The seminar seeks to encompass two major moments in the field of aesthetics: during the first five weeks we examine the founding of science of aesthetics in Alexander Baumgarten’s doctoral dissertation (1735) and its putative completion in Hegel’s posthumously published lectures (1835); in the following five weeks, we turn to the attempts on the part of Walter Benjamin and Martin Heidegger around 1935 to dispose with the founding conception of aesthetics and correspondingly approach the work of art in very different—but also perhaps complementary or entangled—ways. The four primary texts for the seminar are Baumgarten’s “Mediationes philosophicae de nonnullius ad poema pertinentibus” (Philosophical meditations on something more than nothing pertaining to the poem), the introduction to Hegel’s “Vorlesungen über Ästhetik” (Lectures on aesthetics), Heidegger’s “Ursprung des Kunstwerks” (Origin of the artwork), and Benjamin’s “Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter des technischen Reproduzierbarkeit” (The artwork in the age of its technical reproducibility). Other ancillary and secondary works will be also be considered, depending on student interest and the direction of the conversation. We will work closely with the Latin and German texts; but the seminar will be conducted in English, and no knowledge of either German or Latin is required.