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**Art in the Age of
Enlightenment from a
Pan-European Perspective**



The Enlightenment was dedicated to reason. For the existing conditions, State and Church, this was dangerous insofar as reason, stated in absolute terms, began to examine all spheres of life. In theory, each individual's enlightened mind, independent of his or her origins, ought to have had the right to participate in this review. The sole criterion for this thorough examination was logic, that is, a secular logic. As far as the state was concerned, this led to a division of power, to political parties which negotiated decisions in parliament – this robbed the king of his absolutist claim; he no longer ruled by the grace of God, no longer stood above the law. For the church, the consequences were just as radical. When missionaries, especially the Jesuits, wrote their detailed accounts of their attempts at conversion in Asia, Africa and America, in many cases they had to state that the foreign religions were just as monotheistic and their cults, all peculiarities aside, seemingly quite similar in structure to the Christian faith. Whether they intended it or not: by means of their precise accounts, they established a new discipline, comparative theology, the logical consequence of which was putting the Christian religion into perspective. Thus, here too the absolutist claim was gradually lost.

From a philosophical point of view, absolutism was first called into question in England by John Locke (1632–1704) with the publication of his *Two Treatises of Government* in 1690, and later in France, above all by Montesquieu's (1689–1755) *De l'esprit des lois* in 1748. John Locke not only established the idea of the division of power, which in England, ahead of all other countries, took the form of a parliamentary monarchy with considerable restrictions on the king's rule. For in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* of 1690, he also produced the most decisive model of how reason is formed. In contrast to René Descartes (1596–1650), who worked on the assumption of innate ideas, Locke argued that the formation of the mind begins at an absolute zero. For this, he came up with two memorable images: the *tabula rasa*, the blank slate on which experiences are inscribed through sensory perception and connected to one another via association. The second image is that of the *camera obscura*, the darkened chamber, into which the mind increasingly admits light by way of experience until its understanding is enlightened. The English term for this Age of Reason, "Enlightenment", relates still more directly to this image than, say, the German term of "Aufklärung" (clarification). However, Locke was well aware that logic could be suspended through false associative links in the mind. He had an almost pathological fear of irrationality, which he saw as

bordering on insanity. In this fear one can already detect signs of what came to be called the "Dialectic of Enlightenment": the pursuit of an abstract, immanent logic can have disastrous effects when put into practice.

In the 1760s, the author Laurence Sterne (1713–1768) circled around this problem in his satiric novels by pointing to the irresolvable tension between reason and emotion and, quite in contrast to Locke, attributed greater meaning and importance to emotion as being natural by comparison to reason. Locke's hope of controlling nature, strengthened by the 'enlightened' natural sciences, was to relinquish its optimism in 1755 at the latest, when a devastating earthquake in Lisbon rocked the whole of Europe. The experience of the discrepancy between reason and emotion fomented the discovery of the psyche. Whereas human beings had hitherto been able to relieve themselves of their sorrows and hardships within the Church, now all of a sudden they were thrown back on themselves and their own resources in dealing with their burdens. Logic alone could not dispel fears, hence the individual experienced a gap between the outer and inner worlds, between the mind and the soul, which seemed almost impossible to bridge. It is only fitting that the French Revolution responded to this dilemma by establishing psychology as an academic discipline. As is known only too well, this did not help. To this day, physicians are divided into two groups – the actual somatic practitioners, who see the body as a functional organism and rely solely on an equipment-based medicine, and the physicians influenced by natural philosophy, who perceive illness to be a result of mental, and not only physical, anomalies.

Eighteenth-century European art responded to all this in its own manner, propagating Enlightenment on the one hand, while illustrating the problems arising from it on the other. In the realm of the fine arts, the equivalent to open parliamentary debate was the establishment of the French Salon, named after the Salon Carré in the Louvre in Paris, which over time evolved from a royal palace into a museum in its own right. In 1737 the first large-scale exhibition took place in the Salon and included hundreds of paintings. The Academy, having long been an absolutist institution for controlling the arts, lost its influence, for the Salon also allowed non-academics to exhibit their work, which by the end of the century led to exhibitions encompassing more than 10,000 exhibits. And it was no longer the academics who evaluated submissions according to their conventional, normative criteria, but rather public recognition, which created its own medium in the form of art journals. Art criticism emerged, lay appreciation developed, and a public discourse on art evolved. Hence, the court and the Church lost their opinion leadership to a very large degree, as the public showed a preference for subjects other than the historical, mythological or religious ones favoured thus far. Increasingly, portraits, landscapes and genre paintings were in demand, and large formats more or less disappeared until the museum as a new public institution could receive them once more – there was no room for them in bourgeois parlours. This development was not without its problems, for where both the State and the Church were commissioning fewer and fewer works of art, the artist had to prevail on the free market where competition was fierce. Therefore, artists had to attract attention and organise sales via dealers who kept a handsome part of the profits for themselves. In Germany, it was only in the early nineteenth century that the bourgeois public created its own institutions in the form of art associations, which served as exhibition venues for a more contemporary art.

Secularised, middle-class art first originated during the eighteenth century in England. If history, mythology and religion were no longer to provide the themes and motifs, then contemporary, morally didactic narratives had to take their place. New genres originated,

the novella in literature, for example, and in direct parallel with that in the realm of the visual arts, what William Hogarth (1697–1764) termed “modern moral subjects”. Hogarth’s series *A Harlot’s Progress*, *A Rake’s Progress* and *Marriage A-la-Mode* from the 1730s and 1740s illustrate the lives of protagonists who cannot find their place in society because they have either made the wrong decision or failed in their attempts to rise too high. To the English public, where art continued to be dominated by the aristocracy for a relatively long period of time, this genre was acceptable when presented in the form of prints, since they did not make the claim of being great art – the latter being mostly imported to England from Italy. But Hogarth also intended to establish himself in the market for great art, in the field of sophisticated painting, and hence he tried to elevate the, as convention would have it, baser themes of his work by means of references to high art: the “Rake”, for instance, locked up in prison after an attempted suicide, strikes the pose of the dying Christ – even the wound in the side is there. Anyone recognising this is likely to be vexed. A wanton wastrel as Christ? Through his inversion of its significance, however, Hogarth appears to be demonstrating that the classical pose by all means still enjoyed contemporary validity as a successful formal device, although it might have lost its original meaning. Values are re-evaluated. Yet, it was also possible to reflect on the reasons why the present time was so godless, why God had been displaced, why the inversion need not be undone. At the same time, Hogarth demonstrates that he undeniably mastered the classical vocabulary of the arts, but that the classical themes it was traditionally used to depict were no longer capable of persuading audiences in the present day. Therefore, he attempts an indirect approach by pointing out contemporary vices.

Hogarth’s approach endured for a long time in England and could also be applied to the Enlightenment problem raised by the progress of the sciences. Is this progress truly neutral or does not humanity fall prey to hubris in believing itself able to dominate and control everything? Do human beings still take into account their own finite nature? In a series of paintings, Joseph Wright of Derby (1734–1797) illustrated scientific and technical experiments or processes – this, too, is a topic that had no place in classical art. And again, he justified his depictions by using imagery that had become canonical for certain subjects in classical art, measuring the old meanings of such formulaic imagery against the meanings newly assigned. In his *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump*, where the air pump is capable of producing a vacuum, a scientist demonstrates to a captivated audience the effects of the loss of air on a bird placed within the glass receiver. The painter captures the critical moment: the air has been pumped out of the glass receiver, the bird lies on the bottom with compressed lungs as if dead, while the experimenter is holding the valve at the tip of the receiver. With a little twist he can let air into the container again; if he reacts too late, the bird will die. Part of the audience observes the process with alarm. Because the experimenter’s finger tips, the bird’s beak gasping for air, the pointing hand of the father on the right and the hidden light source of the candle are all aligned exactly along the painting’s central vertical axis, not to mention the fact that the experimenter looks straight at us, the painting actually addresses us, the beholders. We are inevitably transfixed and obliged to take a stance regarding the event. Does not the experimenter assume the role of God in deciding over life and death? Does not he, in creating a vacuum, undermine God’s creation, for after all, it was God who, according to Genesis, infused the world with *pneuma*, the breath of life. What is a vacuum? Nothingness or rather a divine space? Once the viewer realises that Christian art centres around the image of the Trinity, with God, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and that this image – which, in European art, is actually exclusive to Christian-dogmatic themes – is similarly aligned along the central vertical axis with the Holy Spirit

depicted as a white dove in a glass globe at God's feet, it becomes apparent that Wright is alluding to this very image – all the more so, as the experimenter's son, who is shown lowering the bird's cage on the right-hand side of the painting, and who knows that the experiment will have a happy ending, gazes directly at the beholder, as does his father, thus completing the Trinity. As in the case of Hogarth, it is likely that Wright by no means intends sacrilege, that this painting does not argue that scientific progress has replaced God, but that this depiction rather constitutes a reflection on the gains and losses that come with progress.

With his moral pieces, Hogarth was to have a pan-European influence, and hence it is no wonder that in each of the three countries, Italy, France and Germany, there was an artist designated the Italian, the French and the German Hogarth respectively. These artists are Pietro Longhi (1702–1785), Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725–1805) and Daniel Chodowiecki (1726–1801). All three argue to a greater or lesser degree on an explicitly moral basis, and all three do this in the context of contemporary themes. Pietro Longhi, the Italian from Venice, seems to be conventionally Christian and in this obliges his Catholic compatriots. For example, in a series on the sacraments dating from around 1755, he depicts the Baptism. However, he does not show the sacraments within the biblical context, as did the seventeenth-century classical French artist Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), but sets them within contemporary scenes. A priest performs the baptism in front of a font. A decidedly elderly couple, that is, the man, apparently a rather poorly dressed peasant, holds the child, who wears an astonishingly rich christening robe. The youthful acolyte holding a candle gazes inquisitively at the beholder, as though indirectly trying to make him or her aware that something may be wrong here. Above him, the candle pointing towards her, a fashionably dressed woman with a fan is standing half hidden by a column and attentively watching the proceedings. In the upper left, rather surprisingly, a collection bag on a pole for collecting the congregation's offertory dangles into the picture. It corresponds with the large chandelier that almost conceals the picture of the Madonna and again points to the woman behind the column. We begin to speculate. Could it be that the young woman is, in fact, the mother who has committed an indiscretion and has found herself an elderly couple in the country to raise the child in exchange for some kind of monetary reward? Did she buy the christening robe, and is she now watching to make sure the baptism is properly conducted? If this is true, then the painting may well depict the sacrament of baptism, but first and foremost it speaks about its contemporary abuse. Current conditions are the real theme, and again, once he or she has understood the covertly told story, the beholder is supposed to weigh ideal and reality against each other, to read the depiction as an admonition for his or her own life.

Before going into the works of the French and German Hogarths, it is necessary to show that in Italy, too, enlightened thought could take effect in entirely different contexts. As shall be shown, Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–1778) was not only embroiled in a dispute with Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768), founder of archaeology and art history and librarian to Cardinal Albani (1692–1779) in Rome, regarding the age and hence rank of either Roman-Etruscan or Greek art. Apart from everything else that may have been behind this controversy, it primarily constituted a historical reflection: historical thought entered into the apprehension of art. In the case of Winckelmann, the historical view was joined by a highly sensitive form of describing works of art. Yet it was his synthesis of the historical analysis and sensuous evocation of the work of art which made Winckelmann the founding father of art history. In line with Winckelmann's approach, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714–1762) established with his *Aesthetica* in

1750 the discipline of aesthetics as a theoretical reflection on the processes of perception and their mode of understanding, whereas Piranesi transferred the dimension of history and aesthetics into his artwork in a grandiose manner. His *Carceri*, a series of dungeon illustrations, was first published in 1745/50 and was, in this first version, indebted to the tradition of stage design on the one hand, and the genre of printmaking known as "Capriccio" on the other, the latter being characterised by a playful variation of a theme – albeit with the significantly greater emphasis being on the variation, as a proof of artistic inventiveness, rather than the theme. The "how" tends to dominate the "what". This had changed by the second edition of the series in 1760, in which the sheets comprising the first edition were revised to a large extent and also saw the addition of several new pictorial innovations, these serving to sharpen the statement of the series as a whole series. To a far greater degree this was now an "architecture parlante", a speaking architecture, insofar as the special manner of depicting the architectural structure was intended to illustrate the profounder and, here again, moral message of the dungeons, as based on their historical reflection. To put it more simply: these dungeons, which are extremely terrifying due to their inscrutable, labyrinthine character and their chaotic perversion of scale, are supposed to carry such a potential for horror that we, who are 'outside', refrain from all misdeeds. In this new set of prints, Piranesi reflects on the Roman conception of law, for example, by means of inserted quotations by Livy (59 BC–17 AD). Yet he also triggers a more general reflection on crime, law and punishment. Amongst other things, the sheets depict torture, but only within the scope of imaginary dungeons. It is a play on the pathos of the aesthetics of the "sublime", the central component of which is the terrifying. Hence, we have an image of horror on the one hand, but also a reflection on the appropriateness of the means of punishment on the other. It is precisely this question that is raised in one of the most famous Enlightenment essays, Cesare Beccaria's (1738–1794) *Dei delitti e delle pene* (On Crimes and Punishments) from 1764. Beccaria, as one of the first ever to do so, calls for the abolition of torture and the death penalty, insisting that all punishments should be commensurate with the crime. This work launched a wave of reform in criminal law across the whole of Europe. Looking at Table VII of Piranesi's *Carceri* in the second edition, one sees enormous halls with stairs, arches and towers, ropes from pulleys and drawbridges, huge iron rings and instruments of torture and in between tiny people on bridges and stairs – what they may be doing or why they are there in the first place is difficult to tell. In the second edition, more bridges were added, the lines rigorously ruled, yet while they adhere to an architectural logic, they have no meaningful function in the overall context – they lead nowhere, against the wall, never providing a real passage as such. In addition, the space itself remains altogether immeasurable in spite of the clear-cut architectural elements. This has a decidedly unsettling effect on the viewer: what at first glance seems to be logical – after all, Piranesi was a trained architect – turns out to be totally illogical on closer inspection. This breach of logic is intended to frighten, to embody the deterrent quality of the dungeons, while at the same time pointing towards the Dialectic of Enlightenment: more often than not, the irrational lurks within the rational. This is the tradition in which Francisco de Goya (1746–1828), too, must be situated.

With his sentimental tearjerkers, the so-called French Hogarth, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, reacted to the new public institution of the Salon – with success, as is evidenced in the exceedingly positive reviews by Denis Diderot (1713–1784), co-editor of the *Encyclopédie*. Being the most famous reference book of the Enlightenment, the *Encyclopédie* provided an exhaustive compilation of all the knowledge and ideas available at the time. In his Salon reports, Diderot praises Greuze for his melodramatic paintings,

which follow the tradition of the *tragédie larmoyante* – the theatre, too, prefers to appeal to the audience's sentiments: classical education is not required, only the ability to empathise with the conditions of humanity. When Greuze's *La Piété filiale* was exhibited at the Salon of 1763, viewers were literally moved to tears – perhaps difficult to imagine from today's point of view – by the son-in-law, who feeds his old, ailing father-in-law in the presence of the whole family. Each of the family members reacts to the event with the same intensity; a common sentiment pervades the painting. This was new: the artistic achievement does not, as in classical paintings, manifest itself in the demonstration of the various different reactions within the painting to one and the same event; rather, it lies in the capacity of the work to draw one into the image, to evoke a sense of shared emotion, of shared experience, to make one part of the family, as it were. Here, behaviour is controlled by the sentiments as opposed to an abstract morality. The title "La Piété filiale" literally translates as "filial love" or "reverence" but "piété" also means piety and is thus resonant of the concept of the Christian Pietà, referring to the Lamentation of Christ. Hence, this is a work about secular piety, whose nucleus lies in the middle-class family.

This Greuzean tone was transformed by Jacques-Louis David (1748–1825), the most important artist of the French Revolution, member of the Convention, politically left-wing and responsible for the style and organisation of the Revolution's celebrations. He, too, works with sentiment, albeit on a higher note, and explores the tension between the private and public spheres. Greuze, on the other hand, takes only the private sphere into consideration so as to create a counter-image to court society and the public sphere. David, in turn, drafts a new concept of the public sphere. In keeping with the ideas of the Revolution, it ideally ought to be united as one with the private sphere. But care must be taken. For in David's famous *Brutus* from 1789, in which the lictors are shown bringing the corpses of Brutus' sons to his home after he had had them sentenced to death for participating in a conspiracy against the state, the artist places reasons of state and duty to one's country above paternal obligation. One of the reasons why this painting became an icon of the Revolution is that, in Roman history, Lucius Junius Brutus (c. 545–509 BC) ended the hateful rule of Tarquinius Superbus (died 495 BC, reigned 535–509 BC) and installed a republic to replace the corrupt monarchy. Yet the painting, which was conceived prior to the Revolution in the years 1787 and 1788, does not in fact allow such an interpretation. For Brutus, seated in the foreground in an exceedingly tense posture, seems to be anything but a hero. He has fled to the house goddess, Roma, sensing that behind him the sons he has sacrificed are being carried in, all the while hearing the wails of his wife and daughters. He was obliged to act as he did but, in doing so, has destroyed his own private happiness. This irreconcilable conflict between private needs and public demands is the true theme of this painting. During the Revolution, David was more or less ambivalent due to political reasons, and thus also more partial when it came to ideology. The assertion of identical private and public spheres was only short-lived; the Revolution itself destroyed all illusions.

Daniel Chodowiecki is the German Hogarth. He is the author of one of the icons of Enlightenment, although the oil painting it is based upon is tiny and its execution less than inspired. Chodowiecki was first and foremost an etcher and copperplate engraver – and it was the painting's printed reproduction that was to become a pan-European success. This was due both to the theme of the image and the manner in which the theme was rendered. This theme – *Jean Calas Bidding Farewell to his Family* (Les adieux de Calas à sa famille) – was dedicated to a Huguenot cloth merchant of Toulouse who was the last person in Europe to be broken on the wheel. He was alleged to have

murdered his own son because the latter intended to convert to Catholicism. The trial was dubious by all accounts; ultimately it served the purposes of Catholic propaganda, inciting hatred against Protestants. These events took place at the end of 1761; the ill-fated son, it would seem, had in fact committed suicide. But the Church found this a convenient case: in 1762, the so called "Déliverance" day had its 200th anniversary, a reminder of the great Protestant Massacre of Vassy in 1562. Ever since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, there had been a latent intolerance of Protestants in France. Protestants were denied the freedom to practise their religion such that many decided to emigrate, with large numbers resettling in the Margraviate of Brandenburg and Berlin. Chodowiecki himself had married a Huguenot and thus belonged to Berlin's Huguenot community. Even in France, the Calas trial and its conclusion in the death sentence were highly controversial. Voltaire (1694–1778) waged a large-scale campaign to have the judgement repealed and finally succeeded: in 1765, Calas was rehabilitated and, later, the Revolution did not miss the opportunity of making him its first martyr. All the same, the case prompted Voltaire to write his famous *Traité sur la tolérance à l'occasion de la mort de Jean Calas*. Published in 1763, the treatise on tolerance came to play a key role in the self-understanding of the Enlightenment and was also a major factor in orchestrating Calas' eventual rehabilitation.

Immediately after the final acquittal in 1765, Chodowiecki began work on his painting, collecting all the material available on the trial and portrait etchings of Calas and his family in order to make his portrayal as authentic as possible. The etching based on the painting was published in 1767. Chodowiecki depicts the moment when Calas had his shackles taken off prior to being led off to his torture and execution. A Catholic priest enters the room to give him the last rites but mostly to persuade him to revoke his testimony. Yet Calas remains steadfast, with his family all around him. Chodowiecki resolutely transforms the event into a sentimental melodrama in the tradition of Greuze. The pose of Calas serves as a conscious reminder of the Lamentation of Christ who was similarly tortured though innocent. Just as Christ died for humanity, the death of Calas can be understood as a sacrifice for the freedom of thought. In order to be convincing, Chodowiecki heightened the emotion of the scene to the extreme, just as Greuze had done before him, a move expressly sanctioned by Diderot. The faces of Calas and his daughter, their heads leaning towards each other, clearly adhere to the traditional typology of emotional expression which, developed by the French Academy director Charles Lebrun (1619–1690) in the late seventeenth century, was to remain the status quo well into the nineteenth century. The father is depicted according to the type of *ravisement*, rapture, hence his expression is to be read as being already in God's view. The daughter is rendered as *tristesse*, sorrow. To increase the impression of authenticity, Chodowiecki depicted even the smallest detail with extraordinary accuracy, such as the ear of corn sticking out from the bed. This form of illusionism stands in express contradiction to the classical academic tendency towards generalisation: the "no particularities", no minute details within the picture, that English Academy president Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792) continued to propagate in the late eighteenth century. The consideration of even the smallest things is bound up with Protestant conviction on the one hand, and middle-class precision on the other.

In Spain, conditions in the eighteenth century were more backward and repressive. The Church ruled by means of the Inquisition and the monarchy was uncontested. Yet in the latter part of the eighteenth century, not even Spain was able to completely shut itself off from the ideas of the European Enlightenment. English and French Enlightenment literature and prints were brought into the country, and even a knowledge of

Chodowiecki's prints has been proven. Short phases of liberal activity, in which people pressed for reform in a bid to turn around the backward economy and limit the influence of the Church and Inquisition, alternated with phases of renewed repression on a massive scale. It was under circumstances such as these that, towards the end of the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, Francisco de Goya created his print series. A supporter of the French Enlightenment, he was friends with political reformers and eventually found his political home in the wording of the liberal Constitution of Cádiz. At the same time, however, he was employed as a court painter and endeavoured to secure his court salary through addresses of loyalty. Much like David in France, he manoeuvred his way through the events of his time, offering his services to the powers that be. During the Spanish Civil War of the early nineteenth century, he served the Spanish King, the English and the French as he saw fit, without making any apparent distinction between the various sides. David, too, was a revolutionary and yet soon bowed to the Emperor Napoleon (1769–1821). This illustrates a central problem faced by modern artists. Indeed, they participated in the market, needing to succeed in one way or another, and thus often could not avoid a certain degree of opportunism. Goya was summoned before the Inquisition but testimonials were in his favour; by making a number of compromises, he was able to maintain the goodwill of the respective rulers. This diminishes neither the greatness nor the intensity of his art, for in his work he illustrates the inevitable contradictions awaiting the bourgeois individual. Clarity is supplanted by perpetual ambiguity; the subject is torn between conflicting issues. Under the given circumstances, it could no longer be said which side was right and which may stake its claim on the truth. And thus Goya, too, discovered the theme of the abysses of the human soul, these pertaining as much to him as to others.

Published in 1799 but soon suppressed, Goya's first expansive series, *Los Caprichos*, which comprises in excess of 80 sheets, demonstrates the ambivalence of all experience, and indeed the ambivalent perception of his own work. He plays on the viewer's feelings of insecurity in reading his imagery. Hence, the viewer automatically transfers this inherent ambivalence onto the theme depicted. *Capricho* 9 is entitled "Tantalo" (Tantalus). In Greek mythology, Tantalus is punished for having tempted the gods by being condemned to suffer perpetual hunger and thirst. Even though he is standing in a pool of water, he cannot drink, for the water retreats whenever he tries to do so; and similarly, whenever he tries to eat, the trees close by withdraw their fruit, leaving his needs forever unsatisfied. In Goya's rendition, an elderly man can be seen wringing his hands over a young, apparently dead woman lying in his lap. The unsettling nature of the image begins with the title: which needs are meant here, is not sorrow the theme? As it happens, there are a number of surviving commentaries on Goya's *Caprichos* which, sourcing from his immediate milieu, unanimously testify to the fact that the woman is feigning unconsciousness to evade the man who is unable to satisfy her sexually. Upon reading this, the viewer might well be shocked. The sexual, quite overtly embodied in the voluminous, bulging breasts of the woman, tends to be suppressed in the viewer's initial encounter with the image, governed as it is by the expectation of death and grief. Yet this first impression is not coincidental at all, bearing in mind that Goya's iconography clearly cites what might be called the classical type of the Pietà, well-known to every Catholic Spaniard from the tradition of the late Middle Ages onwards: the dead Christ, with hanging arms and stiffened legs, is portrayed lying in the lap of his mother, Mary, while she wrings her hands over him in grief. The ambivalence created by Goya could not be greater: the grief of the Pietà group versus the agonies of impotence. And viewers catch themselves thinking what they might be repressing themselves. This is no longer the opposition of reason and emotion but the opposition of reason and instinctive urges.

Indeed, it is also an achievement of the Enlightenment to have laid bare psychological processes, no matter how abysmal they may be, thereby exposing humanity. The Enlightenment appeared to preach faith in reason, and that reason ought to rule the world – yet the reason that emerged from the process of Enlightenment seems to have been altogether unsettled.

About the author

Born in Prague in 1944, Werner Busch studied art history, archaeology and historical auxiliary sciences in Tübingen, Freiburg, Vienna and London. Awarded his doctorate in 1973 for a thesis on the English painter and printmaker William Hogarth, he took up a post as assistant professor at the Institute of Art History at the University of Bonn in 1974 which he held until 1981. After completing his habilitation on German art of the nineteenth century in 1980, he served as professor from 1981 to 1988 at the University of Bochum. In 1988 he was appointed chair of art history at the Free University in Berlin, a position he held until his retirement in 2010. A member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities since 1998, co-founder and editor of *Kunsthistorische Arbeitsblätter* and head of the Free University's Collaborative Research Centre "Aesthetic Experience and the Dissolution of Artistic Experience" from 2003 to 2008, Busch has published widely on Italian and Dutch art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and especially on European art of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His most recent monographs include „Das unklassische Bild: Von Tizian bis Constable und Turner“, Munich: C.H. Beck, 2009 and „Englishness“: Beiträge zur englischen Kunst des 18. Jahrhunderts von Hogarth bis Romney, Berlin and Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2010.

This text has been taken from:

Die Kunst der Aufklärung (*The Art of the Enlightenment*), Exhibition Catalogue by Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden and Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen Munich in cooperation with the National Museum of China, Beijing 2011

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