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THE POETIC DEVELOPMENT OF BARTHOLD HEINRICH BROCKES IN HIS IRDISCHES VERGNÜGEN IN GOTT.

The Johns Hopkins University, Ph.D., 1971
Language and Literature, classical

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THE POETIC DEVELOPMENT
OF
BARTHOLD HEINRICH BROCKES
IN HIS
IRDISCHES VERGNÜGEN IN GOTT

by
Elly Marie Friese Apitz
II

A dissertation submitted to
The Johns Hopkins University
in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Baltimore, Maryland

1971

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Abstract

This dissertation is a study of the poetic development of Barthold Heinrich Brockes in his Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott a collection of poems many of them concerned with nature and man's relation to nature published in nine volumes from 1721 to 1748.

A study of this kind has not been done because there has been a general belief, amounting to a firm conviction, that there is no development from volume to volume, but only a repetition with variations, accompanied by a decline in poetic powers.

A number of factors have led to this questionable conclusion. Intrinsically, Brockes himself is in part to blame: There is much repetition, and many of the poems are indeed mere versified science and moral reflection. In their midst the truly great poems, especially in the later volumes, have been lost sight of.

With the wall of prejudice steadily built up since Brockes' later years, literary historians have had no apprehension in relying on the earlier volumes to formulate their opinions.

However, in my study of the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott I did consult the later volumes and contrary to established opinion, I found that hidden away among the moral reflection and versified natural

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science there are poems of high quality in all the volumes. I also discovered that previously discussed subjects were often treated in a superior manner in the later volumes. I therefore decided to trace the development of a variety of topics from the early to the late period.

I studied the nine volumes of the collection and made a catalogue of many recurring images and themes. Finally I selected the following topics with the intention of analysing their chronological development: the colors of autumn, the symbolism of the falling leaves, sensory worship of God, the circle in the dot, and the Chain of Being.

Invariably the comparison between the analogous poems in the earlier and in the later volumes prove the later poems to be superior. The results demonstrate that Brockes' poetic insight and pure artistry developed to a high level and occasionally reached a perfection we do not expect to find until the classical age.

It is hoped that through a more adequate knowledge of the best of the poet's work the myth of Brockes' poetic decline will disappear from the literary histories.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is with sincere appreciation that I acknowledge the patient support I received from Professor Harold Jantz. His constant encouragement provided the impetus for the completion of this study.

I also want to thank Dr. Holger Homann for his kind interest and helpful suggestions.

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This dissertation is a study of the development of themes and images in the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott, a collection of descriptive poetry, written by the Hamburg poet Barthold Heinrich Brockes (1680-1747) and published in nine volumes between 1721 and 1748. In his poetry Brockes expresses both the rationalistic philosophy and some of the pietist tendencies of his time. Brockes is definitely more a rationalist than a pietist and the chief pietist tendency evident in his poetry is his emotional and effusive reaction to the beauties of nature.

His Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott represents a departure from the poetry of the previous decades for Brockes does not believe in disciplined formality. He writes in madrigal verse using the musical forms of the time such as cantatas and arias, and his effortless language is often more prosaic than poetic. Brockes' aesthetic appreciation of nature was received with great enthusiasm and he became very popular and influential. His poetry was printed in many periodicals and was imitated by a host of less known writers.[1] His influence also reached poets such as Klopstock, Haller, Wieland, Gessner and Mörike. Echoes of his style can be found in the poetic realism of the nineteenth

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century for instance in the prose of Adalbert Stifter and the poetry of Gottfried Keller.

Brockes' importance in German literary history is based on the fact that he was the first German poet to make nature the dominant theme in his work. His approach to nature is an approach to God, whom he sees revealed through His Creation. During his time there was actually a wide-spread interest in this approach of leading men to God through the contemplation of nature. For instance, an English parson, William Derham (1657-1735) published two books of sermons to prove the existence and attributes of God from His work. The first one was Physico-Theology (London, 1713) and the second one Astro-Theology (London, 1714). These books were translated into German by Brockes' good friend Johann Albert Fabricius and published in Hamburg. Their German titles are: Physicotheologie oder Natur-Leitung zu Gott (1732), and Astrotheologie, oder Himmlisches Vergnügen in Gott (1728). These books are compendia of science dealing with natural phenomena pertaining to our planet and present a storehouse of illustrative instances and examples. It is uncertain whether they were

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known to Brockes before he started writing his own physicotheology. The topic as such was certainly nothing new as was proved by Fabricius in an appendix to Astrotheologie containing three hundred titles of ancient, medieval and modern writers who attempted to lead men to God through nature.[2]

In view of the general diffusion of the idea that God can be recognized through the study and contemplation of His works, a direct influence on Brockes by any one writer can only be assumed. Three prose writers of the seventeenth century are generally considered predecessors of Brockes. Johann Arndt, Johann Rist and Christian Scriver. Johann Arndt's book Vom Wahren Christentum (1606-1609) surprisingly popular among Protestants and Catholics alike calls for man to find a more personal relationship to God. In the fourth book of the work 'The Book of Nature' Arndt repeatedly praises the greatness of God's creation and asks how much greater must be the creator of such wonders.[3] Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott has been called a "poetic continuation of Arndt's divine analogy".[4]

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Johann Rist, Brockes' North German predecessor in stature and fame, was a member of the "Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft" and founder of a society of similar aspirations, the "Elbschwanenorden". Rist expresses a love for the simplicity of country life and scorns the vanity of city life.[5] He also confesses to the old belief that God is revealed through His creation and thus nature could lead man to a knowledge of God.

Scriver's Gottholds zufällige Andachten (1671) was of lesser intellectual quality than the writings of Rist and Arndt. However it was greatly admired by Brockes for its emotional and sentimental appeal.[6] Scriver generally follows Arndt's premises and calls for man's communion with God in nature.

These were modest beginnings in prose. In the poetry of the seventeenth century nature still served as a background for human activities. One can find excellent descriptions of the sights and sounds in nature by such poets as Simon Dach, Paul Fleming, and Kaspar Stieler. Friedrich von Spee uses nature as a setting for his mystical experiences. For Gryphius nature serves as a symbol for his pessimistic philosophical attitude. Not until Brockes do we find a joyous recognition of

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nature "as flowing directly out of God's hand in preestablished harmony, meaningful, beautiful, all-powerful and overwhelming."[7]

One problem faces the reader of the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott: the sheer mass of the material in nine volumes consisting of a total of four thousand four hundred pages more or less according to some editions, the repetitions of titles and the length of the poems. Nine volumes of the same genre can bore even the most persistent and interested reader. Consequently critics have found it expedient to rely mainly on the first volume in formulating their opinions. This volume (first 1721), revised and published in seven editions, was the most popular and therefore considered the best. Literary historians from the early nineteenth century on began repeating the opinion that the poems in Volume One of Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott are superior to anything written later. Even in the latest edition of the deBoor-Newald Geschichte der deutschen Literatur we read: "Brockes hat die kräftigen Ansätze des ersten Teiles nicht weiter entwickelt".[8] In an article published in 1962, Harold Jantz refutes the "old myth" and points out the need for a closer look at Brockes' later poetry,

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since contrary to established opinion, poetry of high quality can be found in the later volumes, even Volumes Eight and Nine.[9]

A thorough study of all the volumes and a comparison of the later poetry with the earlier poetry is therefore necessary and it is the purpose of this dissertation to demonstrate that Brockes' poetic talent developed to creative heights and philosophic depths hitherto unknown and unrecognized.

Barthold Heinrich Brockes was wealthy, well educated, well travelled and successful in a variety of fields of endeavor. Although he was highly conscious of culture and civic responsibilities, he was at the same time an unassuming man full of love for the simple things in life.

Brockes was born in Hamburg in 1680, the son of a well-to-do merchant, studied law at Halle University, the seat of the pietist movement, travelled to Rome and Venice and returned to the North to receive his law degree at the University of Leyden. He settled in his home town in 1704. Here he became active in the literary, musical and political life of the city. In 1714 he

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married a woman of similar background and wealth and they had twelve children. During the years of their marriage his wife became increasingly introverted and toward the end of her years was a religious recluse. Brockes was greatly saddened by her death in 1736. The happiness as well as the sadness of his home life is reflected in numerous sketches in his poetry.

As a public servant in Hamburg Brockes distinguished himself as a senator, judge and diplomat extraordinaire. In 1735 he was made magistrate of the district of Ritzebüttel, a small town on the South bank of the Elbe river near Cuxhaven, that last haven for fishermen and merchant ships who venture into the rugged waters of the North Sea. In 1741 Brockes returned to Hamburg where he lived in retirement. He died there in 1747 as a beloved and well-known citizen of Hamburg and of Germany.

When Brockes settled in Hamburg in 1704, the city was a lively center of literature and music. The Hamburg opera house, which had opened its doors in 1678, was well known throughout Europe for its elaborate productions and experimentations in staging. Under the direction

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of Reinhard Keiser (1674-1739) one hundred and sixteen operas were produced here from 1694 to 1734. Among the productions were the first operatic efforts of Georg Friedrich Händel (1685-1759), who was assistant to Keiser from 1703 to 1706. His operas "Almira" and "Nero" were performed in 1705 and "Florindo" and "Dafne" in 1708, after Händel had left for Italy.

The wealth of the city and its cultural activities attracted many writers and musicians, and lively controversies arose on matters of taste concerning the musical and literary scene. The contemporary writers of opera libretti were bitterly attacked for their disregard of traditional classical form. The defenders of contemporary opera replied that of the three Aristotelian unities of classical drama, the unity of action, time and place, only the unity of action was of importance for musical productions. They emphasized that staging, suspense value and musical effects should be the major considerations. Barthold Feind in his essay "Gedancken von der Opera" (1708) clarified the position of the opera producers particularly well. In this defense of the opera Feind

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anticipates many ideas on dramatic art later found in Lessing's "Hamburgische Dramaturgie".[10]

Among the poets was a group of reformers who were developing a new style of poetry, the so called "gallant style", purified of the excessive imagery of the late seventeenth-century poets such as Hofmannswaldau and Lohenstein. The writings of these older poets were characterized by the "gallant poets" as replete with contrived metaphors, all too frequent allusions to the classics and empty pathos. The efforts of the younger poets were directed toward eliminating excessive imagery and finding a middle-of-the-road style, a "Mittelweg". Erdmann Neumeister (1671-1756) was a leading theorist and his handbook Die allerneuste Art/Zur Reinen und Galanten Poesie zu gelangen, published in Hamburg in 1707, was a good compendium of the various reformative trends. It was quite popular and appeared in eleven editions.

Two other Hamburg contemporaries were Christian Friedrich Hunold (1680-1721) and Christian Wernicke (1661-1725). Hunold was the typical representative of the gallant style. He avoided highly intellectual metaphors and classical

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allusions that were too complex for the average reader. This reflects his theory that language was supposed to be as clear as possible and exaggerations of any kind were in bad taste. In his efforts Hunold wanted to renew and refine the poetry of the previous generation. Wernicke, a man with a sharp mind and even sharper tongue, criticized Hunold for not breaking completely with the follies of the older generation. He wanted to see a radical departure from tradition and accused Hunold of devoting excessive attention to form. Hunold in turn criticized Wernicke's tendency toward prose construction and his lack of "gallant imagery".[11] Thus the first literary strife of eighteenth-century Germany erupted in Hamburg.

This old hanseatic city then was a place where men of musical and intellectual talents congregated. Hamburg was a city open to new ideas, innovation and experimentation.

Soon after his arrival in Hamburg, Brockes achieved a position of leadership among the literati and musici, due to a large extent to his social and financial standing. He devoted his early years in the city to the study and collection of art, primarily Dutch painting, and

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sponsored musicals in his home. Thus Brockes led the life of a gentleman of culture.

His literary career began before his political career. His early poetic efforts published between 1708 and 1715 were mostly translations from French or Italian. Among them are poems published anonymously in Barthold Feind's volume Deutsche Gedichte (1708)[12] and the translation of Gianbattista Marino's Bethlehemitischer Kindermord (1715). Brockes' fame however was established with his oratorio "Der für die Sünden der Welt gemarterte und sterbende Jesu" (1712) set to music by Keiser, Händel, Telemann and many others. The oratorios of Keiser and Händel on the Brockes text are considered the finest in church music since Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) and created a new stimulus for oratorio music.[13]

In 1715 Brockes and some friends founded the literary society "die Teutschübende Gesellschaft" which emulated the language societies of the previous century. Members of this society were Johann Ulrich König, the opera librettist and poet; Johann Albert Fabricius (1688-1736) the eminent Latin scholar and director of the Johanneum; and Brockes' loyal friend, Michael Richey (1678-1761)

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a poet and professor of Greek and history. In 1718 this society ceased its endeavors but in 1724 several of the members among them Brockes founded the "Patriotische Gesellschaft" and published a highly respected magazine "Der Patriot" (1724-1726).

In the meantime Brockes had published his first volume of the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott (1721) which immediately became very popular and appeared in its fourth edition by 1727. Other volumes were published at regular intervals through the years, many of them in several editions. [14] Simultaneously Brockes continued his translations of foreign authors such as Charles Claude Genest's Principes de Philosophie, published as Volume Three of his poetry collection (1728), and Alexander Pope's Essay on Man (1740) as well as James Thomson's Seasons (1745).

The nine volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott express one basic idea: man should enjoy the Creation in honor of the Creator. Brockes urges his fellow man to look at nature with devotion as well as curiosity. The poet guides his reader through God's garden pointing out a random flower, a flitting insect, the mixture of colors, the overall harmonious interplay of nature. All this beauty

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leads the reader to recognize God's greatness and to thank Him for this beautiful world. The smallest insect and the most minute detail do not escape the observing eye of the poet. Everything in nature is precious to him. A grain of sand as well as the firmament serve as proof of God's greatness.

In his style Brockes follows neither the recommendations of the gallant poets nor the aims of Wernicke but develops his own form. Christian Friedrich Weichmann, the editor of Volume One of the Irdisches Vergnügen explains in his preface that "Herr Brockes ist ohne das der Meynung, daß im Nothfall die äusserliche Zierlichkeit der Reimkunst dem inneren Werthe der Sachen weichen müsse". Weichmann also informs the readers that Brockes is combining poetry and music in his work and thus appeals to the mind as well as the senses for his poetry is written according to the rules of music.

Many poems in the collection are easily adaptable to music and many local musicians availed themselves of the opportunity to flatter Brockes by setting his verse cantatas to music. Georg Philip Telemann and Georg Friedrich Händel are the most famous composers who used Brockes' poetry. Händel wrote several arias performed in London using

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Brockes poems.[15] In 1740 the Swiss composer Johann Kaspar Bachofen published a selection from the Irdisches Vergnügen with musical compositions.[16]

Brockes' most outstanding stylistic feature, however, is his sensitivity to the visible world. Brockes paints with words and recreates every nuance according to his own interpretations. His scenes are often reminiscent of Dutch landscapes and domestic garden scenes.[17] His friendship with the Dutch painter Wilhelm Mieris and his own art collection confirm his interest in painting.[18]

Thus Brockes combines music and painting in his poetry. As a poet-musician he expresses the style of his time. As a poet-painter however, Brockes develops his own style particularly in the later years of the less well-known volumes.

After the solid success of the first volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen voices of criticism were heard from various directions. Brockes was accused of writing "Froschpredigten" and a "Kräuterbuch".[19]

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Serious criticism of the Irdisches Vergnügen, as one volume after another appeared, was voiced by Friedrich von Hagedorn (1708-1754) the anacreontic poet, whose first volume of poetry was published in Hamburg in 1729. Hagedorn criticized Brockes for adhering to the same style and the same ideas and circulated two parodies in Brockes' style among some friends.[20] Nevertheless, he edited a selection from the first five volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen in 1738 (second edition 1763).[21]

The first criticism of Brockes' poetry then was directed against the most obvious weakness, the repetitiveness of its themes. Thus, the opinion that the later volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen are "Kräuterbücher" and lack the quality of the earlier volumes originated already in the seventeen thirties. Hagedorn, striving to be the German Horace, was of course developing in another direction and found little of inspiration in those later volumes.

More valid critiques came from Zürich and Leipzig. Johann Jacob Breitinger praises Brockes' similes and particularly likes his color comparisons. He calls Brockes "einen vortrefflichen Poeten" and explains:

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> ... Denn der Poet und Redner unterscheiden sich eben dadurch von dem dogmatischen Lehrer der Welt=Weißheit, daß sie die Begriffe von uncörperlichen und geistlichen Dingen durch sinnliche Vorstellungen unter symbolischen von cörperlichen Wesen entlehnten Bildern abschildern und gleichsam sichtbar machen; wodurch die Harmonie zwischen dem Mundo intellectuali und visibili der geistlichen und der cörperlichen Welt, nicht ohne Ergetzen wahrgenommen wird.[22]

Johann Christoph Gottsched, however, expresses severe dislike for Brockes' free madrigal verse. He calls it "die Poesie der Faulen, die lang und kurz durch einander laufen läßt." And he considers it unfortunate that Brockes had so many imitators. He continues:

> Ich kann es aber nicht leugnen, daß mir eine so libertinische Dichtungsart im geringsten nicht gefällt; weil sie weder dem Ohre noch dem Gemüthe dasjenige Vergnügen bringt, das ein wohlabgemessener ordentlicher Vers ihm bringt. Und was ist das wohl für eine Kunst, dergleichen Gemenge ungleicher Zeilen durch einander laufen zu lassen, wie ein Hirt großes und kleines Vieh zum Thore hinaus treibt.[23]

Breitinger was concerned with understanding the creative processes in the mind of the poet. Gottsched however, in his unrelenting quest for perfection was too offended by Brockes' libertine style to consider him a serious poet. Actually it was Brockes' disregard for form that led other young poets to experiment further and to seek a truly melodious verse as a vehicle of emotion rather than ideas.

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Critical concern with Brockes' poetry subsided until the end of the century. In the meantime the Anacreontics had come to the fore and in 1748 the first three cantos of Klopstock's Messiah had created such a stir that the quiet unassuming poetry of Brockes and his contemporaries was all but forgotten.

A new era in German poetry had begun accompanied by a new approach to criticism as indicated by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing in his Laokoon (1766). Lessing suggests that poetry as an art of time must necessarily have approaches and purposes different from those of painting and sculpture which are arts of space. One conclusion implicit in this differentiation was that descriptive poetry was based on false aesthetic principles. Thus the great prestige descriptive poetry enjoyed earlier in the century declined sharply and has not completely recovered to this day.

In any case, Brockes should be studied by the critical standards of his own period, if his artistry is to be understood and validly assessed.

Despite of Lessing's criticism, however, Herder recognizes Brockes for his pure German character. He praises Brockes the poet-painter in his Briefe zur Förderung der Humanität (1793-1797)

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and interprets Brockes' intentions with great sensitivity: "Mit überströmender Wortfülle mahlt er seinen Gegenstand voll Liebe und Bewunderung, um ja keine andre als gut=müthige Empfindungen zu erregen."[24] Goethe however thinks that Brockes' early fame was due to his social and political prominence rather than his poetic genius.[25]

A most scathing comment on the Irdisches Vergnügen comes from the pen of Jean Paul. In his Vorschule der Aesthetik (1804) he calls Brockes' poetry an example of "unpoetischen Repetierwerken der großen Weltuhr". He differentiates, as Lessing had done, between what he calls "prosaische Nachäffung" and "poetische Nachahmung". However, by judging the poetry of the early eighteenth century by the standards of his own period he fails to understand that Brockes was not presenting a "prosaische Nachäffung" but his own "poetische Nachahmung der Natur".

Jean Paul's attitude is easily understood because the same clouded misunderstanding still prevails today. With few exceptions the student of German literature habitually venerates anything written during the classical and romantic period. He has been conditioned by the critical attitudes

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begun by Lessing and so succinctly expressed by Jean Paul. The student of German poetry does not want to accept the fact that the early eighteenth-century poets have a merit of their own. To judge them by the standards of the Goethian age is anachronistic and leads to wrong conclusions. Even Herder's appreciation of Brockes as the pure German character sounds merely condescending, although it is meant to be a compliment. Herder's comment on the "Reformatoren" and the "Hamburgischen Patrioten" also is tinged with the superior attitude of one who has a lofty perspective:

> Die Hofverse dauerten fort,bis fern von Höfen in seinem Garten, Brockes die Natur und eben so fern von Höfen Bodmer und Breitinger die Sitten mahlten. Immer bleibt Deutschland diesen Reformatoren des Geschmacks, so wie dem Hamburgischen Patrioten Dank schuldig; sie thaten, was sie zu ihrer Zeit thun konnten. [26]

The phrase "sie thaten was sie thun konnten" implies limitation, and the limitations of the early eighteenth century have been discussed for a long time. Despite their limited talent, however, the early poets and writers wove the threads for the great synthesis and the time has come for a greater appreciation of their intellectual and poetic achievement.

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German literary historians of the nineteenth century such as Georg Gervinus, Hermann Hettner, Heinrich Kurz and Ludwig Fulda continued to view Brockes with a condescending attitude. Hettner is particularly harsh in his appraisal of Brockes and considers him a pedantic and unoriginal poet.[27] Gervinus and Kurz, however, allow him some talent as "untergeordnet" as it may be (Kurz). They especially emphasize the decline of his talent in the later years. Gervinus, for example, says:

> ... wie nun die Naturbetrachtung bei Brockes Bedürfnis, und alsdann in seiner Poesie kalt und mechanisch geworden war, so geschah es auch mit seiner Betrachtung und Andacht. Je älter und kälter Brockes ward, desto mehr neigte er sich ganz zu dem bloßen Wissenschaftlichen.[28]

Kurz expresses the same idea by suggesting that Brockes' best poems are found in the first volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen while the last volumes contain only poems "welche wir als matte Nachklänge der bessern Zeit bezeichnet haben".[29]

Thus we find in Volume 39 of Kürschner's Deutsche National Litteratur (1884) prepared by Ludwig Fulda, a two part selection from the Irdisches Vergnügen supporting the opinion of Gervinus and Kurz. The first part of this selection contains what Fulda considers the most

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appealing and valuable poems from Volumes One and Two of the Irdisches Vergnügen only. The second part contains poems from the later volumes and are to illustrate Brockes' decline "zur Trockenheit und Geschmacklosigkeit" (p. 295). Fulda, however, does praise the epigrams found in Volume Nine but considers them the product of Brockes' best (meaning the early period). This assertion is open to question for their dates are uncertain and it is just as possible to assume that these epigrams were written in 1746 or 1747 just before the poet's death.

Ludwig Fulda's selection is limited, as he admits, but it is particularly misleading because the poems he considers worthwhile are chosen only from the first two volumes. It must be granted, of course, that not all poetry in a collection of nine volumes can be of equal quality. There are examples of versification of biological, botanical and zoological facts which certainly do not represent the poets lyric talent. But next to samples of versified natural science, poems of lyric quality can be found in all the volumes. A selection which limits itself to the best from Volumes One and Two and the worst from the later

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volumes is indeed biased and does not do justice to the poet. Fulda supports what was previously said and the "myth" is established as fact.

The first major study of Brockes' life and work was published in 1878 on the occasion of the impending two hundredth anniversary of his birth. The author Alois Brandl presents a thorough biographical study in the tradition of the positivistic school of thought.[30]

The dissertations that followed are primarily concerned with Brockes' feeling for nature and his philosophy. The first dissertation on Brockes was Otto Janssen's Naturempfindung und Naturgefühl bei Barthold Hinrich Brockes, Bonn 1907. Janssen concludes that Brockes' feeling for nature is restricted to a definite purpose. Nature is not appreciated for its own sake but serves to lead man's mind and soul to God.

The first examination of Brockes' philosophy was Fritz von Manikowsky's Die Welt und Lebensanschauungen in dem Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott von Barthold Heinrich Brockes, Diss. Greifswald 1914. Manikowsky finds Brockes' philosophical heritage in Leibniz and Shaftesbury but allows that on some points Brockes develops his own philosophy.[31]

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Two dissertations with similar aims are: first, F. Löffelholz's, "Wirklichkeitserlebnis und Gottesvorstellung in Barthold Hinrich Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott," Frankfurt/Main 1955; second, Walter deVolld's, "The Spirit of the Enlightenment in Barthold Hinrich Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott," Western Reserve 1958. Löffelholz is interested in the realistic descriptions of nature as they relate to God's existence in nature. He particularly looks for Sun-God analogies, but cannot prove that Brockes ever says: the sun is God. The study by deVolld sees Brockes as a typical representative of the enlightenment; however, the author concludes that there is one point of disagreement with Leibniz: that is, Brockes does not seem to believe in the parallelism of body and soul, since he never mentions it.[32]

Several studies on the early eighteenth century include chapters on Brockes such as the study by Arnold Weinkauf, "The Literary Life in Hamburg during the Transition from the Baroque to the Enlightenment," Diss. Northwestern 1951. In regard to Brockes, Weinkauf points out the close relationship of poets and musicians.

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Scientific imagery is emphasized in the study by Walter Schatzberg "Scientific Themes in the Popular Literature and the Poetry of the German Enlightenment 1721-1760," Diss. Johns Hopkins 1966.

Of interest is also a chapter entitled "Brockes' astetisch-religöses Bildungsideal" in the book by Hans M. Wolff Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung (München, 1949). Wolff sees the importence of Brockes' poetry in its effects on the strict moral and intellectual teachings of Christian Wolf (1679-1754). The narrow intellectualism advocated by Wolf is expanded in Brockes' lyric poetry toward a gentler and more tolerant point of view.

The only stylistic study of the Irdisches Vergnügen was published by Harry W. Pfund. It is entitled Studien zu Wort und Stil bei Barthold Hinrich Brockes (New York, 1935). Pfund's concern is not with the development of the poetic imagery, but with the remnants of baroque metaphors. He interprets the decline of baroque similes as a decline in the poet's creative power. He maintains that Brockes' poetic impulse becomes weaker with age:

> ...der dichterische Wille wird mit den Jahren immer matter. So werden die Vergleiche spärlicher und die Art des Ausdrucks sachlicher.

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Pfund goes on to mention that Breitinger only quoted from the first volume of Brockes' poetry in his discussion of the Hamburg poet. This first volume, Pfund contends, is in content and style superior to the others. His conclusion is to be expected: "so sind die späteren Bände oft nur ein schwacher Abklatsch des bereits Gesagten, ohne dessen reicheres Bildwerk".[33]

Thus, even a study undertaken in 1935 still labors under the prejudices of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. It did not occur to Harry Pfund that Breitinger may have quoted from Volume One of the Irdisches Vergnügen because he did not have the other volumes available. For those who are looking for remnants of baroque style in eighteenth century poetry Harry Pfund's work is a valuable book. In his judgment of Brockes, however, Pfund only reiterates the conclusions of previous critiques.

Disappointing is the article on Brockes in the well-known history of German lyric poetry by Johannes Klein. His Geschichte der Deutschen Lyrik was first published in 1957 and is now in its second edition. Klein discusses Brockes'"enlightened stanzas" with their involuntarily humorous aspects and his nature poetry, which, according to Klein

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does not go beyond mere description. Finally he compares a stanza from Brockes' poem "Die Sonne" to a stanza from Goethe's poem "Auf dem See". Klein delights in praising Goethe, but in conclusion raises the question: "Gerechter Weise aber wird man fragen, ob es sprachlich möglich gewesen wäre, wenn die bescheidene Leistung eines Brockes nicht voraufgegangen wäre?" (p.215).

One may justly question: why did Johannes Klein not present some other verses from the later volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen, lines which could stand comparison with Goethe or any other poet? The answer is that Klein worked with very limited sources. His criticism of Brockes is based on several very small selections from the Irdisches Vergnügen published by R. Delius in 1917 and 1920 and the previously discussed selection by Ludwig Fulda (see pages 20 to 22).[34]

In summary it can be said that the studies of Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen have concentrated on the poet's attitude toward and feeling for nature as well as his philosophical concerns. Reluctant value judgments tended to repeat previous statements or were based on limited knowledge of the poet's work. Free from past prejudice,

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Curt von Faber du Faur in his German Baroque Literature (New Haven, 1958), praises Brockes unequivocally and says: "he is the most impressive as well as the most expressive impressionist ever produced in Germany." (p.348).

In recent years other American scholars have shed considerable light on the achievements of early eighteenth century German poets and critics such as Friedrich von Hagedorn, Barthold Feind and Johann Christoph Gottsched. Harold Jantz calls attention to Friedrich von Hagedorn's advanced theories on poetic creativity published in the Versuch einiger Gedichte (1729).[35] In her excellent study "In Defense of Opera: A Survey of German Critical Writings on Opera from 1678 to 1770", Gloria M. Flaherty points out that many ideas on drama, hitherto attributed to Lessing, can already be found in the early criticism of opera.[36]

In the field of comparative literature Garold N. Davis recently published a study of German-English cultural relations which brings to light some pertinent facts.[37] Of particular interest is his discussion of the relations between Hamburg and London. Garold Davis is correcting once and for all an inaccuracy that has been accepted

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as truth for a long time. It has generally been assumed that the Irdisches Vergnügen was influenced by or imitated from James Thomson's The Seasons (1726-1730), a work translated by Brockes and published in 1745. And we read in a widely distributed text such as Frenzel's Daten deutscher Dichtung that the Irdisches Vergnügen was "unter dem Einfluß von James Thomson, dessen Jahreszeiten Brockes übersetzte" (third edition, 1962, p. 108). Already in 1936, however, Karl Vietor points out that Brockes was by no means influenced by Thomson.[38] In 1962 Harold Jantz asks: "Just how a work published in 1721 can be influenced by work published in 1726, critics and historians do not tell us."[39] Finally Elschenbroisch acknowledges in 1963 that Brockes' nature poetry does not appear as imitation of English poetry "sondern daß Brockes mit Fug und Recht ihr Begründer genannt werden darf."[40]

Now we also have conclusive documentation by Garold Davis who explains exactly when each volume of the Irdisches Vergnügen appeared in relation to the publication of the Seasons. By 1726, the publication year of Thomson's Winter, Volume One of the Irdisches Vergnügen was in its third edition. By 1730 Brockes had published four

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editions of his first volume and two editions of Volumes Two (1727) and Three (1728). Davis is not concerned with influence but rather the remarkable parallel development of English and German literature in the early eighteenth century, which is explained by a common philosophical heritage, rationalism and empiricism. Davis points out that Thomson and Brockes are both "in harmony with the rationalistic oriented philosophy...but, paradoxically, there is at least in Brockes' poetry an underlying strain of mysticism and the influence of Johann Arndts Vom wahren Christentum is unmistakable."[41]

Garold Davis explains in detail just how the anachronism entered into the literary histories. In the future such statements as can be found in René Wellek's A History of Modern Criticism, "the enormous success of Thomson's Seasons in Germany with such imitators as Brockes, Haller and Ewald von Kleist," should be avoided.[42]

Despite Harold Jantz's conclusive proof that good poetry can be found in the later volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen, the old myth was recently

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compounded by Ida M. Kimber in a dissertation on Brockes, written under the auspices of the University of Edinburgh and soon to be published. In an article based on her work, the author proclaims, "that there is no case for either decline or evolution in Brockes' work."[43] I am delighted to see that Kimber does not believe in the decline in Brockes' poetic talent; but why is there no case for evolution?

The author considers Brockes a very mediocre poet and she believes that any good poems in his collection are copies from other poets or merely unacknowledged translations. She arrives at this conclusion because she found that one of Brockes' more highly acclaimed poems was not an original but a poetic paraphrase from Shaftesbury. Her discovery is indeed a fine contribution to Brockes scholarship but her sweeping conclusion from a small fact is hardly tenable: she simply denies that Brockes could be the author of anything good in his collection.

My purpose in this dissertation is to establish the fact, that there is indeed evolution in Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott. I studied all nine volumes of the collection and made a

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catalogue of many recurring images and themes. Finally I selected several of the most representative images and themes and analyzed their chronological development.

The major problem I had to overcome in this project was the number of poems and their length. From the approximately thirteen hundred poems in the four thousand four hundred pages of the collection I selected a group of poems and passages for detailed analysis. Of these passages I quote only the most important lines. The selection was not always easy to make for there are other poems which also could substantiate my points. I selected poems from all the volumes except Volume Nine. Although there are some fine poems in that volume, they either did not fit into the general pattern I had developed or they were too long to be quoted in their entirety.

The dissertation is divided in two parts. The first part is concerned with nature imagery. The second part presents conceptual images. For these latter images, presenting as they do, the philosophical point of view of Brockes' era, the discussion is limited strictly to the establishment of a developmental pattern in the Irdisches Vergnügen.

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Since my approach in the second part amounts to an iconographical interpretation of Brockes the poet-painter, it was necessary to establish the philosophical background of the images in order to clarify their interpretation.

In the first part each chapter is divided chronologically. The better known volumes, Volumes One, Two, Three, Four and Five (1721 to 1736) are compared to the lesser known volumes, Volumes Six, Seven and Eight of the late period (1739 to 1746).

In the second part a thematic approach is used. The image of the 'circle in the dot' is discussed in relation to its various connotations such as 'man in the center of the circle' and 'the large in the small'. However, the difference between the early and late poetry is also established. Similarly, the image of the 'chain of being' is presented in its chronological development in the Irdisches Vergnügen.

The results of this study will show that Brockes progressively developed a keener sensitivity to his surrounding, greater verbal facility to express his observations and deeper philosophical insight in the life of man.

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NOTES

1. Among Brockes' imitators worthy of notice are Daniel Wilhelm Triller (1695-1782) and Carl Friedrich Drollinger (1688-1742). Triller's Poetische Betrachtungen (Hamburg, 1725) are dedicated to Brockes. Drollinger's Gedichte (Frankfurt am Mayn, 1745) contains a memorial poem by Brockes.

   Of periodicals available to me were:
   1) Die Matrone , ed. Johann Georg Hamann (1697-1733). Hamann frequently quotes from Brockes and in one volume gives instructions on how to use the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott for the most edification. (I, 1728, p.140).

   2) Der fromme Naturkundige, ed. Christian Sendel, published in Danzig, 1740. Sendel quotes Triller, and Drollinger as well as Brockes.

2. Derham and the Fabricius translations are discussed by Walter Schatzberg in "Scientific Themes in the Popular Literature and the Poetry of the German Enlightenment 1720-1760," Diss. Johns Hopkins 1966, pp. 28-30.

3. Much of the imagery in Arndt reflects the influence of Paracelsus. Arndt is one of the transmitters of medieval and Renaissance imagery into the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

4. Garold N. Davis, German Thought and Culture in England 1700-1770 (Chapel Hill, 1969), p.82.

5. Johann Rist, Das Aller-Edelste Leben der gantzen Welt,...Eine Hornungs-Unterredung.. (Hamburg, 1663).

6. Alois Brandl, Barthold Heinrich Brockes (Innsbruck, 1878), p.41. According to Brandl the book by Christian Scriver (1629-1693) was one of Brockes' favorites. By 1724 it had appeared in nineteen editions.

7. Curt von Faber du Faur, German Baroque Literature (New Haven, 1958), p. XXV.

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8. Helmut deBoor and Richard Newald, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur V. Band, 5th ed. (München, 1965), p.460.

9. Harold Jantz, "Brockes' Poetic Apprenticeship," MLN, 57 (1962), 441.

10. Jantz points this out in the above mentioned article p. 439. See also Gloria M. Flaherty, "The Defenders of Baroque Opera - Harbingers of Modern Criticism," MLN,83 (1968), 694-709.

11. Manfred Windfuhr, Die barocke Bildlichkeit und ihre Kritiker (Stuttgart, 1966), pp. 381, 384, 390-391.

12. These early poems were discovered by Harold Jantz and introduced in the article mentioned above in note 9.

13. Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, (New York, 1959), article on "Oratorio" vol. VI, p. 252.

14. Editions of the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott are:
Volume One: 1721, 1724, 1726, 1727, 1732, 1737 and 1744.
Volume Two: 1727, 1730, 1734, 1739.
Volume Three: 1728, 1730, 1736, 1747.
Volume Four: 1732, 1735, 1745.
Volume Five: 1736, 1740.
Volume Six: 1739, 1740.
Volume Seven: 1743, 1746, 1748.
Volume Eight: 1746.
Volume Nine: 1748.

Special editions are the Tübinger Ausgabe of the first six volumes (1739) and a reprint of that edition which includes Volumes Seven, Eight and Nine (1753).

15. Thomas R. Hinton, Poetry and Song in the German Baroque (Oxford, 1963), p. 90 ff.

16. Herrn B. H. Brockes L. Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott nebst musicalischen Compositionen, (Zürich, 1740).

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17. Salomon Gessner appreciated Brockes' nature scenes and he urged young painters to study them in his "Brief über die Landschaftsmahlerey an Herrn Fuesslin" (Henry Fuseli) "seine Gedichte sind doch ein Magazin von Gemählden und Bildern, die gerade aus der Natur genommen sind." Salomon Gessners Schriften (Zürich, 1772) V, p. 263.

18. Alois Brandl, Barthold Heinrich Brockes (Innsbruck, 1878), pp. 54 and 56.

19. Brandl, p. 84.

20. Brandl, p. 77. These parodies on Brockes are published in the Eschenburg edition of Hagedorn's complete works. (1800).

21. Auszug der vornehmsten Gedichte aus dem von Herrn Barthold Heinrich Brockes in fünf Theilen herausgegebenen Irdischen Vergnügen in Gott, ed. Hagedorn (Hamburg, 1738).

    This selection actually heavily favors poetry from the first volume. Half of the poems are from Volume One with representation from the rest of the volumes fairly equally divided. It was reproduced in a facsimile print by the Metzler Verlag and issued as part of their series Deutsche Neudrucke/Reihe: 18. Jahrhundert (Stuttgart, 1965).

22. Johann Jacob Breitinger, Critische Abhandlung von der Natur den Absichten und dem Gebrauche der Gleichnisse (Zürich, 1740), p. 56 ff.

23. Johann Christoph Gottsched, Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst, 4th ed. (Leipzig, 1751), p. 695.

24. Johann Gottfried Herder, "Briefe zur Förderung der Humanität" Brief 102, Gesammelte Werke, Suphan Edition (Berlin, 1881), XVIII, p. 116.

25. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Dichtung und Wahrheit, II, Buch 10, Goethes Werke (Weimar, 1887), p. 296.

26. Herder, op. cit. Brief 105, p. 128.

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27. Hermann J. Th. Hettner, Literaturgeschichte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts, 5th ed. (Braunschweig, 1909) III, pp. 306-312. (First edition 1856-70).

28. Georg G. Gervinus, Geschichte der poetischen National-Literatur (Leipzig, 1842), p. 552.

29. Heinrich Kurz, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, 8th ed. (Leipzig, 1888), II, p. 327 (First edition 1851-59).

30. see note 18.

31. According to Manikowsky Brockes believes to a certain degree in the freedom of the will in contrast to Leibniz and Shaftesbury, who are determinists. p. 89.

32. Brockes believes that body and soul are inseparably fused and can only function together. Manikowsky discusses this fact (p. 85) but fails to point out the difference between Leibniz and Brockes. My own study will confirm deVolld's opinion.

Two unpublished dissertations were not available they are:
Imogen Kupffer, "Das Irdische Vergnügen in Gott." Eine Untersuchung zu Wesen und Entwicklung der Naturlyrik," Göttingen 1956.

Eva E. Riedl, "Die Theodizee in der Popularphilosophie der Aufklärungszeit exemplifiziert an B. H. Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott," Wien 1960.

33. Harry Pfund, Studien zu Wort und Stil bei Barthold Hinrich Brockes (New York, 1935), p.33.

34. Klein mentions as references on Brockes the selections by R. Delius, Der Schöpfungsgarten (1917) and Der Ring des Jahres (1920) and Ludwig Fulda, ed. Gedichte, Kürschner 39.

35. "German Baroque Literature," MLN, 57 (1962), 337-367.

36. Diss. Johns Hopkins 1965.

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37. Garold N. Davis, German Thought and Culture in England 1700-1770 (Chapel Hill, 1969). See also note 4.

38. Karl Vietor, Deutsches Dichten und Denken von der Aufklärung bis zum Realismus, 3rd. ed. (Berlin, 1958), Sammlung Göschen 1046, p. 15.

39. MLN, 57, p.441.

40. Adalbert Elschenbroisch, "Nachwort" in: Barthold Hinrich Brockes Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott, Auswahl (Stuttgart, 1963), Reclam 2015, p. 88.

41. Davis, op.cit. p. 86.

42. (New Haven, 1955) I, p. 161. As quoted by Davis, p. 85.

43. Ida M. Kimber, "Barthold Heinrich Brockes: Two unacknowledged Borrowings," Modern Language Review, 64 (1969), p. 808.

Her dissertation entitled "Barthold Heinrich Brockes, a Transmitter of Germinal Ideas in his Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott," Edinburgh 1969, was not available to me, however I did have the article based on her work.

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PART I: NATURE IMAGERY: TRADITION AND INNOVATION.

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Chapter I: The Colors of Autumn.

Throughout his poetic career Brockes never tires of describing the seasonal changes in nature and poems on the seasons can be found in all the volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen . These poems are arranged according to their general topics. A longer poem describing the season with a title such as "Frühlingsgedancken", "Sommer-betrachtung", "Der Herbst" or "Wintergedancken" precedes a variety of impressions of each season. Among poems on spring are the following: "Dreyerlei Violen" (I: 16), "Mondschein in der Frühlingsnacht" (I: 42), "Die Schnee und Crocus-Bluhme" (II: 19). Summer impressions are: "Fruchtbare Hügel" (I: 160), "Das Getreide" (II:179), "Anmuth in Betrachtung der Creaturen"(IV:138). Poems on fall have titles such as : "Die schnelle Veränderung" (II:440), "Abschied vom Garten" (V:207), "Gedancken beim Fall der Blätter im Herbst"(VIII:230), and winter poems are the following: "Der Schnee im Mondschein" (IV: 425), "Das Dauerhafte Grün" (VI: 190) and "Wie es sanft schneiet" (VI:198).

Brockes'observations on spring by far outnumber his poems on the other seasons.[1] However, his

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enthusiasm for spring gets carried to the point of mere repetition and such repetition justifiably provoked some of the criticism voiced against him. In his autumn poetry, however, Brockes' true talent unfolds and the study of these poems reveals his poetic power. There are thirty three autumn poems with such titles as "Herbstgedancken" or "Fröhliche Herbstbetrachtung". They are found in all volumes except Volume Three, the Genest translation. The poems are found as follows: Volume One: one; Volume Two: one; Volume Four: five; Volume Five: five; Volume Six: four; Volume Seven: eight; Volume Eight: seven; Volume Nine: two.

Brockes' first autumn poem in Volume One (1721) is a cantata. In this poem he touches most of the topics of autumn: the harvest of wheat, the gathering of fruit, the hunting of game and birds. He follows the harvest of the grapes and the wine making up to its dionysic conclusions. The autumn scenery is also described and combined with the symbolism of fading life and ultimate death. The basic topics such as the harvest and the hunt reappear in the later volumes frequently. But Brockes also records isolated observations. Once

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he notices a particularly colorful bush, another time he is fascinated by a leafless tree.

There are, however, two recurring themes that are fully developed and carried through from Volume One to Volume Eight: "the colors of autumn" and "the symbolism of the falling leaves". Brockes never tires of describing various details of the autumn landscape in its glorious shades of red, yellow, brown, and many other colors. The symbolism of the falling leaves haunts him into ever renewed discussion and interpretation of the cycle of life.

This chapter is concerned with the autumn colors and presents Brockes, the poet-painter, as he progressively shows a keener sense of color and larger perspective. As Brockes describes the autumn palette in the later volumes his aesthetic sense becomes more refined. Brockes succeeds best of all when his own mood reflects the mood of nature making it possible for the reader to sense an identification with nature instead of distant observation.

The material is divided in two time periods, the first comprising the better known Volumes One to Five, the second containing the lesser known Volumes Six to Eight.

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The Colors of Autumn, Volume One to Five, 1721-1736.

In the first autumn poem the colors are described in familiar similes characteristic of the Baroque, for example, the leaves of the forest are yellow like gold and red as rubies. Trees and bushes are colorful and some leaves are called "rich with color".

In the following introductory lines of the first autumn poem, Brockes begins with the general observation of the cool air, the changing fields, the pale tips of the grass. Then he continues:

> Der auch bereits an Laub und Schatten
> dünne Wald
> Färbt seiner Blätter Rest: was vor
> Smaragd geschienen/
> Ward itzt theils gelb/wie Gold/theils
> röthlich/wie Rubinen.
> Die bunten Büsch' und Bäume wollen
> Ihr von der Erd' empfang'nes Laub
> Derselben dankbar wieder zollen;
> Den dunkel=braunen feuchten Staub/
> ...
> Bebrämet gleichsam und bekränzt
> Manch Farben=reiches Blatt
> ...
> Durch welche hier und dort/ wo es nicht
> ganz bedeckt/
> Das Gras sein küles Grün mit starren
> Spitzen streckt. (I, 1721:148)

The colors are simply noted and isolated by themselves. The only interesting contrast to the colors of the leaves is the dark-brown dust which is enhanced by the colorful leaves. Also important

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to note is the connection of the idea of coolness with the color "green". The idea of the "cool green" is conventionally associated with the hot summer atmosphere i.e., the cool green gives a welcome relief from the heat of the day. Brockes associates the idea of the "cool green" with the cool autumn day. In later poems the poet identifies the colors "yellow" or "gold" with warmth also on a cool autumn day. (V:211; VI:148). Instead of following conventional thought, Brockes gives a new interpretation to the association of colors with temperature.

In Volume Two, 1727, Brockes discovers the interplay of colors. The colors have a value of their own in relation to one another and the viewer sees the overall effect in pleasant harmony. Brockes dismisses the simile "gelb wie Gold". Yellow is seen enhanced by green shades, hues of red are mixed here and there, sometimes dark, sometimes light.

> Durchs grüne wird dort gelb da grün durch
> gelb erhöhet
> Und hier und dort mischt sich ein rother
> Schein,
> Der dunckel bald, bald hell oft zwischen
> beyden ein,
> ...
> Wie bunt sie nun gefärbt; jedennoch stehen
> sie,
> Wenn man ihr Gantzes sieht, in sanfter Harmonie.
> (II:447)

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Once Brockes discovers the detail as well as the overall effect of color he rarely fails to make note of it in future poems.

In Volume Five, 1736, Brockes notices another aspect of autumn. He describes a dreary day as the autumn colors are toned down by shadows. Yet he says that the trees look sun-drenched even in the dark weather, and although shadows are hovering everywhere, the sun has left its warmth in the color of the leaves, which have covered the fields. Despite the gloomy weather the poet sees sunshine everywhere:

> Jetzt scheinen die gefärbten Blätter
> Und ihrer Wipfel röthlich Grün,
> Als wenn die Sonne sie beschien,
> Auch selbst bey einem duncklen Wetter.
> Wenn auch die Schatten alles drücken
> Und überziehen; sieht man sie,
> Doch mit gedämpfter Harmonie,
> Mit bunter Glut die Felder schmücken.
>
> Hierdurch scheint überall im Dunckeln,
> Im Wald' und Feld', an manchem Ort,
> Auf manchem Baum, bald hier, bald dort,
> Ein bunter Sonnen=Strahl zu funckeln.
> (V:211 f.)

Comparing these passages from 1721, 1727 and 1736, one notices in the earliest fall poem at first the routine baroque similes "gelb wie Gold" and "röthlich wie Rubinen". But Brockes goes further than that in his description. "Bunt" and "farbenreich" are the leaves that cover the dark

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ground and enhance it with their presence. The cool green grass seems like a resting place for the eye.

In the second example the emphasis is on the details of the coloring. Brockes does not merely dismiss the scene with the word "colorful". He shows the reader the various shades of yellow, green and red as they intermingle and form a beautiful harmonious aspect.

In the third example, as the contrasts of dark and light shades of green, yellow and red are toned down, the fall colors are seen as occasional rays of sunlight in dark weather. The tips of the leaves are "reddish green", an illusion created by the proximity of the red to the green leaves. There are blotches of bright color everywhere symbolizing sunshine.

From these observations it becomes apparent that the poet builds on his experience as an observer of nature. His eye becomes increasingly sensitive to details and variations. He adds new dimensions and is approaching his object with a more philosophical attitude.

His attention to detail enriches the total aspect. The earliest passage is superficial and

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gay. The later passages draw the reader to closer attention as he senses the poet's own involvement and begins to see with his eyes.

The Colors of Autumn, Volume Six to Eight, 1739 to 1746.

As Brockes is approaching his later years, his poems become more contemplative. His observation is even richer in detail yet he is also more sensitive to the total effect.

In the poem "Herbstbetrachtung" Brockes conveys the melancholy mood of the season. First he describes the colors. They are in many shades of red and green and blend softly in a pleasant mixture. Then he sees the beauty of the trees heightened by the interplay of shadow and light:

> Jetzt lassen die veränderten Gebüsche,
> Im Schmuck, der minder nicht, als wie im
> Sommer, schön,
> Ein angenehm und liebliches Gemische,
> Von sanft gebrochnen Farben sehn.
> Gelb röthlich, dunkelrot, hellgrün und
> dunkelgrün.....
>
> Die mehrentheils im Herbst bedeckte Luft
> Erfüllet, wenn es still, ein falber Duft,
> Und eben dieser dient der Bäume bunten Pracht,
> Durch klare Dunkelheit, zu einem schönen Grunde,
> Der durch den Gegensatz sie dennoch mehr erhöht,
> Und durch die Schwärze, schöner macht,
> Wodurch, so wie wenn Licht und Schatten,
> In manchen Mischungen, sich gatten,
> Der Landschaft schönster Schmuck entsteht.
> (VI:148 f.)

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In the next strophe the poet moves on to the total view of the fall landscape. Darkness enhances the bright colors, the air is misty, a soft light dominates. There are no clearly defined shadows, everything is hazy. This grayish green landscape conveys a melancholic mood and depresses the observer, but Brockes directs his thoughts toward the eternal cycle of life and the inevitable coming of spring and thus overcomes his melancholy.

So wohl dem Aug, als dem Gefühl,
Scheint jeder Vorwurf jetzo kühl,
Doch machet auch hingegen manche Stelle
Die gelben Bäume nicht nur helle,
Es scheint, durch ihren hell= und gelblich rothen Schein,
Die kühle Landschaft warm zu seyn.

Ein durch die trübe Luft gebrochnes sanftes Licht
Regieret überall. Zwar Schatten sieht man nicht,
Doch scheint ihr schwarzes Heer, in dem geschwächten Schein,
Der nunmehr allgemein,
Zugleich mit eingemischt zu seyn.
Man sieht, so weit man sieht, ein trübes Ganz,
In einem bunten zwar, doch sehr gedämpften Glanz.
Es kam mir vor, als ob dieß grünlich klare Grau,
So ich nunmehr an allen Orten schau,
Auf meinen Geist, auch einen Eindruck machte,
Und ihn zu einer still= und süssen Schwermuth brachte.

The image of the leaves symbolizing sunshine as it appeared in Volume V:211 (see page 44) is

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here carried further: the bright glow of the leaves gives the illusion of warmth on a cool day.

The melancholic mood expressed in the last stanza is created through various means. The adjectives describing the light "trübe", "gebrochen", "sanft" already indicate a moody atmosphere. The shadows mixed "in dem geschwächten Schein" add a feeling of foreboding. Finally the observation of the "trübes Ganz in einem gedämpften Glanz" emphasizes the melancholic impression through the vowel sounds "ü", "ä", "a". Then the poet divorces himself from the scene with a change of tense: "Es kam mir vor" as if he did not want to see it. He is observing the landscape and reluctantly admitting his own melancholy. Here also he mentions the only color next to "schwarz" in this stanza: "dieß grünlich klare Grau" a color in perfect harmony with the total impression.

The abrupt change of the tense from the present to the past creates a certain tension which allows the poet to remove himself from the scene at will. He observes the scene in the present tense giving an illusion of reality. Then the poet hesitates, he contemplates what he sees and

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seems to be questioning his own vision as if to suggest that the gloomy landscape is the product of his mood.

In Volume Seven, 1743, the poet again notices the relationship of colors to one another. He shows how yellow seeks to tone down a bright green, and how red in turn effects the brightness of yellow. The shades of various degrees between these colors are too numerous to mention but they all harmonize.

> ... und ihr gebrochenes Gemische
> Ziert in gedämpfter Harmonie, itzt überall
> so Bäum als Büsche
> (VII:419)

Then Brockes describes a shadowless landscape. The shadows fell down with the wilted leaves and an even light allows the observer to see a soft mixture of colors:

> Die mit den welken Blättern gleichsam mit=
> abgefallne Schatten sind
> Fast itzo nirgend mehr zu finden, im gantzen
> Walde sehr verdünnt,
> Wodurch das zwar gemilderte, doch itzt fast
> allgemeine Licht
> Ein sanft Gemisch von Farben zeigt.

While in the previous poem in Volume VI the shadows are a part of the "trübes Ganz" here only light permeates the landscape. The idea of a leafless thus shadowless forest gives a mystical almost surrealistic quality to the scene.

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In Volume Eight, 1746, the poet praises the colors of autumn as so artistic that no painter can reproduce them:

> Wie viele Kunst, wie viele Müh
> In solcher Farben Harmonie
> In der erhabnen Malerei
> Erfordert wird; ist denen nur bekannt,
> Die Mühe, Fleiß, Verstand
> Auf diese edle Kunst verwandt:
> Hier aber sieht man jetzt, zumal im Wald und Büschen
> Die Farben sich von selbst so künst= und lieblich mischen,
> So angenehm, so sanft sich brechen,
> Daß es nicht glaublich auszusprechen.
> Ein sanftes dunkel=Gelb, ein sanftes dunkel=Braun
> Ein sanftes dunkel=Roth, ein sanftes dunkel=Grün
> Sieht man mit licht=gelb, licht=braun,
> licht=roth licht=grüne Stellen,
> Wohin man sieht, erheben und erhellen.
> (VIII:234)

In the forest and the bushes the colors mix themselves through the proximity of their various shades. Brockes describes how the various dark and light shades intermingle in nature and through the repetition of the sounds he creates the effect of the moving leaves. One can imagine a dazzling bright landscape in a breeze, leaves sparkling in sun light all around, everything is immersed in color. The allusion to the art of painting in the beginning of the poem is possibly an urgent reminder to the painters of his time to go out and learn from nature, a suggestion that was only

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rarely heeded before the nineteenth century.

In these passages from 1739, 1743 and 1746 the poet demonstrates his increased versatility in descerning various shades of color. He sees the detail as an important part of the total picture. In Volume Six he notices the misty gloom in a forest where everything blends in an indefinable grayish green. The absence of definite shadows and bright lights leaves the landscape in suspension, in a seemingly weightless state. Here Brockes succeeds in creating with words a picture that painters of his own time were not able to put on canvas. Especially effective are the lines:

> Ein durch die trübe Luft gebrochnes
> sanftes Licht
> Regieret überall. ...
> Man sieht soweit man sieht, ein trübes
> Ganz,
> In einem bunten zwar, doch sehr gedämpften
> Glanz.

Not until the nineteenth century did painters find the technique to create such impressions on canvas.

In Volume Seven the colors are again shown in their contrast to one another as yellow softens green, and red softens the yellow. The absence of shadows here creates a mystical effect.

In Volume Eight the interplay of light and dark shades is expressed in the sound and rhythm

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of the language creating another display of colors anticipating the impressionists.

It can be said that through the years from Volume One to Volume Eight Brockes' talent becomes more refined and his purpose in writing becomes the personal urge to convey exactly what he sees as only he can see it. Passages like the moody gloom from Volume Six and the gay impression in Volume Eight are proof of Brockes' lasting talent.

There is a pronounced difference between the first attempt in 1721 when the trees and leaves are merely "farbenreich" and the total view of the landscape in Volume Six, 1739. His visual acuteness is apparent in the beginning when he mentions the difference between the dark-brown earth and the colorful leaves. In Volume Two, 1727, he already sees the rich interplay of colors and their harmonious effect. Once he has made this observation he never loses sight of it again. He varies and enriches the experience as he describes autumn in its glory time and time again.

Later, in Volume Six, Brockes succeeds in conveying the moody atmosphere of autumn. He also gives attention to detail as well as to the complete

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picture. In Volume Eight, Brockes' delightful and joyous admiration of nature's colors sound as if he had never written about the colors of autumn before. With age Brockes does not become bored with his subject. His views of nature are not repetitious but ever new and unique. Whenever he goes out to study and record nature's wonders, his appreciation of its beauty is as fresh and unspoiled as on the first day.

It is found that, in contrast to the opinion of critics, Brockes not only sustains his excellence, he actually improves his artistry. The finest examples of his autumn descriptions appear in the later volumes, Volume Six, Seven and Eight.

1. Note to page 39.

There are sixty four poems with such titles as "Frühlingslust" or "Frühlingsgedancken". The other seasons are mentioned in titles as follows: summer: eleven titles; autumn: thirty three titles; winter: thirty one titles.

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Chapter II: The Symbolism of the Falling Leaves.

In the minds of men the seasons of the year have long been equated with the stages of man's life. Spring and summer are the symbol of youth and the fruitful periods of life while autumn and winter symbolize old age and death.[1]

In the Middle Ages death was often represented with a scythe, a tradition which lasted into the seventeenth century. A well known hymn of the Baroque period begins with the line:

Es ist ein Schnitter, heißt der Tod.

Numerous examples of the death symbolism of autumn can be found in poems of this period as for instance the following strophe by the poet Heinrich Albert (1604-1651) from the poem "Ein Kürbis spricht":

> Dem Herbst verlangt nach mir,
> Mich zu verderben;
> Dem Tod, o Mensch, nach dir,
> Auch du mußt sterben!

But not only nature's seasonal changes reminded man of death; everything was considered doomed: "Es ist alles eitel!" This pessimistic attitude of the Baroque period gave way to the optimistic point of view of the eighteenth century when man strove to face life and death with equanimity. Brockes him-

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self wrote a poem with the title Schwanengesang in einer Anleitung zum vergnügten und gelassenen Sterben. (1747)

In his autumn poems Brockes very often associates the season with death and the cycle of life. He describes the autumn landscape and then contemplates its meaning in relation to man. Like the pumpkin in the poem by Albert, the leaves speak to man and advise him to follow their example.

In the following survey through the volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen Brockes finds a variety of expressions for the idea of autumn as a symbol of man's old age or death and the continuity of life. A difference will be found between the expressions and ideas of the early and later volumes as Brockes' thoughts mature and are presented in more refined terms.

The Symbolism of the Falling Leaves, Volume One to Volume Five, 1721-1736.

In Volume One, in the cantata on autumn, Brockes compares the autumn leaves to old age. Their whispering is like a death song to him, but their beauty before death makes him wish that he also could die in such beauty. Nature provides

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man with the example for his own death:

> Bleiche Blätter bunte Büsche
> Gelbe Stauden/ röhtlichs Rohr/
> Euer flüsterndes Gezische
> Kommt mir/ wie ein Sterb=Lied/ vor.
> ...
> Durch so holden Schmuck gerühret/
> Wünscht mein Herz nicht minder schön/
> Zu des Allerhöchsten Preise/
> Wann ich sterbe/ zu vergehn.
> (I:152)

The same idea is expressed in Volume Two as the poet sees the autumn of the year as a symbol of a ripe and fruitful old age:

> Es scheint, als wär im Herbst das Jahr
> nunmehr
> In einer sanften Zier, von Früchten schwer,
> Zu seinem reifen Alter kommen.
> (II:449)

Brockes ends the poem with the hope that he himself may be an example for a useful and productive old age.

In Volume Four, 1732, the topic of autumn and the inevitable death occurs fairly often. Here nature again advises man to heed its lesson. In the poem "Herbstgedancken" (p. 319) the leaves are telling the sad wanderer that he should not feel sad at their falling for they are making room for new leaves:

> Ach nein, wir machen frisch= und schönern
> Blättern Raum.

In another poem (IV:361) the tree mourns the loss of its leaves and some who are still resisting

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the wind tell it that they will not leave it. But they are torn loose by the next gust. Again this serves as a lesson, namely that old people even though they may be he healthy should remember that they can fall into the grave at any time:

> Ein Augenblick stürtzt sie herab:
> Ein Augenblick stürtzt euch ins Grab.

A very blunt memento mori. No one can escape the inevitable and man should not hold on to life when he must go. In the "Herbst=Cantata" the leaves tell us once more to follow their example:

> Ach! folge dem zwar sanft=doch nie gehemmten
> Fluß
> Der eilenden Natur, die Gottes Wille treibet,
> Die immer wandelbar verbleibet,
> Nach dem unwandelbaren Schluß.
> (IV:322)

These lines represent the poet's synthesis of the idea of following nature's example. From now on Brockes' thoughts are not only directed to equanimity in death but toward the continuity of the cycle of life. In their content and form these lines are most impressive as they appear nearly seventy years prior to Goethe's "Dauer im Wechsel". Brockes has reached a turning point in his ideas as he is beginning to see continuity in change. From now on the poet never fails to see the emergence of the fresh and new as the old fades away.

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In Volume Five, 1736, Brockes expresses the idea of permanence in change as the autumn leaves remind the wanderer that he should look at the new buds for they will show him the form of the new leaves:

> Schau nun die Knospen auf den Zweigen,
> Die werden dir, in neuem Schimmer,
> Uns wiederum in andern zeigen.
> (V:223)

Brockes envisions continuity in most unusual terms in the poem "Herbstgedancken". He imagines the flow of water as it rises into the tree through the stem into the leaves and returns to earth with the leaves. The regeneration of the leaves is due to the circulation of water. This cycle repeats itself eternally. "Sollte man Bäume mit Wasser-Künsten fast vergleichen?" the poet asks and he concludes:

> Ach sähe, zu des Schöpfers Ehren, mit
> froher Seelen, jedermann,
> In ehrerbietigster Verwundrung, doch diesen
> grossen Kreis-Lauf an!
> (V:210)

In the examples from Volume One to Five, Brockes urges man to follow nature's example and to heed its lessons. The falling leaves serve as a symbol for death. They all have to fall, sometimes they fall gently, at other times they are torn off the limbs abruptly and violently. Thus man's

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life may end violently or peacefully and quietly. When death comes upon man he should accept it gracefully. This is the philosophy by which eighteenth-century man attempted to live.

In Volume Four Brockes finds the words to express the idea of continuity and change in the permanence of nature. Two images in Volume Five give an illustration of this idea: first, the envisioning of the new leaves in the bud, second, the simile of the trees as fountains, symbolizing eternal renewal.

The Symbolism of the Falling Leaves, Volume Six to Volume Eight, 1739-1746.

In these later volumes the same philosophy prevails. The falling leaves are a symbol of death and also a reminder of the cycle of life. In Volume Six, leaves returning to earth after storms and draughts, remind man that he also should be willing to relinquish his body after the hard work and vicissitudes of life. As the leaves hurry to earth to find a haven from the cold winds, man also should be willing to return to his origin. (VI:170)

In another poem Brockes becomes melancholic after observing a gloomy autumn landscape. He

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overcomes this depression with these thoughts:

> Genieß der Gegenwart des Guten; laß den
> Lauf
> Der regen Zeiten, ohn Verdriessen,
> Gelassen fliessen.
> (VI:149)

What the poet has been trying to express in his examples of nature finds its synthesis here. The rhythm and easy flow of these lines are in perfect harmony with their content.

In Volume Seven Brockes once more reiterates the idea of permanence in change. This time he praises nature in all her beauty as she replenishes the earth. In hymnlike rhythm Brockes sings:

> Gelobet sey die ew'ge Weisheit, die,durch
> den Wechsel=Lauf der Zeiten,
> Wodurch sich in der gantzen Welt
> Die wirkende Natur erhält,
> Uns auch zugleich so holde Schönheit den
> Augen wolle zubereiten.
> (VII:414)

Because of God's eternal wisdom man enjoys the beauty of creative nature through the changing cycle of the seasons.

In all the autumn poems the philosophical aspects of the season are isolated from the descriptions. In Volume Eight Brockes succeeds in introducing the course of nature as an integral part of the autumn scene. The philosophy of "laß den Lauf gelassen fließen" is inherent in

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the description of the landscape in "Fröhliche Herbstbetrachtung":

> Die Blätter welche gleichsam völlig ihr
> Ziel erreichet, und gereift,
> Die werden heuer nicht, wie sonst, von
> Sturm und Winden abgestreift
> Und weit von ihrem Stamm geführt. Man sieht
> ein lind und sanft Bewegen,
> Bey einer still= und lauen Luft. Es fällt,
> als wie ein bunter Regen,
> Der Blätter Heer, von selbst herab; Nicht
> mehr an ihren Aesten fest,
> Scheint es, als ob der müde Baum sie
> selbst herunterfallen läßt.
> (VIII:221)

The leaves have reached their full maturity and fall by themselves out of inner necessity in a gentle movement. The words "lind und sanft" and "still und lau" emphasize the mild atmosphere. A calm resignation is apparent in the last lines as the tired tree lets go of its leaves. Here is a perfect autumn day as nature follows its course in complete serenity.

Brockes' advice to men to follow nature's guidelines moves from the observation of nature in Volume One and Two to a higher philosophical level in Volume Four. The idea of permanence in change serves as consolation for man. In Volumes Five, Six and Seven Brockes finds poetic illustrations for this concept.

In recapitulation of this study of the

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symbolism of the falling leaves it can be said that Brockes' development follows a similar pattern as before. In the later volumes the poet reaches a higher philosophical and artistic level. The autumn description from Volume Eight in its mood and gentle rhythm is unsurpassed among German autumn poems until Rilke's:

Die Blätter fallen, fallen wie von weit.

Brockes is indeed the first Impressionist.

1. Note to page 54.

Detlev von Liliencron in his Deutsches Leben im Volkslied um 1530, Kürschner 13, p. LVI says:

> Der größere Gegensatz des Werdens und Vergehens, in den das Leben des ganzen Weltalls sich eingeschlossen zeigt, wiederholt sich in engem Kreise von Jahr zu Jahr. Aber auch der Mensch findet sich ja mit seinem eigenen persönlichen Dasein in diesen Kreislauf gebannt: So wird der Wechsel der zwei Jahreszeiten ihm selbst zum Symbol des Lebensganges.

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Chapter III: Sensory Worship of God.

Throughout the Irdisches Vergnügen Brockes emphasizes man's duty to use his senses for the purpose of worshipping God the creator of this beautiful world. Unless man appreciates and venerates nature he does not recognize God's greatness. The title of Brockes' poetry alone reveals his intent. This "sinnlicher Gottesdienst" is considered Brockes' most important contribution to German poetry. In 1842 Gervinus says: "Brockes emancipierte die Sinne: dies ist sein großes Verdienst, ohne das in Deutschland nie eine Poesie werden konnte".[1] This thesis has generally been accepted since then by many well known literary historians such as Franz Josef Schneider, Hermann Schneider and Richard Benz.[2] There is one modern negative critique by Philipp Witkop who sees Brockes strictly as a "Sinnenmensch, dem alles Übersinnliche von Herzen gleichgültig ist."[3]

However, Hans M. Wolff refers to Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen as a program of aesthetic-religious education which provided an antipole for the strict ascetic attitude of early eighteenth-century Protestantism. Wolff is of the opinion

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that "irdisches Vergnügen in Gott" is impossible without aesthetic sensibility and philosophical contemplation. Thus Wolff sees Brockes' contribution to the early German Enlightenment in his religious aestheticism. Wolff limits his study to the interpretation of Brockes' aesthetic and religious intentions and places him in line with the tradition of Francis of Assisi, Luther and Johann Arndt.[4]

This chapter will examine those lines in Brockes' poetry which refer specifically to sensory perception. They are the verses, in which Brockes calls on man to use his senses for his enjoyment and for the glorification of God. The question arises: How does Brockes vary this topic as he iterates and reiterates it with the determination of a missionary over a period of twenty five years?

Brockes believes that the senses alone cannot imprint upon the mind the beauty of this world. Reason and contemplation have to be involved in order to direct the mind toward a meaningful search of God. The proper use of the senses and the mind lift the soul to a higher existence. Brockes' argument at first seems based on the argument of

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the empiricists as found in John Locke's Essay concerning Human Understanding. However, Brockes differs from the Lockian ideas on the following point: John Locke perceives the mind as a tabula rasa until experiences have been recorded on it. Brockes goes back to the Aristotelian image that the soul rather than the mind is the tabula rasa until experience has been imprinted upon it.[5] It is the latter concept which begins to crystallize as the poet argues his case for "sinnlichen Gottes-dienst".

Sensory Worship of God, Volume One to Five, 1721-1736.

In Volume One in the poem "Die Welt" (I:490) Brockes discusses the blindness of men toward the world. Man looks at the world through a telescope turned the wrong way. Everything man sees through this telescope appears small and consequently makes man the observer seem larger. Since the view of the outside world is so reduced in size, man feels more important than he really is. Man can only see from his narrow point of view according to his particular background. The merchant, the conqueror, the hunter and others all have a different notion of their surrounding. Only the pious man looks at the world as it should be contemplated.

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He studies it like a book which contains the secret of God's wisdom. But he does not only look. He reads with all his senses:

> Man kann, o Wunder! hier die Schrifft von Gottes Wesen
> Nicht mit den Augen nur, mit allen Sinnen, lesen.
>
> Durchs Ohr lies't unser Geist die Zieffern Seiner Macht;
> Durchs Auge fühlen wir die Strahlen Seiner Pracht;
> Die Zunge spür't die Kraft der Göttlich-süssen Triebe;
> Man schmecket im Geruch den Balsam Seiner Liebe.
> (I:493)

This combination of the senses, as man reads with his ears, feels with his eyes, senses with his tongue, and tastes with his nose conveys the idea of the interdependence of the senses. It stresses the point that only complete use of all of man's capabilities enables him to understand and enjoy God's world to the fullest extent. The response to the world should not come from a narrow point of view but from an unbiased open attitude.

Brockes continues the poem by describing the "book of nature".[6] He refers to each view as a page, to light and sunbeam as God's pencil. The elements provide the coloring and all creatures in heaven, on earth and in the oceans are the letters and figures. Man stands in this book as a reader and

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as a letter. He prays to God that he may be a spokesman in this book of the earth. He prays that he may sense, taste and see with ever renewed approach and that he may search only for its true content, God:

> Laß mich von dieser Schrift die Züge,
> die so schön,
> Mit immer frischem Blick, empfinden, schmekken, sehn!
> Gib aber, daß ich stets, in diesem grossen
> Buche,
> Mit frohem Fleiß nur Dich, den wahren
> Inhalt, suche.
> (I:494)

Thus Brockes establishes the concept of "sinnlichen Gottesdienst". As he justifies the morality of this use of the senses he maintains that all social ills are derived from non-appreciation of God's creation. Man should always enjoy himself with body and soul and see God in all things:

> Wer also jederzeit mit fröhlichem Gemüht'
> In allen Dingen Gott, als gegenwärtig sieht;
> Wird sich, wann Seel' und Leib sich durch
> die Sinne freuen,
> Dem grossen Geber je zu widerstreben,
> scheuen.
> (I:496)

In another poem in Volume One Brockes mentions a bowl of fruit. As he describes the fruit, he appeals to man's eyesight by mentioning the color, to man's touch by naming form, to man's taste

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through the worlds "Geruch" and "Geschmack", finally to man's intellect by referring to the kind of fruit he sees. All these functions together promote the recognition and appreciation of various fruit:

> Alle Frucht, die Gott geschaffen,
> Ist an Farben und Figur
> Am Geschmack, Geruch, Natur
> Wunderbarlich unterschieden.
> (I:289)

Again Brockes suggests that man's perception is based on the interdependence of his sensory and intellectual faculties. All these functions come into play in the understanding of even a simple thing like a bowl of fruit. Objective thinking brings about the configuration of the object in the mind.

Brockes continues with the idea that man ultimately cannot understand God's creation. He can, however, through his senses perceive Gods presence:

> Begreiffen können wir die Wercke Gottes nicht.
> Der Mensch scheint nicht dazu gemacht zu seyn;
> Wol aber ist er zugericht't
> Mit Seel und Geist durch aller Sinnen Thüren
> Der überall verhüllten Gottheit Schein
> Als gegenwärtig zu verspühren.
> (I:289)

The limitation of man's intellect in the face of God's creation is a concept not uncommon in the eighteenth century. Haller believes that man's reasoning power is limited because he does not

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use his mind correctly.[7] Brockes however is most emphatic in his declaration that man should not even try to understand this universe.

Two ideas stand out in Volume One: First, man's necessary total involvement in the perception of his surrounding; second, man's limited understanding of God.

Six years later in Volume Two (1727) Brockes presents a lengthy scientific discussion of the five senses. In a shorter poem he repeats the topic in essence and concludes that man is completely "körperlich und sinnlich"; everything he consumes serves his senses. Man is dependent on his physical nature for contact with the world. The movement of the heavens, the splendor of the earth would mean nothing to him without his senses. Man would hardly be alive:

> Wir sind bloß durch die Sinne nur
> Verbunden mit der Creatur.
> Wir haften bloß durch sie am schönen
> Welt=Gebäude,
> Und ohne sie empfünde man vom Licht
> Des Himmels selber keine Freude.
> Wir wären und wir wären nicht:
> Der Erde Pracht, des Himmels Lauf,
> Die gantze Creatur, hört, ohne Sinnen, auf
> Für uns zu seyn.
> (II:326)

Basically this is the argument of the empiricists. Without his senses, the world would cease to exist for man. Man would not be aware of its physical

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presence. With this statement Brockes enters into the philosophical argument about the question: Does the crashing sound of a falling tree exist although no one hears it? John Locke says in his discussion of the existence of man's soul during his sleep, that a thing exists, even if man is not aware of it. Therefore he would say that the sound does exist but not for those who cannot hear it.[8]

The idea implied in the line "wir wären und wir wären nicht" is further discussed in Volume Six.

Another poem in Volume Two needs to be discussed in connection with Brockes' translation of Genest's Principes de Philosophie, a primarily Cartesian representation of the world. Brockes was undoubtedly working on the translation of this work published only a year after the publication of Volume Two. Without some basic agreement with Genest's philosophy Brockes would not have translated the work, however there is too much emphasis on reason in the Cartesian philosophy and Brockes gently satirizes Descartes in a poem entitled "Das Menschliche Wissen". In this poem Brockes uses the form of a discussion between two people, A and B. A raises questions and B answers. A questions B about many topics of the day, mostly of scientific nature and B always answers: "Das

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weiß ich nicht". Finally A asks B: "Was weißt du dann?" and B says: "Ich weiß: ich bin. Warum? ich dencke." Then he continues by stating that he knows that God rules the universe, that God gave him life, that he should be thankful to God for the plenitude of His creation. Then he concludes:

> Er will sich hier von uns nicht fassen,
> Und nur allein bewundern lassen.
> Dahin nur gehet unsre Pflicht;
> Und weiter nicht!
> (II:558)

Man's intellect cannot progress beyond acknowledgment and veneration of God's greatness. The Cartesian may try to understand the mechanism of the universe and of God, but when Brockes says cogito ergo sum, he uses his mind for one purpose: that of venerating God not of knowing him.

Actually Brockes' answer to the question, what do you know? could also have been the following: "Ich weiß, ich bin, warum? ich denke, sehe, höre, fühle, rieche, schmecke und bewundre."

In the next two volumes, Volumes Four and Five (1732 and1736) Brockes defends his "sensory worship" by quoting biblical sources. He says that reading the Bible and listening to God's word in church is not enough. He quotes the Old Testament to prove his point:

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.....Wir lesen,
Daß wir sehn und fühlen sollen im Geschöpf
Sein Göttlich's Wesen:
Und bey David: schmeckt und sehet, wie so
freundlich Gott der Herr.
(IV:142)

The Bible teaches man to enjoy God's gifts by tasting, feeling and seeing how great He is.

In the poem "Vermahnung" Brockes reminds man to use his senses to better advantage and tells him that if he does so, he will perceive God's greatness in his soul and he continues:

...gleich wird durchs Gesichts Crystallen
Der Geschöpfe Wunder=Pracht strahlend in
die Seele fallen.
(IV:146)

The eye is the crystal which allows the beauty of the world to shine into the soul but only if man is willing to accept this beauty.

In the next poem Brockes maintains, that the existence of man's five senses alone proves that there is more than one way of worshipping God. Man can listen to the word of God in church, but what is the use of his other senses? Brockes' answer is clear: Has God not made man's other senses so that he can admire nature more fully for the purpose of His glorification?

Sein herrlich Regiment in allem zu spühren,
schmecken, und zu sehn,
Und dergestalt, mit Leib und Seele sein
Göttlich Wesen zu erhöhn?

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With Brockes' last reminder to enjoy the world in order to honor God, my discussion of the first five volumes is concluded. In Volume Four and Five no new ideas are added to the topic. But Brockes varies the approach to the subject in his reference to the Bible, which alone cannot teach us everything about God. The image of the eye as the crystal which allows the beauty of the world to shine into our soul will appear later in another part of this study in another context.

Up to this time, 1736, the main ideas are: Man's limited intellect does not allow him to understand God, he can, however, perceive His presence with his soul, mind and body. Thus man needs to respond with his total mental and physical being:

> Wir sind bloß durch die Sinnen nur
> Verbunden mit der Creatur.
> (II:326)

This idea is further deliberated and developed in Volume Six.

Sensory Worship of God, Volume Six to Volume Eight, 1739-1746.

Volume Six (1739) contains two discourses on the problems of the soul. Brockes deals with two questions. First he asks: what happens to man's soul when his senses are completely restrained

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and only his mind is master? Then he asks: what happens to the soul when a man's senses are free and he does not use his mind?

The first problem is deliberated in the poem "Vermahnung" (VI:262f). Brockes finds that his fellow men are doing themselves a great injustice by not enjoying the beauty of this world. He considers it blasphemous that man is apparently willing to sacrifice his own happiness in order to avoid honoring God. Man does not fulfill the purpose of his existence if he denies his physical nature:

> .....da unsre Seelen
> Mit unserm Körper hier verbunden,
> Sie, nebst dem Körper, durch die Sinnen,
> mit andern Körpern zu vermählen,...

Man has a social nature and was made to live with other human beings. Brockes continues by arguing that man is living too ascetically, too much in the realm of the intellect, as if his body had been separated from his spirit. That means that man is living against God's will, for living only of the spirit is a state of being reserved for the future:

> (Da wir ja selbst noch körperlich, und rings
> mit Körpern noch umgeben:)
> Doch gegen seinen weisen Willen auf dieser
> Welt nicht anders leben,
> Als sollten wir schon hier entkörpert, und
> auf der Welt nichts seyn, als Geist,
> So uns jedoch dann allererst, wann wir
> vom Körper abgeschieden,
> Nach unsers Schöpfers weisen Ordnung, wird
> künftig vorbehalten seyn.

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The poet wants man to live according to his nature as God made him. Brockes' main concern is the state of the soul, which would be crippled in its growth by the neglect of the senses. If man disregards the means by which the soul grows and matures he is robbing the soul of its "spirit" and condemning it to death before physical death occurs:

> Nur ists nicht recht, daß man die Mittel,
> wodurch die Seele selbst sich bessert,
> Wodurch sie gleichsam zunimmt, wächset,
> und ihre Größe sich vergrößert,
> Durch einen Stolz, der fast unleidlich,
> ja in demselben den verachtet,
> Durch welche sie und alles ist. Man sucht
> sie gleichsam zu entgeistern,
> Und todt zu seyn, noch eh man todt.

Brockes' concept is in direct opposition to Leibniz, who maintains that whatever the soul expresses has to develop out of its own substance. According to Brockes, the soul is not able to function at all without the influence from the outside world.[9]

The second question: What happens to the soul when the senses are free but the mind is not used? is posed in the poem "Sinnenschule" (VI:270f). Brockes begins the discussion by pointing out that man is taught everything, the arts, mores, languages, with one exception: he is not taught how to use his senses correctly, even though through the senses alone can he perceive God's wisdom:

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Die Seele kann nur durch die Sinnen,
wie weis' und liebreich Gott, verspühren.

A man who does not use his mind is not different from the animals. In fact the senses are completely useless to man without the use of the mind.

Die Sinnen, sonder Geist sind todt;

Then Brockes points out that in this case the senses are touched from the outside but not from the inside:

Sie sieht und höret ohne Denken; einfolglich
hört und sieht sie nicht.
Des Schöpfers in den Creaturen uns angesteckte
Weisheits=Licht
Rührt ihre Sinnen, wie der Thiere, von aussen,
aber nicht von innen,

If the mind is not stirred there is no inner response. And man separated from his intellect can understand nothing:

Wenn wir das Sinnen mit den Sinnen und
den Geschöpfen nicht vereinen:
So kann uns, von des Schöpfers Werken,
fast nichts Betrachtungs=würdig scheinen.

Brockes continues the discussion by trying to solve the problem. He advises the adult to regain the natural curiosity of his childhood by asking questions like a child. By that method man could learn how to enjoy and appreciate nature again, thus finding the way to God. If man does not pursue this end, his soul would be an untouched undeveloped entity:

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Da wir ihn nicht gehört, gespürt, gefühlt,
geschmeckt und gesehn,
Dem Schöpfer eine leere Seele,
.....überliefern werden.

God has not intended for man's soul to reach Him as a blank page, a tabula rasa. Therefore it is imperative that man should pay attention to the beauty of the world by using his mind as well as his senses.

The answers to the poet's deliberations on the soul can be summarized in two equations: 1) Soul plus mind minus the senses equals a dead soul. 2) Soul plus senses minus the mind equals an empty soul. According to this it is slightly more desirable to make use of the senses than of the mind. For at least the soul is alive in an animalistic fashion even if it is empty. Brockes is pointing out the dangers of the extreme positions on each side of the argument. A mindless life is as void as a life of pure reason. Either is useless for God or man.

The philosophical poems are written in a cumbersome almost prose-like style suited to the subject matter but Brockes is still capable of musical and rhythmic lines. In the following strophe he sings in exuberance:

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Preiset ihn, spannt alle Kräfte der
der vernünftgen Seelen an,
Sehet, fühlet, riechet, schmeckt, hört,
bewundert, überleget,
Denkt, vergleicht, erstaunt für Andacht,
wenn ihr Ehrfurchts=voll erweget,
Bey den irdschen Wundertropfen, die man
nicht begreifen kann,
Was das tiefe Meer der Gottheit selber wohl
vor Wunder heget.
(VI:76) [10]

Again Brockes is urging man to use all his physical, mental and spiritual powers available in praise of God. Every fiber of the human heart, mind and body the poet wants to bring into worship of God. He expresses this idea by the enumeration of the senses, the heart and the mind. Lines two and three are very rhythmic and most emphatic in the repetition of one verb after another. First he mentions the verbs of sensory perception: feeling, hearing, smelling, tasting; then he recites some activities of the mind and the heart: admire, contemplate, think, compare, be surprized in awe, weigh with reverence. He concludes that since man cannot understand the creation, "die irdschen Wundertropfen", there must be many wonders hidden in the deep ocean of His divinity. The metaphors are well combined as the poet implies how small the earth is compared to the infinite God.

In Volume Seven (1743) Brockes approaches the subject of man's use of reason from another point

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of view. He explains that each part of creation honors God in its own way, the flowers by their beauty, the birds by their song. But they are not aware of their purpose. Only man can consciously praise God. Man is superior to plants and animals because he has the use of his mind as well as his senses. Animals have senses but they cannot reason.

> Er giebt uns Sinnen und Verstand,
> Durch beydes wird sein Werk erkannt.
> Die Pflanzen haben gleichsam keines,
> Die Thiere von den beyden eines,
> Wir haben beydes.
> (VII:376)

Consequently man is remiss in his duty if he does not use both "Sinnen" and "Verstand".

With these discussions from Volume Six and Seven the poet has left very little to be said. Yet he expresses his opinion once more and most poignantly in Volume Eight. Brockes criticizes again those advocates of an ascetic life who want man to be strictly spiritual. All nature, man's reason and the scriptures teach man that he should enjoy the beauty of the world. In a strophe worth quoting Brockes voices the optimism of his time:

> Verboth, Göttlicher Geschöpfe sich zu vergnügen,
> sündlich.
> Uns zeiget dieses die Natur
> In ihren ungezählten Schätzen.
> Es zeiget uns die Schrift die Spur
> Man soll an selben sich ergetzen.
> . . . . . .

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Es leget die Vernunft uns klar
Die Absicht einer Weisheit dar,
Dass solche Ordnung, solche Pracht
Ja wohl umsonst nicht sey gemacht.
(VIII:574)

Then Brockes continues, that those who repudiate man's divine gift, the senses, must believe that the world was created by the devil and not by God. As the title indicates, those who forbid man to enjoy God's Creation, are committing a sin.

In the following poem Brockes' thoughts reach a synthesis as the poet repeats the themes of the earlier volumes in a simple easy manner.

Nothwendiger Verband der Körper, der Sinnen und der Seele.

Farben, Formen, Schatten, Licht,
Sind die Schönheit dieser Erden. Aber doch sind sie es nicht
Ohn' ein sie verbindend Aug', ohn ein sinnliches Gesicht.
Und auch hierzu muß annoch sich ein Überlegen fügen,
Soll man anders an der Pracht dieser Erden sich vergnügen,
Ihren Wunder=Bau bewundern, ihre Lieblichkeit empfinden,
Und in ihnen, ihren Ursprung, einen weisen Schöpfer finden.
(VIII:544)

Man's physical and mental faculties have to be combined otherwise the world would not exist for him. Man cannot enjoy, admire and sense the loveliness and splendor of the world without the total response of all his capabilities.

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Brockes' perception of the world as colors, shapes, shadows and light again illustrates his artistic approach to nature. The poem moves along in gentle rhythm and gentle sounds. The first three lines with their rhymes "Licht, nicht, Gesicht" impress upon the reader the urgent truth of the opening statement. The next four lines resolve the urgency in the easy going movement of the language emphasized by the rhymes "fügen, vergnügen, empfinden and finden". After all, this beautiful nature is there for man, all he has to do is to look, think, admire and feel and he will find God.

To recapitulate Brockes' thoughts on sensory worship as they proceed through the volumes: In 1721 two ideas are established. First, man's total response to the world in the process of perception. Second, man's limited intellect, which does not allow him to understand but allows him to sense God's presence. The "verspühren" used here is found again in Volume Six in a similar context. These ideas are varied and extended through the following twenty five years.

In 1727 Brockes gives very clear explanations of these ideas. Man's complete dependence on his

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senses for perception of the world is summarized in the concise statement:

> Wir sind bloß durch die Sinnen nur
> Verbunden mit der Creatur.

In the poem "Das Menschliche Wissen" it is precisely stated that man's knowledge is limited to the recognition of his own limitations in the face of God. Man is not here to know but to admire God.

In 1739 two long treatises on body, mind, and soul give a deeper interpretation of man's relation to the world. The poet concludes that the soul needs the senses and the mind in order to develop. Without the mind the soul is empty, without the senses the soul is dead. Yet Brockes retains the idea that man can only sense God's greatness not know Him. In Volume Six the enumeration of man's sensory and mental functions also is reiterated, giving a poetic emphasis to the philosophical ideas expressed here.

In 1746 the synthesis of these ideas is found in a well composed short poem.

The results of this study again repudiate the critics who say that Brockes' capacity as a poet was exhausted in Volume One. Brockes does not merely repeat. The topic of man's use of his senses evolves from the description of the pious

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man to the thorough exploration of the problem of the soul and its relationship to the outside world. The poet does not exhaust the topic and often finds a new approach. He works persistently on a theme, like a musician who is fond of a certain motif and carries it through all possible modulations and variations until he has finally come to a conclusion. The theme is elucidated from an intellectual point of view, as in Volume Six, and from a popular point of view, as in Volume Four, Five and Seven. The synthesis in Volume Eight shows the development and fusion of these approaches in the poet's mind.

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NOTES

1. Geschichte der poetischen National-Literatur (Leipzig, 1842), p. 549.

2. Ferdinand Josef Schneider, Die deutsche Dichtung der Aufklärungszeit, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart, 1948), p. 72 f.

   Hermann Schneider, Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung (Bonn, 1949), p. 326.

   Richard Benz, Deutsches Barock (Stuttgart, 1949), p. 291.

3. Die deutschen Lyriker von Luther bis Nietzsche (Berlin, 1925), p. 63.

4. Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung (München, 1949), pp. 132-151.

5. Albert Friedrich Lange, Geschichte des Materialismus, 8th ed. (Leipzig, 1908), p. 270.

6. The image of the book of nature occurs many times in Brockes' poems. He describes nature as a book which contains "göttliche Geheimnisse". It is called "das Buch der Weisheit/aus dessen Inhalt man den wahren Gott erkennt." The connection with Paracelsus and his followers, here most likely Johann Arndt is easily made. Paracelsus says:

   Denn Gott hat seine Macht in Kräuter gegeben, in Steine gelegt, in die Samen verborgen; in denselbigen sollen wirs nehmen und suchen. Die Engel habens bei ihnen selbst; der Mensch aber nicht; er hats in der Natur, bei derselbigen soll ers suchen."

   Quoted in Will-Erich Peuckert, Pansophie, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1956), p. 190.
   Johann Arndt says: "Wie das grosse Weltbuch der Natur von Gott erzeuget und zu Gott führet. Wie auch alle Menschen Gott zu lieben durch die Creaturen gereitzet und durch ihr eigen Hertz oberzeuget werden". Vom Wahren Christentum "Liber Naturae" (Leipzig, 1632), Introduction.

   See also Ernst Robert Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages (1953; rpt. New York: Harper, 1963), pp. 319-326.

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7. In his poem "Gedanken über Vernunft, Unvernunft und Aberglauben" (1734) in Gedichte, ed. Ludwig Hirzel (Frauenfeld, 1882), p. 141.

8. John Locke, Essay concerning Human Understanding, ed. J. W. Yolton (London, 1964) Bk. 2, § 10, p. 82.

9. This observation confirms the opinion of Walter deVolld in his dissertation "The Spirit of the Enlightenment in Barthold Hinrich Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott," Western Reserve 1958.

10. The image of the "irdschen Wundertropfen" is used frequently by Brockes. I have made a separate study of this image and its influence on Klopstock in his poem "Frühlingsfeier", for later publication.

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PART II: CONCEPTUAL IMAGES: TRADITION AND TRANSFORMATION.

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Chapter IV: The Circle in the Dot.

"Deus est sphaera infinita, cuius centrum est ubique, circumferentia nusquam", is a medieval mystic definition of God found in the Book of the Twenty Four Philosophers.[1] It is used by Brockes in its traditional meaning as a simile for God as well as in its eighteenth-century variant connotation of man in the center of the circle. When Brockes uses it in its traditional meaning as a simile for God, he elucidates and reinterprets the image. In its contemporary application Brockes transforms the image into a visual concept expressing the philosophy of eighteenth-century man.

Again it should be noted that the traditional use of the image of the circle and the dot appears in Brockes' earlier volumes, while the more original applications are found in Volumes Five, Six and Seven, 1736 to 1743. In these later volumes of the Irdisches Vergnügen the truly original approach of the poet becomes evident.

The literary tradition of the image of the circle in the dot was recently discussed by George Poulet in Les metamorphoses du cercle (1961)[2] and previously by Dietrich Mahnke in Unendliche

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Sphäre und Allmittelpunkt. (1937).[3] Mahnke traces the image from the German Romantics back to its orphic beginnings with an emphasis on the mysticism of mathematics. Poulet's study is concerned with the meaning of the circle from the Italian Renaissance to the twentieth century. He brings out the influence of the circle on the aesthetics of the early eighteenth century. Poulet and Mahnke indicate little or no knowledge of early eighteenth century poetry in Germany. Mahnke proceeds from a discussion of the Romantics immediately to the seventeenth century. Poulet's knowledge is limited to Bodmer, whom he quotes from a secondary source.[4]

Some of Brockes' seventeenth-century predecessors who used the simile of the circle in the dot are Johann Arndt and Johann Scheffler. Arndt applies this image to human society in order to build a justification for Christian ethics. In his book Vom Wahren Christentum he describes an emblem showing a heart with a dot in the center surrounded by a triangle and many circles. He says:

> Hier sind viele runde Zirkel zu sehen, da immer einer größer ist als der andere, und doch alle aus einem Ursprung, nähmlich aus einem Mittelpunkt herkommen. Damit wird abgebildet, daß die Menschen alle miteinander, groß und klein, hoch und niedrig auch nur aus einem Ursprunge kommen, nähmlich von Gott.[5]

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Arndt concludes, that since all men derive their origin from the same source, God, they should be kind and loving to one another.

A mystical interpretation of the circle and the dot is given by Johann Scheffler in his Cherubinischer Wandersmann:

> Das Große ist im Kleinen verborgen.
>
> Der Umkreiß ist im Punct; im Saamen liegt die Frucht,
> Gott in der Welt: wie klug ist der ihn drinne sucht.[6]

Scheffler is saying that the large is hidden in the small as the circle in the dot and the fruit lies in its seed as God in the world. He extends the symbolism of the image to the organic reality of the fruit inherent in its tiny seed. In his mystic concept of the infinite God hidden in the world which is analogous to the point, he implies that this world must be a mere speck compared to Him.

These two examples from the seventeenth century illustrate how each writer uses the image of the circle in the dot to express his own ideas. First they express the relationship of God and men, second the relationship of God and the world.

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In Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen the image of the circle in the dot is found in its purely traditional sense as a simile for God in the first four volumes, 1721 to 1732. In Volume Six, 1739, the image is extended according to Brockes' own vision of God. In Volumes Five and Seven, 1736 and 1743, Brockes departs completely from the tradition and presents the point of view of his own time.

The following examples are taken from Brockes' first four volumes:

In Volume One God is the infinite center of all perfection:

> Unendlicher Mittelpunkt aller Vollkommenheit!
> (I:89)

In the next example the poet spells out the ancient symbolism of the circle itself: eternity - no beginning and no end - and calls God

> Der grauen Ewigkeit, Quell, Mittelpunkt und Kreis.
> (I:489)

In Volume Two, he says:

> Unendlich großer Gott und Schöpfer, Herr der Tage
> Du Kreis und Mittel=Punct der Zeit!
> (II:494)

Here Brockes points out that God is master of our days and of time. Thus he interprets the concept

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of the circle with its total mystical connotation.

The next stanza is almost a literal translation of the Latin quotation of the circle in the dot. It includes the idea that man lacks words and intellect to understand God's greatness.

Gottes Grösse.

Zirckel, den kein Mensch mit Worten
Und kein Geist durch Dencken, misst,
Dessen Mittel aller Orten
Dessen Umkreiß nirgends ist!
(IV:189)

In the examples thus far presented Brockes applies the image of the circle and the dot in its traditional meaning that God is everpresent. He also points out in particular that God is eternal. In a later poem the synthesis of these ideas are found.

In Volume Six, 1739, in a poem entitled "Größe eines Punkts" Brockes describes the size of a dot. First he discusses the dot as a geometric and mathematical entity. He says the lines drawn from the dot command an angle which can measure a circle of infinite dimensions.

He considers that this dot with its qualities to project a circle infinitely larger than itself could be compared to God, in whom all things originate and to whom all things return. The only

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difference, he states is that the divine circle is incomprehensible in its size.

Größe eines Punkts.

Wie viel an einem einzgen Punkt, wär er
auch noch so klein, gelegen:
Giebt die Geometrie uns deutlich, wenn
man drauf achtet, zu erwegen.
Da nemlich, wenn zwo Linien aus ihm gezogen
sind und fliessen,
Wie oder (wie mans rechnet) sich, nach ihm
gezogen, in ihm schliessen,
Die Winkel, die der Punkt regiert, den
Inhalt ungeheurer Größen,
Die alle Zahlen übersteigen, durch einen
Theil vom Zirkel, messen.

Ich habe dieses oft bewundert; und kam ein
solches Centrum mir,
Als wie ein Schattenbild der Gottheit, aus
welchem alle Dinge stammen,
In welchem alle Dinge wieder, wie hier die
Linien zusammen,
Als ihrem ersten Ursprung, laufen, auch
wieder sich vereinen, für,
Nur mit dem Unterschied allein,
Daß so, wie dieser Mittelpunkt, ein Punkt
im Zirkel, der so klein,
Der Gottheit Wesen solch ein Zirkel, wovon
in allen Abgrund Gründen,
Der unerforschten Ewigkeit, die Grenz= und
Schranken nicht zu finden,
Den Stralen, die unendlich, füllen, den
kein erschaffner Geist ermißt,
Wovon das Centrum allenthalben, der Umkreis
aber nirgend ist.
(VI:521)

In this poem the circle itself according to the medieval tradition has a ubiquitous center and an undetectable circumference. Brockes again combines two traditions, the circle as the simile of God and as a symbol of eternity.

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Previously Brockes called God "Kreis und Mittelpunkt der Zeit" now he applies this idea to the circle itself as he states:

> Der Gottheit Wesen solch ein Zirkel,
> wovon in allen Abgrund Gründen,
> Der unerforschten Ewigkeit, die Grenz=
> und Schranken nicht zu finden.

It means that the circle, symbol of eternity is so immense that in all eternity one could not find its limits - God, being such a circle is indeed incomprehensible.

There is another important difference between the traditional image and Brockes' circle. If one tries to visualize the image in its old meaning, a circle and a dot everywhere and nowhere one would find it impossible. But Brockes' circle is visible in the radii that go forth from the center. It is visible not as a circle proper but as rays of light.

Den Stralen, die unendlich füllen.

In the first part of the poem as he discusses the circle as a mathematical entity Brockes uses the word "Linien". In the second part he perceives the circle with its rays - not lines - as representing divinity. Consequently in Brockes' later concept of the image God becomes more of a reality and can be imagined as rays of light. God is

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everywhere and in everything but to man only imaginable as eternal infinite light.

The addition of light to the ancient image of the circle in the dot seems natural to Brockes who as a poet of the visual delights of nature appreciates light and its many reflections in nature. Actually Brockes is again going back to an ancient tradition, this time a biblical tradition. Light has always been connected with divinity and in the Bible light is associated with God. St. John says, speaking of the city of God: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of the God did lighten it." (Revelations 21:23)

The identification of God with light is also evident in the writing of the medieval German mystic Mechthild von Magdeburg, whose diary of a soul in search of God is entitled Das fliessende Licht der Gottheit (1250).

Brockes does not simply say God is light. He takes the twelfth century mystical definition of God, combines it with another symbol of eternity plus an earlier image of divinity. Brockes' definition of God does not read: God is a circle, whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere; it reads

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> God is an eternal circle, permeated with infinite light, whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere.

Thus the reinterpretation of the traditional image is complete.

Again here is proof that in his later years Brockes proves his poetic and visionary power as he reinterprets and elucidates an ancient image to express his own concept of God: God is visible in His Creation as everything is reflected in His light.

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Man in the Center of the Circle.

In the eighteenth century occured a revival of the Renaissance point of view that man was the center of creation. He was the most important creature because he alone had intellect. This world was looked upon as the best of all possible worlds and if man found himself in a central position in the universe it would be a desirable position. Poulet explains in his Les metamorphoses du cercle that in the beginning of the eighteenth century the circle was still considered more beautiful than any other geometric figure. For one could immediately recognize the multiplicity of the peripheral points and the simplicity of the central point.[7]

Man placed in the center of the circle could easily grasp his surroundings with one glance. Poulet quotes Addison, who said in the Spectator that if you place yourself underneath a dome

> the entire concavity falls into your Eye at once. Sight being as the center that collects and gathers into it the lines of the whole circumference.
> (no. 415, June 26, 1712) [8]

Nothing then is as important as placing oneself in the proper position in order to have a perfect perspective.

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Brockes finds himself in just such a position as he tells about a unique experience. One quiet night he is standing at the edge of a pond. The surface of the pond is like a mirror and, undisturbed by wind, it gives a perfect reflection of the firmament.

From the poem "Himmelsspiegel"
(V :127, 1736)

Es kam mir vor...
Als wenn ich hier des Himmels gantze Ründe
Mir deutlich vorgestellet fünde.
Mich deucht, ich seh' in ungemessner Ferne,
So über mir, als unter mir,
In funckelnder und Flammen=reicher Zier,
Ein' ungezehlte Anzahl Sterne.

The poet finds himself surrounded by infinite space. He is in the center of an infinite circle as he continues:

Ich kam mir nunmehr vor, auf eine neue Weise,
Von einem unumschränckten Kreise,
Im Mittel=Punct zu stehen,
Und ein aus meiner Seel entsprungnes Dencken
In eine runde Tieff' ohn Um=Kreis zu versencken:

Mein Gott, ach laß der Fluthen glattes Nass;
Des schönen Himmels Spiegel=Glaß,
Des Cörpers Augen oft, doch nicht dem Aug'
allein,
Auch meinem Geist auf diese Weise,
In den Erwegungen von diesem grossen Kreise,
Dir, aller Sternen Herrn, zum Preise,
Auch einen Himmels=Spiegel seyn.

First Brockes very calmly relates this incredible picture as the observer. Only as he begins to think about his own position his personal emotional reaction becomes evident. Out of the depth of his

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soul he tries to penetrate limitless space. Yet all he can hope for is to be worthy of such an experience. The urgency of his prayer to God is effectively expressed through the sentence structure as well as a change in rhyme scheme.

In the description of the scene the sentences are evenly balanced and the rhythm flows calmly. In the prayer the clauses are strung together all dependent on the main clause in the first verse and the sentence is not completed until verse seven. The main verb "lass" is separated from its complimentary infinitive "seyn" by five verses. This separation helps to convey the poet's emotion as the words move forward with only two pauses: one in verse three as he makes the qualifying statement: "doch nicht dem Aug' allein" and one in verse six, as he addresses God: "Dir, aller Sternen Herr". The rhyme scheme aa b ccc b speeds the movement of the words by the repetition of the "ei" sound in "Weise, Kreise und Preise" as well as in the words "allein" and "seyn".

The poet has painted a picture of man in space, the center of an infinite universe. Here is a perfect visual expression of the philosophical view of his time. Brockes' experiences what his

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contemporaries like to believe. In his reaction to his experience he finds humility. As his eye reflects the immense firmament he wishes that his mind as well as his eye may become a mirror for God's greatness. In all sincerity and piety he hopes to become an image of the Lord himself by using his eye and mind. He himself wants to reflect God as Paul had said to the Corinthians:

> But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory (2 Cor 3:18)

In a later poem in Volume Seven (1743) entitled "Die Schönheit der Welt bey Sonnenschein nach dem Regen" Brockes finds another occasion to create the image of man as the center of God's creation. The poet is walking around his garden with some friends admiring the freshness of the green, red, and white colors as they are enhanced by the rain drops. He notices bushes, flowers, and trees, insects buzzing around, cornflowers and poppies swaying in the breeze. He and his friends finally come to the moat and decide on a boatride. The reflections of the surrounding greenery in the water, the movement of the swans, the interplay of colors fascinate him. Everything is beautiful.

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Then their attention is attracted to something much more breathtaking: the rainbow's reflection in the pond. It is something heavenly, a sign of God's eternity, and surpasses everything in its beauty.

The poem follows a pattern Brockes uses frequently. He looks at something here on earth and wonders about it, admires its form, its color, its purpose. Then his gaze finds something heavenly and it is more beautiful than anything found on earth.

There is something special about this rainbow as it is reflected in the water, for Brockes and his friends find themselves in the center of a perfect circle. Here is his description:

> Der schönste Schmuk des Firmaments, der
> holden Iris bunter Bogen
> Schwamm auf dem spiegelnden Krystall,
> und prägte den gefärbten Schein,
> Nebst seinem Kegel=rechten Kreise, dem
> grün=gefärbten Wasser ein,
> Schien, hier in einem Gegenbilde, auch
> unten gleichfalls rund gezogen,
> Und macht, im klaren Wiederschein, von
> seiner Form= und Farben=Glanz
> In der so ähnlichen Copie, den sonst nur
> halben Cirkel ganz.
> Wir fuhren recht im Mittelpunct von diesem
> großen Wunder=Kreise,
> Und mußten, mit vereinter Stimm, dem
> Schöpfer aller Welt zum Preise,
> Recht inniglich dadurch gerührt, voll Lust
> und Anmuth, zugestehn;
> Es sey ein prächtiger Spectakel wol nicht,
> auf dieser Welt, zu sehn.
> (VII:123)

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The poem continues with the acknowledgment that the reflection of the rainbow in the water is proof of the superiority of any celestial over any terrestial creation. Then Brockes and his friends find themselves in the center of his miraculous circle and are so touched by this apparition that they sing a hymn of thanks to God.

In the first poem man stands alone as the center of the universe, deeply touched and humbly reverent. In the second poem man is traveling in the ship of life together with his fellow man. As he is surrounded by God's creation enjoying the beauty of this world, a "signature" of the other world indicates to him that he is the central and most important of all creations. In fellowship man feels full of joy as he and his friends agree in unison that there is nothing more beautiful than the manifestation of God's reflection in the world.

The poet created a scene representing the philosophy of his time. Had Dürer painted this scene, his contemporaries would have understood its symbolism just as the eighteenth-century readers undoubtedly did Brockes'.

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The Projection of the Image in the Concept of the Large in the Small.

The image of the infinite circle in the dot was expressed in the idea of the large inherent in the small, for which Scheffler found the metaphor of the fruit in the seed. For Brockes the idea of the large in the small means admiration of everything small as well as the large in the firmament. He finds God's wisdom illustrated in the least little effort of His creation.

Brockes' introduction to Volume One serves as best proof of his intentions when he explains the purpose of writing to his readers:

> Nicht nur der Himmel Raum, nicht nur der Sonnen Schein,
> Nicht der Planeten Gröss allein;
> Ein Stäubchen, ist bewunderns wehrt.

Not only the realm of heaven, the sunshine and the planets but also a little speck of dust is worthy of admiration. Brockes presents this thought as a basic premise for his Irdisches Vergnügen. However, in several instances, he is particularly explicit, as for example in his appreciation of the lowly moss:

> Doch zeigest du mir auch, geliebtes Mooß, aufs neu,
> Daß unser Gott auch groß im Kleinen sey!
> (II:92)

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In a later volume he is more specific:

Das Große im Kleinen

Nicht nur was klein, ist in dem Grossen;
was Grosses, ob wirs gleich nicht meinen,
Ist überall unendlich groß, und folglich
groß auch in dem Kleinen.
(IV:159)

Brockes interprets this famous "saying" to mean that the deity permeates everything with its creative power, as large or small as it may be. Thus God manifests Himself in the smallest of creatures as well as the largest.

The image of the large in the small is also expressed in more poetic terms. The poet not only just says "das Große ist im Kleinen" he creates the image of a large object reflected in a small globe such as a grape, a soap bubble or a drop of water.

In Volume One in a poem "Die Weinrebe" Brockes shows a whole landscape reflected on the surface of a grape:

Auf mancher Beere nun, worauf kein Düft zu
sehn.
Glänzt auf der glatten Ründ' ein weisser
Schein,
Worin, wiewol unglaublich klein,
Die Bilder jedes Dings im Widerschein
entstehn.
Ja beym Gesichts=Kreis selbst stellt oft
in schöner Zier
Durch Felder, Wälder, Thal und Hügel
Des kleinen Scheines kleiner Spiegel,
Der selber kaum zu sehn, die schönste
Landschaft für
(I:280f)

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A poet can see remarkable sights in nature even on the surface of a grape. Brockes himself wonders about this ability to see large things in the small as he continues:

> Welch ein Wunder, daß die Augen
> Dieses zu betrachten taugen,
> Solche Grösse' im Kleinen sehn!
> Mit dem Schöpfer dich vereinen,
> Und den, im unendlich Kleinen,
> Der unendlich=gross, erhöhn.

"Der weisse Schein" on a grape becomes a convex mirror so small it is hardly visible and yet it reflects a most beautiful landscape. Brockes' imagination combined with his religious fervor produces such a vision that the experience leads the poet to admire God in the infinitely small.

A more complicated reflection of the large in the small is presented in Volume Five. Here a soap bubble floating in the air reflects a landscape on its multicolored surface:

> ...In dem Glantz, der nimmer ruht
> Sah ich mit erstarrten Blicken, als im
> Diamantnem Spiegel
> Himmel, Erde, Häuser, Fenster, Wälder,
> Felder, Thal und Hügel
> Sich in schnellen Farben bilden...
> (V:270)

In Volume One the grape reflects a landscape, here a whole world is passing by. The globe is moving and it is also transparent so that it reflects the landscape from all sides. The world

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is reduced to the size of a bubble.

> Weil, was auf der obern Fläche, sich auch
> auf der untern wies,.....
> Formen, Farben, Glantz und Licht waren
> rund, auch hohl zu sehn.

In this poem the purpose of the reflection of the landscape in the soap bubble is not only a glorification of the large in the small but also a contemplation of the passing of time. The poet compares the changing colors on the bubble to the changing seasons on earth where the colors alternate between yellow, red, white and green. Finally the bubble bursts and the beautiful vision is gone.[9]

Brockes equates the bubble to the grand circle of God's creation which He made with one word and can destroy in an instant.

> Was bey uns der Blasen=Kreis, ist vor Gott
> der Kreis der Erden,
> Aller Irrstern' Kreis und Circkel, ja der
> allgemeinen Welt,
> Grosser Circkel, den er schuf, den er
> durch ein Wort liess werden,
> Aber den auch blos ein Wort schnell
> zertheilen, schnell zersprengen gar
> in Nichts verwandeln kann.
> (V:272)

Other reflections of the large in the small are found in his fall and summer poems as he describes the effects of the sunlight on dew drops or water drops. In one example a water droplet not only reflects the sun but becomes its image.

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In the poem "Ein klares Tröpfgen" (also in Volume Five 1736), Brockes finds a water droplet on a window pane. The sun is shining through it and the droplet looks like an image of the sun itself. The poet contemplates its smallness in contrast to the original sun:

> Ich dachte wie entsetzlich klein
> ist dieses Sonnen=Bildchen nicht
> Im Gegenhalt mit seinem Urbild, dem
> unermeßlich grossen Licht,
> Das hundert tausendmahl an Grösse den
> Erd=Kreis selber übersteiget!
> (V:374)

Then he compares the sun to God the Creator Himself:

> Wann aber dieses Ueberlegen mir im Geschöpf
> den Schöpfer zeiget;
> So deucht mich, daß mir gegen ihn die grosse
> Sonne so verkleint,
> Als dieses Sonnen=Bild im Tröpfgen, ja noch
> unendlich kleiner, scheint.

In comparison to God the sun is nothing but a droplet infinitely smaller even than its image in the drop.

Interesting is Brockes' use of the word "verkleinen". The sun is reduced in size as it appears in the drop on the window pane. This drop functions like a mirror yet it becomes the object it reflects. The sun is caught in its smallest possible image.

Brockes who is fond of taking a microscopic lens to examine "das Kleine" is here using his

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imagination to reduce "das Große" to microscopic size.

In recapitulation of this chapter, it can be said, that Brockes' use of the image of the circle in the dot, is more original and poetically more powerful in the later volumes.

The traditional interpretation of the image as a simile for God as Brockes used it in Volumes One, Two, Three and Four is given a broader, visionary elucidation in Volume Six.

In its eighteenth-century variant connotation, man in the center of the circle, Brockes presents a vision of man surrounded by the universe and encircled by a rainbow. Brockes the poet-painter shows his creative and emotional depth in those passages from the later volumes.

Finally the reflections of the large in the small also are more original in the later years. The vision of the landscape in the grape from Volume One is surpassed by the image in Volume Five, where the reflection of the large in the small symbolizes not only the world but the passing of life and time as well.

Again I come to the conclusion that Brockes' visionary and poetic powers came to full bloom in his later years.

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NOTES

1. Liber XXIV Philosophorum (c. 1200), ed. Clemens Baeumker, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters (München, 1928), XXV, p. 208.

2. George Poulet, Les metamorphoses du cercle (Paris, 1961).

3. Dietrich Mahnke, Unendliche Sphäre und Allmittelpunkt (Halle, 1937).

4. Poulet quotes from René Wellek, History of Modern Criticism (Yale, 1955), p. 148.

5. Johann Arndt, Vom Wahren Christentum (Leipzig, 1632), p. 768.

6. Angelus Silesius, Cherubinischer Wandersmann (Altona, 1737), Buch IV, no. 158.

7. After Hogarth's publication The Analysis of Beauty (1753) the serpentine which he had first introduced in 1745 became "the line of beauty".

8. As quoted in Poulet, p. 84.

9. The image of the bubble can be found in more abstract form in the English literature of the 17th and 18th century as for example in Drummond's "Madrigal"

   This life which seems so fair
   Is like a bubble blown up in the air

quoted in: Marjorie Hope Nicolson, The Breaking of the Circle (Evanston, 1950), p. 42.
In Pope's Essay on Man we find

   and now a bubble burst, and now a world
   (Epistle I).

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Chapter V: The Chain of Being.

In the eighteenth century the conception of the universe as a Chain of Being and the principles underlying this conception - plenitude, continuity and gradation - attained their widest diffusion and acceptance.

According to Arthur O. Lovejoy "next to the word 'nature', 'the great Chain of Being' was the sacred phrase of the eighteenth century".[1]

The popularity of this idea was due to the influence of the two philosophers of the late seventeenth century who were widely acclaimed in the first half of the eighteenth century, Locke and Leibniz.

Locke's ideas were widely dispersed through their popularization by Addison in the Spectator. The following ideas from Locke's Essay concerning Human Understanding found their way into European literature, philosophy and science.

> In all the visible world we see no chasms or gaps. All quite down from us the descent is by easy steps and a continued series of things, that in each remove differ very little one from the other. ...And when we consider the infinite power and wisdom of the Maker, we have reason to think that it is suitable to the magnificent harmony of the universe and the great design and infinite goodness of the architect that the species of creatures should

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> also, by gentle degrees, ascend upwards from us toward his infinite perfection, as we see they gradually descend from us downwards;
> (Bk. III, chapt. 6, § 12)[2]

Leibniz' whole philosophy is concerned with gradation and order in the universe but his thoughts are particularly clearly expressed in the following passage:

> It is necessary that all the orders of natural beings form but a single chain, in which the various classes, like so many rings, are so closely linked one to another that it is impossible for the senses or the imagination to determine precisely the point at which one ends and the next begins.[3]

Man's position in this Chain of Being was that of a creature on a point of transition between the merely animalistic and the spiritual form of being. He represented the middle link of the Chain of Being, but that did not mean that there was an equal number of species below him and above him.

There were two trends in the arguments about the Chain of Being. The traditionalists presented the Chain of Being as an example of a rigid and static scheme of the universe. The argument was that nothing new would ever appear under the sun "since what is best can never change to better".[4] The progressives were bothered by the consequences of this completely settled state of affairs.

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They realized that it would allow neither change nor progress. Already the facts known about nature disputed the idea of permanence.

The ideas of change had already germinated early in the century but were not integrated into the interpretation of the Chain of Being until much later.

Leibniz already in 1718 contributed to the concept of change with the idea that happiness should never consist in the fulfillment of all desires, which would make the mind dull, "but all perpetual progress to new pleasures and new perfections".[5]

The discussions between the conservatives in favor of a static universe and those who saw the possibility indeed inherent necessity for growth continued until the end of the century. Lovejoy explains that serious thinkers in contemplating the Chain of Being reinterpreted it in terms of man's unending progress, a reaching for the state of perfection that could never be attained.

This idea is illustrated in the following passage: "The Scale of Beings thus becomes literally a ladder, with an infinite number of rungs, up which individual souls forever climb."[6]

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Among the German poets and philosophers who participated in the discussion, or who used the image of the Chain of Being, Lovejoy mentions Haller, Kant, Herder and Schiller.

Haller and the early Kant represent the conservative point of view while Herder and Schiller are among the progressive thinkers. Lovejoy does not mention Brockes as he considers him one of the "many lesser writers".

In first considering Haller one finds that Haller refers to man's duality as the cause of his unhappiness. In his poem "Gedanken über Vernunft, Aberglauben und Unglauben" (1729), he says: "Unselig Mittelding von Engeln und von Vieh".[7] Five years later, in 1734, Haller reasons that man's imperfection may all be part of the great design because the earth with all its evil may serve to complete the perfection of the universe:

> Die Sterne sind vielleicht ein Sitz verklärter Geister,
> Wie hier das Laster herrscht, ist dort die Tugend Meister
> Und dieses Punkt der Welt von mindrer Trefflichkeit
> Dient in dem großen All zu der Vollkommenheit.[8]

Simultaneously Pope expounds the same idea in the first Epistle of his Essay on Man, in which he says that the universe is complete and perfect as

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it is with everything in its place whatever its degree of perfection may be. Pope concludes that the whole system would collapse in an apocalytic diaster if there were one void in this full creation:

> Where one step broken, the great scale's destroyed.[9]

Kant quotes Haller and Pope in confirmation of his own views in his Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels (1755). He also maintains that lack of perfection is merely a sign of super abundance of nature. In regard to man he says:

> Die menschliche Natur, welche in der Leiter der Wesen gleichsam die mittleste Sprosse inne hat, sieht sich zwischen zwei äussersten Grenzen der Vollkommenheit mitten inne, von deren beiden Enden sie gleich entfernt ist.[10]

Kant envisions man as placed between the animals and the inhabitants of other planets equally distant from two limits of perfections. One of these perfect entities is an animalistic creature, the other an intellectually superior being. Later in 1781 however, Kant reconsiders the idea of a Chain of Being and accepts it as an "Ideal of the reason" which points the way towards a systematic unity of knowledge. He accepts it as a good method of

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looking for order in the universe. However Kant adds "neither observation nor insight into the constitution of nature could ever establish it as an objective affirmation".[11]

A few years later, 1784, Herder discusses the Chain of Being at length in the fifth book of his Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit. Herder sees the creation on earth as a series of ascending forms which reach their highest perfection in man. Man again is the lowest form in a series of creatures rising above him. Two points are of importance in Herder's essay. First, he maintains that in this series of forms there is no stagnation but continuous progress. Each entity in each stage contains the inherent possibility of a higher existence. Thus, there is a never ending, constant surge of development, a striving to reach the next level "nichts steht in ihr still: alles strebt und rückt weiter."[12]

The second important point is man's position as the most perfectly developed species on earth. Herder urges man to strive for "pure humanity", not in the sense of "Menschlichkeit" but "Humanität". Man should strive to gain insight into life and his existence, to find his true calling, to live

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up to his individual capability. Herder says that man cannot reach a higher stage in the Chain of Being until his death but he can prepare himself for the life after death by reaching a high level of intellect and insight in this life, by becoming godlike, "gottähnlich".[13]

The idea of surging progressiveness and continuous creativity of nature, as described by Herder, came to be viewed as proof of God's eternal creative power. Consequently, if man were to emulate God in his quest for a higher existence, he would have to be creative himself.

Schiller comes to this conclusion in his Philosophische Briefe (1786). He explains that each man, as he climbs the scale of beings, will gain a more complete view of the order of the universe. However, Schiller says that reaching a higher level can only be worthwhile if man takes advantage of his new position and becomes creative in his own right:

> Dem edlern Menschen fehlt es weder an Stoffen zur Wirksamkeit, noch an Kräften, um selbst in seiner Sphäre Schöpfer zu seyn.[14]

Here indeed is a profound change in man's opinion of himself. While in the beginning of the century man was an "unseliges Mittelding", now he is

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imitating the Creator as a "Schöpfer in seiner Sphäre". Almost a century of thought and speculation produced this concept of man the creator, according to Lovejoy one of the primary notions of the romantics.

Let us now consider Brockes' position in the the discussion of the Chain of Being. Walter Schatzberg, in his study of the scientific imagery in the literature of the German Enlightenment, considers Brockes' usage of the image almost an innate pattern of thought.[15] Brockes' mental voyages reach from the smallest entity into space, his mind descending and ascending along a "ladder of creation". For example, in Volume One, in the poem "Das Große und das Kleine", Brockes describes a mental journey in which man contemplates his own position between the world of limitless dimensions and the small creatures below him. On several occasions Brockes clearly indicates his belief in a Chain of Being. In a New Years' contemplation in Volume Four, 1732, he observes that a ladder above him leads much farther away than that which stretches below him.

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Indem ich nun des Schöpfer's Lieb und Macht,
In dieser Wunder=Leiter Länge,
In ihrer Sprossen grosse Menge,
Die von uns abwärts führt, betracht;
Werd' ich auf's neu (o Wunder) sehr gerühret
Durch eine Leiter, die ich seh,
Dass sie mich noch weit höher in die Höh'
Als jene niederwärts mich führet.
(IV:479)

In Volume Six, 1739, in a dream voyage to another planet, Brockes communicates with a man from the planet Jupiter. This man from Jupiter is a highly superior being and he tells Brockes that he considers human beings to be "Mitteldinge":

Die klüger zwar, als wie ein Thier,
Doch lange nicht so klug, als wir.
(VI:294)

This same idea had been expressed by Haller, and Pope and later on was picked up by Kant. It proves how provalent and commonly known these ideas were among educated men.

Walter Schatzberg pursues the scientific implications of Brockes' mental voyages into space, while in this study the interest is focused on the development of the concept of the Chain of Being in Brockes' poetry. Again we will see how Brockes developes his own visions and independent thoughts.

In the earlier writing, Brockes uses the idea of a mental ascent to God via the ladder of creation in the sense of the accepted theological concept of

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ascensio mentis ad Deum per scala creaturam.

He also embellishes the idea by descriptions of how to climb the ladder.

There are several instances in which Brockes urges man to reach God via the ladder of creation. In Volume Two (1727) he says:

> Du musst zum grossen Schöpfer steigen
> Auf Leitern seiner Creatur.....
> Du wirst von allem Gram genesen,
> Wirst du das Buch der Welt zu Gottes Ehre,
> lesen.
> (II:264)

Brockes implies, that by reading in the book of the world, also an old metaphor for creation, all unhappiness will be cured. As man studies nature he will lose himself in its beauty and forget all his troubles. Brockes pursues this thought by describing various features of nature which may lead man in his ascent to God.

In Volume Five, 1736, in a poem entitled "Der himmlische Thau", the stars remind the poet of dew drops reflecting the sunlight:

> Ach lass, o ew'ges Liebeslicht,
> So oft ich, in des Himmels Höhe,
> Der Sonne große Tropfen sehe;
> Durch meine Seele, durchs Gesicht,
> Zu dir, in ihrer Meng' als so viel Staffeln,
> steigen.
> (V:214f)

He prays that the stars, drops of sunlight may guide him to the eternal light through his eyes and soul.

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The stars provide a ladder for his ascent to God. He calls the stars drops of sunlight, as if they were reflecting the light of the sun like dew drops. Thus it is, indirectly, the sun, which leads him to God.

In the next example in Volume Seven, 1743, it is the sun directly which leads the poet to its original source - God:

> Man müsse durch dein Licht geleitet, nach
> deines Lichtes Quelle gehn
> Und in dir, als nächsten Stufe, sich zu
> dem ew'gen Licht erhöhn.
> (VII:328)

In the same volume a beautiful landscape can guide the observer to God.

> .....In Dingen, die dem Sinn sich zeigen,
> Muss unser Geist, der für sie sinnlich,
> als wie auf Leitern zu ihm steigen.
> Komm, lass uns denn die grünen Schatten,
> der Felsen aufgethürmte Höhn,
> Samt den einsiedlerischen Büschen, die
> Zier und Pracht der Welt besehn!
> (VII:7)

Brockes adds another dimension as he points out man's spiritual and sensual nature: our mind can ascend the ladder of creation to God because our senses enable us to see the beauty of nature such as bushes, green shadows and towering rocks.

To recapitulate the poet's use of the image of a ladder of creation or a mental ascent to God, it can be said that Brockes creates a variety of

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poetic visions. In his imagination the poet climbs the ladder of creation led by the light of the stars, the rays of sunlight and by a beautiful landscape.

In Volume Eight, 1746, Brockes presents a totally different philosophical point of view. So far he had followed the traditional conception of man as a middle link in the Chain of Being, whose ascent to God was a mental exercise. Now Brockes expresses the belief that man can reach a higher level of existence and can ascend to the stage of the spirits through the acquisition of true wisdom.

In the poem "Die Weisheit", he explains that wisdom means above all to have the correct concept of everything material and spiritual. In order to obtain such wisdom we should investigate our God-given power of imagination and learn to improve it, because for us the world is not what it is, but what we imagine it to be:

> Die Weisheit ist: von allen Sachen,
> Sowohl die körperlich, als geistig, sich
> richtige Begriffe machen.
> Um nun zur selben zu gelangen; so müssen
> wir die Eigenschaft
> Der von dem Schöpfer, unsern Seelen, einst
> anerschaffnen Wunder=Kraft,
> Uns etwas in uns vorzustellen, zu untersuchen
> uns bemühen,
> Und, um von allem Irrthum, Trug und Widerspruch
> uns abzuziehen,
> Die Phantasie verbessern lernen, zumal, da
> alles auf der Welt,
> Für uns, das, was es ist, nicht ist; nein,
> das was man sich vorgestellt.

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Brockes continues by saying that the entrance to our soul, the senses, should be opened to provide a clear path to our mind. The senses should not be hindered by passion, the routine of life or the prejudices of others for these would distort our power of judgment:

> Nun sind die Sinnen eigentlich, wenn man es recht erwegt, die Thüren,
> Wodurch die Körper unsre Seelen, und unsre Seelen sie berühren.
> Die Thüren müssen denn geöffnet, gerad' und nicht gekrümmet, stehn,
> Damit die Vorwürf' auch gerad' und richtig durch dieselbe gehn.
> Es muß kein Dunst von Leidenschaft und Vorurtheil die Gäng erfüllen;
> Kein Spinnen Webe der Gewohnheit den freyen Durchgang uns verhüllen:
> Weil, wo die Vorwürf unsern Geist, von aussen schon verstellt, berühren,
> Sie ihn in seiner Urtheils=Kraft behindern und gewiß verführen.

For this ultimate purpose man should use every effort to study the nature of things based on physical evidence as well as his own experience. Then man should procede to study mankind and begin by getting to know himself because self-knowledge leads one best to the knowledge of others.

This, the poet concludes, is the first step toward truth and wisdom. If we have started on this step we will be more certain to reach the stage of the spirits. But there is no doubt that we will never reach that stage without having gained wisdom:

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Man spanne denn zu diesem Endzweck die
Kraft an, wie es sich gehört.
Man lege die Physik zum Grunde, die uns
der Körper Wesen lehrt,
Und uns derselben Eigenschaften bloß durch
Erfahrungen erklährt.
Dann lerne man die Menschen kennen, und
fange bey sich selber an,
Weil Selbst=Erkenntniß uns am besten zur
Kenntniß andrer leiten kann.

Wann wir bey dieser Sprosse zur Wahr= und
Weisheit angefangen;
So werden wir zur andern Staffel der Geister
sicherer gelangen,
Zu welcher, ohne daß man jene zuerst bestieg
und da nicht irrt;
Ohn' Irrtum, sonder Fehl und Zweifel, man
nimmer mehr gelangen wird.
(VIII:575)

Brockes states his philosophy in very precise terms. There is no doubt that he has contemplated nature, and after a profound study of its beauty and utility he realizes that ascending the "ladder of creation" alone does not lead to God. The way to God is found in intellectual awareness, self-knowledge and understanding of mankind, as well as the study of nature. By reaching this full level of consciousness man prepares himself for the higher stage of being.

We see how the poet's philosophy in his late years has advanced to a high level of maturity, and he has reached insights into this life that go far beyond those of his contemporaries.

Brockes' concept of "Weisheit" is found in

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Herder's idea of "Humanität" formulated in his Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit (1784-1791). Herder's "Humanität" needs closer examination now. He says that man's development from childhood on is geared toward reaching consciousness. Herder speaks of "Begriffe" and using the senses to reach the soul, using the same terminology as Brockes.

> Ein Kind hat noch wenig Bewußtseyn, ob seine Seele gleich sich unablässig übt, zu demselben zu gelangen, und sich seiner selbst durch alle Sinne zu vergewissern. All sein Streben nach Begriffen hat den Zweck, sich in der Welt Gottes gleichsam zu besinnen und seines Daseyns mit menschlicher Energie froh zu werden.[16]

A child's soul is striving for self-knowledge through its senses. In his searching for concepts he seeks to find himself and to find joy in his human existence.

Herder laments that not many men strive for the attainment of their true human destiny. They are so dominated by their animalistic instincts, that their innate intellectual powers never can develop. He asks, how many men become detached enough to study and understand life? Yet it is this God-like humanity, "die Gottähnliche Humanität" which will allow our spirit to enter the higher stage of being.

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It is clear that Brockes' definition of "Weisheit" and Herder's explanation of "Humanität" are the same and attainment of either "Weisheit" or "Humanität" will allow man entrance to the level of the spirits.

Brockes' poem from Volume Eight demonstrates once more his own capacity for intellectual growth. The years of studying and writing, not to forget an active community life, have given the poet wisdom not so clearly evident in the earlier volumes.

Brockes' poetic development was previously illustrated in his interpretations of the ascent to God. The step from the poetic to the purely philosophical proves the poet's wisdom and maturity.

The conventional thought:

> Du musst zum grossen Schöpfer steigen
> Auf Leitern seiner Creatur

becomes a vision of the stars, the rays of the sun or a landscape leading the poet on toward God. Later it becomes a philosophical program of self-improvement which includes all facets of life and can bring man closer to realizing his full potential.

Brockes' late poem is not only valuable as a testimony to the poet's insights it is also valuable as a lesson for the modern reader. Few

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philosophers express their thoughts as clearly and succinctly as the poet Brockes does in this poem and it would be worthwhile to see it take its place in a modern anthology.

It is doubtful that Herder was influenced by Brockes although he knew his work. The point is that Herder's idea of "Humanität" published at the end of the century was already formulated many years earlier. The fact that Brockes, one of the "many lesser writers", formulated ideas that were more advanced that Kant's, who in 1755 merely followed the conventional, proves again how many ideas that came into prominence during the classical age of the century had already found expression in the writing of its earlier decades.

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NOTES

1. Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (1936; rpt. New York: Harper, 1960), p. 183.

2. John Locke, Essay concerning Human Understanding, ed. J. W. Yolton (London, 1964), II, p. 49.

3. Lovejoy, page 145. The author explains that this quotation is found in a letter by Leibniz usually omitted in the editions of his collected writings. It can be found in Buchenau and Cassirer's: Leibniz: Hauptschriften zur Grundlegung der Philosophie, II, 556-559. (Lovejoy, Notes to Lecture V, p. 347.)

4. Lovejoy, p. 243.

5. p. 248.

6. p. 247.

7. Albrecht von Haller, Gedichte, ed. Ludwig Hirzel (Frauenfeld, 1882), p. 44.

8. Haller, p. 141.

9. Lovejoy, p. 217.

10. Immanuel Kant, Sämmtliche Werke, ed. G. Hartenstein (Leipzig, 1867), I, p. 337.

11. Lovejoy, p. 241.

12. Johann Gottfried von Herder, Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit. Sämmtliche Werke, ed. J. v. Müller (Stuttgart, 1827), IV, p. 214.

13. Herder, p. 233.

14. Friedrich von Schiller, Philosophische Briefe. Sämmtliche Werke (Stuttgart, 1847), X, p. 301.

15. Walter Schatzberg, "Scientific Themes in the Popular Literature and the Poetry of the German Enlightenment 1720-1760," Diss. Johns Hopkins 1966, pp. 211-223.

16. Herder, p. 225.

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Conclusion

The object of this dissertation was to study the poetic development of the poet Barthold Heinrich Brockes in his Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott. A study of this kind had become overdue for even the most recent histories and studies insist on the old myth that the later volumes of the collection are merely weak imitations of poems in Volume One.

It is true that there is repetition and mediocrity in Brockes' work. But what can be expected in nine volumes of nature descriptions? If a discriminating editor had selected Brockes' work more carefully the poet would never have been accused of mediocrity. However through the years the repetitions of his titles and themes as well as the length of his poems have discouraged readers from looking further.

It is easy to find the banal because it is so obvious but the truly exquisite hidden among long passages in the volumes of the 1730s or poems from the 1740s are only for those who will "linger and look".

Studies of Brockes have been concerned with his philosophy and his nature descriptions to

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bring to light his place as a typical poet of the Enlightenment. The critics, however, have been reserved in their value judgment possibly because they still harbor a prejudice against descriptive poetry.

Brockes' disregard for form is baffling for those students trained to judge a poem by its perfect rhyme and rhythm. Brockes' longer poems are analysed more easily in terms of fugal principles than in terms of poetic rules. The poet's observations often interjected with a qualifying remark, like "es scheint", "als ob", "als wie" are difficult to understand for the modern reader. He does not appreciate that these interjections, a common stylistic feature of the early eighteenth-century German poets, represent their attempt to develop a new style free of baroque metaphors.

The reader who is conditioned to the German poetry of and after the classical age will not find the harmony of content and form the poets of that era were striving to achieve. However, the classical age is a great synthesis of numerous thoughts and styles and many poetic and stylistic details found then are also found in the early eighteenth century, especially in Brockes' Irdisches Vergnügen.

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The result of this study demonstrate that Brockes' poetic insight and pure artistry developed to a high level and occasionally reached a perfection we do not expect to find until the classical age.

Invariably a comparison between analogous poems in the earlier and in the later volumes prove the later poems to be superior. In his descriptions of colors and the mood of autumn Brockes' impressionistic scenes of the later volumes far surpass the earlier descriptions. In these autumn scenes (1739 and 1746) his poetic power comes to full maturity. Especially in the passage from Volume Eight the harmony between content and form is a proof of Brockes' high achievement.

When Brockes discusses a topic close to his heart, such as sensory Worship of God he varies his approach from year to year and finally reaches a synthesis in a poem in 1746. Here he expresses all the ideas he had previously developed in simple melodious form.

Brockes' conceptual images illustrate his visionary powers and demonstrate again the poet's heightened creativity in his old age. Brockes the poet-painter of the small who admires the lowly

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moss can also envision himself engulfed in space and convey a mystical experience.

Brockes' development proceeds at all levels. The very basic skill, verbal artistry and inventiveness, grows hand in hand with his increased sensitivity and keen observation. His philosophical maturity although evident from the beginning finds its ultimate culmination in his old age. In his late poetry we find the highest level of his achievement. The poem "Die Weisheit" (1746) represents a synthesis of all of Brockes' teachings.

In this late poem Brockes expresses a concept of human wisdom which later was popularized by Herder as "Humanität". This proves again that many ideas that came to the fore during the classical age and found expression in elegant prose were already formulated at an earlier period.

Finally as last proof of Brockes' talent I shall now present the poem which was the cause of this investigation. I found this poem in Volume Six of the Irdisches Vergnügen and it impressed me so much that I could not understand why it was not included in any selections from Brockes or anthologies of German poetry. My subsequent research into Brockes criticism explained the omission: no one had

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bothered to look. It is unusual that Curt von Faber du Faur did not find it, for he has more selections from Brockes in his Tausend Jahre Deutscher Dichtung (New York, 1949) than any other anthologist of German poetry.

The following poem was published in Volume Six, 1739.

Beym Pflügen

Seh ich den regen Pflug, auf dunklem Grunde, ziehn:
Scheint mir der Ackersmann, sich gleichsam zu bemühn,
Der milden Mutter dunkles Kleid,
Mit einer neuen Zierlichkeit,
Und in der That mit schönen grünen Schnüren,
In der geraden Furchen Strichen, durch die bald grüne Saat, zu zieren.
Die grünen Schnüre werden endlich, durch den recht güldnen Stral der Sonnen,
Mit Golde gleichsam übersponnen,
Wodurch ein güldnes Tuch zuletzt die Mutter schmückt,
Bis endlich, wenn der Schmuck der Erden,
In unsre Scheunen eingeführt,
Die Körner, die vorhin das Feld geziert,
Für uns zu wirklichem und wahrem Golde werden.
(VI:77)

The title of the poem at first is misleading. Beym Pflügen would indicate that the narrator is actively engaged in plowing the field. However, as we begin to read the first two lines we realize the poet is observing the farmer at work. While he is watching, first concentrating on the dark ground, then on the farmer, he is beginning to imagine the changes that will take place on that field; however,

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they are imagined as happening right in front of his eyes. He sees the beautification of mother earth aided by man's toil and the rays of the sun. The dark ground is turning into green furrows and finally into golden fields. At the end of the poem the earth is again barren for her golden grain has been harvested and stored in man's barn. The golden rays of the sun which have entered into the green seeds and changed them into gold are now becoming the true gold for the nourishment and benefit of man.

The composition of the poem aids in the visualization of the scene. There are thirteen lines, rhyme scheme aa bb cc x f gg f. The first six lines move along slowly as if to emphasize the pushing and laboring as the farmer plows along. In lines five and six the "schönen, grünen Schnüren" and "geraden Furchen Strichen" express the slow metamorphoses of the dark earth into straight green furrows. In line nine there is a definite break for now the attention is focused on the next step in the cycle. The rhyme scheme f gg f "Erden, eingeführt, geziert, werden" indicates a finality. The general tone of the poem also changes. In the first part until line six the activities of the farmer are shown "er scheint sich zu bemühn die

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Mutter zu zieren". The next two lines are written in the passive voice and indicate how the earth is changing with the help of the sun: "die Schnüre werden übersponnen". In line nine the change has taken place. It is expressed in a direct statement in the present tense: "ein güldnes Tuch schmückt die Mutter". In lines ten to thirteen the golden grains are now reality, they were harvested and are becoming truly of value to man. In line thirteen a progressive tense is used: "sie werden zu wirklichem und wahrem Golde", expressing man's continuous dependence on nature as well as nature's continuous fertility.

The consistent imagery describing nature as she is dressed and decorated found in the words "Kleid, Zierlichkeit, Schmuck, Tuch, zieren" and "überspinnen" complements the idea of nature's beauty.

In final analysis this poem is truly representative of the philosophy of eighteenth-century man. Man and nature are interdependent for man has to do his share of labor in order to reap the benefits of the harvest. A heavenly sign, the sun, of course is an integral part of life. However, man envisions that all of nature serves him alone for he alone is able to enjoy and appreciate her beauty as well as her fruits.

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The existence of this poem in Volume Six alone refutes Newald's statement, that Brockes "die Ansätze des ersten Teiles nicht weiter entwickelt hat". It is hoped that through a more adequate knowledge of the best of the poet's work the myth of Brockes' poetic decline will disappear from the literary histories.

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APPENDIX

Some Anticipations of Goethe in the Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott.

1. Permanence in Change.

In Brockes' poetry concerned with the symbolism of the falling leaves the idea of permanence in change begins to crystallize over the years, as I discussed in Chapter II. Several stanzas found in the later volumes, specifically Volume Four (1732) and Volume Six (1739) anticipate Goethe's thoughts in his poem "Dauer im Wechsel" (1801) and in his "Zahme Xenien" (c. 1825).

Brockes: Ach! folge dem zwar sanft= doch nie
gehemmten Fluß
Der eilenden Natur, die Gottes Wille
treibet,
Die immer wandelbar verbleibet,
Nach dem unwandelbaren Schluß.
(IV:322)

Goethe: Wenn im Unendlichen dasselbe
Sich wiederholend ewig fließt,
Das tausendfältige Gewölbe
Sich kräftig ineinander schließt,
Strömt Lebenslust aus allen Dingen,
Dem Kleinsten wie dem größten Stern,
Und alles Drängen, alles Ringen
Ist ewige Ruh in Gott dem Herrn.
Zahme Xenien VI.

Brockes: Genieß der Gegenwart des Guten; laß
den Lauf
Der regen Zeiten, ohn Verdriessen,
Gelassen fliessen.
(VI:149)

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Goethe: Willst du nach den Früchten greifen
Eilig nimm dein Teil davon
Diese fangen an zu reifen,
Und die andern keimen schon;
Gleich mit jedem Regengusse
Ändert sich dein holdes Tal,
Ach, und in demselben Flusse
Schwimmst du nicht zu zweitenmal.
(Dauer im Wechsel)

2. Das Große im Kleinen.

In Chapter IV of this dissertation I discuss in detail Brockes' fascination with the idea of the large in the small, which leaves him with a sense of wonder and awe.

Brockes: Nicht nur was klein, ist in dem Grossen;
was Grosses, ob wirs gleich nicht meinen,
Ist überall unendlich groß, und folglich
groß auch in dem Kleinen.
(IV:159)

Goethe: Freudig war vor vielen Jahren
Eifrig so der Geist bestrebt,
Zu erforschen, zu erfahren,
Wie Natur im Schaffen lebt.
Und es ist das ewig Eine,
Das sich vielfach offenbart:
Klein das Große, groß das Kleine,
Alles nach der eignen Art,
Immer wechselnd, fest sich haltend,
Nah und fern und fern und nah,
Sich gestaltend, umgestaltend:
Zum Erstaunen bin ich da.
(Parabase, 1820)

3. The Limitation of Man's Intellect in the Face of the Creation.

The last line in the Goethe poem quoted above can also express Brockes' awe of the creation. Brockes emphasizes frequently (as discussed in Chapter III) man's duty to admire and enjoy the creation

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and not to attempt to understand it.

> Begreiffen können wir die Wercke Gottes nicht.
> Der Mensch scheint nicht dazu gemacht zu seyn;
> Wol aber ist er zugericht't
> Mit Seel und Geist durch aller Sinnen Thüren
> Der überall verhüllten Gottheit Schein
> Als gegenwwärtig zu verspühren.
> (I:289)

> Er will sich hier von uns nicht fassen,
> Und nur allein bewundern lassen.
> (II:558)

4. Observation of Green Shadows in Nature.

Goethe has long been considered to have been the first observer of colorful shadows in the landscape. However, Brockes with his keen observation also saw green shadows.

> Brockes: Komm, lass uns denn die grünen Schatten,
> der Felsen aufgethürmte Höhn,
> Samt den einsiedlerischen Büschen, die
> Zier und Pracht der Welt besehn!
> (VII:7)

Goethe describes in his Farbenlehre, "Harzreise im Winter" the shadows on a winter afternoon as he was descending the Brocken:

> da verwandelte sich die Schattenfarbe in ein Grün, das nach seiner Klarheit einem Meergrün, nach seiner Schönheit einem Smaragdgrün verglichen werden konnte.
> Farbenlehre Goethes Werke, ed. S. Kalischer (Berlin, 1879), XXXV, § 75.

5. Gegenständliches Denken.

In Chapter III of this dissertation I observe that one of the themes in Brockes' work is his advocation of a total response to the world in the

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process of perception. Brockes emphasizes the interdependence of our senses, our mind and soul. Intellectual and sensory faculties come into play in the understanding of even the simplest object. Objective thinking brings about the configuration of the object in the mind.

This type of thinking is very close to Goethe's "gegenständliches Denken", a process of observation in which the mind and the observer's total psyche como into play. Goethe's "gegenständliches Denken" is an advanced psychological insight. It was formulated in our century as man's true manner of perception by proponents of Gestalt psychology. Thus Brockes predates Goethe and through Goethe the Gestalt psychologists of the twentieth century.

These findings again illustrate that many images, themes and concepts found in the poetry and thought of the late eighteenth century are formulated and expressed in the earlier decades of the century.

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VITAE

I, Elly M. Friese Apitz, was born in Kiel, Germany on March 13, 1935. I received my primary and secondary education in Hamburg. I attended the Heilwigschule, Oberrealschule für Mädchen until 1954. In the fall of that year I entered Goucher College, Towson, Maryland and earned a B. A. degree in 1958. In 1959 I received the M. A. degree from the Department of German at The Johns Hopkins University. I continued my graduate studies there as a Jr. Instructor on a Gilman Fellowship until 1964. Since 1965 I have been Instructor of German at the University of Maryland, College Park, Md. I married Robert I. Apitz of Laurel, Maryland in 1962 and we have a daughter born in 1965.

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