Broad in its geographic scope and grounded in original archival research, this book situates the inception of modern aesthetic theory—the philosophical analysis of art and beauty—in theological contexts that are crucial to explaining why it arose. Simon Grote presents seminal aesthetic theories of the German and Scottish Enlightenments as outgrowths of a quintessentially Enlightenment project: the search for a natural “foundation of morality” and a means of helping naturally self-interested human beings to transcend their own self-interest. This conclusion represents an important alternative to the standard history of aesthetics as a series of preludes to the achievements of Immanuel Kant, as well as a reinterpretation of several canonical figures in the German and Scottish Enlightenments. It also offers a foundation for a transnational history of the Enlightenment without the French philosophes at its center, while solidly endorsing historians’ growing reluctance to call the Enlightenment a secularizing movement.

Simon Grote is currently the Wellesley Faculty Assistant Professor of History at Wellesley College, where he has taught since 2013. He previously spent three years at Princeton University’s Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts after graduating with a Ph.D. in History from the University of California, Berkeley (2010), an M.Phil. in Political Thought and Intellectual History from the University of Cambridge (2006), and an A.B. from Harvard College (2001).
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THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN AESTHETIC THEORY

Religion and Morality in Enlightenment Germany and Scotland

SIMON GROTE
Wellesley College
To my father and in memory of my mother
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Acknowledgments

This book, like the dissertation on which it is based, bears witness to an education, both intellectual and sentimental, whose effects on me have been so deep and so welcome that I would happily fill page after page with names and reminiscences, showering gratitude on everyone who has had even the remotest connection with it. What restrains me is a sense of the impropriety of self-indulgence, the inadequacy of words to convey my true feelings, and a fear that my faulty memory would turn any pretense of all-inclusiveness into a source of disappointment for everyone whose name I had unfairly and unwittingly omitted. So I confine myself to mentioning, with regrettable but unavoidable brevity and blandness, and with apologies to everyone I have overlooked, some of the people and institutions who have contributed to this book in particularly direct ways.

The initial phase of my research began seventeen years ago, when I spent a summer in Scotland laying the foundation for an undergraduate thesis in history at Harvard College. Of all the people on whose help I relied, and whom I thanked in the pages of that thesis and thank again now, the one who has left the clearest fingerprints on this book is the late Istvan Hont. Together with Clare Jackson, he supervised a year of research at Cambridge University, generously funded by the Gates–Cambridge Trust in 2004–5, essential to this book’s fourth and fifth chapters. His advice and support continued during my time in the history PhD program at the University of California, Berkeley and in the years between my graduation from that program in 2010 and his death in 2013. He has my gratitude for those thirteen years of challenging criticism, flattering encouragement, and effective advocacy.

I have based the greater part of this book on research I conducted in Germany over the course of several extended visits to Halle (Saale), beginning in 2007, at the generous invitation of the Francke Foundations and the Interdisciplinary Center for European Enlightenment Research, and more particularly the members of the fellowship selection committee,
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Acknowledgments

which included Thomas Müller-Bahlke, Britta Klosterberg, Udo Sträter, and Daniel Fulda. The funding for these visits, for which I am very grateful, came from the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, the German Academic Exchange Service, and the Max Kade Foundation. With help from my hosts in Halle and from many new acquaintances and friends, I became aware of an academic culture and a set of scholarly conversations about Pietism and Enlightenment that have substantially shaped how I understand the significance of my work. These new friends’ and colleagues’ enthusiasm about me and my project buoyed my confidence and made every departure from Halle bittersweet. The archivists, librarians, and other members of the staff of the Study Center of the Francke Foundations, ably led by Britta Klosterberg, taught me paleography and, together with their colleagues at the Halle-Wittenberg University archive and the university library, helped me find almost all the materials I needed. For useful consultations about the substance of my research during those visits, I thank in particular Alexander Aichele, Ulrich Barth, Frank Grunert, Hans-Joachim Kertscher, Reimar Lindauer-Huber, Christian Soboth, and Udo Sträter. Among my colleagues in Halle, I am especially grateful to Alexander Aichele for giving me the means of publishing some results of my research in 2008 and to Rainer Godel (together with Anita Traninger) for inviting me to develop part of it into a conference presentation in 2013. For important advice on drafts of chapters and other written work, and for countless hours of invigorating conversation in Halle, I also owe special thanks to Dirk Effertz and to two dear friends: Ulrich Diehl and Kelly Whitmer.

In Berkeley, where I produced the dissertation that eventually became this book, many friends gave me both a welcome sense of intellectual community and concrete assistance. These include fellow members of the History Department’s intellectual history reading group; Jim Spohrer, who bought reproductions of rare sources for the university library to support my research when time in Germany had run out; and, above all, Johan van der Zande, whose expert critique and openhanded praise of my work, throughout fourteen years of intellectual camaraderie and friendship, have given me a sense of my worth as a scholar. I am likewise grateful to my dissertation committee – Tom Brady, David Lieberman, Niklaus Largier, and Martin Jay – for reading my work attentively, for guiding it with a light but judicious touch, for opening my eyes to aspects of it that I might otherwise never have noticed, and for making a strong case – not only to me but also to others – for its value. For the unflagging care with which Tom and Kathy Brady looked after me in loco parentium, I offer fond appreciation.
Acknowledgments

The other institution that has left a significant mark on this book is the Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts at Princeton University, whose members taught me – among many other lessons – to aspire to speak to, and seek criticism from, audiences outside my discipline. In addition to thanking all those in whose judgment I deserved an invitation to join that extraordinarily stimulating and harmonious community, I thank in particular several colleagues in Princeton (at Princeton University and at the Institute for Advanced Study) for reading my manuscript with care and offering a wide range of productive critiques: Thomas Ahnert, Christopher Close, Caryl Emerson, James Harris, Daniel Heller-Roazen, Daniel Garber, and Susan Stewart. To them, to my friends Mary Harper, Kerim Yasar, and the late Jim Clark, and to so many others in Princeton, I owe the wonderfulness of those three years.

The last institution that deserves my gratitude is Wellesley College, which has offered me everything I needed to finish this project – including the funding to procure expert assistance with several Latin translations from TextFormations and to hire the research assistants whose careful work has saved me from a myriad of small errors: Felicity Loughlin and Timothy Wright. I thank especially my colleagues in the Department of History for their unwavering confidence in the importance of my work within the broader field of early modern European history.

The many others whom I thank for reading parts of my manuscript and offering valuable advice and other forms of support include Susanna Elm, Christian Flow, Anthony Grafton, Eleanor Johnson, Martin Otero Knott, Joel Lande, Anthony LaVopa, Hartmut Lehmann, Anthony Long, Rebecca Lyman, Boris Maslov, Marcus Meier, Yair Mintzker, James Moore, Martin Mulsow, Alessandro Nannini, Christopher Ocker, Thomas Pfau, David Pugh, Clemens Schwaiger, Olga Katherina Schwartz, Jonathan Sheehan, Walter Sparn, the two anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press, David Armitage and his fellow editors of the Ideas in Context series, and all those who organized or attended my presentations of parts of this project outside Halle, Berkeley, Princeton, and Wellesley. The venues included the Transatlantic Doctoral Seminar on early modern Germany (2008), organized by Roger Chickering and Richard Wetzell for the German Historical Institute in Washington, D. C.; the Seminar in Political Thought and Intellectual History at Cambridge University (2009); the Department of Political Science and the Scholars’ Circle at Concordia University in Montreal (2012); the Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici in Heidelberg (2012); and the Departments of History at Boston College and York University (2013). For the
Acknowledgments

invitations I thank, among others, Ulrich Diehl, Ed King, James Moore, Isaac Nakhimovsky, and Martin Sattler.

Words do no justice to my gratitude toward my parents. I wish my mother could see the fruits her indefatigable aspirations for my education have borne. To her and to my father, I dedicate this book with overflowing love.
Abbreviations

AFSt  Archive of the Francke Foundations. Halle (Saale), Germany.
EUL  Edinburgh University Library. Edinburgh, Scotland.
StAndUL  St. Andrews University Library. St. Andrews, Scotland.
Transcription and Citation

1. Most isolated Greek words and phrases have been transliterated.
2. All abbreviations using superscript letters (e.g., “ye” for “the”) have been written out in full. Most ampersands have been replaced with “and.”
3. In the case of William Cleghorn’s lecture dictates, all abbreviations have been written out in full, and punctuation has occasionally been changed to increase readability (e.g., commas inserted between elements of a list). The original orthography has been altered in the case of obvious errors that impair the readability of the text, and the frequent capitalization of individual words has been altered (i.e., usually eliminated) to conform more closely to now-current norms. All changes with an obvious, significant bearing on the interpretation of the text have been enclosed in square brackets.
4. William Dalgleish’s four-volume set of dictates of William Cleghorn’s lectures (EUL MS Dc.3.3–6) is cited according to the pagination of the volumes. The first three volumes (Dc 3.3–5), which are continuously paginated (i.e., 1 to 707, with Dc 3.3 containing pages 1–199, Dc 3.4 pages 201–423, and Dc 3.5 pages 425–707), are accordingly cited as Book I; and the fourth volume (Dc 3.6), which is independently paginated (i.e., 1 to 367), is cited as Book II. For example, the citation “W. Cleghorn, Lectures, EUL, I.413–5” refers to EUL MS Dc.3.4, fols. 413–15.
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