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CHAPTER I

The case for the Enlightenment

By the end of the twentieth century, the Enlightenment was beleaguered. In the eyes of many philosophers as well as of a wider, educated public this eighteenth-century movement of ideas was still regarded as having laid the intellectual foundations of the modern world. By its confidence in the power of human reason, its commitment to individual freedom of expression against clerical or royal tyranny, and its optimistic assumption that these were the values that would improve the human condition everywhere, it was believed to have inspired and justified the nineteenth- and twentieth-century achievements of industrialisation, liberalism, and democracy. But this lay-philosophical view of the Enlightenment easily acquired another, darker face. For the Enlightenment was also charged with fostering ideals, of rationalism, universalism, and human perfectibility, to which could be traced the modern world's greatest evils. The charge was pressed particularly by those who held the Enlightenment responsible for the violence of the French Revolution, which followed so quickly upon it. In this perspective it was argued that Nazi genocide, Western imperialism, and Soviet communism all had their intellectual origins in the Enlightenment. Not surprisingly, it became increasingly fashionable to conclude that if this was where the Enlightenment had led the modern world, it was time to repudiate it, and to create a postmodern world on new intellectual foundations. The Enlightenment stood condemned as a misguided 'project' to establish a single, universal, rational standard of morality.¹ Against it, postmodernists argued that different cultures should be left to determine their own ends, and refused to discriminate morally or politically between them. At best the Enlightenment had been one of those cultures, peculiar to

¹ The concept of an 'Enlightenment project' appears to have been coined by Alasdair MacIntyre, in *After Virtue: a Study in Moral Theory* (London, 1981), esp. chs. 4–6. MacIntyre's definition of the 'project' was strictly philosophical, as 'the project of an independent rational justification of morality' (p. 38); subsequent usages have often been much more expansive.

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eighteenth-century Europe; it was a terrible mistake ever to have accepted its claims to universal significance.

The crisis of the Enlightenment was compounded by the shifting interests of scholars themselves. As criticism of the 'Enlightenment project' gathered force, it seemed that scholars were less and less able to say what the Enlightenment had been. Thirty years earlier, they too had understood it in straightforward terms. The Enlightenment was identified principally with a group of French philosophers, the *philosophes*, who, along with a few curious foreign visitors, gathered in Paris in the middle decades of the eighteenth century to talk and to write about ways of improving the world. While the subjects which the *philosophes* discussed were many and varied, they shared and expounded a common set of intellectual values, prominent among which were reason, humanity, liberty, and tolerance. The Enlightenment, in other words, had existed in a certain time and place, was identified with a particular group of men, and was characterised by specific ideas. Since the 1960s, however, virtually all of these assumptions have been questioned. The Enlightenment has been extended far beyond France, and has been associated with a wider range of intellectual interests than those which formed the staple of the Paris *salons*. Still more scholarly energy has been devoted to writing its social history, enlarging our knowledge of its institutional and cultural contexts, doing justice to the contribution of women, and giving credit to the part played by its publishers and booksellers.

Not surprisingly, the result of all this activity was to open an ever-widening gulf between the public idea of the Enlightenment and that of the scholars. The clichés of the former had come to seem seriously misleading, and sometimes downright false. But instead of simply correcting popular error, the scholars themselves suffered a crisis of confidence. Faced with the mounting complication of their accounts of the Enlightenment, and the disagreements which ensued, many were inclined to conclude that a single, cohesive account of the Enlightenment could no longer be written. The loss of confidence was especially marked in English-language scholarship. The last major synthesis in English was Peter Gay's *The Enlightenment: an Interpretation*, published in two volumes in 1966 and 1969.² Even though it sought to combine a social with an intellectual history of the Enlightenment, Gay's work was immediately found wanting by Robert Darnton.³

² Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: an Interpretation*, 2 vols. 1: *The Rise of Modern Paganism*; 11: *The Science of Freedom* (New York, 1966–9).

³ Robert Darnton, 'In search of the Enlightenment: recent attempts to create a social history of ideas', *Journal of Modern History*, 43 (1971), 113–32.

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Very soon Gay's insistence on the unities of the Enlightenment had come to seem either irrelevant or untenable in the face of a new emphasis on its diversity. The demands of textbook publishing did eventually ensure that short, single-volume studies of the Enlightenment reappeared in the 1990s. But if their authors still wrote of 'the' Enlightenment, they now did so in a loose and inclusive way, characterising it as a series of debates and concerns, rather than as a unified intellectual movement.⁴ More ambitious but even more accurately reflective of the fragmented state of Enlightenment studies has been the series of dictionaries and encyclopaedias devoted to the subject. These now exist in English, German, French, and Italian, the largest as well as the most recent being the four-volume *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment* (2003).⁵ With scholars from all over the world contributing their specialist expertise to entries in these volumes, it seems that pluralism has triumphed. The monolithic edifice which the lay-philosophic view holds responsible for modernity has crumbled; but in its place scholars have refashioned Enlightenment as a postmodern kaleidoscope of diversity and difference. *The Enlightenment is dead; but many Enlightenments may yet flourish.*

By far the most powerful scholarly exponent of this position has been John Pocock. Pocock first made the case for a distinct 'conservative Enlightenment' in the early 1980s, referring particularly to eighteenth-century England, but extending its reach to include the moderate Protestant

⁴ Dorinda Outram's *The Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1995) was apparently the first textbook on the subject written in English for almost thirty years, since Norman Hampson's *The Enlightenment* (Harmondsworth, 1968). (It was narrowly preceded by Ulrich Im Hof, *The Enlightenment* (Oxford, 1994), but this was translated from German.) Outram has been followed by Thomas Munck, *The Enlightenment: a Comparative Social History 1721–1794* (London, 2000), where the Enlightenment is defined as 'an attitude of mind, rather than a coherent system of beliefs' (p. 7). But as the subtitle indicates, Munck is not attempting to give an intellectual history of the Enlightenment; and he resists its fragmentation more than most. Two shorter, pamphlet-length introductions are Roy Porter, *The Enlightenment* (London, 1990; second edn 2001), and Margaret C. Jacob, *The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston and New York, 2001). Porter was an early and always enthusiastic proponent of diversity. A thoughtful contrast to these, which continues to take the ideas of the Enlightenment seriously while recognising that a comprehensive textbook is now impossible to write, is Edoardo Tortarolo, *L'Illuminismo. Ragioni e dubbi della modernità* (Rome, 1999).

⁵ Beginning with J. W. Yolton and others (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment* (Oxford, 1991), and continuing through W. Schneiders (ed.), *Lexikon der Aufklärung* (Munich, 1995), to Vincenzo Ferrone and Daniel Roche (eds.), *L'Illuminismo. Dizionario storico* (Rome and Bari, 1997), French translation: *Le Monde des Lumières* (Paris, 1999), and M. Delon (ed.), *Dictionnaire européen des lumières* (Paris, 1997), before culminating (for the moment), in A. C. Kors (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, 4 vols. (New York and Oxford, 2003). For comment on the significance of the phenomenon: Tortarolo, *L'Illuminismo*, p. 12, and Fania Oz-Salzberger, 'New approaches towards a history of the Enlightenment: can disparate perspectives make a general picture?', *Tel Avivur Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte*, 29 (2000), pp. 171–6.

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philosophers of contemporary Scotland and north Germany.⁶ A preoccupation with the difference of England continues to drive Pocock's enquiries;⁷ but his most recent and eloquent statement of his case, in *The Enlightenment of Edward Gibbon*, ranges much further. Here not only is English Enlightenment set off against that of the French *philosophes*; other major contexts for the intellectual formation of Gibbon are identified in a Socinian Enlightenment, itself with English and Swiss variants, and in the 'Utrecht Enlightenment', whose adherents took their cue from the peace settlement of 1713 to defend a conception of Europe as a 'system of states' regulated by commercial interest rather than confessional allegiance. Pocock acknowledges that there was 'a process of Enlightenment' (in the singular) at work across the multiple Enlightenments with which he is concerned; but he insists that a process must be grounded in specific historical contexts, national or other, and that accordingly it is only in the plural that Enlightenments can be understood by the historian. There can no longer be any question of studying 'the Enlightenment', with the definite article.⁸

To some observers, the new pluralism of the scholars is itself a sufficient response to those who have equated the Enlightenment with a single doctrinaire 'project'. Historians, they point out, have shown that there was no such thing.⁹ Taking the point, some of the Enlightenment's critics have been willing to temper their hostility and draw distinctions. Richard Rorty believes that the Enlightenment philosophical project, which he defines as the search for a comprehensive worldview which would replace God with nature and reason, must be discarded for good. But its political project, 'a world without caste, class or cruelty', remains valid, and ought still to be

⁶ John G. A. Pocock, 'Clergy and commerce: the conservative Enlightenment in England', in Raffaele Ajello and others, *L'età dei lumi. Studi storici sul Settecento europeo in onore di Franco Venturi*, 2 vols. (Naples, 1985), pp. 523–62.

⁷ For example, his contribution, 'Gran Bretagna' to Ferrone and Roche, *L'Illuminismo*, pp. 478–92.

⁸ John G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, 3 vols., to date (Cambridge, 1999–2003): 1: *The Enlightenment of Edward Gibbon, 1737–1764*, p. 13: 'it is a premise of this book that we can no longer write satisfactorily of "the Enlightenment" as a unified and universal intellectual movement'; also pp. 5–10, 292–308. See also, most recently, 'The re-description of Enlightenment', Isaiah Berlin lecture, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, forthcoming. For comment, John Robertson, 'The Enlightenment of J. G. A. Pocock', *Storia della storiografia – History of Historiography*, 39 (2001), 140–51.

Another to object to the definite article has been P. N. Furbank, in *Diderot: a Critical Biography* (London, 1992), pp. 450–1. Furbank's standpoint is that of the literary critic, for whom invocation of 'the Enlightenment' draws attention only to the commonplace themes of the period, at the expense of what was particular to an individual text. His concern is with the interpretation of individual texts, not with the existence of plural Enlightenments.

⁹ Most notably, James Schmidt, 'What Enlightenment project?', *Political Theory*, 28 (2000), 734–57, quoting Outram and Pocock with approval on p. 737; followed by an exchange with Christian Delacampagne in *Political Theory*, 29 (2001), 80–90.

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pursued.¹⁰ Other observers believe that the compromise with postmodern pluralism has gone much too far. As one working mainly on the twentieth century, David Hollinger argues that if intellectual history is to be of any use in trying to understand where we are today, ‘the Enlightenment is extremely difficult to avoid’. In his view its historians have done remarkably little, at least in ‘venues which count’, to resist the proliferation of ‘cardboard-character representations of the Enlightenment mind’. Intellectual historians studying the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries should by no means abandon the attempt to provide their more modern colleagues with ‘a sound and stable sense of the Enlightenment to work with’.¹¹

Among Enlightenment scholars themselves, one or two voices have already been raised in defiance of the retreat into pluralism. Perhaps unexpectedly, one of these was Robert Darnton’s. In an essay for the *New York Review of Books* (which may, perhaps, qualify as ‘a venue which counts’) in 1997, the one-time scourge of Peter Gay upheld the existence of the Enlightenment as ‘a movement, a cause, a campaign to change minds and reform institutions’. Throughout he characterised it in the singular. The Enlightenment was ‘a concerted campaign on the part of a self-conscious group of intellectuals’ to advance certain *idées-forces*, including liberty, happiness, nature, and nature’s laws. As such the Enlightenment was not guilty of the charges now being levelled against it: of cultural imperialism on behalf of the West, of racism, of moral nihilism, or of an excessive faith in reason. It championed, rather, respect for the individual, for liberty, and for all the rights of man; it stood, in short, for progress with a small ‘p’, in an age when the pain of toothache was one of life’s most constant, pervasive blights.¹²

Refreshing – and well placed – as Darnton’s essay was, it has not convinced fellow scholars. There is puzzlement at the apparently very traditional terms of its argument, which seem to slight the social-historical approach to the Enlightenment of which Darnton himself has been such a distinguished exponent. It is also clear that Darnton’s is an Enlightenment

¹⁰ Richard Rorty, ‘The continuity between the Enlightenment and “Postmodernism”’, in K. M. Baker and P. H. Reill (eds.), *What’s Left of Enlightenment? A Postmodern Question* (Stanford, 2001), pp. 19–36.

¹¹ David A. Hollinger, ‘The Enlightenment and the genealogy of cultural conflict in the United States’, in Baker and Reill, *What’s Left of Enlightenment?*, pp. 17–18.

¹² Robert Darnton, ‘George Washington’s false teeth’, originally in *The New York Review of Books* (27 March 1997), pp. 34–8; reprinted as ‘The case for the Enlightenment: George Washington’s false teeth’, in the author’s collection of essays, *George Washington’s False Teeth: an Unconventional Guide to the Eighteenth Century* (New York and London, 2003), pp. 3–24.

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closely linked to the American and French revolutions, which he regards, in their better parts, as its fulfilment. His is not, therefore, an Enlightenment which stands or falls on its own independent merits.

A second, much more substantial restatement of the case for the Enlightenment as a coherent intellectual movement is Jonathan Israel's 800-page *Radical Enlightenment* (2001). As its subtitle, *Philosophy and the Making of Modernity*, would indicate, Israel's claims for the Enlightenment in shaping the modern world are as high as if not higher than those of Darnton. But here the case is specifically for a 'radical' Enlightenment, occurring in the period 1650–1750, before the Enlightenment as it is conventionally thought of, which is associated with the period after 1750. In Israel's view, historians need to put much more emphasis on what was happening in the hundred years before 1750. The subsequent, so-called 'High' Enlightenment cannot compare with its radical predecessor in its impact – in the depth and extent of the changes it brought about; by the end of the 1740s, he writes, 'the real business was over'.¹³ The importance of the early Enlightenment has been missed, according to Israel, because its most powerful and provocative intellectual force has been overlooked. This was the philosophy of Benedict Spinoza. Spinoza's ideas were already notorious by the time of his death in 1677, but their impact, Israel argues, was greatly magnified by the publication immediately afterwards, in Latin and Dutch, of his *Opera Posthuma* (1677–8), and by the debates which they provoked among his Dutch contemporaries. From the United Provinces his ideas spread outwards, through the writings of Pierre Bayle and Bernard de Fontenelle, to be discussed in France, England, Germany, and Italy. Israel does not deny the simultaneous existence of a 'moderate mainstream', whose leading spokesmen included Isaac Newton and John Locke, Newton's Dutch popularisers, and the German philosopher Christian Thomasius. But lacking the radical edge of the Spinozists, their impact, it is implied, was rather less than we have been taught to suppose.¹⁴

Israel's emphasis on the early or radical Enlightenment is not without good precedent. The classic discussion of that period's seminal significance was Paul Hazard's *La crise de la conscience européenne* (1935), in which the moment of decisive intellectual upheaval was located in the three and a half decades following 1680.¹⁵ Israel acknowledges Hazard's insight, but

¹³ Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 6–7.

¹⁴ Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, *passim*.

¹⁵ English translation: Paul Hazard, *The European Mind 1680–1715* (1953; Harmondsworth, 1964).

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relocates the period of the crisis to the three decades before 1680.¹⁶ At the same time, Israel builds on the work of scholars who have studied free-thinking, *libertinage érudit*, and irreligion in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries: Ira O. Wade and J. S. Spink in France, Margaret Jacob and Justin Champion in the Netherlands and England, Franco Venturi, Giuseppe Ricuperati, Vincenzo Ferrone, and Sivia Berti in Italy.¹⁷ None of these, however, had directed the spotlight quite so emphatically on to Spinoza and his Dutch followers. Jacob had earlier made large claims for the Newtonians; Venturi had emphasised the importance of the English republicans, not all of whom were Spinozists.¹⁸ Most striking, however, is the extent to which Israel's focus on Spinoza obliges him to play down the significance of Hobbes and of Bayle. Besides being an absolutist in his politics, Hobbes was 'philosophically less bold and comprehensive' than Spinoza: therefore he could not have had the latter's radical, intellectually transforming impact.¹⁹ Yet Hobbes's work, as Noel Malcolm points out, was both more widely available and more generally discussed, within the mainstream as well as by radicals.²⁰ Bayle, meanwhile, is reduced to following in Spinoza's slipstream, a secret Spinozist – despite being the author of what was generally regarded as the most critical discussion of his philosophy.²¹ In diminishing the intellectual contribution of Bayle, Israel also places less weight than he might have wished to do on the innovations by which Bayle transformed the Republic of Letters, not least

¹⁶ Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, pp. 14–22.

¹⁷ See the commentary by Giuseppe Ricuperati, 'In margine al *Radical Enlightenment* di Jonathan I. Israel', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 115 (1) (2003), 285–329. The works of Israel's predecessors include Ira O. Wade, *The Clandestine Organisation and Diffusion of Philosophic Ideas in France from 1700 to 1750* (Princeton, 1938); J. S. Spink, *French Free-thought from Gassendi to Voltaire* (London, 1960); Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons, and Republicans* (London, 1981); Justin Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken: the Church of England and its Enemies 1660–1730* (Cambridge, 1992); Franco Venturi, *Saggi sull'Europa illuminista*. 1: *Alberto Radicati di Passerano* (Turin, 1954); Giuseppe Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di Pietro Giannone* (Milan and Naples, 1970); Vincenzo Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione. Mondo Newtoniano e cultura italiana nel primo Settecento* (Naples, 1982), transl., *The Intellectual Roots of the Italian Enlightenment: Natural Science, Religion, and Politics in the Early Eighteenth Century* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1995); Sivia Berti (ed.), *Trattato de tre impostori. La vita e lo spirito del signor Benedetto Spinoza* (Turin, 1994).

¹⁸ Margaret C. Jacob, *The Newtonians and the English Revolution 1689–1720* (Hassocks, 1976); Franco Venturi, *Utopia and Reform in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1971).

¹⁹ Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, pp. 159, 602.

²⁰ Noel Malcolm, 'Hobbes and the European Republic of Letters', in the same author's *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 457–545, discussing Israel's treatment of Hobbes on pp. 535–7.

²¹ Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, pp. 331–41. Bayle discussed Spinoza in his article 'Spinoza' in the *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Rotterdam, 1697; second edn 1702), translated in part by Richard H. Popkin, in Pierre Bayle, *Historical and Critical Dictionary: Selections* (Indianapolis, New York and Kansas City, 1965), pp. 288–338. Israel, however, proposes to return to the relation between Spinoza and Bayle in a sequel to *Radical Enlightenment*.

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his pioneering of the literary review in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* (1684–7), and his subsequent use of its successors for controversial purposes.²²

Yet when these features of *Radical Enlightenment* have been noted, there is no denying that Israel's is a case for the Enlightenment to be reckoned with. In mounting another case for the Enlightenment in this book, I will also be reckoning with Israel's. Here too, much attention will be given to the period before 1750: this book shares the conviction that developments between 1680 and 1740 hold the key to the intellectual history of the Enlightenment which followed. But there are also critical differences between our arguments. The most important should perhaps be indicated at the outset.

In the first place, 'the Enlightenment' as it is understood in this book remains the movement which began in the 1740s and ended in the 1790s. There is no need to go so far as to eliminate use of the terms 'pre', 'early' or even 'radical' Enlightenment to distinguish the period between 1680 and 1740; but by no means do I accept Israel's view that 'the real business was over' by the 1740s. What was over by then, in all but a few privileged enclaves, was the radical assault on the foundations of the Christian religion; it was over because the authorities, Protestant as well as Catholic, had effectively suppressed it, or at least curtailed its expression. Instead, what characterised the Enlightenment from the 1740s onwards was a new focus on betterment in this world, without regard for the existence or non-existence of the next. For such betterment to be achieved, it was indeed important that those who claimed to exercise authority in this world on the basis of their knowledge of the next should be removed to the sidelines. But intellectual effort was now concentrated on understanding the means of progress in human society, not on demolishing belief in a divine counterpart.

Underpinning this different understanding of the Enlightenment is a different assessment of its intellectual history, and of the relation it sought to develop between thought and society. It is not Spinozism which will be at the centre of this study, but the convergence between Augustinian and Epicurean currents of thinking about the nature of man and the possibility of society which occurred after 1680. This is an intellectual

²² Israel surveys the learned journals, *Radical Enlightenment*, pp. 142–55, underlining the necessarily limited opportunities for the expression of radical ideas in their pages. He misses the way in which Bayle used them to develop the art of controversy, providing readers many decades later with a rich source for his arguments. See below, ch. 6, 'Hume, after Bayle and Mandeville', pp. 303–4 for an example.

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history in which Hobbes, Gassendi, and especially Bayle will feature more strongly; but the frameworks in which Augustinian and Epicurean ideas were combined and developed were various, and claims on behalf of individual influence are not my primary concern. It will also be suggested that the Enlightenment's conception of the progress of society was intimately connected to a novel view of how men of letters should seek influence over it, by appealing to public opinion rather than to rulers and their ministers.

Finally, the present case for the Enlightenment differs from Israel's in being comparative rather than universal in scope. In Israel's *Radical Enlightenment* it is as if ideas were free to fly at will across international borders, before coming down to land more or less directly in individual minds. By contrast, this study seeks to ground the Enlightenment in specific historical contexts, the better to establish whether we can indeed still speak of one Enlightenment. Two contexts are singled out, for an explicitly comparative study: Scotland and Naples, both historically subordinate or 'provincial' kingdoms on the margins of Europe, which between them produced some of the most original thinking about man and society of the entire period from 1680 to 1790. Pocock appears to suggest that even if a process of Enlightenment can be observed in two places, the differences of context would lead to the emergence of distinct Enlightenments; by contrast, it will be the contention of this book that while Scotland and Naples were two contexts, there was only one Enlightenment.²³

Before explaining the choice of contexts to study, however, I shall review in more detail the development of Enlightenment studies since they became a major scholarly preoccupation in the mid-twentieth century. It is important to see why the Enlightenment has come to seem so fragmented before an attempt is made to reconstitute it. Having offered a fresh account – or model – of the Enlightenment, I shall then outline why Scotland and Naples have been chosen to test it, and what I hope to achieve by the comparison.

²³ *The Case for the Enlightenment* is thus, in one of its meanings, the case that there was one Enlightenment, not several Enlightenments. I will not, however, labour the case by always placing the definite article before Enlightenment: 'Enlightenment' and 'the Enlightenment' will hereafter be used to denote the same European-wide intellectual movement. An argument that there was one Enlightenment permits but does not require use of the definite article, and I do not wish to reduce the issues involved in discussing the unity and coherence of Enlightenment thinking across different countries to a dispute over that article. A further meaning of 'the case for the Enlightenment', referring to the terms in which eighteenth-century Scots and Neapolitans framed their argument for betterment in this world, will be clarified in due course.

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'The Enlightenment' was never simply a scholarly abstraction. It existed in the eighteenth century in three languages, as *les lumières* or *i lumi*, and as *Aufklärung*. In both its French and German denominations it was a fiercely contested concept for most of the nineteenth century, the animosities created by the French Revolution ensuring that any historical investigation of its character was bound to have an ideological charge. By contrast, it was not until the late nineteenth century that 'Enlightenment' came into use in English as a translation for *Aufklärung*; *l'Illuminismo* followed in the early twentieth century. In both cases the translation reflected the spread of interest in German idealist philosophy.²⁴ Gradually, this diffusion of the concept seems to have dissipated the ideological charge which it had carried, even in its original languages; as several have recently remarked, any ideological intention was muted (or at least well hidden) in Ernst Cassirer's classic account of Enlightenment philosophy, *Die Philosophie der Aufklärung*, published in 1932.²⁵

The Second World War was the turning point. Its immediate outcome, it is true, was a revival of the philosophical concept of *Aufklärung*, made the subject of a fierce new critique by Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno in *Die Dialektik der Aufklärung* (1947). Later this work would be an inspiration to the postmodern critique of Enlightenment; at the time, however, its impact was blunted by a quite different response to war and the horrors of Nazism – a turn, even a rush, to scholarship. Though not without ideological motivation, nor, in important individual cases, without roots in work begun before the war, the new turn in Enlightenment studies put scholarship first. The underlying object might be to demonstrate that France, Germany, and Italy possessed an intellectual heritage older, stronger, and utterly antagonistic to the ideals of Nazism and Fascism; but the means

²⁴ On the introduction of the term in English, see James Schmidt, 'Inventing the Enlightenment: Anti-Jacobins, British Hegelians, and the *Oxford English Dictionary*', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 64 (2003), 421–3 – an object lesson in the dangers of relying on a dictionary for a definition of a concept.

²⁵ For an account of the Enlightenment as a concept and subject of study (as well as a prospectus for its future), Daniel Roche and Vincenzo Ferrone, 'Postfazione' to their *L'Illuminismo*, pp. 513–92; separately published as Vincenzo Ferrone and Daniel Roche, *L'Illuminismo nella cultura contemporanea. Storie e storiografie* (Rome and Bari, 2002). Likewise, though with most emphasis on the ideological uses of Enlightenment: Lynn Hunt with Margaret C. Jacob, 'Enlightenment Studies', in Kors, *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*.

On Cassirer, the informative article by Johnson Kent Wright, "A bright clear mirror": Cassirer's *Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, in Baker and Reill, *What's Left of Enlightenment?*, pp. 71–101; and Fania Oz-Salzberger, 'Cassirer's Enlightenment and its recent critics: is Reason out of season?', in Jeffrey Barash (ed.), *Ernst Cassirer: Symbol, Science, and Culture* (Madison, Wis.: forthcoming).