



THESIS

4

2003

101

54694907

LIBRARY
Michigan State
University

This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

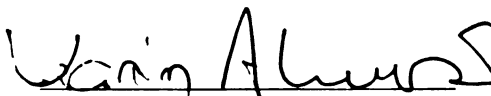
Sexuality and the Ethical Construction of the Self:
Reconstructing J.M.R. Lenz

presented by

Kenneth E. Munn

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Doctoral degree in German Studies


Major professor

Date April 30, 2003

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

| DATE DUE | DATE DUE | DATE DUE |
|----------|----------|----------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**SEXUALITY AND THE ETHICAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE SELF:
RECONSTRUCTING J.M.R. LENZ**

By

Kenneth E. Munn

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages

2003

Professor Karin A. Wurst

ABSTRACT

SEXUALITY AND THE ETHICAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE SELF: RECONSTRUCTING J.M.R. LENZ

By

Kenneth E. Munn

I propose that through his literary texts Lenz seeks to confront his audience with representations of the perverse contemporary socio-cultural state of affairs thereby provoking their sense of pride in the belief that they are independent individuals with free wills and that ethics and morality are their and their society's guiding principles. This in turn should motivate them to reflect on these representations and to become conscious of the socio-cultural conditions to which they refer. To establish the necessary background for this thesis, a detailed thematic reconstruction of Lenz's ethical and moral writings is provided. I use methodological tools derived from Foucault's work on the history of sexuality and work against the background of Hull's historical work on sexuality and Schneewind's history of moral theory in 18th century Germany. In this reconstruction, the nature of Lenz's ethics and their relation to his conception of human nature, sexuality, and literature is elucidated. While investigating the innovative aspects of Lenz's thought, this dissertation also strives to maintain a focus on the centrality of religiosity in Lenz's thinking. Lenz's extensive consideration of law and its role in human existence is also elucidated— a topic that has received almost no attention in the secondary literature.

In memory of my mom, my first and most important teacher.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the faculty and my fellow students in the German Studies program at Michigan State University for providing a productive and collegial environment. I would be remiss if I did not thank my friends in Jena, Germany for the support and input they provided me on my research. In addition, I am grateful to family and friends who helped me in numerous and important ways. Most importantly, I must thank my advisor, Karin A. Wurst, for her patience, support and invaluable guidance throughout the entire process of writing this dissertation.

K.E.M.

April 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|------------|
| INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| CHAPTER 1 | |
| OVERVIEW OF THE SECONDARY LITERATURE..... | 5 |
| CHAPTER 2 | |
| APPROACHING LENZ..... | 21 |
| • Sex/Sexuality..... | 21 |
| • Lenz’s Style and Method..... | 26 |
| CHAPTER 3 | |
| CRITICAL CONCEPTS..... | 36 |
| Being..... | 36 |
| • Material & Spiritual..... | 36 |
| • Inertia, Movement, Action..... | 41 |
| • Power/Capacity..... | 45 |
| • Resistance..... | 47 |
| Desiring..... | 60 |
| • Concupiscence..... | 60 |
| • Happiness..... | 68 |
| • Perfection..... | 74 |
| Feeling..... | 77 |
| Knowing..... | 87 |
| • Experience..... | 87 |
| • Perception..... | 91 |
| • Perspective..... | 96 |
| • Thought..... | 101 |
| • Reason/Soul..... | 106 |
| • Imagination..... | 111 |
| • Knowledge..... | 112 |
| Believing..... | 119 |
| Curing..... | 133 |
| • Independence..... | 143 |
| • Pride..... | 148 |
| • Law..... | 150 |
| CHAPTER 4 | |
| LENZIAN MORAL AND ETHICAL THEORY..... | 173 |
| Morality..... | 177 |
| Deviancy..... | 185 |
| Ascetic Practices..... | 193 |
| Material to be Shaped..... | 205 |
| Self-formative Activities..... | 212 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| The Ethical..... | 232 |
| • Action/Striving..... | 236 |
| • Poet as Doctor..... | 244 |
| • Communication..... | 248 |
| CHAPTER 5 | |
| LENZIAN POETICS..... | 251 |
| CONCLUSION..... | 272 |
| NOTES..... | 275 |
| WORKS BY JAKOB MICHAEL REINHOLD LENZ | 277 |
| WORKS CITED..... | 281 |

INTRODUCTION

*Die Meinungen eines Laien sind der Grundstein meiner ganzen Poesie,
aller meiner Wahrheit, all meines Gefühls [...]. (Notizen, 283–84)ⁱ*

Can we take Lenz at his word, that his “Meinungen eines Laien” is the foundation of his literary works as well as the “truth” of his thinking? Yes, we can. Moreover, we must do so if we seek to understand his literary works and the issues depicted therein in a way that is compatible with his stated conception of themⁱⁱ. My approach is to take Lenz’s assertions seriously, to investigate the “Meinungen eines Laien” and his other theological, moral and ethical writings, to reconstruct their central content and to consider their possible connections to his literary works. My interest in his theoretical works is driven by my attempt to read his literary works from a perspective reconstructed from Lenz’s own writings. My approach is thematically driven. As such, I proceed across texts, bringing in various texts that contribute to the reconstruction of the various concepts under consideration.

When we look at Lenz’s poetological texts and his literary texts it becomes clear that ethical concerns dominate both his theory of genre and the plot driving features of his dramas. I have looked at his ethical and moral and theological texts in order to develop analytical and terminological tools with which we can understand the tensions in his plays and the content of his poetological theory. With these tools, we can reconstruct a coherent picture of how ethics structures his work and better understand the driving force—the central idea—of his plays.

In his moral-theological writings, Lenz develops a concept of personal ethics that is both radically individualistic and inextricably bound up with the socio-cultural and physiological environment. He argues that identity is formed within a complex, agonistic interaction among drives, desires, cognitive capacities, rules, and norms. Lenz asserts that we are socially and biologically constrained, but he also insists that human agency and freedom are the ultimate values by which we are to judge a society and an individual. He conceives of the ultimate stage of character formation as necessarily involving the surpassing of biological and socio-cultural limits that continually threaten human freedom. For Lenz, the question of personal ethics is primary and his handling of ethical questions reveals the extent to which he considers the discourses on self-preservation and reproduction and morals and socio-cultural norms to be ultimately related to a person's relationship to his bodily desires, to other people, to society and, ultimately, to God. According to Lenz, the individual must become aware of his location within this complex of forces and struggle to arrive at acceptable solutions to the problems faced.

When we assess Lenz as a writer or thinker, we must not separate the ethical and the aesthetic, morality and literature. He sees literature as an essential feature of the ethical and social world and considers its effects on readers and thereby on society to be critical. Conversely, his poetological and literary texts cannot be understood in isolation from his writings on social and ethical issues. His theory of genre is tied to his analysis of society and cannot be understood without considering his moral and ethical theory.

The crucial point of intersection is between the function and significance of character in his theory of genre, the notion of character in the ethical sense, the conception of the natural and socio-cultural order of things, and finally the functional definition of

literature. Lenz articulates a pragmatic theory of comedy in that he defines the genre in terms of its functional relation to socio-cultural and historical conditions and to the needs of society that arise out of that same context, and then in turn constructs his comedies in accordance with this pragmatic understanding with the expectation that the works will affect the audience in a particular way. It is my thesis that Lenz seeks to confront his audience with representations of the perverse contemporary socio-cultural state of affairs thereby provoking their sense of pride in the belief that they are independent individuals with free wills and that ethics and morality are their and their society's guiding principles, which should in turn motivate them to reflect on these representations and become conscious of—and thereby somewhat independent of—the socio-cultural conditions to which they refer.

My work proceeds first with a discussion of the secondary literature on Lenz, both in a general sense and in relation to his moral-theological writings. I then discuss my reconstructive approach to Lenz. Next, I break up a discussion of relevant concepts into sections relating to the nature of existence, wherein I focus on Lenz's statements concerning basic aspects of human nature, and nature in general. Then I turn to his discussion of drives, wherein I reconstruct and analyze the critically important notion of concupiscence. Following drives, comes the section on emotion, in which I assess Lenz's assertions of the centrality of feeling to all human experience. After I present the case for the importance of drives and emotions in Lenz's writings, I turn to the role of knowledge, where we clearly see that Lenz is far from an irrationalist, anti-Enlightenment figure, as some have tried to portray him. In the section on the role of religion in Lenz's thought, we see that although Lenz may struggle at times to accommodate religion with the sensualist foundation of his thinking, religion plays a critical role in the functioning of this theoretical constructions. We

then see Lenz's notions of how societal problems can be addressed, which sets up the context for his ethical and moral theory. In this section, I investigate the specifics of his conception of how humans could and should be. I conclude with a schematic outline of his poetological theory and statements about literature as well as references to selected major works to establish the strong and direct connection between his theoretical and literary works.

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE SECONDARY LITERATURE

There are several dominant approaches to Lenz. There are studies that focus on social criticism, for example, the psychological pressure exerted upon the individual by socio-economic forces and interpersonal conflicts (e.g., Mayer, 1966; Kreutzer, 1978; Mattenklott, 1968; McInnes, 1977). There have also been many studies into Lenz's innovative use of language and gestures (Blunden, 1972; Madland, 1984) and his related association with anti-Aristotelian form in his dramas (Madland, 1982). In the past few decades, much attention has been paid to the tension, conflict or contradiction in his dramatic theories and his plays. In particular, his discussion of the autonomous protagonist in his *Anmerkungen übers Theater* and the dependent, socially determined characters he portrays in his plays (Scherpe, 1977; Luserke, 2001; Kagel, 1997). While some scholars see Lenz's writings emphasizing social context (e.g., Guthke, 1959; Schwarz, 1985; Glaser, 1969; Duncan, 1969), Hinderer (1977) has pointed out that social conditions function primarily as a backdrop in Lenz's works against which the individual struggles to form his self.

Recent Lenz criticism has shown how his assessment of power structures is not limited to the Enlightenment's critique of the abuses of power by the nobility (as it was represented, for example, in bourgeois tragedy) but that the realities of middle-class social structures are in themselves oppressive. Christoph Weiß (1994) points out how we can see in Lenz's *Philosophische Vorlesungen* that he takes positions consistent with the Enlightenment, but that he then progressively criticizes and dynamicizes these positions.

This is seen as leading to the contradiction and ambivalence, which results in literature that illuminates problematic social conditions and relationships without offering simple answers. Lenz's refusal to employ formal closure is seen as a rebellion against the internalized cultural norms of formal control indicative of social restraint. It is precisely this complexity that makes Lenz such a rewarding object of study: his texts contain the means for their own destruction and reconstruction with every new reading. Partly because of these complexities, his work serves as historically distanced yet relevant experiment helping us understand how art can have an effect on our world. Wurst effectively summarizes this line of research when she states "[...] Lenz's moral, theological, philosophical, and poetological writings—like his literary texts—ward off all traditional systematization, and it is precisely the non-systematic and seemingly contradictory quality of Lenz that must come under scrutiny. Upon closer inspection, the similarity between his theoretical and creative writings is striking" (Wurst, "Mimesis" 110).

The secondary literature is increasingly turning toward considering Lenz's work as a whole. Particular themes and complexes are being considered, such as the theme of action (Rector, 1992; Unger 1993), and the themes of pride and humility (Osborne, 1969; Hill, 1992). These works are driven by the goal of arriving at a better understanding of Lenz as a thinker. Lenz's moral theological writings have become a focus of work with the apparent goal of trying to understand Lenz's world view in the hope that this will shed light on his literary works (Chantre, 1982; Sauder, 1994; Pautler, 1999). As Zierrath points out, Lenz research has yet adequately to consider the relationship between Lenz's theological texts, and, more importantly, his moral and ethical writings and his poetological texts. This is a grievous lack because neither can be understood without the other. As he

says: “Es fehlt jedoch eine Betrachtung von Lenz’ *Anmerkungen übers Theater*, der *Briefe über die Moralität der Leiden des jungen Werther* und der poetologischen Bemerkungen in seinen Briefen unter dem Gesichtspunkt der in dieser Arbeit erarbeiteten theologischen, moralischen und sexualphilosophischen Thesen von Lenz” (Zierath 95).

The secondary literature long struggled to free itself from its fixation on classicism and its norms and this colored the interpretations of Lenz as a writer and thinker (Glaser). When interpretations refuse immediately to judge the fact that Lenz’s works do not seem to fit certain norms, the contradictions and lack of clarity in Lenz’s works can be assessed as constituent features of those works (Wurst, 1992). Some see these contradictions in his enlightenment intentions and his radical criticism of the Enlightenment on the other hand (Huysen, 1979), while others locate it in his assertions of subjective autonomy and the reality of an experience of being determined by external forces (Wurst, 1992; Rector, 1993). Unger (1993) warns us that we need to be cautious approaching Lenz’s moral-theological writings from a “systematic perspective,” because of their conception as separate lectures to the *Strasbourg Society* and because of their unsystematic nature as suchⁱⁱⁱ.

Criticism that considers Lenz’s philosophical perspective has associated Lenz with numerous important philosophical thinkers of the eighteenth century. For example, Diffey (1974) investigated the relationship between Lenz and Rousseau and asserts that although there are many similarities between Lenz and Rousseau in terms of their socio-cultural criticism, Lenz also mocks Rousseau’s sentimentality and naïve ideals. Blunden (1978) and Rector (1989) have independently investigated how Lenz applies Leibniz’s monadology in his concept of *Standpunkt*. Mayer (1966) asserts that Lenz was an early

Kantian because of his view of the interdependence of beauty and truth. Rudolf (1970) understands Lenz as an eighteenth century moralist and focuses on his position on ethics. He sees in Lenz's writings a reflection on Kant's thoughts on altruism. O'Regan (1997) has also considered the Kant-Lenz connection, and has extended this with the inclusion of speculation as the similarities between Lenz and Kierkegaard. Preuss (1983) considers the notion of moral freedom in Lenz, and asserts that although influenced greatly by Kant, Lenz's ethics are rather an implicit criticism of Kantian ethics.

Martin Rector (1991) asserts that Lenz's theoretical work is still being investigated, if at all, selectively and wrongly. He reports that only the aesthetic texts are analyzed among the theoretical texts. Worse yet, the aesthetic and dramaturgical texts are viewed independently of the moral philosophical writings although, as Rector points out, the aesthetic texts cannot be understood in isolation from the anthropological underpinnings of Lenz's thinking. Sautermeister (1997) agrees in principle with Rector and asserts that little work has been done on the connection of the works on their correspondences, consonances, relationships and divergences as well. He argues that the work that has been done is sporadic and narrowly focused. He sees this deficit increasingly being addressed, but points out that much work still needs to be done.

Concerning Lenz's pursuit of knowledge, Rector (1991) asserts that there is a fundamental sensualist quality about it. He claims that Lenz proceeds from sensual perception and phenomena toward probability and, finally, to truth. This can also be seen in Lenz's aversion toward systematic philosophy and elaborate theoretical constructions. According to Rector, such theorizing obscured the concrete, the individual and the specific behind a wall of abstractions. Lenz talked about such systematic, abstract

thinking as a *Sklavenkette*, and said that he abhorred such thinking. Daemrich (1994) addresses Lenz's conception of the perceptual process and observes that it is a process of valuing abstract concepts in their functional meaning. They are tested and explained in an active interchange with reality. Each intuition proceeds into thinking and thinking leads to renewed observation.

Schulz observes that Lenz orients himself in moral theological questions sometimes on Leibniz or Baumgarten, but also often independently, unsystematically and not always clearly (242). Schulz sees Lenz confronted with the dilemma of wanting to affirm sexual desires on the one hand but on the other hand not to leave it all possible room for its realization or satisfaction on the other hand. He believes that Lenz does not have a problem with human drives as such (243). He sees that Lenz values the drives as a source of motivation that can help to overcome human laziness and inertia. Desires are a source of power that motivates people to act and puts them in a position to pursue their calling. He also sees this as the reason why Lenz insists that we should leave our desires unsatisfied. If we allow them to build up we will develop more power for action and be able to achieve more because of the greater degree of motivation and drive.

Schulz makes the insightful criticism of the secondary literature when he addresses the biographical orientation of the research when it comes to Lenz's "Lebensregeln," or "Catechismus". Even though Lenz uses the "I" form in the text Schulz correctly points out that the pedagogical book in question and answer format has a claim on supra individual validity (248). He also correctly points out the correspondence of this text with Lenz's later texts, with the difference that he holds closer to the lessons of Christ's acts

and example and follows a path of bible interpretation to exemplify his points instead of the moral anthropologically oriented arguments of his later texts.

Schulz (2001) tells us that Lenz's work is strongly oriented toward the work of Herder and Lessing in his interpretation of human development and his use of the bible to explain that development. The "Meinungen eines Laien" exemplifies this. He also uses Lenz's anthropology to explain the biblical stories and their significance. Pointing out the connection between the aesthetic and moral theological writings that Rector and Zierrath have also insisted upon, Schulz draws attention to stylistic similarities, stating "Insofern muten gerade in stilistischer Hinsicht die *Meinungen eines Laien* wie ein theologisches Pendant zu Lenz' ästhetischer Hauptschrift an seinen '*Anmerkungen übers Theater*'."

John Osborne (1975) addresses the important concept of pride in Lenz's works and describes two kinds of pride at work in Lenz that provide a unifying element in his texts—an external pride measurable in rank or wealth, and pride in the "integrity of one's own personality" (62). Most critics, like Edward McInnes, believe that the tension in Lenz between the predictability of social forces and the "contingent" life of the individual in a meaningless world remains unresolved. This is his argument in his 1977 study "Domestic Drama and the Sturm und Drang," where he dissects the structural tensions and random events in Lenz's plays and tries to show that they reveal the conflict between opposing views of life, one that finds life meaningful, another that finds it meaningless. Thus, says McInnes a few years later in *Ein Ungeheures Theater* (1987), Lenz's interest in social reform coexisted with an overwhelming sense of horror. But in a 1972 study of *Der Hofmeister*, Edward Harris suggests that there is more structure to this chaos than we might think, and he tries to show how family relationships are interwoven into a

triangular arrangement in which plot, characterization, and social commentary make up a “complex but persistent pattern of conflict and resolution.”

Rector (1994) asserts that Lenz propagates the necessity of the suppression of drives in his moral-theological writings for two reasons. Firstly, the evidence of the ability to suppress drives is a guarantee of the possibility of morally acceptable pleasure that is to be achieved in marriage. Secondly, how we deal with our drives determines the degree to which we have free will and autonomy in action. Those who give in to their drives are slaves to them and therefore not free. Those who struggle to master them, derive from this struggle the will and the power to be autonomous. Rector’s insights here are critical to an accurate understanding of Lenz’s understanding of drives and human autonomy and my argument agrees in principle with that of Rector.

Lenz scholarship has noted his intense interest in morality and human freedom. In 1970, Rudolf treated Lenz from the point-of-view of his role as a “Moralist und Aufklärer” who never was able to liberate himself from his Pietistic roots, treating all the issues in his work as questions of order, specifically as theological and moral matters. The issue of morality is also confirmed by Madland who examines Lenz’s relationship to Wieland, whose ethics, at least in Lenz’s view, were a threat to the public. David Hill argues that *Die Soldaten* concerns itself more with the abuse of freedom than the power relations existing between aristocracy and middle class. The play is more moral, Hill argues, than political. Hill argues that Lenz believes that the world is a moral entity and questions Lenz’s understanding of social and political structures. Following up this line of thought, his 1992 study of pride points to the close connection between social and moral phenomena and ends up fusing these two concepts, with Lenz becoming both

social critic and moralist. Unlike his fellow *Sturm und Drang* authors, Lenz brings matters of responsibility to the surface, Leidner says in a 1989 essay, resisting the temptation to design texts that justify every transgression.

Closely related to morality is the issue of the limits and possibilities of human action. In 1974, Norman Diffey linked Lenz's "moral creed" of constant activity to his attempts at social reform and showed how his tendency to strive despite the odds is both a statement of faith and a mode of thought and action. In 1993 Martin Rector calls this activity the unacknowledged center of Lenz's work, and an increasing number of other critics also give activity a central place. In his 1993 essay "Seven Theses on the Problem of Action in Lenz," Rector cites a broad palette of issues—theology, ethics, psychology, anthropology, aesthetics—that he feels Lenz addresses with his concept of action, deciding that the problem is important for him not as a compensatory substitute for real action, but as preliminary exercise meant to prepare the way for real freedom. Lenz's drama, says Rector, is written to inspire thought about the free action that we deserve to exercise simply because we are human, and it is meant to keep us from falling into the gears of the great machine of society. Unger, whose work is methodologically indebted to Luhmann's concept of contingency, looks less at action as a means for the attainment of external goals or for proving oneself morally, but rather at the perception of our own effectiveness. In an essay titled "Contingent Spheres of Action," he explores action as a category of interdisciplinary relevance in cultural studies. Lenz, he argues, by removing social action from a fixed moral system and allowing it to appear contingent, makes us aware of the changeability of social conditions, thus increasing our freedom and self-

awareness. His studies of the problem, as well as Rector's work, exemplify how central the concept of action has become.

Schnurr (2001) has provided an insightful analysis of the "Philosophische Vorlesungen," one of Lenz's most important theoretical texts. Among other things, he addresses the form of the "Philosophische Vorlesungen" and makes a comment that is constitutive of Lenz's work as a whole. He points out that Lenz does not seek to present his ideas in a finalized, or closed off form in the sense that every detail has been thought out and formulated in a comprehensive way. He does this because it is Lenz's goal to invite his readers and listeners to think along with him and complete the ideas on his own. As we will see, this aspect is also a clearly stated goal of his poetics as well (see Schnurr, 38). Schnurr tells us that when we look at Lenz's concept of Concupiscence that the following aspects come into view. The subject, the object, the relation of subject to object in terms of the selection and the capturing of the object, the reflection of the subject on this entire process and on itself. Schnurr:

Die Begierde überhaupt deutet damit in mehrfacher Hinsicht, körperlich-geistig, willentlich-unwillentlich, oder auch als erfüllbare, existential-endliche Struktur versus einen "reinen" unerfüllbar-infiniten Streben—etwa nach Wissen, Vervollkommen bestimmter Fähigkeiten, ethische Handlungsorientierung [...]. Lenz gewahrt somit in der "Konkupiszenz" den Verknüpfungspunkt aller Ebenen von Weltlichkeit und Gottlichkeit initial begründet. Wie innerhalb dieser Gefügtheit von Welt menschliche Freiheit Bestand haben kann, muß dennoch problematisch bleiben. (95)

Schnurr thinks that Lenz makes sin a problematic concept because of the permanence and intensity of concupiscence. Schnurr asserts the concupiscence exists within a circle of inner and outer contexts. The development of the power of human action develops its direction toward God not in a linear fashion, but rather in a context of mutually influencing and conflicting powers. He sees here affinities with Leibniz. Completely new with Lenz is the radical embedding of the superior powers in an anthropological context and its dichotomization as a result of individual striving.

One of the more interesting and fruitful directions in Lenz research and one of particular importance for the direction of my work is that of Rector who looks at Lenz's aesthetic principles in the context of his moral-theological writings in his "Seven Theses on the Problem of Action in Lenz" (1993). Rector considers the problem of action to be the center of Lenz's thought—a claim with which I am in basic agreement, because action for Lenz is part of the complex of ideas that comprise ethics and it is the defining feature of his ethics as we will see below. I would agree with a statement by Rudolf long ago that, "Einzig aus der Wechselwirkung vom Dichterischen und Religiös-Philosophischen in Lenz können wir die eigenartige Struktur seines Erlebens und Schaffens erfassen" (201).

Concerning sexuality, Velez (1996) observes that Lenz connects the discussion of the sexual drive with the Theodicy problem. According to her, he attempts to answer the question as to how to bring in agreement the absolute freedom of the individual with the absolute lawlike character of God's creation and the satisfaction of drives that would be consistent with those laws. Furthermore, she asserts that he radicalizes the pietistic and neological as well as the sentimental positions in that he proposes the sexual drive as the

fundamental source of all feelings. She goes so far as to assert that Lenz is unique in the degree to which he derives feelings from concupiscence.

Velez makes another astute observation when she connects Lenz's understanding of drives with that of August Hupel. As she remarks, this connection has hardly been discussed in the secondary literature. She asserts that Lenz did have a more dynamic view of the relation between drives and control than did Hupel and his evaluation of the drives is more positive than Hupel's. In effect, it seems that Lenz is rethinking many of Hupel's positions and that Lenz's writings on the topic of drives and their relation to society and identity can be seen as a response to Hupel, and much in agreement with him.

Coming from a Brechtian and Marxist perspective on literature, Scherpe asks the questions "Warum zeigen poetische Werke des Sturm-und-Drang-Autors Lenz so wenig 'Souveränität'? Was ist ihre literarische Wirklichkeit, ihr Modus dichterischer Erkenntnis der gesellschaftlichen Wirklichkeit in den siebziger Jahren des 18. Jahrhunderts? Wie verhält sich die dichterische Erkenntnis des Autors Lenz zu seinen sozialen, ökonomischen und politischen Vorstellungen und Projekten?" ("Projektmacherei" 207). He then asserts that

Lenz' Reflexionen auf dem Niveau der zeitgenössischen Gesellschaftslehre in Deutschland, seine Kenntnisse auf dem Gebiet der Moralphilosophie, der Pädagogik, der Agrarökonomie und des Militärwesens sind eher zufällig erworben und, was leicht festzustellen ist, mehr konventionell als originell entwickelt. Gleichwohl gewinnt er hier den Standard der *sittlichen Forderungen*, die er glaubt *an sich selber und andere* stellen zu müssen. Den Vernunft rigorismus der aufklärerischen Morallehre macht er sich zur Pflicht.

Den Gedanken der Perfektibilität des Einzelmenschen und der Gattung faßt er als Hauptprinzip, das alle Teilbereiche praktischer Tätigkeit zusammenfaßt. Auf der ebene des theoretischen Räsonnements wird die Glückseligkeit des Menschen systematisch gefolgert aus der Zuordnung aller Vermögen des Verstandes und der Seele zu einer Einheit. Der eines harmonischen Daseins. (209)

Sherpe's view is characteristic of the superficial analysis that has been done with Lenz until recently. We see in it no attempt to investigate the specifics of Lenz's works, but instead to evaluate them against criteria that are not really appropriate to Lenz's works. Whether Lenz's knowledge is "zufällig erworben" or whether it is systematic or not really does not address how these ideas function in his works, which is really the most interesting and important question to address with any writer.

If we seek to represent Lenz's thought, we must go beyond a study of influences. Merely pointing out the influences on Lenz really does not significantly advance our understanding of his work because he never presents the ideas of another with the intent of providing an accurate picture of that person's ideas. He uses their ideas, rather, as useful elements in the construction and presentation of his own understanding of the issues under consideration. Looking for influences may shed light on the context of the terms Lenz uses where he does not clearly explain their meaning or the relations among them, but only if this explanation from the alleged sources or influences is consistent with Lenz's writings. Furthermore, according to Demuth: "Entscheidender dürfte jedoch sein, daß dieses Wissen bei ihm an vielen Stellen bereits so weit problematisiert erscheint, daß man beim bloßen Register von Bildungseinflüssen nicht gerecht verharren darf, will man Lenz' Statur als Moraltheoretiker

gerecht werden. Diese Problemstellen bringen erst seine zeitweilig tiefe moralphilosophische Verunsicherung ans Licht” (20). The fact that Lenz problematizes other’s ideas that he also, in some sense, uses to construct his theories and that he often plays fast and loose with their presentation makes the practice of looking for influences as an “explanation” of what Lenz “means” or how he is to be understood, very problematic. It also obscures Lenz’s qualities as a thinker about morality, as Demuth warns. Instead of asserting connections between Lenz and other thinkers, it is more fruitful to look at how Lenz uses those ideas in the context of his own argument.

We must be cautious about the goals we set in reconstructing Lenz. As Hayer and others warn, Lenz does not reach and, by his own assertions, does not strive to reach a strictly defined conceptual apparatus. According to Hayer:

Auch wenn das Quellenmaterial die Möglichkeit einer Überprüfung der sachlogischen Stringenz argumentativer Teilschritte und eine Kritik entwickelter Begriffsbildung nicht zuläßt, ergeben sich meines Erachtens doch deutliche motivliche Koordinaten. Lenz mag stets schweben in einem Zwischenreich—oberhalb der gefälligen Metapher, doch unterhalb des Begriffs, doch bemüht er sich, dies mit Bestimmtheit in Richtung des selbst formulierten Maßstabes zu tun. (90)

While Lenz clearly does not strive for rigorous conceptual clarity, he also does not merely remain on the level of the metaphor. He seems to move back and forth between a stricter theoretical and conceptual form of argumentation, asserting important cognitive claims and critiquing unclear concepts in others, while at other times appealing to sentiments as the final arbiter of truth and presenting pictures to be assessed on multiple levels and as

aesthetic wholes. We must try to move with Lenz if we seek faithfully to reconstruct his works. Merely focusing on the fact that Lenz was not a rigorous conceptual thinker does little to help us understand the character of his thought. Rather than telling us what it is, it stops at telling us what his thinking is not, which is of limited value in bringing us to a more accurate understanding of Lenz's writings.

We can apply what Hayer asserts about working with Lenz's letters to his writings as a whole. He cautions us: "Die Ergebniserwartung auf eine stimmige gedankliche Gesamtschau hin kann von diesen gewiß bedeutsamen Briefen nicht befriedigt werden. Manches bleibt fragmentarisch, nur lose thesenförmig angebunden" (90). As we will see below, the incomplete nature of Lenz's presentation of his ideas was by design and we must be careful not to try to work his ideas into a framework for which they were not intended. Sometimes we must be satisfied with the fragmentary nature of Lenz's writings. He often breaks off a thought, never to return to it, or he returns to it with a seemingly contradictory conclusion. This is a quality of his thought that we should not try to "tidy up." Wurst also recognizes this aspect of Lenz's work and makes the following observation:

What Lenz offers us is a corpus that demands that we understand it in its multiplicity. The relation between his texts is a complex and creative intertextual rewriting in which the same issue can be treated in a variety of generic contexts, and treated from perspectives that reciprocally elucidate, differentiate, problematize—and, occasionally, even contradict—one another. Every attempt to force the disparate elements of Lenz's drama and theory into some supposed unity will necessarily nullify its peculiar multidimensionality. If readers become disoriented in his labyrinthine texts

and lose focus, it is because he banishes all synthetic wholes to the realm of infinity. In Lenz, all perspectives become 'real' or 'unreal' to the same degree, and there is almost no attempt to hierarchize and privilege one aspect over another. ("Mimesis" 116)

In our attempts to create a coherent picture of what Lenz writes, we must be careful not to strive for a coherence that is antithetical to his writings. While I will argue that there is much more coherence to his texts than many in the secondary literature credit them with, I will also draw attention to the qualities of multiplicity, pluralism, perspectivalism and noncommensurability that define his work and thought.

Although I will argue that Lenz's theoretical texts can and should be used as an analytical framework for understanding his literary texts, we must exercise caution in establishing what type of relationships exist among these texts. This is consistent with Rector's warning: "Lenz' literarische Arbeiten, seine Dramen wie seine Erzählungen, stehen zu seinen moralphilosophischen, sozialreformerischen und ästhetischen Schriften nicht in einem einfachen Abbildungs- oder Umsetzungs-Verhältnis" ("Autonomie" 294). It is quite clear from Lenz's own statements on the relationship between literature and philosophy that he abhors the simplistic reduction of literary representation to the presentation of philosophical propositions. It is also not my contention that he does so. Just as it is clear that he conceives of literature as having its own character as a distinct form of discourse, it is also clear that for him valuable literature must faithfully represent life. To the extent that his theoretical texts are an attempt to present humans as they are and as they could and should be if they were to realize their human nature, there is a clear point of intersection for the

aesthetic and the theoretical where they can and do meet in Lenz's work, as will become clear below.

Recent research has turned to critically analyzing the religious content of Lenz's writings and the function this religious content has in his writings. Hayer (1995), along with Zierath (1995), has provided insight into Lenz's thought on original sin. For example, Zierath points out: "Er widerspricht dem Kernsatz der Erbsündenlehre (alle Menschen sind sündig geboren) vehement, wenn er das Unglück als die Folge einer Handlung aus moralischer Freiheit beschreibt. Die moralische Autonomie des Menschen ist für Lenz verantwortlich für Unglück und Glück in der Welt" (Zierath 38). Hayer asserts: "Es gibt kaum eine theologische Frage, der Lenz in seinen theoretischen Arbeiten solch breiten Raum gewährt, wie diejenige nach der Erbsündenproblematik" (Hayer 120). To make the significance of the theological aspects of Lenz's work clear, Zierath states: "Seine Dramen stehen in engstem Zusammenhang mit seinen moralischen Schriften, die er parallel zu jenen verfaßte. Seine theologischen Ansichten sind Grundlage seiner Dramen. Somit muß der christlichen Intention der Lenzschen Poetik eine größere Beachtung geschenkt werden" (Zierath 171). I am in agreement with Zierath's statement and the central focus of this work is to investigate precisely the nature of Lenz's moral and theological writings and the relationship between these ideas and his poetological and literary works.

CHAPTER 2

APPROACHING LENZ

Sex/Sexuality

While some have found Lenz unique in his focus on sex (Weiß, 1994; Velez), recent work on the history of sexuality in the 18th century has pointed out that sex was a central concern in the discussions and debates in the 18th century. Sex was so important and invested with so much weight for Lenz and his contemporaries because of the contemporary conceptions of human nature. As Hull tells us:

The sexual drive was celebrated as the motor of society and the mark of the independent, adult, productive citizen. [...] Precisely because it was held to be universal, basic and irrepressible, the sexual drive became exemplary of drive altogether, and it thus became enmeshed in the eighteenth century's heated anthropological and philosophical dispute over the distinction between drive, instinct, and desire and the relation these held to freedom, reason, and morality. These were issues of the greatest importance to the founding of civil society, for they determined how one judged the nature of the new basic unity of that society, the individual. (238)

For Lenz as well the sex drive is held to be not only the motor of society, but he also constructs a history of humanity and its development that is centered on concupiscence. For Lenz, as we will see below, the sex drive—being part of what he refers to as “concupiscence”—is so critical because it is the motor for human action. When we recall the importance of action to Lenz (and his Storm and Stress cohorts) the significance the sex-

action link becomes clear. This link is critical to his conceptions of freedom, reason, morality and interpersonal relations.

In order better to appreciate this intense discussion, it is necessary for us to “historicize” the concept of sexuality in our own thinking so that we can avoid clouding our reading of this discussion with anachronistic concepts. I agree with Foucault and Hull in that I do not assume an essential nature to lie behind the word “sex.” As Foucault puts it in volume one of his *History of Sexuality*:

Sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries gradually to uncover. It is the name that can be given to a historical construct: not a furtive reality that is difficult to grasp, but a great surface network in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledges, the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power. (105–06)

With Foucault, I treat sexuality as a social construct and the question as to its nature as such is not addressed in my work and does not provide a theoretical background for my understanding of what sex is or is not. This is a pragmatic methodological restriction. Like Foucault, I have made methodological assumptions that restrict the scope of my study to things said about the issue at hand, and bracket out any discussion about what the thing in itself might or might not be.

Hull (1997) has already laid out the theoretical and practical context in great detail. It is an account with which I am in agreement and which serves as a background against which

my work can be read. In volume two of his *History of Sexuality* Foucault says that he wants to “dwell on that quite recent and banal notion of ‘sexuality’: to stand detached from it, bracketing its familiarity, in order to analyze the theoretical and practical context with which it has been associated” (3). He continues

In short, it was a matter of seeing how an “experience” came to be constituted in modern Western societies, an experience that caused individuals to recognize themselves as subjects of a “sexuality,” which was accessible to very diverse fields of knowledge and linked to a system of rules and constraints. What I planned, therefore, was a history of the experience of sexuality, where experience is understood as the correlation between fields of knowledge, types of normativity, and forms of subjectivity in a particular culture. (4)

In Lenz we see this process of recognition quite clearly and he goes so far as to build human identity on the foundation of desire. We also see the linking to types of normativity in the forms of morality, ethics, and social norms. According to Lenz, our personality and character depends on how this process is negotiated. The common interest of my study with Foucault’s can be seen in his assertion that “[...] the question that ought to guide my inquiry was the following, how, why, and in what forms was sexuality constituted as a moral domain?” (II: 10). Lenz most certainly conceives of sex as being part of a moral domain and, as we will see below, he goes so far as to assert that he is founding morality upon desire. Foucault goes on to state his task as defining “the conditions in which human beings ‘problematize’ what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live (II: 10). Lenz is concerned with the act of problematization and his questioning goes to the core of human

existence. He repeatedly states that the contemporary world is dysfunctional and he sees himself as performing a therapeutic function through his writings. He is questioning contemporary society and wants to fix it. My concern differs from Foucault's in that my interest is not society as a whole in the late 18th century. I am more specifically interested in how a particular thinker problematized sexuality and made it to constitute the central feature of his anthropology and ethics and how in turn it came to serve as the structuring feature of his poetological and literary works.

Lenz's focus on matters relating to sexuality and his expressed sense of the urgency and importance of these issues reflects the contemporary interest in such matters and is certainly not an aberration or a highly unique phenomenon, although it has perhaps not received enough attention in the secondary literature. As Hull states:

Over hundreds of years the church hammered out the central tenets of sexual ethics: distrust of sexual pleasure, exaltation of celibacy and virginity, restriction of permissible sexual relations to monogamous, procreative, heterosexual marriage. It also created the primary disciplinary methods to uphold these standards: confession, penance, the ecclesiastical courts, and canon law. More important, Christianity invested sexual behavior with extraordinary importance [...]. That is, the body and its sexual possibilities bore enormous symbolic weight; they became saturated with meanings belonging to systems of faith, or order and hierarchy in a Christian community, of signs revealing eternity. (10)

According to Hull, sexual behavior was a central concern for Lenz's contemporaries and had been so for centuries. So much so that the debates about sexuality often had a

significance that went far beyond the physical act and that bore a symbolic weight that enmeshed it in almost all aspects of life.

Sex was not merely a matter of religious concern. Because of its effects on human relations, sex came to play a critical role in thinking about society and the state during the Enlightenment. According to Hull,

The existence of Enlightened civil society is critical to understanding what happened to the public interest in sexual behavior, for the late-eighteenth-century discussion of sexual behavior and its impact on state and society, the discussion that laid the foundation for the “modern” assumptions about “sexuality,” was not only carried on by self-described Enlightened members of civil society, it was a public debate on the (sexual) ligaments holding that society together or threatening to pull it apart. Enlightened civil society was the framework within which the reorganization of thinking about sexual behavior took place. (200).

We see this same dynamic in Lenz: sex brings people together and is therefore a part of the foundation of society, but it can create conflict and tension and disrupt that same society. Sex could both be the centripetal force holding society together or a centrifugal force ripping it apart. It all depended on how a given society was constructed and how well or how poorly sexual relations could be integrated and used to foster social bonds rather than operating in constant and absolute opposition to them. Lenz is participating in this discussion, drawing from it in a problem-oriented, pragmatic fashion and trying to contribute to it through his writings and presentations.

Lenz's Style and Method

Lenz tells his readers: “Ich will mich in keine metaphysischen Untersuchungen einlassen, nur das Brauchbarste sagen, was unsern Geist in der zu seinem Glück notwendigen Spannung zu erhalten vermögend ist” (II 619). Lenz declares that he is not engaging in metaphysical investigations but rather only wants to deal with the most useful. This stance is characteristic of his theoretical works as a whole. He wants to focus on the useful and only discuss those things that interest us. This is a thoroughly pragmatic stance on his part and one that can be taken as definitive of his approach.

Lenz often makes somewhat self-deprecating comments. For example, he states in a letter to Salzmann (III: #20, October, 1772) that “Der menschliche Verstand muß von der höchsten Wahrscheinlichkeit zur Wahrheit übergehen; ich habe zu dieser schärfern Untersuchungen keine Zeit—auch keine Fähigkeit.” He satisfies himself with the probable and says that he does not have the time or the ability to try to get to the truth. He is positioning himself as a thinker who does not seek to “get to the bottom” of an issue but rather one who considers it to a point that it makes sense to him and then ceases his theoretical speculations until the understanding he arrived at is problematized once again. Lenz portrays this approach as a limitation, but seen from the pragmatic perspective that seems to guide him it is rather a virtue. Lenz continues this thought when he says:

An mir ist von Kindesbeinen an ein Philosoph verdorben, ich hasche immer nach der ersten besten Wahrscheinlichkeit, die mir in die Augen flimmert, und die liebe, bescheiden nackte Wahrheit kommt dann ganz leise von hinten und hält mir die Augen zu. Eine lange Kette von Ideen, wo eine die andere gibt, bis man, wenn man eine Weile gereist hat, die letzte find't und

sich seines Zieles freuen kann, ist für meine Seele eine wahre
Sklavenkette—wie glücklich bin ich, wieder an Ihrer Hand zu gehen, wenn
ich lange genug auf blumigten Wiesen herumgesprungen.— (III: #21,
October 1772)

He equates being a philosopher with being an intellectualist philosopher who tries to follow the chain of ideas to its bitter end. In contrast, Lenz characterizes his thought process as one that seeks to find the most probable answer to his questions. Lenz associates the path of thought that seeks to find the ultimate truth by following a long chain of ideas to its ultimate end as a “slave chain.” By doing so he appears to be associating such an approach to thinking with a form of bondage. Although Lenz uses his typical self-deprecating strategy here, it is clear from his language that he considers his approach of seeking probabilities superior to the attempt to seek the ultimate and final truth. Given Lenz’s skepticism about human abilities to arrive at final truths, it seems safe to assume that he would consider his approach superior, because it is more realistic.

We must be careful not to be too taken in by Lenz’s self-deprecating tactics. He sets himself up as an unsystematic and somewhat naïve thinker, but it is also clear that he believes that his approach arrives at a picture that is more valuable to us as humans and that is more honest and accurate than the approaches that claim to arrive at ultimate truth or even to be on the road to that truth. There is a skepticism that underlies Lenz’s epistemology and methodology, but it is skepticism of human knowledge as such and one that seeks to be mindful of the limitations of human knowledge. Lenz conceives his style to fit the content of his message. This is actually quite ingenious on his part and needs to be taken more seriously as a conscious effort. As he redefines the genre to fit

appropriately with the content of his plays and the socio-cultural context of the plays production and reception, so he seeks to redefine the discursive style of his theoretical texts to fit with the content he is presenting and to the context within which it is being received and in which it is designed to have its effects. The style of presentation of the material has to be taken into consideration as part of the message because it also affects what he can say if he is to remain within that mode of discourse^{iv}.

Lenz again provides us with a self-characterization of his philosophical method when he says: “ [...] meine philosophischen Betrachtungen dürfen nicht über zwei, drei Minuten währen, sonst tut mir der Kopf weh. Aber wenn ich einen Gegenstand fünf-, zehnmal so flüchtig angesehen habe, und finde, daß er noch immer da bleibt und mir immer besser gefällt, so halt ich ihn für wahr und meine Empfindung führt mich darin richtiger als meine Schlüsse” (III: #22, October 1772). This characterization seems to have had the most long-lasting effect on the perception of Lenz in the secondary literature. Here we see the image of a person who does not think very systematically or in depth about an issue, or he will get a headache. It suffices for him to consider an object “five or ten times.” If after this brief consideration the object remains before him and his conception of it pleases him ever more, he then considers it to be true. Moreover, he asserts that his emotions and sensibility provide a more reliable guide than his rational conclusions. This is an important indication of Lenz’s pragmatic, sensualist epistemological convictions.

Lenz himself says that it is enough for him that an idea seems probable and that he is not interested in getting to the essence of ideas. If we are concerned to understand Lenz’s thinking about the issues he writes about, we must consider how he uses these terms.

Lenz's approach is thoroughly pragmatic and I will analyze his use of these ideas in a similar spirit to seek to understand them in a fashion that is most compatible with his own stated purposes.

Lenz distances himself from intellectualist rationalism. There can be no doubt that he rejects intellectualist rationalist accounts of the world and the methods they use. He argues for a type of thinking that relies on and uses the information from the senses and feelings and that does not demand abstract truth. Lenz does not think that such truth is accessible to humans. It would simply be a contradiction for him to try to arrive at such a truth. According to Rector "klingen fast alle Motive von Lenz' Idiosynkrasie gegen die orthodoxe Philosophie an. Da ist zunächst seine fundamentale sensualistisch-empiristische Kritik an jeglicher abstrakt-begrifflichen Deduktionslogik, der er ein induktives, von der Sinneswahrnehmung und den Phänomenen selbst ausgehendes Aufsteigen über die Wahrscheinlichkeit zur Wahrheit gegenüberstellt" ("Anschauendes Denken" 96). Lenz positions himself against philosophical rationalists. He clearly argues for the importance of experience and the senses in thinking about and discussing human nature. The category of probability is more important to him than the category of truth because the truth has a sense of finality to it that Lenz considers beyond our capabilities and beyond the capabilities of all finite beings.

We cannot achieve the kind of general and consistent knowledge that speculative, intellectualist rationalism aims for. We can only investigate specific problems and come up with answers that will be relative to those investigations. We must not get caught up in trying to tie everything together into some neat system because this is beyond human abilities. This would require divine abilities, which Lenz clearly believes we do not have.

We see this in his statement: “Auch ich hoffe ich baue auf dem Grunde in welchem Jesus Christus der Eckstein ist. Alle Verschiedenheiten aber wird und muß Gott einigen” (III: January, 1776). Lenz is content to leave things in their multiplicity because it is God’s business to unify them all in the end, not some finite being with a systematic, synthesizing philosophy.

When we assess Lenz as a thinker and writer, we must first understand his statements concerning what he considers to be within the human capacity to know, and how we come to know it. In order to consider him a “failure” or to assert that his project was unsuccessful it seems that we must first seek to understand what goals he set for himself and what he thought is possible to achieve. If he achieves what he set out to accomplish, he is successful, at least to that degree. Whether others understood him in the way he desired to be understood or whether his readers saw what he desired them to see, that is another level of “success,” but one that lies outside of his control.

As Wurst points out, the (d)evaluation of Lenz’s works has often been carried out against the background of Classical aesthetics. As she says: “ob ausgesprochen oder unausgesprochen, werden bei der Be- oder Abwertung der Lenzschen Texte an der klassischen Ästhetik geschulte Bewertungskriterien (sinnvolle Beziehung aller Teile, einheitliche Gestalt, Zusammenwirken aller Formelemente, d.h. die Übereinstimmung aller literarischer Zeichen) angewandt” (“Alternative” 6). She goes on to say that these values are too restrictive and inappropriate to Lenz’s work. It should be added here that the literary, socio-political and philosophical values of Brechtian aesthetics are also too restrictive and not appropriate due to their limited social perspective and insistence on a Hegelian/Marxist epistemology that refuses to take Lenz’s world view seriously.

Reconstructing Lenz is not only important to our understanding of his works, it is also important for our understanding of his period and for our understanding of one of the more innovative thinkers of his time. According to Daemmrich (1994): “Aus der Sicht der Themenforschung nimmt Lenz jedoch eine bisher nicht beachtete Schlüsselstellung in einem tiefgreifenden Motivwandel ein. Sein Werk erfaßt in der thematischen Engführung, im Aufbau von Parallelen und Kontrastpaaren, in der Inversion traditioneller Motive und im bedeutenden Neuansatz wesentliche Anliegen der Epoche” (10). Lenz occupies a key position in a period of change and in his work we can see many intersecting themes that were the dominant modes of thought among his contemporaries. His acute awareness of the problematics of his time provide us with a window into aspects of the contemporary situation that we cannot find expressed anywhere else with the density, intensity and creativity that we find in Lenz.

Lenz shows a pragmatic understanding of language. When writing to Simon about the Pietists, Lenz advises Simon that he should, “Redt ihre Sprache mit ihnen, wenn Ihr beweisen wollt, daß Ihr mehr Vernunft und ein größeres Herz habt. Nehmt sie in Euer Herz auf und tragt sie, wenn Ihr stärker sein wollt als sie, die Euch zu tragen meinen. Nennt’s Buße und Glauben und Wiedergeburt, was Ihr itzt Tugend und Providenz nennt, sind es denn nicht nur Namen und für dieselbe Sache” (III, April 1776). We can see here that Lenz does not have an essentialist understanding of language and that he is concerned with the pragmatic effects of using terminology that others can understand and that he sees as referring to the same thing in the end. He does not get lost in language games. Language is a tool of communication, not some thing in itself to be taken too extremely or understood and used too rigidly. He tells his correspondent to use the

terminology of the Pietists when he talks with them if his goal is to prove that he is more reasonable and has a bigger heart than they do. If this person seeks to guide these people he should be strong enough to speak to them in their language. After all, he says, they are only names that speak of the same thing. It is not worth it to get lost in terminological debates that do not make any difference in the end.

Lenz is not a pessimistic skeptic. According to him, we should use all of our powers to create knowledge. We should not simply give up trying to know and to understand because there are limits placed on our knowledge. As he says: "Das verhindert uns aber nicht, all unsere Kräfte aufzubieten, in dieser Dunkelheit schon itzt so weit vorzudringen als wir können, denn die Erfahrung lehrt uns trotz unserer heiligsten Systeme, daß in der Welt nichts übernatürlich zugehe, daß alle Wirkungen und Produkte unseres Verstandes in ihren Ursachen, in den Bestrebungen und Anstrengungen desselben gegründet sind" (II: 570). As we can see in this quote, Lenz does not suggest that because we cannot arrive at final truths that we should give up our search for truth. While we cannot know everything, we also know from our experience that nothing is supernatural. That is, it is caught up in the chain of cause and effect and is, in theory, knowable by its nature, even if we never do come to know it. What we come to know has its causes in our strivings and efforts of our understanding, which I understand to mean that Lenz is saying that what we come to know we come to know because of the effort we exert to know it and not from some divine inspiration. This means that if we do not strive to know or make the effort to know, we will remain ignorant. Lenz is not making the argument that all contents of our knowledge come from within us, only that their causes do. That is, this is

not a relativist argument that all knowledge is subjective and has no objective qualities or status.

In treating Lenz's theoretical texts it is crucial that we consider his style of writing and thinking. He refers to himself as a "lay" person in theology and characterizes his approach in his major poetological text as "rhapsodic." Lenz repeatedly qualifies his remarks and overtly tells his readers not to take him too seriously, although he reminds them at the same time that the material he is discussing is crucially important. Lenz characterizes his style of presentation quite well. He remarks that he will proceed in his presentation according to his "usual" style where he will strew about some light observations about the primary grounds of morality that do not appear to have a connection. He tells his audience:

Ich habe mir vorgenommen, Ihnen m.H., nach meiner gewöhnlichen Art, über diese ersten Gründe der Moral einige leichte, ohne Zusammenhang scheinende Anmerkungen hinzustreuen. Es ist kein Glaubensbekenntnis, es sind Meinungen, die mir aber solange als bare Münze gelten, bis ich sie gegen bessere auswechseln kann. Wenn ein Sokrates, der andere in den Sphären herumreisen ließ, unterdessen in sich selbst zurückschauerte und sein eigen Herz, die reichhaltigste Goldgrube, durchforschte, wenn ein Sokrates gestehen mußte, er habe noch nichts gelernt, als daß er nichts wisse—was sollen wir sagen, meine Herren? (II: 499-500)

He is not proclaiming his beliefs, but rather presenting opinions. However, these opinions he considers to have value until he exchanges them for better ones. Lenz justifies this approach by arguing that Socrates took a similar pragmatic approach, while others

searched about in esoteric realms. Socrates looked into himself and his own heart. In the end, he said he had learned nothing other than that he does not know anything. If Socrates came to this conclusion, what more can we say? Once again, Lenz is outlining what I consider to be a pragmatic orientation.

Wurst astutely points out the phenomenon of self-interruption in Lenz's work. She states: "His self-interruption thus does not arise out of a lack of poetic or psychic self-trust or deficient autonomy, but rather out of a deep skepticism of language and conceptual thought. His texts display a structure that resembles a 'thinking out loud' that foregrounds the process rather than the result and refuses to produce rigid, one-dimensional 'clarity'" ("Mimesis" 116). This style can be attributed to all of his writings, though it is less pronounced than in his "Anmerkungen." Lenz seeks clearly to distance himself in style as well as in content. He wants to accentuate the degree to which all of his work is self-consciously a work in progress and that it is by nature incomplete and always to be taken up again when reality finally goes beyond our understanding of it. Lenz avoids the serious gravity of the "expert" and chooses instead the posture of the lay person who can only describe what he sees and experiences but does not have access to any "deeper" epistemological levels. In some respects this is perhaps a self-protective gesture for any offenses he may commit, but it is also a serious position about what can be said and how it has to be said to maintain a consistency among method, message and style.

Schnurr makes an insightful comment regarding Lenz's style when he says:

Es zeigt sich an [der] Betonung der leib-seelischen Differenz als initiales
movens der Erkenntnisbewegung, in welcher pointierter Weise Lenz mit

traditionellen Betrachtungsweisen zu spielen vermag, durch minimale Modellierung ihrer zentralen Elemente und durch nur partielle Umwertung klassischer Topoi zu einer gegenläufigen, bzw. Wenn nicht völlig konträren, so doch zu einer wesentlich umgemünzten Lesart gelangt, die in ihrer Umgruppierung und Neubetonung den bekannten Sachverhalt unter völlig andersartigen Gesichtspunkten eröffnet. (62)

It is for this reason that I find attempts to point to the sources of Lenz's thought to be of less interest than assessing their function in his writings. Even if we can locate the sources of his thought the question still remains how they function in his works. Whether he accurately reflects the thought of others may be interesting from the perspective of the history of thought, but it is not the focus of my study and will not be pursued here.

CHAPTER 3

CRITICAL CONCEPTS

Being

Material & Spiritual

When discussing Lenz's moral and ethical theory it is helpful to lay out his basic understanding of human nature. In working from man-as-he-is to man-as-he-ought-to-be one must base the "ought" on something beyond the present state of affairs because they are not appropriate to true human nature. This is the general scheme of moral reasoning, according to MacIntyre and:

Its basic structure is that which Aristotle analyzed in the Nicomachean Ethics. Within that teleological scheme there is a fundamental contrast between man-as-he-happens-to-be and man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realized-his-essential-nature. Ethics is the science which is to enable men to understand how they make the transition from the former to the latter. Ethics therefore in this view presupposes some account of potentiality and act, some account of the essence of man as a rational animal and above all some account of the human telos. The precepts which enjoin the various virtues and prohibit the vices which are their counterparts instruct us how to move from potentiality to act, how to realize our true nature and to reach our true end. To defy them will be to be frustrated and incomplete, to fail to achieve that good of rational happiness which it is peculiarly ours as a species to

pursue. The desires and emotions which we possess are to be put in order and educated by the use of such precepts and the cultivation of those habits of action which the study of ethics prescribes; reason instructs us both as to what our true end is and as to how to reach it. (52–53)

I include this extensive quote here because it is a useful tool for understanding Lenz's writings, much of which is devoted to discussing human nature according to God's design, "man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realized-his-essential-nature," and contrasting it with the pitiful human condition he sees around him, "man-as-he-happens-to-be." The notion of human potentiality requires a conception of human nature as such, which is why it is necessary for us to proceed first to a discussion of Lenz's understanding of human nature and from there to a discussion of his assessment of how humans should be, given their nature, including a road map of how to get there from their present pitiful condition.

When Lenz turns to a consideration of human nature, he voices his dissatisfaction with psychologists who insist that humans are either completely material or entirely spiritual. He asserts:

[...] gewisse Psychologen [möchten] uns gern überreden wir wären entweder ganz Geist, oder ganz Materie. Aber warum fürchten denn alle Nationen des Erdballs den Tod, da sie doch sehen, daß kleine niedliche Würmer von uns essen, die eben so gut Materie sind als wir. Warum verlieren wir lieber einen Arm, ein Bein, als einen Kopf, an dem die Materie nichts mehr wiegt, als an jenen. Ja dort oben in der Zirbeldrüse sitzt etwas, das sagt: Ich bin, und wenn das Etwas fort ist, so hört das Ich bin auf [...].

Kurz meine Herren wir sind Hermaphroditen, gedoppelte Tiere sowohl in unserm Wesen, als in unsern Kenntnissen und den Prinzipien derselben. (II: 502)

Arguing against a materialist conception of human nature, he points out that the fear of death would not make sense if we were merely material because this material would simply be recycled into a different form, with no loss to the whole. It only makes sense when you add “something” that resides in the brain that asserts “I am.” When that something is gone, the “I” ceases to exist and there is a loss. Lenz seems to be in agreement with Hamann here, in that both conceive of humans as hermaphrodites, that is, doubled animals in our essence as well as in our knowledge and principles⁹. We must resist bipolar opposites and attempts to reduce everything to one pole or the other. For us, existence is a collection of material and competing forces operating on those materials. We should strive to create some order and harmony out of that conflict, but we should not expect to eliminate it because both the material and spiritual must coexist. Lenz refuses the monological approach to understanding human existence and insists instead on plurality and multiplicity. Humans are “composite” beings consisting of material and spiritual elements and to try to eliminate one or the other of these elements or to focus exclusively on the one while ignoring the importance of the other is a grave mistake. That the human is a part of nature and subject to natural forces is clear to Lenz. As he states: “Wer dem Menschen die Dependenz von der Natur abspricht, der hat ihn noch nie recht angesehen” (II: 485).

The question of materialism and materialist interpretations of nature and reality vexed Lenz, as it did his time (Kondyllis). According to Demuth “Historisch gesehen

artikuliert sich dieses moral- und geschichtsphilosophisch prinzipielle Problem bei Lenz in der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Materialismus. Lenz betrachtet die materialistische Philosophie als ein Krisenphänomen der Aufklärung” (13). As Kondyllis makes clear, the concern to confront materialistic philosophy and its consequences was a major concern of Enlightenment philosophy and theoretical writings on human nature. Some of the secondary literature has gone so far as to assert that Lenz was overwhelmed by this and struggled to come to terms with it because it conflicted with his religious principles and that the resulting writings on this topic are fraught with contradictions because of this fact. Although there may be contradictions in Lenz’s writings on this topic, reducing them to simplistic biographical explanations does not tell us about Lenz’s solution to this problem and how this functions in his writings. It loses focus on what is most important.

There is an antagonistic relationship between nature and the human realm. As Lenz says: “Jetzt haben Sie, wann sie Wollen, Principium für die Erbsünde, wann Sie sie so nennen wollen. Ich nenne sie Natur. Haß, Neid, Mord, Ehebruch, alles liegt in der Natur [...]. Die Natur hat ihre Zwecke, der wahrhaftig freie Mensch die seinigen, und die Vereinigung dieser Zwecke gibt das vollkommenste Ganze” (II: 532). Nature has its own purposes; truly free humans have their purposes. The unification of these principles creates the most perfect whole. Sin is a result of the competing forces of free human beings and nature. If we can unite the purposes of nature and free humans we would have the most perfect whole. Whether we can understand or conceive of this union is another matter entirely and when we consider Lenz’s epistemological skepticism it is unlikely that we will reach this understanding.

Upon self-observation, Lenz says he notices that we have a material body that is perfectly and wonderfully constructed and organized. The body clearly contains material and is essentially constructed and organized material. Even though he is certain of this materiality of the body, he also now clearly sees that there is something missing from this material. He says:

Wenn wir uns selbst ansehen, so finden wir—was? Einen Körper, der
Materie enthält, die aber auf eine wunderbar vollkommene Weise
zusammengesetzt und organisiert ist, deren Geheimnisse alle angewandte
Bemühungen der Anatomiker uns noch nicht haben entschleiern
können[...].Doch sagt uns die Vernunft [...] daß diesem auch aufs
künstlichste zusammengesetzten Körper noch etwas fehle, ihn in Bewegung
zu setzen, in ihm zu denken, zu empfinden, zu urteilen und zu wollen, der
prometheische Funke [...] die lebendige Seele[...]. (II: 565)

Reason tells us that there is something missing in this body, or that it lacks something that can set it in motion, something in it that thinks, feels, judges, wants. When we entertain the notion that everything is material and can be explained in material terms and by material processes, our reason tells us that this explanation is insufficient. We cannot explain how our material body can be put in motion how thinking can occur in it, how it can have sentiments, judge and desire. This something that explains these things that we consider to be part of us, that our experience tells us is there, is the Promethean spark, the living soul, our spirit.

Our spirit is a self-moving power that can exert itself on things external to itself. He says: “Unser Geist ist eine Kraft, die sich selbst bewegt, und doch sogleich seine

Wirksamkeit auf Dinge außer sich äußert, sie bewegt und verändert” (II: 566). The soul is the part of us that can move and alter both itself and things external to it, including our bodies. This is its nature and its proper function and, apparently, without it we would be incapable of initiating movement either in ourselves or in our surroundings.

While Lenz warns that we must neither overemphasize the spiritual nor the material, he asserts that the spiritual is superior, claiming: “ [...] daß die in uns handelnde Kraft, unser Geist, unser höchstes Anteil sei, daß die allein unserm Körper mit allen seinen Sinnlichkeiten und Empfindungen, all unser Wissen doch nur ein Leiden, doch nur ein aufgeschobener Tod sind [...]” (II: 638). Without our spirit, the power that acts within us, there would be nothing but passion, which Lenz calls merely a postponed death in the sense that our body and everything derived from and dependent on it will cease to exist when we are dead. The body’s end will come. If we have nothing more than a body, if we do not cultivate much more than a body, there will be nothing left when that body stops functioning, that is, when we die.

Inertia, Movement, Action

Lenz considers the possible states for humans and comes to the following conclusions: “[...] ein Zustand [...] sei] eine gewisse Lage, eine gewisse Relation unsers Selbst mit den Dingen außer uns [...]. [...] es [gebe] in der ganzen Schöpfung nur zweien mögliche Zustände, die Ruhe und die Bewegung. [...] Wenn also die Frage ist, welcher Zustand für unser Ich das aus Materie und Geist zusammengesetzt ist, der glücklichste sei, so versteht es sich zum voraus, daß wir hier einen Zustand der Bewegung meinen” (II: 507). He defines state as a certain situation, a certain relation to ourselves to the

things external to ourselves. There are only two possible states, rest and motion. The state that is happiest for our selves is the condition of movement. Rest is not appropriate to humans. When we are in a state of rest, we are unhappy, or at least not as happy as we would be in a state of movement.

Fundamental to Lenz's understanding of nature and human nature is the basic Newtonian model of physics where forces interact and all action is also a reaction and exists within a larger chain of actions and reactions. Lenz situates his theory of human action within Newtonian physics and contemporary theories of motion. He tells us that it is undeniable: "[...] daß in der ganzen Natur alle Kräfte nur entgegen wirken. Alle Aktion ist Reaktion, wir erfahren dies täglich, wo kein Stoß, da keine Bewegung, wo kein *primus movens* und *agens*, da bleibt alles ruhend und leidend [...]" (II: 515). Movement originates in a context of competing forces and resistance. All action in the created sphere is in essence a reaction to an opposing force, which creates a seemingly endless chain of actions and reactions, force and resistance. As forces collide, they influence each other, with the more powerful force exerting the most influence on the direction of the resulting motion. Motion is thus based on a fundamental power relationship. Were there no force, there would be no movement. At its most fundamental level, action is thus the reaction of a force to a force, that is, a reaction to the forces a person comes up against.

Action is more difficult than inaction. To exercise powers is strenuous; to neglect them is easy. Lenz asserts that inertia is not a human power. It is the neglect of the active power.

Bedenken Sie doch, mit welchem Fug, wir wohl für die Untätigkeit eine Kraft annehmen können? Vereinigung einer Kraft ist sie, Vernachlässigung

der vis activa, welche in Wirksamkeit und Tätigkeit zu setzen, allemal in unserm Belieben steht oder nicht. Es ist aber die Natur einer jeden Kraft, daß sie nur durch Übung erhalten und vermehrt, durch Vernachlässigung aber, so zu sagen eingeschläfert und verringert wird. Und daß die Übung dieser Kraft schwerer, als ihre Vernachlässigung sei, liegt in der Natur der Sache und konnte von Gott nicht verändert werden. Positio ist allemal schwerer als negatio, wirken schwerer als ruhen, tun schwerer als nicht tun. (III: #23, October 1772)

It is up to the individual to put the active force into action or not. Inertia is not a power: it is the unification of a power, the neglect of the *vis active*. It is in our power to set the *vis active* into motion or not. It is, however, the nature of every power that it is maintained and increased through use and put to sleep and decreased through neglect. It is the nature of things that use is more difficult than neglect. According to Lenz this is the nature of the thing and it could not have been changed by God. Positive action is more difficult than negative action, to affect things is more difficult than rest, to do is more difficult than not to do. This is the nature of things and this is according to God's design and will. Of this, Lenz is convinced. Lenz is echoing Leibniz's Theodicy argument here.^{vi}

Lenz says that God put a tree in Paradise because he needed to treat them differently than animals that are driven forward by their bodily composition. He reasons:

Daher setzte Gott einen Baum in den Garten und da er diese Geschöpfe ganz anders behandeln musste als Thiere die durch ihre Instinkte zu den körperlichen Verrichtungen fortgezogen werden, so setz' er Bäume mit reizendem Obst hin mit dem Befehl esset, sie versuchtens, der sinnliche

Genuß setzte sie in ein gewisses Vergnügen (hier ist die Einbildungskraft, Verschönerung, der Grund aller unsrer Neigungen Begierden und Leidenschaften aber auch die Quelle unsrer Glückseeligkeit), da man seine Existenz ganz fühlt und itzt gern etwas haben möchte seine Kräfte anzuwenden und thätig zu seyn. (“Catechismus,” 56).

It was God’s desire that we be different from animals and he therefore had to treat us differently. For this reason he put trees in Paradise with exquisite fruit on them and gave the order to eat, which we did. The resulting sensual enjoyment gave them a certain pleasure because one fully felt his existence and now gladly would have something so that he can use his powers and be active. When one experiences pleasure one fully feels his existence. There is a direct linkage in his thinking between sensual enjoyment, pleasures, practicing and developing powers and action.

It is quite clear that Lenz considers action to be the defining feature of human existence. It is our calling. It is what God created us to be and what he intended us to do. Action is the highest human reality. It is essential to our flourishing and it is our true calling. He argues: “Also thun ist unsere Hauptbestimmung nicht bloß Eindrücke empfangen sowohl körperliche als geistliche durch die Thüren der Seele die Sinne—thun, handeln, thätig seyn mit Geist und Leib wo es am meisten nützlich seyn, Heil bringen kann zur Ehre Gottes an den Menschen und so von Form zu Form übergehen ins ewige Leben” (“Catechismus,” 61). Not only is action our main calling, but the highest degree of action is the most appropriate to us. As Lenz sees it:

Der höchste Zustand der Bewegung ist unserm Ich der angemessenste, das heißt derjenige Zustand, wo unser äußern Umstände unsere Relationen und

Situationen so zusammenlaufen, daß wir das größtmöglichste Feld vor uns haben, unser Vollkommenheit zu erhöhen zu befördern und andern empfindbar zu machen, weil wir uns alsdenn das größtmöglichste Vergnügen versprechen können, welches eigentlich bei allen Menschen in der ganzen Welt in dem größten Gefühl unserer Existenz, unserer Fähigkeiten, unsers Selbst besteht. (II: 507–08)

The highest degree of movement is the state most appropriate to our “I.” It is the condition where all outer conditions, relations and situations coalesce where we have the greatest possible field before us where we can elevate, support and make our perfection sensible to others. This is because when we have these conditions we can experience the greatest pleasure.

Power/Capacity

According to Lenz, nature has provided us with certain powers and abilities that we feel in us. Feeling them in us is the same thing as being conscious of them. The more our powers develop, the more clearly we feel them or the more clearly we are conscious of them, which is the same thing for Lenz. The desire to become more conscious of an ever increasing range of our powers is the drive to perfection. Perfection is then the expansion and development of our powers and abilities, which is a concrete concept, based on a particular understanding of human nature. According to Lenz:

Wir haben von Natur gewisse Kräfte und Fähigkeiten in uns, die wir fühlen, das heißt [...] uns ihrer bewußt sind—und jemehr sie sich entwickeln, desto deutlicher fühlen, oder welches einerlei ist, desto deutlicher uns ihrer bewußt

werden [...]. Der Trieb nach Vollkommenheit ist also das ursprüngliche Verlangen unsers Wesens, sich eines immer größern Umfanges unserer Kräfte und Fähigkeiten bewußt zu werden. (II: 503–04)

Although we could characterize Lenz's concept of perfection "anthropological" because it is based on an understanding of human nature, the concept of power, which is central to his notion of perfection, has a theological origin. According to Lenz: "Unsere Selbständigkeit wäre da erst angegangen, als Gott seinen lebenden Odem in diese aus irdischen Teilen so künstlich zusammengesetzte Maschine blies. Dieser Odem Gottes, diese unsre Kraft sollte nun die Einflüsse der Weltseele ordnen, erweitern, erhöhen, nach höhern Zwecken wirkend und frei" (II: 531). As we can see from this quote, Lenz asserts that human power is derived from God, their creator.

Lenz tells us that experience teaches us that there is someone there who gave us these powers and who laid down a certain laws of movement and who increases or decreases these powers in us according to the measure of correct application of this power—that is, he rewards or punishes us. The key is how we use this power. Power is synonymous with the breath of God, that is, his spirit, which he blew into us. This, and similar notions, firmly grounds his notion of power in a theological context. To lose sight of this fact is to thoroughly misunderstand Lenz's work. He reinforces the theological grounding when he says: "Die Erfahrung lehrt uns, daß diese Veränderungen in uns vorgehen, die Bibel lehrt uns, von wem sie kommen, lehrt uns, daß einer da sei der diese Kraft uns gegeben, der ihr ein gewisses Gesetz der Bewegung vorgeschrieben, der nach Maßgabe der rechten Anwendung dieser Kraft sie in uns vermehre oder vermindere, das heißt, uns belohne oder bestrafe" (II: 566). What we do or do not do and how we do it will determine our fate. We

also need to understand the nature of the power in order to understand just what the correct use of it would be since this would be determined by its nature.

The powers that we possess exist in an intimate relation to action. If we do not exercise them, they will diminish. According to him:

Es ist aber die Natur einer jeden Kraft, daß sie nur durch Übung erhalten und vermehrt, durch Vernachlässigung aber, so zu sagen eingeschläfert und verringert wird. Und daß die Übung dieser Kraft schwerer, als ihre Vernachlässigung sei, liegt in der Natur der Sache und konnte von Gott nicht verändert werden. Positio ist allemal schwerer als negatio, wirken schwerer als ruhen, tun schwerer als nicht tun. (III: #23, October 1772)

This relation between power and action is a law of nature that even God could not change. The basic principle is that positive action is more difficult than negative, to act is more difficult than to rest, and action is more difficult than inaction. This argument on the mechanics of human nature has obvious implications for moral and ethical life that I will expand on below.

Resistance

Resistance figures in Lenz's theory at a number of levels. At one level it is an aspect of his conception of the physical world. As we saw above, Newtonian physics is fundamental to Lenz's understanding of nature and human nature. Forces interact and all action is also a reaction and exists within a larger chain of actions and reactions. Lenz situates his theory of human action within Newtonian physics and contemporary theories of motion. All action in

the created sphere is in essence a reaction to an opposing force, which creates a seemingly endless chain of actions and reactions, forces and resistances.

The power of resistance we have determines the degree of movement that we have:

Die Materie ist nur beweglich nach dem Maß der Kraft die sie hat zu widerstehen. Die Geister haben nur nach dem Maß ihrer größern Kraft zu widerstehen eine größere Beweglichkeit. Und Gott um unsrer Konkupiszenz den höchsten Schwung zu geben, uns zur ersten Handlung zu determinieren, mußte verbieten. Wir finden auch nicht daß die ersten Eltern gegessen auf den Befehl, esset: sondern Gott mußte dazusetzen, aber von dem Baum sollt ihr nicht essen. (II: 516)

Because we were meant to have a greater degree of movement, God created the order of things such that we would be confronted by strong powers seeking to move us in certain directions, thus calling forth greater powers of resistance from us to assert our own forces of direction and movement.

Resistance is the key to our entire development as humans. We see this when Lenz discusses resistance in the context of criticizing the Stoic ideal of making oneself indifferent to the world and worldly goods. He believes that such people:

[...] glauben dadurch an Wert gewonnen zu haben, wenn sie ihre Seele stumpf machen und einschläfern, anstatt durch innere Stärke den äußern unangenehmen Eindrucken das Gegengewicht zu halten. Das Gefühl von Leere in ihrer Seele das daher entsteht, straft sie genug und sie haben beständig alle Hände voll zu tun, ihrem zu Boden sinkenden Stolz wieder

emporzuhelfen. Sie fühlen es daß sie sich ihren unangenehmen
Empfindungen nicht entziehen können ohne Wüste und Leere in der Seele
zu haben und der Zustand der Streit ist marterhafter als die unangenehmen
Empfindungen selbst. (II: 621)

This power of resistance, the development of our powers so that we can resist the forces attempting to move us in directions we do not wish to go, is a critical concept in Lenz's ethics, as we shall see below. Instead of making oneself indifferent to them (which is impossible anyway) one should strengthen oneself so that one has the power to resist external powers, if one so chooses. If one could withdraw from disturbing sentiments one's soul would become barren and empty (we can hear the ideas of Wenzeslaus from *Die Soldaten* here!). For Lenz, the condition of conflict is more indicative of martyrdom than the disturbing feelings.

Although Lenz criticizes the excesses of those who seek to make their souls impenetrable to disturbing emotions and effects from the outside world he does value the act of thinking as a way to set ourselves above disturbing emotions. He remarks: "Jeder glaubt, sobald er denkt sei er über alles hinausgesetzt, was ihm auch nur immer begegnen mag. Und in der Tat er ist's—er kann freilich die unangenehmen Gefühle seines Zustandes nicht ableugnen, aber er findet eine Kraft in sich, ihnen das Gegengewicht zu halten [...]" (II: 620–21). Thinking is a power of resistance against uncomfortable feelings of a person's situation. Resisting the feelings is far from trying to withdraw from those feelings. It involves a recognition and understanding of those feelings and the ability to think about them and confront what is disturbing about them. This is a vital power for Lenz, as we will see below.

On a physical level, freedom is the power that an entity has to resist forces acting upon it. Freedom is not merely some metaphysical or ephemeral concept: it is entirely concrete and explicable in terms consistent with natural laws. Lenz remarks: “Wir wissen, daß sich die Materie nicht selbst bewegt, alle Kräfte müssen von außen auf sie wirken, sonst ruht sie ewig, verharrt ewig in ihrem Zustande. Unser Geist aber hat in sich den Ursprung seiner Bewegung, kann denken was er will, wollen was er will, unsere Körper bewegen, wohin und wie er will” (II: 565). Material is not able to move of its own accord. It remains in its present condition unless acted upon by an external force. Our spirit, in contrast, has within itself the source of its own movement: it can think what it wants, desire what it wants, and move our bodies where and how it wants. Because our spirit is self-moving and can move things outside it, it has the necessary power to resist. Spirit interjects a power into the system of material forces that interrupts the mechanical movement of bodies. It does not change the laws that operate in the material world. It adds a new force into the mix that is self-moving and self-selecting.

The notion of human freedom is central to Lenz’s thinking. According to Rector: “Die seine theoretischen Schriften durchziehende Grundüberzeugung Lenzens ist das emphatisch-aufklärerische Axiom, daß der Mensch als an der Spitze der Gattungshierarchie stehendes, gottähnliches Geschöpf sich vor allen anderen Lebewesen dadurch auszeichne, daß er sich als ‘unendlich freihandelndes Wesen’ gegen die Fremdbestimmung durch äußere ‘Umstände’ behaupten könne und solle” (“Autonomie” 294). Although this statement standing alone overstates Lenz’s conception of freedom, making it look more absolute than it is, Rector is certainly correct in his assessment about the thematic importance of freedom in Lenz’s work. Rector again addresses Lenz’s notion of freedom, asserting: “Freedom to

act means nothing more than the employment of our freedom of will, and all his attempts to define humanity as a *'freihandelndes Wesen'* begin with showing the existence of human freedom—or, better, they begin by rejecting certain anthropological teachings influential in Lenz's day that deny the freedom of will [...] the Christian church [...] and the French materialists [...]” (“Action” 61). We can agree that Lenz is battling orthodox theology and the French materialists, but Rector considerably oversimplifies Lenz's conception of freedom when he asserts it is “nothing more than” the employment of the will, as should be clear from the discussion of the intersecting forces involved in the phenomenon of human action. I shall now turn to the question of what constitutes freedom.

Freedom is a human good. It can be noncommensurable with the goods of social existence, society and social bonds. They are all goods. That they are noncommensurable does not mean that Lenz contradicts himself. He is convinced that in the end there are goods that cannot be reduced to one simple and final good. These goods are goods in their own right. That they do not perfectly fit is consistent with his world view and with a long standing belief in the noncommensurability of goods that has a long intellectual history^{vii}.

As noted above, Lenz certainly conceives of social forces acting upon and shaping individuals. He also remarks that this limits their options and, at the very least, influences their perspectives on their lives and perceptions of others and their situations (III: #43, July, 1775). On the one hand, we have a person's copied or counterfeit aspects of his personality. This is what he is forced to be by external forces, and that which is external to his choosing. On the other hand, we have a person's actual or characteristic self, his

character, his heart, his moral thermometer, and his perspective. Physical, moral and political arrangements shape a person external to his choosing. Given the contemporary physical, moral and political arrangements, relations between individuals are disturbed. A person must come to know what he is and what he is forced to be. Lenz dramatically addresses this understanding of the power of social forces in shaping our character when he reports:

Jemehr ich in mir selbst forsche und über mich nachdenke, destomehr finde ich Gründe zu zweifeln, ob ich auch wirklich ein selbstständiges von niemand abhängendes Wesen sei, wie ich doch den brennenden Wunsch in mir fühle. Ich weiß nicht der Gedanke ein Produkt der Natur zu sein, dass alles nur ihr und dem Zusammenlauf zufälliger Ursachen zu danken habe, das von ihren Einflüssen lediglich abhänge und seiner Zerstörung mit völliger Ergebung in ihre höheren Ratschlüsse entgegensehen müsse, hat etwas Schreckendes—Vernichtendes in sich—ich weiß nicht wie die Philosophen so ruhig dabei bleiben können.

Und doch ist er wahr!—Aber mein traurendes, angsthaftes Gefühl darüber ist eben so wahr. Ich appelliere an das ganze menschliche Geschlecht, ist es nicht das erste aller menschlichen Gefühle, das sich schon in der Windel und in der Wiege äußert—unabhängig zu sein. (II: 619)

When he investigates and reflects on himself, he concludes that he is a product of nature and that he is dependent upon the coalescence of accidental causes over which he has no control. Although he finds this terrible and devastating, he says that he must admit that this is the result of his investigation and reflection. However, there is still his feeling of

independence, which is among the first feelings we have as humans. We see here the typical construction in Lenz of competing, contradictory forces: the power of external forces and the wish to be independent. These contradict or oppose each other. Lenz knows this—this is how he conceives of existence. Both are true. What matters is which force is more powerful, that is, which has the power over the other. The result of the conflict will determine whether we act independently and freely or according to external forces.

In his text on *Götz von Berlichingen* Lenz begins with his well known rhetorical assertion, wherein he offers a materialist, deterministic picture of human life that he clearly finds inadequate and depressing:

Wir werden geboren—unsere Eltern geben uns Brot und Kleid—unsere Lehrer drücken in unser Hirn Worte, Sprachen, Wissenschaften,—irgend ein artiges Mädchen drückt in unser Herz den Wunsch es eigen zu besitzen, es in unsere Arme als unser Eigentum zu schließen, wenn sich nicht gar ein tierisch Bedürfnis mit hineinmischt—es entsteht eine Lücke in der Republik wo wir hineinpassen—unsere Freunde, Verwandte, Gönner setzen an und stoßen uns glücklich hinein—wir drehen uns eine Zeitlang in diesem Platz herum wie die andern Räder und stoßen und treiben—bis wir wenns noch so ordentlich geht abgestumpft sind und zuletzt wieder einem neuen Rade Platz machen müssen—das ist, meine Herren! Ohne Raum zu melden unsere Biographie—und was bleibt nun der Mensch noch anders als eine vorzüglichkünstliche kleine Maschine, die in die große Maschine, die wir

**Welt, Weltbegebenheiten, Weltläufe nennen besser oder schlimmer
hineinpaßt. (II: 637)**

He then questions this picture by asking: “Aber heißt das gelebt? Heißt das seine Existenz gefühlt, seine selbstständige Existenz, den Funken von Gott?” (II: 637–38). Lenz is focusing on the essence of life—that which makes life worth living and that which can be considered to be most human. The alternative is to live the life of an animal.

Lenz clearly states that this is “unsere Biographie,” meaning those living in Europe, and more specifically, in Germany, in the second half of the eighteenth century, and not of humanity as a whole, at all times, in all places and for eternity. This is evident in his immediate indication that things can and should be different if “our biographies” were to be lived in a way that more accurately approximates human nature and God’s creation. This is not a contradiction. Lenz leaves out some steps in making his case, but he is clearly contrasting the existing order of things with God’s intended creation. This is a critique of the existing social reality and it is meant to motivate his audience to change that state of affairs to be more in conformance with human nature and the proper functioning of humans.

Both in his poetics and in his moral and theological writings we see a distinction between the world-as-it-is (which is indeed bad) and the world-as-it-was-intended-to-be, as it should be, and will one day be. We must therefore be cautious when making statements about Lenz’s apparently pessimistic observations. Wurst is correct in identifying a central focus in Lenzian thought when she states: “The central problem of Lenzian thought nevertheless remains: the incompatibility of mainly two trends in his contemporary philosophical environment: optimistic, metaphysical tendencies on the one hand, and

pessimistic, empirical ones on the other” (“Mimesis” 111). Although these comments are accurate, we must take into consideration that Lenz is portraying the world as he finds it, from a particular perspective, which means that we must remember that what we find is only that, and this cannot be taken to represent how he thinks things are in their nature or how they should or could be.

It is an overstatement to say that Lenz is pessimistic. When Lenz states that he feels devastated by his observations about how bad things are he repeatedly returns to his faith in God and his belief that God created the best of all possible worlds and his conviction that humans will work toward and are working toward their destiny. Of course this is faith-based optimism but when we consider the importance faith plays in Lenz’s thinking and the fundamental assumptions that underlay his theory, this faith is sufficient to feel confident that things will be worked out in the end.

Humans are morally free. For Lenz this is without question. In this regard, Rudolf’s assertion is certainly true that “Für Lenz ist die brennende Frage das Wesen der moralischen Freiheit” (202). Lenz states that when we observe ourselves and how we act in the world, we learn the following: “[...] daß diese unsre handelnde Kraft nicht eher ruhe, nicht eher ablasse zu wirken, zu regen, zu toben, als bis sie uns Freiheit um uns her verschafft, Platz zu handeln, guter Gott Platz zu handeln und wenn es ein Chaos wäre das du geschaffen, wüste und leer, aber Freiheit wohnte nur da und wir könnten dir nachahmend drüber brüten, bis was herauskäme—Seligkeit! Seligkeit! Göttergefühl das! (III: 638).” For Lenz, how this freedom is to be squared with God’s all-knowing and omnipotent nature is not a problem. That God knows what we will do is without question because God knows the laws of nature and created the power of our spirit that will lead

us to make the choices we make. The question of prediction is irrelevant because it imposes human concepts of time onto a deity for whom our temporal notions have no meaning and no function. In short, for Lenz the coexistence of determination and free will is not a problem. We are free, but only morally free to act and to make decisions based on our understanding of our situation, our desires and our goals. We can choose to act in the best possible way, or not, but that we have the freedom to act and that we must choose and that our actions and decisions form our characters is without question for Lenz.

Lenz considers it against Christian freedom to become accustomed to the sensual stimulation of types of spiced drinks, tobacco, opium, brandy, baths and the like. Such habituation makes us slaves to our senses. We must be careful not to read this as saying we cannot enjoy these goods. He says we should not become accustomed to these things, not that we should not have them at all or enjoy their consumption. We must moderate our use of them and not become habituated to them to the point where they cloud our decision-making faculties and thereby our moral freedom. Furthermore, even in his “Catechismus” text, his most cautious text in terms of allowing sensual pleasure, Lenz still argues that habituation to these lower pleasures makes us incapable of experiencing higher pleasures of our concupiscence. That is, even more pleasure can and should be had than these can provide. This is an argument for pleasure, not against it. Once again, whether we agree or not is entirely another matter. That Lenz is arguing for increased, superior pleasure is clear.

Lenz qualifies his notion of freedom. He affirmatively answers his rhetorical question, “Ist der Mensch frei?” When he turns to the type of freedom that humans possess, he says that humans have: “[...] aber die metaphysische gewiß nicht.

Metaphysische Freiheit wäre, wenn endliches, oder geschaffenes Wesen außer den ewigen und notwendigen Gesetzen denken und handeln könnte, die der Schöpfer denkenden und handelnden Wesen vorgeschrieben.” Clearly this type of freedom is not part of Lenz’s conception. He adds the remark: “Welch eine Psychologie und Pneumatologie müßten wir durchschauen können, um jetzt zu behaupten, ja eine solche Freiheit ist möglich” (II: 485).

Lenz insists on human freedom but points out that this freedom is not an abstract and absolute freedom. Freedom is limited. We are not free to act in contradiction to eternal and necessary laws, that is, the laws of nature and the Ten Commandments. Lenz tells us:

[...] es ist die völlige Dependenz von dem, der sie uns gegeben hat—von Gott—Verflucht also die Freiheit, die sich wieder ihn empören will, die glücklich sein will auf einem andern Wege, als den er uns vorgezeichnet, den sein göttlicher Verstand durchgeschaut, sein göttlicher Wille gut befunden und bestätigt hat. Ja frei sind wir, aber frei vor Gott, wie Kinder unter den Augen ihres liebeichen Vaters frei scherzen und spielen dürfen, kehren wir ihm aber den Rücken, so rennen wir in den Tod, und die Freiheit, die uns von dort entgegenwinkt, ist kalt und grauenvoll, ist der Wink des Chaos und der alten Nacht. (II: 566)

Lenz insists on the fundamental relation between humans and God. Without it there is only chaos, darkness and death. Freedom can only exist within the ordered universe that God created because human freedom is his creation as well. There is no freedom beyond this. This is simply axiomatic for Lenz. As Rector remarks, for Lenz: “Der Mensch ist von Gott geschaffen als zur Freiheit bestimmter, aber er ist als von Gott geschaffener

auch abhängig. Er ist seiner Bestimmung nach frei, aber er wird es tatsächlich erst dann, wenn er bereit und willens ist, den Platz einzunehmen, den Gott in seinem Weltenplan für vorgesehen hat, und dies ist der Platz, an dem er dann wirklich 'Platz zu handeln' hat, zur Entfaltung seiner Selbständigkeit" ("La Mettrie," 33). There is no "proof" of this. It is a matter of faith, and he seems perfectly content to leave it at that. He feels no compulsion to offer theoretical support for his positions. Instead, he asserts that such proofs are inappropriate to the subject matter. Because God created humans, they are dependent upon him. But in accordance with that design, humans are free and they must exercise their free wills. There is a tension here between order and freedom that is impossible to think away from Lenz's system. We are determined in our nature by God's design, but we are determined to be free.

The notion of a restricted and qualified freedom is important for Lenz. In contrast to the clichés about the Storm and Stress and the notion of the powerful individual exercising his free will and imposing it upon the world around him, we can clearly see that one of the definitive thinkers of the Storm and Stress is far from holding such a position. Lenz considers it a given that humans are dependent on their creator and that when they turn their backs on this fact and on his intended purpose for them, the existence they lead is impoverished and chaotic. Though they may try, they cannot free themselves from his guidance without suffering laming consequences.

When Lenz turns to the will he claims: "Die begehrende Kräfte zusammengenommen haben den Sitz im Unterleibe vorzüglich und in den Samen und heißen der Wille, welcher in den Handlungen, die zur Fortpflanzung und Erhaltung unserer Existenz dienen, von mächtigen Instinkten unterstützt wird, im übrigen aber sich völlig nach dem Ausspruch

unserer Vernunft richtet, insofern wir ihn nicht an sinnlichen und kleinen Gegenständen abnützen und zu höhern Glücksgütern unfähig machen [...]. Lenz calls our desiring powers the will. He locates them in the lower abdomen, that is, in the genital area, primarily in what he calls our seed. He thereby situates the will biologically and physiologically and clearly indicates that it is influenced or supported by instincts or reason, depending on what the source of the desire is. When it comes to self-preservation and the propagation of the species, powerful instincts support the will. In all other cases the will accords itself to our reason, as long as we do not exhaust it on sensual and insignificant objects and thereby make it incapable of desiring higher goods of happiness. Furthermore, “Diese begehrenden Kräfte sind, wenn sie in uns geübt werden, die Quellen aller unsrer Entschließungen und Handlungen [...]” (Blei IV: 30–31). If these desiring powers are trained they are the source of all of our decisions and actions. Far from demonizing desire as such, Lenz considers it essential to the aspects of life that are for him crucial to human nature and God’s design. We can then either exercise and strengthen our will or use it up and diminish it.

As we will see below, law is an important cause of action, but the free will is the crucial component. As Lenz says “Die Gesetze also überhaupt sind die Ursachen aller unsrer Handlungen so wie es das erste Gesetz oder Verbot Gottes im Garten von der ersten Handlung war, sie sind aber nur die gelegentlichen nicht die wirkenden Ursachen davon, die liegen bloß in unserer Willensfreiheit, welche durch jene nur in Bewegung gesetzt wird“ (II: 518–19). Laws are only the occasional causes of our actions whereas our free will is the effective cause, which is set in motion by the laws forbidding our actions and providing a normative context for them. Without free will there is no action,

only physical movement. This is a critical distinction in Lenz's ethics, as we will see below.

Desiring

Concupiscence

An interesting quality of Lenz's writings is the importance he accords to desire and the drives—in particular to the sexual drive. In fact, it could be argued that for him drives are the core of human existence, as they are certainly situated at the center of all of his writings. Sauder asserts that Lenz's positioning of sexuality as the foundation of morality was original to Lenz in the late 18th century ("Konkupiszenz" 25) but Hull would disagree as to Lenz's uniqueness in this regard. She asserts that this concern reflects a more general concern of the period. She remarks that: "The more influenced he was by liberal Enlightened public discourse (either as a supporter or as an informed critic), the more likely the official was to speculate about the nature of the sexual drive, its occurrence in males and females, its health or biological risks, and its social or antisocial potential" (145). Although Lenz's approach to the topic is perhaps unique, the topic of sexuality and its social effects were hardly rare in contemporary discourse.

For Lenz, concupiscence—the striving to unite, the desire for something—is the foundational element, both historically and psychologically, of human development and

motivation. Lenz's entire theory of identity, morality and ethics centers on the motivational force of desire and develops from that center. He conceives of concupiscence in its broader sense as a striving to unite, and a general desire, and not more narrowly as a sexual desire, even though the sexual desire to unite with another is one of its most important manifestations. In his more restrictive view of concupiscence in the "Catechismus," Lenz asserts:

Also bleibt die beste allgemeinste Regel unsrer Conkupiscenz oder der zwey Instinkten: zu lieben, seine Existenz zu erhalten, aber nicht zu begehren, denn selbst der Genuß der Erquickungen und die Ehe müssen nicht aus Begier geschehen oder kürzer, zu geniessen, aber nicht unmässig zu seyn (nicht mehr als zur Erhaltung unsrer Existenz gehört) zu lieben aber nicht zu begehren ausgenommen wenn es der letzte und höchste Ausdruck der Liebesdienste ist. (50)

Concupiscence consists of the two instincts to love and to preserve the self. Enjoyment, nourishment and marriage must not happen because of desire. One should enjoy but not be immoderate. One should only enjoy to the extent it is necessary for self-preservation. Love, but do not desire, except for when it is the final and highest expression of the duties of love, that is, marital sex.

The drives must be cultivated. Ascetic work must be performed^{viii}. People must perform work upon themselves and form selves above the level of the animal and drive-bound nature that exists in all of us. Although we must maintain and cultivate drives so that they remain healthy forces in our lives, we must also be careful not to allow them to become overheated by the intake of certain foods or drink or by the consumption of

certain forms of literature or art that heat our passions and peak our curiosity. In his “Philosophische Vorlesungen für empfindsame Seelen,” wherein Lenz speaks of “unverschämte Sachen,” he states:

Der Geschlechtstrieb, oder um das Kind beym Namen zu nennen, der Trieb sich zu gatten, ist einer von denen die am heftigsten und unwiderstehlichsten wirken, einer von denen die sich am wenigsten von allen menschlichen Trieben, der Vernunft unterordnen, oder dadurch leiten lassen, es sei denn wenn sie schon befriedigt, und es also für diesmal zu spät ist, einer von denen, deren Befriedigung selber uns den schrecklichen Folgen aussetzt und gemeinlich nicht eher vollständig scheint, als bis seine Kraft mehr in uns übrig ist, diesen Trieb auszuspannen, das heißt bis der gänzlich Ruin und Untergang users Körpers, oft auch der Seele selber durch unsere heldenmäßigen Bemühungen bewirkt ist (emphasis in the original). (51)

The sex drive is one of the most violent and irresistible drives. It is among the drives that least subordinate themselves to reason. The only time it seems to dissipate is after we have satisfied it, that is, after it is too late. It only seems to be completely satisfied when we do not have any strength left in us, that is, when our bodies are completely ruined.

Concupiscence, however, is essential to action. Lenz asserts: “Wir haben auch handelnde Kräfte. Quintessenz der Abhandlung über die Konkupiszenz: je sparsamer wir diese Konkupiszenz, die sich am ersten bei tierischen Bedürfnissen äußert und durch das erste Verbot Gottes so wie jetzt überhaupt durchs Gesetz ihren Schwung erhält, befriedigen, desto größer, starker und edler werden unsere Entschließungen und die drauf folgenden Handlungen, desto edler wir, Helden, Halbgötter, Herkulesse, der Gottheit näher” (Blei IV:

31). Concupiscence is what Lenz calls an active power. It provides motivation for action. Concupiscence first expresses itself in animalistic needs. It initially received momentum from God's prohibitions and now it receives it from the laws. The more sparingly we satisfy our concupiscence the greater, stronger and nobler our decisions and the consequent actions will become, and the nobler will we become, closer to heroes, half-gods, and to the deity. This contrast of animalistic and sublime was typical of a new view of concupiscence emerging in the contemporary discourse. According to Hull there was a "[...] new formulation according to which sexual pleasure itself had two grades. The lower was animalistic, merely physical, short term, and comparatively unsatisfying. The higher was sublime" (292).

Desire, fantasy and concupiscence mutually influence and affect one another, according to Lenz: "Bei der erstaunenden Steigerung unserer Begierden, Fertigkeiten unserer Phantasie, sich Bilder zu erschaffen und auszuschnücken, Fertigkeit all unserer Konkupiszenz, sich für diese Hirngespinnste zu interessieren [...]" (II: 607). In a state of heightened desire, the ability of our fantasy to create and decorate products of our imagination and the capacity of our concupiscence to be interested in these products brings about a condition where fantasy, desire and concupiscence mutually stimulate each other to create a dangerous situation that is potentially damaging to self and others and that is very difficult to control.

According to Lenz, desire—the force of attraction in human existence—provides one of the central natural laws in human development: people are driven to seek its immediate satisfaction. Even if we could, we should not try to do away with this desire because it is an important source of motivation and it is vital to our existence. Through its

motivational force it drives us to act. Lenz states: “Die Triebfeder unserer Handlungen ist die Konkupiszenz: Ohne Begier nach etwas bleiben wir ruhig—und da handeln die größte aller menschlichen Realitäten ist, wie sträflich wär es, den Keim unserer Tätigkeit, aller unsrer Vortrefflichkeit zu ersticken” (II: 515). All action is to be traced back to desires of the flesh. It is the primordial source of action, and as we saw above, for him action is the highest human reality. It is essential to our flourishing. It is our true calling, without it human excellence and our entire ethical life would be impossible. If we damage this motor of our actions, we will be killing the source of the highest of human realities: action. To do this would be to damn humans and to pervert them from their designed goals and purposes. This view of concupiscence was typical of contemporary theories of sex. According to Hull, “Sexual maturity not only marked the completion of the individual, it actually caused it. The energy the individual inherited through this process was the very motor of productivity and of public life [...]. This conviction was a modern restatement of the venerable medical view of sperm as the magic elixir and quintessence of bodily energy [...]” (241).

We see the role concupiscence has in higher order functions, when Lenz discusses our transitioning from the realm of homogenous beauty to ideal beauty (more on this below): “Die vollkommenhomogenste Schönheit aber ist die letzte Stufe zur idealen, der Genuß jener muß unsrer Konkupiszenz also auch den höchsten Schwung geben, zu dieser überzugehen” (II: 8). Concupiscence provides the motivational force to propel us along the path to pursuing ideal beauty and trying to realize it by converting forms along the path from lower forms of homogenous beauty and attraction to it to the highest stage of ideal beauty, which is God. The enjoyment of the stages of beauty along the way provides the motivation

to continue on with this process to the higher stages, which is difficult, challenging and endless. Without concupiscence and the pleasure associated with it we would not progress along this path because we would lack the motivation to do so.

Lenz situates concupiscence within a context of creation and God's plan that makes it clear that it is far from evil but rather that it serves an essential function within that plan. Lenz is discussing the bodily nature of humans and says that humans were intended to form their bodies, which involved eating and mating. He then goes on to say:

Daher setzte Gott einen Baum in den Garten und da er diese Geschöpfe ganz anders behandeln musste als Thiere die durch ihre Instinkte zu den körperlichen Verrichtungen fortgezogen werden, so setz' er Bäume mit reizendem Obst hin mit dem Befehl esset, sie versuchtens, der sinnliche Genuß setzte sie in ein gewisses Vergnügen (hier ist die Einbildungskraft, Verschönerung, der Grund aller unsrer Neigungen begierden und leidenschaften aber auch die Quelle unsrer Glückseeligkeit), da man seine Existenz ganz fühlt und itzt gern etwas haben möchte seine Kräfte anzuwenden und thätig zu seyn. Sie dazu zu bringen, mußten sie notwendig aus dem Paradies heraus in eine Wüste, wo der Erdboden verschlossen war und erst durch ihre Bemühungen wieder musste geöffnet werden. Dieses in eine Strafe ihrer Lüsternheit und der draus entstehenden Wollust, die durch ein Verbot geweckt wurde zu verwandeln war eine besondere Weißheit Gottes. (II: 56)

The body and its needs are part of God's creation. Our bodies are to be formed and provide the basic foundation historically and developmentally for our further development as human

beings. God wanted us to motivate us and the primary motivating source comes from our bodily needs and desires. Through the process of experiencing sensual pleasures, humans came to the need to use their capacities and to become active. We were not created to follow instincts; we were created to act out of internal motivations toward specific goals. It was necessary for humans to be expelled from paradise so that they would use and thereby develop their capacities and be active. If God would have let them stay in paradise, they would have felt no need to be active and to use their capacities, and would not, as a consequence, have developed their capacities. He did this by expelling them to the desert where they were forced to cultivate the land under unfavorable conditions, thus making them use and develop their abilities. That God structures this as a punishment for their lasciviousness and the extreme desires that resulted from it, which he awoke through prohibition not to eat from a particularly beautiful tree, was particularly wise, thinks Lenz.

In addition to its motivational qualities, concupiscence creates qualities of character that are essential to society. He says: "Der Jüngling, der noch dem ersten Stempel der Natur (ha, gewiß dem Bilde Gottes) getreu; für den Trieb, der eben darum der heiligste sein sollte, weil er der süßeste ist; auf den allein alle Güte der Seelen, alle Zärtlichkeit für gesellschaftliche Pflichten und Beziehungen, alle häusliche, alle bürgerliche, alle politische Tugend und Glückseligkeit gepropft werden kann [...]" (II: 731). Lenz is talking about the sexual drive and he clearly attributes essential individual, societal and political qualities to it. Through its effect on the human soul it makes us good, cultivates tenderness in us and makes us capable of performing our duties and engaging in social relations. More than this, civic and political virtues and happiness can be founded upon it.

Lenz points out an important social function that concupiscence performs. He states that it is the nature of humans to distance and differentiate themselves from one another. God created humans with the sex drive as a centripetal counter force to bring humans back together. Lenz is once again figuring in the sex drive into his moral physics, grounding basic elements in his theory of existence using contemporary theories of motion and biology. Concupiscence, though potentially dangerous, has obvious benefits. Lenz asserts: “Es scheint als ob dieser Trieb ein Institut sey, das die ganze Natur umfängt, um alles was lebet, glücklich zu machen. Bis auf den geringsten Wurm hat jedes seine Freude, jedes seinen Grad von Genuß und Glückseeligkeit” (II: 55). He goes so far as to speculate whether God was compensating humans for having exiled them from Paradise and whether Adam was not happier outside Paradise once he discovered this gift after having had sex with Eve! He says that even people with warlike dispositions become tame in the lap of Venus. They become humanized, they can suffer certain people more easily and they become more flexible. The lively nature that such people have often makes them the most gracious and helpful. Such natures also have a certain consistency and durability that weak or soft souls lack and they are capable of great and noble acts (II: 67).

Concupiscence plays an additional role and had another function in God’s design. Lenz states: “durch die nachmalige Hervorbringung des Weibes an die Idee der Zusammensetzung und Verbindung mehrerer Dinge zu einem Zwecke. Sehen Sie da den Keim aller nachmaligen Künste und Wissenschaften, aller menschlichen Bemühungen und Glückseligkeit” (II: 524). Through the creation of a woman who is to be paired to the already created man—which is to be arrived at and driven toward by the motivating sex drive—God provided the first humans with a concrete notion out of which was to evolve

much more complex relationships, all of which were to be understood as being part of a larger whole. The notions of assembly and combination of several things toward a common goal came about for primitive humans. This is the source of all of the succeeding arts and sciences and all human endeavors and of their happiness, according to Lenz. All of this originated out of the concupiscence.

Happiness

Along with the drive to perfection, we have the drive to happiness as one of two fundamental drives guiding our lives. God provided us with these drives to guide us toward our true ends. They set the goals toward which our strivings are directed (II: 503). Lenz differentiates between happiness and perfection in the following way: “[...] Die Glückseligkeit, die ich meine (und hier müssen wir durchaus bestimmte Begriffe haben), ist von der Vollkommenheit wesentlich unterschieden. Die Vollkommenheit ist eine Eigenschaft, die Glückseligkeit ist ein Zustand” (II: 506). Happiness is a state, a certain status, situation or relation of our self to the things external to us. There are only two possible conditions, rest and motion. The condition that is happiest to our “I” is the condition of motion. The state in which we are most happy is the state that is most appropriate to our perfection, and that state is the state of motion, not rest or inertia.

It is hard to disagree with Rudolf’s observation about Lenz that: “Glückseligkeit nimmt in seiner Moralphilosophie einen zentralen Platz ein, sie erhellt für ihn die Beziehung zwischen Mensch und Mensch, aber auch die Beziehung zwischen Mensch und Gott. Für Lenz bedeutet Glückseligkeit die Fülle des christlichen Lebens, ein Leben der Tugend” (246). In addition to the interpersonal relationships and the relationships

between people and God we have to add, however, the relationship of a person to him or herself. Happiness also involves a process of self-formation that is predicated on the cultivation of capacities and powers and in the end rests on sentiments within a person. The concept of happiness is central to Lenz's thinking.

Our ability to be happy in this life is relative to the nature of our spirit and body. Happiness is therefore finite. To be as happy as we can possibly be we need to follow the path of virtue. In a letter, Lenz says that happiness is hard to understand:

[...] die Glückseligkeit ist ein sonderbares Ding, ich glaube immer noch, daß wir schon hier in der Welt so glücklich seien, als wir es nach der Einrichtung unseres Geistes und Körpers werden können. Die Tugend ist das einzige Mittel diese Glückseligkeit in ihrer höchsten Höhe zu erhalten und die Religion versichert uns, sie werde auch nach dem Tode währen und dient also dieser Tugend mehr zu Aufmunterung, als zur Richtschnur. (III: 18, 18.9.1772)

Lenz believes that we can be as happy here on earth as the arrangement of our spirit and body will allow us to be. Virtue is the only means to maintain this happiness at its highest peak. Religion guarantees us that this happiness will last past death and serves virtue more as an encouragement than as a guiding principle. Religion plays a subordinate role here to virtue, which is an ethical category, although intricately bound up with spiritual matters and in our relationship with God.

Lenz tells us that the symmetrical vibration of all of our sentiments makes us happy if we are hearty enough and simple enough to be happy. For him, happiness involves order and proportion. There must be a concerted sentiment and fit. As he says: "[...] und diese

gleichmäßige Vibration aller unserer Empfindungen macht uns immer glücklich, wenn wir Herzhaftigkeit und Einfalt genug haben, es zu sein" (II: 601). Work is required for us to be happy. Shaping is required to achieve this. We have to create sentiments that can harmonize—which requires considerable shaping and ordering (see above).

Ultimate and true happiness is when we can elevate, cultivate and develop our capacities in a certain order and harmony. Lenz lays out a formula wherein he states:

Wir sind also nur alsdenn wahrhaftig glücklich wenn wir in einem Zustande sind, in welchem wir unsere Vollkommenheit auf die leichteste und geschwindeste Art befördern können, das heißt, in welchem wir die Fähigkeiten unsers Verstandes, unsers Willens, unserer Empfindungen, unserer Phantasei, aller unserer übrigen Seelenkräfte, hernach auch unserer Gliedmaßen und unsers Körpers immer mehr entwickeln verfeinern und erhöhen können und zwar in einer gewissen Harmonie und Ordnung, welche uns unsere Vernunft, die von allen Vorurteilen befreit ist und die höchste Oberherrschaft über alle unsere übrigen Seelenvermögen erhalten hat, selbst lehren wird. (II: 509)

This is essentially an ascetic program that is designed to lead to our happiness. Our reason is to guide us in this process and is to have the highest degree of leadership over our other spiritual capacities. We see that happiness is tied directly to the development of our perfection. We are truly happy when we can strive for this self-perfection in the easiest and fastest way, which would imply that external impediments to that pursuit are not present. To the extent that they are present we will not be able to pursue perfection in the simplest and fastest way and will therefore not be able to be as happy as we could be,

presumably because of the frustration we would experience due to the impediments. It is also interesting to note Lenz's inclusion of both bodily and spiritual components in this pursuit of perfection. The body must also be developed, cultivated and elevated if we are to strive for perfection.

Lenz informs his readers that concupiscence is required if happiness is to be possible for humans: “Noch mehr, die Konkupiszenz ist dem Menschen zur Glückseligkeit notwendig, eine Gabe Gottes—die herrlichste aller Gaben Gottes. Das Menstrum, wodurch wir alle Glückseligkeit auflösen. Denn Glückseligkeit muß genossen werden, und Genuß kann kein Vergnügen bringen, ohne zuvor begehrt zu haben” (II: 14).

Concupiscence is “necessary” to the existence of happiness. He reasons that in order for us to experience happiness, we must be able to enjoy the happiness. Enjoyment, in turn, cannot provide pleasure unless it is preceded by desire. Therefore, desire is necessary for happiness to exist. Lenz is clearly creating a causal chain leading from concupiscence, through its appropriate satisfaction and the resulting pleasure to the social virtues and, ultimately, to happiness.

Lenz further ties happiness to bodily elements when he directly links it to concupiscence. We cannot be happy without concupiscence. It is necessary to our happiness. Happiness is a result of our having desired something, enjoyed that thing, felt pleasure as a result which then leads to happiness. Although concupiscence is necessary for happiness, it can also destroy happiness if we do not make it compatible with the ties and relationships of human society that allow us to maintain our happiness. If those bonds and relationships are sundered by lascivious acts, so will our happiness be destroyed. As Lenz sees it when assessing the disorder that occurred in human history:

“[...] eine solche willkürliche ungeordnete Vermischung [zerriß] alle Bande und Beziehung der menschlichen Gesellschaft, wodurch ihre allgemeine und individuelle Glückseligkeit allein aufrecht erhalten werden und glänzend bleiben kann [...]” (II: 538). Humans need society and relationships to flourish. It is a good that we cannot do without. We need to cultivate and maintain our social bonds in order to cultivate and maintain our own happiness as well as the happiness of others.

He makes interesting comments about the function of religion in the matter of happiness. He bluntly asserts: “Religion soll uns glücklicher machen, sonst nehmen wir sie nicht an. Und soll sie das, so muß sie empfunden werden, denn Glückseligkeit besteht in Empfindung” (II: 526). And again he states: “Die Religion soll uns weder fromm noch gelehrt ganz allein machen, sondern glücklich” (II: 530). On the face of it these are somewhat startling comments that appear to functionalize religion to a hedonistic credo. If we look further, however, we see that Lenz is making this statement within the context of a broader argument. This makes perfect sense if we remember the connection between happiness and perfection and between perfection and God's design. We are happiest when we are allowed to pursue our perfection and that perfection brings us closer to God's designed purpose. Any religion that claims to present the word of God and how to maintain the correct relationship to him would by necessity also lead us to happiness.

He addresses this theme from a different perspective when he states: “[...] und grad die Muhe, die Anstrengung unserer Kraft, ist, was uns die Religion oder die Kunst, glücklich zu sein, verstehen lehrt. Grad die Mühe auf alles angewandt, was wir vor uns finden, sei es geistlich oder weltlich, irdisch oder himmlisch, denn vor Gott ist nichts gemein, ist Religion ist Natur, ist beides zusammen, ist Glück” (II: 607). The religion or

art of being happy teaches us that we need to exert ourselves, to strain our powers. The effort we exert on everything that we find before us, worldly and spiritual, earthly or heavenly, is religion, is nature, is both together. Exertion and effort is happiness, it is religion, and it is nature as well. It is the key to our existence. It seems that Lenz is looking at religion from an anthropological perspective here, viewing it as thought directed at understanding our place in creation and our calling. Since Lenz locates happiness at the center of both our nature and our true end, it makes perfect sense to say that religion is directed toward our happiness because if it claims to be a guide to living our lives according to God's design and God created us with the intention that we be happy, religion should make us happy and lead us in that direction.

Our happiness depends on our cultivation of the soul. The degree to which we elevate, expand and shape it, we elevate and expand our happiness. According to Lenz: "[...] so viel wissen wir, daß diese uns belebende Kraft der edelste Teil unseres Selbst ist, daß von ihrer Bildung, Erhöhung, Erweiterung die Bildung, Erhöhung und Erweiterung unserer ganzen Glückseligkeit abhängt, wer das nicht glauben will, der lasse es bleiben, die Sache redet von sich selbst, je größer die Sphäre ist, in der wir leben, desto beglückter und würdiger unser Leben [...]" (II: 565). Self-formative activities are thus crucial to our happiness. This work on the soul is apparently equivalent to increasing the sphere within which we live, that is, it directly affects our circumstances, which will, in turn, affect our soul, and our potential happiness. If we expand our soul we expand the possibilities for our happiness. Lenz constructs a virtuous circle here.

Happiness requires law and order. As we will see below, only the law shows us our circumstances and only they can attach value to actions and pleasure to the sentiments

that accompany those actions. Lenz puts this argument in the following way: “Ohne Gesetz wäre kein Evangelium möglich—folglich auch keine Glückseligkeit, denn nur das Gesetz zeigt uns die Verhältnisse in denen wir uns befinden, und nur diese können Handlungen einen Werth und den sie begleitenden Empfindungen ein Vergnügen beilegen” (II: 25). Without the order and stability they can and should provide, what we would think is our freedom would be mere arbitrariness and disorder and would not result in our happiness. If actions and sentiments have no value or provide no pleasure, happiness would not be possible, because there would be nothing to be happy or unhappy about. The relations within which we exist are what give value and pleasure to actions and sentiments. It is law that shows us our circumstances. Therefore, law is essential to our happiness.

According to Lenz, the variability in conceptions of happiness that people have arises from insufficient and inaccurate self-knowledge. The false feeling of our abilities confuses us. Lenz asks: “Woher denn nun aber die verschiedenen Begriffe der Menschen von der Glückseligkeit [...]? [...] Ich will aber versuchen, Ihnen die ganze Schwürigkeit mit zween Worten zu heben. Aus der unrichtigen Kenntniss seiner selbst. [...] Denn das falsche Gefühl von Fähigkeiten verdunkelt sich zuletzt immer selber und kann nur mit gewaltsamer Anstrengung in unserer Seele erhalten werden, welche gewiß kein Vergnügen ist (II: 508). It becomes imperative more fully and accurately to know our abilities and their correct functioning in order to arrive at better and more appropriate conceptions of happiness, which is, of course, what Lenz argues for.

Perfection

Although we saw above that there is a close connection between happiness and perfection, the former depending on the latter, they are not the same and need to be kept conceptually distinct. “Hören sie also meine Definition, oder vielmehr Deskription von der Vollkommenheit, einem Wort, das den meisten Menschen, ich weiß nicht warum? Nicht gefällt und das sie so gern mit dem Wort Glückseligkeit verwechseln, welches doch in der Tat, wenn wir mit allen Worten genau bestimmte Begriffe verbinden wollen, eine von derselben ganz unterschiedene Bedeutung hat” (II: 503). In order to arrive at the true concept of perfection, we need to delve more deeply into our knowledge of humans, collect our experiences, compare them and use our reason to decide what it is. This concept will, however, be individual because of our differing abilities and powers and the degrees to which they have been developed. Let us now turn to perfection.

Lenz asks:

Was ist Vollkommenheit?—wir haben von Natur gewisse Kräfte und Fähigkeiten in uns, die wir fühlen, das heißt nach der Baumgartischen Art zu reden, uns ihrer bewußt sind—und jemehr sie sich entwickeln, desto deutlicher fühlen, oder welches einerlei ist, desto deutlicher uns ihrer bewußt werden. [...] Aber Sie werden sich auch wohl zu erinnern wissen, daß Ruhe und Heiterkeit in Ihrer Seele mit dem erweiterten Gefühl Ihrer Fähigkeiten zunehmen. [...] Der Trieb nach Vollkommenheit ist also das ursprüngliche Verlangen unsers Wesens, sich eines immer größern Umganges unserer Kräfte und Fähigkeiten bewußt zu werden. Es versteht sich am Rande, daß hier Fähigkeiten des Geistes und Körpers samt und sonders verstanden

werden, und in wiefern einer auf diese, der andere auf jene einen höhern Wert setzt, insofern sind auch die Begriffe der Vollkommenheit verschieden.

(II: 504)

The drive to perfection is the original demand of our being to feel an increasingly large range of our powers and abilities. Feeling our abilities and powers is the same as becoming more conscious of them. Lenz includes in perfection abilities of both body and mind. The extent to which one places a greater value on the body or mind will determine what kind of concept of perfection one has. This plurality is one of the defining features of Lenz's conception of human being and is definitive of his understanding of ethics and human value. We once again see Lenz's commitment to a position of noncommensurability concerning human values with this position.

Our striving toward perfection must be characterized by a certain agreement of all our powers with a whole, a certain harmony, which is actually the concept of the highest beauty. He states: "Genug es muß in unserm Bestreben nach Vollkommenheit eine gewisse Übereinstimmung aller unserer Kräfte zu einem Ganzen, eine gewisse Harmonie sein, welche eigentlich den wahren Begriff des höchsten Schönen gibt. Sehen Sie nun, daß die Linien des wahren Schönen und des wahren Guten im strengsten Verstande, in einen Punkt zusammen laufen?" (II: 505). Lenz points out that the paths of true beauty and true good intersect and must meet at the same point. They have the same telos. There is an intimate connection between the beautiful and the good, that is, between the aesthetic and the ethical. It seems safe to assume that, for Lenz, aesthetic values and ethical values intersect and can be used to understand each other. It also appears that, as is clearly the case with Lenz, the aesthetic principles one uses would be intimately bound

up with one's ethical principles. Also we can assume that both realms mutually affect one another. If we recall Lenz's statements on beauty, and the relationship between ideal and homogenous beauty, we can clearly see that this is the case with Lenz.

If we had any doubts about the earthly and material component of perfection, Lenz makes this abundantly clear when he asserts: "Alle Geschöpfe vom Wurm bis zum Seraph müssen sich vervollkommen können, sonst hörten sie auf endliche Geschöpfe zu sein [...]" (II: 505). Even worms are capable of perfecting themselves. If any being were not capable of striving for perfection that would imply that it were already complete, but finite beings are by definition incomplete. In this sense, perfection means something like completion, that is, that there is no more change or development that could occur to improve upon the existing form. It would mean that one could stop and rest and enjoy one's perfected state. We know from Lenz that he considers this impossible for humans and any other finite being. It is something that we must always strive for.

In his "Meinungen eines Laien" Lenz discusses the history of humanity and the genesis of human feelings, he cites Herder^{ix} and recounts his theory of human development. Within this context, Lenz states that when Adam was introduced to "die höchste Lieblichkeit der Natur im Grundrisse, das Weib [...] da fühlt' er sich in allen Nerven seines Gefühls getroffen, fühlt' es, daß es Fleisch war wie seines, Bein wie seins, und nannte—Männin—Hier ward Verhältnis zu ihm selbst—hier ward Empfindung" (II: 528). At its core, the relationship of man to woman creates a relation to oneself, which in turn creates the possibility of sensibility.

Feeling

Lenz pays particular attention to emotional life in his writings. For him, feelings are an essential foundation of human experience and knowledge. As Lenz points out, all of our higher faculties are brought back to the sensation of feeling. For him, feelings are “eine zarte Schwingung und Zitterung unserer Nerven, die angenehme Kitzelung und Bewegung unserer Lebensgeister, der dadurch beschleunigte, erleichterte, beglückte Umlauf unsers Geblüts—alles, was uns die Ärzte Schönes davon vorzusagen wissen, ist Gefühl [...]” (II: 526–27). We have a perceptive faculty at the neurological level. It is a swinging and shivering of our nerves, a tickling and moving of our “life spirits,” which is a result of the quickened, eased and fortunate circulation of our blood. Continuing the discussion of feeling, Lenz says: “Gefühl ist die Bewegung meines Nervengebäudes von außen” (Blei IV: 283). He defines feeling in physiological terms, involving nerves, blood and life spirits in the process, stating that it is the movement of the nervous structure from the outside. Sensations are a result of external stimulation. Rated on a perceptual level they are dark perceptions, that is, not clearly understood at this level of awareness. Hayer asserts that Lenz’s conception of feeling, “[...] wird dem Bereich des Physiologischen zugewiesen; seinem definierten Inhalt nach beinhaltet er das perzeptive Vermögen unseres biologischen Wahrnehmungsapparats” (162). In essence Lenz uses the language of medicine and then tells his reader that all of this technical language essentially refers to feeling. What is clear from this is that Lenz is grounding feeling in the neurological and biological level. It is a sensual form of perception.

Feeling is the foundation of all perception, as everything must be built upon it and supported by it. Lenz explicitly states that feelings even had to provide the mind with its first

ideas. He says: "Mit alle dem ist doch das Gefühl der Stamm, auf den alle dies gepfropft werden muß. Ja das Gefühl hat sogar dem Geiste in uns all seine ersten Ideen geben müssen" (II: 527). Feelings are critical and important in and of themselves and they must be understood because they provide us with our first ideas. It appears that Lenz is talking about infancy but it could also fit his evolutionary thought, referring to an early stage in the evolutionary development of humans. Lenz focuses on the physiological level here and bases this on contemporary physiology. He is clearly concerned to address human nature at a most basic level and to acknowledge the importance of this level to optimal human functioning.

When feelings and sensations are actively formed and shaped they become something more than mere sensations or emotions: "Empfindungen sind geordnetes in Verhältnis gebrachten Gefühl, Gefühl das gewissen Vorstellungen untergeordnet ist, Gefühl unsrer Seele" (II: 527). This occurs when feelings are ordered and brought into relations with each other or put into proportion, and subordinated to certain representations. They become feelings of the soul instead of feelings of the body. In other words, they are feelings upon which work has been performed, and without this work sentiments would not exist.

According to Lenz: "Eine Kuh, ein Tagelöhner, ein Künstler sehn ein vortreffliches Gebäude mit denselbigen sinnlichen Werkzeugen an, mit dem selbigen Gefühl, aber welch einen Unterschied macht die bei jedem wirksame Kraft in der verhältnismäßigen Stimmung dieses Gefühls, in den Empfindungen" (II: 527). On the level of feeling, humans are like animals. On the level of sentiments there is a world of difference. We all have senses, the same physiological components as animals. There is a large difference

when the “effective power” is considered. The effective power gives a proportionate tuning of our feelings and through this process creates sentiments.

To have sentiments is a condition that “[...] aber so auf ein Haar der vorhergegangenen Handlung entspricht, daß es uns schwer fällt, diese so innig mit einander verwebten Modifikationen unsrer Kraft von einander zu reißen und vor unser Anschauen zu bringen” (II: 527). This condition of having a sentiment corresponds to the preceding action so closely that it is difficult perceptively to distinguish between the action and the sentiment. It appears that sentiments resemble actions very closely, even though they are conditions and not actions. Action is intricately bound up with sentiment and through sentiment with feeling.

Lenz defines sentiments as “[...] ein Zustand meiner Seele, der von einer Vorstellung abhängt und von innen, daß ich so sagen mag, auf die Nerven wirkt” (Blei IV: 283). He describes this type of feelings as vivid. Sentiment is a condition of the soul that is dependent upon a representation and that has internal effects on the nerves. It appears as though Lenz conceives of a reverse effect of sentiments on the physiological foundation, where the experienced emotions alter the nerves. “Zu Empfindungen aber gehören Erfahrungen, zu Erfahrungen Handlungen, Veränderungen unseres Zustandes. Zu Handlungen Zwecke und Entschlossenheit” (II: 283). A sentiment is a condition of the soul that is dependent upon a representation from inside that has an effect upon the nerves. Experiences belong to sentiments and actions belong to experiences. We can therefore say that actions belong to sentiments via experiences. Sentiments are intimately connected to thought and representation: “Wir können also nichts empfinden, das wir uns vorher nicht in einem gewissen Verhältnis gedacht, vorgestellt. Und je nachdem dies

Verhältnis größer, mehr umfassender, richtiger und deutlicher, je nachdem auch unsere Empfindung” (II: 527). In fact, we cannot have the former without the latter. As we clarify and expand out thoughts, and correct our thinking, our sentiments will also be clarified, expanded and corrected.

Lenz tells us that the sentimental powers reside in the heart and in the blood: “Wir haben ein Empfindungsvermögen oder empfindende Kräfte im ganzen Körper ausgebreitet; doch vom körperlichen Gefühl unterschieden, weil dieses unwillkürlich, jenes aber willkürlich ist; nach welchen wir Gegenstände als gut oder böse, schön oder häßlich empfinden. Residiert vorzüglich im Herzen und Blut” (Blei, IV: 29). We have the capacity for sentiment, or sentimental powers, dispersed throughout our entire bodies. Sentiments are, however, different from bodily feelings, because they are voluntary, feelings are involuntary. We have the sentiment that a thing is good or bad, beautiful or ugly—that is, powers of judgment and evaluation—according to these sentimental powers.

Lenz takes up the issue of transforming confused feeling to sentiments when he discusses Adam’s situation in Paradise. Lenz says “Noch ist aber alles verworrenes Gefühl, bis er, wie Herder schön entwickelt hat, zu unterscheiden, zu nennen, zu sprechen anfang. Da entstanden Verhältnisse in seinem Kopfe, da ward’s Empfindung. Und als ihm die Gottheit die höchste Lieblichkeit der Natur im Grundrisse, das Weib, entgegen führte, da fühlte er sich in allen Nerven seines Gefühls getroffen [...] Hier ward Verhältnis zu ihm selbst—hier ward Empfindung” (II: 528). Historically, when humans began to differentiate between things, to name and to speak, relations began to arise in humans’ minds and with these relations came sentiments. With the introduction of the female, man was affected in all aspects of his feelings, which created a relation to himself, thereby

bringing about sentiments. It appears that Lenz is talking about something like self-awareness. The process of performing work upon the self to bring about sentiments involves self-awareness as well.

The divinity had to teach humans to have sentiments in order to feel its power and force and so that they would understand the relationship between themselves and him and between themselves and all of nature: “Die Gottheit mußte er also empfinden lernen, ihre Macht und Gewalt empfinden lernen, um das Verhältnis zwischen sich, ihr und der ganzen Natur zu bekommen. Er wär Atheist geblieben und der unschuldigste, der je auf Gottes Erdboden herumging” (II: 529). Creating sentiments in humans was critical to bringing about faith in God. If humans had not developed sentiments they would have remained atheists. We can also conclude from this that the more undeveloped a person’s sentiments are the less able he or she will be to have faith in God, and that a lack of faith in God is also an indication that a person has impoverished sentimental life.

The first humans, because of how sentiments originated, got the tone and correct relation of their sentiments from the fear of God or reverence for God. According to Lenz: “Diese Empfindungen der Ehrfurcht vor Gott gab allen übrigen Empfindungen der ersten Menschen den Ton und das rechte Verhältnis. Wir sollten nicht bloß in die Breite, sondern auch in die Höhe empfinden. [...] es muß Stufenordnung und Vorzug da sein, wenn diese Empfindungen ihr Leben erhalten sollen” (II: 529). That tone and relation had to do with the lesson that we should not merely have a broad range of sentiments but also our sentiments should have depth and should reach elevated realms. In order for our sentiments to survive there had to be a hierarchy and preference among them.

Lenz is clearly not a relativist. Although he is adamant about the noncommensurability of values he is also adamant that some values are superior to others. The individual must choose, rank and privilege among values according to his reason, powers, capacities and situation. This is not an option; without it sentiments will wither and die. It is insufficient if we are scattered about and have sentiments spread about among many things we also need to have elevated sentiments that are superior to those. There must be differentiation and hierarchy among sentiments. Some are better and more valuable than others. For the first humans, fear of God provided the basis for this prioritization. If we recall Lenz's critique of Greek theater also being driven by this same fear we can see this thought being applied to literature as well. But we also must remember that he asserts that for the contemporary situation a different tone setter must be found. I will take up this issue again below.

We need fully to experience our sentiments without fear or reservation. We need to feel secure to abandon ourselves to them and trust ourselves to their expression. As Lenz proclaims: "O meine Herren! Wer noch nicht das Glück gefühlt hat, eine Empfindung ganz aus zu empfinden—ohne Furcht, ohne Zurückhaltung, mit Sicherheit sich ihr zu überlassen—der hat noch kein Glück gefühlt, nur Schimmer von Lichte, nur Tropfen von der geweihten Schale gekostet, nicht mit vollen Zügen Herz und Existenz in diesen Nektar eintauchen lassen" (II: 562). If one cannot do this, one has not yet experienced happiness, fully feeling our sentiments and having a rich sentimental life is crucial to happiness. Moreover, Lenz asserts that the free expression of the heart is the sole band of all, true society, and of familial happiness. He asks:

Wo aber bleibt die freie Ergießung des Herzens, dieses einzigen Band aller wahrer Gesellschaft, dieses einzige Familienglück, guter Gott, wo bleibt sie, wenn ich fürchten muß, was der, der, der meiner Verwandten tut, tut er nicht aus brüderlicher Liebe, aus Freude, Interesse, Teilnehmung an meiner Existenz, sondern aus eigennützigen Absichten, einen Trieb zu stillen, der mich, wenn's hoch kommt, wohl zu seinem Weibe macht, aber nicht zu seiner Verwandtin. (II: 562)

So, not only is emotion crucial to happiness, it is critical to society. We need to feel that when others show interest in us that it is out of brotherly love, joy, interest in us and empathy with our existence and not out of selfish intentions, or in order to satisfy a drive that can make him care about his wife but not his fellow man, that is out satisfying a base sexual or biological needs.

Lenz asserts that those who seek to become thinkers isolated from the effects of the world commit a grave error. He believes that they:

[...] glauben dadurch an Wert gewonnen zu haben, wenn sie ihre Seele stumpf machen und einschläfern, anstatt durch innere Stärke den äußern unangenehmen Eindrücken das Gegengewicht zu halten. Das Gefühl von Leere in ihrer Seele das daher entsteht, straft sie genug und sie haben beständig alle Hände voll zu tun, ihrem zu Boden sinkenden Stolz wieder emporzuhelfen. Sie fühlen es daß sie sich ihren unangenehmen Empfindungen nicht entziehen können ohne Wüste und Leere in der Seele zu haben und der Zustand der Streit ist marterhafter als die unangenehmen Empfindungen selbst. (II: 621)

Lenz criticizes the Stoic ideal of making oneself indifferent to the world and worldly goods. Instead of making oneself indifferent to them (which is impossible anyway) one should strengthen oneself so that one has the power to resist external powers, if one so chooses. If one could withdraw from disturbing sentiments one's soul would become barren and empty (we can hear the words of Wenzeslaus from *Die Soldaten* here!). For Lenz, the condition of conflict is more indicative of martyrdom than withdrawing from disturbing feelings. If we try to, or were able to, withdraw from our sentiments, our soul would be barren and empty. It appears that his conception is that sentiments fill our soul and provide life and richness to it. To try to eliminate feeling and sentiment impoverishes the soul and deprives life of its richness. We need to be affected by the world around us.

Sentiments provide motivational force. In his discussion of the nature of soldiers he argues: "Um sich aber verteidigen zu können, muß der Soldat wissen, was er verteidigt, es sinnlich lebhaft fühlen um sich davon begeistern zu können" (II: 794). When arguing for his military reforms, Lenz points out the centrality of sentiments in motivating soldiers. They must know and feel what they are fighting for to fight with enthusiasm. We must resist the notion that we can appeal to reason alone or that we can achieve optimal performance through command and fear, as some tacticians seek to do. In order to achieve optimal performance—that is, excellence—we must involve our sensual capacities. Lenz uses the argument in his text on the topic of the right of soldiers to marry to assert the importance of emotional bonds in providing optimal motivation for soldiers to perform at their peak level. No rational argument or commands and threats of punishment from supervisors can bring about this superior level of performance.

As we saw above, concupiscence has its motivational powers due to the pleasure that it produces. But Lenz attributes more significance to concupiscence than that it merely provides simple pleasure. It is bound up in our quest for happiness: “Noch mehr, die Konkupiszenz ist dem Menschen zur Glückseligkeit notwendig, eine Gabe Gottes—die herrlichste aller Gaben Gottes. Das Menstrum, wodurch wir alle Glückseligkeit auflösen. Denn Glückseligkeit muß genossen werden, und Genuß kann kein Vergnügen bringen, ohne zuvor begehrt zu haben. (II: 515). Happiness requires that we enjoy it, and enjoyment cannot provide pleasure unless there was a preceding desire. Desire is thereby made into a precondition for happiness. Concupiscence is therefore one of the greatest gifts God gave to man, because it is the means by which we can make happiness accessible to us and possible for us. Once again, Lenz brings a higher order concept, happiness, back down to the sensual level by explicitly linking it to desire.

True pleasure is not to be found in merely sensual pleasure, according to Lenz, “Denn das wahre Vergnügen in mehr als einer bloßen Kützelung unserer Sinne bestehe, werden Sie mir auch unbewiesen zugeben” (II: 499). He sees the greatest pleasure in the greatest sense of our existence, our abilities, and our self. As he says:

Der höchste Zustand der Bewegung ist unserm Ich der angemessenste, das heißt derjenige Zustand, wo unser äußern Umstände unsere Relationen und Situationen so zusammenlaufen, daß wir das größtmöglichste Feld vor uns haben, unser Vollkommenheit zu erhöhen zu befördern und andern empfindbar zu machen, weil wir uns alsdann das größtmöglichste Vergnügen versprechen können, welches eigentlich bei allen Menschen in

der ganzen Welt in dem größten Gefühl unserer Existenz, unserer Fähigkeiten, unsers Selbst besteht. (II: 507–08)

The best possible situation for us is when all external circumstances, relations and situations coalesce where we have the greatest possible field before us in which we can elevate, support and make our perfection sensible to others. When we have these conditions we can experience the greatest pleasure. If we seek to have the greatest pleasure we must increase our feeling of our existence and of our abilities. This would then affect our happiness and tie into perfection. Desire, pleasure, perfection and happiness, then, are all intimately linked to each other.

Knowing

Experience

Lenz concerns himself in numerous writings with epistemological issues. He is very concerned about the possibilities and limitations of knowledge and the subsequent implications for our existence. Experience figures importantly in Lenz's epistemology. It provides the fundamental building blocks of knowledge. Lenz considers a person to be knowledgeable who has many ideas that go over into sentiments or feelings that unleash desires or passions, or better yet, decisions and actions. The actions and effects he has are compared to the effects that they have on the receptivity and effectiveness of others, that is, to consider their consequences, and then draw conclusions from that. He says:

Bei den Menschen weiß der viel, der sich viel Vorstellungen erwirbt, die in Empfindung oder auch wohl nur in bloßes Gefühl übergehen, Begierden,

Leidenschaften, oder wenn der Geist edler und stärker, Entschlüsse und Handlungen veranlassen, welche Handlungen oder Wirkungen seines Selbst, er mit den Wirkungen die sie auf die Rezeptivität und Wirkungskraft anderer haben, vergleicht, also in ihren Folgen übersieht und daraus Endschlüsse zieht, die freilich nur für den Kreis von Wirkungen gelten, den ihm seine Erfahrungen gezogen hat. (II: 483)

These conclusions we can draw from experience, however, are limited to the circle of effects with which experience provides us. Our experience thus limits what we can know. However, Lenz points out that there is an intersubjective process that widens the range of the knowable. He tell us that: “Eine jedesmalige Erfahrung kann aber wieder ins Unendliche mit anderen eigenen und fremden Erfahrungen verglichen, und neue allgemeine Endschlüsse daraus gezogen werden, das gibt uns denn all unser Wissen in der Welt, unsere Vernunft” (II: 483). We are not isolated monads, according to this epistemological model. When looked at in isolation, each individual’s knowledge is severely limited by his particular point of view. When we consider that we interact and communicate with others, it becomes clear that we can dramatically expand our knowledge by comparing our experiences with the experiences of others and with their knowledge as well.

Every experience can be compared to other experiences that one has had or with experiences that others have had, and therefrom draw new, general conclusions. This is the source of our knowledge of the world and our reason. Our reason and knowledge are derived from experience, which makes them fallible—as we see when Lenz continues:

Das aber mit alledem wie Sie leicht einsehen werden, nicht unfehlbar sein kann, da die Grenzsteine unserer Erfahrung und also auch der daraus entstandenen Vernunft nie dieselben bleiben, sondern in Ewigkeit fort immer verrückt werden, nur daß die Erweiterung derselben die vorigen engern Kreise immer mit in sich schließt, oder unter sich begreift, diese also deswegen durchaus nicht verloren sind. (II: 483)

The foundations of our experience are always changing, they are always being shifted, however, as experience and knowledge expand the circle, the earlier circles remain within the expanded circles and they are therefore maintained and not lost.

We can also see in this process that we compare the effects and actions of our own selves with the receptivity and active power of others, and that we can consider the consequences of our actions and the effects we have on others. In this process the circle of our experiences provides a limiting context for the conclusions our reason can draw therefrom. Lenz's language here indicates that reason arises out of our experiences and therefore that experience determines the quality and content of our reason. Since our experiences are individual and variable, it seems reasonable to conclude that our reason will be so as well. The fact that we can and do compare experiences and have access to experiences of others, past and present, through communication with them, there will be a degree of confluence among our experiences and reason.

Lenz again addresses the importance of experience, and the relation between experience and reason, when he discusses the origin of law. He claims:

In der Einrichtung unserer Natur lagen die stamina zu allen unser heutigen Gesetzen, woher würden wir sie sonst bekommen haben? Ja die Vernunft—

ja nun die Vernunft hebt sich keinen Zoll, keine Linie über den Kreis der allgemeinen Erfahrung, das heißt der verglichenen besonderen Erfahrungen, zieht Schlüsse daraus, die dem ungetübtem Auge über diesen Erfahrungskreis herauszugehen scheinen, die aber eben so wenig wirklich drüber herausgehen können, als ein Stein höher fliegen kann, als ihn die angewandte Kraft oder Stoß bestimmt. (II: 600)

Today's laws have their seeds in the arrangement of our nature, that is, they are derived from our nature and proceed from it, not from reason. That is, reason did not create them by itself. It does not have the tools to do so. The circle of our general experience is the context within which our reason operates, that is, the circle of our compared particular experiences. One can draw conclusions from that experience that appear to the uneducated eye to go beyond those experiences, but that really cannot go beyond them, just as a stone can fly only as far as is proportionate to the force that was applied to it. Even though our general experience goes beyond individual experience, the conclusions we derive from that experience remain grounded in that experience and do not transcend it. This is a clear statement of Lenz's empiricism and a central tenet of his epistemology.

When doing conceptual analysis, experience plays an important role. As a part of the process we have to line up experiences and compare them and then let reason decide which apply to and best capture the concept. Lenz portrays this process in the following manner: "Um den wahren Begriff der Vollkommenheit zu erlangen, müssen wir in die Kenntnis des Menschen ein wenig tiefer hineingehn, Erfahrungen anstellen, sie vergleichen, und die Vernunft entscheiden lassen" (II: 504). Once again, experience and

reason are closely linked in this process, with experience supplying the material and the boundaries for reason, but with reason guiding us in our decisions.

Perception

Lenz criticizes reason for its lack of perception: “In der Tat, die menschliche Vernunft gleicht dem Auge eines Übersichtigen, das Gegenstände von halben Stunden weit aufnimmt, was aber nahe bei ihm steht, nie sehen kann. Und die Wahrheit, um recht verborgen zu bleiben, stellt sich oft ganz nahe bei uns [...]” (II: 501). Lenz appears to be criticizing abstract thought here. Reason has a tendency to look far away for answers instead of dealing with that which is close by. Reason should focus instead on the concrete aspects that confront us on a daily basis, the everyday instead of the exceptional. We should concern ourselves with life as it is in our surroundings instead of some imagined existence in some far away place or time. These things are ready to hand and they will lead us to more important, relevant, useful and accurate understandings of things.

While discussing our tendencies of thought, Lenz makes a clear case for a form of perception that is vivid and present:

Wir suchen alle gern unsere zusammengesetzte Begriffe in einfache zu reduzieren und warum das? Weil er sie dann schneller—und mehr zugleich umfassen kann. Aber trostlos wären wir, wenn wir darüber das Anschauen und die Gegenwart dieser Erkenntnisse verlieren sollten, und das immerwährende Bestreben, all unsere gesammelten Begriffe wieder auseinander zu wickeln und durchzuschauen, sie anschaulich und gegenwärtig zu machen [...]. (II: 647)

Although our thought tends to, or would prefer to, reduce all of our complex concepts to simple ones so that we can grasp them more quickly and more of them simultaneously, if, by doing so, we were to lose the vividness and presence of this knowledge and the perpetual striving to disassemble all of our collected concepts, to inspect them and to make them vivid and present, we would be inconsolable. Vivid and present perception appears to be related to thought, but it is much more. It involves a holistic perception and way of seeing that cannot be reduced to concepts. In contrast, concepts need to be made to conform to this kind of perception. This is why the poet and the “lay” thinker can contribute to the discourse in ways that the “professional” cannot. The lay person operates at a different level of discourse and with different goals and priorities. Because of this, he brings a richness to the issues that they would otherwise lack. Though he cannot achieve something like rigorous and systematic conceptual thought, he can arrive at a vivid, rich, and present probability that speaks to us at many different levels and in a much more convincing manner.

When discussing the negative correlation of the growth of reason and faith, Lenz makes the assertion that faith becomes a form of perception, a beholding. He says:

Je mehr sich aber unsere Vernunft entwickelt (das geht bis ins Unendliche),
desto mehr nimmt dieser moralische Glaube, der in der Tat mehr in den
Empfindungen als in der Erkenntnis gegründet ist, ab und verwandelt sich in
das Schauen, in eine Überzeugung der Vernunft. Überhaupt bedürfen wir
nicht mehr und nicht weniger moralisch zu glauben, als zur Seligkeit
notwendig ist, das übrige haben wir immer noch die Freiheit *in suspenso* zu
lassen. Aber dieses müssen wir viel mehr suchen in Erkenntnis und

Anschauen zu verwandeln, weil, nach der Ordnung Gottes, unser Wille sich nach unserer Erkenntnis richtet. (III: #25, October 1772)

Our moral faith transforms itself into a beholding with the increase of reason. Faith that is not essential to blessedness should be transformed into knowledge and vivid perception which will then aid in guiding our will. With this Lenz outlines a privileged concept that occurs repeatedly in his writings. *Anschauen* is a powerful form of perception that is present and vivid. It not only plays an important role in his thinking on aesthetics but in his ethics as well.

There is a type of thinking that approximates vivid perception. Geniuses exemplify it: “Wir nennen die Köpfe Genies, die alles, was ihnen vorkommt, gleich so durchdringen, durch und durch sehen, daß kommt, daß ihre Erkenntnis denselben Wert, Umfang, Klarheit hat, als ob sie durch Anschauen oder alle sieben Sinne zusammen wäre erworben worden” (II: 648). We consider people geniuses who penetrate everything that presents itself to them, who thoroughly see something, whose knowledge has the same value, range and clarity as if they obtained it through intuition or all “seven senses” together. Such geniuses can have an image of the subject matter in their minds in all of its relations, light, shadows and coloring. With intuition there is a presence that accompanies the knowledge gained through intuition. It is a type of knowing that seeks to view something in its entirety.

Poetic genius is a specific kind of genius whose critical function is to reflect back the object. According to Lenz: “Den Gegenstand zurückspiegeln, das ist der Knoten, die nota diacritica des poetischen Genies” (II: 648). He tells us that the second source of literature is “[...]das immerwährende Bestreben, all unsere gesammelten Begriffe wieder auseinander

zu wickeln und durchschauen, sie anschaulich und gegenwärtig zu machen.” (II: 647). Lenz argues that imitation is common to all of the “schönen Künsten” and that vivid perception is common to all scholarly pursuits and that poetry alone combines the two and “[...] alles scharf durchdacht, durchforscht, durchschaut—und dann in getreuer Nachahmung zum andernmal wieder hervorgebracht. Dieses gibt die Poesie der Sachen, jene des Stils. Oder umgekehrt, wie ihr wollt. Der schöne Geist kann das Ding ganz kennen, aber er kann es nicht wieder so getreu von sich geben” (II: 649). Through this mimetic process the poet allows us to take our collected concepts, take them apart, look them over and make them vivid and present—as does scholarly thought—but then to also sharply look through everything, investigate it thoroughly and to think it through and finally to provide a faithful imitation of it (which literature alone can do). The first source of genius and poetry gives poetry its material, the second its style and the two are inextricably bound to each other. Poetry offers us a way of seeing that other discursive forms cannot provide. It is, however, my contention that Lenz tries to articulate a style of discourse that seeks to accommodate the poetic insights by presenting the material in a rhapsodic style and from the lay perspective, which frees him from the restraints of normal scholarly discourse.

Although Lenz clearly states his skepticism of claims to a perspective that can arrive at a commensurable principle of truth, beauty and goodness, he does indicate elsewhere a notion of perceiving truth. He states: “[...] ein menschlicher Geist, der in der von Gott durch die ganze Welt bekannt gemachten Ordnung des Rechts und der Wahrheit denkt, forscht und handelt, eine Kraft, die sich so unaufhörlich nach der von Gott etablierten und uns empfindbaren Harmonie bewegt, hat schon in gewissen Umständen den Geist Gottes, eine göttliche Gesinnung, eine Gesinnung, die dem Willen der Gottheit konform ist, und

so hatte die ganze erste christliche Kirche den Geist Gottes" (II: 576). A human spirit or mind that thinks, investigates and acts within the order of justice and truth made known by God and then that ceaselessly operates according to the harmony established by God, has, to a certain extent, the spirit of God. This form of perception would rely heavily on the sentiments and faith but it would seem that spirit we would have as a result would be within a realm of truth and justice. Lenz does not say we would know what this truth and justice are, however. He only states that we would be operating within it. Lenz claims that it is in this sense that the first Christian church had the spirit of God and thus it is humanly possible to perceive in this way. It is also clear, however, that since that time we have strayed from that order of justice and truth. It is my contention that Lenz sees it as our ethical telos to work toward those conditions of spirit and to cultivate those convictions.

When discussing the excesses of an obsessive reason that seeks to reduce everything to a commensurable principle, Lenz adds the comforting note that God saw fit to attach a lead weight to our soul that keeps it in perpetual motion long enough for us to arrive at such perceptions. He states: "Der Schöpfer hat unserer Seele einen Bleiklumpen angehängt, der wie die Pendeln an der Uhr sie durch seine niederziehende Kraft in beständiger Bewegung erhält. Anstatt also mit den Hypochondristen auf diesen sichern Freund zu schimpfen [...] ist er, hoff ich, ein Kunststück des Schöpfers, all unsere Erkenntnis festzuhalten, bis sie anschaulich geworden ist" (II: 647). It seems that our soul, which is by nature happiest when it is in the highest state of motion, will remain in motion until we arrive at this vivid knowledge, which we do not yet possess. It seems that Lenz is arguing that God designed us with a soul in perpetual motion so that the

knowledge we seek will only be arrived at then it has become vivid. Until then, our souls keep moving, thinking, experiencing and perceiving, all the while disturbing our fixed notions of how the world is.

We become sensitive through the development of our sentiments. When Lenz describes the person who has become insensitive because of his obsession with the sex drive, he asserts that such a person, although good hearted in the bloom of his life, will become cold blooded and unable to conceive of the sentiments of others. Such a person is incapable of empathy. It appears that because the person obsessed with the sex drive instead of seeking to shape and cultivate it so that it found expression in an acceptable way, this person made himself cold to it and now is unable to have real sentiments which in turn has hindered his perceptive faculties for the sentiments of others. What is also clear from this assertion by Lenz is that he conceives of a form of perception where if one has healthy sentiments and has cultivated her sentimental life, she will be perceptive of others' senses as well and have an empathetic ability (II: 65).

Perspective

Lenz is acutely aware that the senses do not provide us with a precise copy of the perceived world. He seems to derive this recognition from the experience of the variability of the perception among and across individuals. He asserts: "Die Sinne, ja die Sinne—es kommt freilich auf die spezifische Schleifung der Gläser und die spezifische Größe der Projektionstafel an, aber mit alledem, wenn die *Camera obscura* Ritzen hat—" (II: 647). Lenz points out that our sense perceptions do not provide us with exact copies of that which

they perceive. How they are formed, how much they can take in affects what we can perceive and how accurately. As Wurst observes:

[...] there is an awareness of the limitations placed on us by the necessarily fragmentary perception of the world arising out of our awareness that the relationships are too complex to comprehend the totality in all-encompassing, synthetic vision. The shattered mirror displays gaps and blinds spots. This fragmentation manifests itself formally in repeated allusions to “Brillen” and “Gläser,” artificial aids which are able to bring certain aspects momentarily into closer view. (“Mimesis” 111)

Lenz takes a position that clearly does not try to assert he can make statements about essences. All of our knowledge is mediated and fallible.

According to Wurst, “Lenz incorporates the principle of mobility, of change, of instability, and of provisionality into his notion of standpoint and into his conception of mimesis. It follows that Lenz must adhere to momentary, context-dependent, equivocal positions” (“Mimesis” 114). We can apply this insight to Lenz’s thinking on perception in general as well. He wonders about our disquieting feeling when we are confronted by this fact when he ponders the following phenomenon:

Woher die Unruhe, wenn Sie hie und da eine Seite der Erkenntnis beklapst haben, das zitternde Verlangen, das Ganze mit Ihrem Verstande zu umfassen, die lähmende Furcht, wenn Sie zur andern Seite übergehn, werden Sie die erste wieder aus dem Gedächtnis verlieren. Eben so bei jedem Genuß, woher dieser Sturm, das All zu erfassen, der Überdruß, wenn Ihrer

keichenden Sehnsucht kein neuer Gegenstand übrig zu bleiben scheint—die

Welt wird für sie arm und Sie schwärmen nach Brücken. (II: 647)

Lenz conceives of perception as being, by nature, perspectival. We cannot view a thing-in-itself because we cannot simultaneously view all sides of an object and when we move from one side to the next we lose the previously perceived side from our memory. Our views are restricted by our perceptive organs, our education, our social situation, and the degree to which we have trained our reasoning powers, but we will never be able to realize a full perception of the entirety. Such all-seeing perceptions are possible only for God. For this reason we must satisfy ourselves with incomplete knowledge while simultaneously we strive to know as much as we can. We must not become complacent or fatalistic. It is natural for us to want to understand the entirety of things and this drives us to know and to investigate, which is good. Pleasure works the same way. We seek to enjoy the pleasurable experience in its entirety. We feel weariness when we think there is no new object to enjoy. The world becomes unsatisfactory to us and we desire what Lenz calls bridges to bridge the gap between what we know and what we desire to know.

In a letter, Lenz laments that it is a mystery how we can find a way to put ourselves into many perspectives and be able to look at every person with his own eyes: “Ach! Das große Geheimnis, sich in viele Gesichtspunkte zu stellen, und jeden Menschen mit seinen eigenen Augen ansehen zu können!” (III: #44, July, 1775). If we remember Lenz’s assertion that we often are better able to judge the worth and character of others more adequately than our own worth and character because we are less partial and biased, we must be careful not to read this quote in such a way that Lenz is here lamenting that we cannot know the “truth” of another. He is more likely lamenting that we cannot know or

perceive from all perspectives simultaneously and this is a perspective that we do not have access to because we are external to the other person. This internal perspective would be helpful information to us in trying to understand others but it is also not **the** truth about that person. It would add more particulars to our perception of that person, and it would be, in that sense, very valuable.

We do have, however, empathetic perceptive capabilities. Lenz refers to these when he says that we need to: “Uns in die Stelle des andern zu setzen von dem wir etwas fodern und genau abzuwägen, wie wir in dem Verhältnis des andern diese oder jene Foderung anhören und empfinden würden. Wir haben Maß und Gewicht in uns, ein feines zartes Gefühl, daß wir nur aufrichtig befragen dürfen. [...] Also alles was ihr wollt daß euch die Leute tun sollen tut ihr ihnen auch” (II: 494). Here Lenz is arguing that we have a capacity to empathize with others but it is based on looking at ourselves. We need to ask ourselves how we would feel about the demands we are making of others if they were made of us. He asserts that we have a fine and sensitive feeling to conduct this activity and that we need only honestly consult this faculty.

Lenz says that there is a problematic tendency in scholarly pursuits to seek the one true perspective to which they seek to reduce all truth. Lenz criticizes this monological perspective harshly, asserting:

Wie erschrocklich viele Sekten und Stifter derselben in allen Provinzen der Wissenschaft, wovon jeder einen andern Standpunkt genommen, aus dem er alle Dinge um sich herum ansieht, aus dem er eine Linie ins Unendliche zieht und derselben so steif und fest folgt als Theseus dem Faden der Ariadne; ob sie ihn aber allezeit so glücklich aus dem Labyrinth heraushilft,

ist eine andere Frage. Mir wenigstens kommen diese kühnen Stifter neuer Sekten, die durchaus und durchein allein behaupten den echten Punkt der Wahrheit getroffen zu haben, wie blinde Hähne auf einem großen Haufen Schutt vor [...]. (II: 500)

Lenz is skeptical of the various schools (he calls them “sects”) in all areas of scholarship who interpret all aspects of the entire world from a single point of view. They remind him of blind chickens on a pile of garbage. They always seek the single, genuine point of view from which to view the truth and look for only one perspective to which they can then reduce all else. For such thinkers, everything is commensurable to this perspective. For Lenz this is an unacceptable reduction of the richness of life. It forces us to lose the vivid and present perception that he so values.

Blunden, Rector and Wurst, among others, have each addressed this notion of perspective in Lenz. Blunden writes:

I have called [point of view] a technical term within the science of perspective, but it would be more correct to say that it was the key idea on which the whole conception of perspective was based. For if perspective shows us what things look like, it can do so only because there has been a realization that things only look one way to each eye and to each person [...]. The implications of this—that what matters is not how things “really” are, but how they seem to us—are clearly enormously important for human thought in general. Perspective theory is thus the acknowledgment that each of us is only in one place at one time, that all experience begins as an individual particular, and egocentric experience. (“Point of View” 5)

This general point about perspective certainly applies to Lenz. He expresses an awareness of the effect the senses have on our perceptions and that such perceptions are individual. This awareness causes him to have serious doubts about epistemological claims that claim a single standpoint as the point at which all perspectives are commensurable. As Wurst states: “Lenz can imagine a truly synthetic stance only as the power of the divine, which the poet as creator can only approximate, and never fully achieve” (“Mimesis” 112). Only God can see and know all. Finite beings are necessarily excluded from such perception and knowledge.

Wurst continues: “Lenz views the notion of the open or undetermined standpoint as central to his conception of mimesis precisely because both the poetic and the philosophical truth reside somewhere in the middle, therefore truth cannot be precisely delineated” (“Mimesis,” 114). Moreover, this “middle” consists of a plurality of perspectives; it is not a consolidation of perspectives into one. For Lenz, knowledge and values are irreducibly plural because of the limitations placed on us as finite beings. Those who do not accept this can be dangerous to themselves and those around them. As Lenz points out when he criticizes those particularly “devout” religious people who fault all who do not share their beliefs in precisely the way they believe and proceed to damn and demonize all of the alleged “non-believers.”

Thought

Lenz occupies himself with our cognitive capacities and accords them a significant role in our psychology and in our moral and ethical lives. He defines thought in the following way:

Die Kraft, die in uns Vorstellungen abreißt, sammlet, ordnet, unterordnet, in Verhältnis zu einander bringt, ist unsere Seele, unsere Vernunft, wie Sie sie nennen wollen, in unserm Körper in immerwährender Bewegung handelt sie durch denselben oder in demselben. So bald sie aber emfindet, ruht sie, leidet sie. Denken ist eine Handlung, Emfinden ein Zustand, der aber so auf ein Haar der vorhergeganenen Handlung entspricht, daß es uns schwer fällt, diese so innig mit einander verwebten Modifikationen unsrer Kraft von einander zu reißen und vor unser Anschauen zu bringen. (II: 527)

Thinking compares present emotions to past ones, in order to order them and to get oversight on them. According to Lenz, only when one has achieved this can one truly say that one feels oneself. When one survives this test one gains a steadfastness that will be with him forever. After having achieved all of this he will experience happiness, with the realization that he has himself to thank for his happiness. Thinking is an act. It is a power in us that selects, collects, orders, subordinates and brings thoughts into proportion with each other. It is our soul, our reason, and it is also located and operates within our bodies. This power can either be realized in thought and action or it can result in feeling and sensibility, which is a passive and inactive state.

Lenz continues: “Wir haben ein Vorstellungsvermögen oder vorstellende Kräfte im ganzen Körper ausgebreitet, vorzüglich im Gehirn und den Nervensäften, vermöge deren wir uns Gegenstände vorstellen [...]” (Blei, IV: 30). We have cognitive capacities that are extended throughout our entire bodies, but that are primarily located in our brain and nervous fluids. With this power we can represent objects to ourselves, that is, think about them. While Lenz locates this power in the brain and nervous fluids, it is interesting to

note that he also locates it in the entire body, thus including the body in the cognitive apparatus and not merely in the sensual realm.

Thinking is an act, and sensibility is a state. Although they are categorically different they are difficult to distinguish from one another and very closely related to each other. Lenz continues to discuss this relation when he asserts: “Wir können also nichts empfinden, das wir uns vorher nicht in einem gewissen Verhältnis gedacht, vorgestellt. Und je nachdem dies Verhältnis größer, mehr umfassender, richtiger und deutlicher, je nachdem auch unsere Empfindung” (II: 527). The greater the degree to which we have brought our sentiments into relation with our thoughts and representations the greater, clearer and more encompassing will be our sentiments.

Some attribute to thinking effects that go far beyond it. Lenz claims that to some: “Die allerunabhängigste Handlung unsrer Seele scheint das Denken zu sein—es war der einzige Rat den die ohnmächtige menschliche Weisheit oder Erfahrungheit bekümmerten Unglücklichen geben konnte, sie sollten Über die Natur ihres Unglücks nachdenken, philosophieren—das heißt sich gewissermaßen über ihre Umstände hinaussetzen, und den Schwung der Unabhängigkeit geben” (II: 620). Although it appears to those who are unhappy with life’s circumstances that thinking is our most independent activity because we can contemplate and philosophize about the nature of our displeasure and to a certain extent rise above our circumstances and provide ourselves with some momentum to attain independence, thinking does not achieve our independence. Lenz call this “[...] ein seltsamer Selbstbetrug bei den meisten Denkern oder Philosophen [...]. Sie glauben ihre Independenz auf den höchsten Grad getrieben zu haben, wenn sie ihre Aufmerksamkeit von den sie affizierenden Gegenständen abzuziehen und entweder auf sich selbst oder

andere gleichgültige Dinge zu richten vermögend sind” (II: 621). We cannot withdraw from the world and, for Lenz, our independence evidences itself more in action than in thought.

Although Lenz criticizes those who seek to isolate thought and cognitive capacities from emotion and the passions, he points out that those who use the cognitive capacities to increase their powers of resistance against the forces that impinge upon them are pursuing a noble goal. He says: “So sehr man auch wider diesen Trost der Stoiker [das Denken] deklamiert hat, so ist er doch nicht so ungegründet, wenn man nur Stärke genug hat die Probe zu machen, welche Stärke eben sich nur in sich selbst vermehren kann” (II: 620). This strength is directly related to the feeling of pride that is so important as a guiding force and as a sign in human psychology and motivation. It appears that the most independent action is thought (this contradicts his statement that action is, but he does say “appears” not “is,” and as we saw above, he considers thought to be an act). One should reflect and philosophize about the nature of her misfortune, and thereby set herself out of her circumstances and provide the momentum of independence. This solace of the Stoics is not completely unfounded, if one feels the strength to engage in this strategy. This strength can only multiply itself by so doing, that is, this is an ascetic activity. Everyone believes that as soon as they think they set themselves above whatever they may confront. While this is in fact true, she cannot wish away the uncomfortable feelings of her condition. However, she does discover a power in himself, with which he can resist those feelings and his condition. This resistance is crucial if we remember Lenz’s physics of force-counterforce, resistance-freedom. With most thinkers and philosophers, but not all, there is a strange self-deception that people can drive their independence to the

highest degree if they can withdraw their attention from the objects that affect them and either concentrate solely on themselves or on other indifferent things. This is a serious mistake, because thinking is not a tool to make one numb. To the contrary, it means to allow one's disturbing sentiments to rage with all their strength and to investigate the nature of these sentiments and thereby set oneself outside of them. One should compare these sentiments with past ones, weigh them against one another, order them and oversee them. When one does this one can truly then say that one feels oneself. After surviving such a struggle, the person and her spirit receive a steadfastness that will supply her existence with indestructibility and this will be with her for eternity. One will then be able to experience happiness because one is convinced that one has oneself to thank for this happiness. In this description we can see Lenz's plan for his comedies. They are meant to arouse these disturbing feelings in his readers that will then ideally trigger this thinking process he has outlined above.

Although thinking is not a tool for distancing and protecting ourselves from external circumstances, it is, however, a means of resistance, a power that can counter the power of the external events. Lenz asserts:

Denken heißt nicht vertauben—es heißt, seine unangenehmen Empfindungen mit aller ihrer Gewalt wüten lassen und Stärke genug in sich fühlen, die Natur dieser Empfindungen zu untersuchen und sich so über sie hinauszusetzen. Diese Empfindungen mit vergangenen zusammenzuhalten, gegeneinander abzuwägen zu ordnen und zu übersehen. Da erst kann man sagen, man fühle sich—und wenn solch ein Strauß überstanden ist, bekommt der Mensch, oder des Menschen Geist eine Festigkeit die ihm für die

Ewigkeit und Unzerstörbarkeit seiner Existenz Bürge wird. Glücklich da erst, mit der Überzeugung sich selbst dieses Glück zu danken zu haben. (II: 621)

Far from immunizing us by withdrawing us from external events with thought we can confront them in battle with a weapon that enables us to resist, counter and conquer them. In the process we will become stronger, because we have engaged ourselves in a self-formative process. In a sense, we do set ourselves above the disturbing circumstances through the power of thought. As Lenz states “Jeder glaubt, sobald er denkt sei er über alles hinausgesetzt, was ihm auch nur immer begegnen mag. Und in der Tat er ist’s—er kann freilich die unangenehmen Gefühle seines Zustandes nicht ableugnen, aber er findet eine Kraft in sich, ihnen das Gegengewicht zu halten [...]” (II: 620–21). Resistance, then, is the key and thinking helps us obtain and strengthen our powers of resistance.

Reason/Soul

The former stereotype of the irrational Storm and Stress movement as a reaction to the abstractly rationalist Enlightenment has now been sufficiently criticized in recent secondary literature that a detailed discussion of its highly problematic nature is not required in this context. That reason and thinking are critical factors in Lenz’s overall theorizing of the human condition is obvious to even a cursory reading of his theoretical texts.

Reason, for him, is the critical faculty of differentiating and weighing the sensory and experiential data that we have. It is a crucial human faculty and it is one of the definitive human characteristics. Lenz says reason is, “Die Kraft, die in uns

Vorstellungen abreißt, sammlet, ordnet, unterordnet, in Verhältniß zu einander bringt, ist unsere Seele, unsere Vernunft, wie Sie sie nennen wollen, in unserm Körper in immerwährender Bewegung handelt sie durch denselben oder in demselben. So bald sie aber empfindet, ruht sie, leidet sie" (II: 527). Reason, our soul, is the power that pulls down, collects, orders, subordinates and proportions representations with each other. Lenz says that it is insignificant whether we refer to this power as our soul or as reason. It is not worth arguing about which term to use because it is just a matter of semantics. Reason acts through and in our bodies in perpetual motion. As soon as our reason has sentiments, it rests and suffers, that is, experiences passions.

Lenz considers reason to be the king of our soul. It is the third power of our soul that he discusses (along with the desiring and active powers) and Lenz defines it in his "wahre Psychologie" as "[...] das Vermögen Verhältnisse vorzusehen, der König unsrer Seele, vorzüglich im corpore calloso, der Hauch von Gott. Dieser wird nur von uns selbst erkannt, nicht uns angeboren, und ist im beständigen Werden" (Blei IV: 30). Interestingly he says that it is only recognized or acknowledged by us, which seems to be the same as saying that it must be developed in us because it is not innate. In addition, it is in perpetual state of becoming. It is not fixed once and for all and, as with any power, it can diminish and whither away.

Our understanding has a flaw: "Der menschliche Verstand ist von der Art, daß er in jeder Wissenschaft, oft in seiner gesamten Erkenntnis, auf ein erstes Principium zu kommen strebt, welches alsdenn die Basis wird auf der er baut, und, wenn er einmal zu bauen angefangen, von welcher er nie wieder abgeht, es müßte dann der Herr vom Himmel selbst herabfahren und ihm die Sprache verwirren" (II: 500). Our understanding

often tries to reduce all of our knowledge to a primary principle that then serves as the basis upon which we build when we begin to construct our knowledge. We never turn away from this foundation unless God were to descend from heaven and confuse our language. Lenz portrays the drive for a commensurable principle as an obsessive drive that only divine intervention could stop by confusing us in order to get us away from the system we have constructed. Lenz obviously considers it a better approach to maintain the plurality and multiplicity of noncommensurable principles because it is more consistent with our ability to perceive reality.

As we saw above, it is the nature of human understanding that it seeks to arrive at a first principle:

Soll ich aufrichtig reden, so deucht mich dieses Verfahren des menschlichen Verstandes allemal ein wenig vorwitzig und wo ich nicht irre, bestätigt die Erfahrung meinen Verdacht. Wir sind einmal zusammengesetzte Wesen und ein unendliche Reihe von Begriffen aus einem ersten einzigen Begriff herzuleiten, wird uns vielleicht erst dann möglich sein, wenn unsre ihrer Natur nach einfache Seele von dieser wunderbarlich zusammengesetzten Masse Materie getrennt ist, an die es dem Schöpfer gefallen, sie festzumachen [...]. (II: 500)

Even though our understanding operates in this fashion, we must remember that we cannot arrive at this first principle because we are finite beings. Lenz indicates that to extrapolate an infinite chain of concepts from a single concept will perhaps be possible when our simple soul is separated from the compound mass of material, that is, from our bodies. This, of course, only happens with death and is thus, by definition, impossible for

us in this life. Lenz is arguing for the principle of incommensurability (Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*). There are points at which things cannot be reduced any further without losing critical aspects of what those things are. This is a position with a long intellectual history^x and can be taken as a feature characteristic of Lenz's thinking in general, and of his thinking on ethics and morality in particular.

Lenz not only considers it intellectually problematic to try to reduce everything to a commensurable principle, he considers it dangerous. He declares: "Mich deucht, wir haben in der Republik der Gelehrten Erfahrungen genug gehabt, wieviel Irrungen schon aus der gefährlichen Einheitssucht, dem Bestreben alles auf eins zurückzubringen, entstanden" (II: 500). It is a type of fanaticism that has a correlate in the real world: intolerance of difference and dissent and of the plurality of noncommensurable values.

Lenz criticizes the inadequate acuity of reason. He says, "In der Tat, die menschliche Vernunft gleicht dem Auge eines Übersichtigen, das Gegenstände von halben Stunden weit aufnimmt, was aber nahe bei ihm steht, nie sehen kann. Und die Wahrheit, um recht verborgen zu bleiben, stellt sich oft ganz nahe bei uns [...]" (II: 501). Reason has a tendency to look far away for answers instead of dealing with that which is close by. It abstracts and selectively focuses. We need a fuller perception to come closer to the truth by focusing on the concrete aspects that confront us on a daily basis. Life as it is in our surroundings instead of some imagined existence in some far away place or time. These things are ready to hand and they will lead us to more important, relevant, useful and accurate understandings of things.

The successive nature of the perceptions of our soul is an epistemological grounding for our inability to reduce everything to single principles. We simply cannot perceive in

the all-seeing manner that would be required for such knowledge to be possible for us. There is a successive dimension to our thought and feeling, sensation, and experience that places limits on how we can think, feel, experience and this affects what we can think, feel and experience. “Unsere Seele ist ein Ding, dessen Wirkungen wie die des Körpers sukzessiv sind, eine nach der andern. Woher das komme, das ist—so viel ist gewiß, daß unsere Seele von ganzem Herzen wünscht, weder sukzessiv zu erkennen, noch zu wollen. Wir möchten mit einem Blick durch die innerste Natur aller Wesen dringen, mit einer Empfindung alle Wonne, die in der Natur ist, aufnehmen und mit uns vereinigen” (II: 646). Nevertheless, we wish to be able to perceive this way. Though it is impossible, we can imitate it through the production and reception of literature. It tries to approximate this fullness in its production and to recreate it for its reader. It is, in the end, only a modeling of this process but it speaks to a strong need in humans and it provides a way of seeing and knowing that rational discourse cannot match.

Our soul is always striving to elevate itself above the world around it and to make a god out of itself who rules over that world. In the context of his defense of human pride, Lenz writes: “Wäre also nicht die Größe dieses Triebes das Maß der Größe des Geistes—wäre dieses Gefühl über das die Leute so deklamieren, dieser Stolz nicht der einzige Keim unsrer immer im Werden begriffenen Seele, die sich über die Welt die sie umgibt zu erhöhen und einen drüber waltenden Gott aus sich zu machen bestrebt ist” (II: 620). Our soul is always caught up in becoming. It tries to elevate itself above the surrounding environment and to become master of that environment. Pride is the core of the soul. The ever-important element of pride that will not allow us to rest, to stop growing, to stop

trying to elevate ourselves, or to stop shaping our souls so that we become more effective actors in the world.

Imagination

Imagination and fantasy perform important, positive functions in Lenz's conception of human nature. He compliments fantasy by saying: "Unsere Phantasie ist ein sehr gutes Ding, ich möcht sie das Paar Flügel oder Floßfedern unserer Seele nennen, mit welchen sie schwimmt oder fliegt, und ohne dieselbe nicht aus dem Flecke kommt. Aber die hauptsächlichsten Dienste tut sie uns doch immer nur, wenn wir ruhig und zufrieden, des Glückes gar satt sind, denn da weiß sie uns neue Elastizität zu geben, neue Aussichten zu eröffnen *et cetera*" (II: 612). Imagination provides the wings to our soul, with which our soul soars, and without which it would be immobile. It is precisely when we come to rest, when we are satisfied and satiated that imagination performs its main service by giving us new elasticity and providing us with new perspectives, thus bringing about new preferences, desires and passions that drive and motivate us.

Lenz thus points out the positive effects of imagination and its role in human development. He certainly shares some of the concerns his contemporaries had with "overheated," or "overactive" imagination^{xi} and its distorting effect on our thought, but as is always the case with Lenz, it is a matter of degree and how the faculty is used that matters, not the faculty as such, which can be considered good or evil.

In his "Catechismus" Lenz presents an ambivalent picture of imagination:

Daher setzte Gott einen Baum in den Garten und da er diese Geschöpfe ganz anders behandeln musste als Thiere die durch ihre Instinkte zu den

körperlichen Verrichtungen fortgezogen werden, so setz' er Bäume mit reitzendem Obst hin mit dem Befehl esset, sie versuchtens, der sinnliche Genuß setzte sie in ein gewisses Vergnügen (hier ist die Einbildungskraft, Verschönerung, der Grund aller unsrer Neigungen Begierden und Leidenschaften aber auch die Quelle unsrer Glückseeligkeit), da man seine Existenz ganz fühlt und itzt gern etwas haben möchte seine Kräfte anzuwenden und thätig zu seyn ("Catechismus," 56).

It was God's intention that humans should be different from animals and he therefore had to treat humans differently. For this reason he put trees in Paradise with exquisite fruit on them and gave the order to eat, and they obeyed. The resulting sensual enjoyment gave them a certain pleasure because they fully felt their existences. As a result they wanted to have some way to use their powers and to be active. Imagination plays this central role of helping us imagine ways to continue to be active and to apply our powers, thereby keeping the virtuous circle going.

Knowledge

For Lenz, knowledge consists of ideas that are linked to sentiments, feelings, desires, passions, decisions, actions and interpersonal relations. Knowledge is certainly not some abstract product that is isolated from the emotional life of the individual or from everyday activity. Lenz considers a person to be knowledgeable who acquires many ideas that go over into feelings and that unleash desires or passions or, better yet, decisions and actions, if the person's mind is of a nobler and stronger nature. According to Lenz:

Bei den Menschen weiß der viel, der sich viel Vorstellungen erwirbt, die in Empfindung oder auch wohl nur in bloßes Gefühl übergehen, Begierden, Leidenschaften, oder wenn der Geist edler und stärker, Entschlüsse und Handlungen veranlassen, welche Handlungen oder Wirkungen seines Selbst, er mit den Wirkungen die sie auf die Rezeptivität und Wirkungskraft anderer haben, vergleicht, also in ihren Folgen übersieht und daraus Endschlüsse zieht, die freilich nur für den Kreis von Wirkungen gelten, den ihm seine Erfahrungen gezogen hat. (II: 483)

The actions of a person and effects within that person are compared to the effects that the person has on the receptivity and activity of others. Knowledge is gained by considering the consequences for and effects on others, and then drawing conclusions therefrom. These conclusions, however, are limited to the circle of effects with which his experience provided him. However, this process can be expanded because:

Eine jedesmalige Erfahrung kann aber wieder ins Unendliche mit anderen eigenen und fremden Erfahrungen verglichen, und neue allgemeine Endschlüsse daraus gezogen werden, das gibt uns denn all unser Wissen in der Welt, unsere Vernunft. Das aber mit alledem wie Sie leicht einsehen werden, nicht unfehlbar sein kann, da die Grenzsteine unserer Erfahrung und also auch der daraus entstandenen Vernunft nie dieselben bleiben, sondern in Ewigkeit fort immer verrückt werden, nur daß die Erweiterung derselben die vorigen engern Kreise immer mit in sich schließt, oder unter sich begreift, diese also deswegen durchaus nicht verloren sind. (II: 483)

Our knowledge of the world consists of experiences and the general conclusions that have been drawn from comparisons with other experiences of our own and those of others. Knowledge is thus experiential and intersubjective. Our reason and knowledge of the world are thus derived from experience, which makes them fallible, because our experiences are always changing and will continue to change for eternity.

It is a fundamental assumption for Lenz that we live in the best of possible worlds. He despises notions that assert otherwise: “Daher hasse ich alle die Mißgeburten menschlicher Köpfe von möglichen bessern Welten und wenn Leibniz dem Menschenverstande keinen andern Dienst geleistet als daß er ihn erkenne lehrte diese Welt sei notwendig die beste, so hätt er schon genug getan. Denn auf keiner andern Grundfeste können wir mit all unsern Gerüsten und Leitern jemals das himmelhohe Gebiet der Wahrheit ersteigen” (II: 487). Leibniz performed a valuable service when he taught us that we live in the best of all possible worlds, because from this starting point we can begin to seek the truth. This is so because we need to assume that God created our world such that no other possible world, given the laws of nature, could be better. We can therefor assume that how things are is so by design. We need to understand this design to understand the intended purpose of created entities, including humans. For Lenz, without this assumption there is no point in accepting one assertion over another, no standard by which to judge, no common purpose.

It is of little interest to me in this work whether Lenz’s notion is “true.” For the purpose of my study it is critical to focus on the function it has in his work: it serves as a foundation for investigations into all intellectual endeavors. For Lenz, we must assume that God created the best of all possible worlds or we cannot make sense of the apparent

contradictions between God's omniscient, omnipotent and benevolent nature and a world that appears to exhibit qualities that are negative and undesirable.

Lenz makes the argument that since life cannot be reduced to a single principle we must stop seeking it in scholarly pursuits and that we must therefore give it up as a valid category of knowledge. He argues: "Nein, m.H., geben Sie das einzige erste Principium nur ganz dreist in allen Wissenschaften auf, oder lassen Sie uns den Schöpfer tadeln, daß er uns nicht selbst zu einem einzigen Principium gemacht hat" (II: 501–02). In other words, since plurality, multiplicity and noncommensurability characterize our existence, we must accept that a plurality and multiplicity of noncommensurables also characterizes our knowledge of the universe. If we do not give up our attempts to reduce everything to a single principle and if we insist that existence is such that it must be reducible to a single principle—considering as inferior that which cannot be reduced to a single principle—we would be implicitly criticizing God for not having created us and all of creation according to a single principle. This is for Lenz an untenable position.

Although Lenz asserts the epistemological primacy of experience and observation, he claims that there are gaps and limitations to what we can experience through the senses. We cannot personally experience and sense everything that would explain all of the thoughts and sensibilities that we develop. He asserts: "Und wo er selbst nicht Gelegenheit gehabt, hat er sich auf die verglichenen und bewährten Gefühle andrer verlassen müssen, hat also glauben müssen. Ohne Glauben wäre also unsere Erkenntnis und die sich darauf beziehende Empfindung so arm, daß einem die Lust zu leben vergehen möchte" (II: 527–28). In the end, belief in others and what has been handed down is essential to enrich one's experience.

Where our experience ends, we must turn to what others report having felt and experienced.

We must believe in these reports if we are to use this to supplement our knowledge.

According to Lenz, without this belief we would be left with the limited circle of our knowledge and experience and the sentiments related to them would be impoverished to the point that the desire to live would disappear.

Faith is an essential corollary to observation and experience then. Moreover, he asserts: “Zu jeder gemeinsten Menschenhandlung gehört schon eine Portion Glauben [...]” (II: 615). Even the simplest action requires faith. Lenz is talking about situations such that when I decide to walk across the street, I have faith that my perception is true that there is ground under my feet and that the street is clear of traffic. That is, I have faith in my basic perceptions to the degree that I will proceed with the action.

Not only do we need faith to complement observation and experience, we also need it to complement our reason. In a letter, Lenz asserts:

Der theologische Glaube ist das complementum unserer Vernunft, das dasjenige ersetzt, was dieser zur gottfälligen Richtung unsers Willens fehlt. Ich halte ihn also bloß für eine Wirkung der Gnade, zu der wir nichts beitragen, als daß unser Herz in der rechten Verfassung sei, sie anzunehmen; diese Verfassung aber besteht in einer vollkommen ernstlichen Liebe zur Tugend, zum Wahren, guten und Schönen. Dieser Glaube ist eine notwendige Gabe Gottes, weil bei den meisten Menschen die Vernunft noch erst im Anfange ihrer Entwicklung ist, bei vielen aber niemals entwickelt wird. (III: #25, October 1772)

Theological faith is a complement to reason. It replaces or supplements what reason fails to supply to the direction of our will toward a path that is pleasing to God. Where reason

is lacking, faith must supply the guidance we need to live and act correctly. We bring nothing to this faith; we can only have a heart that is open to it. This openness consists of a love of virtue, truth and beauty and it is by the grace of God that we have this condition of heart. This is necessary because reason is not sufficiently developed in most people, and will not ever be sufficiently developed in many, so it will always be necessary for those people.

According to Lenz, reason and faith are negatively correlated: As our reason develops—which is an open-ended process—our moral faith decreases and transforms itself into perception, which is a conviction of reason. In a letter, he tells us:

Je mehr sich aber unsere Vernunft entwickelt (das geht bis ins Unendliche), desto mehr nimmt dieser moralische Glaube, der in der Tat mehr in den Empfindungen als in der Erkenntnis gegründet ist, ab und verwandelt sich in das Schauen, in eine Überzeugung der Vernunft. Überhaupt bedürfen wir nicht mehr und nicht weniger moralisch zu glauben, als zur Seligkeit notwendig ist, das übrige haben wir immer noch die Freiheit in *suspense* zu lassen. Aber dieses müssen wir viel mehr suchen in Erkenntnis und Anschauen zu verwandeln, weil, nach der Ordnung Gottes, unser Wille sich nach unserer Erkenntnis richtet. (III: #25, October 1772)

Our reason can be and should be developed and this is an endless process. The more we develop reason, moral faith is diminished or grows smaller and transforms itself into a beholding, a conviction of reason. Lenz then says we should believe neither more nor less than is required for blessedness and anything beyond that we are free to leave in suspense. We must attempt to transform that which remains in suspense into knowledge

and intuition because, in God's order, our will is to be guided by our knowledge. Lenz is clearly arguing for self-transformative practices and sees this as a moral matter that is consistent with, and a fulfillment of, God's creation.

Lenz says that faith is the lively recognition of the statement: "Gott gibt uns unsern Zustand, unsere Glückseligkeit und zwar nach Maßgebung unserer Vollkommenheit, das heißt, unsers Bestrebens nach Vollkommenheit." He continues: "Es ist dieses der moralische, oder [...] der natürliche Glaube, an ein Wesen, das uns die ganze Schöpfung und der Trieb nach Vollkommenheit und nach einem Zustande der dieser Vollkommenheit der beförderlichste ist, schon als das allervollkommenste Wesen kennen gelehrt hat" (II: 509). Lenz labels this a "moral" or "natural" faith, and tells us that it is a belief in an entity that made us familiar with the entire creation and the drive to perfection and to a condition that is most conducive to this perfection. Lenz asserts that Socrates had such a faith and continues the description of this faith by stating: "ja dieser Glaube macht eigentlich an sich schon den Hauptgrund unserer Glückseligkeit aus. Es ist eine gänzliche Ergebung in den göttlichen Willen, die von einer süßen innern Empfindung der alles erfüllenden Gottheit begleitet ist" (II: 509). This faith is the key to our happiness and the happiness of all humans. It is also a faith that is accessible to all. This type of faith is important to our understanding of Lenz's firm belief in the need for reform and how he conceives of his comedies and what effects he is striving for in his audience. For Lenz, moral belief is founded more on sentiments than on knowledge. It is a matter of the heart and requires receptivity and openness to truly function. Moral belief transforms itself into a beholding. This transformation occurs with the development and application of reason and the resulting beholding is a conviction of reason.

Lenz says there are certain situations where all seems lost, where we have no idea what to do or think, where we feel our indeterminate nature to the highest degree, which is the human condition, our Original Sin, Lenz would like to say. Some people become disparaged in such situations. It is in these moments when we are ripe for vice. This uncertain space—as Lenz says “[...] das traurige Los der Menschheit [...] ihre Erbsünde” (II: 617), is the result of a lack of courage and faith.

Faith has a crucial function in human experience, not merely in religious matters: According to Lenz: “Doch ist ein überflüssiger Reichtum, den wir nicht zu brauchen wissen, der auf der Oberfläche unsrer Wißbegierde liegen bleibt, ohne eine einzige unsrer Empfindungen in Bewegung zu setzen, ohne ihr eine andere angenehme Richtung oder Schwingung zu geben, eben so gefährlich. [...] Es ist besser wenig zu glauben, aber das, was man glaubt, in seinem ganzen Umfang zu empfinden, als alles zu glauben und nichts zu empfinden” (II: 528). There is an important relation between faith and sentiment. That which one believes should be accompanied by a strong sentiment or it will only be a superficial belief that is not capable of providing direction or motivation for action. Both in terms of our emotional life and in terms of our experience and knowledge, belief is necessary for optimal or even sufficient functioning.

Believing

Lenz often discusses Christ in relation to the law and to God’s moral laws. He says: “Meine Hauptfrage ist also die: kam Christus auf die Welt, uns ein moralisch System zu lehren, das heißt, uns in seiner Lehre ein moralisches Ideal eines vollkommen guten,

verständigen, artigen—kurz—eine Extramenschen zu geben?” (II: 584). He continues to investigate this question. He tells us that Christ’s message was “ihr müßt nicht glauben, ich sei gekommen, euer Gesetz, eure Propheten aufzulösen, sondern zu erfüllen” (II: 586). He turns to language, investigating the possible meanings of what Christ said:

[...] daß Christus im 17. Vers das Wort καταλῦσαι gebraucht, welches *dissolvere* heißt, zerstören, aufheben und im 19. Das *simplex* λύση allein, das nichts mehr heißt als lösen allein, das also noch eher die Erklärung annehmen konnte von auslegen, zergliedern: mein Herz sagt mir aber eben umgekehrt, daß Christus beim Worte καταλῦσαι, obschon es für den Haufen, der ihm zuhörte, *destruere*, aufheben, hieß, doch vielmehr an auflösen, erklären, auseinanderlegen gedacht, und hingegen beim *simplex* λύω im 19. Vers mehr ans Erklären auf eine solche Art, daß man die Leute gern von der Verbindlichkeit gegen dies Gesetz losmachen, befreien möchte, ihnen das vermeinte Joch los, weit offen machen möchte. (II: 588)

According to Lenz, it was Christ’s mission to loosen up, explain, and lay out the law, not to destroy it or sublate it. He wanted to explain it in such a way as to free people from the restrictive yoke of the laws. It was certainly not Christ’s purpose to provide humans with a rigid moral system. It was also not his mission to destroy the law or to make it irrelevant. It was, rather, his mission to create a more open relationship to the law.

He points out that Christ stands in a realm that rises above the law. Christ is more a fulfillment of the spirit of the law. Lenz says, “Wie wär’s also, wenn es zugleich hieße, die vorige Bedeutung nicht ausgeschlossen, ich bin nicht gekommen, euch das Gesetz und die Propheten zu erklären, euch euer Moralsystem herauszudrechseln, sondern zu

erfüllen, zu tun und wer's Herz dazu hat, der tue mir nach" (II: 587). In essence, Christ is the fulfillment of the law. The way to understand Christ's message and purpose is not to construct a new moral system or moral law but to follow his example and imitate his ways. If we do this we will also be fulfilling the moral laws and living according to God's plan. This is for Lenz the realm of the ethical, as we will see below.

We need to look at how Christ lived his life and not what he said because, "Christus war Gesetzgeber mehr durch sein Leben und Taten als durch seine Worte" (III: #27, März 1774). Christ functioned as a lawgiver through his life and actions more than through his words, that is, through his example. Christ's plan was to become the general lawgiver. For Lenz: "Christus lebte nach einem Plan um allgemeiner Gesetzgeber zu werden, er lebte um zu leiden und zu sterben" (II: 622). This coincides with Lenz's pronounced focus on action and living according to one's principles rather than merely philosophizing about them and speaking or making pronouncements about them. It was important for Christ's plan not to prescribe our actions for us, not to lay out rigid moral laws, but rather to set us on the path of creating and forming ethical characters. Christ did not seek to give us positive laws prescribing our actions. Rather, he and the Apostles gave us negative laws telling us what not to do in order to avoid sin. How we are to act, that is up to each individual to decide.

He says about Christ's message: "Moses, Christus und seine Apostel (denn die drei hängen alle zusammen) gaben also niemals positive Befehle von Pflichten, von Schuldigkeiten [...], wenn jene ein positives Gesetz zu geben scheinen, so war es nichts als Hülse zu einem oder dem andern negativen Gesetze, daß uns die Unterlassung dieser Sünde erleichterte. Sie waren also im eigentlichsten Verstande Ärzte des menschlichen

Geschlechts” (II: 552). Thus, even when it seemed that Christ, Moses or the Apostles were prescribing positive laws; they were merely shells for negative laws that were designed to help us avoid sin.

More than a lawgiver, Christ was a therapist for the human soul. Lenz tell us: “[...] Christus allein verdient im vollkommensten Verstande den Namen [...] eines Arztes, und es war der Gottheit würdig, ein Arzt für das durch den unrechten Gebrauch seiner Freiheit beschädigte, verirrte, bis in die Knechtschaft der Moralsystem verirrte menschliche Geschlecht zu werden” (II: 552). Only Christ fully deserves to be called a “doctor,” in this sense. It is fully worthy of a deity to become a doctor for the human race, which had become damaged and had been led astray by the improper use of its freedom, to the extent that it lived in the servitude of a rigid moral system. When Lenz talks about the moral system he refers to the rigid morality of rules—law-like morality that prescribes what we are to do and how we are to live our lives. It destroys our freedom because it takes choice away from us and thereby participates in a process that encourages us to become complacent in our acceptance of rules set by others that we unthinkingly and servilely follow. We do not develop ourselves and our society, we stop trying to perfect ourselves. Humans needed therapy to correct the damage they had done to themselves and to provide them with a living model for the correct use of their freedom.

Lenz claims that God created us to be free. His all-knowing and all-powerful nature is not a contradiction, for Lenz: “Da Gott also die Kraft kennt die er in uns gelegt hat, da er alle die Gesetze durchschaut nach denen diese Kraft sich vermehren oder vermindern kann, da er die Wirkungen und Folgen derselben zugleich mit diesen ewignotwendigen

Gesetzen auf einmal übersieht—so kann er allwissend sein ohne unserer moralischen Freiheit Eintrag zu tun” (II: 486). Thus, because God knows the powers he equipped us with and he knows all the laws according to which these powers develop and the effects and consequences associated with them, it is possible for God to be all knowing and for us to be free. That is, just because God knows what we are going to do, does not mean that we are not free.

Lenz presupposes that God created us and all that exists. Furthermore, he assumes that our world is the best possible world that could have been created given the laws of nature that apply to all things. According to this plan, Lenz says: “[...] die allerhöchste Kraft Gottes unterstützte die in die Natur gelegten Kräfte, daß sie ihre ihnen beschiedenen Wirkungen hervorbringen konnten” (III: #20, October, 1772). God’s power supports the powers that he placed in nature. Through this support, these powers can then bring about their modest effects. In this way, God is still active in affecting us and our actions, but he does this by supporting the powers in us, and not by leading us around and determining what we do. Although Lenz at times makes broader statements about nature as such and the laws that apply there, he focuses more specifically on human nature. Within human nature, he concentrates on human flourishing, which is arrived at through our moral and ethical life, which, for him, exists in our relationship with God.

The divinity had to teach humans to have sentiments in order to feel its power and force and to understand the relationship between themselves and him and all of nature: “Die Gottheit mußte er also empfinden lernen, ihre Macht und Gewalt empfinden lernen, um das Verhältnis zwischen sich, ihr und der ganzen Natur zu bekommen. Er wär Atheist geblieben und der unschuldigste, der je auf Gottes Erdboden herumging” (II: 529). God

achieved this through his commandments. Adam did not yet trust in the power of the deity and because he disobeyed the command, the memory of the threatened punishment awoke fear in him, and this strengthened, raised, and expanded his “dunkeln Ideen von der Macht, von der Erhabenheit dieser Gottheit über ihn” and thus became the “mother” of new sentiments. We thereby became aware of sin, which is, according to Lenz: “[...] nichts anders, als Vernachlässigung des Verhältnisses, in welchem wir mit der Gottheit stehen” (II: 530). The necessity of introducing the concept of sin to humans was because of the disturbed relationship that existed. From this perspective we see that: “Die Sünde—der physisch damit verknüpfte Tod, waren also die einzigen Mittel, wodurch die Gottheit ihren ganzen Abstand von ihm, ihm zu fühlen geben konnte” (II: 529). Sin and death were introduced into human existence by God in order to make concretely perceptible to humans that there is a distance in the relationship between them and God. That is, that they are finite beings and not deities.

As a result of the introduction of sin, and how this affected the relationship between humans and God, Lenz argues that: “Diese Empfindungen der Ehrfurcht vor Gott gab allen übrigen Empfindungen der ersten Menschen den Ton und das rechte Verhältnis. Wir sollten nicht bloß in die Breite, sondern auch in die Höhe empfinden. [...] es muß Stufenordnung und Vorzug da sein, wenn diese Empfindungen ihr Leben erhalten sollen” (II: 529). The fear of God that was instilled in us was clearly not an end in itself. It was to set the tone and proper relations among our sentiments. It showed us that we were not merely to feel along the surface of things, dispersed broadly in the world but that our sentiments were to reach to the heights and that there is to be a hierarchy and preference

among our sentiments. Furthermore, hierarchy and preferences are essential if our sentiments are to be maintained.

If our relationship with God is in order, we will exercise our freedom in such a way that allows us to enter into and remain within God's intended order of things. According to Lenz:

[...] ein menschlicher Geist, der in der von Gott durch die ganze Welt bekannt gemachten Ordnung des Rechts und der Wahrheit denkt, forscht und handelt, eine Kraft, die sich so unaufhörlich nach der von Gott etablierten und uns empfindbaren Harmonie bewegt, hat schon in gewissen Umständen den Geist Gottes, eine göttliche Gesinnung, eine Gesinnung, die dem Willen der Gottheit konform ist, und so hatte die ganze erste christliche Kirche den Geist Gottes. (II: 576)

We can think, explore and act within the order of truth and law that God has made known throughout the entire world. We can move according to the harmony that God established and that we can sense. When we do this we have in certain circumstances the spirit of God or a divine conviction. Such a conviction is one that is in conformity with the will of God. This appears to be a situation in which our actions, thoughts, and convictions exist in a harmonious relationship with the order of things established by God. As is clear from Lenz's statement, he thinks the early Christian church had this divine spirit. It is also clear that he thinks that we have since lost this spirit and that we need to reestablish it if we are to live happy and healthy lives.

Too little serious scholarship has focused on the religious dimension of Lenz's thinking. Zierath accurately addresses this situation when he observes:

Alle genannte Arbeiten sprechen Lenz' eigenwillige Theologie zwar an, es findet sich jedoch keine erschöpfende Analyse seiner theologisch-philosophischen Schriften, vielmehr werden ihnen Bruchstücke entnommen, um Teilinterpretationen der Werke zu illustrieren—zu sehr wirkt das Stigma fort, Lenz' theologische Vorstellungen seien Ausdruck seiner schwer auf ihm lastenden pietistischen Erziehung, der Ursache seines Wahnsinns, als daß sei Grundlage seiner gesellschaftskritischen Dichtung sein könnten. (172)

I am in full agreement with Zierath (with which Hayer and Rudolf, among others, would agree) when he asserts: “Lenz baut kompromißlos auf den christlichen Glauben, der allein hinreichend sei, um verlässliche Anweisungen für das aktive Leben zu erhalten [...]. Nur mit Hilfe des christlichen Glaubens sei der Mensch in der Lage, die Natur zu verstehen, die Gesellschaft zu analysieren und dann mittels der Dichtung ein realistisches Abbild der Welt zu schaffen, das andere an der Erkenntnis des ‘genialen Autors’ teilhaben läßt” (174). With this in mind, let us turn to important aspects of Lenz's writings on religion's role in our moral and ethical life.

A secularist-theist dichotomy is misleading when assessing Lenz; we need to view his thoughts on theology as an important part of his thought and assess them on the basis their content and their function in his work and not as some biographical or cultural residue that holds him back from really making the true steps toward secularism, that is, our thinking. Theological thinking plays an essential role but Lenz does not hesitate to reform theology as he deems necessary to seek the truth. He practices “natural theology,” as he calls it, which is akin to what we would call anthropology, but to call it

anthropology only helps us to understand what it is in our disciplinary terms, it does not help us to understand Lenz's writings on this subject. Lenz sees himself as writing a "worldly theology" which he also refers to as "naturalism" (II: 617). Schneewind's statement characterizes Lenz's thought on morality and that of his time well when he claims:

[...] the claim that the main effort of the moral philosophy of the eighteenth century was to secularize morality simply does not stand up to even the most cursory inspection. Indeed, if I were forced to identify something or other as "the Enlightenment project" for morality, I should say that it was the effort to limit God's control over earthly life while keeping him essential to morality. Naturally this effort took different forms, depending on how the relations between God and morality were conceived. (8)

According to Schneewind it is not really the right question to ask if a thinker is "secular" or "religious" because almost all presuppose God in their thinking and include issues in their philosophizing that share presuppositions with traditional theology. To characterize Lenz's writings on moral philosophy, or those of the majority of his contemporary thinkers, as "secular," simply does not hold up under closer scrutiny. Schneewind continues:

There were, of course, atheists who published their views during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries [...]. But there were many more people who, without being atheists or even doubters, were taken to be antireligious only because they held that institutional religion was doing great harm. They

certainly hoped to see the churches or the clergy reformed, but they sought no secular ethic. Anticlericalism is not atheism. (8)

While Schneewind is discussing thinkers of the period in general, a better summary of Lenz's approach to the issues of his day cannot be found. Lenz is not atheistic, agnostic, irreligious or secular. He is both deeply religious and concerned about everyday issues in the here and now. He is fiercely critical of institutionalized religion and he has many suggestions for reforming it and correcting the ill effects it brought about, but Lenz and his writings are far from irreligious and there is simply no textual or biographical support for such claims, unless we isolate certain statements and take them out of context.

We need to view claims such as the following by Demuth with deep skepticism: "In der Straßburger Anfangszeit veranlaßt die fast schockhafte Infragestellung seines Menschenbilds bei Lenz einen tiefgreifenden Orientierungswandel von der Theologie zur Moralphilosophie, von metaphysischen zu handlungstheoretischen Fragestellungen, von Maximen der Sittenlehre zur Moralanthropologie, von der religiösen Bindung der Moral zu ihrer politisch-sozialen Begründung" (20). This is an overstatement of Lenz's alleged "secularization." Though Lenz brings in elements that were not typically addressed by the orthodox theologians, his move from one realm to the other is not nearly so clean and is more of an eclectic, pluralistic integration of various elements that for others seem mutually exclusive. Zierath more accurately portrays the relationship between the allegedly "secular" and the properly "theological": "Allerdings haben sie m.E. übersehen, daß Aufklärung

und Theologie bei Lenz nicht gleichberechtigt nebeneinander stehen. Vielmehr nutzte Lenz das gesellschaftsanalytische Instrumentarium der Aufklärung, um das religiöse Bewußtsein zu festigen, und so auf für ihn idealer ethischer Grundlage die Gesellschaft zu verändern" (171). What Zierath correctly sees is that Lenz both incorporates Enlightenment ideas and maintains his religious convictions. He most certainly moves away from the rigid Pietistic foundation his father laid for him, but it is more accurate to say that he reworks this foundation with new tools and continues to build upon it, incorporating new elements from various sources. This is what gives Lenz's thought its vitality, but also what makes parts of it difficult for us to reconcile.

As we saw above, faith figures predominately in Lenz's writings. Without it we would not have a firm foundation upon which to construct our knowledge. It provides the assumptions upon which everything else is based. Revelation also figures in Lenz's thinking. It functions more precisely to define the natural law, which is found in us (II: 602). According to Lenz:

Die Offenbarung konnte nichts weiter tun als das in uns liegende Naturgesetz näher bestimmen, die Linien höher ausziehen zu dem Hauptzwecke der in uns gelegten Wünsche und Verlangen nach größerem Umfange von Glückseligkeit. Die Grundlinien aber sind immer dieselben, können nicht verändert werden, oder Gott müßte seiner Schöpfung widersprechen. Es ist also die Offenbarung des göttlichen Willens oder des Gesetzes, denn das ist einerlei, nichts als eine Fortsetzung der Schöpfung. Regeln, nach welchen wir uns itzt selber fortschaffen und unsere Existenz

erhöhen können. Abweichung von diesen Regeln ist Abweichung von unserer wahren Existenz, und das Finale derselben die Aufhebung von unserer Existenz. (II: 603)

Revelation is merely the explication of the natural laws that reside in us. If we were able more fully to know ourselves, we could understand these laws and our place in creation. To the extent that we cannot, we are in need of external guidance and aid, which revelation provides. Both revelation and explication and understanding of natural law coincide and proceed to the same end: the expansion of our happiness. Revelation is connected with natural laws that constitute our existence in that it more precisely determines them and provides us with additional information about how to reach the ultimate goal of happiness. The fundamental lines are always the same and cannot be changed, even by God, or he would be contradicting his own creation. That we can and should live according to the rules that can be abstracted from revelation is clear. The possibility of straying from them is unthinkable.

Sentiments, emotions and passions are all founded upon religious beliefs. “Von jeher und zu allen Zeiten sind die Empfindungen, Gemütsbewegungen und Leidenschaften der Menschen auf ihre Religionsbegriffe gepropfet, ein Mensch ohne alle Religion hat gar keine Empfindungen (weh ihm!), ein Mensch mit schiefer Religion schiefe Empfindungen.” (II: 667). Lenz asserts that a person without religion does not have sentiments and a person with a crooked religion has crooked sentiments. Religion is essential to our existence. If we remember the centrality of sentiments to the entire functioning, well-being and flourishing of humans, this connection between sentiments and religion establishes religion’s concrete role in our moral life and our flourishing

beyond any moral laws with which it may provide us. Such a categorical statement should be a clear warning to those who would argue that Lenz is making secular moves in his thinking. He is certainly rethinking religion, but religion and spirituality remain firmly anchored in his thinking. The other important aspect here is that different religious convictions will lead to different emotional lives.

Lenz distances himself from dogmatic, official theology, establishing himself as a worldly or lay theologian in the sense that he discusses our life in this world and not the afterlife. He says:

[...] meine pseudotheologischen Abhandlungen [...]. Denn die eigentliche Theologie beschäftigt sich mit unserm Zustande nach dem Tode und unserer Bestimmung dahin, die weltliche Theologie oder der Naturalismus, den ich Ihnen predige, beschäftigt sich mit unserer Bestimmung in dieser Zeitlichkeit, und diese beiden Theologien müssen auf ein Haar zusammenpassen, wenn sie echt sein wollen (II: 616–17).

Lenz calls his theological writings “pseudo-theological,” then “worldly.” He then says this worldly theology can also be called “naturalism.” He differentiates this theology from the “real” theology in that the latter deals with our condition in the afterlife and our destiny toward this end; the former deals with our destiny in this world. Both of these theologies must be compatible if they seek to be genuine. He does not discount the importance of traditional theology to the extent that it is genuine and he himself addresses issues of the afterlife on occasion, as well as the nature of God and Jesus Christ. However, he consistently takes the position of the “lay” theologian and directly addresses issues related to the here and now.

Questions of heaven and earth, the religious and the worldly must not be mutually exclusive: “Wir müssen den Himmel weder ganz allein auf unsere Erde einschränken, noch auch unsere Erde ganz und gar davon ausschließen wollen, mich deucht, daß allenthalben, wo ein Gott geschaffen hat, Himmel ist, und daß vor Gott dem Herrn dem Allerhöchsten nichts gemein ist” (II: 617). Heaven and earth are intimately related and complementary and to construct a rigid, mutually exclusive dualism would be inappropriate. Lenz asserts that where God created, there is heaven and to him nothing is too small or common to be important.

Lenz thinks it is critical for religion to turn itself toward worldly concerns if it is to be relevant to human life and to remain a powerful influence in their lives. If religion concerns itself merely with the afterlife and our destiny toward that end, it will be much too impotent to confront the storming passions in us, in the decisive instant where crucial decisions have to be made. For Lenz: “Die Religion, so lange sie weiter nichts als eine Anweisung auf den Himmel, auf—der menschlichen Natur ganz fremde und undenkbare Güter ist, ist viel zu ohnmächtig, in dem entscheidenden Augenblick der Versuchung, den in uns stürmenden Leidenschaften die Waage zu halten” (II: 732). The reason why this is so is because the “goods” of heaven are foreign and inconceivable to human nature, whereas the objects of our desire that are enflaming our passions are all too real to us. This is the same criticism Lenz has for all ideals: they are too far removed from the realities that confront us in everyday life and are therefore of little use to us in those decisive moments where crucial decisions are to be made that lead to actions that will have life altering consequences.

Religion's role in bringing about happiness is to support virtue which maintains our happiness at its peak: "[...] Die Tugend ist das einzige Mittel diese Glückseligkeit in ihrer höchsten Höhe zu erhalten und die Religion versichert uns, sie werde auch nach dem Tode währen und dient also dieser Tugend mehr zu Aufmunterung, als zur Richtschnur" (III: 18, 18.9.1772). Religion does this by assuring us that this happiness that we have arrived at through virtuous action will also persist after death. In this sense, religion serves more as encouragement than as a guiding principle. In other words, virtue does not need to follow the strict guidelines of religion but should rather seek its own path with the support of religion. Religion plays a supportive role to virtue in preserving the greatest degree of happiness. Lenz points out that religion does not serve to bridle virtue but rather to reassure it that the happiness it helps preserve will also continue in the afterlife. Virtue, then, is not subordinate to religion. It has its own function and role in our lives.

Curing

Above we saw that Lenz considers Christ a true doctor for a sick humanity. He said that Christ was sent to heal humans who had been incorrectly using their freedom. From Lenz's many assessments of society, it is clear that Lenz thinks society is still sick and in need of therapy. He sees his work as therapy for a sick society. The mimetic principals underlying his work are the axis around which the therapeutic process revolves. Before we move on to the therapeutic process, I shall first present the picture of society with which Lenz provides us. He gives his assessment of contemporary society in the following quote.

Goethe der für steife Sitten schrieb wenn ich so sagen mag, wo man ein ewiges Gerede von Pflichten und Moral hört und nirgends Kraft und Leben spürt, nirgends Ausübung dessen was man hundertmal demonstriert hat und immer wieder von neuem demonstriert, wo man in den eisernen Fesseln eines altfränkischen Etikette alle seine edelsten Wünsche und Neigungen in den brauchten Wänden seiner Studierstube vorsichtig ersticken läßt und so bald sie sich melden, irgend ein System der Moral dagegen schreibt, oder in neuern Zeiten jämmerlich stößtönende Klagen, Idyllen und Romanzen und Spaziergänge und daß des Dings kein Ende ist—für Sitten wo Furchtsamkeit, Ernst und Pedanterei unsere Gesellschaften stimmen und insgeheim doch die verbotene Lust zehnmal rasender wütet, wo jenachdem denn nun endlich die französische Freiheit sich ausbreitet, alles in die elendeste Karikatur ausartet [...] für diese drolligte Sitten, wo niemand Herz hat und wer noch eins hat nicht weiß was er damit anfangen soll [...]. (II: 686–87)

First off, he says that the customs are “stiff” and that there is endless babble about duties and morality. There are also the iron bands of old Franconian etiquette, some system of morality or other, or pathetic, sweet-sounding complaints, idylls, romances and strolls. Fear, gravity and pedantry dominate the discourse. Nowhere can Lenz find heart or vitality. Nowhere does he see people practicing what they preach. He sees the noblest wishes and preferences being suffocated between the four walls of the study. As a result of this situation, forbidden lust storms ten times as strongly in secret and where it does finally break through we see it in the caricature of French Liberty where all of the desires are expressed in a perverted and

destructive form. In Lenz's time nobody has heart and those who do do not know what to do with it because of the disorder of things.

This can be read as a template for Lenz's work as a whole. In that he seeks to portray society as it is, it fits perfectly with his poetic principles to assert this. When we look at his characters, plots and genre theory we can clearly see the resemblance of the theory to the poetic practice.

Lenz repeatedly asserts that contemporary society is sick and in need of deep reaching reforms and therapy. The corrupt values have led to a situation where an unbounded, uncontrollable lecherousness has attacked our bodies and minds and thus made us incapable of performing our interpersonal and societal functions in an acceptable manner. The result is that, "Die verdorbenen Sitten entnerven Bürger und Soldate, die Schamhaftigkeit ist von unsern Weibern gewichen, die Industrie liegt, der Handel selbst muß am Ende ermatten und in bloße Kunst zu betrügen, zu übervorteilen ausarten, die Ehen werden selten und die Nachkommenschaft elend [...]" (II: 796). In his major social reform project, concerning the soldiers' rights to marry, Lenz asserts that the rotten customs enervate the citizens as well as the soldiers. They also affect industry and commerce and future generations. Lenz clearly sees widespread social dysfunction and he relates all of this dysfunction back to our values and the forces that are perverting society's formation. This is an ethical problem for him. The laws of society have created a situation where natural desires and wishes are not allowed their expression and fulfillment. They have been criminalized. As a result the related passions and desires are strengthened and seek expression through any means available. This creates a cascade of ill effects that permeate all aspects of society and not merely the lives of the soldiers for whom the laws were conceived.

There are many things that can lead us from the path of moral order and from God's design. It is somewhat perplexing that Lenz considered art to be one of these sources, given his strong defense of art against moralizing condemnations of it. But if we remember his, at times, vehement condemnation of Wieland's literature, we can see how he differentiates among types of literature^{xii}. He condemns art that strays too far from nature and the world as we find it. This is so, "Denn die Natur ist es nicht, die uns auf krumme Wege führt, die Supernatur ist es, die schöne Natur, die das Ding besser verstehen will als Gott und alle seine Propheten: die Kunst" (II: 613). Lenz condemns art that strays from representing the world as it is, although from pluralist and, at times, noncommensurable perspectives. Such art tries to present a "better" world. It presents things in such a way that our imagination begins to pervert our values and makes us incapable of living in the real world. It is also literature that ventures into areas and depicts certain aspects of life that should not be depicted, particularly those aspects of life that are sensual in nature. Imagination is very valuable in our lives and helps us to see possibilities, but it is also a dangerous and damaging thing if it strays too far from reality and reason. It must not be allowed to run unchecked and those who lead it along paths contrary to nature and God's design are to be opposed and condemned.

The social dimension is an important component of Lenz's moral and ethical theory. After providing the physical context for his understanding of the states of movement and rest, which serve as the theoretical background for his understanding of the state of happiness (II: 507), Lenz declares "Wenn also die Frage ist, welcher Zustand für unser Ich das aus Materie und Geist zusammengesetzt ist, der glücklichste sei, so versteht es sich zum voraus, daß wir hier einen Zustand der Bewegung meinen" (II: 507). Lenz clearly states that

absolute rest is impossible for humans, but relative rest is not, which is the least possible amount of movement (II: 507). The state that is the “happiest” for us is the state that is most appropriate to our perfection, to the range of our abilities. Lenz then clearly asserts that this highest degree of movement is the most compatible with our self and defines this condition in the following manner:

Das heißt derjenige Zustand, wo unsere äußern Umstände unsere Relationen und Situationen so zusammenlaufen, daß wir das größtmöglichste Feld vor uns haben, unsere Vollkommenheit zu erhöhen zu befördern und andern empfindbar zu machen, weil wir uns alsdann das größtmöglichste Vergnügen versprechen können, welches eigentlich bei allen Menschen in der ganzen Welt in dem größten Gefühl unserer Existenz, unserer Fähigkeiten, unsers Selbst besteht. (II: 507–08)

We see here that the external circumstances and relations and the situation that people find themselves in must come together in such a way that the largest possible field of action lies open for them to elevate and promote their perfection and to make that perfection felt by others. This provides pleasure which in turn is the feeling of those abilities and the self that are being perfected. Here we see everything coming together: perfection, happiness, communication, pleasure, abilities and the self. This is a crucial passage for the understanding of Lenzian ethics. The happiness and pleasure that we seek and the perfection upon which they rest involve not only the above discussed cultivation of the self, but also the external circumstances, relations and situation in which we find ourselves. All of these things must come together for us to arrive at our telos.

Our circumstances are “[...] eine gewisse Lage, eine gewisse Relation unsers Selbst mit den Dingen außer uns [...]” (II: 507). One circumstance God gives us is temporal in nature. According to Lenz: “Gott kommt durch eine ganze Folgenreihe äußerer Mittel [...], wozu besonders auch die zeitlichen Umstände gehören, in die er uns versetzt” (III: #21, 284). Lenz considers it God’s grace that he comes to us through external means that are meant to affect us in a particular way and to guide us to our true ends.

He remarks that social forces limit their options and, at the very least, influence their perspectives on their lives and perceptions of others and their situations. Lenz laments to la Roch in a letter:

Ich sage immer: die größte Unvollkommenheit auf unsrer Welt ist, daß Liebe und Liebe sich so oft verfehlt, und nach unsrer physischen, moralischen und politischen Einrichtungen, sich fast immer verfehlen muß. Dahin sollten alle vereinigte Kräfte streben, die Hindernisse wegzuriegeln; aber leider ist’s unmöglich. Wer nur eines jeden Menschen Gesichtspunkt finden könnte; seinen moralischen Thermometer; sein Eigenes; sein Nachgemachtes; sein Herz. Wer den Augenblick haschen könnte, wo sich seine Seele mit der andern zu vereinigen strebt. Wer seine ganze Relation von seinem Charakter absondern, und unterscheiden könnte, was er zu sein gezwungen ist, und was er ist. Stille, Stille gehört dazu; stille, heitre, ruhige, göttlichertragende Beobachtung. (III: #43, July, 1775)

On the one hand we have a person’s fake aspects of his personality. This is what he is forced to be by external forces, and that which is external to his choosing. On the other hand we have a person’s actual or characteristic self, his character, his heart, his moral

thermometer. Given the contemporary physical, moral and political arrangements, relations between individuals are disturbed and love between two people will almost never succeed. This is because still, merry, quiet, and divine-like observation is necessary where the individual can find the moment where his soul is trying to unite with the other. He needs to be able to separate his relations from his character differentiate between them. He must come to know what he is and what he is forced to be. We cannot gain perspective of the forces acting upon us and come to know our true selves. This hinders our interactions with others. Even those we love. It appears that Lenz is arguing that in order for love to be successful we must know ourselves and be aware of our character and our habits because these determine us in ways of which we are unaware and affect our feelings and behavior toward others. This observation of his underlies many of the disturbed relations we see in his literary texts.

Although Lenz is consistently critical of norms and rules where they are too rigid, he is also insistent on their importance for creating a stable and orderly environment within which character can initially develop. Without norms too much chaos would reign for an individual to come to understand her circumstances because they would be too unstable for her to form an understanding of them. I believe this is how we should understand one of Lenz's more well-known statements:

Wir sind alle, meine Herren! In gewissem Verstand noch stumme Personen auf dem großen Theater der Welt, bis es den Direktors gefallen wird uns eine Rolle zu geben. Welche sie aber auch sei, so müssen wir uns doch alle bereit halten in derselben zu handeln und jenachdem wir besser oder schlimmer, schwächer oder stärker handeln, jenachdem haben wir hernach

besser oder schlimmer gespielt, jenachdem verbessern wir auch unser
äußerliches und innerliches Glück. (II: 640)

Here we see his sense that society and, more particularly, society's rulers define the context within which we act. Furthermore, a fundamental feature of our lives is the roles we play in a society, the roles in large part being determined by the rulers and their laws. Lenz does not really question that this is part of life. He seems to accept that we do not have absolute freedom to determine who we are and what we will do in life. In places, he asserts that such supposed freedom leads to chaos and disorder and he consequently condemns it. He seems to see value in fully diving into the roles given to us, in order to make the most of those roles, whatever they might be. The way we act within our particular roles will determine our fate and our happiness. If we act strongly we will improve our internal and external happiness. The more weakly we act, the worse will be our internal and external conditions. The roles we are given are not a matter of choice—how we act is. Moreover, how well or poorly we act is the deciding factor. We need fully to immerse ourselves in the roles and realize their full potential. That is how we will be judged.

We cannot and should not try to remove ourselves from the conditions within which we exist. These relations are important guides for action. According to Lenz: "Die Lehre von den Verhältnissen ist die grosse Lehre unserer Glückseeligkeit. So bald wir durch unsere Einbildungskraft uns aus dem Verhältniß heraus setzen, indem wir uns gegenwärtig mit der ganzen Sammlung unserer Fähigkeiten befinden, sobald gehn wir auf dem Wege der Glückseeligkeit irre" (II: 30). If we try to set ourselves out of the conditions by becoming overwhelmed with our abilities, we err from the path of

happiness. We must work within the relations that exist in trying to make things better. This is a key to understanding Lenz's reform proposals as well as his ethics. Our happiness is to be found within the relations within which we exist. Therefore the study of relations is the study of happiness. If we try to fantasize our way out of these relations that exist, we will err from the path of happiness, continuity is very important to Lenz's thinking on the relation of the individual to society's norms and the possibility of change.

Although social conditions are powerful forces acting to shape individuals, individuals can and should try to affect those conditions and shape themselves if they are to fulfill their calling. In order to do this, each individual must cultivate himself and come to know himself because it is in the nature of God's creation that we are all individuals.

According to Lenz:

Jeder Mensch bringt sein Maß von Begierden und Kräften, seine Harmonie und Übereinstimmung von Begierden und Kräften, sein Moralsystem mit sich auf die Welt, und nach Maßgabe des Gebrauchs, den er von denselben macht, erhöht und verbessert sich dasselbe unaufhörlich. Wir werden alle gut geboren, und das bessere und Schlimmere unserer Handlungen und unseres Zustandes hängt lediglich von uns selber ab. (II: 600)

The drives and abilities that each person has are individual and the resulting morality for each person will be relative to them. The degree to which he makes use of those abilities and drives will determine his condition and situation in life. We see that through the correct use he makes of his desires and capacities and the extent to which he brings them into harmony and correspondence with each other the more he will continually expand and improve his desires and capacities. This is the key to the good life for Lenz.

As individuals, we can affect our conditions by thinking and acting. According to Lenz: “Jeder glaubt, sobald er denkt sei er über alles hinausgesetzt, was ihm auch nur immer begegnen mag. Und in der Tat er ist’s—er kann freilich die unangenehmen Gefühle seines Zustandes nicht ableugnen, aber er findet eine Kraft in sich, ihnen das Gegengewicht zu halten [...]” (II: 620–21). Our power of thinking is a force we can use to resist external forces, creating a counter force that will allow us not to be determined blindly and automatically by these forces. Thinking is, however not enough. We need to act: “Unser Unabhängigkeit zeigt sich aber noch mehr im Handeln als im Denken, denn beim Denken nehm ich meine Lage mein Verhältnis und Gefühle wie sie sind, beim Handeln aber verändere ich sie wie es mir gefällt. Um vollkommen selbständig zu sein, muß ich also viel gehandelt, das heißt meine Empfindungen und Erfahrungen oft verändert haben” (II: 622). When we act we change our circumstances. Our independence derives from acting, which is to say, from changing our sentiments and experiences.

The soul creates itself and its future conditions. It learns the relations of the things to itself and how to use and apply these things to the improvement of its external circumstances. By doing this the soul differentiates itself from the machine-like workings of the mass of beings and it becomes a creator because it creates itself and aspects of its situation that it was able to affect. As Lenz portrays it:

So, möchte ich sagen erschafft sich die Seele selber und somit auch ihren künftigen Zustand. So lernt sie Verhältnis der Dinge zu sich selber—und zugleich Gebrauch und Anwendung dieser Dinge zur Verbesserung ihres äußern Zustandes finden. So sondert sie sich aus dem maschinenhaftwirkenden Haufen der Geschöpfe ab und wird selbst

Schöpfer, mischt sich in die Welt nur in so fern als sie es zu ihrer Absicht dienlich erachtet, je größer ihre Stärke desto größer ihre freiwillige Teilnehmung, ihre verhältnismäßige Einmischung, ihr nachmaliger Schöpfungs- und Wirkungskreis. So gründet sich all unsere Selbstständigkeit all unsere Existenz auf die Menge den Umfang die Wahrheit unsrer Gefühle und Erfahrungen, und auf die Stärke mit der wir sie ausgehalten, das heißt über sie gedacht haben oder welches einerlei ist, uns ihrer bewußt geworden sind. (II: 621–22)

The soul intervenes in the world only to the extent that this serves its intentions. The stronger the soul the greater will be its voluntary participation, its proportionate involvement, and its subsequent creative and effective circle. This is how our self-sufficiency grounds itself upon the mass, the range, the truth of our feelings and experiences and upon the strength with which we endure them, that is, that we think about them or become conscious of them.

There is an obvious potential conflict in this system: If the external circumstances, relations and situation are such that they are incompatible with the person's nature, this telos will be forever beyond reach and pursuing it will prove fruitless. The external world must be changed and made more compatible with the nature of human beings.

Independence

In a letter, Lenz asserts that humans were created as free and independent beings that have certain capacities and abilities:

Nun hat Gott uns gewollt, das heißt er hat uns geschaffen, als freiwillige und selbstständige Wesen versehen mit gewissen Kräften und Fähigkeiten, von denen wir einen Gebrauch machen können, welchen wir wollen [...] (III: #20, October 1772)

God intended that humans should be free and independent beings. In addition he intended that we have the choice how to use the powers and abilities with which we were created. The abilities are there as potential but the use we make of them is critical.

Consistent with his fundamental assumption of noncommensurability he points out that the world is populated by individuals who have their own powers and preferences. The significant unit for Lenz is the individual, not the community, nation or some other mythical unity. The only unity that exists is on the level of the whole, which is beyond our comprehension. God created us as individuals. As such, we will all have individual perceptions, thoughts and feelings. We need to take account of this in our thinking about matters concerning human nature. In his letters, Lenz addresses this idea: “die Welt [ist] ein Ganzes, in welches allerlei Individua passen; die der Schöpfer jedes mit verschiedenen Kräften und Neigungen ausgerüstet hat, die ihre Bestimmung in sich selbst erforschen und hernach dieselbe erfüllen müssen; sie seie welche sie wolle. Die Ganze gibt doch hernach die schönste Harmonie [...]” (III: #22, October 1772). Individuality is not some perversion of some original communal unity. Each individual has her own capacities, tendencies, and feelings and she should look inside herself to investigate and then fulfill her destiny that accords with her individual nature.

Although we are born with abilities and capacities and God created us with the intention that we be independent and free, he also makes clear that we are not self-

sufficient or independent at birth. It is a potential that can be realized or not. He asserts that the soul is:

[...]eine Substanz die nicht selbständig geboren, aber ein Bestreben ein Trieb in ihr sei sich zur Selbständigkeit hinaufzuarbeiten, sich gleichsam von dieser großen Massen der in einander hangenden Schöpfung abzusondern und ein für sich bestehendes Wesen auszumachen, das sich mit derselben wieder nur soweit vereinigt, als es mit ihrer Selbständigkeit sich vertragen kann. (II: 620)

Although the soul is not born as an independent entity it was created to develop itself into one, but this requires work on the self. There is a striving or a drive in humans to develop themselves into self-sufficient, independent beings, but this development will only occur with through the active self-formative activities of each individual. Humans desire to differentiate themselves as individuals from their surroundings and establish their space and place in it. After this creation of the independent and distinct self, humans can then unite or integrate themselves back in with their surroundings, but only to the degree that this integration is compatible with their established identity as an independent being. With this notion Lenz is establishing an anthropological and biological foundation for human freedom and individuality. It exists in us as the desire to differentiate ourselves from our surroundings and establish ourselves as self-sufficient beings that then unite themselves with those surroundings to the degree that their independence can tolerate it.

Lenz indicates the type of work that is required for us to create this independent self when he says: "So gründet sich all unsere Selbstständigkeit all unsere Existenz auf die Menge den Umfang die Wahrheit unsrer Gefühle und Erfahrungen, und auf die Stärke

mit der wir sie ausgehalten, das heißt über sie gedacht haben oder welches einerlei ist, uns ihrer bewußt geworden sind" (II: 621–22). Independence is founded upon our emotions and experiences and the strength we were able to exert to endure them, to think about them and to become conscious of them, which to Lenz are all the same. Independence is the result of resistance, to some degree, where forces are impinging upon us in unpleasant ways. Above all, it is the result of work.

Lenz considers it a defining feature of humans that they operate according to a self-chosen goal and that they should act according to principles derived therefrom. According to him, "Sobald unser Leben einen selbstgewählten Zweck hat, das einzige, was es von dem Leben des Tiers unterscheidet, das nach Instinkten handelt, so ist es notwendig, daß wir nach Grundsätzen handeln, die wie die Grundtöne in der Musik anzusehen sind, in welche sich alles auflöst, selbst die Dissonanzen. Ohne dies sind wir zur Harmonie der Gesellschaft untüchtig, die das einzige Band derselben ist" (II: 830). It is important that individuals select a goal for their actions and their life and as soon as they have these goals they should live their lives according to principles that are consistent with those goals. These principles are what make society possible by creating a consistency of action and a common foundation so that all know what basic scheme everybody is following.

That humans cannot live according to cookie-cutter principles fashioned for them as they are for the masses is clear to Lenz. We see this clearly when he states: "Der Mensch ist keine Maschine, die sich nach den Ideen eines einzigen Kopfs zusammen setzen läßt, er muß aufs höchste in einen willkürlichen Tanz komponiert werden, selbst wenn man was zu seinem Besten bewürken will" (II: 818-19). Freedom and individuality are crucial

to humans and to the society that they will build and within which they will coexist.

Existence is fundamentally plural and there is a noncommensurability that must be respected even when we want to do something for someone else's benefit. The model of the all-powerful, absolutist leader is being questioned here. Lenz is arguing for republicanism.

Each individual must cultivate himself and come to know himself in order to become independent. According to Lenz:

Jeder Mensch bringt sein Maß von Begierden und Kräften, seine Harmonie und Übereinstimmung von Begierden und Kräften, sein Moralsystem mit sich auf die Welt, und nach Maßgabe des Gebrauchs, den er von denselben macht, erhöht und verbessert sich dasselbe unaufhörlich. Wir werden alle gut geboren, und das bessere und Schlimmere unserer Handlungen und unseres Zustandes hängt lediglich von uns selber ab. (II: 600)

The drives and abilities that each person has are individual, and the resulting morality for each person will be relative to them. The degree to which the individual makes use of those abilities and drives will determine his condition and situation in life. We see that through the correct use each individual makes of his desires and capacities and the extent to which he brings them into harmony and correspondence with each other the more he will expand and improve his desires and capacities continually. We are responsible for our condition. We do not create the conditions within which we are born but we are responsible for what we make of them. As individuals, we bear the responsibility for our future.

Pride

When confronted with the observations of his social determination, Lenz reports feeling a sense of hurt pride because this is not how he sees his present condition. He then wonders:

Sollte er [Stolz] nicht ein Wink von der Natur der menschlichen Seele sein, daß sie eine Substanz die nicht selbständig geboren, aber ein Bestreben ein Trieb in ihr sei sich zur Selbständigkeit hinaufzuarbeiten, sich gleichsam von dieser großen Massen der in einander hangenden Schöpfung abzusondern und ein für sich bestehendes Wesen auszumachen, das sich mit derselben wieder nur soweit vereinigt, als es mit ihrer Selbständigkeit sich vertragen kann. (II: 620)

Pride that is founded upon a humble recognition of our abilities and our God-given nature is a good thing because it brings us closer to God. When we are in a conditions that is inappropriate to our created nature our pride functions as a sign from nature that we were meant for more. It can combine with our fantasy to show us how things could and should be. This is what Lenz calls “noble” pride. When we are confronted by situations in which we do not appear to be free, Lenz tells us of a pride that we feel that resists this notion that we are not free. This is not an empty pride, according to Lenz. It is an indication from nature that this condition of dependence is not one that is appropriate to the nature of our soul.

There is nothing wrong with a certain form of pride: “Hiermit kann der edle Stolz gar wohl bestehen der nichts ist, oder so lang er edel bleibt, nichts sein sollte, als das rechtmäßige und gegründete Vertrauen in unsere Kräfte wenn wir ihrer nötig haben und

freilich müssen wir unsre Kräfte zu dem ende geprüft und kennen gelernt haben, damit wir im erforderlichen Fall weder zaghaft noch vermessen sein" (II: 491). Lenz talks of noble pride to distinguish it from the haughty pride. Noble pride is nothing more than the legitimate and well founded trust in our powers when we are in need of them. Powers that we have come to know and have tested, not merely fantasized or imagined.

Pride can also function to keep us on the path toward God, that is, on the ethical path of self-formation. Lenz asserts emphatically: "Unser Stolz unser Stolz, das einzige Gut das du uns gegeben hast um uns selbst dadurch dir nah zu bringen [...]" (II: 623). Pride not only is pride in what we are but also in force that motivates us to improve ourselves and our surroundings, so that we can become closer to God. Pride helps direct us toward our telos.

Pride is the measure of the greatness of our soul: the greater the pride, the greater the soul. According to Lenz: "Wäre also nicht die Größe dieses Triebes das Maß der Größe des Geistes—wäre dieses Gefühl über das die Leute so deklamieren, dieser Stolz nicht der einzige Keim unsrer immer im Werden begriffenen Seele, die sich über die Welt die sie umgibt zu erhöhen und einen drüber waltenden Gott aus sich zu machen bestrebt ist" (II: 620). Pride is the core of the soul as it tries to elevate itself above the world and to try to make a god out of itself that rules over that world. The ever-important element of pride that will not allow us to rest, to stop growing, to stop trying to elevate ourselves, and shape our souls so that we become more effective actors in the world.

Law

We saw above that Lenz considers society to be sick and in need of therapy. For him, Christ is a therapist who came to heal humanity. A major part of Christ's therapeutic practice was to set the relationship aright between humans and the law. The law had become too rigid or, better yet, people came to have a rigid, authoritarian understanding of the law, which suppresses the freedom that is essential for humans to flourish. Lenz sees a major problem in the function of laws in contemporary society.

He discusses law on many occasions in his theoretical writings and we see legal issues and discussions portrayed in almost all of his literary texts. Unfortunately, there has yet to be a major study of Lenz's understanding of law and its role in society. This is unfortunate, because without an understanding of his notion of law and the proper relation between law and individuals we cannot have an adequate understanding of his notion of the human condition and human flourishing. Because his genre theory is based on an assessment of the socio-cultural conditions present at his time, I would also argue that one cannot really understand his poetics either, without a solid understanding of these issues. With this in mind, I now turn to a discussion of Lenz's writings concerning jurisprudence.

For him, humans exist within a network of laws—natural, divine, moral and political. It is important to understand this network and the normative context it provides for all action and valuation. Law sets the framework for our actions by establishing our relations to the surrounding environment and to others. Law sets the context within which actions, happiness, perfection, and ethics are possible. It brings the possibility of value into the world and makes evaluation possible. It shows us the relations within which we

exist. Through it we can apply value to our actions and pleasure to our sentiments.

According to Lenz:

Ein jedes Gesetz also (wir nämlich nennen nur das Gesetz, welches zur allgemeinen Ordnung, Verhältnis und Glückseligkeit etwas beiträgt, mag es so gering scheinen als es wolle, (Matth. 5,19) ist unendlich schätzbar, mag es nun göttlich oder menschlich sein, weil es neue ethische Handlungen veranlaßt, von denen wir ohne dasselbe keine Idee haben würden, indem diese ohne jenem weder Wohllaut haben können [...]. Glaube nur nicht der du das Gesetz verachtest, du könntest jemals wahre Empfindungen der Glückseligkeit herausbringen, Dissonanz bleibt Dissonanz [...]. (II: 520)

The creation of order, proportion, and happiness is a defining feature of laws. Law is understood as that which contributes something to order, proportion and happiness, even if that contribution may appear minimal. Every law, so defined, is infinitely valuable because it induces new ethical actions. Without laws we would not have the slightest notion of these ethical actions. You cannot bring about true feelings of happiness without laws or by living contrary to the laws because such a stance creates dissonance.

Dissonance, as we saw above, is contrary to the harmony required for happiness and perfection. Dissonance disturbs and dissatisfies.

Law sets the framework and at the same time shows us the framework of reality within which we must operate. We cannot arbitrarily will a new reality, nor should we try. He goes on to say that law “ist die Lehre von den Verhältnissen, welche allein das Maß von Realität bestimmen, das wir zu erreichen suchen sollen, und unsere Vernunft ist das Vermögen, diese Verhältnisse einzusehen [...]” (II: 29). Law is the study of

relations, which alone determine the measure of reality that we should attempt to achieve. Reason's role is to gain insight into these relations. Lenz continues by stating that the study of relations, "[...] ist die grosse Lehre unserer Glückseeligkeit. So bald wir durch unsere Einbildungskraft uns aus dem Verhältniß heraus setzen, indem wir uns gegenwärtig mit der ganzen Sammlung unserer Fähigkeiten befinden, sobald gehn wir auf dem Wege der Glückseeligkeit irre" (II: 30). If we try to set ourselves out of our condition by becoming overwhelmed with the collection of our abilities, we err from the path of happiness. We find our happiness within the relations within which we exist. Therefore, the study of relations is the study of happiness. If we try to fantasize our way out of the existing relations—in the process ignoring the relations that exist—we will err from the path of happiness. We must instead use our reason to gain insight into these existing relations by studying and understanding the law. We must work within the relations that exist if we seek to make things better. This is a key to understanding Lenz's reform proposals as well as his ethics in general.

Law is essential to human existence, history, and development. Laws set the context within which we come to understand our surroundings and by which we evaluate actions. On the contextualizing effects of law, Lenz states: "Ohne Gesetz wäre kein Evangelium möglich—folglich auch keine Glückseeligkeit, denn nur das Gesetz zeigt uns die Verhältnisse in denen wir uns befinden, und nur diese können Handlungen einen Werth und den sie begleitenden Empfindungen ein Vergnügen beilegen" (II: 25). The law is important because it helps us to understand and evaluate our environment and provides the background against which all actions are to be experienced and judged. Law shows us the relations within which we exist. These relations, in turn, create the values according

to which we judge actions and make possible the pleasures that result from action. As we see, these are essential to the Gospel and to happiness, which, as we saw above, are the ultimate ends of existence for Lenz.

Law causes action because it sets us in motion by maintaining limits on the expression of our desires. “Die Gesetze also überhaupt sind die Ursachen aller unsrer Handlungen so wie es das erste Gesetz oder Verbot Gottes im Garten von der ersten Handlung war, sie sind aber nur die gelegentlichen nicht die wirkenden Ursachen davon, die liegen bloß in unserer Willensfreiheit, welche durch jene nur in Bewegung gesetzt wird” (II: 518–19). Law causes action, just as God’s prohibitions did. By limiting us, laws and prohibitions force us to find acceptable ways to satisfy our needs and desires, thereby motivating us to think and act to change ourselves and our environment so that our needs and desires increasingly conform to each other, thereby bringing about order and harmony both within ourselves and in our environment. But he reminds us that they are only occasional causes and that they really only set our free will in motion, which will then be the effective cause of our actions. This process of force and resistance that is playing itself out on a high level is an essential dynamic to Lenz’s thinking and underlies his concept of how important personal and social change is brought about. It is also the core focus for the effects and process he hopes to bring about through his work.

The most fundamental laws are the natural. Viewed merely at the animal level—that is as natural bodies, without any spiritual powers—humans are not free. We cannot defy natural laws, even if we wanted to. As Lenz says: “Laßt uns erst den Menschen als Tier betrachten und da ist er weder moralisch noch metaphysisch frei” (II: 485). He then proceeds to describe what he means by metaphysical freedom, saying, “Metaphysiche

Freiheit wäre, wenn ein endliches, oder geschaffenes Wesen außer den ewigen und notwendigen Gesetzen denken und handeln könnte, die der Schöpfer denkenden und handelnden Wesen vorgeschrieben" (II: 484–85). At the animal level, there are only natural laws and our obedience to these laws. There is no question of freedom. The Creator created laws for thinking and acting beings as well as for instinctual beings. Thinking and acting beings act within the context of those laws and according to them. To act contrary to them would be an instance of metaphysical freedom, the freedom to determine the totality of one's existence. This freedom clearly does not exist in Lenz's understanding of things.

We can try to elevate ourselves above our dependence on natural processes but we will never be able to completely free ourselves of their rule over us. Lenz portrays the relationship between nature and morality in the following way:

Die Natur geht und wirkt ihren Gang fort, ohne sich um uns und unsere Moralität zu bekümmern, das ist unsere Sorge, und längst würde die beseelte und organisierte Welt aufgehört haben, wenn sie es nicht täte. Setzt euch also aus dieser Dependenz heraus, fastet, seid keusch, je nachdem ihr größere Kraft anwendet, zu widerstehen je nachdem wird ihr impulsus sich verringern, ihrer Herrschaft aber ganz entsagen, ganz willkürlich werden, könnt ihr eben so wenig als die Pflanze, die am Boden hängt, auf demselben herumtanzen mag. (II: 485)

It is essential that when we think about and discuss morality and human freedom that we do not lose sight of the fact that nature first of all provides a limiting context for this discussion. We need to be clear that when we discuss freedom that we mean "moral"

freedom and not “metaphysical” freedom. There is the interplay of force and resistance, the natural forces that impinge upon us and incite involuntary reactions within us and the willful, voluntary responses we develop to resist these forces and to choose how and when we will act. Although it is our calling as moral beings to increase our powers of resistance we will never be fully independent or free of these forces and free from involuntary reactions and responses. This would be inhuman and we need to remember that this is impossible for humans or we risk imposing impossible and inhumane demands on ourselves and others.

God’s laws for leprosy, for the spending of sperm, for dealing with the menstrual cycle are nothing other than medicine for body and soul. When we investigate God’s laws for humans we find, “[...] den zärtlichsten besorgtesten Vater für das Wohl seiner Kinder, nicht seiner Untertanen. Die Gesetze für den Aussatz, für den Samenfluß, für die Zeiten der Weiber, was ist’s anders als Medizin für Leib und Geist, Verhütung der Zerrüttung unserer Maschine, in der Gott mit aller seiner Seligkeit gern wohnen möchte” (II: 561). The relationship between God, as lawgiver, and humans is one of father to child and not sovereign to subject. That is, love and concern are the dominant features of the relationship, not command and obedience. The other model hinted at is doctor to patient, a theme that recurs in Lenz’s writings, which I will discuss in more detail below.

According to Lenz:

[...] denn nur in soferne nennt sich unser Gott unser Leben, in soferne wir uns von seinen ewigen Gesetzen nicht entfernen, die alt und unveränderlich sind, wie er selber. Und nur in soferne kann uns die Lehre vom Verdienst Christi etwas nützen, als wir in dem Augenblick anfangen nach diesen alten

ewigen Gesetzen zu leben, ohne daß uns das alte Begangene einmal drüber
einfällt. (II: 564)

This quote occurs in a context wherein Lenz discusses God becoming Christ in order to unite with us in the most intimate way possible. God became the means of our life, the divinity became human, in order to die for us. The divinity sought a universal way to make right all of our crimes so that we could live out our lives to the fullest through the feeling of joy and freedom from pangs of conscience without wasting our lives. Only to this extent does God call himself our life, only to the degree that we do not stray from his eternal laws. Christ's sacrifice is only useful to us when we begin to live according to those laws.

Laws are therapeutic in that they serve a prophetic function. They keep us from ruining our body and minds. It is important that we not do things that would weaken us physically and spiritually. This would make us incapable of the greater actions that we need to perform in order to fulfill our potential and to pursue our calling. We need to strengthen ourselves, not weaken ourselves. It is clear from this that for Lenz there are laws according to which we must live before we can hope to proceed to the higher levels of existence, exemplified for us in the life of Christ. In addition God's laws and natural laws are eternal and fixed. Unlike positive law, they will always remain.

In the spirit of Vico, Montesquieu, and Herder, Lenz asserts that God used laws to direct human development and that this development had a distinct impact on human character viewed historically. He claims:

Wollte Gott Geist und Herz der Menschen erweitern, um ihn ganz zu
erkennen, ganz zu fühlen, so muß er von außen anfangen, ihre Verhältnisse

zu einander zu bestimmen, damit, wenn sie die wohltätigen Einflüsse einer richtig geordneten Gesellschaft erführen, das Resultat davon früher oder später, die höchstmögliche Glückseligkeit, ihre Empfindungen gegen den Gott, der sie dazu erschaffen, auf den höchsten Grad der Dankbarkeit triebe.

(II: 549)

Part of God's design was that humans have the highest sense of gratitude toward him as creator. He achieved this by using laws as means external to humans to establish the relations among them that would lead to a well-ordered society. According to Lenz, when people recognize that they have God's eternal laws to thank for their well-ordered society, they would feel that sense of gratitude.

This is the key to understanding Lenz's comedies and their designed effects. Lenz plays with this expectation and desire that he asserts is fundamental to our understanding of God's creation and our place in it and confronts his readers with the realization that not only are they far from this state but that some forces are actively hindering progress toward it. It is divine will that we proceed toward this goal and it is the condition within which humans will flourish. It is their telos. To obstruct this development is to act contrary to God's will.

When discussing God's commandments and the nature of Mosaic law and its function in the historical development of the human race, Lenz says "[...] es ist Gott, der nur will, daß ihr euch durch die angezeigten Handlungen nicht unglücklich macht, und so stieg er der schauervollen Wolke entgegen, und alles was hierauf folgt, ist nichts weiter als eine Erklärung und Anwendung dieser allgemeinen Naturgesetze auf den gegenwärtigen Zustand des Volks" (II: 559–60). As we can see, Lenz clearly establishes a connection between natural laws and moral laws, and sees the nature of the moral laws as fulfilling the same

purpose as the natural laws, but in a more specific manner that is more easily understood by humans because it is more directly related to their circumstances and conditions. Natural laws apply to all created beings; moral laws only to humans. Natural laws in the end have an ineffable quality and are fully knowable only by God. Moral laws should be clearly stated and their further development beyond God's commandments is a human creation.

When discussing human nature within the context of creation and the story of human development—proceeding from bodily development within the context of the Fall—Lenz asserts that after the forming process had reached a certain stage, it was necessary for God to introduce law into this process because merely forming the body was not sufficient for humans to reach their full potential. Cultivation of their spiritual nature was also required, and this was achieved through Mosaic Law. As Lenz says, “daher musste Moses das Gesetz geben und alle Gesetzgeber um ihn herum Gesetze geben die Aeusserungen der körperlichen Triebe zur Glückseligkeit ihres gemeinen Wesens einzuschränken” (Catechismus, 57). Expressions of bodily drives needed to be restricted for the common good. This process allows for space for the spirit to be created, which allows humans to move beyond merely bodily existence, at which they would have otherwise remained. Individual drives must be controlled for the sake of the community because it provides the context in which the individuals develop and flourish, or do not, depending on the circumstances.

According to Lenz, God's prohibitions against the immediate and indiscriminate satisfaction of our fleshly desires initiates conflict and movement.

Es war dies der erste Stoß gleichsam, den Gott freien Wesen gab, die handeln sollten: denn dem Tier kann ich keine Handlung zuschreiben, eine

Handlung aus Instinkt ist immer noch ein Leiden. Es war dies Verbot die *vis centrifuga* die Gott dem menschlichen Wesen eindrückte, da die Konkupiszenz gleichsam seine *vis centripeta* war, und nur bei dem Streit dieser beiden entgegengewirkenden Kräfte konnte sich seine Freiheit im Handeln, seine Selbstwirksamkeit, seine Velleität äußern. Aber nun die Drohung der Vernichtung: Welches Tages du davon issest, wirst du des Todes sterben. (II: 516)

God's prohibitions function as a centripetal force that counteracts the centrifugal forces of concupiscence. Concupiscence is a force driving us to unite, either in the form of consuming food and drink or having sex. It functions to connect us to things and keep us from isolating ourselves. God's prohibitions initiated movement by creating resistance to this centripetal force. Essentially his prohibitions act as forces keeping us apart from the objects of our desires. Because of these conflicting forces, the possibility of our free actions, independence and free will came into being, along with the possibility of our mortality. If humans were to merely feel desires and act upon them instinctively they would be no different from animals. It is simply understood as a given for Lenz and most of his contemporaries that humans are not like animals and were not intended by God to be so. God therefore introduced prohibitions of certain desires as a counteracting force to the centrifugal force of desires.

The ability of law to establish order and relations is critical for human development and human society:

[...] kurz, daß überall Ordnung und Verhältnis stabiliert sein müsse, um alle in einer gewissen Proportion gleich glücklich zu erhalten, und das Gefühl dieser Proportion heißt die Gerechtigkeit, die jedem Erdenbürger angeboren

wird. Sie liegt in seiner Natur, sie entwickelt sich mit derselben, verschlimmert oder verbessert, erweitert oder verengt, erhöht oder erniedrigt sich, lebt oder stirbt mit ihm, sie begleitet ihn in allen Zeiten, in alle Örter, in alle Umstände, läßt sich auf alles anwenden, stimmt alle die Gegenstände um ihn herum, oder vielmehr seine Empfindungen für alle die Gegenstände um ihn herum, die denn beständig Musik in ihm machen würden, mit all ihren Konsonanzen und Dissonanzen, wenn seine Gerechtigkeit nur aufrichtig gestimmt hätte. (II: 600–01)

Order and relations must be stabilized so that everybody can be—in a certain proportion—equally happy. The feeling of this proportion is justice, which is inborn. This sentiment of justice develops with our nature, improves or declines, expands or contracts, elevates or deteriorates lives or dies with us. The sentiment of justice is involved in our sentiments for everything around us. If our sentiment of justice were tuned correctly these objects would make constant music with us, with all of the accompanying consonances and dissonances. Justice allows for a certain sort of perception that operates through our sentiments, which provides important information about our environment but also sets our relations to that environment. We see here in Lenz the notion of equality. He says that the order and relations in society must be such that the people can all be equally happy. He does not mean that they should be literally equally happy, but that they should be equally happy in proportion to other factors. We can assume that he here means in proportion to their abilities and capacities and in proportion to their circumstances. There is not one absolute value of happiness that would apply to all.

Although the sentiment of justice is inborn, humans arrived at the ideas of justice and injustice on their own. Lenz hypothesizes from his reading of the stories of the Patriarchs that: “Alles dies beweist uns, daß sich die Menschen ihre Ideen vom Recht und Unrecht hierinnen selber machten—und selber machten mußten, die Vorsicht winkte ihnen nur durch die physischen Erfolge ihrer Handlungen ein Gesetz für denselben zu” (II: 553). Merely through the physical success of their actions, probity signaled them a law for justice and injustice; that is, they came to these concepts through concrete experiences and the successes or failures of those experiences. In essence, ideas of right and wrong, justice and injustice, were pragmatically arrived at. They are not absolutes. As we saw above, they also change according to the circumstances, as will the successes and failures of their actions. Once again, Lenz makes clear that our laws were induced from experience, not divined or deduced from reason. This is an understanding of law similar to the common law tradition of England and not like the Continental or Roman law. It is also empiricist in spirit. Lenz once again makes clear his belief that law derives from experience when he proclaims:

In der Einrichtung unserer Natur lagen die stamina zu allen unser heutigen Gesetzen, woher würden wir sie sonst bekommen haben? Ja die Vernunft—ja nun die Vernunft hebt sich keinen Zoll, keine Linie über den Kreis der allgemeinen Erfahrung, das heißt der verglichenen besonderen Erfahrungen, zieht Schlüsse daraus, die dem ungetübten Auge über diesen Erfahrungskreis herauszugehen scheinen, die aber eben so wenig wirklich drüber herausgehen können, als ein Stein höher fliegen kann, als ihn die angewandte Kraft oder Stoß bestimmt. (II: 600)

Today's laws have their seeds in the arrangement of our nature, that is, they are derived from our nature and proceed from it, not from reason, that is, reason did not create them by itself, it does not have the tools to do so. The circle of our general experience is the context within which our reason operates, that is, the compared particular experiences. One can draw conclusions from those experiences that appear to the uneducated eye to go beyond those experiences, but that really cannot go beyond them, just as a stone can fly only as far as is proportionate to the force that was applied to it.

Although he proclaims the indispensability of laws, Lenz qualifies this regard when he discusses the preferable relation between laws and the individual.

Alle moralischen Gesetze sind negativ, müssen negativ sein, sie zeugen uns, was wir unterlassen müssen [...] falls wir uns nicht in Schaden und Unglück verwickeln wollen. Was wir zu tun haben, kann uns kein Gesetzgeber vorschreiben, oder er macht uns zu Klötzen und Blöcken, zu Maschinen und Rädern, die herumgedreht werden müssen, weil sie nicht von selber laufen können. (II: 550)

Laws must have a negative character if they are truly to fulfill their function within God's creation. That is, they must stop at telling people what they are forbidden to do. They must be prohibitions from acting in certain ways and not commandments to engage in specific acts. If the lawmaker tells us how we are to act he makes us into clods, blockheads, machines or gears in a machine, that is, they reduce or fully eliminate our powers to discriminate, judge and act accordingly because they eliminate any sense of agency and motivation. This conception of the nature of law is fundamental to Lenz's thinking and indicative of his assumptions about human nature and human flourishing. He asserts that

all moral laws must be negative or prohibitive in nature. They should tell us what not to do unless we want to be involved in self-harm and unhappiness. We become dependent and cannot be self-motivated and self-acting if we have a prescriptive moral order. We must have prohibitive moral laws if there is to be a morality at all because choice and free will are essential to our moral functioning. We cannot have a prescriptive morality because this destroys our autonomy or, worse yet, never allows it to develop. For this reason there was a need to move from a strict, law-based morality to a way of acting based on what Lenz calls evangelical principles, which will be discussed below as the culmination of his thinking on ethics and morality.

In his reconstruction of human history, Lenz lays out the importance of the law in getting humans to develop their bodies and to form themselves as material beings so that they reach the stage where they can begin forming their spirits. He says of the Jews that they had “den kürzesten Weg zu machen, von der negativen Glückseligkeit des Gesetzes, zur positiven Glückseligkeit des Evangeliums überzugehen” (II: 27). Lenz argues historically, arguing that of all the peoples, the Jews had the shortest distance from the negative happiness of the law to the positive happiness of the Gospel. They were ready because they had developed an idea of the duties of the individual to the happiness of the whole. They arrived at this general law through multiple and varied experiences, through their traditions, through God’s law-giving tool (Moses), and through their experiences of fortune and misfortune. The order of society and God’s creation are at stake and to violate those norms is to violate that order. The ethical, in contrast, involves the evangelical freedom that Lenz sees embodied in the life of Christ and his message of love. It involves conflict with norms when those norms conflict with acting in a loving

manner toward one's fellow beings and toward oneself. The only norms that are unquestionably inviolable are the Ten Commandments, and of those perhaps only those seven that Lenz considers—but never specifies—to follow the negative, prohibitive form that they should by their very nature follow.

The ideal laws for bettering our condition are laws that prohibit—that is that provide our concupiscence with the necessary constraints for the existence of general happiness. Such laws, for Lenz, are the Ten Commandments and the other religious norms that we have retained, as well as the civil laws founded by the “spirit of society” for promoting its prosperity. When discussing the nature of laws and the ideal types of law in the context of his discussion of the Tree of Knowledge, Lenz asserts: “Von der Art sind die zehn Gebote, sowohl die welche wir zur Norm beibehalten, als die dem jüdischen Volk insbesondere gegeben wurden, imgleichen alle bürgerlichen Gesetze die der Geist der Gesellschaft zur Beförderung ihres Wohlstandes erfunden und denen wir uns unterwerfen, so bald wir an diesem Wohlstande Teil nehmen” (II: 518). People observe these laws when they share in the prosperity of society. An important, unstated implication is that if people do not share in that prosperity, they will not obey the laws.

Lenz describes the proper place of religious prohibitions and hints at what also is wrong in the contemporary context when he asserts: “Noch von keinem einzigen moralischen Verhältnis hatten die Menschen ein positives Gebot Gottes, sollten auch keines bekommen, sondern sich selbst eines zu ihrem gemeinen Besten abstrahieren. Das ist die beständige Ökonomie Gottes im Alten und Neuen Testamente” (II: 537). In this context Lenz is constructing a history of morality and human psychological development and outlining the role of religious prohibitions and their proper minimalist and negative

character in the context of Cain and Abel. The deity never wanted to speak down from the heavens to lecture us. The power of example was supposed to suffice (II: 538). Example was morality—conscience and judge all in one. In moral relations there were not to be any positive commands. What should have happened is that people were to abstract principles for action from the negative prohibitions. Their guiding principle was to be the common good. Lenz calls this the consistent economy of God and it is the same economy that functions in Lenz's outline of his own moral and ethical principles. Lenz certainly restricts what religious justification one can claim for restrictive or repressive laws. God only provided for minimal prohibitions. The rest was to be constructed by individuals for the common good. This is really the only justification for limiting human freedom, beyond God's prohibitions. Any further restrictions should be an individual matter.

Lenz carries on with the traditional theological notion that Mosaic Law set the context without which Christ's Gospel would not have been possible. As we know, for Lenz, the Gospel is the epitome of the ethical. Lenz continues: "Alle seine [mosaische] Gesetze, wenigstens die wichtigern, sind negativ, verbieten, zwecken, nicht zum Glanz, zur Größe, zur Macht seiner Nation unmittelbar ab, wie die anderer Legislatoren. Und diesen Charakter haben sie sogar mit allen Gesetzen Christi und seiner Apostel gemein" (II: 549). Lenz points out that Mosaic Law, distinguished from positive law, was negative in nature. They did not seek to promote the power, greatness and prosperity of a nation, but rather to prohibit the members of that group from engaging in actions that were contrary to God's will and harmful to their relationship with him.

Mosaic Law is not irrelevant to Christians. What is required is that it be correctly understood and that its moral spirit be correctly extracted. Lenz describes the importance of

Mosaic Law and how we should view it as follows: “[...] kein einziger Buchstab, kein Titel, kein Jota in diesem mosaischen Gesetze [sei] für uns ganz überflüssig, wenn es wohl verstanden, wenn der moralische Geist desselben richtig herausgezogen wird” (II: 560). The moral spirit of Mosaic Law is important to us. He continues: “Sie sehen, daß die ganze mosaische Gesetzgebung nicht die Gesetzgebung eines Menschen, sondern die Gesetzgebung Gottes selber war” (II: 563). Mosaic Law is God’s lawmaking and not human lawmaking. In this same vein, Lenz says:

Moses, Christus und seine Apostel (denn die drei hängen alle zusammen) gaben also niemals positive Befehle von Pflichten, von Schuldigkeiten [...], wenn jene ein positives Gesetz zu geben scheinen, so war es nichts als Hülse zu einem oder dem andern negativen Gesetze, daß uns die Unterlassung dieser Sünde erleichterte. Sie waren also im eigentlichsten Verstande Ärzte des menschlichen Geschlechts. (II: 552)

What appears important to Lenz is to point out a continuity of development in moral law, originating in Paradise, and moving through important stages with the delivery of God’s law through Moses and then the critical point when Christ appeared and elaborated and fulfilled the law through his acts of love.

Law is supposed to form people to the point where they begin to live and then it is supposed to let them live their own lives. Lenz expresses this in the following manner: “So Moses—so Christus—und seine Apostel—Daher heißt das, was anfangs Gesetz war, nachmals frohe Botschaft, Leben und Seligkeit, Glückseligkeit [...] . Es bildet den Menschen bis zu dem Punkte, da er zu leben anfängt—und darnach läßt es ihn laufen” (II: 551). In the beginning we needed law, but later we were supposed to turn to the

message of the Gospel that preaches going beyond the law in the name of love and the common good. We needed law to form us to the point where we begin to live our lives. That is, to the point where we become capable of independent action. Once we reach this point, we do not need such restrictive bonds of law.

Lenz is very clear about this skeletal nature of moral norms—particularly with the entrance of Christ into the picture. He again states:

Ob sie zusammengestellt ein moralisch System herausbringen, oder ob sie nur mit Fleiß so nachlässig hingeworfen scheinen, um dem Menschenverstande einen Wink zu geben, es sei für freie Geister, die in ihrer Wirksamkeit immer fortschreiten und fortschreiten sollen, kein allgemeines Moralsystem möglich, oder wenigstens müsse es so weit und groß sein, daß alle möglichen Modifikationen, wenn sie nur nach der Analogie der angegebenen Grundlinien gezogen sind, hineinpassen, um das Gemälde abwechselnd und dadurch desto anmutiger und vollkommener zu machen?

(II: 597)

God intended his moral law to be minimalist to give humans the idea that the law was intended for free spirits who must and should continually progress. For these free spirits a general moral system based on laws is impossible because of the manifold individuality, and the necessity of allowing that individuality to be expressed. Lenz is skeptical about the possibility of systematic and comprehensive and exclusive moral systems. He asserts that if such a system were possible it would have to be so large and expansive as to include all possible modifications that human life could undergo.

Underlying all of the various manifestations of moral law it is important that a proper relation be maintained with the one true and eternal morality that God intended for us.

According to Lenz:

Es ist seltsam, daß man unter der natürlichen und theologischen Moral einen Unterschied macht, gleicht als ob die ewigen Gesetze Gottes über unser Verhalten nicht zu allen Zeiten dieselben gewesen wären. Die Bibel ist uns nicht gegeben uns eine neue Moral zu lehren, sondern nur die einzige und ewige Moral, die der Finger Gottes in unser Herz geschrieben, in ein neues Licht zu setzen. (II: 511)

There should be a correspondence between natural and theological morality. They are not to be separated abstractly. The degree to which they are separated should be seen as an indication of a faulty understanding of the Bible's message and the morality that we have developed. There is one true and eternal morality that God inscribed in our hearts. The Bible—and, by implication all religious institutions that draw their authority from it—does not change that. Different religions merely provide a different perspective on the same thing. It is also clear from this quote that the true and eternal morality that God created is inscribed upon our hearts. This would imply that it is to be found within each of us, and not somewhere outside the individual. If we can come to understand our hearts, we should then be able to come to know this morality.

Lenz's ultimate statement of the principle underlying all true morality—to which Lenz returns after seeming to loose himself in details from numerous digressions—is the following “[...] die leichteste Gesetze nach welchen diese Besserung, dieser Erwerb der höchsten Realität vor sich geht, dem Gott seine unmittelbare Unterstützung versprochen

hat—sind die Gesetze der höchsten objektiven Schönheit, oder vielmehr der von Gott geordneten Natur—die in Christo Jesu realisiert wurden” (II: 519). For humans to flourish, we need the least restrictive laws so that we can pursue an existence ordered according to the principles of ultimate objective beauty, which is to say, according to the principles embodied by God. The improvement of our condition or the acquisition of the highest reality proceeds according to the simplest laws. These laws are the laws of supreme objective beauty, which, in turn, is God's orderly nature.

An implication of Lenz's arguments concerning the nature of moral laws is that laws that do not share the qualities that he outlines will not be able justly to claim morality as a support for their authority. Though Lenz carefully backs away from explicitly making this statement, it is clear from the logic of his argument that a political system that does not respect the freedom of the individual will not have moral authority and will be constructed according to principles that are not in accord with God's will. Lenz's allowance of arbitrary will to political leaders can be seen in the following statement: “Das mag der Fall wohl beim politischen Gesetzgeber sein, der die Seele seiner Staatsmaschine ist, der das unbehelfsame Volk mit Gebiß und Zaum regiert wie ein Knabe den Elefanten—aber beim moralischen Gesetzgeber, der freihandelnde selbstständige Wesen bilden will, ist's er's nicht und kann es nicht sein” (II: 550). That Lenz acknowledges the right of a sovereign to rule his unmanageable people with bit and bridle, that is, like animals, is more of an indictment of the fact that his subjects are in such a miserable state than it is an acknowledgement of the legitimacy of such laws. Though the ruler is certainly within his political rights, he does not have the force of morality and, by extension, God to back that legitimacy.

Although laws and norms are essential markers that help the individual orient herself in life, each individual must find her solution to life's conflicts because each person's environment and psycho-physical make up is different and because the factor of the individual exercising her free will is crucial to the entire process if actions are to become more than mere re-actions. Although Lenz sees value in laws in general and in the actions that arise out of the conflict between laws and the individual, something more than a reactionary conflict is required for human actions to acquire their ultimate value. In response to the confrontation between the person's desires and socio-cultural norms and prohibitions, the individual must begin to differentiate between, and evaluate and work upon, her desires; acquire self-understanding; come to know the relations between herself and her environment; and then in turn try to find an adequate solution to this conflict.

One of the most important legal structures, both divine and worldly, is that establishing marriage as the appropriate location for the acceptable expression of the sex drive. In terms of the drive to unite the sexes, the institution of marriage is the legal structure that provides the framework for the appropriate and acceptable release of the sex drive. It is the location where the sex drive can safely be allowed release, although in a highly circumscribed manner. In order to make marriage so rewarding, God created the sex drive or at least laws that allowed the sex drive to be released within those confines.

For Lenz, not just any marriage will do. It has to be a marriage in which a certain relationship exists between the partners to receive his highest praise. To marry simply to be able to have sex is unacceptable to him. A powerful love must exist between the partners and not merely some form of Platonic friendship, either. Love between the sexes ranges

from friendship to marital love. Even at the highest level of this relationship, marital love, one should exercise moderation in giving in to the sex drive.

We see a somewhat severe version of Lenz's promotion of the ascetics of marriage in his "Catechismus" text, where he asserts: "Der unterste Grad der Geschlechterliebe ist Freundschaft, der oberste und letzte die eheliche Liebe, wenigstens sollte es so seyn und die Begier nicht eher als auf dem höchsten Grad dieses höchsten Grades in der Ehe selber mässig folgen" (Catechismus, 39). We see that the best marriages are a combination of sentiment and desire. Both must be at the highest levels for the relationship to win his highest praise. Lenz argues for the control of the sex drive because it damages the individual by wasting his spiritual powers and it makes the institution of marriage unappealing to us if the reward of sex is not restricted to it. This is a medical, pragmatic and social argument at its core.

Lenz argues that the best marriages are those "[...] wo wahre Sympathie der Gemüther lange in den reinsten Flammen gebrannt und in beyden Subjecten ein unwiderstehlich Verlangen hervorgebracht, sich auf ewig mit einander zu vereinigen." The next best marriage, the morally good marriages:

[...] sind die wo wahre freundschaftliche Zuneigung vorwaltet mit der aufrichtigen Absicht, seinem Gegenstande und sich das Leben so angenehm und glückseelig zu machen als möglich und diese Ehen können auch diejenigen schliessen, die leider zwar schon den edelsten Theil ihrer Geister verschwendet, aber doch noch genug übrig haben um sanfte Freundshaft und Hülfeleistung zu empfinden und bey denen Vernunft und Ruhe die Stelle von Feuer und Lebhaftigkeit vertritt. ("Catechismus," 40)

A relationship devoid of passion is clearly inferior in Lenz's eyes. Passion and desire are critical elements in a relationship. If one is incapable of either of these two types of marriage one should collect one's spirits (that is, sperm) in a container for God, that is, remain celibate.

Of course we know of the importance of marriage to Lenz when we consider that he dedicated an entire work to arguing that forbidding soldiers the right to marry was not only making them poorer soldiers but also damaging society on many levels because of the corruption of values and the destruction of families it brought in its wake. "Je geschwinder die Begierden mit den zunehmenden Künsten und Wissenschaften reifen, desto gefährlicher ihre Ehlosigkeit" (II: 796). The greater the danger to morality the more important is the institution of marriage as the only legitimate context for our sexual activities.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



3 1293 02487 8591

THESIS

4

2003

part 1

54354907

LIBRARY
Michigan State
University

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

| DATE DUE | DATE DUE | DATE DUE |
|----------|----------|----------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

CHAPTER 4

LENZIAN MORAL AND ETHICAL THEORY

Morality is the central focus of all of Lenz's work. It is the key to understanding his theoretical as well as literary texts. I would go so far as to say that without an understanding of his writings on morality we cannot understand his literary texts. In short, we cannot overstate the importance of morality and ethics to Lenz's works. Of course Lenz uses the term "morality," and "morals" in different senses. If we avoid getting caught up in a limited focus on words and instead focus on their contextual meanings, we can see that when he does use the terms in seemingly contradictory fashions that there is a contextual indication that he means the word in a different sense and is referring to different aspects of morality's manifestations in society and philosophy. We should not get bogged down and distracted by focusing on apparent—or maybe even sometimes real—contradictions. It is a rather obvious conclusion to assert that Lenz is not a systematic thinker. He characterizes himself as such. What is interesting to me is to look at how he presents his ideas, what these ideas are and how they function in his work as a whole.

The fact that Lenz considers morality and his moral reform projects the centerpiece of all of his work puts him squarely in the center of Enlightenment thought. Morality encompassed all of life and was not seen as some private and isolated realm for personal concern that was apolitical in nature and divorced from social reality. Moral philosophy has a long, activist tradition that proves difficult for us to appreciate and value for what most certainly was a political project for those involved. According to Hull:

[...] moral law was the expression of social life; moral law was social law. It is therefore hardly surprising that since practical civil society aimed to explore, expand, and order itself, it would do so primarily in moral terms. And since the reformation of society into civil society was to be done in tandem with the state, and in any case would transform the relation between government and civil society, moral reordering was eminently political, in the sense of bearing a relation to government policy. Since moral reordering could hardly occur without affecting how those subject to it actually lived and interpreted their lives, the eighteenth-century moral debates were political in this wider, cultural sense, as well. (220)

Those concerned with morality and ethics were not “apolitical” or quietist; they saw an intimate bond between morality and politics. Whether we find their projects convincing or coherent is entirely another matter. Surely, if we entertain the possibility of a plurality of values and possible conceptions of values today, we can entertain the possibility that Lenz’s conception of values may be coherent in the terms that he deems important and definitive of his project. It is now that I turn specifically to that moral project and the reconstruction of a Lenzian morality and ethics, using the terms outlined above.

When considering the primary principles of morality, Lenz proclaims: “Wir wollen also die Frage verändern und anstatt: Was ist das erste—soll es heißen: Welches sind die ersten Principia der Moral, aus welchen wir uns ein richtiges, festes und dauerhaftes System derselben entwickeln können” (II: 502). Lenz wants to change the nature of the question from one where we look for the single principle of morality based on the notion that all of human life is commensurable and reducible to a single principle. Instead, he asks the

question based on the assumption of noncommensurability and plurality, that is, that not everything can be reduced to a single principle and that there are not only various goods for various people, but that also that for any individual there may be competing goods and that each good may have a valid claim in its own right. To try to reduce them all to one principle for the sake of a simple coherent system would be to lose sight of the pluralistic and complex nature of humans and human values. If we insist on commensurability in morality, we will construct a system on grounds that are incompatible with human nature. This is the central feature of all of Lenz's thinking on morality. All else follows from it and it is derived from his fundamental assumptions about human nature and nature as a whole.

Demuth's assessment of Lenz's writings on morality is in fundamental agreement with mine. He asserts:

Lenz geht es in seinen ethischen Reflexionen von vornherein nie wie einer systematischen Philosophie um den Entwurf eines moralischen Begründungssystems, um eine Ableitungsethik oder rein logische Kontrollprinzipien sittlicher Handlungsregeln. Sein Interesse richtet sich unter den angesprochenen ideengeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen ganz auf die Verteidigung einer sittlichen Wirklichkeitsordnung, auf die Behauptung genuin moralischer, handlungstheoretischer und dann auch ästhetischer Voraussetzungen in der Konstitution menschlicher Existenz, die nicht monistisch reduziert werden kann und darf. (28)

Lenz is not trying to create a foundational system from which we can deduce all other principles and to which all other principles must be reducible. His pragmatic, action-oriented

morality is very context-sensitive and morality is seen as interacting with all other values that a person might hold.

He asserts “Ich will nicht untersuchen, welches schöner zum Ziel führt. Wird der, um nicht immer verblümt zu sein, der, wenn er einen Hilfsbedürftigen sieht, vorher untersucht, wie nah oder fern die Hilfe, die er ihm leisten könne, von dem Ideal abstehe, das er sich von Mildtätigkeit und Menschenliebe in den Kopf gesetzt, besser handeln, als der ohne Räsonnement und schnell hilft, ohne daß die Rechte weiß, was die Linke tut?” (II: 594–95).

Lenz answers this question by asserting that the happiness that arises from actions according to ideals is fundamentally empty and ineffective compared to the approach of the person who dives in and gets involved in whatever way he can as soon as he can. He will almost certainly make mistakes, but as long as he continues to act to correct those errors and to improve himself and his situation, he will be on the right path. This is consistent with Lenz’s criticism of idealistic and rationalistic approaches to morals and ethics. It is much more important to be engaged in the world and to act in a timely fashion than to reason about ideals and what actions are in accordance with those ideals before one can act. The implication being that by the time the person acts, if he ever does, the need for action will have passed or the situation may have changed such that the deliberations are no longer relevant to the new realities.

Lenz further limits the role of reason in morality when he declares it is the heart and not the mind that will determine what is and is not moral. The heart, and not the intellect, is to provide the answer to the question about what are the principles of morality. Lenz is staking out a position that puts him firmly in the camp of the sensualists, definitely not in the rationalist, intellectualist camp of thought.

As Hull says: “Like *Bildung*, morality was a quality potentially accessible to all; it was another expression of the expansionary, indeed, missionary quality of civil society” (222). During the Enlightenment, issues of morality became a general concern for reformers and moral authority was “popularized” in the sense that it was increasingly located within the auspices of the individual and the common man. According to Schneewind, “Honoring the moral capacities of common people entails [...] giving up the intellectualist morality of Leibniz and Wolff, in which Kant was raised. It also means abandoning the Wolffian claim that the philosopher must educate ordinary people into morality” (489). We clearly see these tendencies in Lenz, as we do in the so-called “popular” philosophers^{xiii}.

Morality

We see an indication of how important morality is to Lenz when he asserts at the outset of his “Versuch über das erste Principium der Moral”: “Das Studium der Moral ist zu allen Zeiten eine der vorzüglichsten Beschäftigungen des menschlichen Verstandes gewesen: und in der Tat sollte es, wenn wir eine vollkommene Erziehung auf unsrer Erde erwarten könnten, die erste sein” (II: 499). Lenz is quite unequivocal here. Morality is the key subject for us to understand. It is also the subject that humans can study and learn from here on earth, that is, without the need for divine intervention or reference to an afterlife. It is a human subject that deals with human behavior and relations and that does not commit itself to grave epistemological aporias due to the nature of its aspirations, as he considers is the case with speculative philosophy. Through the study of morality and work upon it we can

educate ourselves and improve ourselves and our situation. It is extremely important and valuable. Lenz continues:

Da die Moral die Lehre von der Bestimmung des Menschen und von dem rechten Gebrauch seines freien Willens um diese Bestimmung zu erreichen ist, so sehen wir klar, daß sie die Zeichnung zu dem ganzen Gemälde unsers Lebens enthält, welcher wir, jenachdem sich bei reiferem Alter und fruchtbaren Umständen unsere Fähigkeiten entwickeln, Licht Schatten und Kolorit geben. (II: 499)

For Lenz, morality is the study of human destiny and of the correct use of free will in order to arrive at this destiny. Morality contains the entire picture of our life. We see here also that Lenz considers it possible—given ripe age and appropriate circumstances in which we can develop our abilities—we may be able to add color and contour to that picture. That is, we may be able to participate in the creation of what morality is and actively form moral lives. Maturity, circumstances, and abilities allow us to go beyond or at least participate in the creation of a moral life. This is an essential concept in Lenz's thinking, which I will discuss below in the discussion of ethics as self-formative activity.

When he surveys the work that has been done on morality in history he asserts “keinem von allen diesen Herren aber ist es eingefallen, das erste Principium der Moral, das *summum bonum* in uns selber zu suchen” (II: 501). We must seek the first principles of morality within each of us. Self-knowledge is required and an attention to our true desires and wishes. Lenz proposes that we observe ourselves, investigate our desires, feelings, inclinations and sentiments in order to come to a better understanding of what are the principles of morality. We saw above that he concerns himself with this observation and

illumination of human nature and human destiny. This is an important aspect of his moral project. Work on morality has suffered because those who have dealt with it have not sought the first principle within humans. They have always sought it somewhere else and then used that principle to shape their morality.

Life is certainly not absurd for Lenz. The world he depicts in his comedies—where things seem to happen for no apparent reason, or at least they happen for reasons beyond the goals and control of the figures—is a corrupt, sick world, not the world as it should be and could be. Solid principles are critical for morality because “Diese Moral muß [...] auf gewissen festgesetzten unumstößlichen Gründen beruhen, sonst wird das ganze Gebäude unproportioniert und schwankend. Nichts ist aber der menschlichen Natur unwürdiger, als Handlungen die nach keinem Ziel gehen. [.....] nichts ist unangenehmer und unseliger als ein solches absichtloses Betragen” (II: 499). While Lenz severely criticizes rigid ideals and the attempt to reduce noncommensurables to a single principle, he is also critical of the utter lack of principles. One must have a goal and this goal must be based on one’s principles. Arbitrary action is not acceptable. Although these principles cannot be dictated from above, it is necessary that they be there. As we will see below, Lenz thinks it imperative that each individual select these principles and his goals.

Concrete, everyday life is important to Lenz’s conception of morality. We see this where he discusses how we can judge a person’s moral character:

Wir können über die Schönheit einer körperlichen Figur nicht eher
zuverlässig entscheiden, als wenn wir von aller Draperie entweder in
Gedanken oder wie die Alten taten in der Tat abstrahieren und so wird die
moralische Schönheit und Größe eines Charakters nie in einem echten

Licht erscheinen als wenn er unbemerkt und daß ich so sagen darf,
unaufgefordert handelt, in Kleinen häuslichen oder gesellschaftlichen
Veranlassungen wo nicht der Beifall der erwartenden Menge, sondern die
innere Harmonie und schöne Stimmung seiner Kräfte ihn zu Handlungen
treibt um deren Folgen er sich nicht bekümmert. Hier ist es eigentlich, wo
der große Mann aufhört zu scheinen, wo er zu sein anfängt [...]. (II: 749)

Although we saw above that Lenz asserts we induce our principles from the success or failure of our actions, he is not a consequentialist. Here he asserts that true greatness of character and moral beauty result from actions that are motivated by inner harmony and a beautiful attunement of a person's powers and not the consequences of his actions. The difference is that Lenz is talking about the ultimate stage of morality whereas above he was talking about its most basic stage of development and discussing it within a historical context. Moral beauty and greatness of character can best be judged when we observe someone acting when he is unaware of being observed and when he is acting of his own accord. Lenz thinks it is best to observe him in small domestic situations or in social settings where he is not motivated to act by the expected applause of the crowd but rather by the inner harmony and beautiful agreement of his powers. This is where the great man stops appearing and starts to be.

In a moment of hyperbole, Lenz asserts that indifference to that which is beautiful and excellent is the only vice in the world. He questions our ever being able to improve our customs if we become insensitive to true merit. When addressing the critics of Werther, Lenz asserts: "Die Gleichgültigkeit gegen alles was schön und furtrefflich ist, ist das einzige Laster auf der Welt. Wie sollen, wie können unsere Sitten sich jemals verbessern, wenn wir

unempfindlich für wahre Vorzüge bleiben und das aus lieber lauterer Moralität" (II: 682).

He ridicules the critics of *Werther* who consider the work and main character immoral, and faults them and their rigid moralism for making them insensitive to the merits and qualities that he and the work display. There is also a beauty and excellence in the figure and the work to which the critics have become insensitive and indifferent because of their judgmental moral rigorism. Lenz clearly condemns "morality" here but he is referring to a particular approach to morality that is intolerant of values that do not fit into its rigid, all-encompassing system. Lenz is criticizing "moralism" or moral rigorism, not morality as such.

When discussing the rigid moralists, he seems to identify morality as such with moralizing. With a narrow focus on those passages this can seem so, but when we consider Lenz's other statements on morality it is clear that he conceives of morality as something broader and much more important than this narrow understanding. If we maintain a narrow lexical focus and incessantly focus on the seemingly absolute statement about the negative aspect of morality, we will not understand the role morality plays in Lenz's thinking and how he conceives of morality as a discipline.

Lenz argues that the closer humans are to animals, that is, uncultivated and uncivilized, the more important it is to have iron-clad bands of habit to control them. "Je näher dem Tier, desto besser im eisernen Bande der Gewohnheit zu leiten. Aber die aufgeklärtern, die mittägigen, die freigeisterischen Nationen, die den Tod verachten und doch aller Gefahr des Todes fliehen soviel sie können" (II: 793). When they are more civilized these iron-clad customs are not only unnecessary but also harmful.

Lenz is very critical of moral ideals. He declares: “Ich vor meinem Teil halte von den moralischen Idealen ganz und gar nichts” (II: 589). He continues with the topic, stating:

Das Beste, was wir von Tugend wissen, das dem Volke auf die beste Art vorgetragen...denn seht einmal, ihr lieben Leute, wenn man einen krummen Baum gerade haben will, so muß man ihn an einen graden Stock binden, oder wenn man das menschliche Herz bessern will, so muß man die in der Welt sparsam zerstreuten Züge der Tugend alle zusammen nehmen und in ein Gemälde bringen, ein schönes Ganze draus machen [...]. (II: 589)

Lenz rhetorically considers the argument that moral ideals and rules might be necessary to control those who are “crooked,” if moral ideals could possibly serve as a stake to hold up a crooked tree. He also considers the possibility that if one wants to improve the human heart, that one must assemble the sparsely scattered qualities of virtue into a picture to make a beautiful whole out of these scattered qualities. He emphatically denies the usefulness of such uses of ideals. He definitively states that ideals are not only not helpful and healing but that they are harmful. His reasoning is that:

der gemeine Bösewicht oder auch bloß sinnliche Tiermann durch solche so weit über ihn erhabenen Gemälde vom wahren Guten abgeschreckt und mutlos gemacht wird, jemals so etwas aus sich zu machen [...]der andere Teil des Publikums, der die Ideale so begierig auffängt, es deswegen tut, weil mit ein klein wenig Mühe die Außenseiten dieses Ideals so halbweg gut in seinen Charakter übergetragen werden können, und er also in der ganzen christlichen und honetten Welt für das gelten kann, was dem Halbkenner die

Ideale selbst gelten, unbesorgt, ob das Innere des Charakters dem Kern des Ideals entspreche [...].so machten denn die moralischen Ideale aus dem andern Teil des Publikums einen großen Haufen Heuchler, und das wäre, deucht mich, noch schlimmer als der erste. (II: 592–93)

This passage can be used as a critical template for Lenz's characters. We see here that one half of the public is composed of common bad guys or simple, sensual animals who are either scared off from the true good and discouraged that they can become such a person because the ideals are so far above them. The other half of the public is hypocrites who assimilate the surface of the ideals and do not internalize the values into their characters.

Though morality is good, if it rests on foundations that are too rigid and abstract, morality can have a deleterious effect on humans. Rigid rules provide cover for people who find it easy to appear "moral" because they can adopt the external features of conforming to these ideals without accepting any inner principle that may underlie the ideal. This in turn leads to hypocrisy. Even those functions for which ideals could hypothetically be useful are not fulfilled by them. In the end, there is no good argument for general ideals that would apply to all people, or even to particular nations, in particular times, and in certain circumstances.

After people take on this mantle of the ideal they rest and no longer strive to improve themselves and the world around them. As we know, resting for Lenz—unless it is only to collect oneself for further striving—is an evil that must be avoided because it is contrary to human nature. Jesus did not seek to provide his followers with moral ideals. To contrast his moral challenges with the ideals of the Pharisees and the moral laws of

the Jews, Jesus purposely left them vague and unsystematic to provide a hint to our understanding that they were meant for “free spirits” who “in ihrer Wirksamkeit immer fortschreiten und fortschreiten sollen,” and for whom “kein allgemeines Moralsystem möglich, oder wenigstens müsse es so weit und groß sein, daß alle möglichen Modifikationen, wenn sie nur nach der Analogie der angegebenen Grundlinien gezogen sind, hineinpassen [...]” (II: 597). It is interesting to speculate whether it is not the case that Lenz is imitating Christ—as he is insistent we should if we desire to be ethical—in that he is also presenting his readers with a vague and unsystematic picture of what ethics is so that his readers will have to piece it together, just as Christ’s followers are supposed to do. It seems reasonable to assume that Lenz would follow this model because for him it is the ultimate model. If we consider the fragmented nature of his writings, their style certainly matches this model and appears to be so by design and not by some lack of ability.

Plurality and noncommensurability are givens, according to Lenz. As people differ, so will values. Lenz ponders the multiplicity and says: “Welch eine unendliche Menge von Begierden, Bedürfnissen, Charakteren, Sentiments, Entschlüssen, Handlungen, Nichthandlungen—o gütige Gottheit! Wer anders als du kannst alle die tausend mal tausend Verschiedenheiten von Köpfen hüten—mir schwindelt’s, wenn ich daran denke, daß Philosophen waren, die moralische Systeme fürs Ganze erfinden wollten” (II: 583–84). Lenz points out the absurdity of trying to construct a moral system for the entire human race, when he considers the infinite collection of desires, needs, characters, sentiments, decisions, actions, inaction, mental differences, that is, when he observes the

incommensurable components of any meaningful conception of human being and human values.

Deviancy

On the top rung of Lenz's ethical ladder is not the person incapable of error or sin. Rather, it is a person with strong desires that could potentially lead him to sin, but who struggles mightily against giving in to those desires in a way that would lead him to sin. The struggle makes him stronger and, in the end, a greater person than one who would never have such desires. As he proclaims: "Eine Seele ohne starken Trieb zum Laster ist nicht wert, fromm und gut zu sein" (Blei IV: 284). The struggle conveys a quality of nobility to the soul that is essential to its ethical development.

Lenz spends considerable effort arguing against the traditional theological conception of Original Sin. He rejects the notion that Adam and Eve's actions condemned the rest of humanity to sinfulness. Lenz defines sin as the neglect of the relationship we have with the deity: "Sünde ist nichts anders, als Vernachlässigung des Verhältnisses, in welchem wir mit der Gottheit stehen" (II: 530). Sin is relational—relational in terms of the person's relation with God and this relation is first established and made concrete in God's prohibitions, and the first prohibition against indiscriminate satisfaction of his desires.

When discussing the concept of Original Sin, Lenz states "Die Sünde war auf der Welt bis auf das Gesetz, aber man achtete ihrer nicht, weil noch kein Gesetz da war, das sie für Sünde erklärte, sondern der Tod herrschte über die Sünder ohne daß sie wußten wie oder

warum, denn der Tod ist der Sold und die Folge der Sünden [...]” (II: 40). Sin was always present in the world but nobody paid attention to it because the law had not declared it to be a sin. Sin has always existed in the sense that our relation to the divinity, our creator, existed from the moment of creation. Death, the consequence and cost of sin, ruled over the sinners without them knowing how or why. If we remember Lenz’s assertion that law makes us aware of our circumstances and the relations within which we exist, and that God used law to communicate what their proper relationship to God was, this argument is entirely consistent with Lenz’s ideas on law and its function in God’s design.

God’s creation has a certain intended harmonious order. When we disrupt that order, we are acting sinfully. We can see this disorder reflected in the physical world. As Lenz says: “Besonders ist es, daß in der ganzen Haushaltung Gottes moralisches Übel, Verletzung der von Gott eingerichteten Verhältnisse immer mit dem physischen in gleichen Schritten geht” (II: 533). We can see from the disruption in the physical world and in the physical being of humans that that order is disrupted. One can also determine one’s own moral depravity and sinfulness from these signs. Moral and physical evil go hand in hand. This is consistent with physiognomy and the theory of sexual depravity in contemporary sexual theory. It was thought that disorderly moral conduct would manifest itself in physical signs, especially when this conduct involved such essential spiritual components as semen, that also contain the same spiritual powers that produce our reasoning capacities and our ability to act.

Lenz declares his conception of original sin in the following manner: “Jetzt haben Sie, wann Sie wollen, Principium für die Erbsünde, wann Sie sie so nennen wollen. Ich nenne sie Natur. Haß, Neid, Mord, Ehebruch, alles liegt in der Natur, ob aber in der häßlichen

Gestalt, das können nur die zugeben, deren Phantasei in dem schwarzen Reiche höllischer Phantomen veraltert ist” (II: 532). Nature is the cause of Original Sin. What we call “sin” is caused by nature: it lies in nature, in human nature. Lenz questions, however, whether the nature of these flaws that we call “sin” is as ugly as the conceptions of those whose fantasies dwell in the dark archaic realm of hellish phantoms. Sin is not something supernatural and it is not something contrary to nature. As such, it is also something that is part of the world created by God.

Evil, the bad, is the improper and disagreeable use of our abilities. This improper use goes on like a ruined clock, ever further along its twisted path. Whether it is congenital lethargy—which the theologians call “Original Sin”—or bad example—which Lenz considers more likely—we simply misuse our abilities. He asks:

Was ist das Gute anders, als der gehörige und rechtmäßige Gebrauch, den wir von unsren Fähigkeiten machen? Und das Böse, als der unrechtmäßige übelübereinstimmende Gebrauch dieser Fähigkeiten, der, wie ein verdorbenes Uhrwerk, immer weiter im verkehrten Wege davon fortgeht; so wie der gute Gebrauch immer weiter in dem graden und richtigen Wege. Wir sind selbständig—Gott unterstützt die in uns gelegten Kräfte, wie in der ganzen Natur, ohne sie zu lenken—Wir (sei es nun die Schuld einer uns angeborenen Trägheit, die die Theologen Erbsünde nennen, oder dies bösen Beispiels, welche ich fast eher dafür halten möchte), wir brauchen die Fähigkeiten verkehrt. (III: October 1772).

Lenz defines good and evil pragmatically as the correct or incorrect use of our abilities.

We must know our abilities and their intended uses to determine good and evil. How we

define these uses will determine how we define good and evil. Our understanding of human nature will determine our understanding of good and evil. Different abilities will lead to different norms. The good is the appropriate and correct use of our abilities and the bad is the incorrect and inappropriate use of them. If we use the abilities in a perverted fashion, we embark upon a perverted path. If we use them as they were intended to be used we would proceed down the correct path, creating momentum for further growth and development. The causes of us using our abilities in a perverted way are most likely due to bad example. Lenz prefers this pragmatically defined cause to the cause offered by theologians: that we have a congenital laziness or inertia that condemns us to sin and is the result of Original Sin.

It is not that we are evil or have a natural tendency toward evil in the sense that there is an evil core in us. We tend to do evil and select the bad because it is the easier path to take. It is the path of least resistance. It usually involves indiscriminately and impatiently giving in to our drives and desires. He wanted to make it hard work to be good so that we would have to work at it to earn it. If it were easy to achieve, we could rest. As we know, we were not created to rest, but rather to strive and act. In arguing against Leibniz's conception of good and evil—wherein the consequences of sin were directed at the sinner by God as a punishing justice—Lenz has the following to say:

Ich denke aber, es geschieht bloß um unsertwillen, weil, auf das moralische Übel kein physisches Übel, als eine Strafe folgt; wir lieber Böses als Gutes tun würden, da das Böse leichter zu tun ist. Und warum Gott das Gute für unsere Natur schwerer gemacht hat, davon ist die Ursache klar, damit wir

nicht müßig gehen; unsere Seele ist nicht zum Stillsitzen, sondern zum

Gehen, Arbeiten, Handeln geschaffen. (III: #22, October 1772)

Lenz thinks God had other reasons for making doing the right thing more difficult than doing the wrong thing. Here we see the connection between good and evil, human nature, the order of things in the physical world and the order of things in the moral world. Good and evil are such that they interact with our natures and, in turn, help to shape our natures. They do not exist in the abstract, irrespective of our makeup and they do not merely exist as abstract rules to be obeyed but rather they are as they are in order to contribute to the formation of ethical selves. Doing evil—that is, using our abilities in incorrect ways—is easier, that is why we tend to act in this way or misuse our abilities. We have a certain degree of laziness in us, a tendency toward inertia and rest. God made it more difficult for us to do good and this was because he did not want us to become idle. If being good were easy and achievable once and for all, we could rest and would become idle because we would have arrived at our end. But God created our soul such that it should act, go and work, not sit around idly. Things were not meant to come easily, that is why we needed to be expelled from Paradise and this was all part of God's design. Life was designed to be challenging for us.

In talking about Original Sin, Lenz says “Ich meine immer, das, was so genant wird, sei zu Erreichung unserer Bestimmung durchaus notwendig, also keine Folge des Falls, der nur partikular war” (III: 525). The notion of sin was necessary for us to fulfill our destiny and not as a consequence of the Fall, which was a particular instance. One of these functions was to make clear to humans the distance between them and God. “Die Sünde—der physisch damit verknüpfte Tod, waren also die einzigen Mittel, wodurch die

Gottheit ihren ganzen Abstand von ihm, ihm zu fühlen geben konnte” (III: 529). Lenz explicitly states it here: there is a function in God’s design for what we call sin, and as already said, it was not to punish us for the Fall. Humans had to be shown that they were not gods and the fact that they could sin and die were the only means of doing so. Humans are imperfect and mortal. That was the lesson to be learned.

The human desire to be exceptional creates a serious problem at the core of human constitution. As Lenz tells us:

Nur der Teufel verwies die ersten Eltern auf solchen Sprung: esset—und ihr werdet sein wie Gott. So versteckt sich noch hinter diese Begierde nach dem Außerordentlichen unser Erbschaden, die zwei Bleigewichte der Materie die unsre emporstrebende Velleität herabziehen, Trägheit und Furchtsamkeit, die eine will nichts tun, die andere nichts hoffen und das Resultat von beiden ist Ungeduld. Wir möchten gern wie Würmer in müßigen Spekulationen oder Phantaseien sanft eingesponnen im Knoten liegen bleiben, nie uns zum Schmetterling entfalten, der dem Himmel entgegen fliegt. (II: 517)

Within a theological context, Lenz builds the picture from one of appetite and prohibition to temptation by the devil to disobey the prohibition through promise of the ultimate reward of being like God. Behind our desire for the extraordinary—which Lenz calls our Original Sin—we find sluggishness and fearfulness. Because we are lazy and do not want to work much for our satisfaction and because we do not have the hope that our work will be rewarded in the end, we seek the path of least resistance for the immediate satisfaction of our desires. This has terrible consequences for our character and results in the hampering of the motive forces of our existence and creates chaos and disorder in society because of the

consequences of our actions. Thus, our hereditary defect always hides itself behind this desire for the extraordinary. These two lead weights of material, sluggishness and fearfulness, pull down the upwardly soaring effort of our will. The result of both of them is impatience. Under the influence of these hindering forces we would like to lay around like caterpillars in idle speculations or fantasies, comfortably twisted into knots, and never turn into butterflies that fly toward heaven. Lenz is trying to explain why people do bad things and how it is that in God's creation there can be evil. He uses the terminology of physical forces to ground the spiritual in concrete foundations. Our desire to be great and our striving for perfection are vital to our development, but we must be careful to be patient in pursuing these goals.

As Lenz warns: "[...] sobald sich aber die Begierden empörten, rasten, mit Ungeduld gestillt wurden, löschte dieses Wohlgefallen aus, sie sehnten sich nach anderm Fleisch, um sich das gehabte Vergnügen zu reproduzieren, mit jedem neuen Versuche verlor dies Vergnügen von seiner Entzückung, am Ende nervenlos erschöpft" (II: 540). Humans stopped selectively satisfying their concupiscence. Their desires raged and they satisfied them impatiently by enjoying things without having the patience to wait for an opportunity to satisfy them correctly. Once this happened, their sense of pleasure diminished, they longed for new flesh in order to reproduce the previously felt pleasure and with every new attempt to do this the pleasure lost some of its delight. In the end, we were without nerve and completely exhausted. Lenz argues that our improperly acting ruins the pleasure we should feel upon satisfying our desires, not that it is wrong in itself. Lenz makes these assertions in a historical context and uses them to construct an argument about how humans diverged from the path that God had laid out for them.

Lenz tells us: “Wenn nun zu den äußern Bewegungsgründen noch die innern hinzu kommen, eines Triebes zu schonen, den uns die Natur gab, um damit zu wuchern, nicht ihn, eh wir mündig werden, zu verschleudern; wenn die gänzlich Vertäubung unsers innern Nerven uns mit einer furchtbaren Armut an Wonnegefühl für unser ganzes Leben bedroht [...]” (II: 734). There is a need to preserve our drives and particularly our sexual drive. There are external reasons that we do not disrupt our life and the lives of others and internal reasons: the numbing of our inner nerves threatens us with a terrible poverty of pleasure for the rest of our lives. Nature gave us this drive. We should wait to satisfy it until we are mature and not give in to it by carousing. If we do give in to it, we risk the numbing of our internal nerves and a terrible poverty of feelings of well being.

Lenz repeatedly points out that deviant behavior is not only harmful to society but that its most damaging effect is to destroy our core motivating force. If we remember the importance of concupiscence to action as such, it is easy to see that damaging this drive would be disastrous for us and society beyond the immediate harms caused by the actions. According to Lenz, “Jede gesezwidrige Befriedigung unserer Konkupiscenz aber verringert—und zerstört sie am Ende—und was soll denn das Residium bleiben, wenn der Keim verdorben worden [...]?” (II: 30). Inappropriate satisfaction of concupiscent desires is bad because they diminish and destroy our concupiscence in the end. They make the core rotten. It is clear therefore that our satisfaction of these desires must be in conformity with laws. This is how we need to understand Lenz’s discussion of “wheels” and actors on a stage and marionettes (see above). It is essential that laws are provided and that we live according to those laws because if we do not it has a perverting effect on us in that we are creating disorder and chaos in the world which will in turn create it for us in that our

character is formed within that same context and against it as a backdrop. It is of course important to work to create the best possible laws and a better society but one must work within the framework of the presently existing society and not try to create a utopia that is too far removed from present reality. He believed incremental change was necessary. Idealism is not for him. Real, dirty, concrete, and imperfect change is called for. This thinking also has consequences for his understanding of genre and literature.

Ascetic Practices^{xiv}

Lenz consistently argues throughout his texts for ascetic practices directed at the goal of arriving at a superior stage of existence and this is to be achieved through, and is characterized by, constant shaping, strengthening and growing. According to Zierath:

Lenz' Askese, die die Kasteiung miteinschließt, ist Befolgung ärztlichen Rats. Sie ist auch Andenken an die Passion Christi, die Vorbereitung auf dessen Wiederkehr, aber nicht im klassisch-theologischen Sinn, daß die Askese das Himmelreich erkaufe, sondern in einem säkularisierten, daß sie helfe, den höchstmöglichen sexuellen Genuß nach einer Zeit des Kasteiens zu erfahren, quasi als Erleben des Himmelreichs auf Erden. (78)

Zierath correctly sees both that ascetic principles are important in Lenz's thinking and that they are not entirely negative in their nature, that is, that their ultimate goal is for the production of pleasure on a higher level and not the restriction and rejection of pleasure. Although I disagree with his assertion that Lenz's askesis is "secular," it is certainly true that he aims at happiness in this world, although this happiness is to be achieved within a

spiritual context, as should be clear from the discussion above. Zierath also focuses too narrowly on the sexual. As we saw above, concupiscence is much broader than sexual desire, although sexual desire is the most prominent of the drives.

As we saw above, Lenz presents a picture in his writings of human development from a state of nature where they are unaware of laws and norms, through a development of laws and law-based norms, to a vision of an existence modeled after Christ's example, where human behavior operates above the law in a realm guided by the spirit of the Gospel, to which I will turn below. Hayer points out:

Die Freiheit vom 'Gesetz' für das 'Evangelium' als Freiheit vom 'Tod' für das 'Leben,' der Ent-Grenzung aller Strukturen, die alle nicht in freier Wahl angeeigneten Verfügungsgewalten präsentieren, beinhaltet neben diesem Außenaspekt immer ein Innen, ein Moment der Arbeit an sich selbst; gerade so, wie es Lenz stets zum einzig denkbaren Begriff der geschichtlich verantworteten Subjektivität gehörte. Ihr Selbsterkundungswillen bedarf [...], der unaufhörlichen Selbstaufklärung und erweist darin alle Arbeit der Idolenkritik als wesentlich anthropologisch begründet. (260)

Hayer sees that all of the development that occurs requires tremendous spiritual work that rests upon work upon the self and a ceaseless self-enlightenment. While I think he overstates the degree to which there is a freedom from the law and a dissolving of all structures, I completely agree with his assertion that in addition to attention to external structures there is an essential "inner" aspect, which is the work that has to be done on the self in order to bring this development about.

As we saw above, Lenz asserts that humans are created with an emptiness that will be filled, either by self-determining and self-forming activities or by drives and environmental forces. Humans have no choice but to create themselves or allow themselves to be created due to their undetermined nature. As Lenz puts it, “Wir finden ein Leeres in uns, unsere Kräfte, unser ganzer Geist, elastisch wie die Luft, dringt ihm nach und erweitert sich die Sphäre” (II: 601). This space will be filled. This is a fascinating concept that lies at the center of human identity formation for Lenz: elasticity. Our capacities and our spirit are elastic. We must give them shape. We must form them. This concept of elasticity also provides room for a notion of freedom based on lack. Because of emptiness and the incomplete nature of humans, there is a degree of indeterminacy in us that is both a burden and an opportunity. We have only the choices of forming or being formed. Our nature is such that once we gain momentum in one direction or another we are likely to continue in that same direction unless some other, more powerful force intervenes, resists the force of that momentum, and moves us in another direction. We also have tools and drives and external forces that are designed to move us in the direction of self-formation, but these are still not strong enough to determine us because that would ruin our chance to be self-forming, which is what God intended for us.

According to Demuth, Lenz stakes out a position that is quite distinct from rationalist and materialist positions in his conception of the individual in that the human is not completely formed a priori but that he must realize his individuality again and again through a life-long process of forming and that he thereby actively transforms his basic constitution in the process. This is an ethical process. Demuth asserts:

[...] argumentiert [Lenz] in spezifischer Differenz [zu rationalistischen und materialistischen Theorien] [...] in der Sache für ein Individualitätskonzept, bei dem der Mensch keines falls a priori vollständig formiert ist, sondern wo er seine ihm wesentliche Individualität in einem lebensgeschichtlichen Bildungsprozeß erst nach und nach verwirklicht und dabei seine Grundkonstitution aktiv und—vor allem—in genuin ethischer Perspektive transformiert. (35–36)

Within the context of his investigation of Lenz within the paradigm of narrative theory, Demuth perceptively identifies the centrality of the self-formative principle that underlies Lenz's ethics and its position outside of rationalist and materialist philosophies. He also correctly draws attention to the open-ended quality of this process and to the fundamental changes that can and must be made through it.

Lenz clearly wants people to perform work upon themselves. Calling on his readers, he says: “[...] verändert euren Sinn, erhebt ihn, trachtet von ganzem Herzen, das Geschehene zu verbessern [...]” (II: 521). People need to change and elevate their thinking, and work to improve the circumstances and to believe in the Gospel. This is what God wants and he rewards people for trying, even if they fail in their attempts. Lenz interprets the Sermon on the Mount in this light, reading it as saying “erhebt euren Sinn” or “überweg über alle eure vorigen Meinungen von Vollkommenheit und Glückseligkeit, überweg über euer *Non plus ultra*, über euer Ideal selbst, und unaufhörlich überweg, solange ihr noch weiter kommt” (II: 596). It is clear from this message that Lenz wants a constant striving to better oneself and one's conditions. Progression and, more importantly, the striving for this progression are the main things, even to the point where one must progress beyond one's own ideals. The main

thing is that one try, and that one believe. This is what is important in Lenz's eyes and, according to him, in God's eyes. Progress as long as you still can move forward, which—for finite beings—is an infinite process.

Lenz asks what is for him the central question of ethics and existence: "Allein die echte Liebe selber geht sehr leicht in ungeduldiges Verlangen nach der Vereinigung über und kann gar leicht sich einen Weg bis zur Wollust bahnen, welches sind die Mittel diesem zuvorzukommen?" (II: 488). His answer to this question is paradigmatic and extremely important to our understanding of Lenz's ethical understanding. He says:

Vors erste beständige Gegenwart und Spannung aller unsrer Kräfte zu Gott,
der höchsten Quelle alles Guten und aller Glückseligkeit, vors zweite
Vermeidung gewisser moralischer Unvollkommenheiten, die jederzeit aus
einem lebhaften Gefühl eine sich wider Vernunft, Ordnung und Gott
empörende Leidenschaft machen. Diese sind Unmäßigkeit in Befriedigung
anderer tierischen Begierden des Hungers, des Durstes, Unmäßigkeit und
Zügellosigkeit bei Befriedigung einer sonst sehr menschlichen Begierde, der
auch Freude Lustigkeit und Vergnügen, welche alsdann in Wildheit und
Raserei ausartet, Unmäßigkeit bei einer andern menschlichen Begierde die
sonst auch sehr edel ist, der Begierde zu gefallen [...]. (II: 488)

Many critics have seen in such statements the residue of his Pietistic upbringing and have considered his attitude toward desire and bodily needs "repressive." This view does not heed the language of Lenz's argument. It is quite clear that Lenz is careful to differentiate between types of desire and that he considers desires natural but that these desires are also not to be satisfied indiscriminately or impatiently. Humans need to exercise choice

and discretion in the satisfaction of their desires. The choices they make will determine the quality of the selves they form. Desires are material upon which ethical work needs to be performed if humans are to be capable of forming ethical character. Most importantly, this entire process of moderating our drives occurs within the context of a relationship with God. This relationship sets the contextual limits within which our self-formative activities occur.

According to Lenz, God created all existing material. This material required forming. Lenz tells us that Christ was a form-giving force who also sets things in motion and specifies God's general laws for individual cases. Lenz writes: "Wir können füglich Gott die schaffende Natur und Christum die bildende Natur nennen. Gott schuf alle Dinge aber durch Christum wurden sie gemacht, gebildet, *shaped*. Gott schuf die Materie mit allen ihren Kräften und allgemeinen Gesetzen, Christus gab ihr die Form, setzte diese Kräfte in Bewegung und bestimmte diese allgemeinen Gesetze auf einzelne Fälle" ("Catechismus," 59). As we will see below in Lenz's discussion of human development and beauty, not only are we to give material form but that we are to re-form the forms we formed in an ongoing formative process. We can see here the model that Lenz has in mind for his ethical project. If we remember his repeated calls for us to imitate Christ, it seems reasonable to apply that call to imitation Christ in this form-giving activity. If we do this, we would continually set ourselves and things around us in motion and form ourselves and them. Like Christ, we should also heed the concrete particulars and not ignore them in favor of the general and abstract. The general and abstract are for God to deal with, not humans.

Lenz argues that the nature of existence is, "Die unaufhörliche unendliche Verwandlung der Materie in Form oder die unendlich fortgehende Bildung alles

materiellen zur Form bis zum Geist hinauf, welcher die höchste Form ist [...] von Form zu Form gehen unendliche Gradationen fort bis zu Gott” (“Catechismus” 55–56).

Humans are part of this formative process and it is the ultimate goal for humans to perform work upon themselves to give form to their material selves in order to progress along the path toward godliness, a goal that may be increasingly approached but never arrived at completely. Life is a process of giving form to the material and then continuing to change the forms of the formed material in a process that leads to the ultimate form, which is ideal beauty, or God. This process is an ascetic/aesthetic process and it is the core of the formation of ethical selves and the central principle of Lenz’s notion of identity formation and ethics.

We saw above that the soul is a self-moving force. The soul is not only self-moving it is also self-forming. Through its activities, it gives shape to itself, good or bad. In addition to forming itself, it forms the world around it. As Lenz puts it: “So, möchte ich sagen erschafft sich die Seele selber und somit auch ihren künftigen Zustand” (II: 621) Through its self-forming activities, it learns about the relationships of external things to itself and it discovers how to use these things to improve its external conditions. In this process of self-formation and affecting the world around it, the soul differentiates itself from the world of machine-like creatures and becomes a creator itself. As Lenz says:

So sondert sie sich aus dem maschinenhaftwirkenden Haufen der Geschöpfe ab und wird selbst Schöpfer, mischt sich in die Welt nur in so fern als sie es zu ihrer Absicht dienlich erachtet, je größer ihre Stärke desto größer ihre freiwillige Teilnehmung, ihre verhältnismäßige Einmischung, ihr nachmaliger Schöpfungs- und Wirkungskreis. So gründet sich all unsere

Selbstständigkeit all unsere Existenz auf die Menge den Umfang die Wahrheit unsrer Gefühle und Erfahrungen, und auf die Stärke mit der wir sie ausgehalten, das heißt über sie gedacht haben oder welches einerlei ist, uns ihrer bewußt geworden sind. (II: 621–22)

The soul intervenes in the world only to the extent that it needs to for its purposes. The greater our strength the greater will be our voluntary participation and relative intervention, its future circle of creation and activity. This is how our self-sufficiency grounds itself upon the mass, the range, the truth of our feelings and experiences and upon the strength with which we endure them, that is, thought about them or become conscious of them. As we can see from this quote, the activities of our soul—or the lack thereof—determine what we become and what kind of relations we will have with the external world.

We are not born with an independent soul. God designed us so that we would have to work toward that end. He provided us with the necessary powers and abilities to do so but we have to do the work. Again, in a statement relating back to his notion of the signaling function of pride, Lenz states:

Sollte er [Stolz] nicht ein Wink von der Natur der menschlichen Seele sein, daß sie eine Substanz die nicht selbständig geboren, aber ein Bestreben ein Trieb in ihr sei sich zur Selbständigkeit hinaufzuarbeiten, sich gleichsam von dieser großen Massen der in einander hangenden Schöpfung abzusondern und ein für sich bestehendes Wesen auszumachen, das sich mit derselben wieder nur soweit vereinigt, als es mit ihrer Selbständigkeit sich vertragen kann. (II: 620)

We have a striving in us to work toward independence but we have to direct, maintain and cultivate this striving and certainly not kill it. Since we know that Lenz considers it our calling and our nature to become independent beings, we can assume that he considers it our calling to do the self-formative work necessary to achieve this. We are driven to work toward independence by differentiating ourselves from the great masses of the interconnected creation. We seek to create an independent being out of ourselves. Independence is not a given, it is something that requires work on our part. That work is self-formation and for us to realize our nature—that is, the intended end according to God’s creation—this self-formative work is essential.

Not only is developing ourselves our calling, it makes us happy. We are happy when we can support, develop, cultivate and elevate our understanding, our will, our sentiments, our fantasy, all of our spiritual powers as well as our body. Humans seek to develop their capacities because this provides pleasure and leads eventually to happiness. Lenz summarizes the ultimate condition for the self as follows:

Wir sind also nur alsdenn wahrhaftig glücklich wenn wir in einem Zustande sind, in welchem wir unsere Vollkommenheit auf die leichteste und geschwindeste Art befördern können, das heißt, in welchem wir die Fähigkeiten unsers Verstandes, unsers Willens, unserer Empfindungen, unserer Phantasei, aller unserer untern Seelenkräfte, hernach auch unserer Gliedmaßen und unsers Körpers immer mehr entwickeln verfeinern und erhöhen können und zwar in einer gewissen Harmonie und Ordnung, welche uns unsere Vernunft, die von allen Vorurteilen befreit ist und die höchste

Oberherrschaft über alle unsere übrigen Seelenvermögen erhalten hat, selbst
lehren wird. (II: 509)

Among the forces that move us in the direction of self-formation are the drives toward happiness and perfection. We feel happiest, that is, the most pleasure, when we are in a condition in which we can further our perfection in the simplest way, which is to say in which we can develop, cultivate and elevate our powers and abilities. We can clearly see that Lenz presents an understanding of human being that is characterized by a full cultivation of capacities and abilities including bodily capacities down to the movement of body parts and that this cultivation needs to be in the direction of harmony and order if humans are to be happy. Happiness is the goal. Reason is to provide the direction and to perform the ethical work that needs to be performed if all of this is to come together.

About this goal Lenz says: “Dieses Ziel ist aber nicht allein unserer Existenz fortzusetzen, sondern auch sie in ihrem ganzen Umfang und Vollkommenheit der Vorstellungen und Empfindungen, des Genusses und der Thätigkeit fortzusetzen, in so hohem Grad als möglich—” (“Catechismus” 47). Existence, in its full range and perfection, should be pursued to the fullest extent and to the highest degree. Our self-formative work must not cease until we have reached the highest possible degree of development. This will include work upon our thoughts, sentiments, enjoyment and activity.

Each individual must cultivate himself and come to know himself in order to do this because it is in the nature of God’s creation that we are all individuals. According to Lenz:

Jeder Mensch bringt sein Maß von Begierden und Kräften, seine Harmonie und Übereinstimmung von Begierden und Kräften, sein Moralsystem mit sich auf die Welt, und nach Maßgabe des Gebrauchs, den er von denselben macht, erhöht und verbessert sich dasselbe unaufhörlich. Wir werden alle gut geboren, und das bessere und Schlimmere unserer Handlungen und unseres Zustandes hängt lediglich von uns selber ab. (II: 600)

The self-formative process is particular to each individual because the capacities and powers and drives they are to form—that is, the material upon which they will work and that they will shape—differs across individuals. The drives and abilities that each person has is individual and the resulting morality for each person will be relative thereto. The degree to which he makes use of those abilities and drives will determine his condition and situation in life. We see that through the correct use he makes of his desires and capacities and the extent to which he brings them into harmony and correspondence with each other the more he will continually expand and improve his desires and capacities. The individual is ultimately responsible for how he acts and what he makes of his life. He is responsible for his condition because it is up to him how and if he acts and thereby what effects he has on himself and the world around him. This is the key to the good life for Lenz.

While it is important to acknowledge Lenz's awareness of the importance of socio-cultural factor's in human development, his ultimate focus and emphasis is clearly on the individual and the work the individual has to perform on herself in order to form an ethical character and strive for the ultimate level of existence for humans. The natural and social forces that may inhibit the individual from being able to perform this activity are clearly part

of his thinking and it would be a mistake to lose sight of the importance of these external forces and the contextual environment in Lenz's overall discussion of ethics. Nevertheless, it is also clear that the individual is the cornerstone and that the individual has to fight the battles in order to achieve what God intended for her to achieve and what is the telos of human action. Lenz focuses on the relation of the self to the self and to others and on behaviors as they are formative of the self. There are specific actions that need to be performed and what these actions are to be are to be determined by the individual.

In addition to God and Christ, Lenz adds nature as a limiting context for our self-formative activities. As Lenz tells his listeners: "Setzt euch also aus dieser Dependenz heraus, fastet, seid keusch, je nachdem ihr größere Kraft anwendet, zu widerstehen je nachdem wird ihr impulsus sich verringern, ihrer Herrschaft aber ganz entsagen, ganz willkürlich werden, könnt ihr eben so wenig als die Pflanze, die am Boden hängt, auf demselben herumtanzen mag" (II: 485). Although we should certainly try to rise above our dependence by fasting and being chaste, by applying our powers to resist natural forces that impinge upon us because of human nature and our natural desires, we cannot expect to become completely free of them, to become absolutely determined by our wills to the extent that we are free of any instinctual drives. This metaphysical freedom is impossible for humans and should not be considered possible and striving for it actually is contradictory to natural laws. If we look at the metaphor used, if we were to extract ourselves from our dependence on nature and our natures it would be like a plant tearing itself from the ground and being able to dance upon it. In short, it would cease to exist if it did this because its source of life would be detached from it.

Material to be Shaped

The constant theme running through Lenz's writings on morality and ethics is that nature's materials and forces must be shaped and directed to ends that are appropriate to what God intended for us and to our own individual purposes. In his discussion of homogenous and ideal beauty (see below) we see that it is our destiny to give form to material and to progress through form to form toward ever higher forms of homogenous beauty by engaging in forming activity, which would eventually lead us to the perception and experience of ideal beauty. In effect, the entire process hinges upon the degree to which we are able to form ourselves and how well we form ourselves because all activity proceeds from the individual. How well society is formed and how successful we are at re-forming it are also crucial because the relationships it established for each individual are crucial to each individual's self-forming activities as well as providing tools for those activities.

In this section, I will discuss the material that we are to form. In the following section I will turn my attention to the type of work we are to perform on this material in order to shape it in the optimal fashion to bring about human flourishing. The materials we are to shape have already been introduced above as aspects of human nature and there is no need to present them again in detail here. The materials we are to shape are: our body and its desires, our feelings, sentiments, fantasies, thoughts, and, most importantly, our soul.

At a very basic level, we must shape our bodies as bodies and not only in order to spiritualize them. Our bodies are in need of forming and must be formed as bodies. Lenz tells us that, "Dieser Körper mußte nun erst gebildet, zu seinen körperlichen Verrichtungen

fähig gemacht und geübt werden. Das heißt er mußte essen und sich gatten”

(“Catechismus” 56). We must train the body so that it is capable of performing its bodily functions in the proper and optimal fashion. It is important that our bodies function well as bodies. We need to be healthy and fit so that the basics of existence can be met and so that our bodies are capable of optimal performance and so that we can experience things. This means that people had to feed themselves and reproduce, otherwise they would cease to exist as individuals and as a species.

Lenz reminds his readers—after having stated the superiority of the intellectual powers—that they cannot and should not ignore bodily and sensual aspects of human existence. He tells us:

Da aber alle in einem unauflöslichen unendlichfeinen Bande mit einander stehen, so sind die andern eben so wenig zu verabsäumen. Und dieses nach der verschiedenen Einrichtung eines jeden Individuums: sein inneres Gefühl seine gemachten Erfahrungen und die Entscheidung seiner Vernunft wird ihn darin am besten unterrichten. Genug es muß in unserm Bestreben nach Vollkommenheit eine gewisse Übereinstimmung aller unserer Kräfte zu einem Ganzen, eine gewisse Harmonie sein, welche eigentlich den wahren Begriff des höchsten Schönen gibt. Sehen Sie nun, daß die Linien des wahren Schönen und des wahren Guten im strengsten Verstande, in einen Punkt zusammen laufen? (II: 505)

Most importantly we see that, for Lenz, humans are composed of sensual and intellectual powers and that even though the intellectual and spiritual powers are superior—because they make us more than animals and constitute the God-like qualities of humans—the

sensual powers are intimately connected to them and have a role in making humans what they are. Without the sensual we would not have the necessary materials that our spiritual powers are to work upon. The pleasures of the body and the desires related to them also provide important motivational resources and serve as rewards for life here on earth. Humans are not disembodied souls and cannot and should not try to disembody themselves.

Taming the sex drive is fundamental to morality. Lenz makes what, for him, is a startling assertion: “Es wäre also die Zähmung unsers Geschlechtertriebes nicht unfüglich, wo nicht ihrer innern Wichtigkeit, doch der Zeitfolge nach, der erste Grundsatz in unserer Moral zu nennen, da wir gemeiniglich von dem Laster der Ausgelassenheit und Zügellosigkeit zu allen übrigen stufenweise, wie wohl unvermerkt fortzugehen pflegen” (“Chatechismus”: 69). It would not be incorrect to call the taming of the sex drive the first principle of morality for Lenz, if not according to its inherent importance, then because of temporal considerations. That is, because we tend to go from the vice of lasciviousness and uncontrollability to all of the other vices in increments, even though we may be unaware of this process. He says that he is aware that people will have difficulty with grounding morality in our sex drive, but that this is where we have to start if morality is to be meaningful and effective. This follows Lenz’s tendency to ground what are typically high-order philosophical questions in concrete material reality. He consistently shows that these ultimate questions can be brought back down to concrete, physical levels. It simultaneously shows the importance of the seemingly lowly and the tangibility of the seemingly intangible.

The forces of desire are the primary material to be shaped. Not because they are most valuable in a moral or ethical sense, but because of their power over us and their role in action and decision making, as we saw above. As Lenz puts it: “Diese begehrenden Kräfte sind, wenn sie in uns geübt werden, die Quellen aller unsrer EntschlieÙungen und Handlungen [...]” (Blei IV: 30–31). If we do not train our desiring powers they will not be there as sources for our decision making and actions. Not only must we shape sexual desires because they will be harmful but we must do so also because they are a valuable resource for higher order functioning. According to Hull, this focus on drives was common to eighteenth-century thought: “This transformation of drive into willed desire is the key to the eighteenth-century’s thinking about sexual behavior in relation to society” (247). Lenz is clearly working within this train of thought, certainly with variations of emphasis and certainly style and manner of dealing with this topic.

As we saw above, our feelings can, and must, be shaped and given form. Lenz makes what he considers to be an obvious observation: “Was für glückliche Einflüsse ein so in Proportion und Harmonie gebrachtes Gefühl auf den Umlauf unsers Geblüts und also unsere ganze Gesundheit und Behaglichkeit haben müsse, springt hier von selbst Ihnen in die Augen” (II: 527). When our feelings are given form, and that form has proportion and harmony, these shaped and formed feelings have a positive effect on our physiology. It promotes our health and well being. What is more, when feelings are shaped, they become sentiments. As we know, sentiments open up a broader range of experience to us and are beneficial to our development.

Forming and shaping activity is also to be applied to our fantasies. Careful attention to our fantasies is required so that they do not come to dominate our thinking and prevent

us from thinking about the important things in life (“Catechismus” 41). Lenz says “Daß wir unsere Phantasey von allen wohlhlüstigen Vorstellungen befreyen und wenn sich eine einmahl hineinschleicht, sie sogleich zu vergessen und durch Vorstellungen andrer Art und wichtigern Gehalts auszulöschen suchen: lieber aber einschlaffen oder nichts denken, als böse Bilder und Irrlichter verfolgen die uns zuletzt in Stümpfe leiten” (“Catechismus” 41). Thinking bad thoughts is perverts human character and our thoughts and actions. People should strive to keep their thoughts free from fantasies □ocusing on inappropriate desires. Even though Lenz says this in his most conservative text, this suspicion of uncontrolled fantasy remains with him, as can be seen in his criticism of Wieland and the type of literature he writes^{xv}.

Hull makes an observation about a shift in thinking concerning the sex drive that applies well to a shift that seems to have occurred in Lenz’s writings: “If everyone inherited a sexual drive, still, it could be manipulated within limits. Alas, most people apparently chose to arouse it, rather than dampen it. [...] Once the cameralists had redefined luxury as a good thing, exotic, rich or spicy foods, and drink were no longer mentioned as sources of sexual temptation. Instead, imagination and bad example had become paramount” (73). Though Lenz never explicitly states he has changed his focus, we definitely see him moving away from his focus on dietary regulations in the battle with concupiscence to a concern with bad examples and products of the imagination, thus the increasing importance of the social function of literature in his thinking. This can perhaps be explained by his exposure to different thinkers over time and to a broader range of thought through his education and Königsberg and through his voracious reading of contemporary thinkers^{xvi}.

Sentiments are intimately connected to thought and representation. In fact, we cannot have the former without the latter. It is therefore impossible correctly and effectively to form and shape the sentiments without also performing work upon our thoughts. According to Lenz: “Wir können also nichts empfinden, das wir uns vorher nicht in einem gewissen Verhältnis gedacht, vorgestellt. Und je nachdem dies Verhältnis größer, mehr umfassender, richtiger und deutlicher, je nachdem auch unsere Empfindung” (II: 527). As we clarify and expand out thoughts, and correct our thinking, our sentiments will also be clarified, expanded and corrected. Lenz considers it our calling and a matter of ethical behavior to engage in this continuous clarifying work. That is, to engage in self-formative practices focused on clarifying our thoughts and sentiments.

Of course, the ultimate material to be shaped is the soul. As Lenz says: [...] so viel wissen wir, daß diese uns belebende Kraft der edelste Teil unseres Selbst ist, daß von ihrer Bildung, Erhöhung, Erweiterung die Bildung, Erhöhung und Erweiterung unserer ganzen Glückseligkeit abhängt, wer das nicht glauben will, der lasse es bleiben, die Sache redet von sich selbst, je größer die Sphäre ist, in der wir leben, desto beglückter und würdiger unser Leben [...]” (II: 565). The soul is the noblest part of our self. The shaping, elevating and expanding of it leads to the shaping, elevating and expanding of our entire happiness, or, the latter is dependent upon the former. It speaks for itself that the larger the sphere in which we live the happier and more dignified our life.

In the early writing, the “Catechismus,” we see that Lenz quite clearly states a more extreme position in functionalizing the body more drastically than he does in the later

writings. Whereas later we see that he sees the importance of forming the body as well and that the body must be attended to so that it can perform its essential functions, if, for no other reason than that it is the material within which the spirit is contained and it supplies important motivational impulses. According to Lenz: “Dem Menschlichen Geschlecht zu zeigen daß sie hauptsächlich auf die Welt gesetzt sein um in dem Gefäß ihres Körpers ihren unsterblichen Geist zu bilden zu erweitern zu erhöhen, zugleich die Art die Form wie dies geschehen könne an seinem Beyspiel [...]” (“Catechismus” 66). In the end, the body is secondary to the spirit and its cultivation is important because it is the container of the spirit. The cultivation of the spirit is certainly the primary concern for humans. This is not inconsistent with his later position. It is just that he does not mention and perhaps does not consider the shaping of the body as body to have any purpose or function.

Lenz says that we need to act to bring holiness to God and humans and thus move from form to form toward eternal life. We need to ceaselessly build, train and perfect the active power in us, our spirit. In his “Catechismus,” Lenz says:

Daß wir also vorzüglich unsrem Geist die tätige Kraft in uns bilden, nicht die leidende—höchstens empfindende und genießende Materie denn das tut das Tier auch von dem wir doch um eine so herrliche Stufe erhöht sind um zur Gottheit emporzusteigen. Also tun ist unsere Hauptbestimmung, nicht bloß Eindrücke empfangen sowohl körperliche als geistliche durch die Türen der Seele die Sinne—tun, handeln, tätig sein mit Geist und Leib wo es am meisten nützlich sein, Heil bringen kann zur Ihre Gottes und der Menschen und so von Form zu Form übergehen ins ewige Leben [...]. Die tätige Kraft in uns ist unser Geist, die also unaufhörlich zu üben zu bilden und zu

vervollkommen ist unsere Beschäftigung, Handeln und Genießen, das heißt leben [...] (II: 497).

We need to build the active power in us, not the passionate ones. Action is our main calling, not the reception of impressions. We need to be active, with body and mind where it is most useful. We need continually to train, shape and perfect our active power. That is our calling. This is clearly a self-formative process directed at our body and soul. We are to shape and reshape them to infinity.

Self-formative Activities

Lenz also concerns himself with the way in which the individual has to constitute a certain part of himself as the prime material of his moral conduct. What makes up the content of the ethical ideal will be dependent on how one does this. This involves the attitude that one has to have toward the work that has to be done. There are possible differences in the forms of elaboration, of ethical work, that one performs on oneself, not only in order to bring one's conduct into compliance with a given rule, but to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one's behavior.

Lenz provides a summary of the process and results of his moral project when he says:

Geistige Vergnügungen gesucht, des Fleisches Geschäfte getötet, alle subjektive mit der objektiven Schönheit verglichen und nur in dem großen Verhältnis zu ihr genossen. Dann auch gehandelt, o wie göttliches Vergnügen begleitet jede freie Handlung, um dich herumgearbeitet, so weit du reichen magst, auch bei andern dies Lebensfeuer wieder anzuzünden, das unser Prometheus vom Himmel brachte und von dem er wünschte: wollte

Gott es brennte schon. Nach seinem Beispiel dich deinem Nächsten
mitgeteilt—aufgeopfert—wer so sein Leben verliert, der wird es erhalten.

(II: 518)

We should seek out spiritual pleasures, destroy the fleshly goings on, compare subjective with objective beauty and only enjoy in the greatest proportion to objective beauty. Then we should act. We should try to work around ourselves, that is, on our surroundings as far as our reach can go. We should try to inspire others with this life fire (that is, engage in evangelical work). We should act according to God's example and communicate it to our neighbors and sacrifice ourselves for them. Those who do so will be rewarded.

In his "Lebensregeln" Lenz outlines an ascetic program for our bodily desires and needs that is relatively direct and clear. Though he may be a bit more rigid in his attitude toward bodily aspects of existence at this point, the core of the thinking behind this program remains constant throughout his writings, though of course rigid adherence to such a program would be soundly criticized by him, as we can see in his characterization of Wenzeslaus in *Der Hofmeister*. Lenz clearly calls for the forming of the self through the channeling and cultivating of our satisfaction of our desires. In his "Lebensregeln" he asks: Ist es recht sich an gewisse Arten Speisen Getränke und andrer sinnlichen Kützelungen wie Tabak, Opium, Brandntewein, Bäder etc. Zu gewöhnen?" He answers emphatically:

Nein—es ist wider die christliche Freiheit, macht uns zu Sklaven unser
Sinnen und unglücklich sintemal wir höhere und edlere Vorteile oft
dergleichen sinnlichen Vorteilen aufzuopfern uns genötigt sehen und diese
kleinen Befriedigungen unsrer Konkupiszenz dieselbe abstümpfen und

zerstören und zu edlen und großen Entschlüssen unfähig machen. Doch muß ich alle diese Dinge brauchen können wenn ich will und die Vernunft es erlaubt. Just diese kleinen gering scheinenden Bedürfnisse sind die unsichtbaren Seile an welchen wir edle und freie Menschen, die wie die Vögel unterm Himmel das was sie brauchen allenthalben finden, wie Sklaven und Kettenhunde herumgeschleppt werden wohin andre Leute wollen nicht wohin wir wollen. ("Catechismus" 50)

Lenz argues that if we give into sensual pleasures and allow the pursuit of these pleasures to guide our actions we will become slaves to them and that this is against what he calls Christian freedom. It is not that he calls these little sensual pleasures evil in themselves. He clearly does not do this. This is significant. He finds fault in the fact that the satisfaction of these desires is often at the expense of higher and nobler advantages and that they will eventually numb and destroy our desires. Thus, it is not the satisfaction of desire per se but the wrong type of satisfaction that Lenz finds faulty. What is more, we see that Lenz understands these desires to be a cause for our dependence and slavery to other people and that we lose our personal freedom because of it. He says that it is fine to use these things if their use is kept within reason. We need to use our bodily needs as opportunities for spiritual growth. Zierath sees parallels to Hamann's thinking here, claiming: "Wie für Lenz ist für Hamann der Mensch fähig, über die sinnliche Erfahrung des Körpers und über seinen Geist die Qualität seines Handelns zu beurteilen. Auch bei Hamann führt ein diätetisch ausgerichtetes Leben, das die natürlichen Affektkräfte nutzt, statt sich ihnen 'zügellos' zu ergeben, zu einer Harmonie des Menschen mit der Natur" (22). It is an interesting view of the body from a perspective that clearly values the spirit

over the body, but insists on the continuing, vital importance of the body throughout the process of spiritual development. A finely attuned balance is required to achieve this.

Lenz makes clear that the sex drive is not to be allowed free reign. That would be sinful. He also makes clear that repression and absolute denial of the sex drive is harmful, as is the denial of its existence and influence. A delicate balance must be maintained and it is a balance that is never free for long from conflict and strife. In addition, the solution to these problems will be individual because the sex drive is not equally strong in individuals due to different mixtures of blood in people and different lifestyles, variations in diet, and accidental and arbitrary factors (II: 63). He tells us to kill our fleshly concerns. This apparently contradicts his statements elsewhere that if we were to do so we would destroy a vital motivational source.

Lenz presents what he sees to be God's intention for our dealing with concupiscence:

Diese Konkupiszenz ist meine herrlichste Gabe, nur behaltet sie ungeschwächt, als ein Gefäß mir zu Ehren, behaltet sie lebendig—damit sie euch durch eine Ewigkeit begleite, damit ihr eine Glückseligkeit ohne ende damit auflösen könntet. Sobald ihr aber esset—eure Velleität der Konkupiszenz nachgibt, so wird diese Konkupiszenz nach kurzem Genuß eines ihrer nicht würdigen Guts immer enger zusammenschrumpfen, immer weniger begehren, sterben—leerer entsetzlicher Zustand, ihr begehrt, wünscht hofft nichts mehr, ihr kehrt in Staub und Verwesung zurück, ihr sterbt des Todes. (II: 516)

We must be careful not to satisfy our desires indiscriminately. We must satisfy them in ways that do not cause their degeneration by over satisfying them or by succumbing to them too soon or with partners or in situations that are unworthy of us. In short, the drive must be cultivated and shaped and not be “liberated” in the sense of allowing it “free expression.” It should not be treated as a force whose natural, that is, unbridled, expression is desirable. It can and must be cultivated and directed by a person in such a way that it serves higher goals and leads him to a happier and healthier life. The person with ethical character will walk the line separating repression from unbridled expression where the drive is cultivated in such a way that it is maintained in an unweakened or even heightened vigor. We must be careful not to satisfy it in just any way.

Lenz does not think that merely constricting the sex drives with laws can control it, not even along with penalties or even torture. He believes that the sex drive will merely grow in persistence and strength in proportion to the attempts to combat it. Laws and penalties are too weak to control or hinder a passion whose power grows in proportion to the resistance it encounters. What is needed is a still and noble stimulation. This will dampen and suppress the drive and make room for the pure flames of love and cherishing (II: 64). This is an idea that appears to people to be mundane, but nobody has recognized its significance. This recognition alone can lead us out of the labyrinth. If this phenomenon did not exist, beautiful women would be at the mercy of dishonorable men who would try to cool their overheated passions through them. It is important to recall that as a “natural” drive, sexual activity was considered necessary to health. Here general opinion followed centuries-old medical teaching: total continence was harmful. Lenz’s argument here follows a familiar trajectory for thinking about the sex drive among Lenz’s contemporaries. Hull summarizes this view:

[...] retaining sexual fluids poisoned the body, injured the genitals, and triggered ‘hidden illnesses.’ [...] moderate sexual indulgence was plainly considered the physical prerequisite for a normal, healthy life for both sexes.”(237).

As we saw above, Lenz argues that the closer humans are to animals—that is, uncultivated and uncivilized—the more important it is to have iron-clad bands of custom to control them. As he says: “Je näher dem Tier, desto besser im eisernen Bande der Gewohnheit zu leiten. Aber die aufgeklärtern, die mittägigen, die freigeisterischen Nationen, die den Tod verachten und doch aller Gefahr des Todes fliehen soviel sie können” (II: 793). When they are more civilized these iron-clad customs are not only unnecessary but also harmful. Animal pleasure is a pleasure of a lower sort. If one cultivates the drives and desires one can experience an even higher level of pleasure, a truly human pleasure that is more valuable and enjoyable. There are hidden erotics here that we can hear if we do not listen with an ear contaminated by decades of sexual philosophy dominated by the repressive hypothesis.

For example, Rector, one of the more perceptive readers of Lenz, drastically misreads Lenz in this way when he states:

In seinen moralphilosophischen Schriften propagiert Lenz immer wieder die Notwendigkeit der Triebunterdrückung, und zwar aus zwei Gründen. Erstens biete nur der zuvor erbrachte Beweis zur Fähigkeit der Unterdrückung des Triebs eine Gewähr für dessen moralisch vertretbaren Genuß, nämlich in der Ehe [...]. Das zweite Argument für die Triebunterdrückung bezieht sich unmittelbar auf die Willensfreiheit und die Handlungsautonomie.

(“Automomie” 304)

Repression is just too simplistic a term that does not capture the complex set of practices that are to be brought to bear on the drives and it completely ignores Lenz's clearly positive valuation of drives. We need terminology that more accurately captures both the controls and the positive valuation of the potentially dangerous impulses. As Hull says: "Given the contemporary judgment that the sexual drive was both natural and beneficent, 'repression' is a misleading label [...]" (267). We must move away from this term when assessing thinkers like Lenz because it simply misses the mark when it is used to characterize his thinking on drives. Shaping and forming is not repression. In short, the "repressive hypothesis" blinds us to the nature of Lenz's discussion of desire and its appropriate satisfaction. It is not "natural" indiscriminately to satisfy desires. If we were to assume such a "natural" expression we would have to conclude that it would be most "natural" to relieve ourselves immediately and most directly by any means necessary to satisfy our desires. Clearly, not even animals behave in such a way. Conditioning and habituation are omnipresent factors. Repression is a simplistic concept that has been rigorously refuted by Foucault, Hull, and others^{xvii}.

It is true that in Lenz's earlier writings his approach to concupiscence is more controlling and negative in nature. He prescribes denying these desires unfettered access to that which they desire and he demands that we resist them because they are dangerous. In contrast to his earlier writings Lenz seems to move away from a negative focus of control and suppression to a focus on strengthening powers that are superior to the lower capacities. It is not so much that his ultimate goal changes, presence to God and a moral and ethical existence remains his constant telos, it is more that his focus on the type of work to be performed to achieve those goals changes. The material to be worked on also

remains fairly constant: drives and desires are the consistent focus of his ethics and morality. We can say that he moves more to a focus on the Gospel and to what can be considered an evangelical approach, an approach that he defines as an ethics to contrast it with a law-based or morality-based approach to normative behavior, as we will see in more detail below.

The suppressing and controlling activities are not ends in themselves and are not conducted because the drives are evil in themselves. It is quite clear that the drives are invaluable, although dangerous. Control is not for the sake of denying satisfaction and pleasure. To the contrary, it is directed toward the goal of greater pleasure and happiness. This is quite clear from Lenz's statements.

Critics like Luserke are wrong as well when they assert Lenz is creating a refuge for the passions. He is correct when he argues that Lenz insists that passions must be accepted, but he is certainly wrong when he de-emphasizes the role of disciplining that is ever-present in Lenz's work (*Bändigung* 233). For Lenz, both are true: we must accept that the passions are a necessary part of humans, but it is necessary for humans that we work upon those passions and not simply accept them in their natural state. That would be an animal state of existence that is entirely contradictory to human destiny and it would imply a state of rest that is antithetical to Lenz's performative ethics. The concept of refuge is simply wrong. Luserke is not even correct if we assume the limited context of contemporary discussions. He comes too close to upholding the now discredited cliché of the Storm and Stress movement as a reaction against the Enlightenment in the valorization of strong emotion over the Enlightenment's preference for cool reason.

In the end, all work to be done is a form of resistance and in the service of strengthening our capabilities to resist forces acting upon us. Though there are many types of activities that Lenz outlines, at some level, resistance is involved in them. In Lenz's physics he speaks of forces, bodies, power, and resistance. On a physical level, resistance to a force represents the power of the resisting entity against the entity imposing its force upon it and attempting to move it in a certain direction. With humans we are dealing with more than mere physical forces, even though these too apply to humans. With humans there is the material—with its physical laws—and the spiritual—where material laws do not explain everything. The spiritual realm intervenes in the physical. In terms of forces resisting other forces, our spiritual resistance is, "Die Stärke die wir anwenden können, den Trieben der Natur nach den jedesmaligen Erfordernissen unsrer Erkenntnis und unserer Situation zu widerstehen" (II: 486). The degree to which we exert ourselves in the resistance against natural forces with our own powers is the degree to which we will gain momentum to move into higher regions of existence. These regions are characterized by higher degrees of "moral" freedom. According to Lenz:

Moralische Freiheit bleibt freilich, wir können auch da den uns entgegen wirkenden Kräften unsere Kraft entgegensetzen und nach Verhältnis der angewandten Anstrengung oder Tugend uns wieder immer in höhere Regionen schwingen, aber überall bleiben die ewigen notwendigen göttlichen Gesetze, die alle unsere Wirksamkeit einfassen, nach denen diese Wirksamkeit wenn unser moralischer Trieb nachläßt sich in sich selbst wieder verringert, oder in sich selbst vermehrt und uns nach diesem Maßstabe glücklich oder unglücklich macht. (II: 486)

Our exertion in this resistance to opposing forces is our virtue. Our moral freedom is the degree to which we can confront the powers of nature with our powers. The degree to which our resistance is greater against these other forces, the freer we are. The more resistance we can put up, the freer we are. The activity of resistance increases our moral drive, and to the degree that we do not resist, our moral drive diminishes. In this sense, resisting is a self-formative activity, in that by engaging in it, we affect changes in our selves. Resisting forces acting upon us from within and from without is the fundamental form the work to be done takes. Without resistance, none of the other types of work are possible. Struggling against forces to assert, create and build upon our moral freedom. Through the exercise of this freedom and resistance we “swing” to ever higher realms of existence.

Ethical work involves making ourselves less dependent upon forces beyond our control. He mentions fasting, being chaste and resisting as ways of diminishing the natural impulses that impinge upon us and make us dependent. As Lenz tells his listeners, resistance has its limits: “Setzt euch also aus dieser Dependenz heraus, fastet, seid keusch, je nachdem ihr größere Kraft anwendet, zu widerstehen je nachdem wird ihr impulsus sich verringern [...]” (II: 485). Among the activities of resisting that Lenz mentions are fasting, and being chaste. As we perform these activities our impulses to act decrease and our degree of control over our actions increases.

Lenz states a rule of thumb for the enjoyment of sensual pleasures in his “Catechismus”: “Alles fähig seyn zu geniessen und mit dem höchstmöglichen Vergnügen zu geniessen, das die Sache zu geben vermag, aber auch alles fähig seyn zu entbehren bis auf das was unsre Existenz fortsetzt Brod und Wasser” (“Catechismus” 49). He goes on to say that reason should lead each individual in this process because it is too complex to bring

under a single rule. It is essential that one be able to enjoy everything to the fullest possible extent, but also that one can do without all of those things down to the level that one only needs to bare minimum to survive. Lenz does not proclaim that one must deny oneself pleasures but that one must be able to deny oneself these things if necessary so that we do not become dependent upon them and become a slave to our sensual nature. While Lenz does seem to move away from more rigorous forms of self-denial, focusing more on self-formative activities, there is always an element of self-denial present in his prescriptions for dealing with bodily pleasures. Although self-denial is clearly an important component of the ethical work to be done on the self, we cannot overlook the equally important notion of enjoying pleasures, and not merely reduced enjoyment, but enjoyment to the highest degree possible. Far from being necessary evils, enjoying is a type of self-formative activity that is critical to ethics and existence. Once again, this does not fit the repressive hypothesis.

Lenz does present extreme forms of self-forming. For example, he says: “Ueberhaupt ists gut das Fleisch zu kasteyen und zu kreutzigen damit der Geist wachsen und sich bilden könne [...]” (“Catechismus” 62). This is the most extreme expression of askesis with which Lenz presents us. For Lenz, castigation is not an end, it is a means to strengthen and build the spirit, which will allow for more pleasure. In short, castigation works in the service of increasing pleasure. Pleasure is not sacrificed to purity or self-denial because pleasure is considered evil. It is a type of work to be performed on the self if the self is to be made capable of higher forms of pleasure. Pleasure is not negated; it is one type of pleasure being sacrificed to another type of pleasure, a higher form of pleasure. He is proposing a model for us to arrive at a rapturous pleasure that is far more enjoyable and pleasurable than lower forms of enjoyment.

Lenz says that it is the rule of the Christian to maintain a presence to God in spirit and that this includes continually restraining our bodily pleasures so that we become more capable of noble and great decisions and that we should “Die körperliche Begier nie in uns aufsteigen zu lassen außer in der Ehe wo sie eine Folge der innigsten Liebe ist, damit unsre Liebe geistiger, unsere Empfindungen edler höher wärmer und stärker sein” (II: 496). Again, Lenz argues for the limitation of our bodily desires so that we can reach ever-higher goals. The channeling of our desires and the selective satisfaction thereof are the means by which humans can form themselves and reach higher ground. In this case by controlling our bodily desires we make our sentiments nobler, higher, warmer and stronger.

Lenz quite clearly and consistently calls for moderation in satisfying our desires and needs. He condemns immoderate behavior in the following statement: “Diese sind Unmäßigkeit in Befriedigung andrer thierischen Begierden des Hungers, des Durstes, Unmäßigkeit und Zügellosigkeit bey Befriedigung einer sonst sehr menschlichen Begierde, der nach Freude Lustigkeit und Vergnügen, welche alsdenn in Wildheit und Raserey ausartet, Unmäßigkeit bey einer andern menschlichen Begierde die sonst auch sehr edel ist, der Begierde zu gefallen [...]” (“Catechismus” 41). If we are moderate in the degree to which we allow our concupiscence its expression, we will form ourselves in important ways: “[...] je sparsamer wir diese Konkupiszenz, die sich am ersten bei tierischen Bedürfnissen äußert und durch das erste Verbot Gottes so wie jetzt überhaupt durchs Gesetz ihren Schwung erhält, befriedigen, desto größer, starker und edler werden unsere Entschließungen und die drauf folgenden Handlungen, desto edler wir, Helden, Halbgötter, Herkulesse, der Gottheit näher” (Blei IV: 31). If we are able to be modest in satisfying our

concupiscence our decisions will be greater, stronger, nobler as will our actions that follow those decisions. To be moderate in our enjoyment and satisfaction of our desires is ennobling and strengthening to our character. Moderating as a form of resisting ennobles and strengthens character. It is a self-formative activity and a type of work to be performed on the self.

When Lenz asks: “Welches ist die Hauptsumm und Inhalt aller dieser Maximen?” he answers with “Die rechte Maße und Ordnung in allen unsern Handlungen, zu welcher unsere Kräfte allein durch die in unsrer Seele beständig lebhafteste Idee vom alles erfüllenden Gott können disponiert werden, oder durch die Gegenwärtigkeit zu Gott” (II: 490). The way to maintain the correct relationship to God is to find the correct measure and order in all of our actions. Our powers are disposed to this end, but we must work with these dispositions and form them in line with their intended design.

We can go too far in trying to suppress our desires to the point where we destroy a critical component of our psycho-physiological constitution. Even though we cannot completely repress it we can damage and pervert it to a degree that it gets channeled into destructive behaviors. Lenz makes clear that obsessing over or dwelling on concupiscence has a corrupting influence on people that makes them coldhearted and capable of gruesome acts. In fact he attributes such deformations as sects, inquisitions, attempts to convert heathens, and perhaps dark imaginings about God and the future to such a reaction to concupiscence. Such people have dampened souls and are one step away from committing the most ugly and despicable acts. As he says in his Catechismus: “Am schlimmsten sind die Wirkungen dieser Hoffarth bei Leuten die auf einen besondern Eiffer in der Religion, auf eine besondere Frömmigkeit Anspruch machen und alles um sich herum verdammen,

verketzern und verbrennen" (Catechismus, 47). Even in one of Lenz's most conservative texts, where the voice of Lenz's father is often alleged to be speaking through him most clearly, we can see that he asserts that concupiscence is a natural and necessary and vital aspect of human existence and those who condemn it are harmful to human existence and human development. They are the perverse ones. People must also moderate their attempts to be good religious people in the sense that they must not be intolerant of those who are different from them or who do not appear go to the extent that they do in their devotion.

Imitating is an important type of ethical work. Imitating is a developmental tool that arises out of our admiration for God and Christ and our amazement with God's creation. We have a drive to imitate him. As a consequence of this mimetic activity, we build and form our characters. The first drive we feel is the desire to imitate this being. According to Lenz:

Wir sind m.H., oder wollen wenigstens sein, die erste Sprosse auf der Leiter der freihandelnden selbstständigen Geschöpfe, und da wir eine Welt hie da um uns sehen, die der Beweis eines unendlich freihandelnden Wesens ist, so ist der erste Trieb, den wir in unserer Seele fühlen, die Begierde 's ihm nachzutun; da aber die Welt keine Brücken hat, und wir uns schon mit den Dingen, die da sind, begnügen müssen, fühlen wir wenigstens Zuwachs unsrer Existenz, Glückseligkeit, ihm nachzuäffen, seine Schöpfung ins Kleine zu schaffen. (II: 645)

We feel a growth in our existence and pleasure as a result of this mimetic activity and that is its reward and result.

Imitating has the effect of impressing the character of the person imitated more deeply upon us. “Durchs Nachahmen durchs Agieren drückt sich der Charakter tiefer ein” (II: 641). That is why Lenz recommends that we imitate Götz, and why we should imitate Christ, most importantly of all. Lenz appears to propose something like learning by doing where we imitate the actions of exemplary figures. We see this in the case of his repeated calls for us to imitate Christ and here we see him suggesting that we imitate exemplary literary figures. This points to Lenz’s conception of reading literature as a potential ethical practice, if we imitate represented characters and affect our character thereby shaping it in the process.

In an obvious contradiction to the earlier characterization that Lenz and other Storm and Stress writers celebrate the “irrational,” Lenz holds thinking and reasoning in the highest regard and positions them at the center of his program for moral order and the formation of ethical selves. About thinking, Lenz says:

Denken heißt nicht vertauben—es heißt, seine unangenehmen
Empfindungen mit aller ihrer Gewalt wüten lassen und Stärke genug in sich
fühlen, die Natur dieser Empfindungen zu untersuchen und sich so über sie
hinauszusetzen. Diese Empfindungen mit vergangenen zusammenzuhalten,
gegeneinander abzuwägen zu ordnen und zu übersehen. Da erst kann man
sagen, man fühle sich—und wenn solch ein Strauß überstanden ist, bekommt
der Mensch, oder des Menschen Geist eine Festigkeit die ihm für die
Ewigkeit und Unzerstörbarkeit seiner Existenz Bürge wird. Glückliche da
erst, mit der Überzeugung sich selbst dieses Glück zu danken zu haben. (II:
621)

Thinking plays a critical role in the self-formative process. Through the application of thought to the self, one creates one's own happiness. One does this by creating an existence that is firm and that will provide for the indestructibility of his existence for eternity. One does this through thinking. Thinking is a process whereby one lets one's uncomfortable sentiments rage in all of their violence. We then feel the internal strength to investigate those feelings. We do this by bringing them together with past feelings, weighing them against each other, ordering them and overseeing them. In doing so, we set ourselves above them. When one does this, one can say that one feels oneself. Through this process we become firmer. As a result of this, we create our own happiness because we realize that we have ourselves to thank for this strength and happiness.

Thinking is the most independent action of the soul, according to Lenz. It is a way to set one self above the forces acting upon the self, but it is not a way to make oneself numb or indifferent to them. It is an "innere Stärke den äußern unangenehmen Eindrücken das Gegengewicht zu halten" (II: 621). When one performs this action of thought the soul is in the act of creating itself. It is a self-formative activity and the more it is performed the more the soul forms and creates and strengthens itself. But as one can see, Lenz is at pains to describe thinking as intimately bound to feeling and thought and not as abstracted from the earthly and the confused tumult of the emotions and the world. It is not some abstract, disinterested, unemotional activity of a soul separated from the world and the world of emotion and desire. It is necessarily bound up with them and is characterized by reflexively focusing its attention on them and considering them in their relation to each other and to the world outside the soul. Thinking happens in the midst of the conflict, not from somewhere outside it, unaffected, as it were.

We need to train our desiring powers, not repress them. This is quite fundamental to Lenz, as we can see when he asserts: “Diese begehrenden Kräfte sind, wenn sie in uns geübt werden, die Quellen aller unsrer Entschließungen und Handlungen [...]” (Blei IV: 30–31). If these desiring powers are trained they are the source of all of our decisions and actions.

In line with contemporary thinking on reproductive physiology, Lenz asserts that we need to collect our sperm in order to build upon our spiritual powers. He claims:

Es ist also Hurerey und aller Art geheimer Ergiessungen des Saamens eine doppelte Sünde, indem sie eines Theils individuell schadet, da sie unser Individuum dessen beraubt was sein edelstes Gehalt ausmacht, da der Saamen der Menschen eigentlich das Vehickel ihrer Geister ist und die Sammlung dieser Geister von der Vernunft, dem Funken dem Hauch den die Gottheit in uns gelegt, regiert, das Wesen unsers Genius oder innern Menschen ausmacht. (“Catechismus” 40)

Lenz here asserts a sperm-spirit identity. We should not waste sperm because it contains vital spirits. We need to collect these spirits, that is, sperm. Our reason needs to collect them for its own development and vitality. Following the contemporary model of physiology of the time, Lenz asserts that we need to collect our spirits of reason, that is, our sperm because that is what constitutes the genius of human beings. These spirits need to be collected and saved so that one can build one’s spiritual powers. It is a sin to waste these spirits by expending them indiscriminately. This is a serious physiological argument for Lenz and was consistent with contemporary theories of anatomy and physiology.

The very act of striving has formative effects on the self. Lenz tells us that striving makes our bodies and our entire “machine,” the automatic, material part of us, sensitive, or capable of having sentiments, which in turn allows us to enjoy the happiness we strive for. He says:

Ihm, dessen ganze Existenz Streben ist, ihm, dessen Streben, so sehr er es auch zu unterdrücken suchen wird, nie nachläßt, als bis diese himmlische Flamme in ihm ausgelöscht ist, die ihn streben macht, die eben durch dieses Streben seinen Körper, seine ganze Maschine empfindbar, fähig macht, das sich erstrebte Glück zu genießen, und durch Nachlassen dieses Strebens eben wieder in die vorige Unempfindbarkeit, in die vorige Indolenz zurücksinken läßt. (II: 593–94)

If this striving ceases, we become insensitive and sink back into indolence. We must continually strive because striving is our nature. If we do not strive, we are acting contrary to our nature and we thereby pervert ourselves. If we do not strive we become insensitive and indolent, which will initiate a vicious circle that leads to the corruption and undermining of our character.

We get a fuller picture of the Lenzian program for the care of the self when we look at his discussion of how humans are to develop their capacities and the role this plays in the overall scheme for him. Lenz lays out the outline of the type of work that must be performed by a person on himself in psychological terms. He says: “Was für glückliche Einflüsse ein so in Proportion und Harmonie gebrachtes Gefühl auf den Umlauf unsers Geblüts und also unsere ganze Gesundheit und Behaglichkeit haben müsse, spring hier von selbst

Ihnen in die Augen” (II: 527). Part of the work humans must perform on their feelings is a proportioning and harmonizing.

Da aber alle in einem unauflöslichen unendlichfeinen Bande mit einander stehen, so sind die andern eben so wenig zu verabsäumen. Und dieses nach der verschiedenen Einrichtung eines jeden Individuums: sein inneres Gefühl seine gemachten Erfahrungen und die Entscheidung seiner Vernunft wird ihn darin am besten unterrichten. Genug es muß in unserm Bestreben nach Vollkommenheit eine gewisse Übereinstimmung aller unserer Kräfte zu einem Ganzen, eine gewisse Harmonie sein, welche eigentlich den wahren Begriff des höchsten Schönen gibt. Sehen Sie nun, daß die Linien des wahren Schönen und des wahren Guten im strengsten Verstande, in einen Punkt zusammen laufen? (II: 505)

An important precursor to any work on the self is a self-evaluation. Self-knowledge is critical because we need accurately to understand who we are and what our abilities are before we can begin the work. He repeatedly tells his readers to look into their hearts and to consult their thoughts and feelings in their quest for the truth about themselves. Great errors can occur in any ethical project if we do not perform this work well. He says that the false feeling of our abilities confuses us: “Woher denn nun aber die verschiedenen Begriffe der Menschen von der Glückseligkeit [...]? [...] Ich will aber versuchen, Ihnen die ganze Schwürigkeit mit zween Worten zu heben. Aus der unrichtigen Kenntniss seiner selbst. [...] Denn das falsche Gefühl von Fähigkeiten verdunkelt sich zuletzt immer selber und kann nur mit gewaltsamer Anstrengung in unserer Seele erhalten werden, welche gewiß kein Vergnügen ist (II: 508). It seems then it becomes imperative more

fully and accurately to know our abilities and their correct functioning in order to arrive at better and more appropriate conceptions of happiness, which is, of course, what Lenz argues for.

The telos of the care of the self is to cultivate the active part of the soul and to always strive forward. There is no point of rest for mortals, according to Lenz. To seek such a resting point is futile and if one does come to rest one is acting contrary to human nature and contrary to God's design for us. This is why the nature of laws is so important and why the cultivation of the ethical character is the telos. Only if humans are left to act and must act can the harmony of God's creation be realized, but this will always be a harmony that appears conflictual to finite beings. As Lenz proclaims:

Ihm, dessen ganze Existenz Streben ist, ihm, dessen Streben, so sehr er es auch zu unterdrücken suchen wird, nie nachläßt, als bis diese himmlische Flamme in ihm ausgelöscht ist, die ihn streben macht, die eben durch dieses Streben seinen Körper, seine ganze Maschine empfindbar, fähig macht, das sich erstrebte Glück zu genießen, und durch Nachlassen dieses Strebens eben wieder in die vorige Unempfindbarkeit, in die vorige Indolenz zurücksinken läßt. Vergebens sucht er alsdann sich die vorhin einmal versuchten und geschmeckten Eindrücke von Wollust und Vergnügen zurückrufen, sobald die Ursache weg ist, fehlt die Wirkung, oder reverberiert wenigstens in immer schwächerer Progression, je nachdem die wieder angewandte Kraft stärker oder schwächer ist.... Verflucht sei die Ruhe und auf ewig die Inventarium der tauben Materie, aber wir, die wir Geist in Adern fühlen, ruhen nur dann, wenn wir zu noch höherem Schwunge neue Kraft sammeln,

wenn wir freiwillig zu sinken scheinen, um weit über den Gesichtskreis der
gewöhnlichen Sterblichen emporszusteigen. (II: 594)

We should rest only when we are gathering our strength to clime to ever higher heights.
Otherwise resting is bad and contrary to our nature and design. It is antithetical to God's
design.

In forming ourselves we are imitating Christ's form-giving nature. As we say above,
Christ is said to have given form to God's creation. He also characterized creation as an
every-changing process of transitioning from one form to another. According to Lenz:
"Christus oder die bildende Natur dich nach ewigen Gesetzen fortwirkt, ist eins und
davon giebts keine Ausnahmen. Gott schuf die Materie und durch Xstum bearbeitete und
bearbeitet er sie noch zur ewig fortgehenden Form" ("Catechismus" 55). He goes on by
saying: "[Was ist der Hauptgrundsatz und Regel der fortgehenden Schöpfung.] Die
unaufhörliche unendliche Verwandlung der Materie in Form oder die unendlich
fortgehende Bildung alles Materiellen zur Form bis zum Geist hinauf, welcher die
höchste Form ist" ("Catechismus" 55). This idea of forming and transforming material
and giving it form is critical to Lenzian thinking and continues in one form or another
throughout his wrings.

The Ethical

Lenz sees the cultivation of the self to be directed toward a telos. This telos is the
ethical realm. The figure he uses to exemplify the realm of the ethical is the life of Christ.
Lenz talks about surpassing the law, following the characterization of the New Testament

as surpassing of the Mosaic Law and the law-driven morality of Judaism. He tries to explain how this can also be understood in naturalistic, anthropological, and philosophical terms. The type of work that a person must perform on himself is indicated in Lenz's characterization of Christ's message where he says:

Esset von allerlei Bäumen im Garten, aber vom Baume der Erkenntnis Gutes
und Bösen sollt ihr nicht essen, nicht von den alten uralten Regeln abgehen,
die ewig wie die Welt sind, aber, wohl herauf! Empor! Da ihr höhern Genuß
habt, höhere Freuden, auch höher die Kräfte gespannt! Und wie natürlich ist
das! Brauch ich denn nicht höhere Kräftenspannung, um höher zu genießen?
Höhere Stimmung, um höhern Ton anzugeben? (II: 605)

We can clearly see the mixing of naturalistic and theological language here to portray a picture of the person who is to perform ethical action upon himself and his natural drives, not in order to "repress" them but to shape and form them in order to reach higher ground where the pleasures and rewards will be all the greater. It is a shaping and forming activity, an askesis in the service of reaching something better. Merely satisfying drives is natural, but it does not bring the human farther than the level of the animal. If humans are to be more than animals, and they are so created by God, then they must strive to achieve this higher ground. This is the constant message of Lenz's discussion of natural drives, moral laws, cultivation of the self and the realm of the ethical.

We saw above how important Lenz considers law to be to the maintenance of society and to the development of human beings. However, law-abiding citizens are not what Lenz is out to create. This is indicated in his statement: "Also das Gesetz *studiert*—und das Evangelium *ausgeübt*—das gibt glückselige Menschen—nach *dem Verhältnis* glücklicher,

nach dem sich ihre Handlungen über das Gesetz, über die Regel des Rechts *erheben—dixi! Dixi! Dixi!*" (II: 522). It appears that the general model is that people need to study the law, both God's and the society's, in order to become aware of the situation and the context within which they must act, and with this knowledge they need to act with in an evangelical spirit. They need to rise above the law and the rule of right in order to truly follow the path toward ultimate happiness.

He continues with this theme when he says:

Da aber alle Gesetze eigentlich nur verneinen, Handlungen verbieten, die die allgemeine Glückseligkeit stören, so gibt's eigentlich nur zweierlei Handlungen, gesetzwidrige, die dem Verbot grad entgegenlaufen, oder ethische, die über das Gesetz erhaben, die allgemeine Glückseligkeit nicht nur nicht stören, sondern befördern und stufenweise erhöhen, diese haben eigentlich allein in den Augen Gottes einen Wert und sind von ihm mit den reinsten und himmlischsten Empfindungen vergesellschaftet worden, deren Dauer wir in der Tat Seligkeit nennen mögen. Die erste Art von Handlungen nennen wir böse, die andere gut, und nach ihrer höhern Abstufung schön, edel, für trefflich, englisch, göttlich [...] (II: 519).

Lenz specifically ties his definition of action to law. He proclaims that because laws really only negate or prohibit actions that disturb the general welfare, there are really only two kinds of acts: illegal ones that directly contradict the law or ethical ones that are elevated above the law. Ethical actions not only do not disturb the general happiness, they support, promote and elevate it incrementally. Only ethical actions have value in God's eyes and he has attached the purest and most heavenly sentiments to these actions. Ethical actions are

good, illegal actions bad. Ethical actions have a hierarchy ranging from “good,” to “beautiful,” “excellent,” “angelic,” and “divine.” He contrasts these good actions with useless, negating or law-abiding behaviors that neither benefit the happiness of others nor our happiness, and should be characterized as inaction rather than action. He tells us: “Diese Art von Handlungen, anstatt der unnützen, verneinenden, gesetzmäßigen, die weder unser noch anderer Glück befördern und also lieber Untätigkeit als Handlungen heißen mögen” (II: 519).

Given Lenz’s statements above, the common characterization of the development of morality as self-governance only arriving with Kant seems doubtful. Hull expresses this common belief when she says:

Only Kant’s (and Feuerbach’s) argument, that moral behavior could occur only in the utter absence of coercion, preserved the moral element in civil society, while simultaneously capping police power.

Until that idea gained currency most cameralists allotted to ‘police’ the minute regulation of everyday life [...] plus the entire panoply of negative and positive persuasion required by eudaemonism. (193)

Lenz quite clearly conceives the moral as a realm that is necessarily free of state coercion and police intrusion. His belief in God and his insistence of God’s importance for all aspects of human existence does not change this. In fact, Lenz himself addressed this (see above) when he argued that just because God created us and he knows what we will do does not mean that we are not morally free. To the contrary, Lenz firmly believes that we were created morally free and for this freedom to be maintained no legislators, be they moral or legal, can tell us what to do if moral freedom and morality are to exist.

Sacrificing oneself for the benefit of others, acting to communicate the passion for life that one feels and has worked to cultivate in oneself—this is the kind of activity-above-the-law that Lenz means when he talks about ethical action as transcending the law and going beyond the law. Lenz says that the following should happen:

[...] o wie göttliches Vergnügen begleitet jede freie Handlung, um dich herumgearbeitet, so weit du reichen magst, auch bei andern dies Lebensfeuer wieder anzuzünden, das unser Prometheus vom Himmel brachte und von dem er wünschte: wollte Gott es brennte schon. Nach seinem Beispiel dich deinem Nächsten mitgeteilt—aufgeopfert—wer so sein Leben verliert, der wird es erhalten—. (II: 518)

We should try to work around ourselves, that is, on our surroundings as far as our reach can go. We should try to inspire others with this life fire (that is, engage in evangelical work). We should act according to God's example and communicate it to our neighbors and sacrifice ourselves for them. Those who do so will be rewarded.

Action/Striving

As seen above, action is critical to ethics. On the obvious level, ethics concerns itself with norms for human behavior. For Lenz, however, action itself has an ethical quality. Above it was stated that Lenz privileges thinking as one of the highest functions of the human soul. Although this is the case, thinking is not enough, if humans are to achieve their full potential. Action is required if we are to change our circumstances and not just consider them as they are. Thinking is a necessary step to correct action, but it must be completed by action if humans are to realize their ethical calling. According to Lenz:

Unser Unabhängigkeit zeigt sich aber noch mehr im Handeln als im Denken, denn beim Denken nehme ich meine Lage mein Verhältnis und Gefühle wie sie sind, beim Handeln aber verändere ich sie wie es mir gefällt. Um vollkommen selbständig zu sein, muß ich also viel gehandelt, das heißt meine Empfindungen und Erfahrungen oft verändert haben. Ist dies nach gewissen Gesetzen der allgemeinen Harmonie geschehen, so nennen wir das gut handeln, im entgegenstehenden Fall böse. Diese Harmonie läßt sich aber eher fühlen als bestimmen. (II: 622)

Above he described thinking as a kind of action. It appears that he is using action in two senses and we need to heed the circumstantial integration of these words in their respective contexts. Here he appears to be talking of useful and pragmatic action: action that is intended to change things inside and outside of the person acting. Acting in a good way is when one acts according to certain laws of general harmony, the opposite is to act badly. What is more, he tells us that this general harmony that we are to strive for and be guided by in our action is to be felt by us rather than determined in advance and for all people.

When Lenz presents a picture of materialist determination in his *Götz* text, and then counters it as an insufficient account of what a truly human existence would be, he draws the following conclusion:

Das lernen wir hieraus, daß handeln, handeln die Seele der Welt sei, nicht genießen, nicht empfindeln, nicht spitzfundeln, daß wir dadurch allein Gott ähnlich werden, der unaufhörlich lernen wir daraus, daß die in uns handelnde Kraft, unser Geist, unser höchstes Anteil sei, daß die allein unserm Körper

mit allen seinen Sinnlichkeiten und Empfindungen, all unser Wissen doch nur ein Leiden, doch nur ein aufgeschobener Tod sind. Das lernen wir daraus, daß diese unsre handelnde Kraft nicht eher ruhe, nicht eher ablasse zu wirken, zu regen, zu toben, als bis sie uns Freiheit um uns her verschafft, Platz zu handeln, guter Gott Platz zu handeln und wenn es ein Chaos wäre das du geschaffen, wüste und leer, aber Freiheit wohnte nur da und wir könnten dir nachahmend drüber brüten, bis was herauskäme—Seligkeit! Seligkeit! Göttergefühl das! (II: 638)

We do not cease acting until we have created freedom around us so that we will have a space to act. This freedom where we have space to act is divine. Even if this freedom existed only in a realm of chaos, emptiness and barrenness, it would be worth striving for. But we know that Lenz does not consider this to be the case and his use of the subjunctive makes clear that he is only using this hypothetical extreme to show the importance of freedom. Action is directed at increasing the amount of freedom we have, and presumably the freedom of those around us and we cannot and should not rest until that space to act has been created. This is an ethical calling and is the telos of Lenz's ethics.

Ethical actions—that is, actions that designed to rise above the inadequate state of affairs in the name of perfection and toward the common good—originate in the conflict among desire, laws and free will. In discussing once again laws Lenz asserts:

Da aber alle Gesetze eigentlich nur verneinen, Handlungen verbieten, die die allgemeine Glückseligkeit stören, so gibt's eigentlich nur zweierlei Handlungen, gesetzwidrige, die dem Verbot grad entgegenlaufen, oder

ethische, die über das Gesetz erhaben, die allgemeine Glückseligkeit nicht nur nicht stören, sondern befördern und stufenweise erhöhen, diese haben eigentlich allein in den Augen Gottes einen Wert und sind von ihm mit den reinsten und himmlischsten Empfindungen vergesellschaftet worden, deren Dauer wir in der Tat Seligkeit nennen mögen. Die erste Art von Handlungen nennen wir böse, die andere gut, und nach ihrer höhern Abstufung schön, edel, für trefflich, englisch, göttlich—Diese Art von Handlungen, anstatt der unnützen, verneinenden, gesetzmäßigen, die weder unser noch anderer Glück befördern und also lieber Untätigkeit als Handlungen heißen mögen [...]. (II: 519)

There are only two kinds of actions: those contrary to law and those that are elevated above the law. Behaviors that merely conform to the law do not deserve to be called “actions,” they are rather inaction, and they are negating, useless and do not promote our or others’ happiness. Since illegal actions, that is, actions contrary to law are bad, it appears that we can neither merely obey the law nor simply act contrary to it in order to act well. To act well, we must elevate ourselves and our actions above the law. This happens when we promote our and others’ happiness. Happiness thus becomes definitive of good actions. If we remember the connection between abilities, powers, happiness and perfection outlined above, we can begin to see how Lenz’s conception coheres. Out of the conflict between instinctual desires and prohibitions arise actions, which Lenz divides into two kinds, illegal and ethical. Behaviors that are in accordance with laws do not acquire the status of actions, that is, “*Handlungen*,” in that they are not the self-conscious, purposeful acts of thinking individuals, but rather automated behaviors. Actions, “die dem Verbot grad

entgegenlaufen,” are viewed negatively because they merely disturb the peace without having any positive effects and are based on the false assumption that humans are metaphysically or absolutely free; that is, that they can ignore the natural and legal order of things and make their decisions and engage in actions on the basis of their arbitrary will.

Ethical actions are by definition free. They exist within a context of drives, norms and laws that operate as forces attempting to determine actions, but they exist in that free space with which God provided us to act freely. Ethical actions arise in the undetermined space that God provided humans by not giving them an instinctual make up that predetermines their actions but for which he partly compensated with his Ten Commandments and the living example of Jesus Christ and to which humans must continually respond with normative structures and individual decisions and actions. This uncertain space—as Lenz says “[. . .] das traurige Los der Menschheit [. . .] ihre Erbsünde” (II: 617)—can be dealt with constructively if societies develop legal and normative structures that are compatible with human nature and if people strive to act on the basis of principles and self-selected goals; destructively if norms and standards are arbitrarily rejected; or despotically if authoritarian and repressive laws and norms are instituted. Lenz portrays a complex network of relations between socio-cultural and eternal forces, which can and must prohibit certain actions that are destructive to human nature and to the happiness of the members of a given social order; natural forces that are indifferent to social and moral orders; and the God-given faculties of free will and human spirit, which are not entirely compatible with either of the aforementioned. People will of themselves come to exercise their judgment and free will and engage in ethical actions, because this is the nature of the human soul, given conditions in which the legal and moral norms are well defined and well established and only prohibit

behaviors that are clearly harmful to the common good; in which people acknowledge the authority of these normative structures and the ultimate norm-giver, that is, God; and in which human desires are not flatly rejected as sinful.

There is a distinct element of performance based ethics in Lenz. For example, he states that the goal of our existence is “nicht allein unsere Existenz fortzusetzen, sondern auch sie in ihrem ganzen Umfang und Vollkommenheit der Vorstellungen und Empfindungen, des Genusses und der Tätigkeit fortzusetzen in so hohem Grad als möglich” (II: 493). We need not only continually to increase and improve our activities, sensibilities and perceptions—while not harming others—we also need to support and increase the existence of our fellow beings. If this is carried out, the whole will continuously improve and we will all mutually benefit by both seeking to better ourselves and those around us. Even if we have good laws and norms we are not allowed to rest, satisfied that we have created the perfect society. The mere existence and necessity of laws would indicate that we still have not reached perfection in ourselves and our mission would therefore not be over. As finite beings, we are condemned continually to keep striving toward this goal. That is why in ethics we always have to strive beyond the law because the law is evidence of our imperfection.

How is the person to move forward? We have already seen the motive forces of drives and the opposing prohibitions that start the motor running. Lenz identifies the two “drives” that he says provide the direction that these forces need to follow if the ethical is to be achieved. He identifies these basic drives as the drives toward perfection and happiness. These are to serve as the ethical telos—the things toward which our actions are to be directed and the qualities that provide an overall ethical context for action. The

moral law merely provided the skeletal structure that gave us our initial bearings. If we are to “rise above” the mere adherence to the moral law we need to perform at a higher level. The compass that we can use while on this path is provided by these two basic drives and what Lenz calls an auxiliary or helping drive, the drive to communicate.

Another way we go beyond the law in our actions is to help others and to work for the welfare and betterment of others. No law can demand that we do this and sometimes we may be pushing the law to do this, but it is our highest calling. It also benefits us in very concrete ways by helping us to develop our capacities in order to be even more helpful to others. He argues:

Hören Sie was wir tun müssen, hören Sie es, merken Sie es, dies ist der fruchtbarste Teil meiner Principien. Wir müssen suchen andere um uns herum glücklich zu machen. Nach allen unsern Kräften arbeiten, nicht allein ihre Fähigkeiten zu entwickeln, sondern such sie in solche Zustände zu setzen, worin sie ihre Fähigkeiten zum besten entwickeln können. Wenn jeder diesen Vorsatz in sich zur Reife und zum Leben kommen läßt, so werden wir eine glückliche Welt haben. Jeder sorgt bloß für des andern Glück und jeder wird selbst glücklich, weil er um sich herum Leute findet, die für das seinige sorgen. Diese beständig wachsame und wirkende Sorgfalt für den Zustand meines Nebenmenschen wird auch das beste Mittel sein, hier in dieser Welt meine Fähigkeiten zu entwickeln, meine Vollkommenheit zu befördern. (II: 510)

Lenz considers is the most productive part of his principles that we must try to make those around us happier. We must not only try to develop their abilities but also to put

them in circumstances in which their abilities can best be developed. If all people did this we would live in a happy world. If we concern ourselves with the happiness of others, we ourselves will be happy because each will see that there are others around him who are concerned with his happiness. Lenz is positing a principle of reciprocal care—constantly alert and active concern for the conditions of one’s neighbor. This is also the best way to engage and develop one’s abilities and improve my perfection. Lenz sees a virtuous circle here with all benefiting in the end and all developing together.

According to Lenz, unselfish, humble virtue is at the core of the ethical. Moreover, this unselfish virtue is to be found in Christ’s example. As Lenz says: “Diese uneigennützig, enehrgeizig verborgene Tugend ist die letzte Stufe zur Seeligkeit” (II: 34). He continues “Diese Tugend hat uns Christus in seiner göttlichen Bergpredigt vorgezeichnet und mit seinem Lebenswandel vollends ausgemahlt [...]” (II:35). Lenz then exhorts his readers to imitate Christ in this virtue. Altruism and unselfish action is important, “Denn jede gute Handlung wirkt auf das Universum aller Menschenhandlungen auf dem Erdboden in unendlicher Progression, und reverberiert endlich auf uns zurück, wenn nicht hie, so doch da, ganz gewiß, das ist das Gesetz der Natur, eben so wahr, als das metaphysische und physische, daß alle Bewegung unendlich ist” (II: 614). We create an endless wave of positive, multiplying effects through our good actions. Unselfish acts reverberate all across the earth and eventually reverberate back to benefit oneself because the world has become a better place through those and similar acts. We are going above the law here, working toward the goal of supporting the development of perfection and happiness of others through unselfish and humble acts,

which in turn help us to develop our own perfection and abilities and to improve our condition and our happiness.

Poet as Doctor

Lenz claims that Moses, Christ and the Apostles were “Ärzte des menschlichen Geschlechts” because they sought to become doctors for the “durch den unrechten Gebrauch seiner Freiheit beschädigte, verirrte, bis in die Knechtschaft der Moralsysteme verirrte menschliche Geschlecht zu werden” (II: 552). When Lenz talks about the necessity of following Christ and the need to act in an evangelical spirit, it seems reasonable to assert that this would imply also becoming “doctors” for society in this same vein. It is also reasonable to assume that Lenz, through his work, would seek to undertake trying to heal his society from the error of its ways to bring it out of slavery to rigid moral systems through the correct use of their freedom. And this is in fact what he tries to do—through his theoretical writings, but more importantly through his literary texts. They are designed for this purpose and constructed with this goal in mind, as can be seen in his writings on poetics and literature and in the construction and conception of his literary works.

While conceding that he and others appear to be socially and biologically determined Lenz points out that he feels a certain “Gewissensangst” when he is confronted with these observations that make him believe these observations are not the final truth. He also observes, however, that he tends to delude himself with the “stolzen Gedanken,” “das tatst du, das wirktest du, nicht das wirkte die Natur, oder der Zusammenlauf fremder Kräfte” (II: 619-20). He notices that he believes he is the agent of his actions, not natural forces or the conjunction of external forces impinging upon him. He then asks “Dieser Stolz—was ist er?

Wo wurzelt er?" (II: 620). He wonders if this pride is not a sign from the soul, whose nature it is to act in a self-determined and prudential manner. Furthermore Lenz remarks that experience and history have provided examples of people whose pride "[...] das Gegengewicht gegen die schmerzhaftesten Gefühle hielt. Es muß also dieses Gefühl das angenehmste beglückendste—und auch unentbehrlichste in der ganzen menschlichen Natur sein, weil wir im Stande sind, ihm alle mögliche andere angenehme Gefühle aufzuopfern" (II: 620). Pride is therefore not only a sign from the soul that it was created to be free and independent but also a source of power that people have to deal with life's difficulties and to forego certain pleasures.

Society is sick and in need of therapy. Lenz clearly states his disdain for moral or ethical ideals stating that they will not be likely of success because the audience who receives them will be incapable of enacting them. A more radical therapy is needed. A negative therapy that will arouse them out of their corrupt states and put them on the road to health, which is the realization of their human purpose, which can in turn be understood in natural and divine terms, in line with human nature and capacities.

It is my thesis that through his work Lenz tries to provoke anxiety and insult this aforementioned sense of pride in people, who will then "[ihre] unangenehme Empfindungen mit aller ihrer Gewalt wüten lassen und Stärke genug in sich fühlen, die Natur dieser Empfindungen zu untersuchen und sich so über sie hinauszusetzen. Diese Empfindungen mit vergangenen zusammenzuhalten, gegeneinander abzuwägen zu ordnen und zu übersehen" (II: 621). If he can disturb his audience and provoke uncomfortable thoughts and feelings along with their sense of pride they will be forced to reflect upon themselves and their situation, and through this process begin to set themselves above their determination in

that they will have become conscious of it and the contradiction between the fact of their determination and the presupposition of their free will. The next and most important step would then be that they act in accordance with this raised level of consciousness and seek to alter the order of things through principled action. The individual would then be entering the realm of the ethical, according to Lenz's conception of it.

If this were to happen, the writer of tragedies would be able to find material on the basis of which she could articulate representations of active, heroic characters, but—as Lenz the character in *Pandämonium Germanicum* says—such characters are for the future. The writer of comedies can only prepare the ground for this future.

Lenz is interested in the education of his audience, although he really does not provide the full education, but rather only the motivation to begin the process of self-education. The bulk of the learning that Lenz hopes the audience will engage in will have to occur outside the theater in conjunction with their observations and the socio-cultural discourses that thematically relate to his works. Lenz places a great amount of responsibility on his readers, as is indicated in his statement that he prefers to “[. . .] immer gern der geschwungenen Phantasei des Zuschauers auch was zu tun und zu vermuten übrig lassen, und ihm nicht alles erst vorkäuen” (II: 703). The reader, however, needs to be careful not to seek moral messages merely in the content of the work, but rather to consider the entirety of the work in its combination of content and form and the effect that the work as a whole has on him. In addition, Lenz warns the reader of the perspectival nature of literature, stating that “[...] der Dichter nur eine Seite der Seele malen kann die zu seinem Zweck dient und die andere dem Nachdenken überlassen muß” (II: 685). In the end, this interpretive process involves a dialogical interaction between the text and the reader and the socio-cultural context within

which the text was written and in which it is received, and all of these factors need to be actively integrated into an understanding of the work. Lenz does not want to prepackage the message in his works and merely send the reader off with a concise moral message that he has already worked out for them. He wants to leave it up to the fantasy of the reader to think things over and come up with her own conclusion.

We know of Lenz's obsession with the perspectival nature of human perception. He builds this into his concept of poetic production and reception concluding that the reader must contemplate the many other sides of the issue of which the author has only presented one.

We see the aesthetic-ethical connection again in another context where Lenz discusses how best to evaluate a person's character and personal qualities:

Wir können über die Schönheit einer körperlichen Figur nicht eher zuverlässig entscheiden, als wenn wir von aller Draperie entweder in Gedanken oder wie die Alten taten in der Tat abstrahieren und so wird die moralische Schönheit und Größe eines Charakters nie in einem echten Licht erscheinen als wenn er unbemerkt und daß ich so sagen darf, unaufgefordert handelt, in Kleinen häuslichen oder gesellschaftlichen Veranlassungen wo nicht der Beifall der erwartenden Menge, sondern die innere Harmonie und schöne Stimmung seiner Kräfte ihn zu Handlungen treibt um deren Folgen er sich nicht bekümmert. Hier ist es eigentlich, wo der große Mann aufhört zu scheinen, wo er zu sein anfängt [...]. (II: 749)

Moral beauty and greatness of character can best be judged when we observe someone acting when he is unaware of being observed and when he is acting of his own accord. It is

best to observe him in small domestic situations or in social settings where he is not motivated to act by the expected applause of the crowd but rather by the inner harmony and beautiful agreement of his powers. This is where the great man stops appearing and starts to be.

Communication

The drive to communicate with others is identified as an “auxiliary drive” to the drives toward perfection and happiness. Lenz says: “Wir suchen alle Fähigkeiten und Kräfte, deren wir uns bewußt sind, auch andern um uns herum fühlbar zu machen und eben dieses ist das einzigen Mittel, dieselben zu entwickeln und zu erweitern. Die meisten, die größten und fürtrefflichsten unserer Fähigkeiten liegen tot, sobald wir aus aller menschlichen Gesellschaft fortgerissen uns völlig allein befinden” (II: 505). It appears that Lenz conceives of a drive to communicate as an essential part of our ability to develop our capacities, which is in turn at the core of our ability to drive to perfect ourselves. Moreover, Lenz sees this auxiliary drive as an essential ingredient for society and social virtues: “[...] unser Natur [schaudert] für nichts so sehr, als einer gänzlichen Einsamkeit, weil alsdenn unser Gefühl unserer Fähigkeiten das kleinstmöglichste wird” (II: 505). Making our abilities and powers felt by others is the only means of developing those same abilities and powers. The drive to communicate presupposes, in turn, our need for human society. Obviously, if we have no connections to others to whom we can communicate our abilities and powers, we cannot do so and therefore cannot develop them and perfect them. This is why we fear being alone: our feeling for our abilities diminishes when we are alone.

For Lenz the ultimate mode of communication is language. He postulates the following: “Nun frage ich, ob man eine bessere Methode anzugeben weiß, sich Geistern, die in Körper eingeschlossen sind, mitzuteilen, als die vom Schöpfer uns anerschaffenen göttlich kunstreich mechanisierten Organe, und die mittelst derselben hervorgebrachte Sprache, die alle [die, die] eben die Organe haben, eben die Ideen durch dieselben auszudrücken gewohnt sind, als ein Medium unter sich stabilisiert und festgesetzt haben, ihre Ideen einander wechselweise mitzuteilen” (II: 570). For Lenz, communicating with others is an evangelical project. He outlines a vision of how life should proceed, which includes a clear statement of his conception of the role of communication and its evangelical character:

Geistige Vergnügungen gesucht, des Fleisches Geschäfte getötet, alle subjektive mit der objektiven Schönheit verglichen und nur in dem großen Verhältnis zu ihr genossen. Dann auch gehandelt, o wie göttliches Vergnügen begleitet jede freie Handlung, um dich herumgearbeitet, so weit du reichen magst, auch bei andern dies Lebensfeuer wieder anzuzünden, das unser Prometheus vom Himmel brachte und von dem er wünschte: wollte Gott es brennte schon. Nach seinem Beispiel dich deinem Nächsten mitgeteilt—aufgeopfert—wer so sein Leben verliert, der wird es erhalten.
(II: 518)

When we communicate the message about what we have learned from our self-formative practices and the joy we feel as a result of what we have achieved and we attempt to ignite this passion for life in others, we follow Christ’s example and fulfill our calling. As mentioned above, Lenz tries to do just that. He sees his attempts to communicate in

almost missionary terms, both spreading the message and trying to ignite this passion for life that will lead others to follow this path and Christ's example as well.

CHAPTER 5

LENZIAN POETICS

Lenz begins his “*Philosophische Vorlesungen für empfindsame Seelen*” with a discussion of beauty, an aesthetic term. He claims that the focus of his work is beauty. He goes on to say that he tries to reduce all other ideas to the notion of beauty, but that this beauty must be true beauty, which is founded upon truth and goodness, and consists of the highest order of agreement among the parts. In a letter to Salzmann he says:

Wissen Sie worin unsere Lieblingsideen bestehn? Die Ihrige ist—die Liebe—und die meinige, die Schönheit. Vielleicht stehn diese, beide, nahe bei einander, oder fließen gar zusammen—wenn nur meine Brille schärfer wäre! So viel ist gewiß, daß die letztere die einzige Idee ist, auf die ich alle andern zu reduzieren suche. Aber es muß die echte Schönheit sein, die auf Wahrheit und Güte gegründet ist, und in der höchsten und faßlichsten Übereinstimmung [...] diese allein kann mein Herz mit Liebe gegen Gott (die Schönheit in abstracto) und gegen alles was geschaffen (die Schönheit in concreto) füllen. (III: #21, October 1772)

In the concept of beauty we see a confluence of ideas that bring together much of his thinking about human nature. Beauty, goodness and truth are all related. True beauty alone, which is grounded in the highest and most concrete agreement, can make Lenz love God—who is beauty in the abstract—and all of creation—concrete beauty.

He tells us that the beautiful is the quintessence of the good and that if humans had to do without beauty they would have a pitiful heart. According to Lenz: “[...] alle

Glückseligkeit des menschlichen Lebens in dem Gefühl des Schönen besteht. Das Schöne ist nur das Gute quintessenziert zu nennen, wie sollte ein menschliches Herz dessen entbehren können, ohne ein elendes Herz zu werden” (II: 674). Truth, the good, and happiness are all connected to beauty.

The object that one finds beautiful varies according to the character of the perceiver. Lenz argues that the “honest German”:

[...] sucht das Schöne [...] nicht in dem, was seine verstimmte Sensibilität in dem Augenblicke auf die leichteste Art befriedigt, oder vielmehr einschläfert, sondern in dem, was seine männliche Seele aus den eisernen Banden seines Körpers losschüttelt, ihr den elastischen Fittig spannt, und sie hoch über den niedern haufen weg in Höhen führet, die nicht schwärmerisch erträumt, sondern mit Entschlossenheit und Bedacht gewählt sind. (II: 580–81)

One should seek the beautiful in that which shakes free one’s manly soul from the iron bands of his body, which spans the elastic wings of the soul and leads the soul high above the lowly masses up to the heights. Not heights that were rapturously dreamed, but rather selected with determination and circumspection. We should not seek the beautiful in that which satisfies our out of tune sensibility in that moment, but in reality puts it to sleep. How we seek and where we seek beauty is crucial to the development of our selves. If we find beauty in that which provides us with pleasure in the easiest way we are on the wrong path. This is a perverted sense of beauty that will undermine our character and sedate us. We should instead seek the beautiful in objects that increase the intensity of our experience and that elevate us above the lowly masses. These objects of beauty

should be chosen with decisiveness and consideration. Experiencing this type of beauty will not have a sedating effect upon us; to the contrary—it will create a tension that drives us to ever higher regions of existence. Experiencing beauty thus transforms the self—it builds character and thus plays an important role in our ethical development and in our ethical lives.

Lenz divides beauty, which he defines as agreement, into ideal and homogenous beauty. He declares that ideal beauty is “objective,” “necessary,” “self-contained,” and “immutable,” and says that it is “die höchste Uebereinstimmung der Theile untereinander zu ihrem eigenen Ganzen” (“*Philosophische Vorlesungen*” 5). The supreme instance of ideal beauty is God. Ideal beauty spurs us to imitate it.

Homogenous beauty is “subjective,” and is defined as the “Uebereinstimmung dieser Theile zu dem Ganzen des sie erkennenden Subjekts” (5). It is both bodily and spiritual and although appreciating bodily beauty is natural and in and of itself not bad, it cannot be an end in itself and must be combined with the question about the core and inner beauty of the person (10). There must be a certain “congruity” between the object and the individual for this beauty to be felt (9). Homogenous beauty is perceived of as an agreement of the parts of the beautiful object with the one who perceives it. This beauty is “individual” and it “harmonizes” with the individual perceiving subject in a particular way. Because of the direct relations of the object that is perceived of as homogeneously beautiful has this relation to the subject who perceives it and its beauty is derived from this relationship it also has a more immediate and rapid effect on the perceiver than does an object of ideal beauty. At the upper end of homogenous beauty is the stage of

characteristic beauty, which is arrived at by a selective, cultivating process and by avoiding giving in to our urges of attraction at every opportunity (10).

All beauty arouses delight, which leads to wishes that turn into inclinations and strivings. Because of the different natures of homogenous and ideal beauty, they stimulate us in different ways leading to different wishes, inclinations and drives. Homogenous beauty stimulates us to unite and ideal beauty to imitate. Humans are the most homogenous and congruous with each other and there will be a certain pull toward the entire human race, which seems to be something like identification with beings that are similar to oneself.

Lenz tells us that the most homogenous with humans are the opposite sexes, presumably because they harmonize the best with each other. Here Lenz says that when it comes to the opposite sexes that homogenous beauty achieves “ihre völlige Wirkung, sie reizt, zieht, zwingt zur Vereinigung. Mögen die Geschlechter also zu einander streben, sich vereinigen, eins sein, es ist ihre Bestimmung—aber nicht bei einander beruhen” (9). We see here the explicit connection of beauty to concupiscence and the sex drive. Because beautiful objects provide pleasure and a wish to possess them presumably result in leanings toward that object and strivings toward that goal. He then decrees that they should strive toward each other and unite, become one, but that they should not stop there and come to rest within the unity of this relationship. It cannot become an end in itself, because it is only at the level of homogenous beauty that this unity exists and there is still the higher realm of ideal beauty into which and through which humans must pass in order to progress toward a god-like existence.

Homogenous beauty exists within ideal beauty and becomes ideal beauty “wann wir unser Ich so weit erheben, daß schöne und nothwendige Ganze ausser uns, auf unser Ganzes die gehörige Eindrücke macht, das heißt vollkommen damit übereinstimmt” (6). Self-transformation will eventually bring people to the stage where they move from perceiving, appreciating and enjoying homogenous, concrete beauty to the level of ideal, abstract beauty. This occurs when the individual transforms herself so that the beauty and necessity of the outside world makes the appropriate impressions on her, that is, completely agrees with her.

There is a transition from homogenous to ideal beauty. When we transit through the various stages of homogenous beauty, perfectly homogenous beauty is the final step to ideal beauty. As Lenz says: “Die vollkommenehomogenste Schönheit aber ist die letzte Stufe zur idealen, der Genuß jener muß unsrer Konkupiszenz also auch den höchsten Schwung geben, zu dieser überzugehen” (II: 8). The enjoyment of homogenous beauty has to provide our concupiscence with the greatest momentum so that we can be transported to ideal beauty.

Lenz points out that the paths of true beauty and true good intersect and meet at the same point: “Genug es muß in unserm Bestreben nach Vollkommenheit eine gewisse Übereinstimmung aller unserer Kräfte zu einem Ganzen, eine gewisse Harmonie sein, welche eigentlich den wahren Begriff des höchsten Schönen gibt. Sehen Sie nun, daß die Linien des wahren Schönen und des wahren Guten im strengsten Verstande, in einen Punkt zusammen laufen?” (II: 505). The good and the ethical intersect in the notions of agreement and harmony and they have the same telos. There is an ultimate connection between the beautiful and the good, that is, between the aesthetic and the ethical. It seems safe to assume that because the aesthetic values and ethical values intersect they can be

used to read each other and to inform us of the states of the other. It also appears that, as is clearly the case with Lenz, the aesthetic principles one uses would be intimately bound up with one's ethical principles.

Lenz's socio-cultural observations have profound implications if we consider his claim that he wants to write literature that accurately reflects the world around him in a form that is consistent with that reflected world. He quotes Fontenelle in stating his golden rule for the dramatist: he should "[...]billig von der Natur lernen, die größten Materialien aufzunehmen und die in die leichteste und ungezwungenste Form zusammenzusetzen" (II: 626). The writer should observe the world around him, learning from nature. He should then bring that material together in the work in a form that does not try to force that material into an incompatible form. That is, the artistic form should be compatible with the material collected in his observations. In a sense, this is a pragmatic, inductive notion of genre, a genre from the bottom up. Collect the data, then select or create a form that fits it, not the other way around.

Lenz sees his poetological reflection as an important contribution to the overall theoretical discussion on morality and ethics. Literature has an ethical component for Lenz and he brings this to the fore in the content and plots of his literary works and in his poetological statements on the moral dimensions of literary texts but also on the unique nature of literary modes of ethical reflection and ethical mission. He sees the poet contributing to our understanding of moral issues and as having a special kind of vision and way of presenting these issues that cannot be achieved by other means. The poet can do things that philosophers and preachers cannot, given the nature of the medium he uses and its potential for affecting its readers.

Lenz's poetics are saturated by ethical concerns. The "Anmerkungen" are through and through founded upon Lenz's understanding of ethics. His claim that the writer should represent nature as God created it is an assertion about the ethics of writing. His description of tragic character is founded on ethics and its concept of character. His assertions about the function and nature of literature and its place in society are through and through ethical claims. His assertions about the reader's responsibility to the text and the author who wrote it are ethical assertions. In the end, Lenz conceives of literature as a fundamentally ethical realm. Writing literature is both part of a self-formative process and, if done well, provides the impetus and the material for self-formative, or deformative, activities on the part of the recipients. Its content deals with ethical issues because these issues are central to life and a meaningful literature will deal with them as well, if it seeks to play a meaningful role in the lives of the people who inhabit the culture and consume the texts produced in and for that culture.

Lenz makes assertions about mimesis that are founded in his understanding of epistemology and theology. This imitation consists of the imitation of:

Aller Dinge, die wir um uns herum sehen, hören etcetera, die durch die fünf
Tore unsrer Seele in dieselbe hineindringen, und nach Maßgabe des Raums
stärkere oder schwächere Besetzung von Begriffen hineinlegen, die denn
anfangen in dieser Stadt zu leben und zu weben, sich zu einander gesellen,
unter gewisse Hauptbegriffe stellen, oder auch zeitlebens ohne Anführer,
Kommando und Ordnung herumschwärmen [...]. (II: 645)

At the base of mimesis lies perception. Once the things of the world are perceived they then become implicated in a network of other perceptions and thoughts and concepts. Sometimes

they coalesce and cohere; sometimes they remain relatively incoherent and unrelated in any sensible way. At any rate, mimesis is grounded upon the empirical basis of perception.

Imitation is the first source of literature. Imitation of nature is a basic drive. The first example of which is the desire to imitate God. Lenz thus grounds mimesis in human nature and ties our mimetic drive to our relationship with God. This relationship imbues our mimetic activity with all of the responsibilities that we have to our creator.

To establish further the prominence of imitation in human psychological makeup Lenz asserts: “Ich getraue mich, zu behaupten, daß tierische Befriedigung ausgenommen, es für die menschliche Natur kein einzig Vergnügen gibt, wo nicht Nachahmung mit zum Grunde läge—die Nachahmung der Gottheit mit eingerechnet u.s.w.” (II: 650). It appears that Lenz is at pains to establish imitation as a basic feature of human psychology and imitation is fundamental to human nature. He also clearly states that imitation is not merely an artistic principle. It has significance to human life as such.

Further illustrating this point, Lenz states that “Den Gegenstand zurückspiegeln, das ist der Knoten, die nota diacritica des poetischen Genies” (II: 648). The second source of literature is “[...] das immerwährende Bestreben, all unsere gesammeleten Begriffe wieder auseinander zu wickeln und durchschauen, sie anschaulich und gegenwärtig zu machen” (II: 647). Lenz argues that imitation is common to all of the “schönen Künsten” and that intuition is common to all sciences and that poetry alone combines the two and “[...] alles scharf durchdacht, durchforscht, durchschaut—und dann in getreuer Nachahmung zum andernmal wieder hervorgebracht. Dieses gibt die Poesie der Sachen, jene des Stils. Oder umgekehrt, wie ihr wollt. Der schöne Geist kann das Ding ganz kennen, aber er kann es nicht wieder so getreu von sich geben” (II: 649).

Lenz's notion of the true poet asserts that the poet takes a standpoint and that standpoint determines how the poet combines the elements he is depicting in his work. The work is supposed to represent the world from that perspective as though one were looking at a picture of the world from that perspective. It is an assertion about the ethical vocation of the writer that he should not represent a nature that is remade in some way that fits his notion of how it should be but rather as he finds it before him, as God created it. Because he asserts that we do not have access to the things as they are in themselves (II: 646), we must be satisfied with the appearance of things, the things as they are there before us, as we find them and as we understand them. To illustrate this point Lenz states that "Der wahre Dichter verbindet nicht in seiner Einbildungskraft, wie es im gefällt, was die Herren die schöne Natur zu nennen belieben, was aber mit ihrer Erlaubnis nichts als die verfehlte Nature ist. Er nimmt Standpunkt—und dann muß er so verbinden. Man könnte sein Gemälde mit der Sache verwechseln [...]" (II: 648). There is a clear normative notion in Lenz's discussion of a type of mimesis that seeks to "improve upon" what one finds in the world of nature. To attempt such a thing is to think that one can create a world better than the one God created. It would be to deny that the world we have before us is the best of all possible worlds and would in effect be a questioning of the world God created for us and in turn the creator himself. Lenz clearly believes that we do live in the best possible world and he also believes that humans cannot see the overall context that would be necessary for them to see this and that we must be satisfied by seeing things and in turn representing the seen and thought in art from this limited human perspective.

He condemns writers who seek to impose principles on nature that are not found in it. He sees this as an affront to nature and its beauty but also against its creator. While discussing morality and the philosophical error of trying to systematize and bring everything down to one commensurable principle, Lenz uses Bateaux to exemplify this philosophical sickness. Lenz asserts: “Herr Batteux schwur hoch und teuer das erste Principium aller schönen Künste gefunden zu haben. Ahmet der schönen Natur nach! Was ist schöne Natur? Die Natur nicht wie sie ist, sondern wie sie sein soll. Und wie soll sei denn sein? Schön—ein treffliches Principium, das mir meine Frage mit andern Worten zurück gibt” (II: 502).

In his discussion of Greek tragedy and the notion of fate—which he sees as its core principle—Lenz discusses the notion of motivation for the plays events. Underlying this notion of motivation is a clear sense that the author has a responsibility to the action of the play and to his reader. Lenz states the demand of the reader on the author in the following manner: “Ich fordere Rechenschaft von dir. Du sollst keinen Menschen auf die Folter bringen, ohne zu sagen warum” (II: 667–68). Lenz thinks the writer has a responsibility to show the causes for a character’s suffering and that the contemporary audience demands this because of their belief system—the most important element of this belief system being religion. He states:

Damit wir nun, unsern Religionsbegriffen und ganzen Art zu denken und zu handeln analog, die Grenzen unsers Trauerspiels richtiger abstecken, als bisher geschehen, so müssen wir von einem andern Punkt ausgehen als Aristoteles, wir müssen, um den unsrigen zu nehmen, den Volksgeschmack

der Vorzeit und unsers Vaterlandes zu Rate ziehen, der noch heut zu Tage
Volksgeschmack bleibt und bleiben wird. (II: 668)

Lenz is defining genre according to the beliefs and values of the audience for which the literature is intended. If we take him at his word, we can then assume that his theory of genre and its justification will reflect his assessment of contemporary values and beliefs and that we can read his understanding of society from his texts and genre theory.

Religion and religious values and experiences are central to Lenz's theory of genre because: "Von jeher und zu allen Zeiten sind die Empfindungen, Gemütsbewegungen und Leidenschaften der Menschen auf ihre Religionsbegriffe gepropfet, ein Mensch ohne alle Religion hat gar keine Empfindung (weh ihm!), ein Mensch mit schiefer Religion schiefe Empfindungen und ein Dichter, der die Religion seines Volks nicht gegründet hat, ist weniger als ein Meßmusikant" (II: 667). Religion and religious belief are foundational to human experience and human thinking. What is intriguing in this statement is that Lenz conceives of the possibility that religion can be "crooked" and that the resulting human belief system will also be correspondingly "crooked." Moreover, Lenz gives the poet a potential role in grounding the religion of his people. It seems that the poet can have and should have a foundational role in forming the religion of his people and perhaps for straightening out the "crooked" people and ridding his people of "crooked" religious people.

Lenz reacts negatively to the critique of his work that asserted all kinds of moral final purposes and philosophical propositions to his comedies. "Man hat mir allerlei moralische Endzwecke und philosophische Sätze bei einigen meiner Komödien angedichtet, [...] man hat nicht bedacht, daß ich nur ein bedingtes Gemälde geben wollte

von Sachen wie sie da sind und die Philosophie des geheimen Rats nur in seiner Individualität ihren Grund hatte" (II: 675). Lenz argues that it did not occur to these critics that he was trying to provide a contingent presentation of things as they are in their specificity. Because his many statements on the ethical function of literature make clear that Lenz does hold strongly to the position that literature has an ethical function, it seems safe to assume that he is talking about a particular conception of morality and literature that he does not hold, that is, one that asserts an author must have a clear philosophically articulated moral proposition in mind that he seeks to demonstrate in his work.

Lenz sees a direct and immediate connection between the ethical, theological and the aesthetic. He tells his readers that one can abstract a "Theorie der schönen Künste" from the Bible just as one can do so from the "book of nature" (II: 579). What is more, he says that "true theology" and "true beauty" are much more compatible than one thinks. He explains this by arguing that when such products of beauty are created:

Mehr Geist, mehr innere Konsistenz, und Gott gleich stark fortdauernde Wirksamkeit unserer Kraft erfordert wurde, welche bei dem, der sie lieset oder betrachtet, eben die Erschütterung, den süßen tumult, die entzückende Anstrengung und Erhebung aller in uns verborgenen Kräfte hervorbringt, als der in dem Augenblicke fühlt, da er sie hervorbrachte. Es ist also immer unser Geist, der bewegt wird, entflammt, entzückt, über seine Sphäre hinaus gehoben wird—nicht der Körper mit samt seiner *sensibilité*, mag sie auch so fein und subtil sein als sie wolle. (II: 580)

Lenz contrasts the mind with the body and associates *sensibilité* with the body. He presents a picture where an artist creates a work with sufficient spirit, inner consistency

and effectiveness, and that the reader of the work would feel a shuddering, straining and elevating of the hidden powers in him, the same feelings that the producer of the work felt. Lenz points out that it is the spirit that is moved, enflamed and enraptured and raised above its sphere not the body, no matter how finely tuned it is.

Lenz proposes the following:

Laßt uns also einmal die Moralität dieses Romans untersuchen, nicht den moralischen Endzweck den sich der Dichter vorgesetzt (denn da hört er auf Dichter zu sein) sondern die moralische Wirkung die das Lesen dieses Romans auf die Herzen des Publikums haben könne und haben müsse. Es muß jedem Dichter daran gelegen sein, nicht Schaden angerichtet zu haben.

(II: 676–77)

He sharply distinguishes between the morality of a work and the moral final principles of the writer who, according to Lenz would cease to be a poet in that case. The morality of a work is to be judged by the moral effects on the heart of the public brought about by reading it, that it can and must have. It should be important to all writers not to bring about damage to their readers. We should not look in the work itself for the moral message but rather in the effects it is supposed to have on its readers. This should serve as a warning to all of Lenz's readers not to look for the representation of his beliefs in a general and clearly stated philosophical form within his works or in statements by his characters.

When considering the function and value of literature in the context of the controversy over Goethe's *Werther* Lenz states:

[...] jeder Roman der das Herz in seinen verborgensten Schlupfwinkeln anzufassen und zu rühren weiß, auch das Herz bessern muß, er mag aussehen wie er wolle.

Eben darin besteht Werthers Verdienst daß er uns mit Leidenschaften und Empfindungen bekannt macht, die jeder sich dunkel fühlt, die er aber nicht mit Namen zu nennen weiß. Darin besteht das Verdienst jedes Dichters. (II: 682)

To judge a literary work one must “alle Zeiten, alle Nationen mit ihrem Charakter, ihren Produkten der Kunst und deren Wirkung und Einfluß erkannt verglichen zu haben und alsdenn den Wert unsers Dichters nach Maßgabe der Bedürfnisse unserer Nation zu bestimmen” (II: 690). The value of a poet is to be judged in relation to the needs of his time. More specifically, in relation to the effects the works have on his audience in relation to those needs.

The Lenz-Wieland battle can be understood against the background of Lenz’s notion of the ethical function of Literature. Lenz sees Wieland as not taking the character forming effects of literature seriously enough and of presenting seductive images to his readers that are ethically corrosive. It is here that we see the second front against which Lenz is fighting and the characteristic of his thinking on ethics and literature. On one front he is fighting against moralizing and absolute poetic and moral rules and on the other front he is fighting against libertine or materialistic notions of human morality that he sees as misunderstanding the importance of self-formation and the need and ability of all humans to engage in ethical acts of self-formation.

This is also related to Lenz's statements that he is writing for all of the people and not for an elite. While he rejects the rigid moralizing of a Gottschedian nature in literature and the holier than thou moralizing of religious zealots because they do not have the desired effect of bettering people's characters he also rejects the notion that literature is to be seen as an artistic medium that is not to be considered in ethical and moral terms. Lenz tries to negotiate a position that asserts that the ethical and aesthetic are intimately related and that to separate them would be a grievous mistake because we would lose one of the most effective means of affecting people's characters—stories that create vivid pictures of the social world and that can be understood by people on a very concrete level, which will then be most likely to have a positive effect on people's lives.

Lenz represents characters who are unaware of the nature of their desires or their situation in the socio-cultural order of things (for example, Marie, Stolzius, Herr Wesener, Tandi), who deny human drives and desires and confront them with abstract unrealistic moralizing (for example, Gräfin de la Roche, Wenzeslaus, Zierau) or violent physical deprivation (for example, Läufer), or characters who strive for the most immediate and indiscriminate satisfaction of their desires and thereby undermine the moral and ethical fiber of their personality as well as the social fabric because their actions are not in accord with the better interest of themselves or society (for example, Desportes, Mary, Graf Chamäleon, Herr Biedermeier, Magister Beza). The characters are portrayed as neither recognizing nor acting in accordance with the complexity of the conflict that is at the heart of human existence and instead as tending toward the extremes. None of the characters "schafft seine Begebenheiten." To the contrary, the characters seem either completely overwhelmed by the events and situations or they are

just not able to grasp them and in turn effectively act within them. They represent different moments of failure in the overall situation of socio-cultural disorder that prevents people from realizing their potential and becoming ethical, activist individuals.

As we know, for Lenz, characters representing heroic, self-determined individuals are the foundation of contemporary tragedy: everything, including the plot, obtains its significance and function in relation to the main character. In tragedy, according to Lenz, “[ist es] die Rede von Charakteren, die sich ihre Begebenheiten erschaffen, die selbständig und unveränderlich die ganze große Maschine selbst drehen, ohne die Gottheiten in den Wolken anders nötig zu haben [. . .]; nicht von Bildern, von Marionettenpuppen—von Menschen” (II: 654). This requires that the writer show “die ganze Person in allen ihren Verhältnissen,” that is “die Person mit all ihren Nebenpersonen, Interesse, Leidenschaften, Handlungen” (II: 668). Furthermore, Lenz asserts that tragedy has always been the means by which to represent remarkable characters to posterity.

Lenz explicitly relates his poetological concept of tragic character to a particular understanding of human beings and justifies this theoretically on the basis of contemporary modes of discourse and comportment. Tragic character—on the basis of an analogy to human character—is to be understood against the background of a dynamic conflict that occurs among bodily desires, natural and positive laws, socio-cultural norms, and free will: it is based on the psychological and ethical quality of persons who act within this dynamic context of conflicting forces in a principled, self-determined manner, thereby evidencing their free will in action.

Making the ethical dimension of his concept of tragedy and tragic character concrete and clear, Lenz states that the tragic character should deserve his misfortune and that this

misfortune should be motivated by the character's character and actions. What happens to the character should make sense given his or her actions and this character should be responsible for the outcome, "Denn der Held allein ist der Schlüssel zu seinen Schicksalen" (II: 669). Where this is not the case, that is, where it cannot be determined that the character is not responsible for what happens to him there can be no tragedy, given Lenz's definition of tragedy. It is clear here that Lenz's notions of human agency and its relation to natural and social forces are central.

First of all, for such an assertion to make sense, it has to be possible for persons to assert agency in the world and to be the creators of their situation to be held responsible for their actions. That this is possible given human nature is clear from Lenz's writings. He would not assert that this is the category for judgment if it were not so. He repeatedly asserts that humans are created to be independent and that it is their nature to differentiate themselves from their surroundings. Fate or luck has no place here. They cannot be tragic for the contemporary audience. In tragedy the actions and the plot are there for the sake of the main character. They are to illustrate how the hero of the tragedy creates his situation and is a self-determined individual. Actions and events are to be subordinated to the representation of the "remarkable" person (II: 668)

It has long been considered a contradiction that Lenz clearly values and privileges the self-determining character and thereby presumably the genre of tragedy, while writing comedies filled with characters that are far from self-determined. If we carefully read what Lenz states in his poetics and the conditional nature of these statements when read against the background of his writings on ethics, morality, theology and society, there is no contradiction, at least not at the level that has been reported in the secondary literature.

When we consider Lenz's assertions regarding the nature of moral ideals and his characterization of them, we can see the degree to which this parallels his discussion of creating heroes on the stage that would be the embodiment of these ideals. Just as he is against the systematic application of moral ideals because of the negative consequences this would have on the audience or on the general populace who cannot see through to the spirit of the ideal but rather adheres to or becomes depressed by the letter of the ideal, he rejects the portrayal of heroic characters. Given Lenz's argument, this is entirely consistent at the level of his argument. He makes an assertion and backs it up with reasons. What we may think of this reasoning is an entirely different matter. To assert that Lenz contradicts himself ignores significant, central and repeated assertions made by Lenz across all of his work.

Lenz often makes depressed assessments of the current state of affairs, noting the degree to which people do not act as self-determined, ethical agents. In his assessment of contemporary society he clearly sees no such beings in the real world. If the person is not responsible, then the focus shifts to those forces that are responsible. This is where Lenz's notion of comedy comes in.

In comedy the issue of character is secondary because the characters are "für die Handlungen da—für die artigen Erfolge, Wirkungen, Gegenwirkungen, ein Kreis herumgezogen, der sich um eine Hauptidee dreht [. . .]" (II: 669–70). In comedy the characters are reductions and we see only enough of their personalities to make the drama interesting and in order that the action can proceed to its designed end. At the center of Lenz's comedies stands a main idea and the story and plot are situation and event-centered rather than character-centered. If we are to approach Lenz's comedies in a manner consistent with his own stated intention we must try to reconstruct the idea that is

the designed center or main point of the particular comedy and around which all of the events, situations and characters revolve. I propose that the idea at the center of Lenz's comedies is the state of moral decay and pedantry in society and the absence of the socio-cultural conditions necessary to provide the basis for the development of ethical individuals, and that each comedy represents this idea from a different perspective.

For Lenz comedy is "Gemälde der menschlichen Gesellschaft, und wenn die ernsthaft wird, kann das Gemälde nicht lachend werden" and it is a representation that is for the entire society and not just the elite (II: 703). Considering this, Lenz asserts: "daher müssen unsere deutschen Komödienschreiber komisch und tragisch zugleich schreiben, weil das Volk, für das sie schreiben, oder doch wenigstens schreiben sollten, ein solcher Mischmasch von Kultur und Rohigkeit, Sittigkeit und Wildheit ist. So erschafft der komische Dichter dem tragischen sein Publikum" (II: 703–04). We see that because Lenz prefers literature that attempts to portray the world as the author finds it he must find a way to write that reflects the hybrid nature of people. We also see that the goal of reaching this broader public through representing their world is to shape them in a way that will participate in the larger process of character formation. In the end, this process will help create characters that could provide material for tragedies. As they are, such characters are too rare in the real world to be realistically and convincingly portrayed.

We cannot understand Lenz's comedies, his theory of comedy and his writings on moral and ethical issues apart from one another. His moral and ethical theory and his analysis of contemporary society in the terms he therein lays out serve as a necessary background for understanding his definition of comedy and his choice of the comic genre over tragedy when he so clearly privileges tragedy over comedy in evaluative terms. This

has long befuddled Lenz scholarship and continues to do so today but this is a result of Lenz's writings not being taken seriously enough as an analytical tool for investigating his works.

Furthermore, by creating a sense that immoral actions and situations are reconciled or suspended for no logical reason and that none of the characters determines the events through principled and self-determined action, the so-called happy endings in Lenz's comedies underscore the impression that the represented world is dysfunctional. The happy end is a representation of debased human needs and desires and of a defective socio-cultural environment, and although it would be an easy solution to the problems depicted, it is unsatisfactory on cognitive, ethical and moral grounds and thus leaves a sense of dissonance in the audience, as is adequately evidenced in the reception of the plays. The consistency of Lenz's pattern of representing disturbing images of his contemporary socio-cultural environment begs for explanation: just what did Lenz want to achieve through his writing, if anything at all?

Lenz claims that Goethe is writing "[. . .] für Sitten wo Furchtsamkeit, Ernst und Pedanterei unsere Gesellschaften stimmen und insgeheim doch die verbotene Lust zehnmal rasender wütet, wo jenachdem denn nun endlich die französische Freiheit sich ausbreitet, alles in die elendeste Karikatur ausartet [...] für diese drolligte Sitten, wo neimand Herz hat und wer noch eins hat nicht weiß was er damit anfangen soll [...]" (II: 687). It seems safe to assume that Lenz directs his works toward this same context, given that he considers the needs of the public to be related to the aforementioned and claims that we should determine "[...] den Wert unsers Dichters nach Maßgabe der Bedürfnisse unserer Nation" (II: 690).

Lenz is fighting a battle on two fronts. On the one hand he is fighting against the moral rigorism of a Gottsched who demands simple moral messages and ideals to be portrayed in a clear and logical style that makes their message clear. There should be no mistake about what the moral message is and the rigorous style and the rational content of the story is to convey and support this message. On the other front he is fighting against what he sees as the immoral, corrupt texts of Wieland. These he sees as giving up on the moral and ethical improvement of society and as even worse reveling in the corruption of society and writing off the masses as ignorant and morally corrupt individuals. While he rejects the moralizing rigorism of the rationalist poetics he also rejects the notion that it is not literature's task to morally improve its readers and thereby society.

CONCLUSION

I have attempted to provide a Lenzian understanding of Lenz's theory and practice of comedy. I have constructed my argument on the basis of an intertextual analysis of Lenz's own statements—focusing mainly on the notion of character in its literary and socio-cultural dimensions—with a view toward the significance and function of these statements for his comedies. It seems to me that this approach is most compatible with Lenz's own poetics and practice of writing comedies and is therefore a necessary step in trying to understand the nature and purpose of Lenz's works. When we view Lenz from a Lenzian perspective and read his works in manner consistent with his own poetological statements we can see coherence within his literary works and a correspondence between his literary and theoretical writings. In fact, the coherence within a given literary work first appears when we consider the correspondence between the literary and theoretical works. I have argued that this coherence and correspondence exists in his representation of, and discourse on, the moral disorder of things and that this is the "Hauptidee" around which Lenz designs his comedies.

My approach in this work was to take Lenz's assertions seriously, to investigate the "Meinungen eines Laien" and his other theological, moral and ethical writings, to reconstruct their central content and to consider their possible connections to his literary works. My interest in his theoretical works was driven by my attempt to read his literary works from a perspective reconstructed from Lenz's own writings.

As we saw when looking at Lenz's poetological texts it is clear that ethical concerns dominate both his theory of genre. I looked at his ethical and moral and theological texts

in order to develop analytical and terminological tools with which to understand the tensions in his plays and the content of his poetological theory. With these tools I reconstrued a coherent picture of how ethics structures his work and better understand the driving force—the central idea—of his plays.

As we saw, Lenz develops a concept of personal ethics that is both radically individualistic and inextricably bound up with the socio-cultural and physiological environment. He argues that identity is formed within a complex, agonistic interaction among drives, desires, cognitive capacities, rules, and norms. Lenz asserts that we are socially and biologically constrained, but he also insists that human agency and freedom are the ultimate values by which we are to judge a society and an individual. He conceives of the ultimate stage of character formation as necessarily involving the surpassing of biological and socio-cultural limits that continually threaten human freedom. For Lenz, the question of personal ethics is primary and his handling of ethical questions reveals the extent to which he considers the discourses on self-preservation and reproduction and morals and socio-cultural norms to be ultimately related to a person's relationship to his bodily desires, to other people, to society and, ultimately, to God. According to Lenz, the individual must become aware of his location within this complex of forces and struggle to arrive at acceptable solutions to the problems faced.

I argued that Lenz articulates a pragmatic theory of comedy in that he defines the genre in terms of its functional relation to socio-cultural and historical conditions and to the needs of society that arise out of that same context, and then in turn constructs his comedies in accordance with this pragmatic understanding with the expectation that the works will affect the audience in a particular way. I argued that Lenz seeks to confront his audience with

representations of the perverse contemporary socio-cultural state of affairs thereby provoking their sense of pride in the belief that they are independent individuals with free wills and that ethics and morality are their and their society's guiding principles, which should in turn motivate them to reflect on these representations and become conscious of—and thereby somewhat independent of—the socio-cultural conditions to which they refer.

The motivation for this work was to continue the work that has begun looking more seriously and intensively at Lenz's moral-theological writings. In addition, I have specifically tried to link these writings to his poetological texts and literary texts in order to make the connections clear among them. With the foundation provided by work such as this, we can better understand Lenz's literary texts. Secondary literature on his literary texts that does not consider the nature of Lenz's ethics runs the risk of ignoring the central feature of his works. By pointing out the intimate relations between his ethics, poetics and literary works, I hope I have contributed to making the path to conducting such integrated research easier to follow.

Notes

-
- i Unless otherwise indicated, all subsequent references to Lenz's writings in the body of the text will be to the three volumes of the Damm edition, prefaced with (I) for the dramas, (II) for the prose and theoretical texts and (III) for the letters.
- ii Martin Rector has convincingly stated the case for the coherence of Lenz's theoretical and literary works and has succinctly outlined the rationale for conducting such investigations; see "Anschauendes Denken. Zur Form von Lenz' "Anmerkungen übers Theater."
- iii While I agree in principle with Unger, I think he and others, like Luserke, overstate the distinct nature of these writings. When we look at the writings, consider the themes within them, and compare how these themes are handled, there is a high degree of similarity between them. Not to consider these similarities, while at the same time not ignoring the contradictions and gaps, is a mistake. The fact that Lenz scholarship is still calling for such analyses is one of the motivations for the present study.
- iv Nussbaum provides a brilliant analysis of the form-content relation in the introduction to "Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature.
- v For insightful analyses of the similarities in the works of Hamann and Lenz, see Elke Meinzer, "Biblische Poetik. Die Analogie als Stilprinzip bei J. G. Hamann und J.M.R. Lenz." In *Königsberg-Studien. Beiträge zu einem besonderen Kapitel der deutschen Geistesgeschichte des 18. und angehenden 19. Jahrhunderts*. Ed. Joseph Kohnen. Frankfurt/Main: Lang 1998. 37-57. and Stefan Pautler, Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. *Pietistische Weltdeutung und bürgerliche Sozialform im Sturm und Drang*. Göttersloh: Kaiser, Göttersloher Verlagshaus 1999.
- vi G.W. Leibniz, *Die Theodizee*. 2 vols. Trans. Herbert Herring. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1996.
- vii For an interesting discussion of noncommensurability and ethics, see Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature*.
- viii I will discuss the ascetic aspects of Lenz's works in more detail below.
- ix Lenz is referring here to Herder's *Älteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts* (1774). See *Herders Sämtliche Werke*. 33 vols. Ed. Bernhard Suphan. Berlin: Weidmann, 1877-1913. Damm has pointed out the terminological similarities between the texts of the two authors. See II: 892, notes.
- x Nussbaum has outlined this tradition in Greek ethics and literature as well as in American literature. See both *Love's Knowledge* and *The Fragility of Goodness*.
- xi For an interesting discussion of this issue among Lenz's contemporaries and how it was dealt with see Mathias Luserke, *Die Bändigung der wilden Seele. Literatur und Leidenschaft in der Aufklärung*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1995.
- xii For a detailed discussion of Lenz's conflict with Wieland, see Daunicht's 1942 dissertation, *Lenz und Wieland and Madland's "Lenz and Wieland: The Dialectics of Friendship and Morality."*
- xiii According to Hull, there are broader sociological factors at work here. She remarks: "Sociologists observe that as society becomes ever more complex and differentiated, morality in the form of moral codes loses some of the power to structure social interaction that it exercises in simpler social configurations. It must compete against other 'functional equivalents,' like law, or love, or situational rationality [Luhmann]. Above all, complexity produces myriads of possible sources of moral precepts and situations where different obligations, goals, worldviews, and claims may arise and become expressed in moral subsystems. Complexity therefore proliferates moral systems at the same time that it weakens their impact. The moral discussions of the late eighteenth century were in part reactions to this process; by expanding the ground of morality from religion to society, the practitioners of civil society significantly widened the criteria for moral behavior." (223)
- xiv I am using the term "ascetic" in the general sense of "exercise" and "training" directed toward an ethical goal that the original sense of the term entailed and not our limited understanding of the term that is colored with negative notions associated with repression and withdrawal from society. This usage is not only supported etymologically—see the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. Xx ()—but also by the work of Foucault in his work on the history of sexuality and Peter Brown in his *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia UP, 1988).

xv See Daunicht

xvi see Damm, among others

xvii See Foucault's multiple volumes on the history of sexuality, and Hull's *Sexuality, State and Civil Society in Germany, 1700-1815*.

WORKS BY JAKOB MICHAEL REINHOLD LENZ

“Der Versöhnungstod Jesu Christi, besungen von einem Jüngling in Dorpat.” *Gelehrte Beyträge zu den Rigischen Anzeigen* 7, 1766. 49-60.

Die Landplagen. Ein Gedicht in sechs Büchern. Königsberg: Zeisen & Hartung, 1769.

Der Hofmeister oder Vortheile der Privaterziehung: Eine Komödie. Leipzig: Weygand 1774.

Der neue Menoza oder Geschichte des cumbanischen Prinzen Tandi: Eine Komödie. Leipzig: Weygand, 1774

“Anmerkungen übers Theater.” In *Anmerkungen übers Theater nebst angehängten übersetzten Stück Shakespeares.* Leipzig: Weygand, 1774.

Amor vincit omnia. Translation of Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labours Lost*. In *Anmerkungen übers Theater nebst angehängten übersetzten Stück Shakespeares.* Leipzig: Weygand, 1774.

Lustspiele nach dem Plautus fürs deutsche Theater. Darmstadt: Wittich, 1774.

“Nur ein Wort über Herders Philosophie der Geschichte.” *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* 57 (July 18, 1775): 475-477.

“Rezension des Neuen Menoza von dem Verfasser selbst aufgesetzt.” *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* 55/56 (1775): 459-466.

Meynungen eines Layen den Geistlichen zugeeignet. Leipzig: Weygand, 1775.

Menalk und Mopsus: Eine Ekloge nach der fünften Ekloge Virgils. Frankfurt & Leipzig: Weygand, 1775.

Petrarch: Ein Gedicht aus seinen Liedern gezogen. Winterthur: Steiner, 1776.

Vertheidigung des Herrn W. gegen die Wolken von dem Verfasser der Wolken. Lemgo: Helwing, 1776.

Die Freunde machen den Philosophen: Eine Komödie. Lemgo: Meyer, 1776.

Die Soldaten: Eine Komödie. Leipzig: Weidmann & Reich, 1776.

Die beiden Alten. In *Flüchtige Aufsätze von Lenz.* Ed. Philipp Christoph Kayser. Winterthur: Steiner, 1776. 4-41.

Zerbin oder Die neuere Philosophie. Deutsches Museum (March, 1776): 193-207.

- “Über die Veränderung des Theaters in Shakespeare.” In *Flüchtige Aufsätze von Lenz*. Ed. Philipp Christoph Kayser. Winterthur: Steiner, 1776. 86-95.
- “Über die Bearbeitung der deutschen Sprache im Elsass, Breisgau und den benachbarten Gegenden.” In *Flüchtige Aufsätze von Lenz*. Ed. Philipp Christoph Kayser. Winterthur: Steiner, 1776. 55-69.
- “Über die Vorzüge der deutschen Sprache.” In: *Flüchtige Aufsätze von Lenz*. Ed. Philipp Christoph Kayser. Winterthur: Steiner, 1776. 70-79.
- “Fragment aus einer Farce die Höllenrichter genannt.” *Deutsches Museum* 3 (March 1777). 254-256.
- Der Landprediger*. *Deutsches Museum*. April: 289-307; May: 409-439; June: 1777. 567-574.
- Der Engländer: Eine dramatische Phantasey*. Leipzig: Weidmann & Reich, 1777.
- “Das Hochburger Schloss.” *Teutscher Merkur* (April 1777): 16-29.
- “Nachruf zu der im Göttingischen Almanach Jahrs 1778 an das Publikum gehaltenen Rede über Physiognomik.” *Teutscher Merkur* (November, 1777): 106-119.
- “Supplement zur Abhandlung vom Baum des Erkenntnisses Gutes und Bösen.” 1780. In *Philosophische Vorlesungen für empfindsame Seelen*. Frankfurt & Leipzig: Weigand. Complete text in Titel and Haug, *Werke und Schriften*, 1966.
- “Abgerissene Beobachtungen über die launigen Dichter.” *Deutsches Museum* 3 (1882): 195-196.
- Die Sizilianische Vesper*. *Liefländisches Magazin der Lektüre* 1 (1782): 19-72.
- Myrsa Polagi oder der Irrgärten*. 1782. *Liefländisches Magazin der Lektüre* 2: 229-281.
- Der Waldbruder: Ein Pendant zu Werthers Leiden*. 1797. *Die Horen*.
- Pandämonium Germanicum: Eine Skizze von J. M. R. Lenz*. Ed. Georg Dumpf. Nuremberg: Campe, 1819.
- Gesammelte Schriften*. Ed. Ludwig Tieck. 3 vols. Berlin: Reimer, 1828.
- Der verwundete Bräutigam*. Ed. K. L. Blum. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1845.
- “Entwurf eines Briefes an einen Freund, der auf Akademieen Theologie studiert.” In August Stöber, ed. *Johann Gottfried Röderer von Straßburg und seine Freunde nebst*

Briefen an ihn von Goethe, Kayser, Schlosser, Lavater, Pfenninger, Ewald, Haffner und Blessig. Colmar: E. Barth, 1874 178-182.

“Versuch über das erste Prinzipium der Moral.” In August Stöber, ed. *Johann Gottfried Röderer von Straßburg und seine Freunde nebst Briefen an ihn von Goethe, Kayser, Schlosser, Lavater, Pfenninger, Ewald, Haffner und Blessig.* Colmar: E. Barth, 1874. 183-200.

“Das Tagebuch.” In L. Ulrich, “Etwas von Lenz.” *Deutsche Rundschau* 11 (1877).

Katharina von Siena. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 144-190.

Die Kleinen. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 244-265.

Der tugendhafte Taugenichts. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 314-237.

Boris. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 304-306.

Cato. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 293-296.

Graf Heinrich. Eine Haupt- und Staatsaktion. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 278-282.

Henriette von Waldeck. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 113-132.

Die alte Jungfer. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 195-208.

Die Baccalaurei. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 303.

Caroline. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 301-302.

Die Familie der Projektenmacher. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884 284-291.

Magisters Lieschen. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz.* Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 298-300.

“Verteidigung der Verteidigung des Übersetzers der Lustspiele.” In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz*. Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884 14-21.

Zum Weinen oder Weil ihrs so haben wollt. Ein Trauerspiel. In Karl Weinhold, ed. *Dramatischer Nachlaß von J. M. R. Lenz*. Frankfurt: Rütten & Loening, 1884. 268-275.

Gedichte von J. M. R. Lenz. Ed. Karl Weinhold. Berlin: Hertz, 1891.

“Moralische Bekehrung eines Poeten.” *Goethe-Jahrbuch* 10 (1889): 46-70.

“Über Götz von Berlichingen.” In Erich Schmidt, “Lenziana.” *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* 41 (1901): 994-996.

“Zweierlei über Virgils erste Ekloge.” In Erich Schmidt, “Lenziana.” *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* 41: 996-999.

“Anmerkungen über die Rezension eines neu herausgekommenen französischen Trauerspiels.” In Rosanow, M. N. *Jakob M. R. Lenz: Der Dichter der Sturm- und Drangperiode. Sein Leben und seine Werke*, tr. C. von Gutschow. Leipzig: Schulze, 1909. 544-548.

“Meine Lebensregeln.” In Rosanow, M. N. *Jakob M. R. Lenz: Der Dichter der Sturm- und Drangperiode. Sein Leben und seine Werke*, tr. C. von Gutschow. Leipzig: Schulze, 1909. 548-554.

Ausgewählte Gedichte. Ed. Erich Osterheld. Leipzig: Eckardt, 1909.

Gesammelte Schriften. Ed. Ernst Lewy. 4 vols. Berlin: Cassirer, 1909.

“Etwas über Philotas Charakter.” In Lenz, *Gesammelte Schriften*. 1909-1913. Ed. Franz Blei. 5 vols. Munich: Müller, 4 (1909): 331-348.

“Über den Zweck der neuen Strassburger Gesellschaft.” In Lenz, *Gesammelte Schriften*. 1909-1913. Ed. Franz Blei. 5 vols. Munich: Müller. 4: 249-254.

“Von Shakespeares Hamlet.” In Lenz, *Gesammelte Schriften*. 1909-1913. Ed. Franz Blei. 5 vols. Munich: Müller. 4 (1909): 214-222.

“Über Ovid.” In Lenz, *Gesammelte Schriften*. 1909-1913. Ed. Franz Blei. 5 vols. Munich: Müller. 4 (1909): 205-214.

“Entwurf einiger Grundsätze für die Erziehung Überhaupt, besonders aber für die Erziehung des Adels.” In Lenz, *Gesammelte Schriften*. 1909-1913. Ed. Franz Blei. 5 vols. Munich: Müller. 4: 323-330.

"Fragment über die Mode. " In Lenz, *Gesammelte Schriften*. 1909-1913. Ed. Franz Blei. 5 vols. Munich: Müller. 4 (1909): 379-383.

Gesammelte Schriften. 1909-1913. Ed. Franz Blei. 5 vols. Munich: Müller.

Über die Soldatenehen. Ed. Karl Freye. Hamburg: Privately printed, 1913.

Briefe von und an J. M. R. Lenz. Ed. Karl Freye and Wolfgang Stammeler. Leipzig: Wolff, 1918.

Briefe über die Moralität der Leiden des jungen Werthers. Ed. Ludwig Schmitz-Kallenberg. Münster: Coppenrath, 1918.

"Über die Natur unseres Geistes." *Werke und Schriften*. Ed. Britta Titel and Hellmut Haug. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Goverts, 1966. 572-578.

Werke und Schriften. Ed. Britta Titel and Hellmut Haug. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Goverts, 1966.

Werke und Schriften. Ed. Richard Daunicht. 2 vols. Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1970.

Werke und Briefe in drei Bänden. Ed. Sigrid Damm. Leipzig: Insel, 1987 and Munich: Hanser, 1987.

Belinde und der Tod. Carrikatur einer Prosepopoe. Basel: Erasmushaus, 1988.

WORKS CITED

Adelson, Leslie. *Making Bodies, Making History: Feminism & German Identity*. Lincoln, London, U. of Nebraska P. 1993.

Albrecht, Wolfgang and Ulrich Kaufmann. "Lenzens 'expositio ad hominem' in historisch-kritischer Edition mit Faksimile)." In: *Ich aber werde dunkel sein': Ein Buch zur Ausstellung Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz*. Ulrich Kaufmann, Wolfgang Albrecht, Helmut Stadeler eds. Jena: Bussert & Partner, 1996. 78-91.

Apel, Friedmar. "Komische Melancholie, lustige Entfremdung. Zur Struktur der Komik im neueren Lustspiel. " *Sprache im technischen Zeitalter* 70 (1979): 145-170.

Benseler, David P. "Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. An Indexed Bibliography with an Introduction on the History of the Manuscripts and Editions." Diss., University of Oregon. 1971.

- Bertram, Mathias. *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz als Lyriker: Zum Weltverhältnis und zur Struktur seiner lyrischen Selbstreflexionen*. St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 1994.
- Blunden, Allan. "A Case of Elusive Identity: The Correspondence of J. M. R. Lenz." *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 50 (1976): 103-126.
- . "A Study of the Role of Language in Personal Relationships in the Major Works of J. M. R. Lenz." Diss., Cambridge, 1973.
- . "Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz." *German Men of Letters*. Ed. Alex Natan & Brian Keith-Smith. Vol. 6. London: O. Wolff, 1972. 209-240.
- . "J. M. R. Lenz and Leibniz: A Point of View." *Sprachkunst* 9 (1978): 3-18.
- . "Language and Politics: the Patriotic Endeavours of J. M. R. Lenz." *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte. Sonderheft* (1975): 168-189.
- . "Lenz, Language, and Love's Labour's Lost." *Colloquia Germanica* (1974): 252-274.
- Boetius, Henning. *Der verlorene Lenz. Auf der Suche nach dem inneren Kontinent*. Frankfurt: Eichborn, 1985.
- Brown, Peter. *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*. New York: Columbia UP, 1988.
- Brummack, Jürgen. "'... daß Handeln die Seele der Welt sei'. Über das Verhältnis des Ethischen und des Ästhetischen in Lenz' „Soldaten’." In *Geschichtserfahrung im Spiegel der Literatur*. Festschrift für Jürgen Schröder zum 65. Geburtstag. Ed. Cornelia Blasberg and Franz-Josef Deiters. Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2000. 44-64.
- Butler, Michael. "Character and Paradox in Lenz's *Der Hofmeister*." *German Life and Letters* 32 (1978-79): 95-87.
- Catholy, Eckehard. *Das deutsche Lustspiel. Von der Aufklärung bis zur Romantik*. Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln, Mainz: Kohlhammer, 1982.
- Clasen, Thomas. "Den Trieb haben doch alle Menschen." Sexualobsessionen in den Dramen des J.M.R. Lenz. In Schneider, Thomas, ed. *Das Erotische in der Literatur*, 1991. 55-68.

- Daemmrich, Horst. "Lenz in themengeschichtlicher Sicht." In *"Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...": Studien zu Leben und Werk von J.M.R. Lenz*. Eds. Inge Stephan and Hans-Gerd Winter. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 10-26.
- Damm, Sigrid. 1988. "Unruhe" (1987 Lion Feuchtwanger Prize reception speech, Akademie der Künste der DDR). *Sinn und Form* 40/1(1988): 244-248. Reprinted in: Karin A. Wurst, ed., *J. R. M. [sic] Lenz als Alternative. Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Köln: Böhlau, 1992. 23-28.
- . "Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. Ein Essay." In: *J. M. R. Lenz Vol. I-III Gedichte und Briefe*. Berlin, Weimar Aufbau, 1987: 687-768.
- . *Vögel, die verkünden Land*. Weimar: Aufbau, 1985.
- Daunicht, Richard. . "J. M. R. Lenz im Herbst 1777, Zu einem anonymen Gedicht in Wielands 'Teutschem Merkur'." In: *'Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...' Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz*. Inge Stephan, Hans-Gerd Winter eds. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 109-17.
- . *J.M.R. Lenz und Wieland*. Diss. Berlin, 1942.
- Dedert, Hartmut. *Die Erzählung im Sturm und Drang. Studien zur Prosa des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1990.
- Demuth, Volker. *Realität als Geschichte. Biographie, Historie und Dichtung bei J. M. R. Lenz*. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1994.
- Diffey, Norman R. "Language and Liberation in Lenz." In: *Space to Act: The Theater of J. M. R. Lenz*. Alan C. Leidner and Helga Madland eds. Columbia S.C.: Camden, 1993. 1-9.
- . "Lenz, Rousseau, and the Problem of Striving." *Seminar* 10 (1974): 165-180.
- Duncan, Bruce. "Dark Comedy in Eighteenth-Century Germany: Lessing and Lenz." Diss. Cornell U, 1969.
- Eibl, Karl. "Realismus als Widerlegung von Natur: Dargestellt am Beispiel von Lenz' Hofmeister." *Poetica* 6 (1974): 456-67.
- Falck, P. Th. *Der Dichter J.M.R. Lenz in Livland*. Winterthur: Westfeling, 1878.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*. Vol. 1: An Introduction. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage, 1980.
- . *The Use of Pleasure*. The History of Sexuality, vol. 2. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage, 1985.

Genton, Elizabeth. "Lenz, Klinger, Wagner: Studien über die rationalistischen Elemente im Denken und Dichten des Sturm und Drangs." Diss. Berlin: Freie Universität, 1955.

Gerth, Klaus. "'Vergnügen ohne Geschmack' J. M. R. Lenz' *Menoza* als parodistisches 'Püppelspiel'." *Jahrbuch des freien deutschen Hochstifts* (1988): 35-56.

Gibbons, James M. "Laying the Moral Foundations: Writer, Religion and Late Eighteenth-Century Society—The Case of J.M.R. Lenz." *German Life and Letters*, Vol. 54 (2001): 137-154.

Giese, Peter Christian. *Das 'Gesellschaftlich-Komische'. Zur Komik und Komödie am Beispiel der Stücke und Bearbeitungen Brechts*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1974.

Glarner, Hannes. "*Diese willkürlichen Ausschweifungen der Phantasey*". *Das Schauspiel Der Engländer von Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz*. Bern, Frankfurt a. Main, New York, Paris, Wien: Lang, 1992.

Glaser, Horst Albert. "Drama des Sturm und Drang." In: *Deutsche Literatur. Eine Sozialgeschichte*. Vol. 4. Horst Glaser, ed. Reinbeck: Rowohlt, 1980.

—. "Heteroklisie: Der Fall Lenz." *Gestaltungsgeschichte und Gesellschaftsgeschichte*. Ed. Helmut Kreuzer und Käte Hamburger. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1969. 132-51.

Graevenitz, Gerhart von. "Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit. Aspekte deutscher 'bürgerlicher' Literatur im frühen 18. Jahrhundert." *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift* 49 Sonderheft: 18. Jahrhundert (1975): 1-82.

Graf, Roman. "'Die Folgen des ehlosen Standes der Herren Soldaten': Male Homosocial Desire in *Die Soldaten*." In: *Space to Act: The Theater of J. M. R. Lenz*. Eds. Alan C. Leidner and Helga Madland, eds. Columbia S.C.: Camden, 1993. 34-44.

Grathoff, Dirk. "Literarhistorische Ungleichzeitigkeiten: der *Hofmeister* von Lenz zu Brecht. Ein Rückschritt im Fortschritt." In: *Studien zur Ästhetik und Literaturgeschichte der Kunstepoche*. Dirk Grathoff, ed. Frankfurt, Bern, New York: Lang, 1985. 163-207.

Grimm, Reinhold and Jost Hermand eds. *Die Klassik-Legende*. Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1971.

Grimminger, Rolf, ed. *Deutsche Aufklärung bis zur französischen Revolution (1680-1789)*. München: Hanser, 1980.

Großklaus, Götz. "Rückgewinnung der Natur. Zu Werner Herzogs *Vom Gehen im Eis*." *Jahrbuch Deutsch als Fremdsprache* 10 (1984): 14-23.

- Guthke, Karl S. "Lenzens 'Hofmeister' und 'Soldaten': Ein neuer Formtypus in der Geschichte des deutschen Dramas." *Wirkendes Wort* (1959): 274-86.
- Guthrie, John. "Revision und Rezeption: Lenz und sein *Hofmeister*." *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 110.2 (1991): 181-210.
- Haffner, Herbert. *Lenz: Der Hofmeister und Die Soldaten, mit Brechts Hofmeister-Bearbeitung und Materialien*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1979.
- Hallersleben, Silvia. "'Dies Geschöpf taugt nur zur Hure...'. Anmerkungen zum Frauenbild in Lenz' *Soldaten*." In: '*Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...*' *Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz*. Inge Stephan, Hans-Gerd Winter eds. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 225-42.
- Harris, Edward P. "Structural Unity in J. M. R. Lenz's *Der Hofmeister*: A Reevaluation." *Seminar* 8 (1972): 77-87.
- . "The Structure of Dramatic Characterization in Four Plays by J.M.R. Lenz." Diss. Ann Arbor U, 1968.
- Hayer, Uwe. *Das Genie und die Transzendenz. Untersuchungen zur konzeptionellen Einheit theologischer und ästhetischer Reflexion bei J.M.R. Lenz*. Frankfurt am Main, 1995.
- Hein, Christoph. "Der Neue Menoza oder Geschichte des kumbanischen Prinzen Tandi." In: *Cromwell und andere Stücke*. Berlin, Weimar: Aufbau, 1981. 233-307.
- . "Waldbruder Lenz." In: Christoph Hein, *Die wahre Geschichte des Ah Q: Stücke und Essays*. Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1984. 136-160.
- Heine, Thomas. "Lenz's *Waldbruder*: Inauthentic Narration as Social Criticism." *German Life and Letters* 33/3 (1980): 183-89.
- Hermant, Jost. *Die Kultur der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1965-85*. München: Nymphenburger, 1988.
- Hiebel, Hans. "Das 'offene' Kunstwerk als Signum der Moderne." In: *J.R.M. Lenz als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Karin A. Wurst, ed. Köln: Böhlau, 1992. 179-97.
- Hill, David. "'Das Politische' in *Die Soldaten*" in *Orbis Litterarum* 43 (1988): 299-315.
- , ed. *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. Studien zum Gesamtwerk*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994.
- , ed. *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*. Rochester: Camden House, 2003.

- . "Stolz und Demut, Illusion und Mitleid bei Lenz." In: *J. M. R. [sic] als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Karin A. Wurst, ed. Köln: Böhlau, 1992. 64-91.
- . "The Portrait of Lenz in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*: A Literary Perspective." David Hill ed. *J. M. R. Lenz: Studien zum Gesamtwerk*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994. 222-231.
- Hinck, Walter. *Das deutsche Lustspiel des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts und die italienische Komödie*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1965.
- . *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. Der Neue Menoza. Eine Komödie. Text und Materialien zur Interpretation*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1965.
- . "Vom Ausgang der Komödie: Exemplarische Lustspielschlüsse in der europäischen Literatur." In: *Zwischen Satire und Utopie*. Reinhold Grimm & Walter Hinck. eds. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1982. 126-183.
- Hinderer, Walter. "Lenz: *Der Hofmeister*." In: *Die deutsche Komödie: Vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*. Walter Hinck, ed. Düsseldorf: Bagel, 1977. 66-88.
- Hoff, Dagmar von. "Inszenierung des Leidens. Lektüre von J. M. R. Lenz's *Der Engländer* und Sophie Albrechts *Theresgen*." In: '*Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...*' *Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz*. Inge Stephan, Hans-Gerd Winter eds. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 210-224.
- Hull, Isabel V. *Sexuality, State, and Civil Society in Germany, 1700-1815*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996.
- Huyssen, Andreas. *Das Drama des Sturm und Drang. Kommentar zu einer Epoche*. München: Winkler. 1980.
- . "Gesellschaftsgeschichte und literarische Form: J. M. R. Lenz' Komödie *Der Hofmeister*." *Monatshefte* 71.2 (1979): 131-144.
- Inbar, Eva Maria. "Goethe's Lenz-Porträt." *Wirkendes Wort* 6 (1978): 422-429.
- Kaufmann, Ulrich. "Die Lenziana in Weimar." In: *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. Studien zum Gesamtwerk*. David Hill, ed. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994. 214-21.
- . "'Ich geh aufs Land, weil ich bei Euch nichts tun kann.'" Zu einigen Aspekten des Aufenthaltes von J. M. R. Lenz am Weimarer Musenhof." In: Inge Stephan and Hans-Gerd Winter, eds. '*Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...*' *Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994 153-66.

- Kes-Costa, Barbara R. "‘Freundschaft geht über Natur’: On Lenz’s Rediscovered Adaptation of Plautus." In: *Space to Act: The Theater of J. M. R. Lenz*. Alan C. Leidner and Helga Madland, eds. Columbia SC: Camden, 1993. 162-73.
- Kieffer, Bruce. *The Storm and Stress of Language: Linguistic Catastrophe in the Early Works of Goethe, Lenz, Klinger, and Schiller*. University Park, London: Pennsylvania State UP, 1986.
- King, Janet K. "Lenz Viewed Sane." *The Germanic Review* 49/2 (1974): 146-53.
- Kitching, Laurence Patrick Anthony. *Der Hofmeister: A Critical Analysis of Bertolt Brecht’s Adaptation of Lenz’s Drama*. München: Fink. 1976.
- Kondylis, Panajotis. *Die Aufklärung im Rahmen des neuzeitlichen Rationalismus*. Stuttgart: Klett, 1986.
- Kreutzer, Leo. "Literatur als Einmischung: Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz." In: *Sturm und Drang. Ein literaturwissenschaftliches Studienbuch*. Walter Hinck, ed. Kronberg/Ts.: Athenäum, 1978. 213-229.
- Landwehr, Jürgen. "Das suspendierte Formurteil. Versuch der Grundlegung einer Gattungslogik anlässlich von Lenz’ sogenannten Tragikomödien *Der Hofmeister* und *Die Soldaten*." *Lenzjahrbuch* (1996): 7-61.
- Leidner, Alan C. "A Titan in Extenuating Circumstances: Sturm und Drang and the *Kraftmensch*." *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 104 (1989): 178-89.
- and Karin A. Wurst. *Unpopular Virtues: The Critical Reception of J.M.R. Lenz*. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1999.
- . "The Dream of Identity: Lenz and the Problem of *Standpunkt*." *German Quarterly* 59 (1986): 387-400.
- . *The Impatient Muse: Germany and the Sturm und Drang*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1994.
- . "Zur Selbstunterbrechung in den Werken von J. M. R. Lenz." In: *J. R. M. [sic] Lenz als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Karin A. Wurst, ed. Köln: Böhlau, 1992. 46-63.
- Luserke, Matthias and Christoph Weiß eds. *Pandämonium Germanikum: Eine Skizze. Synoptische Ausgabe beider Handschriften*. St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1993.
- . "Arbeit an den Vätern. Zur Plautus-Bearbeitung *Die Algierer* von J. M. R. Lenz." *Lenz Jahrbuch* 1(1991): 59-91.

Luserke, Mathias and Reiner Marx. "Die Anti-Läufer. Thesen zur SuD-Forschung oder Gedanken neben dem Totenkopf auf der Toilette des Denkers" in *Lenz Jahrbuch 2* (1992): 126-50.

Luserke, Mathias. *Die Bändigung der wilden Seele. Literatur und Leidenschaft in der Aufklärung*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1995.

---. "Das Pandämonium Germanikum von J. M. R. Lenz und die Literatursatire des Sturm und Drang." In: '*Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen..*' *Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz*. Inge Stephan and Hans-Gerd Winter, eds. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 257-72.

---, ed. *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz im Spiegel der Forschung*. Hildesheim: Olms, 1995.

---. *Lenz-Studien : Literaturgeschichte, Werke, Themen*. St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2001.

---. *Sturm und Drang*. Stuttgart: Reclam, 1997.

Madland, Helga and Alan Leidner Eds. *Space to Act: The Theater of J. M. R. Lenz*. Columbia SC: Camden, 1993.

Madland, Helga. "A Question of Norms: The Stage Reception of Lenz's *Hofmeister*." *Seminar 23/2* (1987): 98-114.

---. "Gesture as Evidence of Language Skepticism in Lenz's *Der Hofmeister* and *Die Soldaten*." *German Quarterly 57* (1984): 546-57.

---. *Image and Text: J. M. R. Lenz*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994.

---. "Imitation to Creation: The Changing Concept of Mimesis from Bodmer and Breitinger to Lenz." In: *Eighteenth-Century Authors and their Aesthetic Theories*. Richard Critchfield & Wulf Koepke, eds. Columbia S.C.: Camden House, 1988. 29-43.

---. "J.M.R. Lenz: Poetry as Communication." *Lessing-Yearbook*, Vol.29 (1997): 151-174.

---. "Lenz and Wieland: The Dialectics of Friendship and Morality." *Lessing Yearbook 18* (1986): 197-208.

---. . "Lenz's Sprachwahrnehmung in Theorie und Praxis." In: *J. R. M. [sic] als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Karin A. Wurst ed. Köln: Böhlau, 1992. 92-111.

- . *Non-Aristotelian Drama in Eighteenth-Century Germany and its Modernity: J. M. R. Lenz*. Frankfurt: Lang, 1982.
- Mahoney, Dennis. *Der Roman der Goethezeit (1774-1829)*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1988.
- Martini, Fritz. "Die Einheit der Konzeption in J. M. R. Lenz' *Anmerkungen übers Theater*." *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 14 (1970): 159-182.
- . "Die Poetik des Sturm und Drang. Versuch einer Zusammenfassung." In: *Deutsche Dramentheorien: Beiträge zu einer historischen Poetik des Dramas in Deutschland*. Ed. Reinhold Grimm. Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1971. 123-166.
- . *Literarische Form und Geschichte. Aufsätze zur Gattungstheorie und Gattungsentwicklung vom Sturm und Drang bis zum Erzählen heute*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1984. 1-32.
- Mattenklott, Gert. *Melancholie in der Dramatik des Sturm und Drang*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1968.
- Mayer, Hans. *Deutsche Literaturkritik im neunzehnten Jahrhundert: von Heine bis Mehring*. Stuttgart: Goverts, 1976.
- . *Deutsche Literaturkritik im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert: Kaiserreich, erster Weltkrieg, und erste Nachkriegszeit (1889-1933)*. Stuttgart: Goverts, 1965.
- . "Lenz oder die Alternative." In: Hellmut Haug, Britta Titel, eds. *J. M. R. Lenz: Werke*. Stuttgart: Goverts (1966-67): 795-827.
- McBride, Patrizia C. "The Paradox of Aesthetic Discourse: J.M.R. Lenz's 'Anmerkungen übers Theater'." *German Studies Review*, Vol.22 (1999): 397-419.
- McInnes, Edward. "'Die Regie des Lebens': Domestic Drama and the Sturm und Drang." *Orbis Litterarum* 32 (1977): 269-284.
- . *'Ein ungeheures Theater': The Drama of the Sturm und Drang*. Frankfurt, Bern, New York, Paris: Lang, 1987.
- McIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 1984.
- Meinzer, Elke. "Biblische Poetik. Die Analogie als Stilprinzip bei J. G. Hamann und J.M.R. Lenz." In *Königsberg-Studien. Beiträge zu einem besonderen Kapitel der deutschen Geistesgeschichte des 18. und angehenden 19. Jahrhunderts*. Ed. Joseph Kohnen. Frankfurt/Main: Lang, 1998. 37-57.
- . "Die Irrgärten des J. M. R. Lenz. Zur psychoanalytischen Interpretation der Werke *Tantalus*, *Der Waldbruder* und *Myrsa Polagi*." In: *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz*.

- Studien zum Gesamtwerk*. David Hill, ed. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994. 161-78.
- . *Über Delikatesse der Empfindung: Eine späte Prosaschrift von Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz*. St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1996.
- Menz, Egon. "Lenzens Weimarer Eselei." *Goethe Jahrbuch* 106 (1989): 91-105.
- Mog, Paul. *Ratio und Gefühlskultur. Studien zur Psychogenese und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1976.
- Morton, Michael. "Exemplary Poetics: The Rhetoric of Lenz's *Anmerkungen übers Theater* and *Pandämonium Germanicum*." *Lessing Yearbook* 20 (1988): 121-51.
- Müller, Heiner. *Gesammelte Irrtümer. Interviews und Gespräche*. Frankfurt: Verlag der Autoren, 1986.
- Müller, Maria E. "Die Wunschwelt des Tantalus: Kritische Bemerkungen zu sozial-utopischen Entwürfen im Werk von J. M. R. Lenz." *Literatur für Leser* (1984): 148-61.
- Müller, Peter & Jürgen Stötzer, eds. *Jakob Michael Lenz im Urteil dreier Jahrhunderte: Texte der Rezeption von Werk und Persönlichkeit. 18.-20. Jahrhundert*. 3 vols. Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt, New York: Lang, 1995.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature*. New York: Oxford UP, 1990.
- . *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1986.
- . *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994.
- Oehlschläger, Eckhart. "Jacob Michael Reinhold Lenz." In: *Deutsche Dichter des 18. Jahrhunderts. Ihr Leben und Werk*. Benno von Wiese, ed. Berlin: E. Schmidt, 1977. 747-781.
- O'Regan, Brigitte. *Self and Existence: J.M.R. Lenz's Subjective Point of View*. New York: Lang, 1997.
- Osborne, John. "Anti-Aristotelian Drama from Lenz to Wedekind." In: *The German Theatre: A Symposium*. Ed. Ronald Hayman. London: Oswald Wolff, 1975. 87-105.
- . "Exhibitionism and Criticism: J. M. R. Lenz's 'Briefe über die Moralität der Leiden des jungen Werthers'." *Seminar* 10 (1974): 199-212.

- . "From Pygmalion to Dibutade: Introversion in the prose writings of J. M. R. Lenz." *Oxford German Studies* 8 (1973): 23-46.
- . *J. M. R. Lenz: The Renunciation of Heroism*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975.
- . "The Postponed Idyll: Two Moral Tales by J. M. R. Lenz." *Neophilologus* 59 (1975): 69-83.
- . "Zwei Märchen von J. M. R. Lenz oder 'Anmerkungen über die Erzählung'." In: *Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen... 'Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz'*. Inge Stephan Hans-Gerd Winter eds. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 325-36.
- Pausch, Holger A. "Zur Widersprüchlichkeit in der Lenzschen 'Dramaturgie'." *Maske und Kothurn. Internationale Beiträge zur Theaterwissenschaft* 17 (1971): 97-107.
- Pautler, Stefan Martin. *Genieästhetik und Sozialreform im Werk von J.M.R. Lenz*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997.
- . *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz : pietistische Weltdeutung und bürgerliche Sozialform [sic] im Sturm und Drang*. Gütersloh: Kaiser, 1999.
- Petrich, Rosemarie. "Die Funktion der Komik in den Dramen 'Der Hofmeister' und 'Die Soldaten' von J.M.R. Lenz." Diss. Ohio State, 1974.
- Pfäffle, Stefan: "Die subversive Kraft von Liebe und Sexualität—J.M.R. Lenz: Moralthorie und literarisches Werk am Beispiel ausgewählter Texte." *Text und Kontext*, 20 (1997): 109-130.
- Pope, Timothy F. "The Concept of Action in the Works of J.M.R. Lenz." Diss. U. of Brit. Columbia, 1980.
- Preuss, Werner. "'Lenzens Eseley': *Der Tod der Dido*." *Goethe Jahrbuch* 106 (1989): 53-90.
- . *Selbstkastration oder Zeugung neuer Kreatur. Zum Problem der moralischen Freiheit in Leben und Werk von J.M.R. Lenz*. Bonn: Bouvier, 1983.
- Profitlich, Ulrich. "Zur Deutung von J.M.R. Lenz' Komödientheorie." *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* (1998): 411-432.
- Rector, Martin. "Anschauendes Denken. Zur Form von Lenz' 'Anmerkungen übers Theater'." *Lenzjahrbuch* (1991): 92-105.
- . "Götterblick und menschlicher Standpunkt. J. M. R. Lenz' Komödie *Der Neue Menoza* als Inszenierung eines Wahrnehmungsproblems." *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 33 (1989): 185-209.

- . "La Mettrie und die Folgen: Zur Ambivalenz der Maschinen-Metapher bei Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz." In: *Willkommen und Abschied der Maschinen. Literatur und Technik-Bestandsaufnahme eines Themas*. Erhard Schütz, ed. Essen: Klartext, 1988. 23-41.
- . "Optische Metaphorik und theologischer Sinn in Lenz' Poesie-Auffassung." In Hill, David ed., *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. Studien zum Gesamtwerk*, 11-26.
- . "Seven Theses on the Problem of Action in Lenz." In: *Space to Act: The Theater of J. M. R. Lenz*. Alan C. Leidner and Helga Madland eds. Columbia S.C.: Camden House, 1993. 60-76.
- . "Zur Anthropologie von Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz." In *Literaturwissenschaft und politische Kultur*. Für Eberhard Lämmert zum 75. Geburtstag. Ed. Winfried Menninghaus und Klaus R. Scherpe. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999. 239-247.
- . "Zur moralischen Kritik des Autonomie-Ideal. Jakob Lenz' Erzählung *Zerbin oder die neuere Philosophie*." In: '*Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...*': *Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz*. Inge Stephan and Hans-Gerd Winter, eds. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 294-308.
- Rieck, Werner. "Poetologie als poetisches Szenarium. Zum *Pandämonium Germanicum* von Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz." *Lenz Jahrbuch* 2 (1992): 78-111.
- Rudolf, Ottomar. *Jacob Michael Reinhold Lenz: Moralist und Aufklärer*. Bad Homburg: Galen, 1970.
- Salumets, Thomas. "Von Macht, Menschen und Marionetten: Zur Titelfigur in Lenz' *Der Hofmeister*." In: *J. R. M [sic] Lenz als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Karin A. Wurst, ed. Köln: Böhlau, 1992. 158-78.
- Sauder, Gerhard. "Konkupiszenz und empfindsame Liebe J.M.R. Lenz' „Philosophische Vorlesungen für empfindsame Seelen’." *Lenzjahrbuch* (1994): 7-29.
- . "Lenz' eigenwillige Anmerkungen über das Theater." *Etudes Germaniques* (1997): 49-64.
- Scherpe, Klaus. "Dichterische Erkenntnis und Projektmacherei': Widersprüche im Werk von J. M. R. Lenz." *Goethe Jahrbuch* 94 (1977): 206-235. Reprinted in Klaus Scherpe. *Poesie der Demokratie*. Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1980 and in Manfred Wacker, ed. *Sturm und Drang*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1985. 279-314.
- . "Historische Widersprüche in der Gattungspoetik des 18. Jahrhunderts." *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift* 34.3 (1984): 312-322.

- Schlieske, Jörg: *Lenz und die Mimesis. Eine Untersuchung der Nachahmungspoetik bei Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz (1751-1792)*. Frankfurt/Main: Lang, 2000.
- Schmidt, Henry J. *How Dramas End: Essays on the German Sturm und Drang, Büchner, Hauptmann, and Fleisser*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1992.
- . "J. M. R. Lenz' *Der neue Menoza*: Die Unmöglichkeit einer Geschlossenheit." In: *J. R. M. [sic] als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Karin A. Wurst, ed. Köln: Böhlau, 1992. 220-228.
- Schmitt, Axel. "Rollenbedingtheit, Selbstentäußerung und Spiel-im-Spiel-Strukturen." In: *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. Studien zum Gesamtwerk*. David Hill, ed. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994. 67-80.
- Schneewind, Jerome B. *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1997.
- Scholz, Rüdiger. "Eine längst fällige historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe: Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz." *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 34 (1990): 195-229.
- . "Zur Biographie des späten Lenz." *Lenz Jahrbuch* 1 (1991): 106-34.
- Schönert, Jörg. "Literarische Exerziten der Selbstdisziplinierung. *Das Tagebuch* im Kontext der Straßburger Prosa-Schriften von J. M. R. Lenz." In: '*Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...*' *Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz*. Inge Stephan, Hans-Gerd Winter eds. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 309-24.
- Schnurr, Johannes. *Begehren und lyrische Potentialität: Eine Untersuchung des "Konkupiszenz"-Begriffs in J.M.R. Lenz' Philosophischen Vorlesungen für empfindsame Seelen in Hinsicht auf seine Lyrik*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001.
- Schulz, Georg-Michael. *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz*. Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001.
- Sommer, Andreas Urs. "Theodizee und Triebverzicht. Zu J.M.R. Lenzens "Philosophische Vorlesungen für empfindsame Seelen." *Lichtenberg-Jahrbuch* (1995): 242-249.
- Stephan, Inge and Hans-Gerd Winter Eds. '*Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...*': *Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994.
- . '*Ein vorübergehendes Meteor?*' *J. M. R. Lenz und seine Rezeption in Deutschland*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1984.
- Stephan, Inge. "Das Scheitern einer heroischen Konzeption. Der Freundschafts- und Liebesdiskurs im *Waldbruder*." In: '*Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...*': *Studien zu Leben*

- und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz.* Inge Stephan and Hans-Gerd Winter eds. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 273-93.
- . *Literarischer Jakobinismus in Deutschland 1789-1806*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1976.
- Stockhammer, Robert. "J. M. R. Lenz' 'misreadings' von Goethes *Werther*." In: *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. Studien zum Gesamtwerk*. David Hill, ed. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994. 129-39.
- Stötzer, Jürgen. *Das vom Pathos der Zerrissenheit geprägte Subjekt. Eigenwert und Stellung der epischen Texte im Gesamtwerk von Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz*. Frankfurt: Lang, 1992.
- . "'Lenz: ein Schatten nur einer ungesehenen Tradition': Aspekte der Rezeption J. M. R. Lenz' bei Christoph Hein." *Zeitschrift für Germanistik* 9.4 (1988): 429-441.
- Unger, Thorsten. "Contingent Spheres of Action: The Category of Action in Lenz's Anthropology and Theory of Drama." In: *Space to Act: The Theater of J. M. R. Lenz*. Alan C. Leidner and Helga Madland eds. Columbia S.C.: Camden House, 1993. 77-90.
- . *Handeln im Drama. Theorie und Praxis bei J. Chr. Gottsched und bei J. M. R. Lenz*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993.
- Unglaub, Erich. *Das mit den Fingern deutende Publikum: Das Bild des Dichters Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz in der literarischen Öffentlichkeit, 1770-1814*. Frankfurt: Lang. 1983.
- . "Ein neuer Menoza? Die Komödie *Der neue Menoza* von Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz und der Menoza-Roman von Erik Pontoppidan." *Orbis Litterarum* 44 (1989): 10-47.
- Velez, Andrea. "Wie 'unverschämt' sind Lenz' 'Philosophische Vorlesungen'?" In: *Ich aber werde dunkel sein. Ein Buch zur Ausstellung J.M.R. Lenz. Jena*. 1996. 46-57.
- Vonhoff, Gert. *Subjektkonstitution in der Lyrik von J. M. R. Lenz. Mit einer Auswahl neu herausgegebener Gedichte*. Frankfurt: Lang. 1990.
- . "Unnötiger Perfektionismus oder doch mehr? Gründe für historisch-kritische Ausgaben." *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 34 (1990): 419-423.
- Wefelmeyer, Fritz. "Der scheiternde Künstler auf der Höhe mit 'Bruder Goethe' und Zuschauer. Selbstdarstellung im *Pandämonium Germanicum*." In: *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. Studien zum Gesamtwerk*. David Hill, ed. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994. 140-60.

- Weimar, Klaus. *Geschichte der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft bis zum Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts*. München: Fink. 1989.
- Weiß, Christoph. "'Abgezwungene Selbstvertheidigung'. Ein bislang unveröffentlichter Text von J. M. R. Lenz aus seinem letzten Lebensjahr" *Lenz Jahrbuch* 2: 7-41. 1992.
- . "Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz' 'Catechismus.'" *Lenz-Jahrbuch*. 4. (1994): 30-67.
- Wilson, W. Daniel. "Enlightenment's Alliance with Power: The Dialectic of Collusion and Opposition in the Literary Elite." *Impure Reason: Dialectic of Enlightenment in Germany*. W. Daniel Wilson and Robert Holub eds. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1993. 364-84.
- . "Zwischen Kritik und Affirmation. Militärphantasien und Geschlechterdisziplinierung bei J. M. R. Lenz." In: '*Unaufhörlich Lenz gelesen...*' *Studien zu Leben und Werk von J. M. R. Lenz*. Inge Stephan, Hans-Gerd Winter eds. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994. 52-85.
- Winter, Hans-Gerd. "'Denken heißt nicht vertauben.' Lenz als Kritiker der Aufklärung" in *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz. Studien zum Gesamtwerk*. David Hill ed. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994. 81-96.
- . *J. M. R. Lenz*. Stuttgart: Metzler. 1987.
- . "J. M. R. Lenz as Adherent and Critic of Enlightenment in *Zerbin; or Modern Philosophy and The Most Sentimental of All Novels*." In W. Daniel Wilson and Robert Holub, eds. *Impure Reason: Dialectic of Enlightenment in Germany*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993. 443-64.
- Wurst, Karin A. "A Shattered Mirror: Lenz's Concept of Mimesis." In: *Space to Act: The Theater of J.M.R. Lenz*. Allan C. Leidner and Helga Madland, eds. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1993. 106-120.
- . "Erzählstrategien im Prosawerk von J.M.R. Lenz. Eine Leseanleitung." In: *Text + Kritik*, H.146: *Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz*, April (2000): 36-43.
- . "J.M.R. Lenz als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag." In: *J. R. M. [sic] Lenz als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Karin A. Wurst ed. Köln: Böhlau, 1992: 1-22.
- , ed. *J. R. M. [sic] Lenz als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Köln: Böhlau, 1992.
- . "J.M.R. Lenz' Poetik der Bedingungsverhältnisse: *Werther*, die *Werther-Briefe* und *Der Waldbruder ein Pendant zu Werthers Leiden*." In: *J. R. M. [sic] als Alternative? Positionsanalysen zum 200. Todestag*. Karin A. Wurst, ed. Köln: Böhlau, 1992. 189-219.

---. "Überlegungen zur ästhetischen Struktur von J. M. R. Lenz' *Der Waldbruder Ein Pendant zu Werthers Leiden*." *Neophilologus* 74 (1990): 70-86.

---. "'Von der Unmöglichkeit die Quadratur des Zirkels zu finden'. Lenz' narrative Strategien in *Zerbin oder die neuere Philosophie*". *Lenz Jahrbuch* 3 (1993): 64-86.

Zierath, Christof. *Moral und Sexualität bei Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz*. (Diss., Marburg, 1994). St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag. 1995.

Wuthenow, Ralph-Rainer. *Die gebändigte Flamme. Zur Wiederentdeckung der Leidenschaften im Zeitalter der Vernunft*. Heidelberg: Winter 2000.

Zeithammer, Angela: *Genie in stürmischen Zeiten. Ursprung, Bedeutung und Konsequenz der Weltbilder von J.M.R. Lenz und J. W. Goethe*. St. Ingbert: Röhrig 2000.

Zimmer, Reinhold. *Dramatischer Dialog und Ausersprachlicher Kontext. Dialogformen in deutschen Dramen des 17. bis 20. Jahrhunderts*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. 1982.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



3 1293 02487 8609