

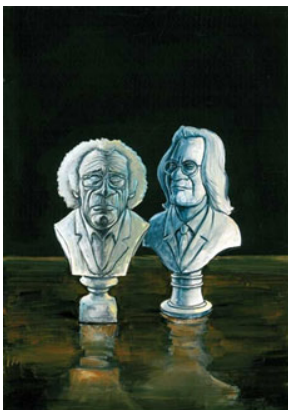


AC Grayling, Tzvetan Todorov How to defend the Enlightenment

"To say that reason is only desiccating and too dry is a dangerous caricature. No less dangerous is to eliminate the place for arts, for myth, which is a different kind of knowledge of the world. We have to be cautious about both dangers, both reductions." On the publication of his new book *In Defence of the Enlightenment*, Tzvetan Todorov tells British philosopher AC Grayling why the Enlightenment must be separated from scientism and cultural chauvinism.

AC Grayling: We are in profound agreement on many things; you and I share the much same premises, the same desires and ambitions, the same sentiments. I regard us as comrades in the same line of inquiry. But, for the purposes of discussing your book with you, I will at times play the devil's advocate. However, there are one or two points where we have a real difference of view. That is the background against which I shall be asking you the following questions. First, a point about deism in the eighteenth century. Many people who were then atheist couldn't say so, because it was socially unacceptable. So they assumed the label of deist. Some people who did so were probably serious about it, for example Voltaire. But a lot of other people were probably atheists. Is that your understanding?

Tzvetan Todorov: Definitely. But some of the important thinkers of the Enlightenment I think were deists. And there is one character who plays a central role for me, biographically, and this is Rousseau. He is a very singular representative of the Enlightenment, since his point was fighting against the *philosophes*, the extreme of the Enlightenment. He always claimed that he had to fight on two fronts, against the fanatics on one side and atheists on the other. He had a certain sort of deism, theism.



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ACG: We're going to come back to Rousseau; I know he's important for you and my feeling has always been that he began as a supporter of the Enlightenment project, but quite soon came to think there were implications of it that he couldn't agree with. In some ways he's a more important precursor of one of the major counter-Enlightenment movements, which is Romanticism. But let's come back to this. The point about deism is interesting, because prior to the nineteenth century and Darwin, there was an explanatory gap about how one could understand where the universe came from, and how life arose. There were just no candidates for understanding in a naturalistic sense how this might be. Which for me is one

explanation for why some people said, "Well, the only explanatory resource we have is to think that some agency is responsible for it".

TT: You know there was this famous saying concerning Voltaire. There has to be a master watchmaker.

ACG: Exactly. Now let me ask you about Rousseau and the point that early on he was a champion of Enlightenment, but later came to have many doubts about it. He's a very complex figure, obviously, and his position is unique among all the different positions that were taken by eighteenth century thinkers. My claim is that the overall position he arrived at seems to me more a precursor of Romanticism than an outcome of the Enlightenment.

TT: As you say, Rousseau is one of the most complex figures of the time and for that reason maybe one of the most fascinating for us readers and critics, because he seems at times so contradictory. But, at the same time, to blame a writer for being contradictory is an easy way out of the problem of interpretation of his thought, because probably Rousseau was brighter than me, and if I can see contradictions in his thoughts, probably he saw them just as well. So this is just a preliminary answer to the question, and I'm aware of the fact that not everyone has the same vision of Rousseau. This being said, first of all I would say that he has never been entirely in line with the mainstream encyclopaedists and *philosophes*, because his first major writing, which was the first *Discourse on Arts and Sciences*, was really straightforward against the ideas of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment claimed that by promoting culture — meaning by this high culture, the theatre, reading, the arts — then social progress will arrive automatically. And as we know, Rousseau chose to defend the opposite thesis, namely that there was a degradation of human society because of the arts and sciences. This is really, at least at the surface, a totally anti-Enlightenment argument.

But, I don't think one should stop at that and I think in his mature political writings, which are the *Second Discourse*, the *Social Contract* and *Emile*, he did develop a vision of human society and of human beings which are indeed among the deepest interpretations of Enlightenment ideas. You may remember that a Count at one point said that Rousseau, for him, performed a Copernican revolution, and after reading Rousseau, he put things upside down and could enter his new thinking. And this new thinking was first of all the recognition of the role of the free will of autonomy, of deliberate action of the individual, as the major characteristic of the human species. These are famous pages in the *Second Discourse*, the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, in which Rousseau contrasts different animal species and says put a pigeon in front of a piece of meat, and put a fox in front of vegetables and they will die of hunger. But human beings are able to abandon whatever they receive as education and adapt to new circumstances. Rousseau has this short formula — human beings are capable to acquiesce or resist. We human beings have this opportunity of opposing determination. Rousseau does not define human beings as rational beings, as the old Aristotelian definition would be, but as beings that are capable of creating their own code of behaviour, and this is what we call culture. And this is why different human communities have different cultures. This insistence on the major central role of human autonomy, of the capacity to act out of decision of the will, is really one of the major contributions. Another one in which Rousseau is different from his Romantic followers. Of course you're right that he had a huge Romantic following — all the individual autobiographies, and the self-concentration and self-absorption with problems of the self, were born out of Rousseau's *Confessions*, *Reveries* and so on. However, read carefully his theoretical statements and one sees that he never imagined human beings as self-sufficient individuals. He was acutely aware of the social nature of human beings, and this is a dividing line between what I

should call humanism, old or new, and individualism as a world view. Individualism being the image of the individual as a self-sufficient, independent being — "well, I communicate with others, but that's just because I can do it. But if only I could achieve my authentic self, then I wouldn't need any communication with anyone outside of me". I quote some contemporary writers like Bataille and Blanchot, and also Sade at the time of Rousseau, who perpetuate this myth, and Rousseau doesn't. Now, to go a little further in your direction, Rousseau was I think an extremely intense thinker and a very gifted person, and each direction he explored he went very far. And one of the directions he explored was, he hated being with other human beings, apparently. So when he was reflecting theoretically on the subject, he would describe the whole of human history as a process of socialisation. He says in the *Second Discourse*, before we became social beings, we were not fully human. The full humanity comes with the socialising process. However, he himself hated being with other people, and he was so eloquent in this, that what his immediate successors imitated was precisely this exclusion of the outside world, self-absorption, in a way the self-fiction of today, all these endless autobiographies of insignificant people that we read today are very, very distant heirs of Rousseau. We can blame him for that of course, but I think he was more than that.



Tzvetan Todorov (l.) and AC Grayling (r.). Photo: Des Willie

ACG: Hume and Kant both wrote about reason. We think of the Enlightenment as privileging reason, but for Hume and Kant their question was: what are the limits of reason? Hume was sceptical about the

capacity of reason to solve our problems in metaphysics and elsewhere. And so indeed was Kant. For me, this is the reason why both Hume and Kant are central Enlightenment figures, and of course Kant is the author of the great essay "What is Enlightenment?" People ask, if they are Enlightenment thinkers, why are they looking for the limits of reason? The answer is that before the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century and the Enlightenment, the source of knowledge was authority — the authority of the deity, the Bible, the Church. If we are going to exercise authority over the acquisition of knowledge, we have to understand our instrument. That is why we need a critique of our mental powers. Look also at Locke, a major figure in stimulating the Enlightenment. His question was, "What can we know? How much can we know?" This is why one distinctive feature of the Enlightenment is the examination of the nature and extent of reason. It's important to notice this because there is a caricature of the Enlightenment which says that reason usurps sensibility or feeling. It usurps the role that emotion plays in the formation of relationships, the appreciation of beauty and the spiritual aspect of life. It's desiccating. It doesn't see the pearl, only the disease of the oyster. This attitude is present in Rousseau. His objection to the *philosophes* was that they over-privileged reason. What the Romantics find in Rousseau is the idea that feeling has a special authority, and is a route to truth more profound and far-reaching than the enquiries of reason can ever be. For this reason Rousseau is perhaps more of a Romantic than he is an Enlightenment figure.

TT: That's a very interesting line of analysing history, I agree. I think that reason has to have a limited scope indeed, and that it was a kind of wisdom of

Enlightenment thinkers that they perceived reason within its limits. And there are two dangerous caricatures of this position. One is to say that reason is only desiccating, and too dry and doesn't understand anything. And the other, which is no less dangerous, is to eliminate all non-discursive expression of knowledge, to eliminate the place for arts, for myth, for all visions for the image as such, which is a different kind of knowledge of the world. In a way I think we have to be cautious about both dangers, both reductions. And this is in a way what I like in the Enlightenment and what I try to remind the reader — that the Enlightenment was this complex moment when people were able to fight for reason so that reason would replace traditional authority. But at the same time, they were aware of the limits of reason. Now, specifically about Rousseau and the passions, I think he may have that following because of certain pages of his writings. But at the same time, books like those I mentioned — *Discourses*, *Social Contract* or *Emile* — are monuments of logical argumentation. So they don't qualify really as attacks on reason. It is true that in his later, most paranoid writings he can have developments of that kind, and so his heirs within the Romantic movement would follow that line. But the Romantic Movement itself was not all of a piece. Victor Hugo, to take the great French figure of Romanticism, was very much a defender of reason, although he would leave a place for passions. If you look at literature in the eighteenth century, which we should, because the writers were just as much an expression of the sensibility and mentality of the age, I think we find both the defenders of passion and of reason. Rousseau was maybe a defender of passion, or Samuel Richardson. But at the same time, the line of Diderot and Laurence Sterne wasn't really a domination of irrational passions overwhelming human beings. They were very ironic and aware of all the traps human beings could fall in.

ACG: And it's interesting to see why that's so. The point I'm going to offer you is connected to something else that you mention — scientism. I think the proponent of scientism has always been a straw man; I don't think there is any serious scientist or proponent of the Enlightenment who has ever made scientific claims, which is that science can solve all our problems, or explain human nature, or tell us what is morally good.

TT: I don't think that scientism is practised by scientists. It's practised by philosophers.

ACG: By the wrong kind of philosopher, yes. But also by people who take a kind of schoolboy stand. I think Marquis de Sade is a good example of this on the extreme. One thing that is characteristic of the Enlightenment, among the encyclopaedists in France in particular, was that they wanted to apply the scientific mindset to understanding society, morality, the social order and politics. They didn't mean that science itself was going to solve problems in these fields. When you think scientifically, you think in an open-minded way, in which questions of practicality, empirical test of hypotheses, and public debate, are central. This contrasts sharply — because of its open-endedness, its preparedness to live with uncertainty, and with the creation of new problems from the solution of old problems — with the old narrative structure of theistic explanations of the world. Those narratives are very neat — human beings like a nice simple story. We can tell the religious story in ten minutes, but to explain science takes years. To bring the scientific mindset to social problems means having to collect the facts, to examine and think about them, to discuss and debate them.

TT: And not give any certainty at the end. I couldn't agree more.

ACG: So it seems to me that that is characteristic of Diderot, d'Alembert, many of the contributors, even to a great extent Voltaire himself, who was scientifically very literate, that their approach has this character. This is not scientism, it's not scientific as such, but it has something of the quality of the scientific mindset, which I see as being quite fundamental to the Enlightenment.

TT: I couldn't agree more, I don't know what to add because you expressed it very well. This is indeed also an explanation for why Enlightenment ideas cannot be accepted by everyone. Because if you leave people with doubts after big argumentation and a lot of information collected, and you say at the end "so probably it is this way, but some doubts remain", I think this leaves many people unsatisfied and they would prefer a straightforward narrative which says human beings fell, Adam accepted the apple. So we know where we stand, and where we go, and what's our future. We have entered an age of uncertainty via the Enlightenment.

ACG: And that's unsettling. It's interesting that the narratives that provide closure have something strongly in common with fairy stories. When you read Grimm or Anderson, there are many improbabilities that you simply accept. For example, if you said to somebody who believes the standard Old Testament story, "there's a puzzle about the Garden of Eden, because before they ate the fruit, they couldn't know that doing so was wrong, for the fruit is the knowledge of what is wrong." Here's a paradox: how could they disobey if they didn't know? It's that kind of contradiction that in fairy stories don't matter.

TT: But the people of seventeenth, eighteenth centuries were precisely sensitive to that kind of contradiction, and they started asking these questions. And this brought them pretty far away, starting from this point.

ACG: In your chapter on humanity you describe the Enlightenment transformation of the idea that man's duty is to love God and his fellow man. The idea that one must love God became, you say, less important, and the new basis for humanistic ethics is our concern for our fellow men. You describe this as nevertheless coming out of Christianity. And you quote Gotthold Lessing saying you don't need the forms of religion, but the content of religion.

TT: Benjamin Franklin also.

ACG: So my disagreement is with them, not you. When I think about the demands that religion makes of us, you can indeed say that they include an instruction to love God and our fellow men, but you can also say religion demands that we submit our will to the deity, that we don't ask questions, that we don't challenge, we don't think for ourselves, we humble ourselves, we recognise that we are in a permanent state of failure — and that it's only by the grace of salvation that we might be saved. Now the psychology of the condition of man in the Christian picture is utterly different from the Enlightenment conception of the autonomous person who must take responsibility for himself, who must think for himself. Everything that the Enlightenment says a man should be is a description of Christianity's terrible sin of pride. I often hear people say that the idea of the universality of rights and the oneness of humankind are Christian ideas, together with the idea of love and respect for other people. But I think that when you go deep into what it is that a Christian psychology tells us about the state of man, and what the Enlightenment wants a man to be, they couldn't be more different.

TT: I see very well the point. But I would say that your objection concerns all religions and not Christianity specifically. The word "Islam" means "submission", and each and every religion implies total submission to authority, otherwise it's no longer religion, it's New Age or something. So in this I completely agree, and thus the psychological experience cannot be the same. Nevertheless, I think that we can distinguish between religions which appeal to all human beings, or to our tribe only. And this is a significant difference. It doesn't make out of Christianity the equivalence of the human rights struggle. However, the very idea that all human beings can follow the same path, and not just those who belong to our tribe, is I think a significant difference. And this is a Christian heritage in a way. Concerning love, St Paul has in fact quite striking statements. On several occasions in his Epistles, in which he says you have only two obligations as Christians. Love God, and love thy neighbour. And he adds, if you really love thy neighbour, then you have performed the first requirement of loving God. Which means that you don't have to love God separately outside the simple attitude towards other human beings. This was not the way Christianity was interpreted through the ages. Through the ages it was said that the love for the creature should not hinder the love for the creator and thus there was a hierarchy. And Pascal, in his famous writings that he would hide within his jacket, wrote that he wanted to find some distance, not to love people too much, because this makes it impossible for him to love only God. Now, I think this is indeed a very anti-humanistic attitude, and Pascal is an anti-humanist in a purely descriptive sense. This is not an insult — he is a great writer, thinker, but he was an anti-humanist. He was not concerned at all with human interest. However, not every Christian thinker followed that line. This is basically the opposition of the early fight between Augustine and Pelagius. Pelagians were those who thought that one had to care about human action here and now, not to address God all the time. I think that in the eighteenth century people like Lessing and Franklin... I think Franklin was an atheist, he was a deist, but that was mere protection. Probably the other founding fathers as well. Lessing maybe less so, I don't know. In any case that was their movement. They said well, Christianity teaches us love. We keep the love, we just eliminate that distant addressee of our love, we keep the closest addressees, we keep the essentials. This allowed them to avoid a frontal clash with the religious authorities of their time.

ACG: Of course universalism wasn't the view of the Church of Jerusalem, which thought that only Jews could become Christians. This explains the great debate between Paul and the Jerusalem apostles about circumcision. Even more importantly, the idea of love God and your fellow man is not quite the whole duty, because there is an extremely important thesis in Paul, which is that faith has usurped the law. Then there's the conflict, right up to Luther and beyond, about justification by faith or by works, which has deeply divided Christianity. In the period before Augustine there is a contradiction, which is that the ethics of the New Testament preach a completely impractical way of life. Give everything away, take no thought for tomorrow, turn your back on your family if they disagree with you. Of course it's all premised on the idea that the end of the world is very soon. When you look in the fourth/fifth century Church, you see how much they import into Christian moral thinking and metaphysics from Plotinus and neo-Platonism and the rich ethical resources of Stoicism. And of course later in Aquinas you get another import from Greek philosophy. When people attribute things to Christianity, I see through the veil of Christianity, I see the Greek classical tradition. For example in Stoicism there is a universalising ethics. In one of my own books I argue that from the classical period to our own time, we've had these two strands of thought, the humanistic strand and the "divine command" strand. After the

Reformation I see them being mainly in conflict. So when we talk about the genealogy of an idea, like the idea of universality...

TT: You're right. As you remember Paul also says if you don't have faith, it doesn't matter, if you don't have hope, it doesn't matter, but you have to have love. So he did have some of that, but you're right of course, that others were concerned with who is Christian and who is not, and kill the others because they are not Christians. They weren't that universalist. Maybe it's just a strategy in eighteenth century thinkers to claim that this came from one basic tenet of Christianity. And in the Greeks, indeed in the Stoic philosophy I remember in Cicero there are sentences about the human race, the whole world. It's clear that people like Augustine were infused with Platonism, with Stoic teachings, so it's very hard to distinguish in this sense, and maybe this is just the tradition within which there are strings coming from different sources.

ACG: In the book you ask, Why go to Mars? This bears on what is surely a great Enlightenment idea. I call the eighteenth century Enlightenment the Third Enlightenment, because I think that classical antiquity is the first, and the Renaissance for me is the second. If you contrast the *contemptus mundi* view of the medieval period — the idea that the world is an evil place — with the Renaissance view; when you consider the latter's landscapes, portraits of ordinary people, music, poetry, its enjoyment of life in this world, there's a remarkable contrast. From then on knowledge was again valued for its own sake. Understanding something about the world that we're in is an extension of our enjoyment of it. To go to Mars and see what Mars is like is an aspect of this, so I wondered why you didn't think we should go to Mars.

TT: First of all I agree about the Renaissance. In fact I have written a book called *In Praise of the Individual*, on fifteenth century painting, which describes the way in which the world started being appreciated in itself, and that really happened at what point in time. Before that the world was a vehicle for some meaning, but starting in the early fifteenth century the way a house looked broken became interesting in itself, and it had no meaning at all, no allegorical, no theological meaning. It was because this house happened to be broken, and individual portraits, and individual actions and so on, so definitely. To me also, let me insist on this, I haven't dealt with the first Enlightenment in antiquity, but I can see the point. From the Renaissance to the eighteenth century, it is sort of a unique process. The eighteenth century, I don't think they had many original ideas. It was the synthesis, and the enforcement that was characteristic of that age. But they didn't invent things. Locke invented things, Descartes invented things, Galileo invented things, Newton. Application and diffusion. So that's why the encyclopaedia was such an important thing. Although it's just mass-market, it has no scientific, specific or philosophical value, it was vulgarisation, but it counted for that. Now, knowledge for its own sake. Well, maybe I'm being a little bit more anthropocentric than you are, and since the final aim of knowledge, of human action, should be the human welfare in one way or another, I think that at a certain point there is a calculus between the price and the results that we expect. And I think that travelling to Mars is a pretty expensive enterprise, and I don't think that we'll ever establish a colony on Mars that will change our lives. Whereas the study of human genetics, to take another example, well, we don't know at all what the outcome may be. It may be a horrible outcome, it may be engineering genetics and producing monsters, slaves deprived of freedom, because they will know how to manipulate, this we cannot know. The same concerns the search for new energies — I cannot blame the nuclear scientists who found the secret of nuclear energy. That was a huge progress of human knowledge. It seems to me

that, given the prize, what we can expect of the expeditions to Mars, maybe we should spare that money and improve our schools.

ACG: I can give you two counter arguments. One is that we never know what beneficial spin-offs there will be. That's a pragmatic justification. You talk about how everything should be for the welfare of humanity, and I agree, but it seems to me that knowing things adds to our welfare, because we are intelligent, enquiring apes.

TT: I feel very excited by some discoveries, because we live in an age of discoveries, concerning the behaviour of apes for instance, or of prehistory also, they are pushing the limits of humanity further and further away and learning more. So the origins of humanity, I find that very illuminating because it gives us a perspective on ourselves.

ACG: Knowing about the very early history of mankind, its ancestry, is also very theoretical, like visiting Mars. It's not as expensive, sure, but it has the same character: knowledge for its own sake.

TT: It's purely theoretical, but it gives us insight into human identity. It's a question of balance for me. I'm not against, but given the expenses I feel reluctant. But I have a cousin who is a brilliant astronomer, and if he hears me saying these restrictions he will kill me. But I'm not at all for limiting the work of astronomers. I think the travels to Mars are a different project, and infinitely more expensive than building good astronomical instruments. I think there should be some strategy. This is not a question of principle so much to me, as strategy.

ACG: I was very struck by something you say in the book, that there is one science, and there are many religions. The idea of the objectivity that scientific inquiry yearns towards contrasts with the fact that different belief systems, and their tribalism, are the things that divide people. I have direct practical experience of this. I'm a representative to the Human Rights Council in Geneva for the International Humanist and Ethical Union, but I've also just recently made a programme for the BBC World Service about CERN. I went this year to the Human Rights Council to do some work there, and then to CERN, and I couldn't have been more struck by the contrast. At CERN, people from politically opposed countries were working together. Two miles away, in the Human Rights Council, their countries were arguing against each other. The point that arises concerns not just the objectivity of science, but the desire for it. To maximise agreement, to find common ground, and something that we can all share regarding the good for human beings and how we can cooperate with each other to achieve it: this is also an aspiration to a universal ethics, implicit in the idea of human rights, protection of which opens a space for individuals to create the good. You say in your book that you're sceptical about human rights as a possible basis for a universal morality. Maybe I'm urging that it is a possible basis...

TT: Well, let me first agree on the first point, which is the real universality of science. Human rights, I think my reservations... I'm not against human rights. Who could be against human rights? But I'm a little sceptical about their use. It seems to be that the preliminary of human rights is indeed something that we should cherish very much, which is the capacity of finding a common ground. The very capacity of finding a common ground, and thus the justification of a conversation, of a debate, of an argument, so that we can establish exactly where this common ground is. I observe, and I think that's why I have this

sceptical view, that human rights nowadays are used as a kind of instrument for justifying our western superiority. It is for this historical reason, because we have defined a certain body of ideas, of principles, that we call human rights. And as soon as we observe that somewhere they are not exactly accepted in the same way, we consider these countries definitely inferior and maybe even deserving punishment. So that's my basic reservation. But I agree with you that if one proposes to replace universal human rights with what is sometimes called the rights of God, we are taking a big step backwards. Or if we divide humanity into categories, be they the faithful and the faithless, or men and women, or whatever, and declare irreducible differences between the two, again these are things that we cannot accept in any public debate. This breaks the horizon. But the horizon of accepting the question itself I think is very important. And it should be followed by, it should be nourished by better knowledge of cultural traditions. I think that in the West we are very proud of our tradition and justly so, but we still have a lot to learn from the Chinese tradition, from the African traditions, from all sorts of ways of being elsewhere. If we pay the necessary attention to understand their justification, rather than extracting one savage habit such as cliterodectomy, and say "well, how can you do that?"

ACG: That's a good point, because of course our difficulty when we're trying to think sympathetically about these issues, involves not imposing cultural norms, but on the other hand thinking that all human beings have certain fundamental needs and interests that we can recognise. Yet even when we take that line, we get accused of cultural imperialism. But what would you do if Nicolas Sarkozy said okay, you're in charge now, and here is the problem of Darfur, or Rwanda. What then?

TT: Well, in the general case I would say that it certainly is not my business to settle this problem. I think this is the case in Afghanistan today. There is a real problem, there is a real danger, but it seems to me that the intervention of western powers aggravates the problem instead of solving it.

ACG: But is that a practical point or a philosophical point?

TT: It's practical. That is, I think that someone can intervene. The intervention of local forces have a much bigger chance of helping to solve the problems you mention. Also I think there is a difference in the transgressions of human rights, which justify or don't justify outside interventions. You mention genocide, and the two most recent in Cambodia and Rwanda did not provoke humanitarian military intervention of the US, UN, EU. In one case it was the Tutsi from Uganda who stopped the genocide, in another it was the Vietnamese army. I think there is a lesson in this. Even in the case of genocide, which for me would be ideally the case in which an intervention is preferable, necessary, because we cannot accept that millions of people getting killed. Even in this case, clearly the local neighbour is much more efficient, is much more concerned. And you have to feel concerned in order to be ready to sacrifice your own life, because this is war. So I'm not against making judgements, transcultural judgements. I think we have to. But I think frequently the means that we use in order to impose our values are counter-productive most of the time. I think the means that have been most productive are the diffusion of the ideas of the Enlightenment. And these have really changed the world. In a way, decolonisation was fuelled by ideas of autonomy, equal dignity, individual freedom, which were ideas of the Enlightenment.

ACG: Yes, agreed. If you look at a western liberal democracy, one thing you notice is that within it there is a great deal of argument, disagreement, discussion, tumult, upset. This is a sign of health, not of dysfunction. Peace is what tyrannies produce. Argument and discussion are signs of health, because a society constantly negotiating with itself always has possibilities. It's a valuable lesson this, and of course it's a lesson very much of the Enlightenment. Because one thing that's characteristic about the Enlightenment is the celebration of plurality, of difference, of the idea that debate is healthy and productive. What Stalinism has in common with the Catholicism of Torquemada is what I call a monolithic ideology, an ideocracy, serving the One Great Truth at individual expense.

TT: I discovered, found, that there was an expression for this, which was *plenitudo potestatis*, and it's quite eloquent in itself to express this necessity to concentrate all power in the same hands, all ideology, all views. And so the final word about our discussion could be that it is by criticising the Enlightenment that we are faithful to its principles.

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