clearer" (*extensive clarior*) representation (MP § 16), and the clarity of this strong representation is referred to as "extensively greater clarity" (*claritas extensive maior*) (MT4 § 531). In contrast, Wolff viewed clear and confused cognitions negatively because of the "lack of a further degree of clarity" that would lead to distinctness: that is, due to their cluttered aspect (DM §§ 214f.). Baumgarten, however, views them positively because these cognitions can have their own clarity, owing to the fullness of the mingled notes.

Baumgarten expresses the character of extensive clarity as "lively" (*vividus*) (MT4 § 531). He introduced the concept of extensive clarity in *Reflections*, his thesis on poetry; therefore, his first use of this concept was to describe the features of poetic language. In *Reflections*, an extensively clearer representation, that is, a clear and confused representation that comprehends many notes, is said to be "poetic" rather than "strong" (MP § 17). Hence, using the word "strong" for clear and confused representations can be read as full, lively, poetic, or aesthetic.

Combining the above notions of complete determination and extensive clarity in his work *Reflections*, Baumgarten proposes the rule that the representations of an individual and the use of an individual's sign, the proper name, are highly poetic. According to him, it is "maximally poetic" that we have an exceedingly high degree of extensive clarity (MP § 17)—that is, a considerable number of determinations—when we recognize a thing clearly and confusedly. With this proposition as a basic premise, he states the following:

> Individuals are completely determined, ergo, *singular representations are extremely poetic*. (MP § 19)

If representations of an individual are highly poetic, then "proper names," signs of individuals, "are also *poetic*" (MP § 89). In empirical psychology, he describes it as a form of strength:

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[4] For the citations of Baumgarten's *Metaphysics*, I use the English translation by Fugate and Hymers.

The power [*vis*] of proper names is not small. (MT4 § 517)

The "power" being referred to here implies the strength of a representation due to the number of notes. The double negative expression "not small" is not a euphemism but a strong affirmation, as Baumgarten contended, in his earlier book *Reflections*, that representations of an individual are extremely poetic.

Baumgarten thus argues that proper names are highly poetic or strong because the complete determinations of individuals bring about a high level of extensive clarity of cognition. Despite directly connecting the ontological concept of complete determination to the aesthetic and epistemological problem of the representation of proper names in literature, he does not explain how complete determinations are represented when proper names are used.

As examples to expound that representations of individuals are poetic, Baumgarten cites the 394-line chart of the warships in Homer's *Iliad* (Hom. *Il.* 2.484–877), the enumeration of Apollo's holy places in the *Hymn to Apollo* (*HH* 21.30–44), and the list of 35 dogs that bite Actaeon in Ovid's *Metamorphose* (Ovid. *Met.* 3.206-225) (MP § 19 Scholium).[5] This rhetorical technique lists more specific things for the purpose of description, called "catalogos" (κατάλογος) because of their character of catalog-like enumeration.

The catalogos is not the best example for Baumgarten's theory of proper names and may lead to a misunderstanding: although the poetic nature of proper names should derive from the considerable number of notes or determinations that an individual has, the point of the catalogos relates to the number of proper names enumerated.[6] In addition, right after Baumgarten indicates in *Reflections* that proper names are poetic, he dissuades the use of too many proper names that may be unfamiliar to readers. Asserting that several unknown things will diminish the clarity of a readers' cognition, he states that "*it is poetic to avoid many unfamiliar proper names*" (MP § 90).[7] Even though the above expressions may conflict with this rule, Baumgarten seems to consider them exceptions. As these catalogos have generally been negatively evaluated as abrupt and redundant expressions that interrupt the flow of the story, Baumgarten persists in defending Homer and Ovid. He evaluates them as poetic expressions that cannot be easily imitated, while third-rate poets snicker at them without understanding their beauty (MP § 19 Scholium).

If the strength of proper names comes from their complete determination, then when we hear a proper name, do we represent all the notes of the referent at once, or do we keep enumerating the notes sequentially? It is difficult to imagine such a situation, and to assume that Baumgarten,

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[5] In his later book *Aesthetics* (1750/1758), Baumgarten indicates that, regarding the technique of naming more concrete things, it is better to express species rather than genera, or express individuals rather than species, and then cites the chart of warships in the *Iliad* and the enumeration of Actaeon's dogs by Ovid as examples of exemplary expression (AE § 751; § 756).

[6] It is true that some catalogos refer to the notes of individuals, as in the *Iliad*'s chart of warships, which describes each circumstance of the generals' departure. Furthermore, as in *Aesthetics* (see previous note), if we take each proper name as a note, it provides a good example of an explanation for extensive clarity. However, as an example of the poetic nature of proper names, catalogos are insufficient, because they are characterized by the enumeration of proper names. Undeniably, catalogos have other poetic effects, but we cannot explore them in this paper.

[7] It is recommended to weave proper names and unknown things into known things appropriately (MP § 13; § 48; § 56).

who was familiar with poetry since childhood, would present a theory that is so far removed from practice. What poetic effect does a proper name have, and how does a complete determination provide the effect? To elucidate this, something that has not been explored before, we concentrate on Meier in the next section.

2. Proper name as emphasis

In this section, we focus on Meier's definition of a proper name as an "emphatic expression" (*nachdrücklicher Ausdruck*) or "emphasis" (*Nackdruck*).

Whereas Baumgarten defines proper names as "names which signify individuals" ([*nomina*] *indiuidua significantia*) (MP § 89), Meier adds the adjective "emphatic" here. I quote from the chapter on empirical psychology in Meier's *Metaphysics*, vol. 3 (first edition 1757, second edition 1765).

> Expressions, through which emphatic representations are signified, are called EMPHATIC EXPRESSIONS, and those that express single things are named PROPER NAMES [*eigenthümliche Namen*]. (MK2 § 494, S. 38)

It is obvious from this definition that Meier considers proper names to be a form of "emphatic expression." An emphatic representation is one that "contains many notes [*Merkmale*] in itself" (MK2 § 494, S. 38). Since individuals have a considerable number of notes (see the previous section; cf. MK2 § 141), by definition, the representation of an individual can be an emphatic representation and the sign of an individual can be an emphatic expression. However, what does it mean for a proper name to be an emphatic expression?

A more detailed explanation of emphasis is found in *Attempt at a General Art of Interpretation* (1757), in Chapter 2 "On the Interpretation of Discourse" of Part I "Theoretical Art of Interpretation." First, it is better to organize the distinction between the "meaning" (*Bedeutung; significatus*) and "sense" (*Sinn; sensus*) that Meier assumes. The meaning is the content of the "expression" (*Ausdruck; terminus*) or especially of the "word" (*Wort; vocabulum*) (AA §§ 103f.),[8] and it corresponds to the "referent" (*eine bezeichnete Sache; signatum*) (AA § 7).[9] In contrast, sense is the content of a set of words, a "discourse" (*Rede; oratio*), and it can be rephrased as "understanding" (*Verstand*) (AA §§ 103f.). The discourse as an object of interpretation is called a "text" (AA § 105). Taking these into account, Meier explains emphasis:

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[8] Meier defines an expression as "a sign for cognition" (*ein Zeichen der Erkenntnis*) and a word as "an expression which usually consists of a human voice [*Stimme*] or an expression which can be heard" (AA § 103). Therefore, the expression may include animal voices.

[9] Meier immediately rephrases the "referent" by the "meaning." Thus, the binary relation between the sign (word) and its content (referent or meaning) is at issue here. This rephrasing is possible for Meier, because he imposes to the referent and meaning the condition that the actual existence of the thing they signify can be recognized through the sign (cf. MK2 § 21, S. 35f.). Things that cannot exist are irrational concepts, such as "cold flames." Such things that violate the law of contradiction are, for Meier, simply nothing.

The quantity and variety of what is contained in the sense and what can be correctly deduced from it, are named *the fruitfulness of the sense* [*die Fruchtbarkeit des Sinnes*] (foecunditas sensus). [...] A discourse, which has a fruitful sense, is a shorter sign of many meanings, hence a more perfect sign; and therefore, the fruitfulness of the sense promotes the fruitfulness of the discourse. Inasmuch as the meaning of a word contains much, in itself, *an emphasis* [*ein Nachdruck*] (emphasis) is attributed to the word. Consequently, an emphatic discourse is more perfect than a discourse that is not emphatic. (AA § 201)

According to the above quotation, when the sense or understanding of a text shows many variable contents, and it could produce a variety of interpretations, it is said to be a fruitful sense or understanding. An understanding that enriches the text in such a manner depends not only on the interpreter but also on the text. A text that carries many meanings but is not redundant in expression can provide fertility to understanding.

As the quotation specifies, an emphasis indicates that meaning includes many things, or, if we apply the description in *Metaphysics*, it includes many notes. In other words, "An emphasis emerges from secondary concepts [*Nebenbegriffe*] that are attached to the main concepts [*Hauptbegriffe*] in the meaning" (AA § 202). Thus, emphasis results from evoking notes as secondary concepts of its main representations; these secondary concepts are inherent in any concept that references an object. It is clear from this that "emphasis," according to Meier, does not mean that a word is intensified by vocalization or gestures, nor that a certain meaning of a word is emphasized. Rather, it refers to the intensification of an expression by inducing many meanings out of it.[10] Therefore, Meier concludes that the discourse with emphasis has more meaning than the one without emphasis and is thus more fruitful and "more perfect." Hence, an interpreter must "assume the most fruitful [*allerfruchtbarst*] immediate [i.e., literal] sense of the text, and therefore the most emphasized [*allernachdrücklichst*] too" (ibid.).

The fact that Meier regards proper names as "emphasis," which evokes the notes inherent in the referent, means that proper names have not only the function of indicating an individual as a label but also the rhetorical function of evoking the notes of an individual to a cognitive agent. So long as Meier focuses on the use of words, he does not consider all possible predicates of a certain proper name equally; instead, he considers that notes have shades of degrees, those that are strongly evoked and those that are not, depending on the usage of the word at the time.

How are the evoked notes determined among the numerous notes that the individual has? Meier does not explain this point, but because the emphasis is a rhetorical expression, the emphasized content may depend on the intention of the author or speaker, and is determined by the context of the text and the common perceptions and conventions of the group to which the author or recipient belongs.[11] However, we argue that emphasis by a proper name is largely based

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[10] Baumgarten defines emphasis as "terms having a pregnant meaning" (*termini significatus praegnantis*) (MT4 § 517).

[11] Emphasis is a concept that has significance in the biblical hermeneutics of pietistic theology, and the reason Meier does not elaborate on it is probably that the theory was already established. *Lectures on Interpretation of Holy*

on the relationship between the referent individual and the recipient. Because the individual has many choices of notes, the ones evoked are likely to vary according to the recipient's level of knowledge and interest. Therefore, when the name of an individual who has a direct or indirect relationship with the recipient is mentioned, more notes will be evoked than for those who do not; thus, the name will be more vivid. Alternatively, when reading a story, the number of notes that can be evoked from a character's name increases toward the end of the story, and the name becomes more emphasized and fulfilling.

Meier cites a few examples of proper names. In empirical psychology, as evidence that poets and orators prefer to use proper names rather than abstract concepts, he states that they think of Alexander the Great rather than of heroes in general and they give the name "Kaspar" when they introduce a miser (MK2 § 494, S. 39). The former seems to imply the portrayal of a specific individual, Alexander the Great, to represent a heroic figure.[12] Another interpretation is that it is an expression that uses an individual as an archetype instead of a species, as when a skilled tactician is called Hannibal (cf. AE §§ 797f.). The latter example, "Kaspar," typologically refers to a person with a specific character by a certain fictitious name. In Japanese culture, there are also such examples in Edo rakugo, in which an unintelligent character is called "Yotaro." The second interpretation of the former and the latter can be explained in terms of rhetorical techniques, synecdoche, which refers to a whole thing by mentioning its parts, and among the various types of synecdoche it corresponds to an antonomasia, which refers to a common noun by using a proper name.

Perhaps Meier cites typological expressions to make it easier for the reader to understand, but in this case the effect of the proper name can be explained as follows. For example, in Plautus' play, "Step this way with me, [...] my Juno (*Ei hac mecum*, [...] *Iuno mea*)" (Plaut. *Mercator* 689f.; cf. AE § 797), readers familiar with conventions based on ancient Roman culture will understand that Juno implies a wife. Compared with if the word "wife" was used here instead, this line would evoke more notes associated with Juno, such as the graceful figure of the goddess depicted in various works of art, the image of the peacock as an attribute, or chastity and fertility. The antonomasia of the proper name makes texts more fruitful because of these aesthetic effects.

Scripture (1st edition 1742) by Baumgarten's brother Siegmund Jakob Baumgarten (1706–1757) is said to have had a strong influence on Meier's *Attempt at a General Art of Interpretation* (cf. Bühler and Madonna 1996, XLVf.). According to S. J. Baumgarten's description, the understanding of an emphasis, like the understanding of a text, is determined by the author's final purpose and must be carried out with due regard to the historical circumstances of the text and the author (AHS § 117; § 129). His definition of emphasis is as follows: "When the delivery of a discourse, in addition to the proper main representations that should be aroused through the discourse, causes some secondary representations related to the speaker's final purpose; so, one calls it EMPHASIS, because the weight and effect of the main representations are increased by them" (AHS § 118). Furthermore, emphasis has four main characteristics: a much-signifying expression, verifiability of the main representations, differences among the secondary representations, and the relation of the secondary meanings to the entire purpose of the discourse (AHS § 121). Since the concept of emphasis is derived from biblical hermeneutics, it can be assumed that Meier intended to defend the poetic expression of the Bible with the argument about the strength of proper names. For more on Meier's defense of biblical expression, see Goldenbaum (2011).

[12] In this case, Meier probably has chapter 9 of Aristotle's *Poetics* in mind. As is well known, Aristotle says that poetry speaks of the universals, and ""[u]niversal" means the kinds of things which it suits a certain kind of person to say or do, in terms of probability or necessity: poetry aims for this, even though attaching names to the agents" (1451b5–10).

The differences between normal untyped proper names are discussed in Section 3, in relation to definite descriptions.

Although the idea that expressions with a variety of meanings can enrich a text is not novel, we see that Meier's uniqueness lies in the fact that he considers proper names themselves to be the emphasis. However, Baumgarten probably conceived the idea of considering proper names as a form of emphasis. He mentions proper names only in § 517 of *Metaphysics*, and says, "the power of proper names is not small" (see the previous section), where he provides the definition of emphasis immediately before this sentence. The sentences Baumgarten added to § 517 in the second edition (1743) were about emphasis and proper names, so it is unlikely that proper names and emphasis are regarded as being completely unrelated. Moreover, Meier's view, as we revealed in this section, does not conflict with Baumgarten's view presented in the previous section, and Meier's theory of proper names can be regarded as an elaboration of Baumgarten's view. Nevertheless, Baumgarten does not explicitly note anything about the connection between emphasis and the proper name. Hence, based on Baumgarten's theory of proper names, which states that they have a strong power because of their complete determination of individuals, Meier explained their poetic or rhetorical effect by accentuating the proper name as emphasis.

However, there is a limit to the number of notes that a recipient can represent, and even if we consider proper names as emphasis, the huge number of notes of complete determinations may not be utilized. Responding to this issue in the next section, we examine the effects of proper names as emphasis from the perspective of notes that are not evoked.

3. Mathematical infinity of notes in a proper name and the inexhaustibility of individuals

All complete determinations of the individual must be graspable, in principle, from a transcendental perspective. Since Wolffianism purports that God created this best world seeing through all the determinations of the possible worlds—even though the determinations of individuals are more numerous than those of genera and species—the number of determinations is not infinite, so long as the creatures are finite. Nonetheless, it would be impossible for human beings to grasp all the events and actions that happen to an individual in the present, past, and future.[13] Meier himself was aware that human cognition is limited (cf. SME § 1), as is often pointed out. This attitude is also apparent in his book on aesthetics, *Foundations of All Beautiful Sciences* (three volumes, first edition 1748–1750, second edition 1754–1769)—for example, in the following description: "we humans do not have either entirely detailed concepts about any single thing, nor cognition that entirely exhausts [*erschöpfen*] the object" (SW2 Bd. 2, § 327, S. 142).

In his empirical psychology, which explains cognition with the "I" as its starting point, Meier, who emphasizes the limits of human cognition, uses the word "infinite" to describe the total notes that an individual possesses, and then goes on to refer to the use of proper names in aesthetic expressions. It becomes clear from Meier's description that he approaches it positively from a

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[13] Cf. Leibniz (1686, § 13).

point of view of beauty that the notes of individuals, which should be finite from the transcendental point of view, cannot be fully grasped by human cognition. This is a quote from *Metaphysics*:

> The representation of a single thing represents us a thing that is completely determined and thus contains infinitely many things in itself [*unendlich viel in sich enthalten*]. Consequently, such representations have great strength, and they are usually stronger and more emphatic than abstract concepts, and the expressions of the representations of a single thing, are stronger and more emphatic than those that contain little in themselves. Hence, it comes that orators and poets deliver as few abstract concepts as can be done. Instead of general expressions, they use proper names. (MK2 § 494, S. 38f.)

We discussed the relationship between the strength of individual representations or emphasis and complete determination in Sections 1 and 2. Here, we investigate that complete determination is "infinitely many things." According to Meier, representations and expressions of the individual have a considerable degree of strength and emphasis because the individual is represented as containing "infinitely many things." Since the representations and expressions of the individual possess this strength and emphasis, proper names are preferred to abstract concepts in poetry and speech. Following the quoted passage, Meier ends the section by citing examples such as Alexander the Great, which we have explored in Section 2. We can gather from this statement that, in Meier's view, the reason that the use of proper names is effective in poetry and speech is that the collection of the complete determinations of the individual is represented as "infinitely many things."

The infinity referring to an individual's notes here is, of course, different from the infinity referred to as God. Meier distinguishes "the mathematically infinite" (*das mathematisch Unendliche*) from "the metaphysically infinite" (*das metaphysisch Unendliche*). The latter has no limits whatsoever. In contrast, the former seems to have no limits, or that which has boundaries but is not or cannot be determined, from a particular point of view (MK2 § 181; § 306). According to Meier, God is metaphysically infinite, while the immortality of the soul, the straight line in mathematics, and the distance between the smallest fixed star and the earth are mathematically infinite (ibid.). When describing the number of notes that an individual has as "infinite," it is apparent that he mentions mathematical infinity from the perspective of human cognition.

Meier sometimes uses the adverb "infinitely" for mere intensification (e.g., MK2 § 548, S. 117), so it might be unnecessary to read the above quotation literally. However, there is no reason to regard the use of the word infinite in the passage as wholly meaningless. This is not only because numerous notes are attributed to the individual but also because inexhaustibility without an end is fundamental to Meier's aesthetic theory.

Meier positively affirms the object, which is represented as infinite and inexhaustive, in terms of increasing diversity. The text that clearly states this is Meier's early representative aesthetic text, *Thoughts on Humor* (first edition 1744, second edition 1754). Despite the limited theme of humor, he wrote this essay as a part of the then-nascent aesthetics (GS2 § 9, S. 23), and offered his views on beauty in general. The quotation that follows is from the first half of the

book, the section titled "The First Beauty of Humor," in which he argues that diversity is necessary for humor:

> Nothing delights our soul more strongly than the difference in a pleasant object. If we direct our attention to the thing that contains, in itself, exceedingly little, we exhaust [*erschöpfen*] this thing by our observation in an instant [...]. On the contrary, the eye wanders with enchanted delight here and there in the region where the eye can behold no end and is filled with the infinitely many [*unendlich viel*] different objects. Everything large and infinite and everything comprehends so many diverse things in itself arouses a pleasing sensation to the soul. (GS2 § 33, S. 79)

Because diversity amuses us, it is more desirable to have infinite diversity in beauty than to have so little that we assume that we have rapidly exhausted it, although, as noted above, it is theoretically impossible for human cognition to exhaust any object at all. Therefore, for Meier, the "large and infinite" gives rise to a pleasant sensation.

Since the individual has a mathematically infinite number of notes, in line with Meier, the individual can be an "infinite thing" or even a "large thing" and can cause pleasant sensations through its inexhaustibility. The reason an individual can be a "large thing" is that a large object is, according to the explanation in *Foundations of All Beautiful Sciences*, not only the object, whose cause and effect are large, but also an object that contains an "infinite amount" of determinations or parts (SW2 § 65, S. 117–119). Although beauty is fundamentally dependent on the way the agent recognizes it (SW2 § 23), diversity and magnitude, the two properties that bring about beauty, are said to be derived from the object rather than the way of cognition (SW2 § 30, S. 48).

When Meier argues in *Metaphysics* that the representations and expressions of the individual are strong and emphatic based on the mathematical infinity of the notes, he refers only to the proper name as the expression of the individual, ignoring definite descriptions. We argue that the quantity of candidate notes for evocation relates to this. The definite description that indicates an individual with certain notes, such as the expression "teacher of Alexander the Great," which indicates Aristotle, has the effect of foregrounding the notes used for the indication. In this way, they preferentially evoke the notes that are used and strongly related to them, relegating the other notes to the background. Compared with proper names, in poetic effect, definite descriptions certainly have a positive aspect, in that the author's or speaker's intention or wit is expressed with greater clarity by the choice of notes; but unlike proper names, such definite descriptions do not reflect that an individual is an entity with innumerable notes inexhaustible by human cognition. Therefore, an aesthetic difference arises when, for example, a character or place in a story is referred to merely by role as opposed to being given a proper name. In addition, typological expressions, such as antonomasia, mentioned in the previous section, are also inferior in the quantity of candidate notes for evocation, since the choice of notes is partially limited by convention.

If Meier thinks that proper names are more suitable than definite descriptions to represent individuals as entities with an inexhaustible number of notes, and if the reason is that definite

descriptions bring only certain notes to the fore, then the proper name already has strong power because of numerous notes that are not evoked. Therefore, even if the recipient does not represent a lot of concrete notes, through fullness, which indicates that the individual is an entity with a mathematically infinite number of notes, the proper name itself can bring a lively beauty.

Conclusion

By focusing on Meier's text, this paper has demonstrated how the proper name, considered "poetic" by Baumgarten, can have a poetic effect.

Claiming that proper names are highly poetic or "strong," Baumgarten directly applies the ontological notion of the "complete determination" of individuals to the aesthetic and epistemological problem of the representation of proper names in the literature. Moreover, his example of "catalogos" is not the most appropriate since it uses the abundance of proper names rather than the abundance of the notes of a proper name. Hence, it is unclear how such complete determinations are represented and give a poetic effect when proper names are used (Section 1).

Meier considers a proper name as a type of "emphasis." Thus, he extends the proper name beyond the function of indicating an individual as the label to the rhetorical function of evoking the notes of the individual to the cognitive agent. Therefore, it is clear that expressions of proper names make use of complete determination by evoking notes. In addition, depending on the recipient, emphasis by a proper name evokes more variable notes than do common names (Section 2).

The notes of the individual, which should be finite from the transcendental perspective, cannot be fully grasped by human cognition. Meier regards it as the reason proper names are more powerful than abstract concepts, taking the limits of human cognition positively from the perspective of beauty. Meier assumed that the expressions indicating individuals who have "mathematically infinite" notes were proper names rather than definite descriptions. Hence, we propose that, because proper names represent the individual as an inexhaustible entity, their use does not necessarily have to evoke numerous complete determinations for the individual, but the name of the individual itself could bring about a lively beauty through an abundance of latent notes (Section 3).

Through the above discussion, the relationship between the poetic effect of proper names and their complete determination is explained from two aspects: emphasis and the mathematical infinity of the notes. Baumgarten claimed that individuals and proper names are extremely poetic, in his habilitation thesis, where he declared the new science of aesthetics. Meier, in response, elaborated on Baumgarten's argument about the poetic effect of proper names. The conclusions of this paper suggest that these were two sides of the same coin; Meier was keenly aware of the limitations of human cognition, and he found the potential of aesthetics as a new science and exerted effort to promote it. This may provide a clue to the origin of aesthetics as a philosophical discipline.

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