

## CHAPTER 6

---

# COSMOPOLITANISM AND THE GERMAN ENLIGHTENMENT

---

FRANZ LEANDER FILLAFER AND  
JÜRGEN OSTERHAMMEL

THE European Enlightenment has long been regarded as a host of disembodied, self-perpetuating ideas typically emanating from France and inspiring apprentices at the various European peripheries. Historians have demonstrated the scope and depth of the Enlightenment's reach and have painted a variegated picture of a decentralized intellectual system with fulcrums as remote as Lima, Calcutta, and Batavia. There clearly was a set of overarching purposes of emancipation and improvement, but elaborating and pursuing 'the Enlightenment' also involved a 'sense of place.' We encounter sentimentalist empiricists, atheist republican hacks, Leibnizian metaphysicians, Kantian defenders of enlightened kingship, and Anglican Newtonians. Enlightened premises were reconfigured by translation, showing the disparities of audience and purpose. The German translators of Adam Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, for example, diluted his civic humanism and praise of commerce and placed it in the service of an advocacy of spiritual freedom and aesthetic inwardness. Civic participation was in this way transmuted into the striving for individual perfection.<sup>1</sup> By its very nature, the Enlightenment imposed identifiable modes of thought on those who used it, while it always remained an expression of particular desires and meanings, and a response to particular conditions.

What difference did the Enlightenment make? It maintained that human reason was able to understand nature unaided by divine revelation, but attuned to its truths;

many Enlighteners agreed that God, like Newton's divine clockmaker, had created the universe, but thereafter intervened no more. John Locke's critique of primordialism challenged the existence of innate ideas and original sin. He also mounted a pervasive argument in favor of government based on public support. Pierre Bayle maintained that a society of atheists would not relapse into internecine violence. German scholarly pursuits contributed to the force and panache of this intellectual revolution, both in Protestant territories and in the Catholic South, which was, contrary to long-held opinions, not stifled by Baroque piety. Religion and religiosity did not simply 'adjust' to 'modernity,' but theological preoccupations fed into enlightened interests. References to Hobbes, Spinoza and Toland were often concealed with erudite codes.<sup>2</sup> Contrary to England and France where universities receded into insignificance during the eighteenth century, German universities became the power nodes of intellectual and political rejuvenation. They played a key part in displacing Aristotelianism, and later heralded innovation when Leibnizian-Wolffian philosophy fell into disrepute. Structurally similar to the Scottish Enlightenment, the German *Aufklärung* initially revolved around two pivot institutions, school and church; it was rooted in learned societies, and flourished among the Protestant and Catholic clergy alike. The rarity of gentleman scholars accounts for this; almost all successful writers of the German Enlightenment had to earn their living as teachers or civil servants. By and large, the general political climate in the German lands was not an impediment to public intellectual activity. If German Enlighteners proceeded with caution, they were rarely exposed to full princely caprice.

Around 1750, German was not yet established on the map of Europe as a language of scholarship and high culture. It is difficult to chart the evolution of the German language, from the rustic and recondite idiom used by scribes and preachers and despised by Frederick II, to the subtle instrument it had become by 1780.<sup>3</sup> While the genius polymath Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz or the firebrand professor of law Christian Thomasius had made occasional forays into the vernacular, Christian Wolff was the first to propagate German as a language of instruction. After the mid-century, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, a man of many talents, heralded a cultural transformation of unprecedented magnitude. In the years around 1760, German became the main language of Enlightenment in the principalities and free cities of the Holy Roman Empire. At the same time, German-speaking scholars and intellectuals remained deeply enmeshed in the networks of philosophical discourse that had spanned Europe since the radical early Enlightenment.

In the German lands, patriotism as a sentiment of solidarity can be found among Enlighteners, as well as among their opponents. It was often colored by resistance against French hegemony in the realm of culture and motivated by a struggle against cultural inferiority. Eighteenth-century Germans began to grapple with alternative objects of their patriotism, be it the Reich, their principality, or their hometown. For those in the mainly Catholic South, the focus lay on a centripetal agglutination of territories, the Habsburg Monarchy. However, even throughout Germany, few committed themselves to a vague overarching unit of German culture. Conservative critics, like Friedrich Karl von

Moser in his *Of German National Spirit (Vom deutschen Nationalgeist, 1765)* tended to favor the Reich or smaller regional and local communities, engendering brotherhood and calling for a reform of the Reich's constitution.

Thomas Abbt, who in 1761 published *On Dying for the Fatherland (Vom Tode für das Vaterland)*, elaborated his stance within the enlightened debate on the moral prerequisites of politics and the genius of nations. In a time of dispersed territories and mercenary recruitment, Abbt posited that martial patriotism countervailed individual selfishness; it was aroused by an inborn aesthetic admiration for beauty and order, and by the emulation of incarnate virtue as epitomized by the just ruler, Frederick II. Abbt's theory wedded reason and sentiment. Arguing in the vein of the Earl of Shaftesbury's and Moses Mendelssohn's aesthetics, Abbt hoped for moral renewal centered on altruistic patriotism, which he believed yielded pleasurable affections as well as rich intellectual and emotional delights.<sup>4</sup>

A conceptual centerpiece of the Enlightenment agenda of self-cultivation, cosmopolitanism possessed protean meanings and associations. The archetypical 'polite' cosmopolitan would have travelled, mastered foreign languages, and displayed refined manners. He would be acquainted with the recent outpouring of the European republic of letters and conversant with the political, economic, and social state of the various corners of the world. He would also evince tolerance and curiosity, and harness his knowledge to a particular end—the reform of his fatherland.

Modern forms of cosmopolitanism developed in Europe from about the middle of the seventeenth century, especially in its earliest cradle—the Dutch Republic with its double face as sanctuary of religious toleration and pivot of a global commercial empire.<sup>5</sup> In a world of merchants, 'cosmopolitanism' mainly referred to the enlarged scope of one's own business interests. However, other milieus on the European continent cultivated a self-image that transcended mercantile egoism and repudiated the haughty exclusiveness of privileged elites. This kind of cosmopolitanism flourished in a shadowy sphere of semi-secrecy, especially in Masonic lodges that encouraged social mixing and pursued emancipatory aspirations. During the latter half of the eighteenth century, cosmopolitanism gradually lost its tinge of unorthodoxy and dissidence and developed into an openly proclaimed identity and style of life, which was frequently associated with the French cultural model of the '*gentilhomme*'.<sup>6</sup> By the end of the century, complaints abounded that cosmopolitanism meant little more than fashionable rhetorical frills, an attitude of irresponsible armchair travelers. At the same time, however, the growth of nationalist sentiments lent a new urgency to any serious attempt at overcoming a spirit of selfishness and confrontation. Cosmopolitanism was an ambiguous concept; it could possess strong imperial contours, encapsulating a civilizing and pacifying mission; in the German context, it could also refurbish the *Reichsidee* in the sense of a *translatio imperii*.

German states did not pursue imperial projects. Although Joseph II contemplated a Pacific voyage, Germans eager to visit other continents sought employment abroad, joining voyages, expeditions, or diplomatic missions organized by the Dutch East India Company, the British Admiralty, the Tsarist Crown, or the Royal Danish government.

Indeed, their political unobtrusiveness, as well as their philological, naturalist and medical qualifications, endeared Germans abroad. At another level, German intellectuals engaged with the world through a vibrant culture of translation. Philosophical treatises, historical surveys, novels, and travel reports from all over the world were translated soon after their first publication, and were frequently adorned with lengthy disquisitions and corrections by the editors. Several large-scale publishing projects acquainted German readers with an unprecedented wealth of material; foremost among them was the *Allgemeine Historie aller merckwürdigen Reisen, zu Wasser, und zu Lande* (The General History of Curious Travels on Water and Land), which appeared in twenty-one volumes between 1747 and 1774. Marvelous material objects from the remotest corners of the world found their way into German curiosity cabinets (*Wunderkammern*) and other, more specialized, collections—the forerunners of the ethnological museums of the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> None of the German libraries could equal the enormous repositories of oriental manuscripts that were now accumulating in Paris, Leiden, London, or St. Petersburg, but the Arabic, Ottoman, or Chinese texts in German and Austrian possession sufficed as the material basis for the oriental philologies as they emerged, with only a minor time lag behind France, at places like Vienna, Leipzig, or Göttingen.

To summarize, German scholars were well integrated both into the intellectual networks within Europe and into the circuits of information about the extra-European world that were fully developed in the wake of Captain Cook's three circumnavigations. To some degree, the lack of direct access to exploration and colonial conquest was compensated by a heightened attention to all kinds of systematic knowledge about the 'East' and about the peoples labeled 'savages' in the language of the eighteenth century. When German authors reasoned about anthropology or the patterns of world history, they drew heavily on evidence provided in travel accounts. Immanuel Kant and Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, were thoroughly familiar with this kind of material.

We need a conceptual grid to grasp the complexities of enlightened cosmopolitanism in the German lands, and to explain how the global and the local were interrelated. Our chapter will first delineate four analytical facets of the cosmopolitan agenda. In a second step we will introduce selected fields of enlightened cosmopolitan reasoning. In a third subsection, we will survey the multiple transformations of cosmopolitanism around 1800, following some of its guiding threads into the nineteenth century.

## 6.1 FACETS

First, the world could figure as Europe's mirror. In enlightened literature, most prominently Montesquieu's influential *Persian Letters* (1721), the external perspective of the puzzled alien observer is adopted to lay bare what was considered reprobate and

decrepit in Europe. European literature of the eighteenth century is replete with travelling Chinese or Turkish spies, modeled on Montesquieu's Persian visitors, who tell the satirical 'truth' about the West.<sup>8</sup> These were often critical tracts informed by an increasingly profound acquaintance with the political, religious, economic, and cultural past and present of other continents. Some Enlighteners clearly saw that 'oriental despotism' was a mirage, a reverse reflection of intra-European grievances.<sup>9</sup> Conversely, another genre preferred the direct juxtaposition of flawed European reality with an idealized East. An example is Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi's *Vergleichungen der Europäischen mit den Asiatischen und anderen vermeintlich Barbarischen Regierungen* (Comparisons of European with Asian and other Supposedly Barbaric Governments), published in 1762. A prominent cameralist, Justi contrasted the alleged wisdom and rationality of China and other Asian countries with the backwardness and folly of the social and political arrangements prevailing in the German lands. Justi's favorable views on Asia, not entirely unfounded, were based on the reading of travelogues and Jesuit 'relations,' a common source of eighteenth-century visions of other civilizations.

Secondly, pivotal concepts of eighteenth-century theorizing were elaborated against the backdrop of perceptions of America, Asia, Africa, and the South Seas. A discipline of 'comparative government' arose at the moment in history when the 'great map of mankind' (Edmund Burke) unfolded before the eyes of European observers. A broad range of varieties of political experience far beyond the confines of Christendom and the Greco-Roman tradition became visible for the first time and enabled Europeans to define their own place in the world. The very concept of 'civilization,' a key term of the age, was predicated on semantic opposition and contrast. Earlier notions of 'barbarism' and 'savagery' could now be refined in the light of new ethnographic information, and comparative reasoning threw new light on the historical specificity of modern Europe. The 'comparative method' was a favorite with Enlightenment thinkers. One of its foremost applications was the devising of ambitious matrices and graded scales of social and cultural forms around the globe.

Thirdly, connections within a planetary space were very much on the minds of eighteenth century readers and writers, especially during the second half of the century. In an age of expanding inter-continental shipping and commerce and especially during and after a war—the Seven Years War (1756–1763)—that was fought for global maritime hegemony, Europeans clearly recognized that the different parts of the world were interwoven and interconnected to an unprecedented degree. The 'spirit of commerce' (*Handelsgeist*) would create bonds of mutual interest that would overcome the traditional ignorance and suspicion between peoples living in different countries. A number of German *Staatswissenschaftler* and geographers specialized in observing and interpreting the momentous changes taking place in the world. One of them was Matthias Christian Sprengel (1746–1803), who edited, among other such projects, a massive collection of news and data on all parts of the world, entitled *Auswahl der besten ausländischen geographischen und statistischen Nachrichten zur Aufklärung der Völker- und Länderkunde* (Selection of the Best Foreign Geographical and Statistical Reports

for Illuminating the Knowledge of Peoples and Countries), which appeared in fourteen volumes between 1794 and 1800. Another manifestation of an acute sense of interconnectedness was a series of lectures given by August Ludwig Schlözer at Göttingen in 1795/96 on global travel and its impact on Europe.<sup>10</sup>

Fourthly, the anthropological study of human 'nature' and a broadly-conceived 'conjectural' history operating on a level far above the plurality of peoples and nations seemed to validate the enlightened adage of the unity of mankind. The idea of *Menschheit* (Humanity) served several functions in German Enlightenment thought, and two of them are of particular importance.<sup>11</sup> On the one hand, the concept carried the meaning of utopian emancipation. *Menschheit* as a concept was deliberately opposed to 'Christendom' and the theological model of man linked with it; in this sense, *Menschheit* referred not to a given order in which human beings were supposed to integrate themselves, but to a common task to be accomplished by activity and a conscious development of human capabilities. Humanity as a condition of liberty and (though far from absolute) equality had to be achieved through autonomous human action in pursuit of moral purposes. The idea itself could be used as a critical yardstick by which to measure all social, political, and cultural arrangements that stood in the way of human progress and perfection. On the other hand, many Enlightenment thinkers also had in mind the empirical collective of human beings co-existing on the face of the earth. As Christoph Martin Wieland put it in 1788: cosmopolitans 'regard all peoples of the earth as just so many branches of a single family, and the universe as a state in which they are citizens, together with innumerable other rational beings, in order to promote the perfection of the whole.'<sup>12</sup> Crucial for Wieland as for many others was the idea of unity in diversity. Many Enlightenment intellectuals not only assumed a common natural right possessed by human beings on all levels of 'refinement,' but also shared cognitive and bodily capacities that made it possible to acknowledge the other's humanity in situations, rare as they were, of direct personal contact.

## 6.2 FIELDS

### 6.2.1 History

Enlightened historians did not fret about the expansive range of their subjects; indeed, the subject of the history they wrote was no less than the world. According to the two pundits of German *Aufklärungshistorie* who taught at Göttingen, Johann Christoph Gatterer and August Ludwig Schlözer, all particular histories had to be constructed bearing this global angle of significance in mind: This '[...] powerful gaze turns the aggregate into a system, a system in which world and humanity form a unit.'<sup>13</sup> Universal history was written 'with the intention of creating world citizens' (*in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*). Enlightened historians operated in the aftermath of the so-called 'Pyrrhonian Crisis' around 1700 when the knowledge of the past provided by elder

'antiquarian' or 'erudite' scholarship had come under severe attack. What the best of eighteenth-century German historical scholarship aimed at was no mere enumeration of data, but the critical-systematic (and necessarily selective) establishment of a '*nexus rerum universalis*,' a universal connection of things in the world, in order to retrieve a universal connection between events.<sup>14</sup> When tied to source-criticism, as it was in the Göttingen school, this emphasis on 'structures' replaced an earlier focus on rulers and warfare. In a somewhat less empirical vein, 'conjectural' or 'philosophical' history chiseled out a sequence of developmental stages through which mankind passed on its way towards refinement. The works of the Basel-born Isaak Iselin (1728–1782) exemplified this approach.<sup>15</sup> Schlözer's own major works, *Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie* (The Conception of Universal History), published in two volumes in 1772–1773, and *WeltGeschichte nach ihren HauptTheilen im Auszug und Zusammenhange*, (World History in its Main Outlines in Selections and Connections, two volumes, 1785–1789) strove to supersede both Iselin's lofty design and purely compilatory collections, such as the gargantuan English *Universal History*, which was translated and assiduously annotated by a consortium of staunchly Lutheran scholars from Halle headed by Sigmund Jacob Baumgarten.<sup>16</sup> Schlözer's works represent path-breaking attempts to delineate the parameters of a non-providential history of mankind: space, time, and the plurality of ethnic groups or civilizations ('Völker') who, due to contingent constellations of factors, had experienced different historical trajectories.<sup>17</sup>

All comprehensive histories invariably included reflections on ancient history and the biblical narrative, on Chinese history (introduced through Jesuit missionaries) and on the customs of 'savage societies.' A way to reconcile universalism with diversity on an analytical level was to survey gradations of 'progress.' This problem was tied to a broader question about the course of history, whether it proceeded in a cyclical fashion or rather in a linear manner? For Enlighteners, the circular motion of history became applicable to the non-European world *and* to Europe's internal peripheries, whereas the linear arrow was the discernible trait of the advanced, cultivated nations. Nevertheless, a set of concentric perimeters or orbits with different degrees of approximation to the European standard was not constructed before the end of the eighteenth century. Enlighteners relished in viewing the savage cultures of the age as their 'contemporary predecessors' consigned to earlier stages of European history. Intimate knowledge of 'primitive' societies would shed new light on antiquity and the early civilizations. Associations binding together the history of the mind, religious cults, and social organization became prevalent. This way of thinking correlated monotheism with reason and civilization, the predominance of the imagination with mythology and 'barbarism,' or the 'uncultured' mind with poetic, sensual-allegorical concepts and pantheist leanings. Johann Gottfried Herder and Christoph Gottlieb Heyne likewise conducted horizontal and vertical comparisons. As the Prussian cleric Friedrich Gedike put it: '[T]here was a time when the Greeks were no more prudent [...] than the Greenlanders or Kamtchatkans whose mythology is strikingly similar to that of the Greeks.' Under the auspices of a history of human reason, the ontogenesis of the human being was tied to the

phylogenesis of mankind: 'Observations about the development of a child's soul give insights about the pace of development of an entire uncultivated people,' Gedike argued.<sup>18</sup>

This anthropological design co-existed with a bold re-envisaging of the German lands' place in the history of Europe. Since Johann Jacob Mascov's *Geschichte der Teutschen* (two volumes, 1726–1734), the migrations of late antiquity acquired prominence as a axial period in Europe's progress toward enlightenment. Barbaric German tribes, forest transhumants pasturing their cattle on glades in the immense woodlands, initially lacked sociability and law before nomadic invasions originating at the inner Asian boundaries of China set off snowball effects with repercussions reaching to the frontiers of the Roman Empire. German barbarians, converts to the Arian variety of Christianity, conquered Rome and, submitting to its legal culture, forged a blend of Roman law with their models of allodial and proprietary tenure: it was Montesquieu who famously exclaimed in his *Spirit of the Laws* (1748) that 'this beautiful system was invented in the woods.'<sup>19</sup> In this way, the Germans became key agents in the transformation that gave rise to the medieval European system of state and Church. The formerly barbarian, acculturated *legalis homo* would emerge from their cisalpine and transalpine feudal kingdoms, shattered by their conflict with the papacy, as the first *Bürger* of flourishing cities. This marriage of German liberty and Roman legality was thus taken to encapsulate the germ of the eighteenth-century European order.

### 6.2.2 Religion

Enlighteners, as is well known, propagated religious toleration. Notwithstanding this practice of openness, a comparative study of non-Christian religions had to wait for the Romantic fascination with mythology to grow into a scholarly field of some importance. Under the influence of the Jesuits, Confucianism did not count as a religion, but as an inner-worldly system of ethics. Buddhism was discovered in Europe only around the middle of the nineteenth century. Hinduism (a collective label covering a broad range of Indian religious creeds and practices) became visible to European eyes as a result of early Sanskrit studies in Bengal and in Paris from the 1780s onwards. At first linguistic and mythological aspects of Indian civilization received more attention than its religious side. This remains true until Friedrich Schlegel's essay *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians), published in 1808, which marks a decisive shift from the sensualist study of imagination to the philological and symbolic penetration of myth. During the Enlightenment, however, the religious practices of 'savages' continued to be lumped under the old catch-all notion of 'idolatry.'

For several decades, the European debate about Islam left few traces in Germany. The outstanding German-language contribution was the sympathetic description of

tribal Arabia by the traveler and proto-ethnographer in Danish service, Carsten Niebuhr (1733–1815), whose *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und anderen umliegenden Ländern* (Descriptions of Travels to Arabia and other Nearby Lands) appeared in three volumes between 1774 and 1837. Most writers of the German Enlightenment took a detached attitude towards Islam, a religion that had few adherents in Germany and was no longer, following the decline of the Ottoman Empire, considered a menace to Christendom. Few major German intellectuals, apart from Lessing, engaged with Islam, which does not diminish the importance of orientalist scholarship.<sup>20</sup> The rediscovery of Islam during the first half of the eighteenth century led to subversive consequences,<sup>21</sup> but 'Mohamedanism' presented no religious threat and little of an intellectual challenge, even though much ink was spilled on the rise of Islam as a peculiarly 'Asiatic revolution.'

Orientalist scholarship was bolstered by biblical hermeneutics and Pietism, a proselytizing, evangelical movement, which emphasized heartfelt sincerity of belief over formulaic professions of faith. Excellent Pietist language schools at Halle (*Collegium Orientale Theologicum*, *Collegium Judaicum*) designed to train missionaries saw many students abort their theological careers. A trailblazer of biblical criticism emerging from this very milieu was Johann David Michaelis (1717–1791), who moved from the then-conventional Protestant view of Hebrew as an immutable, divinely inspired tongue to a naturalist notion of the emergence of language. In 1761, he prompted the Danish court to send a scholarly expedition to the Arabian Peninsula, which Michaelis considered a static polity where one could still study the customs and rites related in the Bible. Although antediluvian chronologies became available, the scope of sacred history was not constricted, and the pedigree of Confucianism was even traced back to the Ark of Noah (vice-versa, Jesus was cast by Chinese writers as a disciple of Confucius' equilibrist doctrine).

Eager to end vindictive persecution, most German Enlightenmenters defended the toleration of Jews—with Christian Wilhelm Dohm's *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden* (On the Civic Improvement of the Jews, 1781) prominent among them. The desirability of Jewish 'emancipation,' and civic integration was however also contested among Jewish *Maskilim*, scholars and adherents of *Haskalah*, Jewish Enlightenment. What Christian Enlightenmenters perceived as rebarbative traits of the Jews' behavior was explained as a result of their ignominious humiliation over centuries. Positions vis-à-vis Jewry thus oscillated between patronizing 'betterment,' calls for conversion, and anthropological curiosity.

### 6.2.3 Empire

The critique of Empire was a discourse of its own that bore a discernibly German imprint, since the German states took no part in the colonial expansion of the time.

Colonialism was not a domestic political issue, and nothing ever came close to such great public events as the process of impeachment against Warren Hastings, the first Governor General of India, in the House of Commons in the years 1788–1795, or the debates in the French National Convention preceding the abolition of colonial slavery in February 1794. The Germans were keen, but detached observers of other people's empires and colonialism.

Racist remarks directed at Africans by Christoph Meiners (1747–1810), a prolific professor of *Weltweisheit* (Worldly Wisdom) at the University of Göttingen, have given the German Enlightenment a bad reputation, and even in Herder, rightly considered the paragon of cultural diversity, one comes across occasional comments on non-Europeans, Mongols for example, of a blatantly offensive nature.<sup>22</sup> On the whole, however, the German Enlighteners in the second half of the eighteenth century were outspoken critics of imperialism and colonialism. This holds true for Immanuel Kant, Herder, Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, Georg Forster, and many less well-known authors, such as August Hennings (1746–1826), a Danish civil servant writing in German.<sup>23</sup> However, the German critique of empire responded less to specific abuses and outrages than anti-colonial agitation in Britain or France. It argued on principal grounds, and discussed conquest and subjugation in fundamental terms of justice, legitimacy, and the tolerance of diversity. Immanuel Kant put forward the strongest objection to colonialism; he rejected the right to settle on another people's soil except when permitted through a treaty, and he left no doubt that even 'savages' had rights and were capable of acting as legal subjects. The most powerful enlightened critique of empire was the detailed analysis of the Spanish colonial system in Mexico composed by Alexander von Humboldt after his extended visit to the country (*Essai politique sur le Royaume de la Nouvelle-Espagne*, 1808–1812), a book written in French, the principal language of enlightened cosmopolitanism. Here, and in his later work on Cuba (*Essai politique sur l'île de Cuba*, 1831), Humboldt did not limit himself to moral or legal denunciation. Through careful examination, he uncovered the inherent irrationality of the colonial system and questioned its long-term capacity for survival.

Post-modernist critics belittle enlightened interest in the world as a mere soliloquy, give short shrift to Enlighteners' recognition of diversity and calls for toleration, and see eighteenth-century universalism as a smokescreen of benevolence to camouflage Europe's rise to world supremacy. According to these critiques, genuinely European categories have been ruthlessly grafted onto the world in the guise of 'universal' characteristics of mankind by means of expropriation and colonial oppression.<sup>24</sup> However, we must be careful not to read back into the *ancien régime* nineteenth-century commonplaces. German Enlighteners who subscribed to a *weltbürgerlich* or cosmopolitan agenda by no means licensed a *mission civilisatrice*. Moreover, they did not exculpate the destruction of primitive cultures as a prerequisite for their advancement. Although Enlighteners' criticism of exploitative colonialism did not entail a full recognition of cultural equality irrespective of place, most Enlighteners preserved the unity of mankind as a pivotal idea. 'All men,' Herder insisted, 'are endowed with the power of attaining' superior reason.<sup>25</sup> Foreign cultures should be treated with respect,

not lured into exploitative treaties. However, he also wondered whether, when under European dominion, foreign cultures should be given laws adjusted to their moral customs and intellectual capacity. In the early nineteenth century, the idiom of enlightened benevolence lingered on, but it was gradually interspersed with more disparaging attitudes toward other cultures arrested in their respective stages of development. This left little doubt about the progress of Europe as a guiding beacon for the world. Whereas in the eighteenth century the propensity for despotism was ascribed to malleable traits, habits, or oppression, a new explanatory model lodged it in the intrinsic indolence and servility of non-Europeans from the early nineteenth century onwards. In his *Principles of Political Economy* of 1848, John Stuart Mill famously lamented the recent tendency of 'attributing the diversities of conduct and character to inherent national differences.'<sup>26</sup>

#### 6.2.4 Commerce and the law of nations

The eighteenth-century European order was built on a system of treaties and on the mollifying benefits of commerce. According to Emmerich de Vattel's classic on the *Law of Nations* (1758), this *res publica* was based on a common interest in the maintenance of order and in the preservation of liberty.<sup>27</sup> It was a 'balanced' commonwealth of self-governing entities, interconnected to a degree of interdependency where one state could not dispense with the other. The republic of letters spread enlightened reasoning and polite morals, multiplying advancement beyond the narrow circle of its accredited members.<sup>28</sup> This system was deemed incompatible with assertions of empire, of a *monarchia universalis* on the continent itself,<sup>29</sup> even if, at the same time, Europe hosted several metropolitan centers of maritime empires. Obviously, the conceptual distinctions drawn within Europe as well as between Europe and the rest of the world were crucial here. The new notion of Europe as a balanced stable system of enlightened states that mutually enhanced the commonweal increasingly provoked doubts, also from a cosmopolitan perspective. If a state failed to fulfill its duties to its subjects, by investing them with liberty and to ensuring justice, could it, some asked, forfeit its right to self-preservation? The three partitions of Poland (1772, 1793, 1795), when Europe's second-largest state disappeared from the map within twenty years, aroused fierce debates, and so did Joseph II's plan of 1785 to trade off the Austrian Netherlands for Bavaria. The Polish case could be seen as an example of morally responsible absolutism repressing a myopic movement of Catholic-aristocratic resistance to the modern state.<sup>30</sup> Anarchy could spill over Poland's boundaries and would be in need of containment. This issue threw into relief the co-existence of alternative models that inhabited the enlightened sphere of political legitimacy. To quite a few authors reforming monarchies were superior to the sturdy, but ramshackle republics so dear to the defenders of ancient public virtue. On this reasoning, the monarchy's function as warrantor of public welfare and felicity justified inter-state intervention, even occupation. This was precisely the argument advanced in the Polish case to brush aside claims

of autarky and self-determination, which had been eloquently rephrased by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (1770–1771). In their acerbic reports, Prussian bureaucrats meticulously took stock of the alleged moral destitution of the newly acquired territories.

By the late eighteenth century, the ‘cosmopolitan regime’ came under attack for propagating vapid and abstract legal and moral norms. Enlightened cosmopolitanism could then be seen as tantamount to the perilous symptoms of (ostensibly) *doux commerce* (marked, e.g., by counterfeit coins and *cordons sanitaires*, which impeded trade and thus severed bonds between regional economies). Among these supposedly perilous symptoms were emotional depravation, individual self-aggrandizement, prodigality, and avarice, together forming a system of ‘interactive greed.’<sup>31</sup> Critics put forward a non-utilitarian notion of morals, tilting a lance at Kant’s ‘unsociable sociability.’ Writers like Thomas Abbt challenged the significance of egoistical self-gratification and rehabilitated sacrifice for the common good and for posterity, envisaging moral self-regeneration through sublime, patriotic virtue. Moral perfection thus served as a scaffold for common welfare (*allgemeines Bestes*). This was the critical juncture where Kant felt obliged to take up the gauntlet flung down by his former student Herder in the *Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (1784–91). Herder, as Kant argued in a famous review, adhered to fallacious sensationalist principles in order to prove a speculative presumption about the benign harmony between the individual and society. The attainment of harmony, Kant argued, was a vain hope in light of natural human antagonisms, which surreptitiously contributed to happiness and perfection.<sup>32</sup>

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the whole idea of a regulated polite and commercial advancement could seem a decoy, a prevarication of glib enlightened parlance. Students of national economy had argued for some time that the subjugation (by means of spreading law and morals) and cultural evisceration of peoples were the by-products of commercial domination within as well as outside Europe.<sup>33</sup> Commerce meant coercion and conquest. In 1807, the Berlin publicist Friedrich Buchholz called for a Franco-Prussian alliance against the universal monarchy of British mercantile dominance.<sup>34</sup> Reiterating tenets from Rousseau’s *Social Contract*, Johann Gottlieb Fichte’s *Closed Commercial State* (1800) likewise urged the abandonment of international trade.<sup>35</sup> A disdain for the overtly paternalistic state-economies of the static Eastern Empires, held responsible for distortions of commerce, also began to overshadow the erstwhile appreciation for the fine-tuned checks and balances which domesticated despotism.

Fifthly, philosophy of history and *Weltbürgertum*. Common to Enlighteners’ view of progress was the ascertaining of three particular qualities: economic activity (dynamism and competitive entrepreneurship), sociability (translating private virtues into social modes and collective habits of comportment or channeling private vices into public benefits) and public governance (as opposed to the arbitrary use of power). These three traits shaped enlightened attempts to come to terms with Europe’s place in history.

Two of the shorter writings of the greatest German philosopher of the eighteenth century, Immanuel Kant, are of particular relevance here: ‘*Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*’ (Ideas for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim, 1784)<sup>36</sup> and ‘*Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer Entwurf*’ (Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch, 1795).<sup>37</sup> Kant’s treatise on perpetual peace stands not only in a tradition of irenic writings since Erasmus’ *Querela Pacis* (The Complaint of Peace) of 1517, but should also be seen as part of a debate on the contemporary condition of Europe in an age of large-scale war.

Immanuel Kant’s essay ‘Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim’ proposes a regulative idea of the improvement of mankind that allows for the full development of man’s predispositions (*Anlagen*) for the use of reason. Similar to the Göttingen historians, Kant’s regulative idea serves to make the ‘complex and disorderly’ material of history reveal order, allowing the historian to see the ‘system’ behind the ‘aggregate’ of disparate and arbitrary facts.<sup>38</sup> The teleological idea of a providential plan of nature is a ‘maxim’ and ‘guiding principle’ necessary to organize empirical material.<sup>39</sup> The presupposition of ‘progress’ does not serve as a causal explanation or as an absolute truth, but as a heuristic principle capable of empirical confirmation, revealing a ‘regular cause of improvement.’<sup>40</sup> Kant’s conjectural axiom, the improvement of mankind, organizes the process of history ‘as if,’ prefiguring man’s further development and encouraging social and political reform. The axiom prepares its own decrease of importance without ever being dislodged. As soon as man is emancipated from the ‘rule of instincts,’ the toil endured to achieve this stage will be retrospectively justified. Kant’s *a priori* thus saves mankind from despair in the face of injustices that are man-made and therefore changeable. Kant is concerned with a species-wide rational and moral advancement through social ‘antagonism.’ This irresolvable state of competition, in turn, precludes men from developing the self-discipline necessary for moral agency, a function fulfilled by public law with its threat of sanction.

Perfect justice remains an illusion and even the state’s approximate justice is, in Kant’s view, constantly imperiled by warfare and inter-state conflict. A cosmopolitan federation with legislative powers, inaugurating a world senate for universal jurisdiction and a court of international arbitration, is the prerequisite for the further advancement of mankind. We need to situate Kant’s ‘perpetual peace’ of 1795 in its context: the idea that the international cohabitation of nations could be described as a natural society—subject to natural law, as was the community of men within a state—was common to enlightened thought.<sup>41</sup> Accordingly, international law had aimed at preventing individual states from destroying this (fictional) ‘natural order.’ Kant envisages a global legal community of equal citizens who assent to their polity’s laws and are not forced into arms. He favors a voluntary league of nations over a regime of universal jurisdiction with coercive powers. Predestination forecloses the total ‘confluence’ of peoples, but there exists a mechanism, based on shared instincts, which connects and at the same time separates them: ‘National pride and national hatred are necessary to separate nations’ and, Kant adds, governments ‘like this folly.’ Moral perfection will surmount the instinctual state through ‘maxims of reason,’ which will enable men to



'eradicate *Nationalwahn*' (national delusion) whose place will be taken by 'patriotism and cosmopolitanism.'<sup>42</sup>

Johann Gottfried Herder, Kant's former student, repudiated the 'spirit of the times,' which he saw as a presumption of uniformity based upon self-adulatory parochialism. Herder's unease with 'facile, grandiose' generalities and his emphasis on the contingency of history were reinforced by his studies on the origins of language.<sup>43</sup> Subscribing to a nominalist approach, Herder highlighted how particular, descriptive notions were transmuted into universal denominators.<sup>44</sup> Generalized claims that fitted entire peoples into an overall scheme were perilous and unfounded as no universal standard to measure 'progress' existed. This absence of parameters resulted as much from the fallibility and finitude of human capacities as from the circumstantial conditions of every specific situation. The notion of 'deviation' from a given 'standard' is therefore erroneous. According to Herder the force of knowledge imprinted by concrete circumstances leads to moral incommensurability across time and place. 'Why do we not realize that if we do not have all the vices and virtues of former ages?', Herder asked in his 1774 *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Also a Philosophy of History), it is 'because we are not in their position [ . . . ] nor breathe the same air.'<sup>45</sup> 'The philosopher,' according to Herder's poignant appraisal, 'is never more of an ass than when he [ . . . ] pronounces on the perfection of the world, wholly convinced that everything moves just so, in a [ . . . ] straight line, that every succeeding generation reaches perfection in a [ . . . ] linear progression, according to *his* ideals of virtue and progress.'<sup>46</sup> Indeed, the self-serving teleology that pervades all the countless 'pragmatic histories' of the age fuels a complacent trust in *general* progress. This basic conviction makes it impossible to properly appreciate minor, but *concrete* and overdue reforms. According to Herder, conjuring up the 'opium dream' of the superiority of eighteenth-century Europe served as a pretext for cowardice and inactivity. Adorning man's chains with flowers, the 'uniformity of progress' sapped the cosmopolitan project by setting up a complacent notion of 'humanity,' tied to the alleged benefits of commerce.<sup>47</sup>

By emphasizing the uniqueness of situations and the incomparability of different sociopolitical configurations, Herder does not assign intrinsic, inalienable characteristics to peoples. In his *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784–1791), he claimed that all individuals and nations are expressions of a single human nature, all gravitating toward the fullest expression of their potentialities. The 'New Zealand cannibal and a Fénelon, a Newton and the wretched Peshera, are all creatures of one and the same species,' he insisted.<sup>48</sup>

### 6.3 TRANSITIONS AROUND 1800

The period around 1800 was a time of multiple transitions and of the fragmentation of enlightened agendas and claims. New, ostensibly self-contained 'currents' surfaced: liberalism, conservatism, romanticism. The conventional taxonomy suggests that

Enlightenment's demise neatly coincided with the centennial divide. This oversimplifies the ways by which enlightened objectives and methods were reconfigured and built into newly available idioms; also, partisans of late Enlightenment, *Spätaufklärung*, did not simply acquiesce to this polemical and selective re-tailoring. The engrained view of Enlightenment's decline also tends to portray the available agendas around 1800 in isolation from each other.

This chapter can only hint at the changes the concept of *Weltbürgertum* underwent around 1800. Let us single out two epistemological dislocations: a sanguine eighteenth-century debate about the history of writing came to an end with the disenchanting realization that Chinese and Egyptian civilizations did not possess scripts reproducing reality in pictorial or symbolic signs beyond phonetic and alphabetical notation. Jean-François Champollion's decipherment of the Rosetta Stone and Wilhelm von Humboldt's studies on Chinese language are pivotal here. Also, the belief in the pristine African and Oriental progenitors of Greek Antiquity rapidly lost prestige by the early nineteenth century, being replaced by a notion of indigenously European or Indo-European 'Aryan' origins. A renewed sentiment of European solidarity, culturally validated by an invoked shared 'heritage,' went hand in hand with an increasing disregard for the fate of peoples outside Europe.

In the realm of politics, three processes come to mind: the years around 1800 brought a redistribution of global power, with the Napoleonic wars heralding British ascendancy. Distances between the continents shrunk further and Europe's mercantile empire was consolidated. After a marked decline before 1800, European missionary aspirations again began to soar.<sup>49</sup> In a more narrowly German setting, the unmasking of the Illuminati order in 1784–1785 and the spread of revolutionary conflagration after 1789 allowed cosmopolitanism to acquire yet another layer of meaning—while tarnishing, for some, the process of Enlightenment further still.<sup>50</sup> The Enlightenment could now, in the wake of Napoleonic 'despotism' and belligerent expansionist zeal, be denounced as universalist, French, and as a potential menace.<sup>51</sup> The divorce between the cosmopolitan (in a disparaging sense), superficial and vapid French ideas and an ostensibly deeper German national 'spirit' became a much-labored theme of cultural self-recognition in the German lands, one which still resonated in Friedrich Meinecke's magisterial *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat* (1908). In fact, the rejection of Napoleon's German politics was far less pervasive than usually assumed. The shifts in political sensibilities and rhetoric are difficult to gauge, but the Masonic lodges provide revealing evidence. Around 1800 cosmopolitan rhetoric was readjusted and realigned to fit an agenda more straightforwardly alloyed to a 'nation.'<sup>52</sup> In 1809, a few days after the foundation of the *Rheinbund*, Prussian Masons of Erlangen dispatched a circular to fraternal lodges in which they insisted that 'the cosmopolitan interest can and should coexist with the patriotic [*vaterländischen*] in complete harmony.'<sup>53</sup>

The 'nation' frequently invoked around 1800 was not a concept developed in clear contradistinction to cosmopolitanism. It rather seems that cosmopolitanism and hyperbolic 'nationalism' carved out separate channels. The early nineteenth century did not bring a backlash of stubborn nationalism traditionally attributed to popular



revolts against Napoleon. Fraternal bonds to other peoples were reinforced and praise for the Revolution in France remained strong. German Philhellenism in the 1820s also rested on a cosmopolitan scaffold, as Greek patriots modeled their pedigree on what they considered to be the ancient ancestors of all civilized mankind. Notwithstanding the nationalist harangues of Joseph Görres and Ernst Moritz Arndt, many of Germany's foremost men of letters retained a distinctly cosmopolitan perspective and refrained from adulating the *Vaterland*. During the last years of his life, Friedrich Schiller collected materials on several plays with oceanic and exotic subject matters. Only fragments indicate the direction in which his interest in pirates, emigration, and the New World might have taken the great dramatist.<sup>54</sup> Cosmopolitanism survived powerfully in Goethe's idea and program of *Weltliteratur*, which he began to adumbrate in 1827. He did not, in the first place, mean the formation of an extended literary canon to be enjoyed and contemplated quietly by readers in the Germany of the *Biedermeier* years, but rather a constant, and well-organized, activity of awareness and mediation, translation and transfer, a process of linking intellectual communities in distant parts of the world, encouraging the educated to transcend parochialism or national bigotry. *Weltliteratur*, as the cultural underpinning of world society, had not just to be assembled and displayed, it had to be created.<sup>55</sup> In his last years, the ever-attentive Goethe hailed the advent of the steamship, predicted a great future for the railway and understood that cross-border cultural communication would be facilitated by the logistics of the dawning industrial age. While the old enlightened republic of letters was dilapidated after 1815, a pan-European community of scholars was not torn apart by the Napoleonic wars. German scholars were actively involved in the many networks tirelessly spun by that indefatigable survivor and defender of the late Enlightenment, Alexander von Humboldt.

The desirability of 'Enlightenment' as moral and political advancement remained forceful. From the early nineteenth century onwards, its universal thrust became more and more unequivocally tied to a distinct, tangible 'national' community, which was portrayed as both the target and agent of enlightening in the sense of a 'national renaissance.' A double-threaded process can be observed. On the one hand, one relished Germany's alleged role as intellectual *primus inter pares*, which encouraged the wish to bestow to others one's pioneer accomplishments. On the other hand, and this is particularly salient well into the *Vormärz*, Germans gave themselves pride of place in their solitary cosmopolitanism: cosmopolitanism was thus emblazoned as a key cachet of German national character, as a quality which potentially superseded that of other peoples.<sup>56</sup>

In the Habsburg monarchy after 1800, the conceptual triad of cosmopolitan universalism, territorial patriotism and an incipient stress on national distinctiveness was equally significant. In its multilingual milieu, rival conceptions of the nation contended for legitimacy. As in the non-Habsburg German context, cosmopolitanism could become a term of vituperation directed against an irresponsibly 'rootless' (in the Central European case: 'Germanized') aristocracy with its outdated taste and opinions, whose legally sanctioned predominance had to be curtailed.<sup>57</sup> In addition, a 'cosmopolitan' proclivity could be accused of enticing consent to Joseph II's reforms of the

1780s, which rode roughshod over inherited constitutions and an ostensibly 'natural' diversity. This linkage did not deter early conservatives from decrying liberalism as a reincarnation of the enlightened cosmopolitan ideal, or from seeing liberalism as expressing abstract legalism and encouraging self-love. This was a key moment in the fragmentation of enlightened cosmopolitanism.<sup>58</sup> However, while agents of the Bohemian and Hungarian 'national renaissance' rejected antiquated and detrimental 'cosmopolitanism,' they strongly emphasized the brotherhood and interdependency of peoples who were entitled to aspire and achieve freedom. This again clearly evinces traits of the late-enlightened model of a European equilibrium, and of eighteenth-century universalism reoriented toward the 'people' as the agent of emancipation and refinement. Moreover, the 'cosmopolitan patriotism' inculcated by the imperial state explicitly situated itself in the dignified ancestry of the Roman Empire.<sup>59</sup>

Another shift relevant to the reconfiguration of cosmopolitanism both in the Habsburg Monarchy and in the German lands occurred around 1800. During the eighteenth century, the European Republic of letters was involved in charting an imaginary boundary between 'East' and 'West,' portraying the former as exotically backward and the later as progressive and enlightened. The debate over Poland sketched above was a critical point in this drift. These clichés were often reinforced by intellectuals from 'the East' for reasons of polemical purchase in order to spur their audiences' will to reform. However, with the Revolutionary Wars this sliding frontier between East and West became more tangible and politically charged. While Germany was not squarely placed on the Eastern side of this divide, German educated citizens' self-recognition acquired a certain gravitational pull in that direction after 1800. The conventional wisdom about the renunciation of enlightened ideas and methodological devices after 1800 is heavily colored by hindsight. The disavowal of cosmopolitanism was a convenient exit from the Enlightenment. Later in the nineteenth century, liberal nationalists wished to efface the cosmopolitan blot on their shield and, in doing so, they diluted the intellectual force of enlightened dispositions after 1800. Posterity has accepted this liberal-nationalist image of German cosmopolitanism and connected it to assumptions about Germany's purported 'special path.' As a consequence, cosmopolitanism has been frequently treated as a typically German idealist pipe dream that hampered political realism and reinforced escapism, thus buttressing pusillanimous state-obedience.<sup>60</sup> Those who deplored Germany's status as a 'belated nation' could hold cosmopolitanism responsible for this delay. The dissociation from questionable *Spätaufklärung* with its asserted revolutionary potential thus served a central purpose. In retrospect, it irrevocably attuned liberal aspirations to the nation state already during the *Vormärz*.<sup>61</sup> This claiming and realigning of intellectual predecessors has also colored basic assumptions of German history, with liberal nationalists later maligning the bureaucrats who had supported Napoleonic rule. In fact, those civil servants were eager to level the privilege-based society of orders and inherited prerogative including what remained of the estates (*Stände* or *Landtage*) that had not been entirely subverted by the enlightened despots of the eighteenth century. Later liberal nationalists essentially erased the patriotic activities of enlightened bureaucrats where they had succumbed to pro-Napoleonic sentiments. In the

former *Rheinbund* states, liberal nationalists slighted the long-standing effects of bureaucratic reform, whereas in Prussia the reconstruction of the state after the crushing defeat of 1806 was conceived as the foundational moment for 'liberal' statehood. As for the intellectual genesis and antecedents of Prussia's rebirth, their 'cosmopolitan' purview was disputed. Around 1900, this would spark a veritable *Historikerstreit* about Baron vom Stein, Karl August von Hardenberg, and other Prussian heroes. The debate focused on their reliance on eighteenth-century French reforming schemes that had been thwarted or distorted by the Revolution of 1789 and, of course, on their debt to Kant.

The Romantics' cosmopolitan schemes are difficult to square with the conventional image of their inveterate repudiation of Enlightenment. Romantics joined in the disavowal of the paradigms of commerce and 'unsocial sociability.' They wished to resuscitate a world of fraternity marked by—in Novalis' words—'faith and love,' not by 'knowing and having.'<sup>62</sup> They tacitly endorsed enlightened ideals of individuality, freedom, and equality, but accused the Enlightenment of having devaluated them, ridiculing sacrifice for the best of mankind and supplanting true charity with greed. The Romantics took issue with contractualism, which stipulated the self-subjugation of individuals to the state's laws. Joseph von Eichendorff, for example, tried to strip the prejudicial incrustations of 'Enlightenment' in order to retrieve the true core of cosmopolitanism, which he saw as a Catholic universalism beyond confessional hostility.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, Johann Gottlieb Fichte had initially aspired to the cosmopolitan unification of 'Neo-Europeans'—unflinchingly rejecting Arab-Muslim culture—under the aegis of a 'science of reason' [*Vernunftwissenschaft*]. He devised a heliotropism which irresistibly attracted the cosmopolitan mind to the 'sun' of the most refined culture.<sup>64</sup> Fichte's crestfallen response to Napoleonic victory first in Austerlitz, then in Jena, made him pronounce that 'in reality cosmopolitanism should necessarily become patriotism'.<sup>65</sup> In his *Addresses to the German Nation*, delivered in Berlin between December 1807 and March 1808, Fichte even claimed that the German nation should excel as the 'rebirthing mother and conceiver of the World' (*Wiedergebälerin und Wiederherstellerin der Welt*).<sup>66</sup> Indeed, the criticism of what the Romantics took to be the enlightened conception of the state, an aggregate of individuals detached from each other, re-invigorated their cosmopolitan view of mankind as a family united in spiritual harmony: The 'poetic state' would dispense with coercive laws to the degree it succeeded in educating its citizen to emotional, spiritual, and moral perfection.<sup>67</sup>

At the very time the divide between 'East' and 'West' underwent a reconfiguration, there also occurred a refashioning of the conceptual arbitrator between the 'universal' and the 'particular.' The 'nation' increasingly came to replace the 'citizen of the world' as the epistemological interface between the 'whole' and the 'parts.' The character of this seismic shift can best be studied in historical writing: the decades immediately preceding 1800 witnessed the last heyday of cosmopolitan world history, for example, with Johann Gottfried Eichhorn's *Weltgeschichte* (2 vols, 1799–1800).<sup>68</sup> The 'cultural history of the human race' (*Kulturgeschichte des Menschengeschlechts*) was losing academic significance within Germany, and the same applies to the 'history of the European system of states,' whose main practitioner had been Arnold Hermann

Ludwig Heeren at Göttingen. However, both did not simply peter out. We know little about how the *science de l'homme*, which furnished the Napoleonic Empire with its key tools of knowledge, was received in the German lands. A philosophical history of the Scottish type found new acolytes among Hegelians.<sup>69</sup> The large-scale historical enterprises of this 'threshold period' (*Schwelienzeit*), mocked as insipid and anodyne by a younger generation, refused to vanish.<sup>70</sup> Notable examples are Alexander von Humboldt's far-flung oeuvre based on his American voyage of 1799–1805 or Carl Ritter with his monumental *Die Erdkunde im Verhältniß zur Natur und Geschichte des Menschen* (1817–1859). Nevertheless, impermeable disciplinary dispensations emerged and a contraction of the gaze replaced the far less prejudiced enlightened global perspective. With specialization came claims to European omniscience. Axiomatic and aprioristic Eurocentrism retained the enlightened *terminus ad quem*, the apogee of refinement, but tended to identify this stage with the situation of early nineteenth century Europe. The sliding scale of progress designed by eighteenth century historians-cum-anthropologists was a heuristic grid and elastic model, which atrophied into a teleological model, with Europe as its implicit parameter, pinnacle, and destination. In practice, this superior stage of civilization was identified with *western* Europe.

These shifts had far-ranging implications for the purpose and purview of the historian's craft: enlighteners enjoyed the unraveling of evil intentions resulting in beneficial effects. With a fine sense of irony, Enlighteners pinpointed how fallacious doctrines and 'salutary nonsense' spurred societal progress. These tools were gradually replaced with new explanatory devices, most saliently by an appeal to moral powers (*sittliche Mächte*) and their earth-bound protagonists, notable individuals (mostly 'great men'), who served as the significant agents of history. Here, of course, lies the much-betrodden threshold between Enlightenment and 'Historicism.'<sup>71</sup> The recognition of the artificiality of the units and entities of historical enquiry stressed by the Enlighteners gave way to a new authentication of the intrinsic qualities of 'identity' and 'individuality'—be it of states, peoples, nations, or guiding 'ideas.' The discontinuities of history that Enlighteners had stressed were now increasingly glossed over. Enlighteners had argued that the linchpin of historical refinement wandered. Peoples replaced each other at the helm of progress. By the early nineteenth century, 'culture' was divested of this typological, Linnéan mould and imparted with a new immanent thrust and a set of diachronic, organicist-ontological metaphors: a cataract-or glacier-like 'world historical stream of peoples' rolls along and nations are likened to the peaks of a 'primeval mountain range.'<sup>72</sup> When scholars after 1800 subverted the eighteenth-century system of world history, this involved a redistribution of emphasis, allotting more significance to the 'interior,' to intrinsic pulls and qualities.

Anthropology, with its classificatory schemes, held in the highest esteem in the eighteenth century, was discarded in the long run as far as it did not serve to justify material exploitation. Accounts of the stages of civilization proved superfluous once the savage was regarded as markedly less 'noble' and ultimately incomprehensible. Historical writing, then, came to lend credence to two basic convictions: Europe's superiority was taken to consist in the division of its land mass into nation states whose global

destiny and mission only now, after 1800, unfurled fully. The second prerequisite was the role of the rational state as the ultimate agent of historical progress. The absence of these engines of reform elsewhere made the study of extra-European constitutional regulations and customs expendable. Acquitting the historian of his responsibility to forge the global *'nexus rerum'* stressed by Gatterer, the cosmopolitan synoptic vision was surrendered to God, who adjudicated *sub specie aeternitatis*. States could now be portrayed as the 'thoughts of God.'<sup>73</sup> The re-entrance of God into history was also predicated upon the late-eighteenth century break with the old pragmatic universal history. Now, given the asserted self-actualization of a *deus absconditus*, progress could be retrieved in the most diverse shapes and figurations of an 'inner history' and 'inner meaning': one could see all epochs—following Ranke—as 'immediate to God.'<sup>74</sup> This radicalized the eighteenth century's appreciation of diversity.<sup>75</sup> The new mode of historiographical 'depiction' implied a reverential reluctance to decipher the innermost 'hieroglyphic' forces of history: a new idiom of disclosure and revelation emerged.

## NOTES

1. Fania Oz-Salzberger, *Translating the Enlightenment: Scottish Civic Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 48, 138–166; László Kontler, 'William Robertson's History of Manners in German,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 58 (1997), 125–144.
2. Martin Mulsow, *Moderne aus dem Untergrund: Radikale Frühaufklärung in Deutschland 1680–1720* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2002).
3. Eric A. Blackall, *The Emergence of German as a Literary Language, 1700–1775*, 2nd edn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978).
4. Notker Hammerstein, 'Das politische Denken Friedrich Carl von Mosers,' *Historische Zeitschrift* 212 (1971), 316–338; Eva Piirimäe, 'Dying for the Fatherland: Thomas Abbt's Theory of Aesthetic Patriotism,' *History of European Ideas* 35 (2009), 194–208; the best available edition of Abbt's treatise is in Johannes Kunisch (ed.), *Aufklärung und Kriegserfahrung: Klassische Zeitzeugen zum Siebenjährigen Krieg* (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassikerverlag, 1996), 589–650.
5. Margaret C. Jacob, *Strangers Nowhere in the World: The Rise of Cosmopolitanism in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).
6. On the main varieties of cosmopolitanism see Axel Horstmann, 'Kosmopolit, Kosmopolitismus,' in Joachim Ritter and Karlfried Gründer (eds), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* (Basel: Schwabe, 1971–2007), iv (1976), column 1155–1167, 1159–1162.
7. Dominik Collet, *Die Welt in der Stube: Begegnungen mit Außereuropa in Kunstkammern der Frühen Neuzeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007).
8. Winfried Weisshaupt, *Europa sieht sich mit fremdem Blick: Werke nach dem Schema der 'Lettres persanes' in der europäischen, insbesondere der deutschen Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts*, 3 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1979).
9. Franco Venturi, 'Despotismo orientale,' *Rivista storica italiana* 72 (1960), 117–126; Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu,' *Journal of Early Modern History* 9 (2005), 109–180; Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert*, 2nd edn (Munich: Beck, 2010), 271–309.
10. August Ludwig Schlözer, *Vorlesungen über Land- und Seereisen: Nach dem Kollegheft des stud. jur. E. F. Haupt (Wintersemester 1795/96)*, ed. Wilhelm Ebel (Göttingen: Muster-schmidt, 1962).
11. See Hans Erich Bödeker, 'Menschheit, Humanität, Humanismus,' in Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972–1997), iii (1982), 1063–1128, 1079–1090.
12. 'Das Geheimnis des Kosmopolitenordens [1788],' in Christoph Martin Wieland, *Werke*, Fritz Martini and Hans Werner Seiffert (eds), (Munich: Hanser, 1967), iii, 553–575, at 556. Translation: Pauline Kleingeld, 'Six Varieties of Cosmopolitanism in Late Eighteenth-Century Germany,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60, no. 3 (1999), 505–525, at 508.
13. August Ludwig Schlözer, *Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie* (Göttingen and Gotha: J. C. Dieterich, 1772), 18–19, 86, idem, *Weltgeschichte nach ihren Haupttheilen im Auszug und Zusammenhange*, 2 vols (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1785–1789), i, 1, 70.
14. Johann Christoph Gatterer, 'Vom historischen Plan und der sich darauf gründenden historischen Erzählung,' *Allgemeine historische Bibliothek* 1 (1767), 15–89.
15. Isaak Iselin, *Ueber die Geschichte der Menschheit*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: J. H. Harsche 1764). Another important author was the librarian Johann Christoph Adelung (1732–1806) with his *Versuch einer Geschichte der Cultur des menschlichen Geschlechtes* (Leipzig: Hertel, 1782).
16. *An Universal History from the Earliest Account of Time; Compiled from Original Authors and illustrated with Maps, cuts, notes, chronological and other tables*, 44 vols. + 16 folio vols., (London: various printers), 1736–1765; *Uebersetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie, die in England von einer Gesellschaft von Gelehrten angefertigt worden*, i (Halle: Gebauer, 1744).
17. Martin Peters, *Altes Reich und Europa: Der Historiker, Statistiker und Publizist August Ludwig (v.) Schlözer (1735–1809)* (Münster, Lit, 2003), 180.
18. Friedrich Gedike, 'Ueber die mannigfaltigen Hypothesen zur Erklärung der Mythologie: Eine Vorlesung an der Akademie der Wissenschaften,' *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 17, no. 1 (1791), 333–370, at 336, 364.
19. Charles le Secondat de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, Book XI, chapter 6, tr. by Thomas Nugent (4th edn, London: Nourse, 1766), 237, cf. Erwin Hölzle, *Die Idee einer altgermanischen Freiheit vor Montesquieu* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1926).
20. Karl-Josef Kuschel, *Vom Streit zum Wettstreit der Religionen: Lessing und die Herausforderung des Islam* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1998). We cannot here discuss pioneers of Arabic studies like Johann Jacob Reiske (1716–1774).
21. Jonathan I. Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670–1752* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 615–639.
22. Christoph Meiners, *Ueber die Natur der afrikanischen Neger und die davon abhängende Befreyung, oder Einschränkung der Schwarzen [1790]* (Hanover: Wehrhahn 2000); see also id., *Grundriß der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Leipzig: Meyer, 1793), 58–128.
23. August Hennings, *Gegenwärtiger Zustand der Besitzungen der Europäer in Ostindien*, 3 vols. (Hamburg: Bohn, 1784–86).
24. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 7. For an incisive critique see Daniel Carey and Sven Trakulhun, 'Universalism, Diversity, and the Postcolonial Enlightenment,' in Daniel Carey and Lynn Festa (eds), *The Postcolonial Enlightenment*:

- Eighteenth-Century Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 240–280.
25. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, trans. Thomas O. Churchill (London: Johnson, 1800), 231, an abridged translation, with certain idiosyncrasies, of Herder's *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784–1791).
  26. John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy* [1848], in *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965–1991), ii (1965), 319.
  27. Emmerich de Vattel, *Le droit des gens, ou principes de la loi naturelle* (London [i.e. Neuchâtel] 1758).
  28. Jean Paul speaks of a 'geistige Gütergemeinschaft mit allen Völkern': 'Friedens-Predigt an Deutschland' [1808], in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Norbert Miller (Munich: Hanser, 1959–1963), series I, v (1962), 877–916, at 889.
  29. It is in precisely this sense that Karl von Rotteck identifies the Holy Alliance as an 'die Schrecken der Universalmonarchie in sich beherbergende Macht': *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte* (Stuttgart: Hoffmann, 1831–1845), iv, 291.
  30. Friedrich von der Trenck, *Beantwortung auf die in französischer Sprache erschienene Schmähchrift: Anmerkung über die Erklärung der Wiener, Petersburger und Berliner Höfe, die Zergliederung der Republik Pohlen betreffend* (Aachen, 1773); Johann Erich Biester, *Abriß des Lebens und der Regierung der Kaiserinn Katharina II. von Rußland* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1797), 128; see also David Pickus, *Dying with an Enlightened Fall: Poland in the Eyes of German Intellectuals 1764–1800* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2001), 71–156.
  31. István Hont, *The Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
  32. Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 209.
  33. See Kenneth E. Carpenter, *Dialogue in Political Economy: Translations From and Into German in the 18th Century* (Boston: Kress Library Publications, 1977). This line of critique still informs Karl Marx's reading: 'The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. [...] In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations.' Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: 'Manifesto of the Communist Party' [1848], in id., *Collected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1976), vi, 488.
  34. Friedrich Buchholz, *Rom und London oder über die Beschaffenheit der nächsten Universal-Monarchie* (Tübingen: Cotta, 1807).
  35. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, 'Über den geschlossenen Handelsstaat,' in id., Reinhard Lauth et al. (eds), *Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Stuttgart—Bad Cannstatt: Friedrich Frommann Verlag 1962), series I, vii (1988); id., 'Prüfung der Rousseauschen Behauptungen über den Einfluss der Künste und Wissenschaften auf das Wohl der Menschheit' in *Gesamtausgabe*, series I, iii (1966) 59–68.
  36. Translated in Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt (eds), *Kant's Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 9–23.
  37. For a translation see Immanuel Kant, *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, ed. Pauline Kleingeld, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 67–109.
  38. Immanuel Kant, 'Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht,' in: Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Preußischen/Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin/Göttingen (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1902), viii (1912), 17–18; id. 'Streit der Fakultäten,' in Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vii (1907), 83.
  39. Id., *Kritik der Urteilstkraft*, in Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, v (1908), 366.
  40. Id., *Idea*, 29.
  41. For example, Christian Wolff, *Jus Gentium Methodo Scientifica Pertractatum* [1749], trans. Joseph Drake (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), ii, 16–17, § 19–20.
  42. Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, xv (1913), no. 1353.
  43. *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* [1774], cited after J. G. Herder on *Social and Political Culture*, ed. and trans. F. M. Barnard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 198.
  44. 'Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache (Berlin: Voss, 1772)' in all languages the same type of searching reason is conspicuous. See also Herder, *Outlines*, 251.
  45. J. G. Herder on *Social and Political culture*, 212, see also 187.
  46. *Ibid.*, 214.
  47. *Ibid.*, 213–14, Herder, *Outlines*, 92.
  48. J.G. Herder, *Sämtliche Werke* ed. Bernhard Suphan (Berlin: Weidmann, 1877–1913), xiii (1887), 147.
  49. Stuart Woolf, 'The Construction of a European World-View in the Revolutionary-Napoleonic Years,' *Past and Present* 137 (1992), 72–101.
  50. Ernst August von Göchhausen, *Enthüllung des Systems der Weltbürger-Republic: In Briefen aus der Verlassenschaft eines Freymaurers: wahrscheinlich manchem Leser zwanzig Jahre zu spät publiziert* (Rome, [Leipzig: Göschen] 1786) and *Einige Originalschriften des illuminatenordens, welche bey dem gewesenen Regierungsrath Zwack[h] durch vorgenommene Hausvisitation [...] vorgefunden worden*, 3 vols (Munich: Stroll, 1787), i, 3–56.
  51. Gerhard Schuck, *Rheinbundpatriotismus und politische Öffentlichkeit zwischen Aufklärung und Frühliberalismus: Kontinuitätsdenken und Diskontinuitäts Erfahrung in den Staatsrechts- und Verfassungsdebatten der Rheinbundpublizistik*, (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1994).
  52. See Robert Beachy, 'Recasting Cosmopolitanism: German Freemasonry and Regional Identity in the Early Nineteenth Century,' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33 (2000), 266–274.
  53. Julius R. Haarhaus, *Deutsche Freimaurer zur Zeit der Befreiungskriege* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1913) 71–74; see also Jörg Echternkamp, *Der Aufstieg des deutschen Nationalismus 1770–1840* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1999), 577, note 105.
  54. *Schillers Werke. Nationalausgabe* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1943), xii (1982), 303–320.
  55. See Karl S Guthke, *Goethes Weimar und 'Die große Öffnung in die weite Welt'* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001).
  56. For example: Johann Gottlieb Fichte, 'Der Patriotismus und sein Gegenteil: Patriotische Dialoge,' in id., *Gesamtausgabe*, series II, ix (1993), 387–445, 405.
  57. Maciej Janowski, 'Wavering Friendship: Liberal and Nationalist Ideas in Nineteenth-century East Central Europe', *Ab Imperio* 3–4 (2000), 69–90.
  58. See Anton Klement, *Die Prager Monatsschrift Kronos: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Journalistik während der Befreiungskriege* (PhD, University of Vienna, 1908); Maria Kleffer, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der kosmopolitisch gerichteten Zeitschriften um die Wende des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* (PhD, University of Münster, 1923).
  59. For example: Johann Berényi, *Das große Zeitalter Franz I.* (Pesth: Landerer, 1831), 14–15.
  60. See Irma Traud Sahmland, *Christoph Martin Wieland und die deutsche Nation: Zwischen Patriotismus, Kosmopolitismus und Griechentum* (Tübingen: Niemeyer 1990), 269–270.
  61. On this liberal-national retailoring of the past see Wolfgang Hardtwig, 'Von Preußens Aufgabe in Deutschland zu Deutschlands Aufgabe in der Welt: Liberalismus und

- borussianisches Geschichtsbild zwischen Revolution und Restauration' in id., *Geschichtskultur und Wissenschaft* (Munich: Beck, 1990), 103–160.
62. Novalis, *Die Christenheit oder Europa* [delivered 1799, first published 1826], in Richard Samuel et al. (eds) *Novalis: Schriften: Die Werke Friedrich von Hardenbergs*, 6 vols, ed. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1960–2008), iii, 510 (§ 64). This, however, did not amount to a nostalgia for the ancien régime, see *ibid.*, 522, (§ 76).
63. Joseph von Eichendorff, *Zur Geschichte des Dramas* [1855], in id., Jost Perfahl et al. (eds) *Werke*, 5 vols (Munich: Winkler, 1970–1988), iii (1976), 379–527, at 525.
64. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, 'Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters [1804/1805]' in id., *Gesamtausgabe*, series I, viii (1991) 141–396, at 199, 351–352, 363.
65. Id., 'Patriotismus und sein Gegenteil,' 399.
66. Fichte, *Reden an die deutsche Nation*, Reinhard Lauth (ed.) (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1978), 233. The standard account is Stefan Reiß, *Fichtes 'Reden an die deutsche Nation' oder: Vom Ich zum Wir* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006).
67. See Hans-Joachim Mähl, 'Der poetische Staat', in Wilhelm Voßkamp (ed.), *Utopieforschung: Interdisziplinäre Studien zur neuzeitlichen Utopie*, 3 vols (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1985), iii, 273–302.
68. See Giuseppe D'Alessandro, *L'illuminismo dimenticato: Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752–1826) e il suo tempo* (Naples: Liguori Editore, 2000).
69. Norbert Waszek, 'Adam Smith in Germany, 1776–1832,' in Hiroshi Mizuta and Chuhei Sugiyama (eds), *Adam Smith: International Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993), 163–180.
70. See Mihály Horváth, 'Az államelméleti teóriák eredete, kifejlése és befolyása az újabb Európában, Heeren után [The Origins, Development and Influence of State Theories in Modern Europe after Heeren] [1841],' in id., Pál Lányi (ed.) *Polgárosodás, liberalizmus, függetlenségi harc: válogatott írások* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1986), 64–103; Horst-Walter Blanke, 'Verfassungen, die nicht rechtlich, aber wirklich sind: A. H. L. Heeren und das Ende der Aufklärungshistorie,' *Berichte für Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 6 (1983), 143–164. The most popular authors in this vein were Karl von Rotteck (1775–1840) and Friedrich Christoph Schlosser (1776–1861).
71. See Ernst Schulin, 'Die Epochenschwelle zwischen Aufklärung und Historismus,' in Wolfgang Küttler et al. (eds), *Geschichtsdiskurs*, iii: *Die Epoche der Historisierung* (Frankfurt am Main: Fisher, 1997), 17–26; on institutionalization see Wolfgang Hardtwig, 'Die Verwissenschaftlichung der Geschichtsschreibung zwischen Aufklärung und Historismus,' in id., *Geschichtskultur und Wissenschaft*, 58–91.
72. "'Weltgeschichtlicher Völkerstrom': Friedrich Schlegel, Philosophie der Geschichte [1828]," in Ernst Behler et al. (eds) *Kritische Friedrich Schlegel-Ausgabe*, 35 vols (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1959–2002), ix (1971), 4, 55. 'Urgebirgskette': Heinrich Luden, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Völker und Staaten*, 3 vols. (Jena, 1814–1822), i (1814), 30. See also Hans Erich Bödeker, 'The Debates About Universal History and National History, c. 1800: A Problem-Oriented Historical Attempt,' in T. C. W. Blanning and Hagen Schulze (eds), *Unity and Diversity in European Culture c. 1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 135–170.
73. Leopold von Ranke, 'Die sittlichen Mächte,' in id., *Sämtliche Werke*, 54 vols (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1867–90), xxiv (1872) 8, 11.
74. Id., *Aus Werk und Nachlaß*, ii: *Über die Epochen der neueren Geschichte*, ed. Theodor Schieder and Helmut Berding (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1971), 9.
75. For the shaky foundations of the Romantic disavowal of Enlightenment's sense for the unique see Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koellin and James P. Pettegrove (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), 197–199.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ALBRECHT, ANDREA, *Kosmopolitismus: Weltbürgerdiskurse in Literatur, Philosophie und Publizistik um 1800* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005).
- BEISER, FREDERICK C., *Enlightenment, Romanticism and Revolution: The Genesis of Modern German Political Thought 1790–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- CHENEVAL, FRANCIS, *Philosophie in weltbürgerlicher Bedeutung: Über die Entstehung und die philosophischen Grundlagen des supranationalen und kosmopolitischen Denkens der Moderne* (Basel: Schwabe, 2002).
- GAY, PETER, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, 2 vols (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966 and 1969).
- GISI, LUCAS MARCO, *Einbildungskraft und Mythologie: Die Verschränkung von Anthropologie und Geschichte im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007).
- HARDTWIG, WOLFGANG (ed.), *Die Aufklärung und ihre Weltwirkung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010).
- KLEINGELD, PAULINE, 'Romantic Cosmopolitanism: Novalis, Christianity or Europe,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 46 (2008), 269–284.
- KLEINGELD, PAULINE, 'Six Varieties of Cosmopolitanism in Late Eighteenth-century Germany,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 60, no. 3 (1999), 505–524.
- MEINECKE, FRIEDRICH, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State* [1908], trans. Robert B. Kimber (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).
- MUTHU, SANKAR, *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).
- O'BRIEN, KAREN, *Narratives of Enlightenment: Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- OSTERHAMMEL, JÜRGEN, *Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert*, 2nd edn (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2010).
- POCOCK, J. G. A., *Barbarism and Religion*, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999–2005).
- PONSO, MARZIA, *Cosmopoliti e Patrioti: Trasformazioni dell'ideologia nazionale tedesca tra Kant e Hegel (1795–1815)* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2005).
- PORTER, ROY and TEICH MIKULAŠ (eds), *The Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
- REED, TERENCE JAMES, *Mehr Licht in Deutschland: Eine kleine Geschichte der Aufklärung* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2009).
- REILL, PETER HANNS, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).
- TORTAROLO, EDOARDO, *L'illuminismo: Ragioni e dubbi della modernità* (Rome: Carocci, 1999).
- WOLFF, LARRY, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).
- ZEDELMAIER, HELMUT, *Der Anfang der Geschichte: Studien zur Ursprungsdebatte im 18. Jahrhundert* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2003).