

## Michaelmas Term Seminars Enlightenment Debates

### Week 1. *Eighteenth-Century Theories of the Origin of Language* (Dr Ted Nye)

The aim of the seminar is to provide students with an understanding of a notable tendency in the Enlightenment to investigate hypothetically the origins of human language. Students will consider the implications which these theories have for other intellectual domains, such as history, philosophy, psychology, and art aesthetics, and they will consider the ways in which the pursuit of intellectual origins in general is a characteristic Enlightenment interest.

#### Primary texts (for seminar and written work)

Etienne de Condillac, *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* (Paris 1746), available in French in many editions, for example Paris: Editions Alive, 1998, and in English as *Essay on the Origin of Human Knowledge* with good notes and introduction by Hans Aarsleff, Cambridge: CUP, 2001.

Giambattista Vico, *La Scienza nuova* (Naples 1725), published in many modern editions, e.g. *Principi di una Scienza nuova* (Diogene Edizioni, 2014), and available in English as *New Science* (London: Penguin Classics, 1999). See especially Book 2, 'Prolegomena', Section 1, 'Poetic metaphysics', and Section 2, 'Poetic Logic'.

#### Founding texts to dip into

- Plato, 'Cratylus', in *Dialogues*
- John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690), particularly Book 2

#### Secondary Literature

##### On Condillac:

- I. Knight, *The Geometric spirit: The Abbé de Condillac and the French Enlightenment* (London 1968), a general study of Condillac
- J. Derrida, *L'Archéologie du frivole* (Paris 1976), first published as an introduction to Condillac's *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances*, available in English as *The Archeology of the Frivolous* (Nebraska 1987)
- J. Sgard (ed.), *Condillac et les problèmes du langage* (Geneva 1982), a collection of articles on Condillac, including some on the origin of language
- A. Bertrand (ed.), *Condillac, l'origine du langage* (Paris 2002)
- R. Salvucci, *Sviluppi della problematica del linguaggio nel XVIII secolo : Condillac, Rousseau, Smith* (Rimini 1982)

##### On Vico:

- P. Burke, *Vico* (Oxford 1985)
- I. Berlin, *Vico and Herder: two studies in the history of ideas* (London 1976)
- B. Croce, *La Filosofia di Giambattista Vico* (Barri 1911), available in English as *The Philosophy of Giambattista Vico* (New York 1964)

- J. Mali, *The Rehabilitation of myth: Vico's "New science"* (Cambridge 1992)
- M. Danesi, *Vico, Metaphor, and the Origin of Language* (Bloomington IN 1993)
- G. Patella, *Senso, corpo, poesia: Giambattista Vico e l'origine dell'estetica moderna* (Milan 1995)
- G. Wohlfart, *Denken der Sprache: Sprache und Kunst bei Vico, Hamann, Humboldt und Hegel* (Freiburg 1984)
- R. Salamone, *Lingua e linguaggio nella filosofia di Giambattista Vico* (Roma 1984)

On language origin theories generally, including eighteenth-century ones:

- G. Genette, *Mimologiques: Voyage en Cratylie* (Paris 1976), available in English as *Mimologics* (Nebraska 1995), an influential account of how thinkers from Plato to modern times have explained the relation of language to reality
- D. Droixhe, *La Linguistique et l'appel de l'histoire (1600-1800)* (Geneva 1978), a scholarly landmark in the subject
- O. Jespersen, *Language, its Nature, Development and Origin* (London 1922), one of the few serious and influential studies of the subject in modern linguistics
- L. Spitzer, *Linguistics and Literary History* (New York 1948), a study of the relevance of eighteenth-century and other linguistic theories to contemporary literary styles
- Huisman and Ribes (eds), *Les Philosophes et le langage* (Paris 1986), an anthology of extracts from Plato to Foucault
- M. Duchet (ed.), *L'Inscription des langues dans les relations de voyage (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles)*; collection of articles on the fictional elaboration of theories of language origin

*Coda*

The opposite of language origins is *sui generis* language invention:

- Umberto Eco, *Ricerca della lingua perfetta nella cultura Europea* (Rome 1993), available in English as *The Search for the Perfect Language* (Blackwell 1995)
- Marina Yaguello, *Les Fous du langage. Des Langues imaginaires et de leurs inventeurs* (Paris 1984).

**Seminar topics**

- What are these two primary texts implicitly about if they are not only and specifically about the origin of language? Anthropology? History? Aesthetics? Philosophy of mind? Psychology...?
- Discuss how any one of these implicit subjects stems from the author's analysis of language origins.
- Is it possible to use any of their models of language origin as some kind of intellectual model for understanding art of one kind or another (literature in prose or verse? painting? music? theatre?).
- Are these language theories interesting for their explicit subject (language origins), not just their implicit subjects?
- What makes the way these authors write about language origins characteristic of the intellectual movement we call 'the Enlightenment'?

### Week 3. Amusement, Entertainment, and Spectacle (Dr Alessandra Aloisi)

#### *Amusement, Entertainment, and Spectacle*

##### **Primary Reading**

D'Alembert, 'Genève' (1757), in *Encyclopédie*, vol. 7.

Rousseau, *Lettre à D'Alembert sur les spectacles* (1758), in *Discours sur les sciences et les arts. Lettre à D'Alembert*, ed. J. Varloot (Paris, 1987), pp. 137-312.

D'Alembert, *Lettre à J.-J. Rousseau, citoyen de Genève* (1759), in Rousseau, *Discours sur les sciences et les arts. Lettre à D'Alembert*, ed. J. Varloot (Paris, 1987), pp. 357-380.

The translations of all these texts are available in the volume: J.-J. Rousseau, *Letter to D'Alembert, and Writings on the Theatre*, ed. and transl. by A. Bloom, C. Butterworth, and C. Kelly (University Press of New England, 2004).

##### **Founding texts to dip into**

Plato, *Republic*, VII, 514 a-517 a; X.

Pascal, *Pensées* (fragments on *divertissement*)

##### **Select secondary reading**

###### On the *Lettre à D'Alembert*

J. N. Pappas, "Rousseau and D'Alembert", *PMLA* (March 1960), 46-60.

J.-J. Rousseau, *Politics and the Arts* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1968). Besides an English translation of Rousseau's *Lettre à D'Alembert*, it includes a useful introduction by Allan Bottom.

M. Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality, Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Berkeley, London, 1980), in particular: Appendix B, "Two related Texts: The *Lettre sur les spectacles* and *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*", pp. 167-174.

H. Gouhier, "La lettre sur les spectacles", *Rousseau et Voltaire: Portraits dans deux miroirs* (Paris, 1983), pp. 109-126.

P. Coleman, *Rousseau's Political Imagination, Rule and Representation in the "Lettre à D'Alembert"* (Genève, 1984).

D. Marshall, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelley* (Chicago, 1988), in particular: chapter 5, "Rousseau and the State of Theatre", pp. 135-177.

E. Wingrove, "Sexual Performance as Political Performance in the *Lettre à M. D'Alembert sur les Spectacles*", *Political Theory*, 23 (1995), pp. 585-616.

- H. Rosenblatt, "On the 'Misogyny' of Jean-Jacques Rousseau: The *Letter to D'Alembert* in Historical Context", in *French Historical Studies*, 25/1 (2002), pp. 91-114.
- O. Mostefai, *Le Citoyen de Genève et la République des Lettres. Étude de la controverse autour de la Lettre à D'Alembert* de Jean-Jacques Rousseau (New York, 2003).
- Rousseau on Stage. Playwright, Musician, Spectator*, ed. by M. Gullstam and M. O'Dea (Oxford, 2017). In particular: chapter 1, "The Anthropological Foresight of the *Lettre sur les spectacles*" (pp. 25-50), by F. Baker, and chapter 2, "The Dramaturgy of Rousseau's *Lettre à D'Alembert* and its Importance in Modern Theatre" (pp. 51-76), by P. Primavesi.

### Context

- R. Niklaus, "Diderot et Rousseau. Pour et contre le théâtre", *Diderot studies*, IV, 1963.
- R. Tessari, *Teatro e spettacolo nel Settecento* (Roma-Bari, 1975).
- J. Derrida, *De la Grammatologie* (Paris, 1967), in particular: Part II, chapter 4, "Le théorème et le théâtre", pp. 428-440 (eng. *Of Grammatology*, Baltimore, 1976).
- M. Moffat, *Rousseau et la querelle du théâtre au XVIII siècle* (1930; Geneva, 1970).
- P. Hoffman, *La Femme dans la pensée des lumières* (Paris, 1977).
- C. Piau-Gillot, "Le discours de Jean-Jacques Rousseau sur les femmes et sa réception critique", *Dix-huitième siècle*, 13 (1981), 317-333.
- M. Hulliung, *The Autocritique of the Enlightenment: Rousseau and the 'philosophes'* (Cambridge, 1994).
- J. F. Ravel, *The Contested Parterre, Public Theatre and the French Political Culture (1680-1791)* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1999).
- E. Franzini, *Il teatro, la festa e la rivoluzione. Su Rousseau e gli enciclopedisti* (Palermo, 2002).
- J. Rancière, *Le spectateur émancipé* (Paris, 2008), in particular chapter 3 (eng. *The Emancipated Spectator*, London 2009).
- J. Rancière, *Dissensus: on Politics and Aesthetics* (London, 2010), in particular: Part II, chapter 10, "The Paradoxes of Political Art", pp. 134-151.
- J. Rancière, *Aisthesis. Scènes du régime esthétique de l'art* (Paris, 2011), in particular: "La beauté divisée", pp. 19-40 (eng.: *Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art*, London 2013).

### On Rousseau

- J. Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: la transparence et l'obstacle* (Paris, 1971<sup>2</sup>); eng.: *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Transparency and Obstruction* (Chicago, 1988).
- J. Starobinsky, *Le Remède dans le mal: critique et légitimation de l'artifice à l'âge des Lumières* (Paris, 1989), ch. V, pp. 165-232.
- J. F. Hamilton, *Rousseau's Theory of Literature: the Poetics of Art and Nature* (York, S.C., 1979), in particular: chapter IV, "An Intrusion of Art into Politics: The *Lettre à D'Alembert sur les spectacles*", pp. 101-132.
- Cambridge Companion to Rousseau*, ed. P. Riley (Cambridge, 2001), in particular: C. N. Dugan and T. B. Strong, "Music, Politics, Theatre and Representation", pp. 329-64.
- M. Launay, *Rousseau écrivain politique (1712-1762)*, (Cannes and Grenoble, 1971), in particular chapter V.
- O. Mostefai, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau écrivain polémique: querelles, disputes et controverses au Siècle des Lumières* (Leiden and Boston, 2016).

## Seminar topics

(these are just suggestions; you are welcome to devise your own topic)

- 1) What are the primary texts about if they are not only and specifically about theatre? *Divertissement*, boredom (*ennui*), distraction, imitation, artifice, theatricality, censorship...?
- 2) What does the term “spectacle” refer to? How is this term defined in these texts, also in relation to other terms?
- 3) How are questions related to gender present in the debate?
- 4) How are questions related to a politics of aesthetics present in the debate?

## Week 5. What is Enlightenment? (Professor Ritchie Robertson)

### Primary reading

Moses Mendelssohn, ‘Über die Frage: Was heißt aufklären?’ (1784)

Immanuel Kant, ‘Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?’ (1784)

It is important to read both essays.

Consider the definitions offered by the two writers, noting points of agreement or difference; and compare what they say with your own understanding of what Enlightenment is. Written work could pursue these issues and bring in twentieth-century debates (e. g. Horkheimer/Adorno) as a point of comparison.

German originals in editions of Mendelssohn’s and Kant’s works, or in: *Was ist Aufklärung? Thesen und Definitionen*, ed. Ehrhard Bahr (Stuttgart, 1974)

*Was ist Aufklärung? Beiträge aus der Berlinischen Monatsschrift*, ed. Norbert Hinske and Michael Albrecht, 4th ed. (Darmstadt, 1990)

English translations in: *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions*, ed. James Schmidt (Berkeley, 1996)

Kant’s essay can also be found on a number of websites, e. g.

<http://www.english.upenn.edu/~mgamer/Etexts/kant.html>;

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/kant-what-is.html>.

### Secondary reading. Priority:

H. B. Nisbet, ‘“Was ist Aufklärung?” The Concept of Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Germany’, *Journal of European Studies*, 12 (1992), 77-95

James Schmidt, ‘Introduction. What is Enlightenment? A Question, Its Context, and Some Consequences’, in Schmidt (ed.), *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions* (Berkeley, 1996). This whole book is extremely valuable for the subject.

### Possible further reading:

Gisbert Beyerhaus, 'Kants "Programm" der Aufklärung aus dem Jahre 1784', *Kant-Studien*, 26 (1921), 1-16

Franco Venturi, 'Was ist Aufklärung? Sapere aude!', *Rivista storica italiana*, 71 (1959), 119-128

Luigi Firpo, 'Ancora a proposito di "Sapere aude!"', *Rivista storica italiana*, 72 (1960), 114-117

Werner Schneiders, *Die wahre Aufklärung* (Munich, 1974)

Norbert Hinske, 'Mendelssohns Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung? oder Über die Aktualität Mendelssohns', in *Ich handle mit Vernunft ... Moses Mendelssohn und die europäische Aufklärung*, ed. Norbert Hinske (Hamburg, 1981), 85-117

Hans Erich Bödeker, 'Aufklärung als Kommunikationsprozeß', *Aufklärung*, 2/2 (1987), 89-111

Norbert Hinske, 'Il dialogo silenzioso: Principi di antropologia e di filosofia della storia in Mendelssohn e Kant', tr. S. Carboncini, in *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa: Classe di Lettere*, 3<sup>rd</sup> series, XIX (1989), no. 4, pp. 1299-1323; in German as 'Das stillschweigende Gespräch: Prinzipien der Anthropologie und Geschichtsphilosophie bei Mendelssohn und Kant', in *Moses Mendelssohn und die Kreise seiner Wirksamkeit*, ed. M. Albrecht, E. J. Engel, N. Hinske (Tübingen, 1994), pp. 135-156

James Schmidt, 'What Enlightenment Was: How Moses Mendelssohn and Immanuel Kant answered the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 30 (1992), 77-101

*Die Bestimmung des Menschen*, ed. Norbert Hinske, in *Aufklärung* 11 (1999), no. 1

Katerina Deligiorgi, *Kant and the Culture of Enlightenment*, SUNY series in philosophy (Albany, 2005)

Wolfgang Albrecht, 'Bestimmung(en) des Menschen: Zu einem Zentralthema des Aufklärungsdiskurses und einigen seiner Facetten im Umkreis Lessings', in *Practicing Progress: The Promise and Limitations of Enlightenment: Festschrift for John A. McCarthy*, Internationale Forschungen zur allgemeinen und vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft, 106 (Amsterdam, 2007), 21-34

Reinhard Brandt, *Die Bestimmung des Menschen bei Kant* (Hamburg, 2007)

Giovanni Landolfi Petrone, 'La voix de la raison: la *Bestimmung des Menschen* d'après l'itinéraire kantien', in *Kant et les lumières européennes: Actes du VIIe Congrès de la Société d'Études Kantiennes de langue française*, ed. Lorenzo Bianchi, Jean Ferrari, Alberto Postigliola (Naples and Paris, 2009)

Oliver R. Scholz, 'Kants Aufklärungsprogramm: Rekonstruktion und Verteidigung', in *Kant und die Zukunft der europäischen Aufklärung*, ed. H. F. Klemme (Berlin and New York, 2009), pp. 28-42

Günter Zöller, 'Aufklärung über Aufklärung: Kants Konzeption des selbständigen, öffentlichen und gemeinschaftlichen Gebrauchs der Vernunft', in *Kant und die Zukunft der europäischen Aufklärung*, ed. H. F. Klemme (Berlin and New York, 2009), pp. 82-99

Willi Goetschel, 'Einstimmigkeit in Differenz: Der Begriff der Aufklärung bei Kant und Mendelssohn', in *Text + Kritik Sonderband: Moses Mendelssohn*, ed. Heinz Ludwig Arnold and Cord-Friedrich Berghahn (Munich, 2011), pp. 79-98

[George di Giovanni](#), '[The Year 1786 and Die Bestimmung des Menschen, or Popularphilosophie in Crisis](#)', in *Moses Mendelssohn's Metaphysics and Aesthetics*, ed. Reinier Munk, Studies in German Idealism, 13 (Dordrecht, 2011), pp. 217-234

Frederick C. Beiser, 'Mendelssohn Versus Herder on the Vocation of Man', in *Moses Mendelssohn's Metaphysics and Aesthetics*, ed. Reinier Munk, Studies in German Idealism, 13 (Dordrecht, 2011), pp. 235-244

James Schmidt, 'What Counts as an Answer to the Question "What is Enlightenment?"?' (2011), at

[http://www.academia.edu/3751155/What Counts as an Answer to the Question What is Enlightenment](http://www.academia.edu/3751155/What_Counts_as_an_Answer_to_the_Question_What_is_Enlightenment)

Samuel Fleischacker, *What is Enlightenment?*, Kant's Questions (Abingdon, 2013)

## **Week 6. The Luxury Debate (Dr Kate Tunstall)**

### **Select primary texts**

Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees* (1714)

Voltaire, 'Le Mondain' (1736) [in *Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, vol. 16].

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* (1750)

Saint Lambert, 'Luxe', in *Encyclopédie* (1765)

Diderot, 'Satire contre le luxe', in *Salon de 1767* (1767); *Regrets sur ma vieille robe de chambre* (1769)

### **Select secondary reading**

Yves Benot, 'Diderot et le luxe: jouissances ou égalité?', in *Les Lumières, l'esclavage, la colonization* (2005), pp. 124 – 137.

Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Egers, *Luxury in the eighteenth century: debates, desires, and delectable goods* (2003)

Clarissa Bremner-David, *Paris: Life and Luxury in the Eighteenth Century* (2011)

John Brewer and Roy Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods* (1993)

E. J. Clery, *The Feminization Debate in Eighteenth-Century England: Literature, Commerce and Luxury* (2004)

Jean-Christophe Rebejkow, 'Diderot, les Salons de 1767 et de 1769 et la question du luxe', *Diderot Studies*, 29 (2003), pp. 65-82

M. Hulliung, *The Autocritique of Enlightenment: Rousseau and the Philosophes* (1994)

E. J. Hundert, *The Enlightenment's Fable: Mandeville and the Discovery of Society* (1994)

Daniel Roche, *Histoire des choses banales [A history of everyday things : the birth of consumption in France, 1600-1800]* (2000)

John Sekora, *Luxury. The Concept in Western Thought from Eden to Smollett* (2004)

John Shovlin, *The political economy of virtue: luxury, patriotism, and the origins of the French Revolution* (2006)

Anoush Fraser Terjanian, *Commerce and Its Discontents in Eighteenth-Century French Political Thought* (2014)

**Seminar topics** – these are just suggestions; you are welcome to devise your own:

- What does the term 'luxury' or 'luxe' refer to? How is the term defined and redefined in these texts?
- How are questions related to gender present in the debate?
- How does this debate relate to the other great debate of the period, namely the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*?