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# THE MORAL INEVITABILITY OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND THE PRECARIOUSNESS OF THE MOMENT: READING KANT'S *WHAT IS ENLIGHTENMENT?*

ANTOON BRAECKMAN

**S**YMBOL AND TEXT. Where the Enlightenment is concerned, there are few philosophical texts which are so often cited as Kant's famous essay *An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?*<sup>1</sup> This occasional text, which started out as an answer to a question raised incidentally in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, has in the course of the last two hundred years grown to become the symbolic text of the philosophical Enlightenment.<sup>2</sup> The reasons for this are obvious. It is a text which, in terms of its textuality already displays a number of features

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<sup>1</sup> Kant's text originally appeared in December 1784 in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*. The secondary literature on this famous text is now almost too extensive to survey, hence the instructiveness of the anthology compiled by James Schmidt, which includes both the texts which provided the immediate impetus for Kant's essay and the most interesting documents in its (contemporary) philosophical reception: *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth Century Answers and Twentieth Century Questions*, ed. James Schmidt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). More recent studies of Kant's text and its philosophical significance can be found, among others, in the proceedings of the "IX. Internationaler Kant-Kongress," which was held in Berlin in March 2000 and was devoted to "Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung": *Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung*, eds. Volker Gerhardt, Rolf-Peter Horstmann, and Ralph Schumacher, *Akten des IX. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses*, vol. 5 (New York: Walter De Gruyter, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> The question: "What is Enlightenment?" had appeared in an article by the preacher, theologian, and educationalist Johann Friedrich Zöllner (1753–1804) in the December issue of 1783. Zöllner was responding to an earlier, anonymous text published in the same journal in which a plea was made for purely civil marriage. In a footnote, Zöllner raised the question (in translation): "What is Enlightenment? The question, which is almost as important as the question *What is truth?*, should be answered before one begins to enlighten others. And yet I have never found it answered anywhere." Apart from Kant (1724–1804), Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) also took the opportunity to formulate an answer to this question. Mendelssohn's contribution appeared in September 1784 under the title "Über die Frage: was heisst aufklären?" (*On the Question: what is Enlightenment?*). The *Berlinische*

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traditionally associated with the phenomenon of the Enlightenment. To start with, there is the element of self-reflection and self-justification. In Kant's text, the *Aufklärung* seeks to give an account of itself, and tries to understand and explain itself. In addition, the text's pronouncements are those of an intellectual who speaks out freely, relies on his own understanding, and addresses a broad public via a readily accessible text. As a piece of writing, *What is Enlightenment?* is thus thoroughly "enlightened." Yet we also find the classic agenda of the Enlightenment in Kant's very argument. Characteristic here is the plea for the emancipation of thinking and the insistence on the importance of thinking *for oneself* (*sapere aude*). Equally typical is the link which is made between this question and the political conditions which make it possible: Kant refers expressly to the need for politically guaranteed publicity, in which this independent thinking can be articulated freely and without hindrance. One final recognizable feature is the way in which the *Enlightenment* becomes embedded in an historical-philosophical dynamic, which is intended to demonstrate that the Enlightenment is inevitable because it is ingrained in the very nature of things, and that it should therefore be immediately promoted and brought about.

Therefore, it is not surprising that in numerous publications both past and present, *What is Enlightenment?* figures as a model text for the Enlightenment, or what is taken to be the Enlightenment.<sup>3</sup> This is

*Monatsschrift* functioned at that time as the public mouthpiece of the so-called "Wednesday Club" (*Mittwochsgesellschaft*) in Berlin: a secret (!) club of "friends of the Enlightenment," founded in 1783, in which around twenty intellectuals (writers, philosophers, clerics) and leading civil servants at the court of Frederick the Great (lawyers, financial advisers, doctors) met on a regular basis to discuss the prospects and consequences of the Enlightenment. See James Schmidt, "The Question of Enlightenment. Kant, Mendelssohn, and the *Mittwochsgesellschaft*," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 50 (1989): 272–5; see also James Schmidt, "What Enlightenment Was. How Moses Mendelssohn and Immanuel Kant Answered the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 30 (1992): 77–101. Fundamental to these discussions was the question how far the Enlightenment could go without damaging the social order. Behind Zöllner's apparently casual question and Mendelssohn's answer there thus lay intense discussion of which Kant had no knowledge (Schmidt, "The Question of Enlightenment," 272).

<sup>3</sup>An excessively homogeneous and monochrome picture of the Enlightenment is often still painted in the literature. It is the great merit of authors such as Panajotis Kondylis to have pointed out that what we nowadays call *the* Enlightenment is essentially an amalgam of various currents and convictions which often stood in tension with one another. Thus he shows that the

no less true in Habermas's reading of *What is Enlightenment?*<sup>4</sup> and in that of Foucault.<sup>5</sup> They may avoid offering a predictable reading of Kant's essay, but like many others they all too readily refer *What is Enlightenment?* back to a number of central ideas and insights that can be easily linked with the great themes of the Enlightenment, or at any rate with their interpretation of it. Thus Habermas in his reading emphasizes the role that Kant assigns to publicity (*Öffentlichkeit*). In Kant, Habermas argues, this publicity assumes its full significance for the first time.<sup>6</sup> This is because, for Kant, publicity is not just the sphere where people become mature (*aufgeklärt*), but also the sphere where that maturity is deployed politically as a mediating factor between political authority and the citizen. The only problem is that Kant still regards the origination of this publicity, in historico-philosophical terms, as an inevitable step in the gradual progress of

intellectual trends within the German *Aufklärung*, the French *Siècle des Lumières*, and the British Enlightenment display distinctly differing orientations. The pietistic and sentimental-philosophical components of the German Enlightenment are hard to reconcile with the austere rationalism and materialism of the French Enlightenment, while eighteenth-century British empiricism and sensualism present yet another face of the Enlightenment. Somewhat provocatively, Kondylis also argues that if one can speak of a common denominator in these disparate Enlightenment phenomena, it should be sought in the "rehabilitation of sensuality" rather than in some form of putative rationalism. In this conception, Kant therefore appears rather as an exception, not as an exponent of the German *Aufklärung*. See Panajotis Kondylis, *Die Aufklärung im Rahmen des neuzeitlichen Rationalismus* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981), pp. 19, 638–40.

<sup>4</sup> Jürgen Habermas, "Publicity as the Bridging Principle between Politics and Morality (Kant)," in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), 102–17. For Habermas' broader vision of the "project of enlightenment" (and its supposed enemies), see Jürgen Habermas, "Die Moderne—ein unvollendetes Projekt," in Jürgen Habermas, *Kleine politische Schriften I–IV* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981), 444–64.

<sup>5</sup> Foucault's "What is Enlightenment" was originally published in English in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 32–50; for the French version, "Qu'est-ce que les Lumières?" see Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits: 1954–1988*, vol II: 1976–1988 (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 1381–97. Another text by Foucault entitled "Qu'est-ce que les Lumières?" about Kant and the Enlightenment appeared in *Magazine littéraire* in 1984 (no. 207, May 1984: 35–9). This is an extract from a lecture by Foucault given on 5 January 1983 to the "Collège de France." This text is also included in Foucault, *Dits et écrits* (II), 1498–1507.

<sup>6</sup> Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 102. Habermas offers an even more teleological formulation: "its theoretically fully developed form." For a critique of Habermas' over-rapid identification of Kant's "public use of reason" and the liberal idea of a political public sphere, see Ciaran Cronin, "Kant's Politics of Enlightenment," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 41 (2003): 54–5

mankind and its institutions towards a complete (cosmopolitan) civic order.<sup>7</sup> Foucault for his part pays hardly any attention in his reading of *What is Enlightenment?* to this question of publicity, or to its historico-philosophical underpinnings. For him,

in the text on *Aufklärung*, [Kant] deals with the question of contemporary reality alone. He is not seeking to understand the present on the basis of a totality or of a future achievement. He is looking for a difference: What difference does today introduce with respect to yesterday?<sup>8</sup>

The way in which Kant raises the question about the present and elevates this question to the status of a philosophical task, Foucault argues, is new.<sup>9</sup> So much so, in fact, that Foucault believes it is a point of departure: “the outline of what one might call the attitude of modernity.”<sup>10</sup> By this Foucault means an attitude toward the present which can be defined as a critique of our historical way of being, of the historical way in which we constitute ourselves as subjects here and now, and of the possibilities contained therein of transcending this historical specificity.<sup>11</sup> Foucault refers in this connection to a philosophical ethos.<sup>12</sup> He sees the possibility of remaining linked with the spirit of the *Enlightenment* as lying in the permanent reactivation of this attitude, rather than in staying true to specific doctrinal principles.<sup>13</sup> For Foucault too, *What is Enlightenment?* thus represents an important event, albeit in a fundamentally different sense than for

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<sup>7</sup> Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 111; see also 104, 109.

<sup>8</sup> Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” 34.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 38; see also 33–4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 42, 45.

<sup>12</sup> Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” 45; Foucault, *Dits et écrits* (II), 1506. Referring to Baudelaire, Foucault also defines this ethos as follows: “For the attitude of modernity, the high value of the present is indissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it, to imagine it otherwise than it is, and to transform it not by destroying it but by grasping it in what it is. Baudelairean modernity is an exercise in which extreme attention to what is real is confronted with the practice of a liberty that simultaneously respects this reality and violates it” (Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” 41).

<sup>13</sup> Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” 42. On Foucault’s reading of Kant and the significance of the concept of Enlightenment in Foucault see, among others, Christopher Norris, “*What is Enlightenment?* Kant according to Foucault,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, ed. Gary Gutting (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 159–96; Jürgen Habermas, “Taking Aim at the Heart of the Present,” in *Foucault: a Critical Reader*, ed. David Couzens Hoy (Oxford: Blackwells, 1986), 103–8; Maurizio Passerin d’Entrèves, “Between Nietzsche and Kant: Michel Foucault’s Reading of *What is Enlightenment?*” *History of Political Thought* 20 (1999): 337–56.

Habermas.<sup>14</sup> Whereas for Habermas Kant's essay marks the historical moment at which publicity first acquired its full theoretical articulation, for Foucault the same text represents, likewise for the first time, a modern way of relating critically to the (historical) limits of the present and the possibility of transcending them.<sup>15</sup>

However, these divergent interpretations of Kant's text must not cause one to overlook the fact that they are products of the same reading strategy. Both writers attribute to Kant's text an unequivocal meaning that the text does not evince at all; apart from the philosophical merits of both readings, Kant's text is reconstituted with a univocality which is at odds with the manifest ambivalence that strikes the reader right from a first contact with the text.

In the following, therefore, I put these and other commentaries on Kant's famous essay aside and seek to confront the text afresh by means of a close reading. In terms of methodology, I take the polysemy referred to above as my starting-point, in the conviction that careful exploration of it will contribute to a plausible interpretation of the text and the elucidation of its meaning.<sup>16</sup>

## II

*Obvious ambiguities.* Contrary to what one might suppose, the striking ambiguity of *What is Enlightenment?* is independent of

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<sup>14</sup> For the divergent readings of Kant in Foucault and Habermas, see Hubert L. Dreyfus, & Paul Rabinow, "What is maturity? Habermas and Foucault on *What is Enlightenment?*" in *Foucault: a Critical Reader*, 109–21. However, in his critical assessment of Dreyfus & Rabinow's reading of Foucault, Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves points out that both overlook the Nietzschean character of Foucault's reading of Kant. He claims that Foucault's "ontology of ourselves," and indeed his ethos of transgression and aesthetic self-styling, are far closer to Nietzsche's "revaluation of all values" than Kant's idea of "maturity" (Passerin d'Entrèves, "Between Nietzsche and Kant," 356).

<sup>15</sup> Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?" 47.

<sup>16</sup> Obviously reference is made in the literature on occasion to unclear points or ambiguities in Kant's text, but as a rule these are "resolved" through reference to the essay's historical context. In the following I take precisely the opposite approach; I tackle these unclear points and ambiguities not as impurities to be explained (away) with reference to the context in a text which otherwise communicates a clear message, but as entry points for prizing open the text to reveal its underlying and often polysemic layers of meaning.



external, editorial factors. It is not the genre—that of an essay intended for a broad public which is compelled to dispense with the precision of technical philosophical language—that is responsible for the ambiguous character of the text, nor, indeed, for any verbal inconsistencies, implicit contradictions, or unclear positions. Kant’s text is by no means free of such features, but the cause of the ambiguity does not lie in that quarter. The text’s ambiguous character derives from the striking ambiguity of the key players within the enlightenment process as sketched out by Kant, the result being that, in Kant’s essay, the phenomenon of the Enlightenment itself becomes thoroughly ambivalent.

Why Kant attributes such an ambiguous character to the key players within the Enlightenment requires clarification. Yet it is necessary to first explain in what sense they are ambiguous. Incidentally, in answering this question we shall discover that the elements that Habermas and Foucault put forward as the core of Kant’s argument, such as: publicity, the historico-philosophical inevitability of the Enlightenment, the role of the intellectual, the task of philosophy as a critical ontology of the present, et cetera; share this same ambiguity.

“*Enlightenment*,” runs the famous opening sentence of Kant’s essay,

*is the human being’s emergence from his self-incurred minority. Minority is the inability to make use of one’s own understanding without direction from another . . . Sapere aude! Have courage to make use of your own understanding!* is thus the motto of enlightenment!<sup>17</sup>

With a single sentence, Kant indicates what enlightenment is: thinking for oneself, no longer following others in one’s thinking, but having the courage “to use one’s own understanding.”<sup>18</sup> Enlightenment, Kant tells us, in this sense runs counter both to those who lack the courage

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<sup>17</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Akademie-Ausgabe (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1902) (henceforth “AA”), vol. VIII, 35; Immanuel Kant, *An answer to the question: What is enlightenment?* in Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, ed. and trans. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 17. (Kant’s texts will be referred to throughout by volume and page number of AA, followed, between parentheses, by the page numbers of their English translation).

<sup>18</sup> In what follows “the Enlightenment” refers to the eighteenth-century cultural and political movement at large; “enlightenment,” by contrast, refers to the process that Kant seeks to define in his essay and whose intended meaning should not be restricted to the eighteenth century.

to think for themselves and the many “guardians” (*Vormünder*) who put themselves forward as their mouthpieces and leaders. Kant reserves harsh comments for both categories: “It is because of laziness and cowardice that so great a part of humankind . . . nevertheless gladly remains minor for life.”<sup>19</sup> And:

That by far the greatest part of humankind . . . should hold the step toward majority to be not only troublesome but also highly dangerous will soon be seen to by those guardians who have kindly taken it upon themselves to supervise them.<sup>20</sup>

According to Kant, this interaction between human inertia and the paternalistic posture of the *Vormünder* is therefore the main obstacle to the elimination of immaturity and the dawning of enlightenment. So much so, in fact, that Kant regards it as particularly difficult and hence improbable that an isolated individual will be capable of discarding his immaturity *unaided*.<sup>21</sup>

It is thus highly remarkable that a few lines later, Kant presents these same *Vormünder* as the ones who will in fact set the *enlightenment* process in motion among the masses:

For there will always be a few independent thinkers, even among the established guardians of the great masses, who, after having themselves cast off the yoke of minority will disseminate the spirit of a rational valuing of one’s own worth and of the calling of each individual to think for himself.<sup>22</sup>

In this way, according to Kant, the general public can, gradually, achieve enlightenment.<sup>23</sup> Later on in the text, this idea is further reinforced by the actual thesis of Kant’s essay, in which the enlightenment process is made directly dependent on the possibility that independent thinkers have of making public use of their own reason in all respects.<sup>24</sup> Enlightenment on a broad scale, runs the argument, only becomes possible when independent thinkers can address the masses publicly and without hindrance. Only in this way, adds Kant, can enlightenment be brought about among people.<sup>25</sup> Like the just-quoted passage, however, this position implies that the enlightenment of the

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<sup>19</sup> AA 8: 35 (17).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 8: 36 (17): “Thus it is difficult for any single individual to extricate himself from the minority that has become almost nature to him.”

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 8: 36 (17–18).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 8: 36 (17).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 8:36 (18).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 8: 37 (18): “The *public* use of one’s reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among human beings.”



masses is only possible in the wake of a few guardians who set the enlightenment process in motion. This means that not all guardians can be tarred with the same brush. Apparently, there are not just “bad,” but also “good” leaders: those who do not oppose the enlightenment process, but in fact make it possible. The existence of guardians thus does not *ipso facto* represent a hindrance to the continuation of the enlightenment. On the contrary, guardians are essential to the process. Thus, paradoxically, there are guardians from whom the public needs to emancipate itself in order to achieve independent thought, as well as guardians whose example the public should follow in order to achieve independent thought.

The concept of guardians thus turns out to be less unequivocal than it might seem at first sight. And that ambiguity instantly contaminates a series of other terms. This is the case with the concept of “the public” and with the ideal of independent thought that is held up before it. After all, how are we to understand this call to independent thought, if the public is supposed to emancipate itself not from all, but only from some leaders? Does this not imply that the public is pushed back into the passive role of immaturity? But if this is so, to whom is the cry “*sapere aude!*” addressed? In other words, should the public remain passive and permit itself “to be enlightened”, or should it actively cast aside immaturity through independent thought? And is such a thing possible? Does such a process not in fact presuppose people being helped by others who have already cast aside their immaturity, who are already enlightened and can therefore take the lead in the process? But if this is the case, how do these *Aufgeklärten*, these intellectuals (*die Gelehrten*) as Kant also calls them, relate to the process of enlightenment as a whole?<sup>26</sup> Are they necessary conditions for it, or are they its effect? Do they make enlightenment possible or are they its symptom? Here we come up against an ambivalence which, it will turn out, touches on the core of Kant’s essay. Because as a text, *What is Enlightenment?* is more than just an attempt to accurately define what enlightenment is. It is also and above all an intervention in the process of enlightenment. In writing and publishing *What is Enlightenment?*, Kant has in fact assumed the

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<sup>26</sup> In Kant’s view, “der Gelehrten” embodies his idea of enlightenment as he, through his writings, “speaks to the public in the strict sense, that is, the world” AA:8:38 (19); see also AA:8:37 (18). In the English translation, the term “Gelehrten” has been translated as “scholar.”

guise of one of the intellectuals who seek to promote the enlightenment process among the general public.<sup>27</sup> In this way, he seeks to “enlighten” the public about enlightenment: to make clear what enlightenment is, what it stands for, and what it presupposes. Moreover, he does so in a manner which is consistent with what he substantively defines in the text as enlightenment.<sup>28</sup> By publishing an accessible essay devoid of philosophical technicalities in a journal which is likewise no specialist philosophical publication, the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, he freely addresses the general public and exclusively uses his own reason in his treatment of the issue, in this case the answer to the question: *What is Enlightenment?*<sup>29</sup> In this sense, Kant’s text is a living proof, an exquisite sign of enlightenment. But to the extent that enlightenment is tangibly present in the text, Kant’s essay presents itself more as a product of the enlightenment process than as its condition; the text forms a proof of enlightenment rather than an intervention in order to make it possible.

This ambiguity affects the notion of enlightenment itself because the fact that Kant’s essay is unable to pull off the feat of simultaneously functioning as condition and symptom of enlightenment seems to say something about enlightenment itself. It makes it clear that talking about enlightenment with the aim of disseminating it already presupposes enlightenment. It suggests that, strictly speaking, enlightenment is not something that can be brought about, and therefore constantly eludes the initiative of those who seek to realize it. This is something that Kant himself recognizes, incidentally, as is apparent from the passages in which he roots the enlightenment process and hence makes it dependent on a broader historico-philosophical development. In doing so, Kant neutralizes any sense of proactive initiative with regard to enlightenment. He conveys the message that the onset and continuation of enlightenment is not a question of any

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<sup>27</sup> Thus Kant presents himself as a guardian, albeit, in his view of the *bona fide* sort.

<sup>28</sup> For a similar observation, see Cronin, “Kant’s Politics of Enlightenment,” 65.

<sup>29</sup> In this compact form these very criteria are to be found in Kant’s discussion of what enlightenment might mean for a cleric: “On the other hand as a scholar, who by his writings speaks to the public in the strict sense, that is, the world—hence a clergyman in the *public use* of his reason—he enjoys an unrestricted freedom to make use of his own reason and to speak in his own person” (AA 8: 38 [19]).

specific initiative, but is dependent on a development which lies in the nature of things and as such transcends any specific initiative. These passages occur at the point where Kant responds to the hypothesis that malicious intellectuals might conspire to sabotage the enlightenment process. Kant replies:

I say that this is quite impossible. Such a contract, concluded to keep all further enlightenment away from the human race forever, is absolutely null and void. This would be a crime against human nature, whose original vocation lies precisely in such progress.<sup>30</sup>

In this respect, too, any voluntarism is unwelcome: the enlightenment process cannot be halted. Enlightenment, the text gives us to understand, is too closely bound up with the natural progress of mankind: "People gradually work their way out of barbarism *of their own accord* if only one does not intentionally contrive to keep them in it."<sup>31</sup>

But if the Enlightenment really is a virtually inevitable stage in the spontaneous progress of mankind towards its ultimate destination, we are again confronted with the question of the role of the intellectual. What, in this case, can be the point of the intellectual's attempts to advance this process? What can be the sense of interventions such as the one by Kant himself? For it is unclear whether his actions as an intellectual help to make the enlightenment process possible, or whether, conversely, these actions are made possible thanks to the enlightenment process.

It is undoubtedly the case that Kant, despite what is suggested here, associates the phenomenon of the enlightenment in the text far less, or at any rate far less directly, with the role and position of the intellectual. Rather, his thesis is that enlightenment stands or falls with the freedom to use one's own reason in public.<sup>32</sup> Thus the fundamental requirement for the enlightenment is not any specific intervention on the part of any specific intellectual as the bearer of any specific competence, but the freedom to use one's own reason publicly. Moreover, it is on the basis of this more fundamental requirement that Kant defines the idea of the intellectual. An intellectual, we read, is anyone who makes free use of his own reason in public.<sup>33</sup> Thus Kant declares

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<sup>30</sup> AA 8: 39 (19–20).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 8: 41 (21), my emphasis.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 8: 36 (18).

that enlightenment and the idea of the intellectual, as he defines it, share a common origin, and in this sense he unequivocally answers the ambiguity that has been pointed out. However, this merely displaces the problem. The ambiguity that was noted in the determination of the intellectual's role for enlightenment returns in the plea for freedom of thought as a precondition for enlightenment. Here too, the same peculiar tension is found between the emphasis with which freedom of thought is called for and the fact of Kant's text itself, which demonstrates precisely the existence of such freedom of thought, and hence the reality of enlightenment. At the textual level, incidentally, a related tension can be identified between the same demand for freedom of thought and the historico-philosophical affirmation of the inevitability of its realization. Additionally, both tensions are further reinforced towards the end of the text with the eulogy of Frederick the Great, who is praised by Kant because a start has actually been made on introducing this freedom of thought under his rule.<sup>34</sup>

Ambiguities abound, it turns out. Although these are predominantly generated by the opposition between what the text is arguing for and what it is actually doing, the text contains further obscurities still. Kant's definition of the intellectual is one of these. In the text, he defines the intellectual not as the holder of some competence, but with reference to a practice. Anyone who makes public use of his own reason, who addresses a universal public in his writing, is an intellectual.<sup>35</sup> Kant gives the example of the officer and the clergyman, who in the exercise of their profession are clearly confined in the use of reason, but outside this context, to the extent that they address a universal public in writing, must be free to use purely and simply their own reason.<sup>36</sup> It is not as functionaries that the officer and the clergyman are intellectuals, but precisely to the extent that they are not functionaries and address the public as a whole in their writings.

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<sup>33</sup>In the text Kant expresses it as follows: "But by the public use of one's own reason I understand that use which someone may make of it *as a scholar* before the entire public of the *world of readers*" (AA 8: 37 (18)). He makes a distinction between this public use of reason, associated with acting as an intellectual, and the private use of reason, associated with a person's role as the holder of a function or office: "What I call the private use of reason is that which one may make of it in a certain *civil* post of office with which he is entrusted" (AA 8: 37 [18]).

<sup>34</sup>Kant goes so far in this connection as to rename the Age of Enlightenment as the Age of Frederick (AA 8: 40 [21]).

<sup>35</sup>Ibid. 8: 37–8 (18–9).

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

This may be an interesting way to define the idea of being an intellectual, but two factors raise questions about the scope that Kant gives to this definition. Firstly, there is the striking insistence on the importance of writing and publishing.<sup>37</sup> Without these, Kant appears to argue, it is impossible to address a universal public, and the requirement of functioning as an intellectual is thus not fulfilled. Secondly, when giving examples of intellectuals we find that Kant falls back on certain groups or classes who are well documented as suppliers of intellectuals in the traditional sense. Thus, he refers to groups such as writers, doctors, army officers, clergymen, and so on.<sup>38</sup> Everything thus suggests that Kant, despite the fact that in the text he associates the idea of an intellectual almost programmatically with the practice of using one's own reason publicly via writings, nonetheless has a clearly defined group of publicists in mind for whom such a practice is particularly appropriate.

This is also clearly apparent from *The Conflict of the Faculties*—a text which, although it dates from much later (1798), can in many respects be read as a substantiation of *What is Enlightenment?* Here, Kant considers in concrete terms which intellectuals are restricted in their speech and which are able to make free use of their own reason in public. As a preliminary, he draws a distinction between the “true intellectuals,” who are to be found in the universities, academies, and scientific associations, and those who have enjoyed an academic education, but are working as officials on behalf of the government. As such, the latter are not free and are thus not true intellectuals.<sup>39</sup> What is interesting, incidentally, is that Kant, in parallel with this distinction between intellectuals and those with a university education, also draws a distinction between two types of writing: publications intended for colleagues within the university, and manuals for the general public. Unlike the texts for specialists, in which the academic imparts his own insights with complete freedom, such manuals are, according to Kant, restricted with regard to their contents by what the government regards as admissible.<sup>40</sup> Inevitably, then, such writings

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<sup>37</sup> See AA 8: 37 (18): “the entire public of the *world of readers*,” AA 8: 37 (18): “by his writings;” AA 8: 38 (19): “by his writings;” AA 8: 39 (20): “publicly, that is, through writings;” AA 8: 40 (20): “the writings in which his subjects attempt to clarify their insight.”

<sup>38</sup> AA 8: 35, 37 (17, 18–9).

<sup>39</sup> AA 7: 18; Immanuel Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, trans. Mary J Gregor and Robert Anchor in *Religion and Rational Theology*, ed. and trans. Allen W. Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 247–8.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* 7: 8 (241).

are not free and are thus not the writings of intellectuals. In the process, we also learn in this way that writings are always aimed at a specific public, and not simply at a universal one, as Kant was still suggesting in *What is Enlightenment?*<sup>41</sup> “The public” is clearly plural. But even within the group of the so-called true intellectuals, the university professors, the members of the academies and scientific associations, Kant believes that he can identify a further important distinction, between the three “higher” faculties of theology, law, and medicine and the “lower” faculty of philosophy.<sup>42</sup> Only the philosophical faculty, runs the argument in *The Conflict of the Faculties*, is truly free compared with the higher faculties. This is because theology, law, and medicine all serve the government. Via the theologians, the government seeks to maintain control of the inner convictions of its subjects; via the lawyers, it attempts to regulate and control behavior and interactions between citizens; and via the doctors it ensures itself a strong and large population which is at its disposal at all times.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, adds Kant, these higher faculties are not even free of obligation as academic educations. None of them bases its teachings purely on individual reason: theology relies on the Bible, the lawyer on the prevailing, positive law, and the doctor on the entirety of recognized medical treatments.<sup>44</sup> Thus, only the philosophical faculty is completely free,<sup>45</sup> from which Kant, on the basis of the argument from *What is Enlightenment?* at any rate, ought to conclude that only philosophers are true intellectuals. It is clear that such a conclusion,

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 7: 34 (260–1): “On the other hand, the teachings and views that the faculties, as theorists, have to settle with one another are directed to a different kind of public—a *learned* community devoted to the sciences; and since the people are resigned to understanding nothing about this, the government does not see fit to intervene in scholarly discussions.”

<sup>42</sup> *Conflict of the Faculties*, AA 7: 19 (248).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. 7: 21–2 (250–1).

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. 7: 23 (251).

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. 7: 19–20 (249): “It is absolutely essential that the learned community at the university also contain a faculty that is independent of the government’s command with regard to its teachings; one that, having no commands to give, is free to evaluate everything, and concerns itself with the interests of the sciences, that is, with truth: one in which reason is authorized to speak out publicly. For without a faculty of this kind, the truth would not come to light (and this would be to the government’s own detriment); but reason is by its nature free and admits of no command to hold something as true (no imperative “Believe!” but only a free *credo*). The reason why this faculty, despite its great prerogative (freedom), is called the lower faculty lies in human nature; for a human being who can give commands, even though he is someone else’s humble servant, is considered more distinguished than a free man who has no one under his command.” See also AA 7: 27–9 (255–6).



although formally consistent with the argument in *What is Enlightenment?*, deviates significantly from Kant's position in the 1784 essay, in which the idea of an intellectual was still defined as a practice, in principle accessible to anyone, of making free and public use of one's own reason.

One final significant point which is unclear in *What is Enlightenment?* relates to freedom. "For this enlightenment [that is, for emerging from minority], however," declares Kant in a famous passage, "nothing is required but *freedom*, and indeed the least harmful of anything that could even be called freedom: namely, freedom to make *public use* of one's reason in all matters."<sup>46</sup> In the name of enlightenment Kant here asks for the ability to speak out about any subject in public. However, he does not request anything more. For Kant, the requirements for enlightenment are satisfied once such public freedom of thought is politically safeguarded: once the ruler ceases to oppose such free and public use of individual reason.<sup>47</sup> So, at any rate, it turns out from the close of the famous essay. Kant writes:

A greater degree of civil freedom seems advantageous to a people's freedom of *spirit* and nevertheless puts up insurmountable barriers to it; a lesser degree of the former, on the other hand, provides a space for the latter to expand to its full capacity.<sup>48</sup>

Freedom of thought, Kant surprisingly informs us here, does not presuppose civil freedom. On the contrary: the fewer civil liberties there are, the more chance freedom of thought has. Thus according to Kant, freedom of thought and enlightenment which directly results from it have little to do with the granting of civil liberties; strictly speaking, not even with the granting of the right of freedom of speech. Freedom of thought, in Kant's view, is not a right which the citizen

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<sup>46</sup> *What is enlightenment?* AA 8: 36 (18).

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* 8: 40–1 (21–2): "A prince who does not find it beneath himself to say that he considers it his *duty* not to prescribe anything to human beings in religious matters but to leave them complete freedom, who thus even declines the arrogant name of *tolerance*, is himself enlightened and deserves to be praised by a grateful world and by posterity as the one who first released the human race from minority, at least from the side of government, and left each free to make use of his own reason in all matters of conscience. But only one who, himself enlightened, is not afraid of phantoms, but at the same time has a well-disciplined and numerous army ready to guarantee public peace, can say what a free state may not dare to say: *Argue as much as you will and about what you will; only obey!*"

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* 8: 41 (22).

can claim. It is a matter for the ruler, who seeks to safeguard it politically, either from a sense of duty, if he himself is enlightened,<sup>49</sup> or out of calculated self-interest, if he is simply prudent. For he quickly realizes that:

When nature has unwrapped . . . the propensity and calling to *think* freely, the latter gradually works back upon the mentality of the people (which thereby gradually becomes capable of *freedom in acting*) and eventually even upon the principles of *government*, which finds it profitable to itself to treat the human being, *who is now more than a machine*, in keeping with his dignity.<sup>50</sup>

Kant's apology for freedom as the foundation and precondition for enlightenment thus remains rather limited in scope, especially for a text regarded as a model and benchmark for the Enlightenment.<sup>51</sup> Enlightenment is safeguarded, according to Kant's thesis, once a ruler guarantees freedom of thought politically. This viewpoint is both simultaneously endorsed and substantiated in *The Conflict of the Faculties*:

*Enlightenment of the people* is the public instruction of the people in its duties and rights vis-à-vis the state to which they belong. Since only natural rights and rights arising out of common human understanding are concerned here, then the natural heralds and expositors of these among the people are not officially appointed by the state but are free professors of law, that is philosophers. The latter, precisely because this freedom is allowed to them, are objectionable to the state, which always desires to rule alone; and they are decried, under the name of *enlighteners*, as persons dangerous to the state, although their voice is not addressed *confidentially* to the people (as the people take scarcely any or no notice at all of it and of their writings) but is addressed *respectfully* to the state; and they implore the state to take to heart that need which is felt to be legitimate. This can happen by no other means than that of publicity in the event that an entire people cares to bring forward its grievances (*gravamen*). Thus the *prohibition* of publicity impedes the progress of a people towards improvement, even in that which applies to the least of its claims, namely its simple, natural right.<sup>52</sup>

On close inspection, Kant here reduces the general plea for freedom of thought from *What is Enlightenment?* to the plea for freedom of thought for philosophers. Philosophers must have the freedom to use

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 8: 39–40 (20–1).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 8: 41–2 (22).

<sup>51</sup> In this respect, Cronin is right to criticize Habermas for being over-ready to identify Kant's view of the public arena and the required freedom of thought therein with liberal views on this matter (Cronin, "Kant's Politics of Enlightenment," 54).

<sup>52</sup> AA 7: 89 (305).

their own reason in public because they and they alone are the suitable go-betweens mediating between people and ruler. This is because they alone are capable of drawing the people's attention to its natural rights and duties, and for the same reason they are also best placed to request the ruler to respect these natural rights of the people. Enlightenment, or enlightenment of the people (*Volk-saufklärung*) as it is called here, thus stands or falls with the public freedom of thought of the philosophers within the state; its prohibition is at any rate an obstacle to the people's progress along the path of self-perfection. Another striking feature of the quoted passage, but one which again is entirely in line with the argumentation on this point in the essay on enlightenment, is that this freedom of thought is not presented as a right or civil liberty which can be claimed by the people and *a fortiori* by the philosopher, but as a prerequisite of the ruler, which he should deploy immediately if he is at least prudent and does not wish to stand in the way of the people's momentum. Here again, the conditions for the enlightenment process have to be made possible from the top down, rather than being realized from the bottom up.<sup>53</sup> The freedom to use one's reason in public, of which the philosopher in particular has such an explicit need and without which enlightenment is absolutely impossible, ultimately lies in the hands of the ruler. Finally, if we compare this with the famous opening of *What is Enlightenment?* "*Enlightenment is the human being's emergence from his self-incurred minority. . . . Sapere aude! Have courage to make use of your own understanding!*"<sup>54</sup> one is immediately struck by its ambiguous character. Exactly how can or should man emerge from his minority? And in what sense is that minority self-imposed? What does thinking for oneself mean? And above all, to whom is this exhortation addressed? Who is authorized to make this "motto of enlightenment," as Kant calls it, his own? These are questions which, as a result of the foregoing reading, have ceased to be obvious and can no longer be clearly answered.

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<sup>53</sup> Kant in fact confirms this in so many words. To the question of how progress towards "the better" should be expected, his answer is clear: "not by the movement of things from bottom to top, but from top to bottom" (*Conflict of the Faculties* AA 7:92 [307]).

<sup>54</sup> AA 8: 35 (17).

## III

*“What is” and “what should be.”* The question now is how we are supposed to understand this remarkable ambiguity in the text? When we reread the text and try to relate the highlighted ambiguities to one another, it turns out that they are virtually all generated by the same fundamental tension that seems to dominate the argumentation in the text and is responsible for its surprising ambiguity.

In terms of argumentation, this tension can be described as follows: firstly, the text indicates that enlightenment will in any case continue in accordance with a historico-philosophical dynamic; yet at the same time it makes an insistent plea for the concrete conditions to be satisfied so that this realization of enlightenment will actually take place. This tension recurs at the level of the text as an historic act, as a concrete intervention. Secondly, the publication of such a text proves that, to a certain extent, enlightenment is already a *fait accompli*, yet at the same time there is every indication that the text understands itself and is meant to be read as an intervention in view of helping enlightenment to come about, or, as the case may be, to promoting it. If we take these two tensions together, the message of Kant’s text is roughly as follows: A start has already been made with respect to enlightenment and in principle this process will continue, provided it is not opposed at any rate. I therefore regard it as intellectually important to take action and to call on everyone who is responsible to continue to satisfy the conditions for the continuation of this process, and above all to safeguard it.

If we read the text in this sense, its historico-philosophical perspective is substantially reduced in favor of its significance as a concrete, historical intervention. According to this interpretation, what is intended here from the historico-philosophical viewpoint is more in the nature of “what should be” rather than “what *will* be the case;” it represents a normative ideal—one to which Kant wishes to contribute in order to realize it—rather than an historico-philosophical *telos* which inevitably will be realized. Precisely because the historico-philosophical dimension of the text is reduced in this reading to a normative appeal, the focus on “what actually is” increases, and hence too the importance of the text as an historical intervention. To formulate it in a way that is closer to the issues of the text: as the historico-philosophical “prophecy” becomes less prominent, so the possible

threat to the enlightenment process needs to be taken more seriously, and so too Kant's own intervention becomes more significant.

The question then is whether there are good reasons to interpret the historico-philosophical perspective of *What is Enlightenment?* in the above sense. This comes down to the question what epistemological status Kant attributes to his historico-philosophical declarations. Without claiming to offer an exhaustive treatment of the issue here, there are two important texts in which Kant expresses himself more explicitly about this point than he does in the essay about enlightenment: *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*, which in fact dates from the same year, 1784, and the previously mentioned *The Conflict of the Faculties* from 1798, which, as stated, can to a certain extent be read as a substantiation of the enlightenment essay. *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* is an especially interesting text from this viewpoint, as the (epistemological) status of the philosophy of history that has been expounded in the foregoing pages is made very clear at the end of the text. Kant writes: "A philosophical attempt to work out a universal history of the world in accordance with a plan of nature aimed at a perfect civil union of mankind," which is precisely what Kant seeks to do in this essay,

*must be regarded as possible and even as capable of furthering the purpose of nature itself.* It is admittedly a strange and at first sight absurd proposition to write a history according to an idea of how world events must develop if they are to conform to certain rational ends; it would seem that only a *novel* could result from such premises. Yet if it may be assumed that nature does not work without a plan and purposeful end, even amidst the arbitrary play of human freedom, this idea might nevertheless prove useful. And although we are too short-sighted to perceive the hidden mechanism of nature's scheme, this idea may yet serve as a guide to us in representing an otherwise planless *aggregate* of human actions as conforming, at least when considered as a whole, to a *system*.<sup>55</sup>

Kant here accounts for the possibly problematic status of the philosophy of history. The comparison with a novel does at least indicate that Kant recognizes that philosophies of history inevitably include an element of fiction, but, the passage suggests, this does not detract

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<sup>55</sup> AA 8: 29; Immanuel Kant, *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*, in Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings*, ed. H.S. Reiss, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 51–2.

from the special value of such philosophies of history. To start with, it enables us to bring coherence to the chaos of events. In this way, the philosophy of history fulfils an important “Ersatz” function, as we are incapable of perceiving the actual rational coherence in the multiplicity of events, although such a coherence has to be assumed in one way or another. Moreover, and this is a second point, such a philosophy of history invariably rewrites history in view of an idea, that is, of an ideal which is ultimately to be achieved, and this may in turn be conducive for the actual realization of that ideal. Thus philosophies of history, so Kant seems to argue, have both a heuristic, methodological function and a historical, practical one. They bring order into the totality of historical events on the basis of a preconceived normative ideal, and in doing so they also actually contribute to the concrete, historical realization of that ideal.

Applied to the Enlightenment essay this would mean that the historico-philosophical perspective that enlightenment acquires in it, need not be taken as a purely theoretical affirmation, but rather as a practical construct: as an historico-philosophical design within which the enlightenment process is presented as a necessary and inevitable phase on the way to the eventual realization of the postulated moral purpose of history, ultimately with the intention of actually promoting the realization of that purpose in this way. If we read the historico-philosophical remarks in *What is Enlightenment?* from this perspective, it proves that they are not at all inconsistent with Kant’s intention of promoting the enlightenment process via the text, but serve the same goal because, in Kant’s view, the teleological presentation of history itself helps actually achieve the defined *telos*. Such a reading of the Enlightenment essay would thus offer a way of understanding a significant ambiguity in the text, while at the same time placing greater emphasis on the normatively driven interventionist nature of Kant’s text.

In *The Conflict of the Faculties* the historico-philosophical subject matter is somewhat different, but here too we see that Kant remains cautious about attributing too much epistemological weight to historico-philosophical views. In the second part, which is devoted to the “conflict of the philosophy faculty with the faculty of law” and dates from 1797, he explicitly considers this question. The question that is raised here reads as follows: “Is the human race constantly progressing?”<sup>56</sup> After many deliberations in which he demonstrates the

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<sup>56</sup> *The Conflict of the Faculties*, AA 7: 79 (297).



limits of various types of philosophies of history,<sup>57</sup> Kant concludes that this question can only be answered on the basis of particular experiences which from the historical viewpoint display a symbolic character and as such permit deductions to be made from them regarding the future course of history. Kant refers in this connection to a “historical sign (*Geschichtszeichen—signum rememorativum, demonstrativum, prognostikon*)”<sup>58</sup> in which something is revealed about the direction in which history as a whole is moving. In *The Conflict of the Faculties* Kant regards the enthusiasm for the French Revolution as such a historical sign.<sup>59</sup> This enthusiasm, he argues, makes it clear that people experience in the occurrence of the French Revolution something of moral value, a moral progress that now represents an ineradicable experience, whatever happens in reality. For this very reason, one can predict without too much risk on the basis of such experiences that history will move in this direction. For people will wish what has been perceived as moral progress to be realized one day.<sup>60</sup> Although he does so in a completely different sense from in *Idea for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Purpose*, Kant thus once again draws a link between the issue of (the progress of) morality, and the relevance of historico-philosophical speculation.

If we were to reinterpret *What is Enlightenment?* in this light, and hence inevitably extend its meaning, we would again have to relativize thoroughly the theoretical status of its historico-philosophical passages. The emergence of enlightenment in countless manifestations, such as the publication of Kant’s text, could then be regarded as a historical sign involving a moral progress that indicates the inevitable continuation of the enlightenment process, whatever attempts were made to prevent it. Of course, the historico-philosophical passages in Kant’s Enlightenment essay do not fit with this viewpoint (or not yet, at any rate), but even so it is striking that they permit such an interpretation. This is most evident when we look at the arguments with which Kant substantiates the inevitability of the enlightenment process. As historico-philosophical arguments, they sound rather odd, to say the least, because all but one are formulated normatively, expressing not what *will* be, but what *should* or *should not* be the case. To the question of whether a number of treacherous guardians could halt the enlightenment process, Kant successively answers

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid. 7: 81–2 (298–9).

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. 7: 84 (301).

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. 7: 85–6 (302–3).

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. 7: 87–9 (303–5).

that such a thing “is impossible,”<sup>61</sup> “is contrary to human nature,”<sup>62</sup> “is illegitimate,”<sup>63</sup> and “is an inadmissible infringement of sacred human rights.”<sup>64</sup> Although the context of the argumentation is different from that in *The Conflict of the Faculties*, we recognize two major components of the argument presented there: firstly, the conviction that the coming about of enlightenment represents moral progress, and secondly, that this progress will continue, because it should, regardless of any steps that are taken against it. Here too, the historico-philosophical perspective on the enlightenment process thus seems to be informed and carried by a moral position rather than by any presumed theoretical knowledge about the course of history necessitated by the nature of things. Although it should be added right away that the terminology used by Kant, here and elsewhere, often suggests the reverse. To conclude from all this that *What is Enlightenment?* already contains the subtle philosophy of history of *The Conflict of the Faculties* in an implicit form would of course be naive. However, this is no reason to commit another form of naivety and take Kant’s historico-philosophical remarks unequivocally in a theoretical sense. The foregoing makes it sufficiently clear that a primarily normative interpretation of these remarks can be related to other pronouncements by Kant on the matter, and above all eliminates a number of striking ambiguities from the Enlightenment essay. Such an interpretation shows that these historico-philosophical passages primarily depict a normative ideal, as a result of which a powerful tension is generated in the text between “what should be” and “what is,” and not between “what is” and “what will be.”

#### IV

*Actuality as crisis.* If we read Kant’s essay along these lines and understand his historico-philosophical account of the Enlightenment primarily in a normative sense, the focus in the text shifts from the historico-philosophical promise of a completely “enlightened age” to the precarious, risky “age of enlightenment” which Kant claims to be situated in.<sup>65</sup> It then becomes clear that this “enlightened age” is not guaranteed, but only can and will be as a normative ideal to the extent

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<sup>61</sup> *What is enlightenment?* AA 8: 39 (19–20).

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* 8: 39 (20).

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *What is Enlightenment?* AA 8: 40 (21).

that the process of enlightenment continues and is not blocked. Once we understand the inevitability of enlightenment's continuation as a moral rather than a natural inevitability, the here and now, the moment at which Kant as an intellectual is addressing the public, gains in significance. It then becomes clear what is at stake in this "now": it is determinative of what will happen and what will not. As a result of the historico-philosophical presentation of the still-to-be-realized normative ideal, the present is thus not neutralized or reduced to sheer meaninglessness; on the contrary, it is potentialized and laden with significance. The present, the moment at which Kant intervenes thus becomes the decisive moment at which something may be won, but also lost. It is determinative of whether the preconceived ideal still has a chance or will be definitively abandoned.

This explains the remarkable and seemingly paradoxical focus in the text on authorities that constitute a threat to the supposedly inevitable progress of the enlightenment process. I refer to the laziness and the lack of courage to think for oneself, and especially to the treacherous guardians who keep the people in a state of minority and try to bind them to that state, to the possible conspiracies among intellectuals to call a halt to enlightenment, and to the potentially destructive interventions in the enlightenment process on the part of the ruler. In this way, Kant recognizes the contingent nature of enlightenment and the precariousness of the moment; whether enlightenment will continue or implode depends on choices that are being made right now.

As a result of the paradoxical contrast between the normatively colored, historico-philosophical *telos* and the problematization of the acute tensions in the here and now, the present thus appears in Kant's text as a crisis.<sup>66</sup> The essence of this actuality is precisely to be a crisis: being the moment at which things are decided, at which choices are made which could equally mean "progress" towards more, or "regression" towards less enlightenment. There is every indication that Kant, because of his awareness of the present as crisis, as a risk-fraught moment, sought to intervene with *What is Enlightenment?* in the hope that in this way he could help to ensure that the genuine possibility of less enlightenment in fact became somewhat less likely.

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<sup>66</sup> For the crisis concept in relation to eighteenth-century philosophy of history, see Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis. Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998), 14, 158–86, and especially 173–4, 183.