

# Johan Ernst Gunnerus and the Quest for the Soul in the Eighteenth Century

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Although recognized by scholars of eighteenth-century Danish-Norwegian cultural and political history as an influential figure in the Norwegian Enlightenment, with impressive transnational connections, Johan Ernst Gunnerus (1718–1773) receives scant mention outside the Norwegian discourse in discussions on the *siècle des lumières*. In fact, his contributions to the eighteenth-century philosophico-theological debates on the soul have hardly been studied at all, in any language. His influence and accomplishments, especially in the context of eighteenth-century ecclesiastical politics, as well as his scholarly explorations in diverse disciplines, distinguish him as one of the founding fathers of modern Norwegian culture. A recent conference in Trondheim that generated an anthology on Gunnerus, entitled *Life and Work* (2012),<sup>1</sup> was a response to this need to redress the scholarly neglect.

Born in Christiania, the son of a physician, Gunnerus' intellectual preoccupation extended beyond theology.<sup>2</sup> In line with the decree issued by King Christian VI in 1741 that all Danish-Norwegian theology students study at the University of Halle, Germany, which was a centre of multiple influences, such as the Protestant Reformation, Pietism and German Enlightenment, Gunnerus also attended lectures on natural history and law upon enrolling at the university in 1742. In 1744, he moved to Jena, where he graduated, worked as a tutor, and eventually, in 1753, became an adjunct there at the Department of Philosophy. However, within a year he left for Denmark, where he first became a pastor, then appointed professor in Copenhagen and eventually bishop in Norway, at a time when the entire country had a total of only four bishops and 480 pastors.<sup>3</sup> From 1758 to 1773, Gunnerus served as bishop in Trondheim and became, in 1760, one of the founders of the Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters.

These biographical details account only partially for the range of his accomplishments and his diverse scholarly interests, evident from his publications on

wide-ranging topics. In fact, Gunnerus could be deemed the founder of Norwegian botany. He corresponded with Carl von Linné and undertook a vast array of studies relating to geography and natural history.<sup>4</sup> His writings on nature and international law that drew on the works of Joachim Georg Darjes were published in eight volumes.<sup>5</sup> Precisely these dimensions of his scholarship remain unacknowledged in an otherwise extensive body of research on the legal history of the Enlightenment era. As a theologian, the scope of his scholarly investigations also included dogmatic theology and, not unlike his contemporaries, he ultimately published a textbook on metaphysics.<sup>6</sup> Even this dimension of his work seems to have entirely escaped the lens of scholarship.

In all these areas, he maintained close contact with diverse circles of Continental scholars, and not just with those he had known during his time in Halle and Jena. As such, he can be considered an important agent of cultural transfer between Norway and mainland Europe, and vice versa, whereby Central Germany – to be precise, the German territories between Prussia, Saxony and Thuringia – came to play an important role. Inasmuch as Gunnerus was well versed in the debates of mid-eighteenth century, and had applied them to the Danish-Norwegian context, he can also be considered a key figure in the contentious theologico-philosophical debates in Denmark-Norway that exemplify the complex relationship between Enlightenment and the Pietist movement. The following study seeks to turn the spotlight on the historical links between the Norwegian culture of the eighteenth century and the contemporaneous scholarly debates that took place in Central Europe.

Gunnerus scholars typically highlight links that connect him to state and international law, botany and natural history as well as to Norwegian national history and Church history. But in order to be able to situate Gunnerus in a European context, it is important to highlight one of the most contentious issues that attracted the scholarly attention of numerous eighteenth-century theologians, philosophers of history and physicians alike, which remains central to my research: the eighteenth-century debates on the soul. They clearly show how inextricably Pietism and the Enlightenment were interwoven, and the diverse points at which they intersected. Furthermore, Gunnerus' publications illuminate the significant role he came to play in this public debate, as well as his ability to bring forth new and influential ideas.

How central the topic of the soul was for Gunnerus can be gleaned from the fact that he decided to include his treatise on the soul, *Betragtninger over Sielens Udødelighed* (Considerations on the Immortality of the Soul), in the first edition of the *Skrifter* of the Trondheim Society, which he had founded in 1761.<sup>7</sup> While

this may seem like yet another extensive treatise, the fact that it highlights many dimensions directly relevant to this topic demonstrates Gunnerus' position in the 'Continental' debate on the soul. The significance of the immortality of the soul in Gunnerus' work is also borne out by his short dissertation, *De Exsistentia & possibilitate resurrectionis mortuorum* (On the Existence and the Possibility of the Resurrection of Deaths), from 1760, and a somewhat more comprehensive text from 1748, *Beurteilung des Beweises von der vorherbestimmten Uebereinstimmung* (Evaluation of the Proof of Pre-established Harmony), which he wrote, like many of his other works, in Jena. Written in the characteristic style of rationalist philosophers, it is a singular piece that sought to respond to corresponding discourses in the German territories and was eventually published in Leipzig and Jena. *Beurteilung*, in particular, shows that the question of the soul had been discussed in the mid-eighteenth century, particularly among German scholars, in reference to the philosophy of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and Christian Wolff and their heterogeneous group of pupils and students at various universities in Central Germany, predominantly in Halle, Jena, and Leipzig. Leibniz's doctrine on *harmonia praestabilita* was among the more recurrent topics and the debate on the soul was the terrain on which theologians and philosophers sought to establish their own competence and influence.

The quest to understand the soul had far-reaching implications, as much for traditional theology and philosophy as for the scholarship on nature and the human body. In the eighteenth century, this was embedded in a holistic and rationalist view of the world that had brought about a seismic shift in traditional theology and philosophy and altered how they would be linked from then on. In what follows, I offer a brief account of two opposing perspectives, each representing one end of the long thread of the eighteenth-century discourse on the soul, which essentially served as an empty signifier that allowed multiple, often contradictory, interpretations of theological questions of the greatest significance. Subsequently, I will explore various dimensions of a central nodal point in the contentious debates on the soul between theology and philosophy that were discussed among Gunnerus' contemporaries, namely, its immortality and freedom. Other authors who participated in this debate – some quite prominent – will be mentioned in addition to the contributions of classical authors, such as Leibniz and Descartes, that form the authoritative discursive backdrop for discussions on the soul.

Another reason to situate Gunnerus within the context of the eighteenth-century debates is to bring to light the extent to which he succeeded in conveying the central ideas derived from these Central European Enlightenment debates to a Norwegian discursive landscape. At the same time, it also serves as a commentary

on Gunnerus' published texts on the soul, which lend themselves perfectly to the Enlightenment debate on this subject.

### *What the Soul Could Be: Two Contrary Perspectives in the Eighteenth Century*

At the end of the eighteenth century, young Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher's *Über die Religion* (On Religion, 1799) rejected the notion that personhood – and not just the soul – had an afterlife, because this notion would be 'totally irreligious'.<sup>8</sup> Schleiermacher was reacting to the Emanuel Swedenborg 'event',<sup>9</sup> and in so doing had opposed the changes in the Christian confession of faith that Swedenborg and others had proposed in their discourse about the soul – in which Gunnerus had also participated. If the soul were immortal, then certain traditional Christian theological positions would have to be abandoned. What would redemption by Christ and the Last Judgement mean in that eventuality? What sense would it make to call God a judge? What about the moral responsibility of the individual? Schleiermacher looked to past discussions on these problems to conclude that the survival of personhood after death was in no way compatible with Christianity.

Another nodal point, or *point de capiton*,<sup>10</sup> within the debate on the soul was the *Preisfrage*, or the prize question, posed by the Prussian Academy of Sciences for their 1753 competition – a neglected aspect in the history of psychology and medicine.<sup>11</sup> 'What', they asked, 'is the connection between the brain and the nerves during muscle movement in the body? Is there a link to a fluid matter, and what is the nature of this fluid?' The winner of this competition was Claude-Nicolas Le Cat, a surgeon from Rouen, who postulated a very subtle form of material fluidity in the nerves, which consisted of two parts: the first, a liquid resembling sap, and the second, a *fluidum* originating partly from nerve lymph and partly from *l'esprit vivifiant & universel*.<sup>12</sup> Le Cat referred to this *fluidum* as an *amphibium*, as bearing an amphibian essence: between matter and immaterial spirit, an *aura mundi* that acted as an agent between them, but not like fire, rather as a subtle light, or an electric substance.<sup>13</sup> Hence the nerve-sap consisted of *anima mundi* and the lymph.<sup>14</sup> This *fluidum* was indelibly integrated into the human body and passed through the neural tracts, serving to link brain and body.

Another esteemed publication<sup>15</sup> rejected Le Cat's view that the nerve sap had metaphysical or spiritual qualities or could be identified as the soul itself. This sap had to be resolutely material, and although it remained imperceptible to the

intellect and the senses, it was nonetheless the cause of all muscle movement. The sap was categorized as an empirical, not metaphysical, phenomenon, but, potentially, was not an object of epistemology. As a matter of fact, it was not this latter, rather non-speculative, work that had been lauded by the Academy, but, rather, Le Cat's dissertation, which had combined Neoplatonic principles with practical medical observations borrowed from researchers including, inter alia, Pieter van Musschenbroeck, Marcello Malpighi, Francis Glisson, Raymond Vieussens, Giovanni Alfonso Borelli, and Robert Hooke.<sup>16</sup>

The two perspectives offered by Le Cat and Schleiermacher represent the disparities between their contemporaries in how they understood the soul – as *fluidum spirituosum*, *spiritus animales*, or as *Lebensgeister* (life-spirits or spirits embodying life), the highest manifestation of 'blood within the blood' in the physiology of Galen, an idea René Descartes may have borrowed in his treatise *De homine* (1662) to postulate a subtle but 'material' breath or an acutely 'animate' flame.<sup>17</sup> Diverse texts – including those authored by Swedenborg, Albrecht von Haller, Johann August Unzer, Justus Christian Hennings, Friedrich Christoph Oetinger, and many other physicians, theologians, and philosophers – broached the issue of the obscure position and indefinite quality of this *fluidum* or 'life-spirit', as the conduit between soul and body.<sup>18</sup> This offered the gateway for bridging the strong Cartesian dualism, for claiming subtle material substances as the basis of the immortal soul, and, eventually, but predominantly in the early nineteenth century, for asserting the reality of the sensory apparitions of the souls of the deceased.<sup>19</sup>

At the end of the eighteenth century, there was still no dominant 'enlightened' position on the question of what constituted the soul. No noteworthy development can be detected in any one area. But, as outlined below, the positions and arguments demonstrate the significance of the debates for theology and philosophy, for these debates in which Gunnerus intervened were complex and convoluted.

### *The 'Nodal Point': The Soul, Its Immortality, and Freedom*

The assertion that the soul had a material dimension was merely one perspective in the larger discussion on the soul and stood in contrast with the framework of rationalist psychology, a metaphysical discipline in the rationalist philosophy of Christian Wolff and his followers – a heterogeneous group, whose members saw themselves as followers of Leibniz. In the debates about the soul, some dominant perspectives within the various schools and learned circles intersected.

Theological and philosophical apologetics in these debates played a significant role. Hermann Samuel Reimarus, the most famous critic of the Christian confessions in Germany, constituted in mid-eighteenth century, was a strong defender of a natural religion cleansed of supernatural elements, and thus of a modified Christianity. In 1756, five years before Gunnerus' *Betrachtungen*, Reimarus published his *Vernunftlehre* (Doctrine on Reason, 1756), two years after he had first published his reflections on natural religion in *Die vornehmsten Wahrheiten der natürlichen Religion* (The Principal Truths of Natural Religion, 1754).<sup>20</sup> Two aspects are remarkable in respect of Reimarus', who viewed the soul as free and immortal, in particular, contrary to Julien Offray de La Mettrie, who published his *Histoire naturelle de l'âme* in 1745, and *L'homme machine* only three years later.<sup>21</sup> La Mettrie's soul is a material substance that functioned much like the body on which it depends and died with the body. This view came to serve as the chief foil for attacks against materialism and alleged atheism, notwithstanding the fact that not all proponents of the materiality of the soul were atheists.<sup>22</sup> After all, Le Cat's study had been honoured only five years after La Mettrie's work, and thus represented an alternative to the non-materialist, Neoplatonist and materialist positions.

The thesis of the soul's materiality seemed to deny not only its immortality but also its freedom. If the soul was like the body, then it had to be subject to the same mechanistic and geometric laws, and even these laws had their origin in the order of an eternal, wise God. Consequently, as a finite and material entity, the soul would be unable to change either the laws themselves or its own position inside the so-called 'clockwork of the world' (*Uhrwerk der Welt*). A materialist standpoint was not inevitably atheistic, for Christian polemicists often depicted their enemies using the faces of Spinoza or Epicurus, and imputed to them an inability to account for freedom and morality.<sup>23</sup>

The materialist position was construed by its Christian opponents as a frontal attack against religion and the rational concept of God, developed most prominently by Leibniz as a third way between the Cartesian dualism of God and nature and the Spinozistic equation of the two. In these debates, Gunnerus defended not just the ideal of universal divine predestination. Following the Lisbon earthquake, a scholarly debate about Leibniz' *Theodicy* ensued,<sup>24</sup> with Voltaire,<sup>25</sup> whose polemical texts attacked the anthropomorphism of a rationalistic God, emerging as a key figure in it. Even though he identified himself as a 'theist' and did not repudiate religion, his opponents still portrayed him as the exemplar of an antireligious scholar.<sup>26</sup> The rational and, concurrently, Christian defence fortified the Leibniz-Wolffian demand to describe all reality as thoroughly comprehensible, logical and teleological, in the realm of nature, the soul and God. The arguments

following the earthquake against Voltaire's supposed aggression overflowed with unwavering commitment to universal divine predestination.<sup>27</sup> Not just plants and insects, minerals and stars – elements in the universal chain of things – but also man, with his body and faculties of the soul, were integrated into this chain. Yet Wolff, in his *Cosmologia* (1731), and his follower, Swedenborg, had developed extensive hierarchies of ranges and degrees in the form of a metaphorical stepladder, starting with the inanimate nature at the lowest rung and ascending right up to a mathematical point, considered the origin of the universe. In Swedenborg's doctrine from the 1740s, for instance, man, endowed with a soul, was by no means just a rung on this ladder but, rather, embodied the fulfilment of the very intention of the universe.<sup>28</sup> And Gunnerus may have included the critical correction of Wolff's doctrine on series and degrees, written by the Halle philosopher, Christian Albrecht Körber, who asserted that the soul did not belong to the realm of nature – in response to Spinozism, which essentially interrogated the possibility that the soul could be deemed inanimate.<sup>29</sup>

For that very reason, the argument centred on *spontaneitas*, or the free will of the soul, and attempted to counter all materialistic-mechanistic objections. Casting doubt on these properties came with the risk of being identified as a doubter of the moral capability of man. *Spontaneitas* of the soul was a staple of the Wolffian philosophy, which played a significant role here.<sup>30</sup> A soul that did not possess the properties of matter could be inferred as indestructible and able to conserve all its intelligible faculties, such as memory, reason (*ratio*, *Vernunft*), mind or intellect (*Verstand*), free will, personality, moral progression and, potentially, wisdom. After death, the soul remained in a state of distinct yet higher perceptions, for its awareness as *individuum morale* extended beyond death. The human soul, Wolff maintains, is only a *spiritus* and not a *spiritus perfectissimus*, and it is finite when compared to God, but it is nonetheless indestructible and immortal. These key assertions can be found in Wolff's *Psychologia rationalis* (Rational Psychology, from 1734).<sup>31</sup> The Leibnizian and Wolffian doctrines on the soul did not constitute an 'esoteric', dark undercurrent in the Age of Enlightenment, as reason's 'Other';<sup>32</sup> in fact, they form the core of Enlightenment philosophy that had been taught to generations of theologians, philosophers, lawyers, and physicians – and not just to those who received a university education in Halle, Jena or Göttingen.

Traditional elements of confessions of faith differed from this rationalist psychology; in regard to the End of the World, the Last Judgement, the resurrection of the body and the eternity of punishment. But disagreements on these issues do not necessarily reflect a deeper conflict – for instance, between the Pietist and Enlightenment thinkers – as if such orientations were fundamentally monolithic and

homogeneous. The texts of Christian confessions were controversially debated at different junctures of the eighteenth-century. In Norway, the conventional mapping of the differences between the Enlightenment and Pietist thinkers is often also applied to the relationship between Erik Pontoppidan and Gunnerus,<sup>33</sup> which reduces the eighteenth-century complexity to the simplicity of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century categories.

### *Gunnerus and the Soul*

These disputes were addressed in the work of the philosopher, theologian and clergyman, Gunnerus. In *Betragtninger*, he intervened in a broad literary debate that generated seemingly endless literature, to name a few, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* (1739); *Gedanken von dem Zustande der Seele nach dem Tode* (Thoughts on the State of the Soul after the Death, 1748) by Georg Friedrich Meier, Gunnerus' teacher and opponent in his *Beurtheilung des Beweises von der vorherbestimmten Uebereinstimmung*; and Pontoppidan's *Tractat om Sielens Udødelighed samt dens Tilstand i og efter Døden, stadfæstet ved Guds Ord og den sunde Fornuft* (Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul in accordance with Reason and Holy Scripture, 1762).<sup>34</sup> Gunnerus' adversaries and the authoritative sources on which he drew, as well as his goals, may at first glance seem the same as those of other rationalist theologians.

In *Betragtninger*, he first addresses the relationship between free will and morality and presupposes the mechanistic, dualistic Cartesian worldview, which postulates that the body functions like a machine. The effects of all material things, even the most elusive or subtle elements, were necessarily and irreversibly determinate. If freedom existed only in human thought, the soul would have to be inherently immaterial, as matter was not capable of thought<sup>35</sup> – a position also asserted in the Wolffian psychology – and like any spirit was merely *substantia simplex*, or basic substance.<sup>36</sup>

But Gunnerus' views seemingly conflicted with other popular ones, such as those of Andreas Rüdiger, the influential critic of Wolff, who believed that the soul was not only created, but by virtue of the fact that it had been created it resembled matter and possessed its properties, much like the Cartesian extension.<sup>37</sup> Gunnerus proved to be a radical dualist at this point. The concept of the soul, for Gunnerus, remained somewhat empty, even though it was neither 'nothing' nor 'anything'. But Gunnerus rendered the soul devoid of all corporeal properties, in order to avoid the risk of it being construed as a machine or capable of death or



a death-like sleep.<sup>38</sup> He had thereby also circumvented the question of the soul's location within the body, which others variously believed to be the pineal gland, or other sections of the brain, or an organic substance diffused throughout the body as the nerve fluid or *spiritus animalis*, or the *non materialis* in the blood.<sup>39</sup>

Gunnerus thus proposes a relatively uncomplicated defence of human free will, buttressed by his assertion of the soul's immateriality. At the end of *Betraktninger*, he discloses this goal, linking the soul's immortality to its persistence as the foundation of personal identity. The soul, according to Gunnerus, had to be identified with the moral individual, because denying its immortality would give rise to immorality. Postulating the soul as mortal was tantamount not just to sanctioning escape from punishment altogether if, by some sleight of hand, misdeeds went unpunished during one's lifetime, but, furthermore, to introducing a fatal error in the conceptualisation of the state (*Staatsfebler*). It undermined the legitimacy of the state, derived predominantly from religion as its most enduring foundation, for man-made laws, while then serving as the highest instance of authority, could yet be evaded.<sup>40</sup> Gunnerus thus acknowledged the political importance of religion, the impermanence of law, and the immortality of the soul. Consider this line of thinking in Immanuel Kant's later postulations of God (*Höchstes Gut*), freedom, immortality (and *mundus intelligibilis*) and his well-known assertion that virtue would be a chimera, morality an *absurdum practicum*, and life meaningless, without those postulates. And it is important to bear in mind that at the time Kant formulated his postulates he had banished their objects (God, freedom, and statehood) from the realm of theoretical reason.<sup>41</sup> Gunnerus concludes his *Betraktninger* with a comment on their indispensable utility for the state – not for the individual. Here he sided with Pontoppidan, who in his *Tractat om Sielens Udødelighed* (Treatise on the Immortality) primarily attacked La Mettrie for rejecting the notion that human responsibility continued after death.<sup>42</sup>

Returning to a question of a rather more anatomical nature, if the soul was neither an organ nor matter, what impact would it have on the body and its various parts? Cartesians, who shared Gunnerus' view of the soul, had two alternatives at hand. One was the notion of 'pre-established harmony', as elaborated by Leibniz and his followers, according to which body and soul could not impact one another, but had been programmed by God to harmonize and interact with one another within a system of universal harmony. The other possibility, occasionalism, inherited from Descartes, was predominantly defended by the Oratorian Christocentric philosopher, Nicolas Malebranche, who postulated that God Himself intervened at the moment a connection was established between body and soul. Both positions faced heavy criticism in mid-eighteenth century, but it was

mostly the occasionalist position that had to put up with most criticism because it postulated perpetual supernatural miracles.<sup>43</sup> In a similar vein, some Wolffian philosophers, including Meier, tried to modify his notion of 'pre-established harmony' in favour of freedom and responsibility, particularly in response to the accusation that both soul and body would be pure *automatons* inside a pre-established universe. Meier and others claimed an influx of the soul into the body, as a wholly idealistic (or intuited) act, not a real one. In his former *Beurtheilung des Beweises von der vorherbestimmten Uebereinstimmung*, Gunnerus attacked not only the occasionalists and harmonists but also the combination that Meier had proposed.<sup>44</sup> He proposed the real and mutual influence, *influxus realis et mutuus*, between soul and body.<sup>45</sup> This philosophy was represented by the aforementioned Andreas Rüdiger, who had published his *Herrn Christian Wolffens Meinung von dem Wesen der Seele und eines Geistes überhaupt; und Andreas Rüdigers Gegen-Meinung* (Mr Christian Wolff's View of the Essence of the Soul and a Ghost in General; and Andreas Rüdiger's Opposite View) as early as 1727. But in contrast to Gunnerus, Rüdiger displayed greater rigor in asserting that the gap between body and soul was not insurmountable, because Rüdiger's extended soul was not material in the Cartesian and Wolffian sense, but elastic.<sup>46</sup> Elasticity was a standard contemporaneous term for explicating *imponderabilia* like ether or unidentified fluids, with properties similar to organic substances.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, Rüdiger's soul was certainly immortal, but possessed the quality of matter as 'extension'.

In light of his theory concerning the real and reciprocal influence of body and soul, Gunnerus' adherence to the notion of the radical immateriality of the soul seems inconsistent. Moreover, he discusses no elements of mediation, such as *spiritus animales* or nerve-fluids. He confines himself to claiming the double influx and the discreteness of the substances. But several times in his *Beurtheilung*, he refers to his friend from Jena, Joachim Georg Darjes, who argued – contrary to Leibniz and Wolff – that substances, including body and soul, could reciprocally affect one another.<sup>48</sup> Darjes seemed to endorse Rüdiger's position, but Gunnerus does not appear to have explored the former's theory any further on this point.

In the 1740s, Swedenborg, likewise, developed the notion of co-established harmony, drawing in part from the work of Le Cat, the aforementioned Prussian Academy prize-winner in 1753, who, in turn, may also have been influenced by Swedenborg. In his *Oeconomia regni animalis* (1740–1741), Swedenborg asserted that the soul could possibly be identical to its intermediaries and their manifestation in the body, which is to say, it could be identical to the purest form of blood within the nerves. The body, according to Swedenborg, also housed the soul, which had been implanted in the maternal womb by the male seed.<sup>49</sup> As Sweden-

borg and Le Cat viewed it, the soul as a ‘finite spirit’ was the link between divine infinity, *anima mundi*, or even God, because all things were interwoven, in ascending and descending mathematical order. Swedenborg noted the speculative hypothesis of Anthony van Leeuwenhoek, who hoped to see, with his own eyes, the *animalcula*-bearing organs preserved in water like salt crystals – when he dissected them. For Swedenborg, this would suggest the universality of the metaphorical stepladder of the world in both the natural and the spiritual kingdoms.<sup>50</sup> This more vitalist approach tried to overcome the static, mechanistic and dualistic view of the link between body and soul.<sup>51</sup> What invigorated the life of the body, and the soul, as part of the body, was not the soul itself but the life-bearing spirit; a trope Gunnerus used in his interpretation of *Ecclesiastes*, in all probability similar to the distinction between the lifeless soul and the spirit of life, as Augustine had claimed.<sup>52</sup> But now, once more, in the mid-eighteenth-century debate on the soul, many thinkers avoided the question of whether the soul was of divine origin or, as Swedenborg had postulated, a part of the body itself, to be vitalized by divine breath.<sup>53</sup>

Gunnerus’ campaign against pre-established harmony, as it were, was rooted in a conservative attitude, insofar as he did not expressly concede an organic reciprocity between body and soul. But the reason for his opposition was different. Gunnerus saw a vain attempt at theodicy in Meier’s suggestion that the possibility of an ‘idealistic’ influence had to be considered despite the harmony: Meier, Gunnerus believed, had not solved this old problem with pre-established harmony. If God had pre-programmed all things in the world at its origin – including the interactions between body and soul – He was also the originator of sin and had rendered human freedom impossible. In his assessment of Meier’s proof of pre-established harmony, Gunnerus observed that Meier would achieve greater honour if he could show that pre-established harmony was compatible with freedom, as he put it, *contingentia subjectiva sive libertas a necessitate sc. interna physica* – or, in other words, was freed from necessity.<sup>54</sup> This was his strongest objection to the notion of pre-established harmony.

At the same time, Gunnerus rejected Meier’s objection that the *influxus physicus* would be Spinozistic, because he assumed that the interaction between body and soul did not require God’s direct or indirect intervention. Gunnerus maintained that an influxionist could well be an orthodox Christian.<sup>55</sup> For Gunnerus, both body and soul were only analytically connected in the harmonist’s system, and appeared like ‘dead lumps’ (*totte Klumpen*).<sup>56</sup> Therefore, he aspired to describe a stronger bond between them, one that would enable, on the one hand, a vital and mutual influx, and on the other hand, the efficacy both of the soul’s free will

and of God's predestination.<sup>57</sup> Body and soul were real matter, operated on a real plane, and not merely on an idealistic or intuitive one, as in Leibniz's system. All changes in the world were real and not idealistic, or a pure consequence of the imagination of the monads.<sup>58</sup> But Gunnerus did not equate 'real' with 'corporeal', and, in fact, the precise meaning is not clear. Only his opposition to Meier's 'ideal' influx seems clear. The notion of 'real' connoted an existence bearing dimensions, but not in a purely idealist sense. Also, God had to stay at a 'where' (ποῦ) before the creation of the world: at a *locus absolutus*.<sup>59</sup> The existence of a purely idealistic space seemed unthinkable. This position was shared by many theologians from the 1750s on, particularly Theosophists such as Oetinger, who harked back to Isaac Newton to explicitly designate that space ποῦ, while protesting against idealistic tendencies within the Leibniz-Wolffian philosophy and its theological followers.<sup>60</sup> These were the dogmatic fronts between which the philosophy of nature had to position itself.

### *The immortal soul*

One of the central components, or crucial points, of the Wolffian philosophy was its presupposition that the soul, as simple substance, was immortal and indestructible, except through the Wolffian notion of annihilation (*annihilatio*).<sup>61</sup> One interpretation of this view was proposed by Rüdiger, the Leipzig-based philosopher, who regarded the soul as not immortal – that is to say, eternal per se – because immortality was unique only to God. On the contrary, the soul had the properties of all created and finite beings. The only reason for its perpetuity and persistence was that God had imputed these qualities to the soul as a sign of His mercy.<sup>62</sup> This more voluntaristic tendency – a God who acted graciously, possibly even against His own order – differs from Gunnerus' notion and concept of God, which is close to the rationalist concept of Leibniz, Wolff, and also Swedenborg. Gunnerus posited the soul as immortal and indestructible, attributing these qualities to God's wisdom. Not a single creation in God's world, which was the best (that is, the most perfect of all possible worlds), could perish.<sup>63</sup> If so, God's world, which was the real mirror of His characteristics, would not be perfect, and neither would God Himself.

In the Leibnizian tradition, the Devil and sin are explained as part and parcel of the best of all possible worlds: existing and real evil served to perfect the world on all levels. Evil had no proper existence; it was merely the negation of the good, *privatio boni*. Remarkably, the Lutheran and the Theosophical system of

eighteenth-century Swabian Pietism protested against this tendency to minimize evil (and the Devil) by attributing to it a substantial reality of its own.<sup>64</sup> In *Betrachtninger*, Gunnerus takes the middle position. Humans alone, and not God, were responsible for their unhappiness and, in this sense, for the world's imperfections. Their fate was, furthermore, a deterrent for other men.<sup>65</sup> As such, evil existed as a consequence of human freedom and, simultaneously, as a part of the divine construction of the universe. I will return later to the related discussion on the eternity of punishment in Hell.

Gunnerus, however, was only partly consistent with other critics of the Leibniz-Wolffian philosophy, such as his Jena friend Darjes, and the teacher of the famous Hermann Samuel Reimarus, Johann Franz Budde, as well as his successors in Jena, Johann Georg Walch and Justus Christian Hennings. They refuted the proposition that 'evil' had a part to play in perfecting the world and maintained that evil, as such, was neither a manifestation of *anthropodicy* nor of *theodicy*.<sup>66</sup> Voltaire's well-known attack on Leibniz's idea of the importance of evil in the best of all possible worlds complemented theirs: if evil only perfected the universal good, this universal good had to be composed of nothing but singular evils.<sup>67</sup>

Gunnerus ultimately agreed with this criticism put forth by Darjes and others, but held on to the Leibnizian idea of a pre-established, best world: God was a God of order, who promised hope for absolution from sin only if one complied with the order created by Him. This view found expression in Gunnerus' *Betrachtninger*.<sup>68</sup> Order ranked higher than all other divine expressions, including grace, mercy, and compassion, which was typical for the mid-eighteenth-century rationalist theologians.<sup>69</sup>

The doctrine of the soul gained new weight and a new dimension in the context of the Leibniz-Wolffian rationalistic philosophy. Its postulation concerning the soul's condition after the death of the body drew new advocates and critics alike. On this point, Gunnerus shared the opinion of most Wolffians, but a few deviations are noticeable. Some authors took specific remarks by Martin Luther as their point of departure: the soul had to enter the state of sleep after death until the Last Judgement and the resurrection of the body. This was a rather rare argument against the Purgatory.<sup>70</sup> For instance, Pontoppidan rejected Luther's notion of the sleep of the soul and, instead, invoked Wolff's *Vernünfftige Gedancken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen* (Rational Thoughts on God, the Human Being, and his Soul, 1751). In effect, he declared that the soul remained as connected after the death of the body as before, and the event of death would not prevent its ability to preserve memory and its higher faculties, or to think and progress.<sup>71</sup> Authors to whom Pontoppidan referred included Israel Gottlieb Canz, Gustav

Reinbeck, the famous English theologian and cosmologist, Thomas Burnet, author of the treatise *De statu mortuorum et resurgentium* (1727), and John Calvin, who advanced the Neoplatonic position rejecting the sleep of the soul.<sup>72</sup> Gunnerus, in fact, had relied on these authors, but now, as a Lutheran, he assailed not Luther himself, but rather the ungodly enemies of Lutheranism. He alludes to Voltaire and La Mettrie, attributing to them the idea of the ‘sleep of the soul’. Yet in its earthly life, the soul bore connection not so much to the body as to the dreams, so that those that equated sleep and death were themselves godless people. In line with the literature on the soul’s immortality and its condition after death, Gunnerus claimed that the Holy Scripture took sleep to signify death.<sup>73</sup>

And this is his next target: the postulation of the death of the soul, attributed to La Mettrie but also to Christians like the Unitarian chemist, Joseph Priestley, who believed in the total death of the soul, and at the same time, in the emergence of a whole new creation, of both body and soul. Priestley, who had served as the materialist foil that Kant used in formulating moral philosophy,<sup>74</sup> had turned against the numerous defenders of *status intermedius* (Pontoppidan) or *mundus spiritalis* or *intelligibilis* after death (Wolffians, Swedenborg, Kant). Gunnerus took a remarkable position between those standpoints.

Notwithstanding the duration of *status intermedius*, the modality of the soul’s existence after the death of the body was explained differently. The passage from Leibniz’s *Theodicy* was often cited to counter the assertion of the immaterial quality of the soul in Wolffian philosophy: before and after its corporeal life, every monad bore a *corpusculum*, which constituted the basis for the presence of a post-mortual soul, and for its pre-existing state.<sup>75</sup> In particular, Canz, the Tübingen philosopher, Gottfried Ploucquet (teacher of Schelling and Hölderlin) who was acquainted with the Lutheran theosophist, Oetinger, as well as Gunnerus’ well-known friend, Justus Christian Hennings, who had come to Jena in place of Kant, subscribed to this Leibnizian idea of a monadic *corpusculum*.<sup>76</sup> Hennings, for example, believed that a rapid putrefaction of the body in the grave would also hasten the liberation of the internal being, in effect, of the soul bearing a subtle, material residue, from the shackles of the body.<sup>77</sup>

Gunnerus rejected these ideas, explaining that God could bestow eternal life on something very subtle and material owing to His omnipotence, and ‘metempsychism’, as some Leibnizians, like Meier, argued, was not impossible.<sup>78</sup> Probably the (eternal) soul would sometimes acquire a new (mortal) body. But the ‘solidity’ of the soul could not be ascribed to matter but to its power, or force.<sup>79</sup> Gunnerus rejected all materialistic tendencies in the above-quoted philosophies. Perhaps he knew Pontoppidan’s view that a real or material ap-

pearance of a spirit, the soul of a dead human, was conceivable as ‘a very subtle and fine airy body’, which was now ‘regarded as good and even necessary by Leibnitz, Reinbeck, Cantz, and others among our recent philosophers, and is attached to the soul as a vehicle [*vehiculum*], coach or messenger of the body’.<sup>80</sup> These positions accumulated in the last thirty years of the eighteenth century, also owing to the sensational debate surrounding Swedenborg’s rationalist and spiritist doctrine.<sup>81</sup>

### *Opposition to Enlightenment Spiritism*

Even if no direct references to ghosts and spirits can be found in Gunnerus’ writings, his rejection of the materiality of the soul can probably be traced to his more sceptical opposition to the widespread spiritism of the late eighteenth century, possibly a product of the rationalist discourse, not of the traditional confessional theologies.<sup>82</sup> But other influences can be traced. Pontoppidan, the Swedish ‘Archimedes’, Christopher Polhem, the young Swedenborg, and later some Christian Theosophists explained the appearance of spirits with reference to the semi-materiality of all existing things. All substances and energies were of material quality, and dreams and thoughts between likeminded people could be exchanged as subtle material currents despite their physical remoteness. A ‘material’ medium provided the sensation of being remembered.<sup>83</sup>

Gunnerus’ insistence on the notion of *influxus physicus et realis* echoes a similar idea. In his assessment of Meier’s proof of pre-established harmony, he asserted that all bodies and all souls could affect each other.<sup>84</sup> The chain-effect was physical, insofar as the speech of a lecturer, conveyed through the medium of air, impacted the bodies of the students, generated several images in the students’ brains, such that the body of every student determined what happened next in their soul.<sup>85</sup> This was a simple physical explanation, not linked to the story told by Hennings, according to which a glass had shattered in Jena at the moment of Gunnerus’ death, 1,400 kilometres away.<sup>86</sup> Some contemporaries explained the remote effect of such powers by alluding to the work of subtle material currents, *imponderabilia* like ether, or electric or magnetic forces.<sup>87</sup> They often invoked discrete Newtonian remarks about the ether in empty space and combined them with ideas about the soul and its free will that had the power to act physiologically.<sup>88</sup> It is important to recall here that the doctrine of pre-established harmony did not envisage the possibility of contact between different souls, or between soul and body, and monads were ‘windowless’.<sup>89</sup>

But in respect of the post-mortal state of the soul in Gunnerus' doctrine, it is remarkable that he refrains from any mention of other spirits except human souls in contrast to Leibniz, Wolff, and Baumgarten. Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* includes chapters on the soul of animals and other 'finite spirits', angels and demons, which he categorizes as a distinct class of spirits between God and humankind.<sup>90</sup> For Leibniz, the services of the *Engelsgenster* or 'angel spirits' were required in God's world, the best of all possible worlds that human immortal souls shared with a lot of other higher and lower spirits.<sup>91</sup>

But in contrast to these demonologies, a break could be noted, which I call the 'anthropologization' or 'anthropocentrification' of Heaven: the expulsion of the demons – and the Devil – from the beyond. Most importantly, it was Swedenborg who would invoke this form of anthropocentrification in his body of work.<sup>92</sup> But Gunnerus had taken an intermediate position between the former Leibnizian angelology and the expulsion of demons within a holistic worldview that only acknowledged human souls and God.

Indeed, Gunnerus upheld the contemporaneous opinion about the souls of animals, a subject famously invoked in the works of Reimarus and Hennings.<sup>93</sup> For Gunnerus, animal souls resembled human souls in their immateriality, simplicity, and so on. Therefore they were indestructible and eternal. But animal souls did not possess the higher human faculties of reason, freedom, and conscience. Consequently, they were not able to enjoy bliss (*Glückseligkeit*) in the world beyond.<sup>94</sup> As for other souls, there are both similarities and differences between Gunnerus and Pontoppidan, which in the former's case seemingly depended on Wolffian philosophy. Pontoppidan and Gunnerus had similar views on the difference between human and animal souls. But as in the older demonology of Leibniz and some Wolffians, Pontoppidan asserted that human souls were accompanied by good and bad immortal angels.<sup>95</sup> In contrast, it is obvious that Gunnerus shared, at least partially, a view of the spiritual part of the universe that can only be termed 'anthropocentric': Heaven and Hell were only inhabited by human souls. In *Betrægtninger*, he makes no explicit reference to spirits, such as angels, demons, or devils, as a species distinct from humankind and God.

Notwithstanding the fact that scientific theological-philosophical treatises, sermons, novels, poems, and other genres commonly contained depictions of the *status intermedius*, or the state of the soul after death, Gunnerus had refrained from addressing the topic. But he had very detailed ideas about the trajectory of the individual soul and the spiritual universe within his theological system. In Leibnizian philosophy, as in the works of various authors writing under the influence of cabalistic and hermetic texts, misleadingly referred to as 'radical Pietists', the



figure of God as a judge was explicitly invoked. Johann Wilhelm Petersen and his wife Johanna Eleonora were prominent proponents of the idea of *apokatastasis panton*: restitution of the primordial state at the end of all things, like a great universal reconciliation, probably even with the Devil himself.<sup>96</sup> This idea was officially and unofficially acknowledged by Leibnizian philosophers, by Pietists, like Spener, Bengel, and Oetinger, and many Enlightenment theologians.<sup>97</sup>

As it was generally explained, a step toward *apokatastasis* was the differentiation between the so-called ‘positive’ and ‘natural’ punishments served upon death. Positive punishments were those decreed by God as an additional consequence for real sins, such as at the Last Judgement, in effect a juridical event. But natural punishments did not require a corresponding juridical event, as they were just a continuation of an earthly state after death, without an additional event. Evil people would live eternally with their evil nature; they would continue to live in the same communities and have the same ideas and perceptions as in their terrestrial life. And good people would continue to live their fortunate lives. Only in some writings was this double outcome connected to an ultimate *apokatastasis*, but for the most part, rationalist authors did not anticipate a ‘positive’ Last Judgement. They concealed this point, as it was dangerous to express such opinions in some territories owing to the strictures of the Lutheran confession.<sup>98</sup> For example, Meier defined Hell as eternal misery, and Heaven as eternal bliss, but he avoided the topic of the Last Judgement in his *Gedanken von dem Zustande der Seele nach dem Tode*. Like the natural and the spiritual worlds, the soul was eternal. Meier did not openly advocate an *apokatastasis panton*, but emphasized, on the one hand, that the punishment was not demonstrably eternal, and on the other hand, that even the vicious souls in Hell were able to morally exculpate themselves through moral deeds. Meier asserted the natural character of punishments and rewards. While excluding the possibility of an additional judgement, he ventured a suggestion rather than a clear assertion in regard to universal reconciliation.<sup>99</sup> The most famous ‘enlightened’ eschatology of this kind was that of Swedenborg, who purged the Devil, demons, God as a judge, and the end of the world. But he also rejected the idea of *apokatastasis panton* as a supernatural act of divine mercy and conciliation, because he regarded these notions as directed against the divine order of eternal equilibrium, wisdom, and order. For him, total responsibility and human freedom were all that mattered.<sup>100</sup>

On the contrary, Gunnerus’ famous contemporary, Pontoppidan, was heavily influenced by Wolffian philosophy, like Meier and Swedenborg, but he maintained his own position regarding the Last Judgement and the resurrection of the body. Therefore, for him, the post-mortal state of the soul was merely an intermediate

state before the advent of the great divine events at the end of the time in both the natural and the spiritual life of the universe.<sup>101</sup>

What can be said about Gunnerus' approach to these tricky problems? Like Wolff, Meier, Swedenborg, and like Kant at the end of the century, he presupposed a double *eschaton*, in which souls were immortal.<sup>102</sup> Contrary to Pontoppidan, Gunnerus avoided the question of the Last Judgement; he merely described the double *eschaton* as a continuation of earthly relationships, which functioned as natural punishments and rewards. God could not be held accountable for human misfortune and man alone was responsible for his sin and imperfection, and therefore Hell resulted from his own deeds.<sup>103</sup> God was not bad, angry, or arbitrary in a human sense, but He was unable to act against His eternal order. Gunnerus once seemed to have adopted the typical Wolffian eschatological mode, but now pursued a direction that departed from the conventional anthropocentric turn, in that it positioned both human freedom and divine order at its centre. In *Betraktninger*, he assailed Meier's viewpoint, without explicitly naming him, for having spoken out, not so much for the *apokatastasis* as against the certainty of eternal punishment. God was not able to redeem a single man from Hell. God would be imperfect, because Hell, the continuation and natural result of earthly life, was part of the divine order, which even God could not disturb.<sup>104</sup> The problem was that there was no place for a divine mercy or for post-mortal salvation through Christ, let alone for a universal reconciliation.<sup>105</sup>

Man, as depicted by Gunnerus in *Betraktninger*, remains eternally ungodly, in a manner strongly reminiscent of Swedenborg's much acclaimed reports about the World of Spirits. All atheists, Spinozists or freethinkers (a polemical term, which deism later replaced), all 'rebels against Heaven', would live eternally as they lived their earthly lives. And the most terrible fate would await such freethinkers who believed in annihilation. They would be pursued savagely, pained and plagued, unable to escape the final thoughts of their earthly lives: the cruel, awful idea of their annihilation, unaccompanied by hope or comfort.<sup>106</sup>

Nor was another substantial argument convincing for the jurist Gunnerus; namely, that even a brief sin could have eternal consequences. He identified five main criteria for juridically assessing a crime: the results, the motives, their quantity and weight, the mood of the culprit, and his intention. Temporally confined acts could involve everlasting consequences. Nobody, according to Gunnerus (without naming Meier but seemingly alluding to his treatise), was able to prove that a single human sin would not result in eternal punishment.<sup>107</sup> The damned sinned eternally in several spheres of Hell and were unable to reform their ways. The state of their souls after death was eternally connected to the moral predis-

positions they had developed during their earthly lives.<sup>108</sup> For Gunnerus, those who died in childhood proceeded towards their ‘evolution’, which began on earth and conveyed them to a fully developed state of reason and understanding in the realm beyond.<sup>109</sup> Meier had suggested some years earlier that children on the other side would attain a new, perfect soul.<sup>110</sup> Like some other scholastic writers, Leibniz postulated a Heaven particularly for children, and argued that unbaptized children did not go to Hell, as Augustine claimed, simply because of original sin.<sup>111</sup> And in Swedenborg’s doctrine, which has no place for original sin, children would not descend to Hell but would be educated by angels as adult tutors before entering Heaven.<sup>112</sup> This central motif of child-angels later dominated many artistic genres.

### *Two eschatological questions*

Finally, I will outline two eschatological questions. First, must we expect the end of the world to be like the biblical apocalypse? Oetinger and his theosophical followers in Württemberg insisted on the reality of a Last Judgement: not the end of the world, but a great last transformation, to some extent a ‘transmutatorial’ event. On the basis of the old natural and spiritual world, they claimed, a new world would be created by God; a new world that consisted of the elements of the past, but in a different, redeemed, new, and perfectly arranged order. With this idea, Oetinger, like Pontoppidan several years before him, turned against the Leibnizian assertion that the world was nothing but a *series infinita*, an infinite series, because if the world possessed similar characteristics as God, it would have to be eternal. The great transformation at the end rules out any disavowal of God’s personal intervention in the world, including the denial required under the ‘clockwork’ system of the mechanistic and Leibnizian philosophy. The eschatological perspectives developed by Meier, Baumgarten, and Wolff, exclude or transform the question of the apocalypse: the world could not be annihilated.<sup>113</sup>

In his dissertation, *De Exsistentia & possibilitate resurrectionis mortuorum*, Gunnerus cited the Dutch alchemist and philosopher Bernard Nieuwentijt and his notion of the renewed body in the resurrection in alchemical terms, borrowed from the father of theosophy, Jakob Böhme.<sup>114</sup> Gunnerus had referred to him in regard to a similar set of problems in Oetinger’s doctrine. Oetinger’s last great book, *Biblisches und Emblematisches Wörterbuch* (Biblical and Emblematical Dictionary, 1776), which influenced not only many theosophical authors in the eighteenth century

but also Schelling's natural philosophy, invoked the lemma 'Soma' (*Leib* or the corporeal). Here he referred to Nieuwentijt, who sought to prove that everybody possessed a dual body, not *Körper* but *Leib*, typically invoked in the theosophy of Jakob Böhme: a latent 'sideric' or ethereal body and one that was revealed and could be apprehended by the senses. At the crux of the human entity was '*spiritus rector*', which endured and could not putrefy. The highest level of perfection, as exemplified by Christ's flesh and body, could not be attained until dawn of the 'Last Day': '*Leiblichkeit* is the end of God's works, as is clearly illuminated by the City of God'.<sup>115</sup> Gunnerus did not share this theosophical eschatology; he continued to inhabit a more Cartesian, dualistic view of the relation between the world and God, matter and spirit, and so on. While there was no point of convergence between the opposing sides (*coincidentia oppositorum*), divine order endured and remained immutable to changes.

### Conclusion

It is apparent that Gunnerus' work contains different motifs, literary allusions, and overlapping ideas. These draw on both 'Pietist' and 'Enlightenment' thought: in Gunnerus' notion of God, in his eschatology, in his ideas about the materiality or immateriality of world, soul, and body. Gunnerus thereby serves to demonstrate that concepts such as 'Pietist' and 'Enlightenment' are supererogatory, in that they suggest oppositions that, in fact, do not exist in the manner we imagine. Gunnerus' case also makes clear that it is misleading to distinguish between positions that come to be regarded as 'contemporaneous' only in nineteenth-century historiography. It is a mistake to label these currents 'esoteric' in a 'modern' way.<sup>116</sup> Gunnerus illustrates the organic cohesion of the two projects, which are probably just one and the same: the cosmo- and physico-theological grasp of the world in both realms, natural and spiritual, according to universal rules, and the holistic dimension of human reason, which had its origin in divine wisdom and truth. Gunnerus took part in this project, which sought to understand both reason and a rationally cognizable world as a way to deliver the ultimate proof for the divinity of the world with all its imaginable, and yet empirically apprehensible, elements. The project was not unusual for its time – the time before Kant – and had brought about an epistemological break in the decade after Gunnerus' death.<sup>117</sup> For the majority of Kant's contemporaries, however, this break did not carry any significant weight – but that is yet another topic.

## Notes

1. Nature as book and image – scientific communication and exchange in eighteenth-century Europe. The Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters, Trondheim 12–13 May 2011; *Aspects of Johan Ernst Gunnerus' Life and Work*, ed. by Rolv Nøtvik Jakobsen (Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag 2012), Skrifter, Det Kongelige Norske Videnskabers Selskab 2012, 2; esp. Rolv Nøtvik Jakobsen, 'Johan Ernst Gunnerus – a conservative theologian and an enlightened scientist (?)', *ibid.*, pp. 75–107.
2. For further biographical data see *Aemula Lauri: The Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters, 1760–2010*, ed. by Håkon Anderson, Brita Brenna, Magne Njåstad & Astrid Wale (Sagamore Beach: Science History Publications, 2009), pp. 7–13.
3. *Aemula Lauri*, 12.
4. Johan Ernst Gunnerus, *Flora Norvegica, observationibus praesertim oeconomicis panosque norvegici locupletata*, 2 vols. (Nidrosiae; Hafniae, 1766–1772); Finn-Egil Eckblad & Klaus Høiland, *Biskop J. E. Gunnerus og soppene i hans Flora Norvegica 1766, 1776* (Trondheim, 1985); *Biskop Gunnerus' Virksomhed. Fornemmelig som botaniker*, 4 vols., ed. by Ove Dahl (Trondheim: Aktie-trykkeriet, 1895–1911).
5. Johan Ernst Gunnerus, *Volständige Erklrning ber das Natur- und Vlkerrecht des Herrn Hofrath Darjes*, 8 vols. (Franckfurth, Leipzig & Jena, 1748–1752).
6. Johan Ernst Gunnerus, *Institutiones metaphysicae* (Hafniae; Lipsiae, 1757).
7. Johan Ernst Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen ber die Unsterblichkeit der Seele', *Der Drontheimischen Gesellschaft Schriften* 1 (1765), pp. 1–53; in Danish, 'Betragtninger over Sielens Uddelighed', *Det Trondhiemske Selskabs Skrifter* 1 (1761), pp. 11–70. In the following, passages will be quoted only from the German edition of this work.
8. Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher, *ber die Religion: Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verchtern* (Berlin: Unger, 1799), pp. 130–133, cf. also pp. 96–108.
9. Friedemann Stengel, *Aufklrung bis zum Himmel: Emanuel Swedenborg im Kontext der Theologie und Philosophie des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Tbingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011); cf. also Diethard Sawicki, *Leben mit den Toten: Geisterglauben und die Entstehung des Spiritismus in Deutschland 1770–1900* (Paderborn et al.: Schnigh, 2002), pp. 115–128.
10. Following Lacan's idea of structuring discursive fields by a 'point de capiton', cf. Slavoj iek, 'Che Vuoi?', in Slavoj iek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London & New York: Verso, 1989), pp. 95–144 (p. 95); Ernesto Laclau & Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemonie und radikale Demokratie: zur Dekonstruktion des Marxismus* (Vienna: Passagen, 1991), p. 150.
11. Reill does not mention this 'Preisfrage' and Le Cat, cf. Peter Hanns Reill, *Vitalizing Nature in the Enlightenment* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2005); for a short discussion of that case, cf. Hubert Steinke: *Irritating Experiments: Haller's Concept and the European Controversy on Irritability and Sensibility 1750–90* (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2005), pp. 139, 178 f.; Adolf von Harnack, *Geschichte der Kniglich Preuischen*

*Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, vol. 1, part 1 (Berlin: Stilke, 1900), p. 400; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 159–162.

12. Claude-Nicolas Le Cat, 'Mémoire qui a remporté le prix sur la question proposée par l'Académie pour le sujet du prix de l'année 1753', in *Dissertation qui a remporté le prix proposé par l'Académie Royale des sciences et belles-lettres de Prusse, sur le principe de l'action des muscles avec les pièces qui ont concouru* (Berlin: Haude et Spener, 1753), p. 68; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 159–162.

13. Le Cat, 'Mémoire', pp. 21, 67 f.: 'une espece d'Être amphibie, matiere par son im-pénétrabilité et sa puissance impulsive, mais suprême espece de cette classe, il est en même tems affecté par son Auteur d'une nuance supérieure qui le lie avec l'Être immatériel'.

14. Le Cat, 'Mémoire', pp. 25, 32.

15. 'Abhandlung von dem Nerven-Safte, dessen Eigenschaften und Würckungen, woraus sowohl die natürlichen als willkührlichen Bewegungen des menschlichen Cörpers auf eine ungezwungene der Vernunft und Erfahrung gemäße Art erkläret werden', in Le Cat, *Dissertation*, pp. 34, 37 f.

16. Le Cat, 'Mémoire', e.g. 22, 24, 26, 39, 122 f.

17. René Descartes, 'Discourse de la méthode pour bien conduire sa raison, et chercher la vérité dans les sciences', in: René Descartes, *Philosophische Schriften in einem Band* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1996), part 5, no. 8 (p. 88): 'qui sont comme un vent très subtil ou plutôt comme une flamme très pure et très vive'. For more extensive discussion, see Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 158–170.

18. Friedemann Stengel, 'Lebensgeister – Nervensaft. Cartesianer, Mediziner, Spiritisten', in *Aufklärung und Esoterik. Wege in die Moderne*, ed. by Monika Neugebauer-Wölk, Renko Gefarth, and Markus Meumann (Berlin–Boston: De Gruyter, 2012), pp. 340–377.

19. See all in all Sawicki, *Leben*, passim.

20. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen'; Hermann Samuel Reimarus, *Vernunftlehre* (Hamburg: Bohn, 1756 [1766]; repr. München: Hanser, 1979); Hermann Samuel Reimarus, *Die vornehmsten Wahrheiten der natürlichen Religion* (Hamburg: Bohn, 1754; many editions; repr. in 2 vols. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1985).

21. Julien Offray de La Mettrie, *Histoire naturelle de l'âme* (La Haye: Neaulme, 1745); Julien Offray de La Mettrie, *L'homme machine* (Leyde: Luzac, 1748).

22. See e.g. the polemics against La Mettrie in Reimarus, *Wahrheiten*, pp. 733–744, §§ 16 and 18.

23. See as example Reimarus' critics of contemporary atheism and Spinozism: Dietrich Klein, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694–1768): Das theologische Werk* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), pp. 225–234; and Reimarus, *Wahrheiten*, pp. 609–617; Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 20, 48.

24. That contemporaries denied the singularity and metaphysical importance of this earthquake with help of modern geological and geographical arguments, so that it was not possible to refute the theodicy is shown by Johann August Unzer, 'Physikalische

Untersuchungen von der Structur der Erdfäche und von den Ursachen der Erdbeben, bey Gelegenheit des im Jahre 1755, am 11ten November erfolgten Erdbebens, in Briefen an einen Freund', in Johann August Unzer, *Sammlung kleiner Schriften*, vol. 3 (Hamburg, Lüneburg & Leipzig: Berth, 1767), pp. 3–444.

25. François Marie Arouet de Voltaire, *Candide ou l'optimisme* (Londres, 1759).

26. Also by Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 18, 22, 26, 47 (unnamed).

27. This cosmo- and physicotheological approach is Reimarus' way prior to the Lisbon event, proving the purposiveness of God's entire creation, see Reimarus, *Wahrheiten*, pp. 615–617, 727 f., 739; § 164, § 166; for an overview see Sara Stebbins, *Maxima in minimis: Zum Empirie- und Autoritätsverständnis in der physikotheologischen Literatur der Frühaufklärung* (Frankfurt a.M. et al.: Lang, 1980).

28. Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 129–132.

29. Christian Albrecht Körber, 'Beweis, daß die Seele des Menschen nicht in eine Reihe der Dinge gehöre, welche die materielle Welt ausmacht (Franckfurth–Leipzig 1743)', in Johan Ernst Gunnerus, *Beurtheilung des Beweises von der vorherbestimmten Uebereinstimmung* (Jena & Leipzig: Gollner, 1748), pp. 9, 56.

30. Thomas Sören Hoffmann, 'Art. Spontaneität', *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* 9 (1995), pp. 1424–1434 (pp. 1426–1428).

31. Christian Wolff, *Psychologia rationalis methodo scientifica pertractata, qua ea, quae de anima humana indubia experientiae fide innotescunt, per essentiam et naturam animae explicantur, et ad intimiorem naturae ejusque autoris cognitionem profutura proponuntur. Editio nova priori emendatior* (Frankfurt & Leipzig: Renger, 1740), §§ 374–376, 643, 645f, 656–659, 669 f., 675, 693–695, 741–747; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 348–355.

32. In terms of Hartmut Böhme, Gernot Böhme, *Das Andere der Vernunft: zur Entwicklung von Rationalitätsstrukturen am Beispiel Kants* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1983); but also against Wouter J. Hanegraaff, 'Forbidden Knowledge: Anti-Esoteric Polemics and Academic Research', *Aries* 5 (2005), pp. 225–254; see: Friedemann Stengel, 'Diskurstheorie und Aufklärung', in *Ordnungen des Wissens – Ordnungen des Streitens: Gelehrte Debatten des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts in diskursgeschichtlicher Perspektive*, ed. by Markus Meumann (Berlin: Akademie, [forthcoming]); in English, 'Discourse Theory and Enlightenment.' *Aries. Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism* 15 (2015) [forthcoming].

33. See: Trygve Lysaker, *Trondhjems stift og Nidaros bispedømme 1. Reformasjon og enevelde 1537–1804* (Oslo 1987), vol. 1, sect. 5; *Den danske Kirkes Historie V*, ed. by Hal Koch et al. (København: Gyldendal, 1951), vol. 5, p. 4.

34. Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Metaphysica* (Halae Magdeburgicae: Hemmerde, 1739); many editions and reprints in Latin and German, critical edition (Stuttgart & Bad Canstatt: Olms, 2011); Georg Friedrich Meier, *Gedanken von dem Zustande der Seele nach dem Tode* (Halle: Hemmerde, 1748; 1762); Erik Pontoppidan, *Tractat om Sielens Udødelighed samt dens Tilstand i og efter Døden, stadfæstet ved Guds Ord og den sunde Fornuft* (Kjøbenhavn: Andreas Hartvig Godiche, 1762); in German, *Schrift- und Vernunftmäßige Abhandlung I. Von der Unster-*

blickheit menschlicher Seelen, II. Von deren Befinden in dem Tode, III. Von deren Zustand gleich nach dem Tode, bis an das jüngste Gericht (Kopenhagen & Leipzig: Rothens Wittwe, 1766 [1764]). In the following, passages will be quoted only from the German edition of this work.

35. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 3–6.
36. Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, § 757 (cit. 4th edition); Wolff, *Psychologia*, §§ 658 f.
37. Andreas Rüdiger, *Herrn Christian Wolffens, Hochfürstl. Heßischen Hoff-Raths und Prof. Philos. & Mathem. Primarii &c. Meinung von dem Wesen der Seele und eines Geistes überhaupt; und Andreas Rüdigers, Hochfürstl. Sächsischen wirklichen Raths und Leib-Medici in Forst, Gegen-Meinung* (Leipzig: Heinsius, 1727), Preface, § 11; and Andreas Rüdiger, *Anweisung zu der Zufriedenheit der Menschlichen Seele, als Dem Höchsten Gute dieses zeitlichen Lebens* (Leipzig: Selbstverlag, 1726), p. 89 f.; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 120–126.
38. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 10, 30–32.
39. Albrecht von Haller read this in Swedenborg's *Oeconomia regni animalis*, cf. Albrecht von Haller, *Bibliotheca anatomica: Qua scripta ad anatomen et physiologiam facientia a rerum initiis recensentur* (Tiguri: Orell, Gessner, Fuessli, 1777), pp. 328 f.; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 127–170.
40. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 52 f.
41. Friedemann Stengel, 'Kant – 'Zwillingsbruder' Swedenborgs?', in *Kant und Swedenborg: Zugänge zu einem umstrittenen Verhältnis*, ed. by Friedemann Stengel (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2008), pp. 35–98 (p. 78 f.).
42. Pontoppidan, *Abhandlung*, p. 140.
43. Georg Bernhard Bilfinger, *De harmonia animi et corporis humani, maxime praestabilita, ex mente illustris Leibnitii commentatio hypothetica* (Tubingae: Berger, 1741), § 74. Bilfinger's treatise contains an elaborate popular and critical explanation of the three systems of the body-soul-interaction.
44. Gunnerus, *Beurteilung*, pp. 48 f., 51, 60 f., 65, 80–82, passim.
45. Gunnerus, *Beurteilung*, pp. 41, 43, 47, 52, 80, 97.
46. Rüdiger, *Meinung*, §§ 11, 22, 26; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 120–126.
47. Martin Mulsow, 'Aufklärung versus Esoterik? Vermessung des intellektuellen Feldes anhand einer Kabale zwischen Weißmüller, Ludovici und den Gottscheds', in *Aufklärung und Esoterik: Rezeption – Integration – Konfrontation*, ed. by Monika Neugebauer-Wölk & Andre Rudolph (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2008), pp. 331–376 (p. 351).
48. Gunnerus, *Beurteilung*, p. 17 (cit. Joachim Georg Darjes, *Elementa metaphysices*, § 21), p. 39, 53.
49. Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 116–118, 124–126, 135, 137 f., 238 f.
50. Swedenborg commented: *Haec vera sunt quia signum habeo*. Cf. Inge Jonsson, *Visionary Scientist: The Effects of Science and Philosophy on Swedenborg's Cosmology* (West Chester PA: Swedenborg Foundation, 1999), pp. 65–67.
51. Cf. for that Reill, *Nature*.
52. E.g. Augustin, *De anima et ejus origine*, Lib. II,II.
53. Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 348–355, 360, 368–373.



54. Gunnerus, *Beurteilung*, p. 87, see also pp. 90 f.
55. Gunnerus, *Beurteilung*, pp. 60 f., 67. But Meier deemed the occasionalist system as a Spinozistic way too, cf. p. 75 f.
56. Gunnerus, *Beurteilung*, p. 88.
57. Gunnerus, *Beurteilung*, pp. 43, 52, 90 f.
58. Gunnerus, *Beurteilung*, pp. 31 f., 49, 97 f., 100 f.
59. Gunnerus, *Beurteilung*, p. 101.
60. Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 545 f., 589–594; Friedemann Stengel, ‘Theosophie in der Aufklärung: Friedrich Christoph Oetinger’, in *Offenbarung und Episteme: zur europäischen Wirkung Jakob Böhmes im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Wilhelm Kühlmann & Friedrich Vollhardt (Berlin & Boston MA: De Gruyter, 2012), pp. 514–547.
61. Wolff, *Psychologia rationalis*, §§ 669 f.
62. Rüdiger 1727, preface, §§ 2–10; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 120–126.
63. Gunnerus, ‘Betrachtungen’, pp. 7 f., 15, 17.
64. Cf. for instance Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Tentamina Theodicaeae: De bonitate Dei, libertate hominis et origine mali* (Francofurti & Lipsiae: Berger, 1739), cap. I, 20; II, 153; III, 335; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 361–365, 542–544.
65. Gunnerus, ‘Betrachtungen’, pp. 8–12, 39 f.
66. Anton Hügli, ‘Art. Malum VI’, *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* 5 (1980), pp. 681–706 (p. 684).
67. *Ibid.*, pp. 684 f.
68. Gunnerus, ‘Betrachtungen’, p. 41: ‘er ist ein Gott der Ordnung, und er will, daß sich alle nach der von ihm selbst in seinem Worte vorgeschriebenen Ordnung richten sollen, wenn sie sich Hoffnung zur Vergebung ihrer Sünden machen wollen’.
69. See especially the case of Emanuel Swedenborg and his reference authors, Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 218–228, 386–387.
70. See for a short overview by Fritz Schmidt-Clausing, ‘Art. Fegefeuer’, *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2 (1958), pp. 892–894.
71. Pontoppidan, *Abhandlung*, pp. 267–269, 293–314; Christian Wolff, *Vernünfftige Gedanken von Gott, der Welt und der Seele des Menschen, auch allen Dingen überhaupt, den Liebhabern der Wahrheit mitgetheilet* (Halle et al.: Renger, 1751), § 925; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 468–472.
72. Cf. Pontoppidan, *Abhandlung*, pp. 169 f., 293, 306; Thomas Burnet, *Tractatus de statu mortuorum et resurgentium* (Londini: Hooke, 1727). For Calvin’s doctrine on soul see: Wilhelm Schwendemann, *Leib und Seele bei Calvin: Die erkenntnistheoretische und anthropologische Funktion des platonischen Leib-Seele-Dualismus in Calvins Theologie* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1996), which includes the German translation for Calvin’s former essay *Psychopannychia* (1534).
73. Gunnerus, ‘Betrachtungen’, pp. 30–32 (also p. 10).
74. For the connection between Kant and Priestley, see Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 670, 672.

75. Leibniz, *Tentamina*, cap. II, 124 = *Die Theodizee: Von der Güte Gottes, der Freiheit des Menschen und dem Ursprung des Übels*, ed. and transl. by Herbert Herring, 2nd edition, vol. 1 (Frankfurt a.M.: Insel, 1986), p. 413.
76. Israel Gottlob Canz, *De regimine Dei universalis, sive jurisprudentia civitatis Dei publica ...* (Tubingae: Cotta, 1737), §§ 228, 193, 153, 230 f.; Gottfried Ploucquet (praes.) & Johannes Christian Faber (resp.), *Problemata de natura hominis ante et post mortem* (Tubingae: Schramm, 1766), pp. 11, 14–16; for Ploucquet see also: ‘... im Reiche des Wissens cavalierement?’ Hölderlins, *Hegels und Schellings Philosophiestudium an der Universität Tübingen*, ed. by Michael Franz (Eggingen: Isele, 2005); Justus Christian Hennings, *Anthropologische und pneumatologische Aphorismen* (Halle: Gebauer, 1777), p. 33; Justus Christian Hennings, *Geschichte von den Seelen der Menschen und Thiere* (Halle: Gebauer, 1774), pp. 355–359.
77. Cf. review of Hennings, *Verjährte Vorurtheile in verschiedenen Abhandlungen bestritten* (Riga, 1778), *Hallsche Neue Gelehrte Zeitungen* 1778, pp. 630–632.
78. Gunnerus, ‘Betrachtungen’, pp. 23, 47 f. For the problem of metempsychosis and reincarnation in the eighteenth century see: Daniel Cyranka, *Lessing im Reinkarnationsdiskurs: eine Untersuchung zu Kontext und Wirkung von G.E. Lessings Texten zur Seelenwanderung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 2005).
79. Gunnerus, ‘Betrachtungen’, p. 25: ‘Scheinet es, die Seelen wären nicht solide genug, so muß man wohl erwägen, daß ihre Solidität in nichts anders bestehen kann, als in ihrer Kraft und Stärke; denn es wäre über die Maßen unbillig, zu verlangen, daß sie, als immaterielle Wesen, eine solche Solidität haben sollen, wie in der Naturlehre der Materie und den Körpern beygeleget wird’.
80. Pontoppidan, *Abhandlung*, pp. 169 f.: ‘solche Leiber, als ein Leibnitz, Reinbek, Cantz, und andere unserer neuesten Philosophen für gut, wo nicht nothwendig halten, der Seele, bey ihrem Abschiede aus dem Leibe, beyzulegen, aus dessen Essenz er gleichsam sollte extrahiret und bis weiter als ein vehiculum, ein Wagen und Mittheilungsmittel, gebraucht werden’.
81. See Stengel, ‘Lebensgeister’; Friedemann Stengel, ‘Swedenborg in German Theology in the 1770’s and 1780’s’, in *Emanuel Swedenborg – Exploring a ‘World Memory’: Context, Content, Contribution* (Contributions to the History of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, 43), ed. by Karl Grandin (Stockholm & West Chester, PA: The Center for History of Science, 2013), pp. 334–355; Friedemann Stengel, ‘Prophetie? Wahnsinn? Betrug? Swedenborgs Visionen im Diskurs’, *Pietismus und Neuzeit* 37 (2011), pp. 136–162.
82. Diethard Sawicki, ‘Die Gespenster und ihr Ancien régime: Geisterglauben als ‘Nachtseite’ der Spätaufklärung’, in *Aufklärung und Esoterik*, ed. by Monika Neugebauer-Wölk & Holger Zaunstöck (Hamburg: Meiner, 1999), pp. 364–396; and Stengel, ‘Lebensgeister’.
83. Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 22–27, 63–66.
84. According to Darjes, see Gunnerus, *Beurtheilung*, p. 17; and also Gunnerus, ‘Betrachtungen’, p. 37.
85. Gunnerus, *Beurtheilung*, p. 50.

86. Justus Christian Hennings, *Von Geistern und Geistersehern* (Leipzig: Weygand, 1780), pp. 452–455; Justus Christian Hennings, *Von den Abndungen und Visionen* (Leipzig: Weygand, 1777), pp. 467 f.
87. See also Ernst Benz, 'Theologie der Elektrizität: Zur Begegnung und Auseinandersetzung von Theologie und Naturwissenschaften im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', *Abhandlungen der geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur zu Mainz* (1971), pp. 685–782.
88. Stengel, 'Lebensgeister'.
89. Hans Poser, 'Art. Monade, Monas II', *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* 6 (1984), pp. 117–121 (pp. 118 f.).
90. See Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, § 792–799 (cit. 4th edition) for the notion of finitus spiritus.
91. In reference to the best world, this is detailed cit. in Pontoppidan, *Abhandlung*, p. 112. The passage could refer to Leibniz, *Tentamina*, for example: II, 124; III, 247, 249; *Adnotationes in Librum De Origine Mali*, p. 27; *Causa Dei*, p. 57.
92. Stengel, *Aufklärung*, notably chapter 3.4 (pp. 307–323).
93. Reimarus, *Wahrheiten*, pp. 702–719; Hennings, *Geschichte*.
94. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 16 f.
95. Pontoppidan, 1766 (n. 40), pp. 39, 46, 67, 169 f.
96. Johann Wilhelm Petersen, *Mysterion Apokatastase hos Panton. Das ist: Das Geheimn ß Der Wiederbringung aller Dinge, Darinnen In einer Unterredung zwischen Philaletham und Agathophilum gelehret wird, Wie das Böse und die Sünde solle aufgehoben und vernichtet; Hergegen die Creaturen Gottes, durch Jesum Christum, Den Wiederbringer aller Dinge, errettet werden* (Pamphilia=Offenbach: Selbstverlag, 1700); Leibniz, *Tentamina*, cap. I, 17. For Petersen's theory of cosmic salvation see Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, *Philosophia perennis: historische Umriss abendländischer Spiritualität in Antike, Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1998), pp. 573–584.
97. Friedhelm Groth, *Die 'Wiederbringung aller Dinge' im württembergischen Pietismus. Theologiegeschichtliche Studien zum eschatologischen Heilsuniversalismus württembergischer Pietisten des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1984).
98. Confessio Augustana, article 17, condemned chiliasm and apokatastasis panton.
99. Georg Friedrich Meier, *Vertheidigung seiner Gedancken von dem Zustande der Seele nach dem Tode* (Halle: Hemmerde, 1762), pp. 165–168, and Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 469–472.
100. Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 271–323.
101. Pontoppidan, *Abhandlung*, pp. 272, 274 passim; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 468–472.
102. For Kant's eschatology, see Stengel, 'Kant', pp. 62–69; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 666–673.
103. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 39 f., see also p. 8.
104. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 41, 45.
105. Against that position shared by Swedenborg, F.C. Oetinger developed his Lutheran Theosophy, Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 555–635.

106. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 42, 48 f., 51 f. For 'freethinking' see Kurt Hutten, 'Art. Freidenker', *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3rd edition, 2 (1958), pp. 1093–1096 (pp. 1093 f.); 'Freydenkerey' is also Reimarus' adversarial front; see Reimarus, *Wahrheiten*, preface, passim. For Swedenborg's stories about the fate of the dead ungodly people, see Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 316–318. Particularly the conception that the last dominant thought will determine the existence of the soul after the death is typical for Swedenborg's works, which began to be known at the start of the 1760s.

107. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', pp. 43 f. Probably Gunnerus counters Meier's suggestion that the eternity of the hellish punishments is not demonstrable, and the vicious people are able to improve themselves in hell, cf. Meier, *Gedanken*, pp. 167 f.

108. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', p. 45. These notions are likewise very similar to Swedenborg's system, cf. n. 106).

109. Gunnerus, 'Betrachtungen', p. 28.

110. Meier, *Gedanken*, p. 150.

111. Leibniz, *Tentamina*, cap. I, 92.

112. Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 255–258.

113. Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 527–534, 689–695.

114. Johan Ernst Gunnerus, *Dissertatio theol: inauguralis de Exsistentia & possibilitate resurrectionis mortuorum, ad Gradum Doctoris Theologiae, inter solemnia secularia ob Introductionem Imperii in Daniam & Norvegiam nullis humani arbitrii limitibus circumscribendi, d. XVI. sqq. Octobris anni aerae Christianae MDCCLX. Celebranda, in illustri Academia Havniensi capessendum* (Nidrosiae 1760), pp. 21 f.

115. Friedrich Christoph Oetinger, *Biblisches und Emblematisches Wörterbuch*, ed. by Gerhard Schäfer (Berlin & New York: De Gruyter, 1999 [1776]), vol. 1, p. 222 f.: 'Leiblichkeit ist das Ende der Werke Gottes, wie aus der Stadt GOTTes klar erhellet (Offenb. 20)'. For Oetinger's doctrine of 'Geistleiblichkeit' see Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 550–555.

116. Cf. n. 32. See also Michael Bergunder, 'Was ist Esoterik? Religionswissenschaftliche Überlegungen zum Gegenstand der Esoterikforschung', in Neugebauer-Wölk & Rudolph, *Aufklärung und Esoterik*, pp. 477–507; in English, Michael Bergunder, 'What is Esotericism? Cultural Studies Approaches and the Problems of Definition in Religious Studies', *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 22 (2010), pp. 9–36.

117. Regarding the physico-theology, cf. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, esp. § 85; in *Kant's gesammelte Schriften*, 29 vols. (Berlin: Königlich Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1902 ff.), vol. 5, pp. 436–442; Stengel, *Aufklärung*, pp. 689–695.

Summary:

*Johan Ernst Gunnerus and the Quest for the Soul in the Eighteenth Century*

The Norwegian bishop, theologian, philosopher, political scientist, and naturalist, Johan Ernst Gunnerus, can be regarded as one of the most significant proponents of continental European culture in eighteenth-century Norway. The eighteenth-century debate on the meaning and locus of the soul, considered the most central scholarly debate of the 'Century of Enlightenment', clearly exemplifies Gunnerus' own entanglement in contemporaneous philosophical and theological debates. While delineating his position within it, the present article seeks to shed light on its crucial dimensions and arguments, while also illuminating its impact on the transmission of traditional Christian ideas. Theological-philosophical concepts underwent dramatic transformations – in particular, on the question of the immortality of the soul – that also extended to anthropology, eschatology and the divine doctrine. Positioning Gunnerus within this debate demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of scholarly interactions on topics that today might be deemed purely theological. Their vigorous resistance to dogma and barriers to autonomous thinking form a salient feature of the Enlightenment era. In contextualizing Gunnerus' doctrine on the soul, it becomes clear that classifying theologies and philosophies according to clear-cut categories like 'Enlightenment', 'Pietism', or 'Esotericism', prunes the complexity of the debates and implicates far-reaching perspectives of the Enlightenment discourse in notions generated in the centuries thereafter.

*Keywords:* body and soul; Enlightenment; Esotericism; freedom; immortality; Pietism; pre-established harmony; theology.