What is Counter-Enlightenment?

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Abstract

This article counters recent suggestions that there was no such thing as a 'Counter-Enlightenment' or 'Counter-Enlightenments', and that such terms ought thus to be abandoned. While acknowledging inevitable difficulties with the terms, the article argues that there can be no doubting the reality. European countries faced a variety of vehement and self-conscious movements that defined themselves precisely through their opposition to what they took to be the corrosive effects of the Enlightenment. In the process, they defined the main terms of an enduring vision of the world that we now associate with the right.

Keywords: Counter-Enlightenment, Enlightenment, religious Enlightenment, right

Introduction

What is Counter-Enlightenment? The question has been posed before, but never, to my knowledge, was it posed in the eighteenth century.[1] In the minds of some critics that would suggest that the Counter-Enlightenment did not exist. 'No one in the eighteenth century used the term … [s]o why should we?', the historian Jeremy Caradonna asks.[2] Less dogmatically, the political philosopher James Schmidt, taking his cue from the historian John Pocock, cautions that the concept is 'inherently ambiguous' and so should be avoided.[3]

Of course, as both these critics appreciate, one could say precisely the same thing about 'the Enlightenment', a term that was never used

in the eighteenth century as a substantive to describe a movement or a time, and whose meaning has been argued about from its very first appearance in the now more familiar sense.[4] A similar observation could be made about countless other labels employed by historians to describe periods or processes that contemporaries themselves would not have recognized, from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance to the Scientific Revolution.

Yet Caradonna's complaint is not nominalist, but structural. The term 'Counter-Enlightenment' he observes, rests upon a false 'oppositional binary' that reifies and distorts its other (the Enlightenment). At the same time, he notes, the term is a 'moving target' that 'has been defined in such radically different ways that it casts doubt upon the empirical basis of the category', which is, it seems, 'confused, unhelpful, and arbitrary' to say nothing of 'simplistic', and 'superficial', a kind of 'red herring' and 'political trick'.[5] In short, Caradonna concludes, 'there was no Counter-Enlightenment'.[6]

I confess that it is somewhat disconcerting to learn that a subject on which I have devoted years of scholarly endeavour has ceased to exist, or worse, never existed at all. I suspect that the contributors to this special issue of the *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity* will be similarly perplexed. But in the end, I think, we need not be concerned. If Caradonna and Schmidt are certainly right to caution against facile uses and abuses of the term, it would be wrong to dispense with the historical reality that it seeks to capture. There *was* a Counter-Enlightenment. Indeed there were many. The articles in this issue, rest assured, are more than a mirage.

Counter-Enlightenments

Yet, it cannot be denied – nor should it be – that Caradonna and Schmidt have a point. The 'Counter-Enlightenment' has indeed been used loosely, and rather sloppily, on many occasions since the term was first coined in 1949 by the American philosopher William Barrett and then popularized, more famously, by Isaiah Berlin in his landmark essay 'The Counter-Enlightenment' and subsequent works.[7] For Berlin, the Counter-Enlightenment was primarily, though not exclusively, a German affair, characterized by a militant reaction to the perceived

rationalism, universalism, and materialism of the French Enlightenment, and articulated by leading figures such as the philosophers and men of letters J.G.A. Hamann, Friedrich Jacobi, and Herder. With fellow travellers in the Francophone world such as Joseph de Maistre and Louis de Bonald, and Italian predecessors such as Giambattista Vico, the Counter-Enlightenment, in Berlin's handling, was paradoxically a wellspring both of modern pluralism *and* of modern fascism.

As has often been pointed out, Berlin's Counter-Enlightenment relied on precisely the sort of binary against which Caradonna and Schmidt caution, setting up an abstract and idealist construction of the 'Enlightenment' as a foil with which 'Counter-Enlightenment' partisans could be made to do intellectual battle down through the ages.[8] Uniting otherwise disparate figures such as Vico, Herder, and Maistre, all of whom lived in different places at different times, Berlin's Counter-Enlightenment stretched back to the ancient world and forward to the present day, representing an enduring temptation in thought. It was, like all of his work, stimulating and suggestive. But as an historical account of opposition to the Enlightenment, Berlin's presentation was less satisfying. Critics have questioned his characterizations of the thought of such figures as Hamann, Herder, and Jacobi as 'irrational', and asked whether such individuals might better be placed in an Enlightenment more broadly conceived than in a pantheon of its most implacable enemies.[9] Others have criticized the teleological assumptions imbedded in Berlin's work, discounting the view that the Counter-Enlightenment must end with fascism or the Enlightenment with the Gulag. Arguably, these portrayals tell us more about the period when the 'Enlightenment' and 'Counter-Enlightenment' came into widespread use as categories – namely, the Cold War – than they do about the eighteenth century itself.

Such warnings about the pitfalls of teleology, a-historicism, and false binaries, however, have not prevented scholars from falling deeply into these traps, abusing the concept of 'Counter-Enlightenment' or its German, French, or Dutch equivalents, *Gegen-Aufklärung*, *Anti-Lumières*, or *Antiverlichting*. Perhaps the most egregious example is the Israeli scholar Zeev Sternhell's *Les Anti-Lumières,* which manages to commit, in a single volume, nearly every one of the principal shortcomings of an old-fashioned *histoire des idées* singled out by Quentin Skinner in his seminal essay, 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas'.[10] From 'reification' and the 'mythology of

doctrines' (Sternhell's 'Anti-Enlightenment' comprises not only Burke and Maistre, Barrès and Maurras, but Gertrude Himmelfarb and Isaiah Berlin himself!) to misplaced 'influence' and teleology, the book takes us from the eighteenth century to Stalinism, fascism, and beyond in leaps and bounds, conducting an unwitting master-class on how to do bad intellectual history.[11] Constructed, moreover, against a shining and monolithic 'Enlightenment' that stands for all that is good and true in the world, it is a work, that gives some credence to Caradonna's complaints. In a similar manner, a collection such as Jochen Schmidt's edited volume, *Aufklärung und Gegen-Aufklärung in der europäischen Literatur, Philosophie und Politik von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* strips the category of 'Counter-Enlightenment' (as well as Enlightenment) of all historicity whatsoever, reducing it to an abiding principle of the universe, "a kind of Yang to the Enlightenment's Ying."[12]

But if the term 'Counter-Enlightenment' can certainly be abused, it does not follow that it should not be used at all. In the very same article, in fact, that James Schmidt cites in support of his view that the term ought to be avoided, John Pocock uses it repeatedly, without apparent qualm.[13] Pocock's only objection seems to be that the term (like *philosophe*) does not travel well from the Continent to England (an assertion with which I would agree). But why there cannot be Counter-Enlightenments, varieties of resistance to Enlightenment – or as Pocock would have it, Enlightenments – is no more clear than why we should dispense with such indispensable terms as Counter-Reformation(s) and Counter-Revolution(s).

Indeed, the bogeyman of a reified Counter-Enlightenment is just that, a bogeyman, conjured up in Caradonna's essay to topple over as if it were composed of nothing of more substance than words and straw. Isaiah Berlin himself acknowledged that there were 'counter-movements' to the Enlightenment, not just one, despite using the singular Counter-Enlightenment in the title of his famous essay.[14] In my own *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, devoted primarily to France, I made a similar point, observing that the 'Catholic Counter-Enlightenment discussed in these pages is only one of a range of oppositional responses to Enlightenment movements, spanning a broad, geographical spectrum of regional and confessional difference', while stressing that 'these other Counter-Enlightenments await their historian'.[15] Finally, Graeme Garrard has emphasized the point in his appropriately

entitled study *Counter-Enlightenments*, which treats the myriad ways the Enlightenment has been constructed and attacked by its enemies on both the right and the left.[16] The point being that sophisticated treatments of opposition to the Enlightenment have long recognized that there was more than one such thing.

Religion and (Counter-) Enlightenment

Almost all of this opposition, however, at least in its eighteenth and early nineteenth-century instantiations, was galvanized by religious conviction. That conviction took different forms in different confessions and faiths, and expressed itself with varying degrees of novelty and sophistication. Yet collectively the religious energies harnessed in resistance to movements of Enlightenment represented an unprecedented response to the perceived secularizing forces of modernity that began to trouble Western observers in the long eighteenth century. This phenomenon was new, neither an atavism of the past nor a holdover from a world that was gone, but a *modern* reaction to conditions that were inscribed in the modernizing process itself. In this respect, the Counter-Enlightenment movements of the long eighteenth century initiated a cycle of militant cultural combat and a posture of embattled defense that would prove a recurrent feature of European politics well into the twentieth century. They also provide a precedent and a frame of reference for thinking about the multiple reactions to the (multiple) modernities that have played out in the non-Western world ever since, and remain very much a feature of our own time.

But if religion was central to movements of Counter-Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, it was also central to movements of Enlightenment. This is a point on which scholars have insisted with good reason in recent years, drawing attention to the many moderate religious reformers who saw the *siècle des lumières* as fully consonant with Christian (or Jewish) civilization. To think of the Enlightenment primarily as a movement conducted outside of religion rather than as a movement carried on it within it, these scholars insist, is misplaced. Far from being enemies of the Enlightenment, the representatives of what David Sorkin has called the 'Religious Enlightenment' embraced it, seeking to counter the more extreme materialist and atheist positions circulating

in the eighteenth century from the standpoint of reason deployed in the public sphere.[17] They, too, argued for toleration and respect for the individual conscience, combating prejudice and fanaticism, while seeking to reconcile reason and revolution. They, too, upheld free speech and embraced the new science, promoting progress and advancement and moderation. And they too adopted the scholarly practices of the age, publishing books and journals in the republic of letters, participating in essay contests and debates, and engaging in enlightened forms of sociability in lodges, clubs, academies, and salons. Long overlooked, these moderate theologians, clerics, and religious reformers were not somehow peripheral to the mainstream Enlightenment, but arguably constituted its core.

As I have pointed out elsewhere, the very first scholarly attempts to define a historical Enlightenment in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Germany and America granted a central place to religion (and especially Protestant Christianity) in their definitions.[18] The recent scholarship on the Religious Enlightenment, then, has (largely unwittingly) had the effect of restoring an earlier sense of religion's centrality to the Enlightenment that for different reasons was then occluded for the better part of the twentieth century. Yet one may legitimately ask whether the pendulum has swung back too far. Today, we not only have Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish Enlightenments, but enlightened Benedictines, enlightened Jesuits, and enlightened Methodists, with John Wesley presented as a model of the enlightened man who walks with a torch![19] Mystics such as Swedenbourg and Saint-Martin can now be placed in a category of 'Super-Enlightenment', and even Polish Hasidim, it seems, are to be accorded a place.[20] As the historian and literary scholar Dan Edelstein has complained, 'there is a tendency today to give everyone his own private Enlightenment'.[21] It is enough to make one wonder if Kant got it wrong. To judge by current scholarship, to ask 'Was ist Aufklärung?' is to conclude that the eighteenth century was not only an age of Enlightenment, but that it *was* an Enlightened Age. Everybody, it seems, is enlightened nowadays.

This 'catholic' attitude toward membership in the Enlightenment's apparently universal church has only been exacerbated by the further tendency in Enlightenment scholarship to accord primacy of place, not to ideas, but to social practices. According to this calculus, what matters for inclusion is less what people actually believed than the forms in

which they expressed their beliefs, and the common ways in which they did so. As Caradonna writes:

> Lurking beneath the surface of intellectual dispute is often a deep well of shared beliefs about *where* intellectual practices should take place, *what* form they should and should not take, and *why* exchange is useful for the broader public sphere. In short, cultural perspectives and the concept of the public sphere offer a pathway out of the Enlightenment/Counter-Enlightenment binary and allow us to recognize commonality beneath the veneer of difference.[22]

By this reckoning, simply to publish a book in the eighteenth century was to take part in the Enlightenment through participation in the public sphere of the republic of letters. But surely that is far too low a bar. Just because enemies of the Enlightenment made use of the most modern methods and means at their disposal to broadcast their views to the public (as they most certainly did), does not mean that they were fellow travelers of the Enlightenment any more than the use of Twitter and Facebook by the propagandists of ISIS means that they are proponents of neo-liberalism, liberal democracy, or the global public sphere. In such cases, the medium is emphatically not the message.

It is for these reasons – the elasticity of the category 'Enlightenment' and the tendency to discount ideas as opposed to scholarly practices – that it is important to draw distinctions. But how, exactly, to draw them? I admit that it is not always an easy task, as the lines of political and intellectual division are often somewhat hazy at the edges. Mark Curran has pointed out in a fine book dealing with what he calls the 'Christian Enlightenment' that many of the religious authors who contributed to the vast literature combatting the Baron d'Holbach and other outright materialists were hardly 'enemies of the Enlightenment' themselves.[23] I agree. And I would also acknowledge that although, in my book of that name, I self-consciously tried to focus on the most extreme of these voices, while fully recognizing that there were many Catholics and Protestants who were 'enlightened' themselves, I nevertheless made use of the description 'enemies' too broadly at times, taking in people who were in truth among the (religiously) Enlightened.[24] But to conclude from this, as Curran does, that the term 'enemies of enlightenment' is 'unhelpful', is to go too far, and at the extreme it would be naïve.[25] For

despite a certain current historiographical tendency to obscure the fact, not all Christians were Enlightened in the eighteenth century, and not all of the religious participated in a Religious Enlightenment.

Conclusion

In short, there *were* enemies of the Enlightenment, militant and uncompromising enemies, who attacked the Radical Enlightenment and its more moderate form with equal vehemence.[26] These men and women were implacably opposed to religious toleration; they believed that liberty was license, and that human beings were equal only in the sense that they were equal before God. They were convinced that to allow freedom of speech was to give free rein to error; and they participated in the public sphere only *faute de mieux*, publishing books and writing articles not because they believed that truth would emerge from rational discourse and reasoned debate, but because they believed that to do otherwise was to bear culpable witness to evil. Just as enemies of liberal freedoms have done ever since, that is, they made use of institutions – free speech, the public sphere, mass printing, in time elections and votes – that they detested and in which they had no faith. Distrusting the power of reason, they emphasized human depravity, gullibility, and the capacity for sin. They scoffed at the words 'progress' and 'rights', speaking rather of duties and constraints, and the logic of history, custom, and prejudice. Finally, they scapegoated sinister plotters, whom they charged repeatedly with conspiracies to undermine the common good, and emphasized the need for discipline, order, and control.[27]

That there were those among the enlightened – whether Christian or not – who shared one or other of these views was, of course, always the case. Burke valued history and sang the virtues of prejudice; Voltaire scoffed at 'equality'; Hume pointed out the weakness of reason, while chronicling human beings' capacity to deceive themselves or to be deceived. Classical republicans, for their part, like many enemies of the Enlightenment, emphasized human beings' propensity to corruption and so the need to counter it with the manly virtues of upright men. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *encyclopédiste* and Diderot's friend, denied the 'progress' of the age. Robespierre broke the bust of Helvétius and excoriated those such as Voltaire whom he claimed (wrongly) acknowledged no God.

Yet what characterized the men and women who participated in movements of Counter-Enlightenment were not the individual tenets of a plank, but their adoption of discourses that combined the tenets and grouped them together in novel ways. This was done differently in different countries, with varying actors adopting their own accents, emphases, and preoccupations. Still, it is possible to speak of a Catholic 'Counter-Enlightenment International' that crossed boundaries and oceans, as well as commonalities among the various confessions.[28] What united them, however, was their tendency to engage in a process of radical simplification and reification, presenting the social and political order in Manichean, either/or terms. Those who sought to *counter* the Enlightenment, that is, did so precisely by constructing a reductive picture of what it is they were up against, so as to better express what is was they were for. Lumping together the radical and moderate positions of their enemies, they associated modern (Enlightenment) philosophy with the worst excess of the age: atheism and materialism, relativism and moral license, hedonism, self-interest, egalitarianism, political upheaval, and subversion. This 'Enlightenment', its enemies believed, was revolutionary in intent, aiming to topple thrones and overturn altars. And so when, during the French Revolution, actual thrones and altars were overthrown, enemies of the Enlightenment had no problem transferring their opposition to the Revolution. In their view, the violence and upheaval of the Revolution was a direct consequence of the perverse philosophy of the age.

That such visions of the Enlightenment were constructions – and indeed most often perversions and simplifications of the actual aims and positions of eighteenth-century actors – is a point on which I, like other students of Counter-Enlightenment movements, have always insisted. For the constructions are precisely the point. Not only did the most vehement enemies succeed in defining an image of the Enlightenment that would exert a powerful hold on future representations, but they used it to put forth competing claims in terms that broached no compromise with their enemies. It was a hallmark of the emergent right-wing movements in Europe of the late eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, in fact, to think in black and white, either-or terms. For all these movements (and others besides), the 'Enlightenment' was good to think, providing an 'other' over and against which to define competing, Counter-Enlightenment claims.

Thus, what Caradonna decries as the 'superficial' binaries of those who use Counter-Enlightenment as a conceptual category are in truth the actual, rhetorical binaries of historical actors who were all-too-ready to carve the world in two – between us and them, right and wrong, right and left. To dismiss the 'Counter-Enlightenment', as he does, as an invention and 'political trick' would thus be to render oneself willfully blind to the many political tricks played in the eighteenth century and ever since by those seeking to use their simplifications and reifications of 'Enlightenment' for political ends.[29] Michel Foucault was undoubtedly right that scholars should seek to escape the 'blackmail of the Enlightenment', which aims to seduce its students to take sides for or against.[30] But that does not mean that we should pretend, somehow, that agents of the past did not see the world in this way.

Of course, such Manichean splicing can be found on all sides of the political divide, where the creation of an 'other' is a common, and often effective, means to political mobilization. But while negative depictions of the Enlightenment have sometimes served political activists on the left, most often they have been used by movements on the right. It is for that reason, as Pocock correctly observed, that Counter-Enlightenment discourse has proved a less consistent feature of Anglo-American political culture, where an anti-liberal 'right' in the proper sense has never taken hold to the same degree as on the Continent.[31] If there were undoubtedly conservative enemies of the Enlightenment throughout the British isles and the erstwhile colonies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, echoing the claims of continental actors in as widely dispersed places as Edinburgh and New Haven, they did not acquire the same traction as they did in political cultures on the Continent and Latin America, where authoritarian right-wing movements found more fertile ground.[32] It was above all in this soil that opposition to the Enlightenment flourished in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with energies that have not been entirely dispelled.

Might we adopt a better term to capture this varied opposition? Maybe, and perhaps it is also possible that Counter-Enlightenment scholars will go the way of students of the Enlightenment itself, continuing to argue in sophisticated, if somewhat pedantic, debates about the use and definition of the term in the singular or the plural, or the need for appropriate qualifiers and demarcations to allow us to distinguish the High Counter-Enlightenment from the Low, the Radical from the

Moderate, the Jewish from the Catholic, the German from the Dutch. Be that as it may, no amount of quibbling about labels can deny the existence of movements self-consciously organized around opposition to the values and principles they associated with the 'Enlightenment'. To do so would be to willfully turn a blind eye to an essential aspect of modern European history that has too often been ignored by scholars. Whether we choose to recognize them or not, 'Counter-Enlightenments' are artifacts of the past, whose further study can only help clarify the genesis and difficult reception of Enlightened values, whose triumph has never been assured.

Notes

1   See, for example, Mark Lilla, 'What is Counter-Enlightenment', in Joseph Mali and Robert Wokler (ed.), *Isaiah Berlin's Counter-Enlightenment* (Philadelphia, 2003) 1–13, as well as my article, 'The Real Counter-Enlightenment: The Case of France', in Mali and Wokler, *Isaiah Berlin's Counter-Enlightenment*, 91–105.

2   Jeremy L. Caradonna, 'There Was No Counter-Enlightenment', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 49:1 (2015) 51–69, 51. This is the lead article to a round-table discussion on the subject of the 'Counter-Enlightenment', to which James Schmidt, Graeme Garrard, and Eva Piirimäe also contributed articles.

3   James Schmidt, 'The Counter-Enlightenment: Historical Notes on a Concept Historians Should Avoid', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 49:1 (2015) 83–86, 83.

4   The pathbreaking work on the subject is, in fact, Schmidt's article 'Inventing the Enlightenment: Anti-Jacobins, British Hegelians and the Oxford English Dictionary', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 64 (2003) 421–423. As Schmidt has also shown, and as Sonja Assal discusses in her contribution to this special issue, the term 'Gegen-Aufklärung' was used in the eighteenth century, showing up in the *Deutsche Monatschrift* in 1790, and employed earlier by the man of letters and court physician to Frederick the Great, Johann Georg Zimmermann. See Schmidt's article 'Light, Truth, and Counter-Enlightenment', forthcoming in Anton Matytsin and Dan Edelstein (eds), *Let There Be Enlightenment* (Baltimore, 2017).

5   See Caradonna's 'Roundtable Discussion Conclusion', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 49:1 (2015) 87–88.

6   In addition to what follows, Graeme Garrard offers a robust theoretical critique to Caradonna in his article 'Tilting at Counter-Enlightenment Windmills', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 49:1 (2015) 77–81.

7   Isaiah Berlin, 'The Counter-Enlightenment', in Henry Hardy (ed.), *Against the Current*, intr. Roger Hausheer (Princeton, 2011) 1–24. Berlin's essay was first published in the *Dictionary of the History of Ideas* (New York, 1968–73). On the history of the term 'Counter-Enlightenment', see James Schmidt, 'Inventing a Counter-Enlightenment: Liberalism, Nihilism, and Totalitarianism', paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Boston, January 6, 2006, available at http://people.bu.edu/jschmidt/James_Schmidt/Welcome_files/CounterE(AHA).pdf, and Graham Garrard, *Counter-Enlightenments: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (London/New York, 2006) 2–3.

8   See, for example, Darrin M. McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (New York/Oxford, 2011) 9–10, and McMahon, 'The Real Counter-Enlightenment', 91–93.

9   See, for example, Frederick Beiser, 'Berlin and the German Counter-Enlightenment', in Mali and Wokler, *Isaiah Berlin's Counter-Enlightenment*, 105–117.

10 Quentin Skinner, 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas', *History and Theory* 8:1 (1969) 3–53.

11 For a more detailed critique of this book, see my review of the English edition, *The Anti-Enlightenment-Tradition*, trans. David Maisel (New Haven, 2010) in *The Journal of Modern History* 83:1 (2011) 145–147.

12 Jochen Schmidt (ed.), *Aufklärung und Gegen-Aufklärung in der europäischen Literatur, Philosophie und Politik von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Darmstadt, 1989).

13 J. G. A. Pocock, 'Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment, Revolution and Counter-Revolution', *History of Political Thought* 20:1 (1999) 125–139.

14 Berlin, 'Counter-Enlightenment', 24. See, also, the discussion in Garrard, 'Tilting at Counter-Enlightenment Windmills', 78.

15 McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, 10.

16 Garrard, *Counter-Enlightenments*, 1–10.

17 David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton/Oxford, 2008).

18 Darrin M. McMahon, 'Religious Enlightenment: A Useful Category of Research?', *The European Journal* 14:1 (2013) 1–3, available at http://www.europeanjournal.it/rivista/annoXIV_n1.pdf.

19 See, for example, Ulrich Lehner, *Enlightened Monks: German Benedictines, 1740–1803* (New York/ Oxford, 2011); Jeffrey Burson, *The Rise and Fall of Theological Enlightenment: Jean-Martin de Prades and Ideological Polarization in Eighteenth-Century France* (Notre Dame, 2010); and Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity: The British, French, and American Enlightenments* (New York, 2005).

20 See Dan Edelstein (ed.), *The Super-Enlightenment: Daring to Know too Much* (Oxford, 2010), as well as the Super-Enlightenment Project at http://collections.stanford.edu/supere/page.action?forward=about. Also in this vein, see John C. Fleming's learned *The Dark Side of the Enlightenment: Wizards, Alchemists, and Spiritual Seekers in the Age of Reason* (New York, 2013).

21 Dan Edelstein, *The Enlightenment: A Genealogy* (Chicago, 2010) 17.

22 Caradonna, 'There Was No Counter-Enlightenment', 57.

23 Mark Curran, *Atheism, Religion, and Enlightenment in Pre-Revolutionary Europe* (Woodbrige, 2012). In a related vein, see Didier Masseau, *Les Ennemis des philosophes: l'Anti-philosophie au temps de lumières* (Paris, 2000).

24 McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, 8–10. I framed my own study, in fact, against Robert R. Palmer's excellent *Catholics and Unbelievers in Eighteenth-Century France* (Princeton, NJ, 1939), a work which consciously avoided the more extreme enemies of the Enlightenment on whom I focused in favour of a concentration on those we would now associate with the Catholic Enlightenment.

25 Curran, *Atheism, Religion, and Enlightenment*, 164. Curran, who is objecting primarily to the use of the term 'enemies of the enlightenment' in reference to those he considers part of the 'Christian Enlightenment' would, I suspect, agree with my points here and below.

26 This is a point that Jonathan Israel has clearly recognized. Though he distinguishes between the 'Counter-Enlightenment' and an enlightened Christian '*anti-philosophie*', he sees the former as exercising a powerful presence in eighteenth-century culture, eventually crowding out the Moderate Christian Enlightenment towards the end of the Old Regime, which was assailed by the Radical Enlightenment from the left and the Counter-Enlightenment from the right. See, for example, Jonathan Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670–1752* (New York/Oxford, 2006) esp. 38–39 and *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights* (New York/ Oxford, 2011) 15–16, and ch. 6.

27 McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, ch. 1.

28 On the 'Counter-Enlightenment International', see McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, 106–115 and McMahon, 'Seeing the Century of Lights as a Time of Darkness', in Florence Lotterie and Darrin M. McMahon (eds), *Les Lumières européennes dans leurs relations avec les autres grandes cultures et religions* (Paris, 2002) 81–104 (esp. 92–103).

29 Caradonna, 'There Was No Counter-Enlightenment', 52.

30 Michel Foucault, 'What is Enlightenment?', in P. Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (New York, 1984) 32–50; Caradonna, 'There Was No Counter-Enlightenment', 54.

31 Pocock, 'Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment, esp. 131–33. For an introduction to the complicated history of right-wing movements, see Jean-Francois Sirinelli, *Histoire des droites en France*, 3 vols. (Paris, 2006).

32 For the British case, see James J. Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative* (Cambridge, 2004). On the resonance of the French Counter-Enlightenment in New Haven and the New World more generally, see McMahon, *Enemies*, 112–114.

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