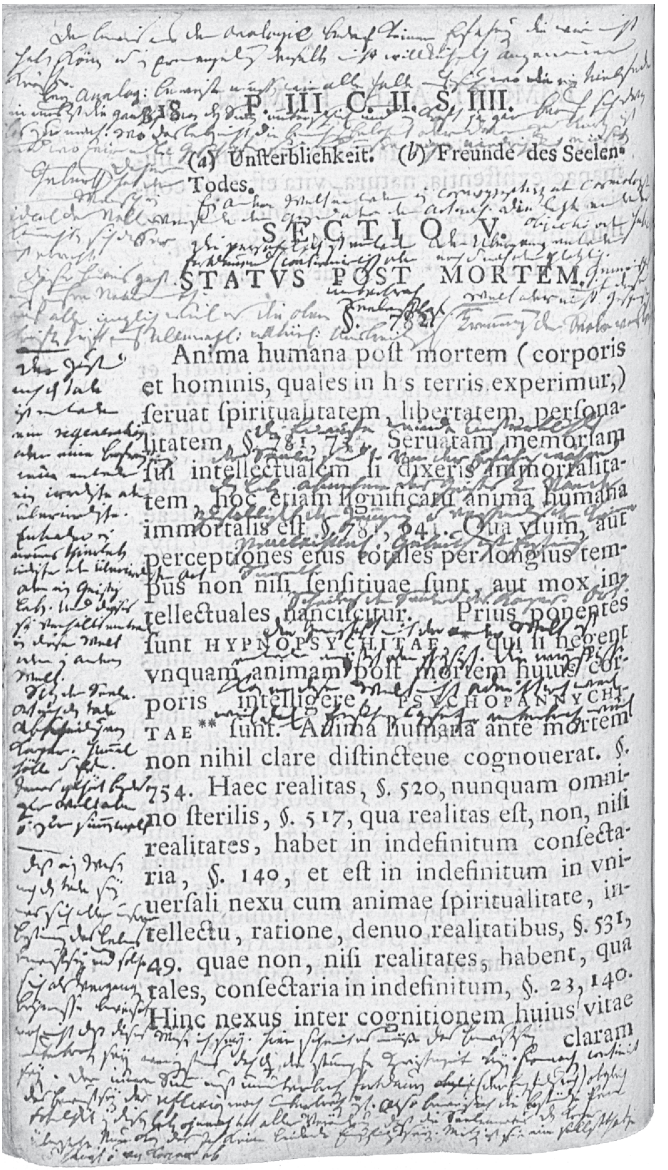

318 P. III. C. II. S. IIII.

(a) Unsterblichkeit. (b) Freunde des Seelen-Todes.

SECTIO V.

STATVS POST MORTEM.

§. 782.

Anima humana post mortem (corporis et hominis, quales in his terris experimur,) seruat spiritualitatem, libertatem, personalitatem, §. 781, 73. Seruatam memoriam sui intellectualem si dixeris immortalitatem, hoc etiam significatu anima humana immortalis est §. 781, 341. Quia vium, aut perceptiones eius totales per longius tempus non nisi sensitiuae sunt, aut mox intellectuales nanciscitur. Prius ponentes sunt HYPNOPSYCHITAE, qui si negent vnquam animam post mortem huius corporis intelligere PSYCHOPANNYCHITAE** sunt. Anima humana ante mortem non nihil clare distincteue cognouerat. §. 754. Haec realitas, §. 520, nunquam omnino sterilis, §. 517, qua realitas est, non, nisi realitates, habet in indefinitum consectaria, §. 140, et est in indefinitum in vniuersali nexu cum animae spiritualitate, intellectu, ratione, denuo realitatibus, §. 531, 749. quae non, nisi realitates, habent, qua tales, consectaria in indefinitum, §. 23, 140. Hinc nexus inter cognitionem huius vitae claram

Fig. 4: Reproduction of page 318 ("Status Post Mortem") of Kant's copy of A. G. Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* (Halle, 1757, 4th edn.), with Kant's handwritten notes: Reflections 3631 (AA 17: 151), 4343 (AA 17: 512 f.), 4442 (AA 17: 548), 4559–61 (AA 17: 593 f.), 5478–79 (AA 18: 194). Reproduced with the kind permission of the University of Tartu Library, Estonia. Call number: manuscript 93. Kant's personal copy of Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* is available at the University of Tartu Library website: http://hdl.handle.net/10062/32369. Accessed 22 April 2015.

Chapter 4
Beyond the Paralogisms: The Proofs of Immortality in the Lectures on Metaphysics

Corey W. Dyck

One would expect that the issue of immortality – the proof of the soul's survival of the death of the body and an account of its state in the afterlife – would be a central topic for Kant's criticism of the rational psychologist in the Paralogisms of Pure Reason of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Indeed, Kant himself would seem to encourage this expectation when he lists immortality as one of the "concepts of the pure doctrine of the soul" at the outset of the chapter (A345/B403). Yet, a look at the Paralogisms chapter itself, in both its original version in the A edition as well as the thoroughly revised B edition version, reveals to the contrary that Kant has little to say expressly about the topic that was arguably the most important for the rational psychologist. So, in the A edition, rather than offering a direct discussion of immortality, Kant focuses his criticism on the claims of the soul's substantiality and simplicity, and then draws the natural consequences from this for the possibility of any cognition of the immortality of the soul (cf. A349, A351, and A356 f.). In the B edition, Kant offers two rather more substantial but still peripheral discussions of immortality, the first in the context of a criticism of Mendelssohn's proof of the perdurance of the soul (B413–15), and the second a concluding section on the warrant for the assumption of the possibility of a future life (B423–6).[1] Considered in light of the reader's expectation of a thoroughgoing criticism of the pretensions of the rational psychologist, and in light of the wealth of discussions available in the broader eighteenth-century context, which includes a variety of proofs that do not explicitly turn on the identification of the soul as a simple substance, Kant's discussion of immortality in the Paralogisms would seem to fall lamentably short.

However, outside of the Paralogisms (and the published works generally), Kant had much more to say about the arguments for the soul's immortality, and he devoted considerable time to the topic throughout his career in his lectures on metaphysics. In fact, the student lecture notes prove to be an indispensable

1 Karl Ameriks also notes that there is "not all that much attention given directly to immortality" in the Paralogisms; see Ameriks 2000b: 177.

supplement to the treatment in the Paralogisms, not only for illuminating Kant's criticism of the rational psychologist's views on the immortality of the soul, but also in reconciling this criticism with Kant's own positive claims regarding certain theoretical proofs of immortality. So, in one of the passages from the B edition referred to above, Kant rather surprisingly identifies the theoretical proof for the soul's immortality which proceeds by "*analogy with the nature* of living beings in this world" (B425) as a "powerful ground of proof, which can never be refuted" (B426), and elsewhere endorses a belief in immortality that is nonetheless not founded upon practical principles (cf. A827/B855). Accordingly, in order to clarify Kant's criticism and to make sense of these otherwise perplexing positive claims, in this chapter I will consider Kant's treatment of the immortality of the soul as presented in the student notes to his lectures on metaphysics. In the first section, I will briefly consider an important piece of the context of Kant's discussion, namely, Baumgarten's treatment of immortality in the *Metaphysica* which served as the template for Kant's own presentation. In the second section, I will present Kant's detailed classification and criticism of the various proofs offered for the soul's immortality as contained in the lecture notes and show how his criticism of a number of these proofs links up with the abbreviated treatment in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Finally, in the third section, I will turn to Kant's largely sympathetic treatment of one of these proofs (the teleological proof), which as I will show provides an alternative but complementary basis for our belief in the soul's immortality and for a richer conception of the soul's possible state in the afterlife.

1 Baumgarten on the immortality of the soul and its state after death

Before turning to Kant's treatment of the afterlife as recorded in the student lecture notes, it will be useful briefly to present Baumgarten's discussion in the *Metaphysica* which, as is well known, frequently served as the textbook for Kant's metaphysics lectures.[2] Baumgarten's views on the soul's immortality and state after death are presented late in the chapter on rational psychology, in the fourth and fifth sections, respectively, after his discussion of the soul's nature (first section), of the system of explaining the relation between soul and body (second section), and of the soul's origin (third section), which order of presen-

2 English translations of Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* are taken from Baumgarten 2013. In the case of texts by Baumgarten, as well as by Wolff, I refer only to the section number (rather than the page number).

tation Kant largely adheres to in his lectures. Concerning the soul's immortality, Baumgarten understands this rather narrowly as amounting to the "impossibility of dying" (Baumgarten 2013: § 781), although he proceeds to introduce a distinction between absolute and hypothetical immortality. By the former, Baumgarten evidently understands the unconditional impossibility of the soul dying, which is taken to be tantamount to making the soul a necessary being and would therefore exclude even the possibility of annihilation at the hands of God. Yet, as Baumgarten has already shown, the soul is a contingent being (§ 743), one whose non-existence entails no contradiction, and therefore, a being that is capable of destruction by annihilation: "the existence, nature, or life of every human soul is contingent in itself. Therefore, the death of the human soul is possible in itself" (§ 780). However, Baumgarten argues that the human soul can be admitted to be immortal in the hypothetical sense, that is, that the soul cannot naturally perish as the body can and so that it will survive the death of the body *provided that* God does not annihilate it:

> Absolute immortality indeed cannot be attributed to the soul; however, since what is indestructible cannot die in the innumerable ways in which the body can die, the soul possesses a very great hypothetical immortality. No substance of this world is annihilated. Therefore, when the body (such as humans have on this earth) dies, the surviving human soul lives immortally. (Baumgarten 2013: § 781)

While hypothetical immortality is thus contingent on God's preservation of the soul, and so falls short of absolute immortality, there is nonetheless nothing precarious about it as Baumgarten contends that there is good reason to think that God will not annihilate the human soul. This is because the destruction of any substance in the world would entail a loss of harmony and a consequent loss of perfection, which would make the actual world less perfect than that possible world in which the substance is not annihilated (cf. Baumgarten 2013: § 354, § 436).

In addition to attempting to demonstrate the (hypothetical) immortality of the soul, Baumgarten considers what state the soul would find itself in after the death of the body. Here, Baumgarten takes his cue from Christian Wolff's influential treatment in his *Deutsche Metaphysik* and *Psychologia rationalis*, where Wolff argues, against the Cartesians, that the demonstration of the soul's immortality requires not only showing that the soul survives the death of the body but also that the soul retains its distinctive capacities in the afterlife.[3] Following Wolff,

3 See Wolff 1983b: § 742 and § 922; and Wolff 1972: § 739–40. For more extended discussion, see Dyck 2014: 142–7.

Baumgarten emphasizes that true immortality requires the preservation of the soul's *spirituality*, or its capacity for distinct cognition (understanding – cf. Baumgarten 2013: § 624, § 754), and *personality*, or its capacity to be conscious that it is the same soul now as it was previously (cf. § 783). To this end, Baumgarten seeks to dispel two spectres with respect to the soul's state in the afterlife: first, that the soul might survive the death of the body but lose its capacity for distinct cognition, which state Baumgarten compares to a condition of sleep (or *psychopannychia*), and second, that the soul will survive the death of the body and retain its understanding but fail to be conscious that it is the same being as it was previously, which Baumgarten relates to the draught of forgetfulness of ancient myth.

Concerning the possibility of the sleep of the soul, Baumgarten argues that the clarity and distinctness of our perceptions should increase rather than decrease after the death of the body. Given that the clear and distinct perceptions that the soul has in this life are realities which, as realities, are pregnant with consequences in the soul, and given that the soul will subsist indefinitely after the death of the body, it is more natural that the perceptions it had in this life will continue to issue in distinct perceptions in the afterlife rather than in something less perfect:

> Before its death, the human soul had clearly or distinctly known something. This reality, which is never completely sterile insofar as it is a reality, has nothing but realities indefinitely as logical consequences and it is indefinitely in a universal nexus with the spirituality, intellect, and reason of the soul, which again are realities, and which as such have nothing but realities as logical consequences, and it is indefinitely in a universal nexus with the spirituality, intellect, and reason of the soul, which again are realities, and which as such have nothing but realities indefinitely as logical consequences. (Baumgarten 2013: § 782)

With respect to the retention of the soul's personality in the afterlife, Baumgarten claims that the soul must be taken to stand in the closest interaction with *some* body in the afterlife (§ 785), and given this, he contends that the soul can be shown to preserve its state of personality:

> The human soul that endures after the death of this body is in the closest interaction with another one [i. e., body]. In its different states, this new body will sometimes be more congruent with the former body, and sometime less so. Therefore, it will have some state in which it will be the most congruent with the body that, in this life, was in the closest connection with the soul, and hence it will be the same. (Baumgarten 2013: § 786)

As Baumgarten argues, inasmuch as the state of the new (spiritual) body will at some point resemble or be congruent with the state of the old one, it follows that

the soul will at some point be in the same state that it was previously. Given this, and presumably in accordance with its faculty of imagination, which reproduces a past state given a resembling present one (§ 559), and its memory, which recognizes that a reproduced state has been perceived before (§ 579), the soul will then recall that it is the same soul now as it was previously in this life.[4] As a result, Baumgarten accordingly contends not only that the human soul is (hypothetically) immortal such that it will survive the death of the body, but also that we can be certain that it will retain its distinctive capacities of understanding and personality in the afterlife.

2 Kant's criticism of theoretical proofs of the soul's immortality

Unsurprisingly, Kant's discussion of the soul's immortality, as recorded in the lecture notes, sets out from that of Baumgarten. So, Kant contrasts two questions relating to the soul's future life, the first, "whether the soul *will* live and survive after death" and the second "whether by its nature [the soul] *must* live and survive" (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 284), where the former concerns only the "*contingent* life of the soul" (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 285), or the mere "continuation" of its existence (V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 763), but the latter concerns true immortality, which is to say, the *necessity* of the soul surviving the death of the body, or the "impossibility of dying" as Baumgarten had understood it. While Kant thus agrees with Baumgarten regarding what is at stake in any proof of the soul's immortality, he nonetheless rejects Baumgarten's proof, which he identifies as a version of what he refers to as a "theological-moral proof" (cf. V-Met/Mron 29: 917). According to Kant, such a proof infers the immortality of the soul from God's moral properties (namely, goodness and justice[5]): given our cognition that God is just, and given that our experience confirms that there is no appropriate reward for virtue or punishment for vice in this life, it follows that there must be an afterlife in which reward and punishment are properly apportioned, or as

4 That this produces a recollection of the soul's previous state in connection with the body is suggested by Baumgarten's reference, in his initial account of personality at *Metaphysica* § 641, to his characterization of memory as the perception that "a reproduced representation [is] the same one as one I had formerly produced" (Baumgarten 2013: § 579).

5 In this context, Kant also mentions a proof for immortality that follows from God's wisdom (cf. V-Met/Mron 29: 917), though this seems to amount to the teleological argument (inasmuch as God's wisdom in endowing human beings with rational capacities would be impugned if the soul did not survive the death of the body).

Kant presents it: "One says: virtue is so little rewarded here in the world, and vice so little punished. If God is just, then a future life is to be hoped for where this disproportion will be removed" (V-Met/Mron 29: 917). Kant likely considered Baumgarten's argument as a version of the theological-moral proof since, for Baumgarten, God's annihilation of the soul is taken to be inconsistent with God's (presumably moral) perfection.[6] In his criticism of this proof, Kant contends that any proof of the soul's immortality which does not proceed on the basis of the nature of the soul itself can never demonstrate the immortality of the soul in the sense in which both Kant and Baumgarten understand it, namely, as involving the necessity of survival. In this case, because the theological-moral proof turns on features external to the soul (namely, the properties of God), it cannot yield the necessity of the afterlife since "we do not know what [God] will do in accordance with his goodness and justice; it is also audacity to want to determine according to our wisdom what God will do" (V-Met/Volckmann 28: 443; cf. V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 767).[7] Moreover, Kant argues that this proof fails to guarantee that all will enjoy a lasting afterlife since, on the one hand, there are the blameless few (for instance, those who die very young) for whom an afterlife would be neither required for punishment nor merited as a reward and, on the other hand, the soul might still perish in the afterlife once rewards and punishments have been fully distributed.[8]

The theological-moral proof, then, cannot be taken to furnish a demonstration of the immortality of the soul, as Kant understands it, and Kant further concludes that only proofs founded on the nature of the soul (rather than on the features of something external to the soul) can be taken to demonstrate the immortality of the soul, since otherwise the *universality* of survival and the *eternality* of the afterlife will not necessarily follow as a consequence. Accordingly, Kant proceeds to discuss a wider array of proofs of immortality all of which turn

6 See, for instance, V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 287 f. where Kant's presentation of this proof is prefaced by a consideration of the contingency of the soul (as it also was in Baumgarten's presentation).

7 Kant's objection here likely draws on that of Baumgarten's student G. F. Meier (whose *Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre* Kant used for his logic lectures) who had contended that we cannot gain insight into the basis for God's decision to preserve the soul after death through the use of reason; see, e. g., Meier 1746: § 5.

8 For presentations of these criticisms, see V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 289–90; V-Met/Mron 29: 917; V-Met/Volckmann 28: 443; V-Met/Dohna 28: 688; V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 766 f. Significantly, Kant also contends that positing an *eternal* reward (blessedness) or punishment (damnation) would be radically disproportionate to the degree of virtue or vice attained in this world: "no human being's guilt is so great that he should be eternally punished, and no merit so great that it should be eternally rewarded" (V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 767; cf. V-Met/Mron 29: 917).

on a consideration of "the nature and the concept" of the soul itself (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 285), and he presents a categorization of the various sorts of arguments that can be offered on this basis. Kant considers, on the one hand, arguments that argue directly for the soul's immorality, either (1) on the basis of experience or a posteriori (cf. V-Met/Volckmann 28: 441; V-Met/Dohna 28: 686), or (2) a priori (cf. V-Met/Dohna 28: 686; V-Met-Vigil 29: 1038), and on the other hand, arguments which argue indirectly for this conclusion, namely (3) arguments from analogy (cf. V-Met/Volckmann 28: 441; V-Met-L2/Pölitz 28: 591 f.) such as the teleological (or sometimes "cosmological-teleological") argument (cf. V-Met/Dohna 28: 687; V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 764). Kant's classification is clearly intended to be exhaustive as his aim in his discussion of these proofs in the lectures (at least from the Critical period) is to rule out any possible theoretical cognition of immortality, leaving only his own moral proof for belief in the soul's survival of the body's death; as the notes read: "we can refute all objections to the maintaining of a future life, but can furnish only one proof for it, the moral-teleological" (V-Met/Dohna 28: 688 f.).[9]

Within the first group of arguments, Kant considers proofs that generally proceed a posteriori, such as crude arguments that make use of a presumed analogy between caterpillars and the human soul (inasmuch as the former might be seen to "survive" the death of its former body – V-Met/Mron 29: 912, V-Met/Volckmann 28: 441) or that trade on our observations of elderly people whose bodies are in decline but who maintain their cognitive capacities (which would suggest that the soul can preserve its condition in spite of the decline of the body – V-Met/Mron 29: 912). While such proofs are obviously inadequate, Kant also considers a more promising argument "from empirical psychology" which turns on putative observations of the soul in particular. The argument itself is not actually recorded in the lecture notes,[10] though it can be reconstructed from Kant's criticism of it. So, in the most detailed discussion preserved of such a proof, the notes read:

> We essay, namely, whether we can derive a proof from the experience that we have of the nature of the soul. – We note in experience that the powers of the soul increase just like the powers of the body, and decrease just like the powers of the body. Just as the body decreases, so the soul decreases as well. (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 291)

9 For detailed presentations of Kant's own moral proof of immortality (which I will not consider here), see Beck 1960: 267–9 and Suprenant 2008: 88 f.

10 Likely for this reason, Ameriks does not consider this argument in his discussion of the empirical arguments for immortality; see Ameriks 2000b: 181.

It is not immediately clear how the observation that bodily and mental states co-vary in this way is intended to yield the conclusion that the soul is immortal. Yet, it is likely that Kant is here trying to draw attention to the fact that, in spite of our observations of the agreement between these states, the specific (causal) ground of this agreement is not available to observation. Indeed, Wolff had previously made note of this, appropriately enough, at the conclusion of his empirical psychology, where he writes that we "perceive nothing further than that two things are simultaneous, namely, an alteration that occurs in the organs of the senses, and a thought by means of which the soul is conscious of the external things that cause the alteration" (Wolff 1983b: § 529), and in this he is followed by Kant (see, for instance, V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 259 f.). The argument for immortality on this basis would evidently proceed as follows: since we lack any empirical insight into the ground of agreement between states of the soul and states of the body, this constitutes evidence that the soul and body are actually independent of one another such that the former can survive the death of the latter.

For his part, Kant rejects this argument, objecting first that the move from the lack of any insight into the ground of the agreement between respective states of soul and body to the independence of the two is too hasty, even remaining in the context of empirical psychology. As he notes, a proof of genuine metaphysical independence would require that we isolate the soul from the body in life and show, by means of experimentation, that they are capable of alterations in the absence of all connection between them (V-Met-L2/Pölitz 28: 591; V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 764). Second, Kant contends that even if we have no insight into causal grounds, our experience of the states of the soul is nonetheless limited to the time during which it is connected with the body; thus, this experience cannot license an inference to what might be possible for the soul independently of the body:

> The general reason why we cannot demonstrate the future survival of the soul without the body from the observations and experiences of the human mind, is: because all of these experiences and observations happen *in connection with the body*. We cannot set up any experiences in life other than in connection with the body. Accordingly these experiences cannot prove what we could be *without* the body, for of course they have happened *with* the body. (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 291; cf. V-Met/Mron 29: 911 f., V-Met/Volckmann 28: 441; V-Met/Dohna 28: 686; V-Met-K3/Arnoldt 28: 1038)

Aside from these internal criticisms, it would seem clear that a posteriori arguments could be of little use as demonstrations of the immortality of the soul, by which (as we have seen) Kant intends the *necessity* of the soul's survival of the

body's death.[11] Nonetheless, and significantly, Kant points out that the foregoing argument performs an important *negative* service for such demonstrations:

> But this empirical proof has a *negative* use, namely in that we cannot derive from experience any certain inference *against* the life of the soul; for from that, that the body ceases, it still does not at all follow that the soul will also cease. – Thus no opponent can find an argument *from experience* which would demonstrate the mortality of the soul. (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 29: 291)

Kant here notes that while the observation at the basis of the argument from empirical psychology, namely, that we have no empirical insight into the ground of agreement between the soul and body, cannot be marshalled in support of the soul's immortality, it nonetheless tells against, for instance, the materialist insofar as his claim that the soul dies along with the body might be founded upon an alleged experience of the *dependence* of the soul's states upon those of the body.

Turning to the a priori proof of the soul's immortality, the argument to which Kant devotes the most discussion throughout his career, and even identifies at one point as "the *only* proof that can be given a priori" (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 287; emphasis added), turns upon the identification of the soul as a principle of life inasmuch as it is spontaneous or the source of its own activity. As presented in the ML_1 notes, the proof runs as follows:

> Now because all matter is lifeless ..., everything that belongs to life cannot come from matter. The act of spontaneity cannot proceed from an outer principle, i. e., there cannot be outer causes of life, for otherwise spontaneity would not be in life. That lies already in the concept of life, since it is a faculty for determining actions from an *inner* principle. Thus no body can be the cause of life .... The ground of life must rather lie in another substance, namely, in the soul .... Accordingly neither the beginning of the life of the soul, nor the survival of its life will proceed from the body. (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 285 f.)

Given that, for Kant, life involves the capacity for spontaneous action, and given that matter is known to be lifeless,[12] it follows that something non-material must be assumed that contains within it the source of the actions of the body. This non-

11 Here, contrast Ameriks who claims that, in his consideration of empirical arguments, Kant offers "no proof that in principle such arguments could not be made appealing" (Ameriks 2000b: 181).

12 Kant evidently takes the lifelessness of matter as proven (or at least presupposed) by modern physics; thus, he claims that hylozoism is the "death of all physics" (V-Met/Dohna 28: 687) inasmuch as the postulate of matter that could move itself and not merely be moved by others would contradict the "principle of inertia" (V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 753).

material ground of activity is identified with the soul, and because the body is not the ground of life, it follows that the separation of the soul from the body cannot result in the death of the soul.[13] In any case, the crucial step in the argument is clearly the identification of the soul as spontaneous, and Kant indicates that this is founded merely upon the consciousness of the self, or the I: "[t]he consciousness of the mere I proves that life lies not in the body, but rather in a separate principle" (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 287). Indeed, earlier in the notes on rational psychology, Kant had claimed that our consciousness of the I involves the immediate consciousness of our own activity, either with respect to our thoughts or actions: "When I say: I think, I act, etc., then either the word I is applied falsely, or I am free," which is to say that the I expresses "spontaneity in the transcendental sense" (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 269). It is, then, because we are conscious of ourselves as the subject of the activity involved in thought and (free) actions that we are conscious that the I or soul (cf. 28: 265) is spontaneous.

Strikingly, however, there is no record of Kant's criticism of this a priori argument in the ML_1 lecture notes, or indeed any evidence that he rejected the argument in the pre-Critical period. As a matter of fact, Kant himself had at one point explicitly endorsed this proof, which he also calls the proof "from rational psychology," even making use of it himself in the *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer* (which is, otherwise, generally critical of the pretensions of rational psychology):

> That which contains a principle of life in the world seems to be an immaterial nature. All life rests on the inner capacity of determining oneself in accordance with the power of choice. Since, however, the essential mark of matter in the filling of space obtains through a different force that is limited by external opposition [*durch äußere Gegenwirkung*], therefore, the state of all of that which is material is externally dependent and coerced, [whereas] those natures that are spontaneous [*selbst thätig*] and effective on the basis of their internal power are supposed to contain the ground of life. (TG 2: 327n)[14]

It would not, therefore, be surprising if Kant continued to accept this proof barely a decade later (that is, at the time of the lectures recorded in the ML_1 notes). It is, in any case, only in the notes from the Critical-period lectures that Kant, drawing on the resources of his mature thought, offers a detailed evaluation of the a priori

13 Contrast my presentation of this argument with that of Ameriks (who refers to it as the "principle of life" argument), who takes it to involve a claim about the soul's simplicity in contrast with the compositeness of matter (Ameriks 2000b: 179). While Kant's criticism of this argument parallels, as we will see, his criticism of the extended "unity argument," Kant gives no indication that the argument itself turns on any insight into the soul's simplicity.

14 See also Refl 3855 (AA 17: 313).

proof of the soul's immortality. Indeed, Kant's opinion of this proof is made clear when, likely referring to his own previous endorsement in *Dreams*, he is recorded as claiming that this "beautiful" proof is to be rejected since "too much follows from it, [and] one is delivered by it into wild fantasy" (V-Met-L2/Pölitz 28: 592). This is probably on account of the fact that this proof also suffices to demonstrate the immortality of non-human souls (i. e., those of animals[15]) and that it enforces a rigid distinction between the soul and body which only encourages wild speculation about the ground of their relation.[16] Kant also brings the resources of the Critical philosophy to bear against this proof, claiming for instance that, even if successful, it only serves to distinguish the soul from matter, considered as an external appearance:

> This proof is also not very rigorous. For the lifelessness of matter is merely a property of appearance, namely of the body. But whether the substance underlying the body also has life we do not know. (V-Met/Mron 29: 914; cf. V-Met/Volckmann 28: 441 f.)

Kant's point here, presumably, is that while the spontaneity of the soul might serve to distinguish it from body (taken as an external appearance), it nonetheless does not thereby distinguish it from the *transcendental ground* of matter which remains inaccessible to human cognition and which, accordingly, could be spontaneous in a way similar to the soul. The worry (though Kant does not spell this out) would thus be that simply identifying the soul as spontaneous would not suffice to demonstrate its immortality since we cannot rule out the possibility that the (ground of the) body could be similarly spontaneous and yet can cease to exist; as a result, the soul cannot be taken to be "except[ed] from the perishability to which matter is always subjected" (A356).

3 The teleological proof of immortality and the state of the soul after death

Having ruled out any strict demonstration of the soul's immortality, whether they proceed a posteriori or a priori, Kant proceeds to consider the last class of proofs, namely, those which proceed informally, or by analogy, the primary example of which Kant identifies as the teleological proof. However, Kant's treatment of the teleological proof contrasts starkly with that of the others as Kant had not only

15 See V-Met/Mron 29: 916 f. and Ameriks 2000b: 179.
16 Kant seems to acknowledge this at TG 2: 327 f.

long had sympathies with this proof, as is evidenced already by Herder's notes to Kant's lectures from the first half of the 1760s (cf. V-Met-N/Herder 28: 892–4), but as we will see he continues to mine it even in the Critical period for important positive conclusions regarding the afterlife. The proof itself turns on a reflection on the general purposiveness of nature with respect to the capacities of living beings, and it sets out from the assumption of a general teleological principle:

> We find in nature a connection of efficient causes, also connection of ends, this connection is indicated in organized beings, and the connection of finality with living beings is the highest principle, from which one cannot depart at all: that no organ is met in living beings that would be superfluous, also that no part would be in a living being that would be useless and not have its determinate purpose. (V-Met-L2/Pölitz 28: 592)

The teleological principle, then, is that we must assume that every organ or, more generally, capacity on the part of a living being has some end or purpose which it is designed to serve. While this principle might seem controversial, it bears noting that Kant frequently endorses it himself, and indeed explicitly with respect to the faculties of the soul, as in the *Critique of Pure Reason* where he asserts that "[e]verything grounded in the nature of our powers must be purposive and consistent with their correct use" (A643 f./B670 f.; cf. B425). The next step of the proof consists in noting that the highest functions of human cognitive and moral powers would seem to be superfluous, or even contra-purposive, considered in the context of the opportunities for their use in this life:

> Now we find in human beings powers, faculties, and talents which, if they were made merely for this world, are really purposeless and superfluous. The talents and equipment of the soul show that it has powers. The moral principles of the will also go much further than we need here. (V-Met-L2/Pölitz 28: 592)

Regarding the soul's higher cognitive powers, Kant frequently refers to the example of astronomy, where the discovery of the laws of attraction that govern the movement of the heavens represent the pinnacle of human scientific achievement and yet apparently serve little use for our ends in this life (cf. V-Met/Mron 29: 915f; V-Met/Volckmann 28: 442 and note). With respect to the soul's moral powers, that is, the faculty of will and the higher faculty of desire, Kant echoes a point he makes in his published works on moral philosophy, namely, that morality frequently demands sacrifice of interest and, though rarely, even of our own life: "the moral principles in the reason of a human being intend that he should not attend to the advantages of life and even life itself" (V-Met/Volckmann 28:

442).[17] That our highest faculties should thus appear to be superfluous in this life, or even to work contrary to our worldly interests, is taken to imply that the ultimate ends of their use could only be realized if there is a life to come, which is to say that "it is quite obvious that the soul of the human being is not created for this world alone, but rather also for another future world" (V-Met-L2/Pölitz 28: 592).

It bears noting that the teleological proof had been widely used in Kant's time. Kant himself credits David Fordyce (1711–1751) with its discovery in V-Met/Mron (29: 916), though he later names an unknown "French philosopher" in connection with the proof (V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 766).[18] In addition to being promoted by Kant in his lectures, the proof was championed by a number of Kant's prominent German contemporaries. So, Hermann Samuel Reimarus presents it in his *Die vornehmste Wahrheiten der natürlichen Religion*,[19] Moses Mendelssohn has Socrates offer a version of the proof in the third dialogue of his famous *Phädon, oder über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele*,[20] and it is well-represented in the work of other authors of the period.[21] Strikingly, Kant himself provides a ringing endorsement of the teleological proof, not only in the lectures, where he lauds the proof as "especially admirable" (V-Met/Mron 29: 916), "the most noble" (V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 767), and even claims that it "is the best of all that has ever been introduced for the soul" (V-Met-L2/Pölitz 28: 592; cf. V-Met/Volckmann 28: 442), but also in the Paralogisms chapter in the B edition of *Critique of Pure Reason*. There, in a passage referred to previously and which emphasizes the positive contributions of rational psychology, Kant presents a truncated version of the proof "*by analogy with the nature* of living beings in this world" (B425), and continues:

> This powerful ground of proof, which can never be refuted, accompanied by an ever increasing cognition of the purposiveness in everything we see and by a vision of the immensity of creation, hence also by the consciousness of a certain boundlessness in the possible extension of our knowledge, along with a drive commensurable to it, always still remains. (B426)

17 See, for instance, GMS 4: 395 f.

18 For Fordyce's original presentation, see Fordyce 1769: 289–99. Rolf George offers a more detailed consideration of Fordyce's argument and its early uptake by Kant in George (unpublished manuscript).

19 See Reimarus 1766: 691–3.

20 See Mendelssohn 2013: 168 ff.

21 See Beck 1960: 266 n. 18 for a list of other occurrences of this proof among Kant's contemporaries.

Yet, it is not obvious, to say the least, how Kant's claim here that this proof "can never be refuted" can be reconciled with his assertion, immediately following this quote, that "we must equally give up insight into the necessary continuation of our existence from the merely theoretical cognition of our self" (B426).[22] Fortunately, the student lecture notes provide some additional detail regarding what Kant takes the nature of the positive result of the teleological argument to consist in. In Kant's discussion in the notes, the teleological proof is, like the other proofs for immortality, taken to fall short of demonstrating "the necessary continuation of our existence." This is because the teleological proof might be allowed to demonstrate the necessity of an afterlife, and even to include *only* human souls (rather than extending to the souls of animals – V-Met/Mron 29: 916), though it might be questioned whether it applies to *all* human souls, such as to those who have yet to emerge from a state of animality (cf. V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 767). Kant argues that it does, however, fail to prove the *eternality* of the afterlife inasmuch as it remains possible that the human soul might simply attain the purpose set for its faculties sometime after the death of the body, at which point the soul could conceivably perish: "Who knows if I do not die once all these predispositions have developed? Granted, that I will live even that long, if I do finally stop then, I would rather wish to have stopped earlier" (V-Met/Mron 29: 917).

While the teleological proof is thus no more successful than the previous proofs in its pretensions to offer theoretical certainty regarding the soul's immortality, it is nonetheless singled out as encouraging a salutary, and indeed, necessary perspective on human action. Along these lines, Kant suggests that the conclusion of the teleological proof can be allowed to hold insofar as it is understood as expressing that we must *assume* that there is an afterlife for the human soul. The conclusion cannot, however, be taken to amount to a cognition that the soul must survive the death of the body, inasmuch as the teleological principle from which it is derived only holds subjectively; thus, in the MK_2 notes, Kant is careful to emphasize that the "proper teleological proof is carried out according to the analogy of organized nature, in which we *assume* that nothing is in vain and without purpose" (V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 766). It is, then, insofar as the teleological proof convincingly establishes a warrant for the *belief* in the afterlife, grounded on the *necessity of assuming* the soul's survival of the death of the body, that Kant continues to make use of and endorse the teleological proof in the Critical period. Kant's surprising claim that this proof "can never be refuted," then, should be taken as an assertion that, while it might not succeed as a proof of immortality,

22 Ameriks also notes that Kant "does not express precisely what he finds philosophically inadequate in the argument" (Ameriks 2000b: 184 f.).

the teleological proof is nonetheless successful in providing another basis for the hope for a future life. Indeed, just this is confirmed by Kant's scattered mentions of this proof in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. So, Kant writes in the Preface to the B edition, in an apparent reference to the teleological argument, that it is that "remarkable predisposition of our nature … never to be capable of being satisfied by what is temporal" which leads to "the hope of a future life" (Bxxxii).[23] Moreover, Kant claims in the Canon of Pure Reason that the teleological proof discloses another, distinct basis for belief in the immortality of the soul, namely, one founded on a theoretical presupposition of a purposiveness in nature:

> In regard to this same wisdom [regarding the presupposition of the purposiveness of nature], in respect of the magnificent equipment of human nature and the shortness of life which is so ill suited to it, there is likewise to be found sufficient ground for a doctrinal belief in the future life of the human soul. (A827/B855)

Kant here appropriately contrast the resulting belief in the soul's immortality with the more familiar moral belief by characterizing it as *doctrinal* inasmuch as it is grounded on a theoretical rather than a practical presupposition.[24] Yet, in spite of this important distinction, it should be clear that such a doctrinal belief in the soul's immortality can nonetheless be seen to complement the more familiar moral belief inasmuch as it proceeds not on the basis of the recognition of the human being's *distinction*, through freedom, from the natural world, but rather on an understanding of the human being as a part of nature and, as such, likewise governed by "general natural ends" (V-Met/Arnoldt 29: 1035).[25] Despite rejecting the possibility of any *cognition* that the human soul will survive the death of the body, then, Kant's claim that the teleological proof "can never be refuted" should be understood as referring to the fact that this proof nonetheless affords a legitimate and indeed helpful basis for a (doctrinal) *belief* in the soul's immortality.

As the lectures make clear, however, there is more to this belief than simply that the soul survives the death of the body since Kant recognizes that it must also

23 See also V-Met/Arnoldt, where Kant is recorded as claiming that from the moral and teleological proofs, "one cannot infer to any necessity of the future life, but rather only that we have cause … to expect a future life, which is hope of a future life" (29: 1036).

24 Compare L. W. Beck, who contrasts "moral belief" with that "doctrinal belief" for which this proof serves as a basis (Beck 1960: 266 n. 18). For a detailed account of Kant's views on doctrinal belief see Chignell 2007: 345–50.

25 I take it that this is why Kant claims that the "proper teleological proof … teaches us to study our own nature correctly" (V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 767).

be shown that it is *possible* for the human soul to retain the requisite cognitive and moral capacities. Accordingly, Kant proceeds to consider what can be known about the state, or condition, of the soul in the afterlife. Again following Baumgarten, Kant claims that with respect to the state of the soul after death "we have three items to prove: (1) the perdurability of the soul as a substance, (2) the survival of this after death, as intelligence, (3) its survival as a person" (V-Met/Mron 29: 912; cf. V-Met/Volckmann 28: 440).[26] Obviously, the perdurability of the soul as substance after the death of the body is a necessary feature of the soul's state after death, but Kant rejects those treatments of immortality that demonstrate *merely* that the soul perdures as a substance since not only does he deny that we can have cognition of the soul as a substance such that it would perdure through the loss of the body (cf. A349), but also because he claims that such accounts do nothing to dispel the spectres of spiritual sleep and the draught of forgetfulness which threaten the loss of the distinctive cognitive and moral capacities required by the human soul if it is to remain possible for it to achieve the ends set for it by nature. As Kant warns, were the soul not to retain its capacities for thought and consciousness of its identity in the afterlife, it would amount to nothing less than a spiritual death (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 296; V-Met/Mron 29: 914) and the death of the person (V-Met/Dohna 28: 688; V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 769).

As might be expected, Kant will reject the rational psychologist's claim to cognize with any degree of certainty that the soul can retain either its spirituality, that is, its capacity for thought independently of the body (cf. V-Met/Dohna 28: 683 and V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 755), or its personality, that is, its capacity to be "conscious of being just the same subject as it was previously" (V-Met/Arnoldt 29: 1036) in the afterlife. So, against the rational psychologist's claim that we can know that the soul will be able to think independently of the body and thus will lead a purely spiritual existence in the life to come, Kant points out that not only does experience provide us with little guidance regarding whether the soul can exercise its faculties in the absence of the body, but also that, if anything, the course of experience actually suggests the opposite:

> The spirituality of the soul belongs to the transcendent concepts, i. e., we can attain no cognition of it, because we can give no objective reality to this concept, i. e., no corresponding object in any possible experience. It is not to be decided whether the body is not an indispensable support of the soul for thinking; for we cannot set ourselves outside the body in order to experience this. (V-Met-K2/Heinze 28: 755)[27]

26 Spirituality and personality are also mentioned in the list of the "concepts of the pure doctrine of the soul" in the opening section of the Paralogisms (cf. A345/B403).

27 See also V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 295 f.; V-Met/Mron 29: 914; V-Met/Volckmann 28: 441; and V-Met/

Similarly, experience would suggest that the human soul's faculty of recollection degrades over time and so that it is unlikely that it would retain its memory of itself and past states in the afterlife:

> What concerns ... the identity of the person of the soul, this would be the intellectual memory. To what extent this should belong to it after death, the necessity of that one cannot comprehend at all: one can, of course, assume the possibility, but not prove it, therefore one cannot infer it a priori. Psychologically we rather find that the human being forgets what he previously was. (V-Met/Arnoldt 29: 1038)[28]

While Kant thus rules out any cognition of the soul's state after death on the basis of experience, he nonetheless does not take the soul's preservation of its spirituality and personality in the afterlife to be impossible. So, Kant claims that a complete deficiency of consciousness such that the soul would be unable to think in the afterlife "cannot at all be proven" (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 296), and he contends that even though rational psychology cannot disclose the reality of spirits (and so become a pneumatology, or doctrine of spirit), likewise the materialist cannot disprove the possibility of "the life of the spirit without body" (V-Met/Dohna 28: 688). Regarding personality, Kant is clear in the lectures that it at least remains possible in the absence of the body, as the notes read, "[p]erhaps in the future [the soul] will be able to be self-conscious without body" (V-Met/Mron 29: 914; cf. V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 296). Indeed, it is obviously crucial that Kant upholds, at the very least, the *possibility* of the soul retaining these distinctive capacities in the afterlife since otherwise any belief in immortality warranted by the teleological proof will be undermined inasmuch as the soul could not be allowed to retain the very capacities the apparent purpose of which was to be used and developed in the afterlife.

It is not, however, clear *how* Kant can uphold even the possibility of the spirituality and personality of the soul after the death of the body, which he maintains in the Critical-period lectures, in a way consistent with his published Critical views, particularly the doctrine of apperception and emphasis (in the B edition) on the role of external bodies in general as a condition of our cognition, and so consciousness, of ourselves. That it should be possible for the soul to preserve its capacity for thinking in the absence of the body would seem inconsistent with Kant's claim that the activity of thought itself presupposes that a manifold of *sen-*

Dohna 28: 683 f.

28 See also V-Met/Mron 29: 914: "Perhaps in the future it will be able to be self-conscious without body, for I must be conscious of myself through clear representations. But these rest on the body, since they are sensations."

sations be given to the subject. Kant makes this point, for instance, in a lengthy footnote in the B edition Paralogisms, writing that sensation "grounds this existential proposition [i. e., the *I think*]" (B422), and continues:

> Only without any empirical representation, which provides the material for thinking, the act I think would not take place, and the empirical is only the condition of the application, or use, of the pure intellectual faculty. (B423n)

Accordingly, Kant seems to rule out the possibility of any exercise of the soul's cognitive capacity in the absence of the body and its organs of sense through which it is provided with an empirical manifold. In addition, it is not clear how the soul should be understood to preserve a consciousness of its identity, and thus its personality, in the afterlife, given Kant's claim that the experience of myself as existing over time presupposes the existence of (an external) body as a condition of its possibility. In the Refutation of Idealism, Kant sets out from inner experience, understood as the consciousness of "my existence as determined in time" (B275), but concludes that "the existence of outer objects is required for the possibility of a determinate consciousness of our self" (B278). Assuming that the human subject's putative consciousness that it is the same soul in the afterlife as it was previous to the death of the body is just such a case of empirically determined self-consciousness, it is not clear how this consciousness would be possible in the absence of the body and its organs of outer sense by means of which the soul is able to represent external objects. In light of all this, it seems that Kant could not even maintain that it is conceivable that the soul should retain these capacities in the afterlife, thereby undermining the basis for the doctrinal belief in immortality.

While Kant himself does not offer much by way of detail on these points, the beginnings of an adequate solution can be formulated on the basis of the available texts. In claiming that the activity involved in discursive thought is conditioned by a manifold, Kant's point is not that the activity of the *I think* depends on the body but only that it requires that a manifold be given. In the course of *our* lives, obviously, the manifold is only given sensibly, that is, as a result of the affection of the organs of sensation, which is to say that our experience is such that the activity of thought is always conditioned by the body, and so we can hardly claim to know that the soul must be able to exercise its activity independently of it (or indeed of any body whatsoever). Even so, it nonetheless remains *conceivable* that the activity of the soul could occur independently of the body, insofar, namely, as a manifold is not given to us by means of bodily organs of

sense but in some other way that does not rely on the body;[29] accordingly, as Kant notes in his lectures: "it is not necessary that the [activity of the] soul would have to stop with the body" (V-Met/Mron 29: 914; cf. V-Met/Volckmann 28: 441 f.). With respect to the soul's personality, while the empirically determined consciousness of the self undoubtedly requires the presupposition of the existence of body, it is not clear that Kant needs to account for the possibility of such a robust self-consciousness in the afterlife. Rather, insofar as personality is taken to involve only the bare (capacity for the) consciousness that I am the same subject now as I was previously, Kant could contend that this only amounts to the *mere*, as opposed to empirically determined, consciousness of the self, that is, the "*intellectual consciousness*" of the self as the identical subject of consciousness which precedes (as a condition) the thicker consciousness of the self (by means of inner sense – cf. Bxl). This consciousness has a far better claim to being possible in the absence of body, and while it obviously does not amount to the consciousness of my identity as an empirical subject, it nonetheless serves to distinguish the human soul (as an intellectual being) from lesser beings incapable of such complex consciousness which is in any case what is primarily at issue for the rational psychologist in the question of personality.[30] Kant is thus able to shore up the teleological proof by accounting for the conceivability of the soul's preservation of its spirituality and personality after the death of the body. As a result, Kant can contend that by means of this proof we are not only provided with an additional warrant to believe that the human soul will survive the death of the body, but we are also licensed in a belief that the human soul will continue to be outfitted with the capacities required for the realization of its natural purposes in the afterlife.

In the end, then, it should be clear that the discussion of the immortality of the soul as preserved in the student notes to Kant's metaphysics lectures serve as an indispensable supplement to his discussion in the Paralogisms. As we have seen, the account preserved in the notes serves to extend and clarify his devastating criticism of the rational psychologist but, significantly, Kant also makes use of his lectures to elaborate on his positive doctrine of the soul, albeit in a manner that remains fundamentally consistent with Critical strictures. That Kant should take the liberty to explore this territory in the context of his lectures is,

29 Along these lines, one might consider the extended discussion contained in the ML_1 notes of a so-called "spiritual intuition [*geistige Anschauung*]" (see V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 297–9) of which the soul might be capable "when it is liberated from the sensible intuition of the body" (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 298). Even here, however, Kant maintains that it cannot be demonstrated that the soul will receive this kind of intuition after the death of the body, yet Kant allows that it remains a "necessary hypothesis of reason which can be set against opponents" (V-Met-L1/Pölitz 28: 298).
30 See Dyck 2014: 168–71.

perhaps, unsurprising, given that the classroom would have offered him a much more informal venue (and a more receptive audience) for the presentation of these views. Yet, Kant undoubtedly also recognized the transformative potential, for his students' theoretical and practical endeavours, of a belief in the soul's immortality that promotes our investigation of the natural world in terms of its purposive organization (where the human being is no exception), and that continually exhorts us to develop our highest cognitive and moral capacities in this life with an eye towards the life to come.