

## РАННЬОМОДЕРНА ФІЛОСОФІЯ / EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY

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### METHOD AS A SYSTEM: CLEMENS TIMPLER AND HIS PROGRAM FOR THE REFORM OF PHILOSOPHY

Clemens Timpler (1563–1624) was a key figure in early seventeenth-century German academic philosophy and the author of some of the most original and comprehensive systematic textbooks on metaphysics and logic.<sup>1</sup> His idea of presenting all sciences as a “methodically sound system” and uniting them into a single encyclopedic system largely determined the subsequent development of German philosophy and its distinctive methodical style of philosophizing. Even before Galileo Galilei and Francis Bacon, he formulated the foundations of a new scientific worldview, which, through the eclectics and rationalists, quickly spread throughout the universities of seventeenth-century Germany.

However, the grandeur of his plans and the originality and depth of his ideas aroused less admiration among his contemporaries than misunderstanding and fierce resistance, which, incidentally, Timpler himself predicted in the dedication to his *Logicae systema methodicum* [see *Epistula dedicatoria*]. His works were widely studied but rarely cited. This was due partly to misunderstanding, partly to the bias and prejudices of university professors, and partly to the fact that his works were used primarily as encyclopedic reference works, with readers interested mainly in his exhaustive classifications rather than in the ideas underlying them. This also applied to his teacher and closest friend, Rudolf Goclenius (1547–1628),<sup>2</sup> as well as to his student and close friend, Bartholomeus Keckermann,<sup>3</sup> and Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588–1638), whose ideas proved more accessible to

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<sup>1</sup>Max Wundt calls Timpler the most significant (bedeutendste) among the reformers of metaphysics [Wundt 1992: 72]; U.G. Leinsle also recognizes the innovative nature of Timpler's work, calling him “the most significant and at the same time most controversial reformer of the modern era” (der bedeutendste und zugleich umstrittenste reformierte Metaphysiker der Frühzeit) [Leinsle 1985: 352].

<sup>2</sup>Rudolf Goclenius was Timpler's teacher and friend. Throughout Timpler's life, Goclenius maintained close ties with him and Keckermann. Goclenius wrote a laudatory introduction to his metaphysics textbook, but at the end he added his own critical remarks, which indicate that he did not fully understand Timpler.

<sup>3</sup>Keckermann was Timpler's student in Heidelberg and was later chosen by Timpler for private tuition in logic [Freedman 1988: 138–139.]. Keckermann himself also acknowledges that Timpler, whom he calls “doctissimo philosopho et medico” [Keckermann, 1611: 176], helped him understand Aristotle and Zabarella. Characterizing Timpler as a *doctissimus medicus* should be considered the highest form of praise, since physicians had been considered specialists in methodology since the time of Galen [Ong 1958: 226].

their contemporaries. Even Leibniz, who speaks highly of Timpler, rarely mentions him and refers primarily to his students and to the philosophers they influenced. Nevertheless, we find in the philosophies of Leibniz and Wolff a surprising number of similarities with Timpler's thought, giving us reason to regard Timpler as a forerunner of German rationalism and German classical philosophy.

Despite the pioneering works of Max Wundt, Ulrich Gottfried Leinsle, Joseph S. Freedman, and others who have sought to draw attention to Timpler's philosophy, most historians of philosophy continue to view Timpler within the framework of other philosophical traditions and, accordingly, classify him as a follower of Aristotle,<sup>4</sup> Melanchthon, Petrus Ramus,<sup>5</sup> Francisco Suárez, and Spanish Neo-Scholasticism. This article examines Timpler's philosophy in the context of his program of educational reform, with the aim of assessing his role in the development of the methodical tradition of philosophizing in seventeenth-century Germany.

### 1. Method as a Proper Subject Matter of Logic

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the question of which science had method as its proper subject matter was primarily limited to the relationship between two disciplines – metaphysics and logic. Although all sciences develop their own methods, only metaphysics and logic could claim method as their proper subject matter. It is with this question that Timpler begins his discussion of the problem of method in the chapter devoted to it.

The metaphysical character of Aristotle's logic was rarely disputed by the scholastics. The situation changed significantly during the Renaissance, especially with the rise of the Protestant movement. Philipp Melanchthon and Petrus Ramus had already argued that logic ought to be freed from metaphysics and reduced to dialectic. This tendency was evident even among the Peripatetics. Representatives of the Paduan school, especially Giacomo Zabarella (1533–1589), made significant contributions to the emancipation of logic from metaphysics. According to Zabarella, logic is neither a science nor an art but merely an instrument of both. It is not a science because it has no subject matter in reality. Rather, its subject matter consists of the primary concepts employed by the sciences to denote real entities, which logic investigates and organizes by means of so-called secondary concepts (*notiones secundae*). All the other sciences, including metaphysics, use logic as an instrument for attaining truth. This makes logic not only a universal discipline but also a rational one, whose primary goal is to recognize truth and distinguish it from falsehood. Since the sciences have different subject matters and different aims, Zabarella recognizes the need for specific logics alongside general logic. Thus arose the problem of distinguishing the subject matter of universal logic from that of the particular logics. The need for such a distinction also affected the problem of method, since the particular sciences are compelled to develop their own specific methods. All of this had to be taken into account in answering the question of which science should study method in general.

The scholastics advanced two main arguments in support of the view that method should be the subject matter of metaphysics rather than logic: (1) since metaphysics studies order, and method is a kind of order, method should be studied by metaphysics; and (2) what is common to all the arts does not belong to logic [Timpler 1612: 720-721]. Timpler

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<sup>4</sup> Peter Petersen writes that Timpler spent years trying to bring Aristotle's teaching into a unified system, but was unable to achieve the same results as F. Suarez [Petersen 1921: 287].

<sup>5</sup> See [Hotson 2007: 131-135] and [Burton 2024: 221].

rejects these arguments, maintaining that both objections are instances of the fallacy of *ad dicto secundum quid ad dictum simpliciter* (from what is said in a qualified sense to what is said in an absolute sense). Timpler admits that one and the same thing cannot, in the same respect, be the subject matter of different sciences, but this does not prevent it from belonging to different sciences in different respects. This applies not only to metaphysics but also to the other sciences, each of which develops its own methods:

For although what belongs to metaphysics may not belong to logic in one and the same respect, there is nothing to prevent it from being rightly affirmed that one and the same thing belongs to both disciplines in different respects. Accordingly, the doctrine of method belongs to metaphysics insofar as method is a species of order, and order is the general affection of things, and therefore the term of the first intention; but not insofar as method is an instrument of correct reasoning and knowing, and thus a term of second intention. Likewise, although that which is, in a certain respect, common to all the arts does not, properly speaking, belong to logic under that same respect, it may nevertheless, under another respect, become something proper to logic [ibid.: 721].

From this, Timpler concludes that “the doctrine of method is indeed common to all the arts in respect of the general application it provides to each of them; however, it is proper to Logic in respect of the precepts by which this doctrine is communicated and understood” [ibid.]. Logic develops a general theory of method that cannot be neglected by the other arts, and in this respect it is a universal science. In this universality, logic resembles metaphysics, which is no exception in the above-mentioned respect, since it also employs method. Nevertheless, for Timpler, metaphysics remains the foundational science even in relation to logic.

The priority of metaphysics over logic follows from Timpler's definitions of logic and method. He defines logic as “the liberal art which teaches the method of conducting a discussion on any topic with the aim of obtaining knowledge of things” (*ars liberalis quae modum tradit de quolibet themate bene disserendi ad acquirendam rerum cognitionem*) [ibid.: 1], and method as “*instrumentum dianoeticum bene ordinandi res diversas & varias secundum prius & posterius*” [ibid.: 716]. Since this definition of method presupposes the concept of order, which metaphysics investigates as a relational attribute of being, logic presupposes metaphysics. Metaphysics, however, is not a foundational science for logic in the traditional sense. It does not determine the principles of logic; on the contrary, it cannot violate them. Metaphysics provides logic with “objects of first intention”, which logic must then order. Like Plato, who called dialectic *τέχνη λόγῳ*, Timpler likewise describes logic as “the art of reason” (*ars rationis*) [ibid.: 6], since it deals with the products of reason, namely concepts derived from the other sciences. Timpler's fundamental departure from Zabarella and the Aristotelian tradition as a whole lies in his understanding of metaphysics as a normative system that constructs no hypotheses about reality but instead develops a system of primary concepts that enable us to determine the possibility of things and explain them precisely. Yet it cannot accomplish this task without logic, whose primary function is to develop the instruments of scientific inquiry.

For Timpler, method “directs and forms” (*dirigit & informat*) the third operation of the human mind, namely *dianoia* (διάνοια), since it passes from one clearer and better-known thing to another, more obscure and less well-known, and appropriately (*apte*) orders and connects them with one another for the sake of better and easier knowledge” [ibid.: 721]. He therefore maintains that “the doctrine of method presupposes the doctrine of arguments, enunciation, and syllogism, and without it can neither be distinctly understood nor adapted

to use (*sine ea distincte neque intelligi, neque ad usum accommodari potest*)” [ibid.]. Thus, the order of the doctrines is determined by two criteria: greater clarity of understanding and suitability for practical use.

## 2. The Concept of Method in General

Having demonstrated that logic should be concerned with method as such and having established the place of the doctrine of method within logic, Timpler turns to the central issue of his teaching: the justification of the general concept of method.

### 2.1. Order and Method

Timpler arrives at his definition of method as a “dianoetic instrument” through a critical analysis of the difficulties encountered by both the Aristotelian and the Ramist traditions.

In his polemic against the Italian Aristotelians, Ramus, accusing his opponents of confusing method with syllogism, tries to demonstrate the existence of a single method of teaching and organizing doctrine. In doing so, he repeatedly appeals to Aristotle, attempting to show that the followers of Claudius Galen, as well as others who recognized the existence of several methods, had misunderstood Aristotle. Ramus does not deny that Aristotle, in defining method as a progression from what is prior and better known to what is less known, distinguishes between two senses of “prior” and “better known”: one is “prior by nature and absolutely”, while the other is “prior relative to us” [Ramus 1557: 2]. He nevertheless argues, on the basis of Aristotle, that these two senses do not entail two distinct methods.

Ramus quotes Aristotle as teaching that “the principles of demonstrative science are absolutely prior and more knowable insofar as scientific knowledge proceeds from universal principles to particular conclusions. In the temporal order of learning, however, we initially proceed in the opposite direction, from singulars and particulars toward universals” [ibid.: 3-4]. Ramus therefore distinguishes between the order in which a science is constituted and the order in which it is initially learned, calling the former the “absolute order”. He explains the apparent discrepancy by arguing that, in the course of education, what is first by nature – the universal – also becomes better known to us and thus comes to be “absolutely known”.

Ramus further points out that Aristotle, in the Topics, teaches that a definition should be composed of concepts that are not merely better known to us but also better known by nature and absolutely. Individual concepts are initially better known to us, but as education progresses, universal concepts become better known. Accordingly, Ramus explains that by ‘absolutely known’ we should understand “not what is known by everyone, but what is known by minds that are well ordered and properly disposed” [ibid.: 4].

For this reason, Ramus insists that method should be understood exclusively as *artis ordinem et dispositionem* – “the order and arrangement of an art” [ibid.: 5]. Referring to the Physics of Aristotle, he attempts to show that Aristotle likewise held this position. Since what is “first for us” is in nature “mixed” and “complex”, it is therefore unsuitable as the basis for the construction of the arts. Ramus writes:

For in the Physics, right at the beginning, he proposed that all scientific knowledge is derived from the cognition of principles, causes, and elements, because we truly know something when we know its causes; and therefore principles must first be defined. He calls these the “principles of science”, and says that they are “clearer and more knowable in themselves and by nature”, that is, absolutely and naturally clearer and more knowable. On the other hand, he says that things obscure by nature but more

knowable to us are “confused” and composite things. Then he says that “one must proceed from universals to particulars”. [ibid.: 6-7]

Although Ramus distinguishes the temporal process of learning from the normative order of doctrine, but his ultimate purpose is precisely to prevent that distinction from producing two methods. Ramus' solution is essentially to bring notiora nobis into conformity with notiora natura through education and the properly ordered intellect. The methodological order is therefore ultimately identified with the natural/intelligible order.

Zabarella, according to Timpler, by contrast, denied the identity of order and method. He argued, first, that “it is one thing to know that this is earlier than that; another thing to proceed from knowledge of this to knowledge of that which is unknown”; and, second, that “order does not draw conclusions from this or that, but merely arranges what is subject to consideration” [Timpler 1612: 725]. Although Timpler likewise rejects the identification of order with method, he nevertheless accuses Zabarella of what the last understand “by method in the proper sense a syllogism”. Timpler calls this position a hypothesis that cannot be demonstrated and that contradicts his own definition of method (in Book I of *De Methodis*, chapter 2) as a “logical habit” since “a syllogism cannot be a species of this genus” [ibid.: 726]. For Timpler, method is neither a logical habit nor an instrumental logical habit. At the same time, he does not identify it with order, as Ramus does. Rather, he defines method in general as an instrument:

Thus, I define method in general as a dianoetic instrument for the proper arrangement of diverse and different things according to a prior and subsequent order for the sake of more convenient knowledge. [Timpler 1612: 723]

Timpler's definition differs from that of Ramus primarily with respect to its genus. For Ramus, method is a disposition. For Timpler, method is neither arrangement nor order but an instrument whose formal operation consists in ordering. His definition also specifies a genus (*instrumentum dianoeticum*), an object (*res diversae et variae*), and an end (*commodior cognitio*). Ramus, by contrast, does not explicitly attribute a cognitive function to method.

Understanding method as an instrument brings Timpler closer to Zabarella, but it does not eliminate the fundamental differences between their positions. Zabarella employs the scholastic distinction between objects of first and second intention to argue that logic is not a science, since it deals with objects of second intention, which he interprets, in the spirit of nominalism, as mere inventions (*figmenta*) of the human mind. Because logic does not deal with real beings, it cannot, according to Aristotle's conception of science, itself be a science. Zabarella therefore concludes that logic is merely an instrument of knowledge rather than a science. Timpler, by contrast, effectively rejects the Aristotelian conception of science by radically revising the traditional criterion of reality, understanding objects of first order (*protonoematica*) as those that deal directly with reality and objects of second order (*deuteronοematica*) as “notional” [ibid.: 91].<sup>6</sup> Although logic deals with objects of second intention, Timpler nevertheless elevates it to the status of a liberal art alongside metaphysics and the other sciences by characterizing it as the “art of reason”.

Moreover, in attempting to demonstrate that the doctrine of method belongs to logic rather than metaphysics, Zabarella characterizes method in the broad sense as *habitus*:

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<sup>6</sup> Timpler means by “real” everything that does not depend on the actions of the intellect. He also expands the traditional concept of “thing”. He reproaches Keckermann for excluding the image of a thing from the class of things: although it is not the very thing whose image it is, nevertheless, considered in itself, it is still a thing [ibid.: 92].

Thus, if the term is taken in its broadest sense, method seems to be nothing other than a logical habit – or, more precisely, an instrumental intellectual habit – that serves us in acquiring knowledge of things. For not every path or every transition is properly called a method, but only that procedure by which the mind investigates and attains knowledge of things [Zabarella 1597: 135].

For Timpler, however, “instrument” is not merely a technical term describing the functional role of logic or an intellectual habit. He emphasizes the artificial character of instruments. Instruments are what logic constructs and subsequently employs to achieve its goal – *bene disserendi et sciendi* (to reason well and to know well). Logic is an instrumental discipline not merely because of its function. Rather, it equips the intellect with artificial means that refine its natural operations and thereby contribute not only to the cognition of truth but also to the perfection of the intellect itself.

## 2.2. Method as an Instrument of Logic

The doctrine of the instruments of logic becomes one of the most distinctive and important parts of Timpler's logical system. He divides logical instruments into noetic instruments, which are employed in the discussion of a subject without discursive reasoning, and dianoetic instruments, which operate through discourse. He also introduces each logical instrument in three stages: first its definition (*quid sit*), then its general attributes (*communes affectiones*), and only afterward its species. This procedure, together with the requirement to distinguish general attributes from species, becomes a characteristic feature of Timpler's methodology.

Timpler begins with a definition in which, in accordance with Aristotle's requirements, he distinguishes the proximate genus from the specific difference. This, however, is perhaps all that the two approaches have in common. Timpler deliberately distances himself from Zabarella, who treats “a habit of the intellect” or “an acquired intellectual capacity” as the generic characteristic of method. For Timpler, by contrast, logic is primarily an artificial instrument through which intellectual habit is acquired. This represents a fundamentally new understanding of the nature of method, since *habitus* is a quality of the soul, whereas an *instrumentum* is an objective means employed by the intellect.

Timpler's objections concerning the specific difference are equally fundamental. It is essential for him to distinguish method from syllogism already at the level of definition. Although he classifies both method and syllogism within the same genus, namely *instrumentum dianoeticum*, they nevertheless belong to different species. According to Timpler, they differ with respect to form, object, and end. This exemplifies his systematic Aristotelian analysis of conceptual definitions. In terms of form, method orders, whereas syllogism draws a conclusion. The object of method – or, more precisely, of ordering – is *res diversae et variae*, that is, a multiplicity of different things. Moreover, method encompasses the whole domain of knowledge, whereas syllogism concerns only a particular inference. This considerably broadens the scope of method and correspondingly enhances its role in cognition. The end of method is *commodior rerum cognitio*, that is, a more convenient, easier, or more effective knowledge of things. Once again, the emphasis falls not on demonstration but on the organization of the cognitive process. In this respect, Timpler's conception of method differs fundamentally from Zabarella's.

In Timpler's view, Zabarella's definition also fails to explain adequately how method differs from demonstration, since both ultimately lead to scientific knowledge. Timpler's own account is more precise: syllogism produces individual acts of inference, whereas

method creates an ordered, architectonic system within which individual conclusions acquire systematic significance. For Timpler, syllogism governs propositions, whereas method governs the arts or sciences. This is why he consistently defines method through the concepts of order, arrangement, and collocation. His use of these concepts, however, does not align him with Ramus, since for Timpler ordering is always undertaken for the sake of *commodior rerum cognition* – more effective knowledge of things. Moreover, like Zabarella, he rejects Ramus' thesis that there is only one method. For Timpler, method cannot consist merely in a transition from what is prior to what is subsequent, since such a transition must itself be justified. Otherwise, it will lead neither to easier and more effective knowledge of things nor to the end of the corresponding art, nor, above all, to the highest end of all the arts: “the perfection of man with respect to all the arts, and the salvation of souls with respect to the true faith” [Timpler 1612: 132].<sup>7</sup>

Even the order of the arts and of the subjects within each art must be justified. Thus, the general theory of the arts (*technologia*) precedes the exposition of the individual arts; metaphysics precedes logic; and logic precedes all the remaining arts. This dependence is not merely pragmatic. It consists not only in the fact that the later arts make use of the knowledge provided by the earlier ones but also in the fact that knowledge of the earlier arts is necessary for understanding the later ones. The same principle applies to the organization of subject matter. At the beginning of both his metaphysics and his logic, Timpler introduces the doctrine of causes, especially final causes, emphasizing the specifically methodological character of ends in logic, since all subsequent topics presuppose knowledge of the kinds of causes and their functions. In Timpler's logical system, ends determine the entire architecture of the system of the arts. Without ends, no production is possible, for, as Timpler repeatedly emphasizes, human beings act, and the arts are created, for the sake of achieving definite ends. Final causes also function as *loci argumentorum*, and without them the structural and functional relations among the parts of the system cannot be understood.

Thus, according to Timpler, method not only organizes but also justifies order. At the same time, it does not generate new knowledge and therefore differs fundamentally from syllogism. Timpler not only develops method into a system of normative principles but also extends the scope of these methodological requirements beyond the boundaries of the individual arts. He explains the plurality of methods by the fact that different arts have different subjects and different ends, while individual investigators may likewise pursue different aims. Having established the general concept of method, Timpler therefore proceeds to classify its various kinds, thereby clarifying the concept of method itself and avoiding unnecessary disputes concerning it.

### 3. The Method of Discovery and the Method of Doctrine

Timpler does not limit himself to the method of perfect doctrine, as do Ramus, Goclenius, and Keckermann. Like Zabarella, and in keeping with the Aristotelian tradition, he insists on distinguishing between the method of discovery and the method of doctrine:

For the method of invention demands that progress be made from those things which are prior and better known according to sense, or at least to the confused knowledge of the intellect: but the method of perfect doctrine does the opposite. [Timpler 1612: 724]

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<sup>7</sup> Timpler considers the glory of God to be the absolutely highest goal, and he calls the goal of man perfection ultimate in a certain respect, since “it is ultimate only from a particular point of view” [ibid.].

Here again, however, his position differs from the traditional one. In the older dialectical tradition, especially from Melanchthon through Goclenius, the distinction between *inventio* and *iudicium* corresponds to two operations of reason. In this tradition, *inventio* is the discovery of concepts, arguments, middle terms, causes, and topics, whereas *iudicium* is the examination and ordering of what has been discovered: propositions, syllogisms, demonstrations, and methods. Thus, *inventio* and *iudicium* are understood as two functions of logic, and the distinction concerns the activity of the intellect. Although Timpler discusses issues related to these forms of inquiry in his doctrine of the syllogism, he does not incorporate them into his definition of method. Instead of opposing invention to judgment, discovery to demonstration, or analysis to synthesis, he contrasts *methodus inventionis* with *methodus doctrinae perfecta*. His distinction therefore concerns the direction of methodological movement.

At first glance, Timpler's account of the method of invention appears to follow the Aristotelian tradition closely:

But if “prior” and “better known” are understood not in one and the same sense, but in different senses, then it is true that in every method a progression is made from what is prior and better known to what is posterior and less known. For the method of discovery requires that one proceed from those things which are prior and better known according to sense, or at least according to the confused cognition of the intellect (*aut saltem confusam intellectus cognitionem*); whereas the perfect method of doctrine establishes the opposite [*ibid.*].

This passage is closely connected with another important distinction. Timpler contrasts the method of invention not simply with the method of doctrine but specifically with the perfect method of doctrine. Consequently, the opposition between invention and perfect doctrine cannot be reduced to the opposition between sense and intellect. Both methods involve the intellect. They differ only in the degree and order of cognition. The method of invention therefore proceeds from what is cognitively closer to us toward what is scientifically prior. Timpler understands invention as the method by which principles are discovered from their consequences. The emphasis is thus placed not on the search for arguments but on the ascent from confused knowledge to a clear grasp of first principles.

Timpler also departs from both the Aristotelian and the Ramist traditions in that his doctrine of method is not intended to describe or reproduce the ontological structure of reality but rather to prescribe how inquiry ought to proceed. His method of discovery is anthropocentric in the sense that it prescribes a sequence of cognitive operations from the standpoint of the knowing subject, namely an empirical subject endowed with both sense and intellect. The process of cognition itself is understood as a progressive movement from the lower (sensory, indeterminate, particular) to the higher (intelligible, universal) and is therefore epistemological rather than metaphysical in character. Invention thus becomes a method for overcoming the limitations of our initial state of knowledge. It is no longer merely a matter of “following nature” but of a rule-governed ascent from the way things first appear to us to the way they are understood scientifically.

This opposition between the two methods strongly recalls Zabarella's distinction between *resolutio* (analysis) and *compositio* (synthesis), which exerted considerable influence on early modern philosophy, particularly on Francis Bacon directly and on René Descartes indirectly through Galileo. Zabarella also exercised a profound influence on German Protestant philosophy, and his popularity in Germany owed much to Goclenius, Keckermann, and Timpler.

The first point that emerges from comparing their conceptions is that Timpler does not identify the method of discovery with analysis, nor does he oppose it to synthesis; rather, he contrasts it with the perfect method of doctrine. From the standpoint of formal logic, this appears to involve a logical error – a leap in division. Timpler, however, cannot be accused of overlooking this rule, since at the beginning of his chapter on method he contrasts the method of discovery with the method of doctrine, which he subsequently divides into perfect and imperfect:

The method of teaching is an order of things that serves better and easier teaching and knowledge (*ordo rerum, meliori ac faciliori earum doctrina ac cognitioni inserviens*). Another name for it is the didactic method. And it is either perfect or imperfect [ibid.: 717].

The question therefore arises as to why Timpler opposes the method of invention specifically to the perfect method of doctrine. The answer lies in his conception of metaphysics and logic as arts and in his distinction between internal art, understood as *habitus*, and external art, understood as a normative system. He requires all of these distinctions in order to explain how the principal goal of philosophy and of all the arts – the perfection of the human being – is possible. Logic, as a normative system designed to correct the deficiencies of natural reason, requires a distinction between the actual order in which knowledge is acquired and the ideal order in which it ought to be demonstrated. The former is conditioned by our cognitive limitations and is therefore liable to error. Moreover, according to Timpler, the human intellect is inherently prone to error and therefore requires a perfect method by which it can correct itself. Such a method is necessary not only for the discovery of truth but also for its demonstration, since natural reason is liable to err in both the search for truth and its proof.

For Timpler, the method of invention is the natural path leading to the principles of the arts. Knowledge of these principles is no less important than knowledge of the laws of nature, since it is indispensable for the development of a flawless method for constructing the arts, which can correct and perfect human nature. From this perspective, the method of discovery and the perfect method of doctrine perform equally important cognitive functions in the advancement of scientific knowledge. Timpler thus overcomes the opposition between the Aristotelian and the Ramist traditions by recognizing, on the one hand, the distinct functions of these methods and, on the other, emphasizing their unity and their common significance for scientific progress and human perfection. What we find here is not a compromise or an eclectic combination but an attempt to transcend the opposition through a genuine synthesis grounded in a fundamentally new conception of the sciences and the arts, as well as in a fundamentally new epistemological framework. This new approach to solving methodological problems rests on Timpler's original understanding of the relation between nature and art and on his doctrine of the perfect method.

#### 4. Method and Art: Methodus Artificialis

Timpler's most original idea, which runs throughout all his works and which he sought to capture in his definition of the perfect method, is that only an artificial method can be perfect:

*Perfecta methodus est, quae ex artis norma accurate instituitur. Unde etiam dicitur methodus artis seu methodus artificialis.* (A perfect method is that which is accurately constructed according to the norm of art. Hence, it also bears the name “the method of art” or “the artificial method”) [Timpler 1612: 717].

If method essentially consists in the correct ordering and connection of things, then art not only discovers truths but also constructs an ordered system of truths. This order is no longer given by nature but is the achievement of methodical art. Hence Timpler's concept of the *methodus artificialis*. The artificial element lies precisely in the construction of an ordered system. The particular sciences provide only the material; method provides the form for it.

For Timpler, method is not merely a component of art, nor is art simply a product of method. Rather, method provides the formal structure (*forma*) of art itself. This is why Timpler identifies *bona ordinatio seu collocatio secundum prius et posterius* (proper ordering or arrangement according to priority and posteriority) as the specific difference of method. The essence of method lies neither in discovery nor in demonstration nor even in teaching but in its primary role as the instrument by which knowledge is organized into art. Whereas for Zabarella method remains subordinate to scientific cognition, for Timpler it becomes a constitutive element of science understood as art, since it provides the formal order without which no art properly exists. This explains why Timpler locates the distinguishing feature of method in *ordinatio* rather than in *cognitio*. One of his central innovations is therefore the shift of emphasis from the production of scientific knowledge to the systematic construction of the sciences themselves.

The definition of the perfect method as one established in precise conformity with the normative rules of art, together with its characterization as an artificial method (*methodus artis seu methodus artificialis*), radically distinguishes Timpler's conception from those of his predecessors. The scholastics, the Ramists, and even his close associate Keckermann regarded the perfect method as one that follows the natural order of things. Timpler, by contrast, defines the perfection of method through its conformity to the laws of art formulated as normative prescriptions.

## 5. The Laws of the Perfect Method

Since logic and metaphysics are intended to correct human nature, the question naturally arises as to the source of the normativity of the prescriptions of art. For the entire Aristotelian tradition, including Zabarella, as well as for Ramus, Goclenius, and Keckermann, who maintained that the arts imitate nature, the answer was straightforward: the arts must reproduce the natural order of things. For Timpler, however, this answer was no longer acceptable, since nature could not simultaneously be the object of imitation and of correction. His definition of the perfect method makes it clear that the prescriptions of the arts derive their binding force from the laws of the perfect method (*leges methodi perfectae*), which not only regulate inquiry but also define the ideal of methodological perfection. Accordingly, after defining the perfect method, Timpler proceeds to formulate its laws.

The laws of the perfect method are not rules governing the application of method but criteria that determine what counts as a perfect method. Thus, the adjective *perfecta* does not merely mean "complete"; it signifies that a method is governed by universal methodological laws. In effect, Timpler constructs something like an axiomatics of method. This marks a significant departure from both Zabarella and Ramus. Although Ramist dialectic likewise contains universal methodological rules, they differ from Timpler's not only in content but, more importantly, in function, since they do not possess the normative status assigned to the laws of the perfect method. Timpler also refers to them as the laws of the perfect didactic method (*leges methodi didascalicae perfectae*), some of which concern matter and others concern form [Timpler 1612: 717].

Another important innovation in Timpler's doctrine is the distinction between the material and the formal laws of method. He divides them into two groups. The first comprises the laws of homogeneity and panharmony, whereas the second comprises the laws of correct arrangement, appropriate brevity, and suitable connection. The first two concern the material constitution (*materia*) of doctrine under method. They regulate the admissibility of parts and their mutual compatibility. They are called material because they determine what may be included within the system as an object of cognition. The remaining three are formal because they regulate the organization of that material. They determine sequence, proportion, and coherence and thereby prescribe how the system itself should be constructed.

The law of homogeneity (*lex homogeneiae*) requires that "the individual parts of a doctrine, falling under a methodical organization, be homogeneous, that is, connected with one another by some knowledge of nature, by virtue of the identity of the object and the purpose to which they pertain" (*naturae aliqua cognitione inter se coniuncta, ob subiecti & finis, ad quae respiciunt, identitatem*) [ibid.]. This law is not ontological in the traditional Aristotelian sense. It is not a metaphysical principle concerning being but a logical principle governing the organization of a system of knowledge. Timpler does not speak of the identity of the nature of things. Rather, he requires that the parts be united through a body of knowledge characterized by the identity of its object and its end. The principle is therefore architectonic rather than metaphysical. Its fundamental normative meaning is expressed in the requirement that heterogeneous elements not be combined within the same doctrinal system. The parts belong together because they concern the same object of knowledge and serve the same end.

The formulation of the law of panharmony likewise excludes ontological assumptions: "The law of panharmony requires that the individual parts of a doctrine agree with each other and support each other: and at the same time, one must not contradict the other" [ibid.]. Timpler distinguishes contradiction (*contradictio*) from incompatibility (*repugnancia*). Contradiction exists when two things are incompatible in every respect, whereas incompatibility concerns only certain respects. Goclenius had already emphasized the importance of this distinction: contradictions of the first kind are irresolvable, whereas those of the second kind admit of resolution [Goclenius 1609: Praefatio, a2; see Secundant 2026: 340]. The principle of contradiction therefore indicates what is impossible, whereas compatibility determines what is possible within a given class of objects and concerns the substantive relations among concepts, precepts, and the other parts of a system. Since resolving incompatibilities requires the adoption of a new point of view, the requirement of compatibility contributes not only to the formation of an architectonic system but also to its further development. If the law of homogeneity determines what may belong to an art, the law of panharmony determines what is possible within it. Like Timpler's metaphysics, his logic presupposes not the existence of things but the determination of their possibility. Together, these two laws define the domain of the possible objects of art.

The laws of the second group establish formal requirements that concern not the objects of cognition themselves but the organization of the system of knowledge.

The law of correct arrangement (*lex collocationis rectae*) requires that those things which contribute to a more distinct and easier understanding of what follows should come first: "And therefore it demands that progress be made from things prior and better known by nature to things posterior and less known" [Timpler 1612.: 718]. This law establishes a principle of order according to which whatever most facilitates the understanding of what follows must take precedence. Within the perfect method of doctrine, knowledge therefore

proceeds from universals to particulars and from the abstract to the concrete, since only such an order makes genuine understanding possible.

The law of appropriate brevity (*lex brevitatis convenientis*) requires that nothing necessary be omitted and nothing superfluous added [ibid.]. It prohibits both mutilation and empty redundancy (*tam mutilationem quam redundantiam inanem*). Its violation renders a method imperfect and a system incomplete and lacking in economy.

The law of suitable connection (*lex connexionis aptae*) requires that “the individual parts of a doctrine be well connected with one another: they are united by the bonds of transition” (*ut singulae doctrinae partes bene inter se cohæreant: per transitionum vincula colligentur*) [ibid.]. Whereas the law of appropriate brevity requires completeness, the law of suitable connection requires justified conceptual continuity among the parts of the system. It prohibits discontinuities and requires coherence in exposition.

Taken together, these laws constitute a system of normative principles. They formulate no metaphysical hypotheses but perform exclusively architectonic functions. The laws of the first group define the domain of possible objects, whereas those of the second establish the fundamental requirements that every perfect method must satisfy and according to which every system of the arts must be constructed. Nothing comparable is found in Ramus<sup>8</sup>, Zabarella, or Keckermann, whose discussions of method remain largely confined to questions of pedagogy. In this respect, Timpler stands considerably closer to the later architectonic tradition.

According to Timpler, these normative laws govern not only an art as a whole but also each of its constituent parts. This follows from his distinction between the universal perfect method, which concerns the entire system of an art, and the particular perfect method, which “concerns either themes, simple or complex, or the arguments by which themes are treated, or both together” [ibid.: 719]. Methodical order must therefore be present at every level of exposition, including the presentation of first principles and the formulation of questions, and must everywhere contribute to clearer understanding and more effective cognition.

## 6. Perfect and Imperfect Method.

If a perfect method is one “precisely established in accordance with the norms of art” (*ex artis norma accurate instituitur*), then an “imperfect method” (*imperfecta methodus*) is, accordingly, one “that deviates to some extent from the norm of a given art and is modified in accordance with the prudence and discretion of the teacher, as well as the understanding of the students” (*Sequitur quæ ab artis norma quodam modo deflectit, ac pro prudentia & arbitrio docentis captui discentium accord modantur*) [Timpler 1612: 719]<sup>9</sup>. For Timpler, an imperfect method is neither the opposite of nor a violation of a perfect method, but an appropriate deviation that is determined by the specific circumstances of the method's use. In particular, it is determined by the level of understanding of the audience or other external circumstances that cannot be ignored if the goal of teaching is to be achieved. It is about the application of the method in specific conditions. The success of its application

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<sup>8</sup> Although the three laws of the arts of Ramus (the law of truth, the law of justice and the law of wisdom), which he derived from Aristotle's Second Analytics, also regulate the construction of sciences, they are still of a purely logical-pedagogical nature and do not perform the same cognitive functions as the laws of Timpler's method.

<sup>9</sup> In that place lies Methodical crypsis, which is the departure of method from the norm of the art with a certain plan and without institution [ibid.].

depends largely on the teacher's practical acumen and prudence. Such teaching may be practically effective, but it may not be perfect. Therefore, Timpler calls this method the method of prudence (*Methodus prudentiae*). An imperfect method thus includes a subjective factor (the students' level of understanding, the teacher's degree of prudence), and therefore it is not objective in the strict sense of the word. However, its deviation from the norms of art is not only not an error; on the contrary, it is justified by the method's purpose – the easier and more successful attainment of truth. Nevertheless, it is not a purely artificial method, since it includes a human or other (external or internal) natural factor. Such a method may be practically effective under certain conditions, but it is not perfect or objective. Timpler closely links the perfection and objectivity of the method with its artificiality. This is entirely consistent with the ultimate goal of art – correcting the deficiencies of natural human reason and improving it by cultivating more refined habits.

Taking into account that an imperfect method facilitates better learning and assimilation (*doctrinam & cognitionem*) of educational material just as much as a perfect method, Timpler considers it necessary to provide a definition of teaching method in general that also takes into account the imperfect method. Now, by teaching method in general, he understands “an order of things that facilitates their better and easier teaching and assimilation” (*ordo rerum meliori & faciliori earum doctrina & cognitioni inferniens*) [ibid.: 727].

As we see, in this definition, the generic characteristic is “the order of things”, not “the dianoetic instrument”. Can Timpler be accused of inconsistency and a return to Ramism? To answer this question, let us consider his critique of other definitions of method, which precedes this definition of Timpler's method in general, focusing on his arguments.

Timpler specifies what a method of teaching is not: it is not a habit, because every habit is a quality, but a method of teaching is not a quality, since it is a kind of order [ibid.]. It is not a kind of production (*productionem*) of anything. It is not dianoia, because every dianoia is a deduction of one thing from another. But “a method of teaching is not a deduction of one thing from another, but rather a disposition or placement of one thing after another, arising from dianoia and connected with it” (*Methodus autem doctrinae non est illatio unius ex alio; sed potius dispositio seu collocatio unius post aliud ex dianoia orta, & cum ea coniuncta*) [ibid.].

The notion that method is a kind of order “arising from dianoia and connected with it” (*ex dianoia orta, & cum ea coniuncta*) sheds some light on why Timpler defines method as a “dianoetic instrument”. An instrument is an artificial tool, created from natural material, but used to process this material with the goal of improving it. Timpler calls method a “dianoetic instrument” not only because dianoia (inferential reasoning) is its object, and not only because method guides and shapes it, but also because the method emerges from it. But how is it possible for method to emerge from dianoia and simultaneously improve it? The improvement of method becomes possible only because it is constructed in accordance with the laws of perfect method. The question remains to be clarified: Where do the laws of perfect method originate from?

## **7. Where do the laws arise according to which a perfect method of teaching is to be shaped?**

The debate over the origin of the laws of method arose in the 16th century between two representatives of the Paduan school: Giacomo Zabarella, who argued that the laws of method must follow from the natural order of things, and Francesco Piccolomini (1520–1604), who argued that they must follow from our better and easier knowledge. Goclenius

and Keckermann also expressed their views on this question. Timpler formulates this question more specifically: “Where do the laws arise according to which a perfect method of teaching is to be shaped?” (*Unde oriantur leges secundum quas methodus perfecta doctrina est conformanda?*) [Timpler 1612: 732]. In the context of this formulation of the question, he reconstructs the arguments of his opponents and criticizes them.

Timpler rejects Zabarella's main argument, that “art must imitate nature: and therefore those things which by nature are prior in the order of things must also be considered first in art” [ibid.], because of its false premise. The premise that “art should not be the measure of things, but, on the contrary, things should be the measure of art” [ibid.] contradicts the historical facts that testify to the progress of the arts. Timpler does not deny the role of knowledge of the laws of nature, but he believes that their knowledge depends on the progress of the arts, and not vice versa. In his opinion, the assertion that the laws of nature should serve as the constitutive principles of art completely contradicts the purpose of art – the perfection of human nature. With his doctrine of art as an active factor in the transformation of nature, Timpler effectively destroys the speculative model of knowledge that arose in antiquity and dominated modern European philosophy long after Timpler.

Piccolomini, on the contrary, believed that the nature of the laws of the perfect method is determined by its purpose. In support of his view, he offers the following arguments according to Timpler's reconstruction. First, the purpose pursued by the perfect method of teaching is our better and easier knowledge. For this is precisely why it exists and is established; therefore, the laws to which it must conform must also be accepted. Second, the order of nature is not one, but two: one is that of generation or origin; the other is that of intention or perfection. And these two orders clearly contradict each other and arise in opposite ways. For what is primary in the order of generation is secondary in the order of intention. And conversely, what is primary in the order of intention is secondary in the order of generation. Consequently, the specific reason and norm for the correct and proper arrangement of the parts of a discipline cannot be deduced from the order of nature. For otherwise, we will always be perplexed and doubtful as to whether we should observe this order of nature rather than another. Third, the order of the existence of things and the order in which they are offered to us for knowledge are not always the same. For something can be primary in the order of nature and origin, but secondary in the order of knowledge and teaching. Therefore, it is not necessary that the principles with which the order of teaching begins always be principles of being; it is sufficient if they are principles of knowledge – that is, those on whose knowledge the knowledge of others depends and through which we understand things better and more easily [ibid.: 733].

Timpler agrees with Piccolomini both that the aim of method is our better and easier knowledge, and that method is established for the sake of achieving this aim, although for him the aim appears as only one of the factors that the method must take into account. However, Timpler rejects the opinion of Piccolomini and all those who believe that “the method of teaching does not depend on any source other than the free will of the teachers; and therefore, if anyone follows the order in teaching that seems to him best and most adapted to the understanding of the students, he must be considered as having fulfilled his duty admirably” [ibid.: 731]. Such an opinion, according to Timpler, first, “instead of method, introduces simply methodlessness & confusion (ἀμεθοδίαν & *confusionem*), since a person has different judgments about the same things, and some of them seem better than others”; second, “it abolishes all the laws by which a perfect method should be formed and judged” and, third, “it makes uncertain and doubtful the judgment of men about things well

or ill ordered” and, fourth, “no one can know when the methods of teaching are good or bad unless he has certain laws or norms (*certas leges tanquam normas*) by which he can examine them, for every error (*peccatum*) is a violation of a law, whether it be a natural, moral, or artificial law” [ibid.: 731].

As can be seen from this criticism, Timpler emphasizes the need for the progress of the sciences of the existence of such laws (including artificial ones) that do not depend on the arbitrary will of man: without them, a critical evaluation of opinions, which is a necessary condition for the objective knowledge of truth, is impossible.

*Keckermann's Compromise.* Keckermann, in his *System of Logic*, touches upon the controversy between Zabarella and Piccolomini. He defines method as “the arrangement of the parts of a doctrine from a certain principle toward a certain end” (*a principio certo ad certum finem*) [Keckermann 1611: 582]. However, dividing method into artificial (*artificialis*) and non-artificial, and calling the latter arbitrary (*inartificialis seu arbitraria*), he defines the artificial method as “that which is established according to the nature of things and the rules of art”. (*Artificialis est quae iuxta rerum naturam et artis normas instituitur*) [ibid.: 584]. Reconstructing Keckermann's viewpoint and argumentation, Timpler characterizes his position in this debate as a “compromise”:

But in order to reconcile (ad conciliandas) these different opinions of philosophers, Keckermann, in Chapter “On Method”, in Rule 2 of the Artificial Method, teaches that the order of doctrine follows first from the natural order of things and secondly corresponds to our knowledge, insofar as it corresponds to the natural order of things. For what is first by nature is also first according to our distinct knowledge. And therefore the process of the artificial Method imitates the natural process and order of things, progressing from the earlier and better known things of nature to the later and less known”. [Timpler 1612: 734]

But this reconciliation of Keckermann's is apparently not accepted by Timpler, but rather reversed (*non esse admittenda, sed potius invertenda*):

...thus the basis and norm [*ratio & norma*] for the good ordering of things according to the perfect method of teaching are established so that they are taken, first of all, from our better (i.e., more distinct) and easier cognition [*ex nostra meliore (h. e. distinctiore) & faciliore cognition*], which is the proper goal of the perfect or artificial method; and secondly from the natural order of things: since it requires this and cannot exist without it. Accordingly, even the laws according to which the method of perfect teaching is to be formed are rightly considered to originate in the first place from our better and easier cognition. [ibid.: 734]

Timpler's position is closest to that of Goclenius, who also addresses the controversy between Zabarella and Piccolomini. In Section XIX, “On Order”, Goclenius presents the dispute as a confrontation between two opposing theses: “Thesis: Order is the very nature of sensible things” and “Antithesis: Every order is a relation (or rational proportion)” [Goclenius 1609: 186]. Goclenius argues that support for both positions can be found in Aristotle and seeks to reconcile them by distinguishing between two different respects, namely the formal and the causal. According to Goclenius, the thesis is “not true properly and formally, but only causally; that is, order exists through, or proceeds from, nature. Nature is the cause of order” [ibid.]. By contrast, he regards the antithesis as “formally – that is, properly – true”:

For order is nothing other than a certain rational arrangement of many things with respect to one another for the sake of some end. Order consists in the relation that one thing has to another [ibid.: 186-187].

In effect, Goclenius insists upon a distinction between cause (*causa*) and relation (*ratio*). He rejects Zabarella's attempt to reconcile the two theses by interpreting *ratio* in the sense of *cause*, for then the proposition that “order proceeds from a cause” would indeed be correct. As Goclenius remarks, however, “I do not approve of this interpretation” [ibid.: 187].

Equally important for understanding Timpler's position is Goclenius's characterization of order as “a certain rational and necessary relation among many things” [ibid.]. For Goclenius, this “rational and necessary relation” (*proportio rationalis et necessaria*) applies equally to natural objects and to the products of thought. It is precisely in this sense that he believes the two opposing positions can be reconciled.

This distinction between *ratio* and *causa* appears to have suggested to Timpler the possibility of distinguishing between the genetic (causal) and the methodological (relational) approaches<sup>10</sup>. The latter is confined to the realm of the intelligible and the knowable and is thereby freed from dependence upon causal or ontological hypotheses. This distinction also enables Timpler to separate the question of the origin of the laws of method from that of the grounds of their validity. The validity of the laws of method rests upon the “rational and necessary relations of things”, where “things” (*res*) is understood in its broadest possible sense – that is, as something (aliquid). With respect to the origin of these laws, however, Timpler goes a decisive step further by replacing nature with *dianoia*.

This interpretation suggests that Timpler's conception of method – or, what amounts to the same thing, his conception of a methodical system – emerged from the conciliatory methodological movement as an attempt to develop a universal method, or instrument, capable of resolving philosophical disagreements and contradictions in a principled manner. Timpler clearly recognized the revolutionary character of this new mode of philosophizing, whose broader social and philosophical significance he sought to articulate in his program of philosophical reform.

## 8. Method as an Instrument for the Scientific Community

Timpler's dedicatory letter (*Epistula dedicatoria*), placed at the beginning of his *System of Logic*, provides strong evidence that he conceived his work as part of a broader program for the reform of philosophy, in which logic is assigned a decisive role. The question naturally arises whether this program represents an attempt to improve Ramist or Peripatetic logic, or to reconcile the two traditions. Timpler himself gives a clear answer. In compiling his *System of Logic*, he “did not bind himself unconditionally to either school of logic, whether Peripatetic or Ramist”, but was guided instead by the ideal of “that freedom of judgment which is especially necessary for a true philosopher”, namely:

...applying the free judgment of right reason, I selected and extracted from the logical writings of others those doctrines which I judged to contribute most to the construc-

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<sup>10</sup> This distinction between the genetic and the relational approaches is already evident in Timpler's *Metaphysics*, which he likewise conceives as a “methodical system”. Rather than presupposing the existence of things, it seeks to establish their possibility. Even the concept of the *real* is defined relationally, namely, as that which does not depend upon the operations of the intellect. Moreover, although Timpler insists on distinguishing the concept of cause in logic from that in metaphysics, the notion of cause continues to perform primarily methodical rather than ontological functions even within metaphysics. It serves to articulate the intelligible order of things rather than to introduce causal-ontological hypotheses into the system. See [Secundant 2026].

tion of a complete body of logical doctrine, suitably adapted to practical use. [Timpler 1612: b (10)]

Timpler is neither a Ramist nor a Peripatetic, nor even simply a Neo-Scholastic. Like the eclectics, he embraces *iudicandi libertas* (freedom of judgment), which in his age signified above all intellectual independence from the authorities and dogmas of established schools. Yet, as Timpler himself emphasizes, this freedom is not arbitrary but constrained by “the free judgment of right reason”. Although he modestly declares that he seeks only to shed “some light” (*aliquid lucis*) on the issues under discussion rather than to replace either Ramus or Aristotle, his project is neither merely logicalist nor eclectic. His aim is to construct “a complete body of logical doctrine, suitably adapted to practical use”.

The eclectic movement that emerged during the Renaissance and later assumed the form of a new scientific outlook in the writings of Johann Christoph Sturm was oriented toward an open conception of system. Such an orientation is already implicit in Timpler's work. Unlike the later eclectics, however, Timpler seeks to construct not an abstract open system of philosophy but a concrete and complete system of philosophical sciences.

Nor can Timpler be regarded simply as a late Renaissance thinker. He does not idealize antiquity but maintains that his contemporaries possess “more solid doctrine and knowledge” (*plus solidae doctrinae et scientiae*) than the ancients [Timpler 1612: E.d. a3 (2)]. His attention is directed toward scientific progress, which he regards as the indispensable foundation of social progress. In the dedicatory letter he therefore argues that logic is not merely an auxiliary discipline but one of the principal driving forces of scientific advancement.

According to Timpler, the chief obstacle to such progress is the fragmentation of philosophy and logic into competing schools. He attributes logic's dependence upon particular philosophical traditions to its predominantly theoretical orientation. Consequently, he sets out to write not simply another textbook but one distinguished by its independence from sectarian prejudice and by its practical usefulness. Both objectives, he argues, can be achieved only through a systematic presentation governed by the laws of method. His ultimate ambition is to demonstrate that a unified and coherent doctrine of method, satisfying the strictest demands of reason, provides the most effective means of overcoming philosophical sectarianism.

Timpler accordingly regards logic as the discipline most indispensable for the study of philosophy and of every other science:

“For logic alone teaches the method of reasoning and knowing rightly; logic alone prescribes the rules and norms for defining, dividing, arguing, and ordering correctly; logic alone explains the art of discovering arguments properly and arranging what has been discovered in the proper way; logic alone teaches how every subject proposed for investigation ought to be treated, analyzed, explained, and demonstrated. Without logic no one can rightly employ reason in apprehending, judging, and expressing the truth of things; no one can distinguish what is ambiguous, explain what is obscure, order what is confused, resolve what is doubtful, confirm what is true, refute what is false, or dissolve sophisms. Without it no one can attain solid knowledge of the truth, nor acquire the intellectual virtues without error and difficulty” [ibid.: b (6-7)].

Yet Timpler does not claim infallibility. In the preface to his *System of Logic*, he openly acknowledges that he deliberately departed from certain established requirements, guided by “the law of necessity and prudence, to which every teacher ought to be most strictly subject” (*necessitatis et prudentiae lege, cui docens maxime strictus esse debet*) [Timpler 1612: Praefatio, b1-b2]. He explicitly invites his readers to propose a more precise and

more convenient method and declares himself willing to acknowledge and correct his own mistakes [ibid.: b2]. This reflects a fundamentally new conception of knowledge as a dynamic enterprise developing through open scholarly dialogue while remaining subject to the complementary principles of necessity and prudence.

Such a conception would later become characteristic of the mathematical and natural sciences of the early modern period. When Timpler maintains that the laws of method arise from *dianoia*, he no longer understands *dianoia* in its traditional Aristotelian sense. Rather, these laws emerge through rational scientific discourse conducted by scholars whose judgments are governed by the principles of necessity and prudence. This is indeed a form of experience, but it is intellectual rather than merely empirical, governed by the laws of reason.

Timpler regards the laws of method, the laws of order in general, and the principles of logic as necessary because they are laws governing relations, whose opposites are inconceivable from the standpoint of reason. Yet these laws are not products of reason itself. They possess objective validity independently of the human intellect. *Lumen naturale* merely recognizes the impossibility or absurdity of their negation; it does not create them. Indeed, as Timpler argues in his *Metaphysics*, even God cannot violate the law of contradiction or act irrationally.

For this reason, Timpler's rejection of the view that the laws of method merely imitate the laws of nature marks a decisive turning point. In this respect, he deserves to be regarded as one of the principal forerunners of German rationalism. To interpret classical German philosophy exclusively through the opposition between British empiricism and French rationalism, while neglecting the contribution of German academic philosophy, is to distort both its historical development and its philosophical significance.

Timpler describes logic not merely as an *organon* but as the *organon of all organs* – the discipline that enables every other discipline to develop consciously and methodically rather than merely successfully. Only logic supplies the reflexive norms that make scientific inquiry self-conscious in its procedures. It provides the methodological foundation for communication both within individual disciplines and across disciplinary boundaries. As the instrument of interdisciplinary scholarly dialogue, logic becomes the primary means by which the *Respublica Literaria* (the Scientific Community) is formed and sustained.

Timpler's conception of the *Respublica Literaria* extends beyond scholars actively engaged in research to include rulers and patrons who support learning and education, for they too contribute to what Timpler describes as the effort “to advance and enlarge the entire Republic of Letters” (*universam Respublicam Literariam*) [ibid.: E.d. (11)].

For Timpler, the Republic of Letters is not merely an intellectual ideal but an institutional reality sustained by civic government, schools, patronage, and scholarly cooperation. This institutional conception of knowledge casts new light upon his philosophical system as a whole. Within the *Respublica Literaria*, technology classifies the arts, logic organizes inquiry, and metaphysics orders the objects of knowledge. Schools provide the institutional setting in which the arts (*artes*) are taught. Logic furnishes their common methodological foundation. The Republic of Letters unites scholars across disciplinary boundaries, while metaphysics establishes the universal intelligible horizon toward which all disciplines are directed.

Accordingly, Timpler compares schools to “workshops” (*officinae liberales*), where languages, the liberal arts, and moral virtues are cultivated, and where the young are educated in wisdom, eloquence, and virtue [ibid.: E.d. (12)]. In schools students acquire not

only knowledge but also the moral qualities without which neither the state nor civilized life itself can endure.

## 9. Conclusions

To summarize, Timpler's doctrine of method is central to understanding his conception of the methodical system, which may justifiably be regarded as one of the most original and ambitious socio-intellectual projects of the early modern period. Its influence on German academic culture was subtle yet profound, extending over nearly two centuries. Emerging within the context of the conciliatory movement, Timpler's systemic-methodological approach laid the foundations for a fundamentally new style of philosophizing. Its influence can be discerned not only in the works of Leibniz and Christian Wolff but also in the systematic projects of classical German philosophy, from Karl Leonhard Reinhold to Hegel. In this respect, systematic philosophizing became one of the defining characteristics of the German philosophical tradition.

Equally significant is the normative dimension of Timpler's program for the reform of philosophy. By reorienting metaphysics and logic toward the development of practical and effective instruments for scientific inquiry, and by emphasizing the decisive role of science and education in social progress, Timpler formulated a philosophical project whose significance extended far beyond the university curriculum. His program was based on a fundamentally new view of scientific, cultural, and social progress that became dominant among natural scientists in the 17th and 18th centuries. In this broader perspective, his conception of the *Respublica Literaria* may be seen as anticipating the ideal of the German nation as a nation of scholars, later articulated by Karl Leonhard Reinhold.

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**Sergii Secundant**

**Method as a System: Clemens Timpler and His Program for the Reform of Philosophy**

This article reconstructs Timpler's concept of the method as the organizing principle of his philosophical project. In contrast to interpretations that view him primarily as a Ramist, Aristotelian, or eclectic, it is argued that his doctrine of method represents an original synthesis based on objective laws of order and rational relations rather than on the natural order of things. The article shows how Timpler's concept of method unites logic, metaphysics, and other sciences in a single program for the reform of philosophy based on a fundamentally new view of science, scientific, and social progress, and suggests that it represents an important stage in the emergence of a methodical tradition in German philosophy.

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**Sergii Secundant**

**Метод як система. Клеменс Тимплер і його програма реформи філософії**

Концепція методу реконструюється в статті як організуючий принцип Тимплерового філософського проєкту. На відміну від наявних тлумачень Тимплера переважно як раміста, аристотеліанця чи еkleктика, автор стверджує, що його доктрина методу постає як оригінальний синтез, заснований на об'єктивних законах порядку й на раціональних відношеннях, а не на природному порядку речей. У статті показано, як Тимплерова концепція методу об'єднує логіку, метафізику й інші науки в єдиній програмі реформи філософії, базованій на принципово новому погляді на науку, науковий і соціальний прогрес. Автор припускає, що ця концепція постає як важливий етап у виникненні методичної традиції в німецькій філософії.

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