

## Montaigne as Myth through History

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## Bibliography

How to Live: Or a Life of Montaigne in One Question and Twenty Attempts at an Answer by Sarah Bakewell [The Other Press: 2010 ISBN: 9781590514252]

Winner of the 2010 National Book Critics Circle Award for Biography

How to get along with people, how to deal with violence, how to adjust to losing someone you love—such questions arise in most people's lives. They are all versions of a bigger question: how do you live? How do you do the good or honorable thing, while flourishing and feeling happy?

This question obsessed Renaissance writers, none more than Michel Eyquem de Montaigne, perhaps the first truly modern individual. A nobleman, public official and wine-grower, he wrote free-roaming explorations of his thought and experience, unlike anything written before. He called them "essays," meaning "attempts" or "tries." Into them, he put whatever was in his head: his tastes in wine and food, his childhood memories, the way his dog's ears twitched when it was dreaming, as well as the appalling events of the religious civil wars raging around him. The Essays was an instant bestseller and, over four hundred years later, Montaigne's honesty and charm still draw people to him. Readers come in search of companionship, wisdom and entertainment—and in search of themselves.

This book, a spirited and singular biography, relates the story of his life by way of the questions he posed and the answers he explored. It traces his bizarre upbringing, youthful career and sexual adventures, his travels, and his friendships with the scholar and poet Étienne de La Boétie and with his adopted "daughter," Marie de Gournay. And we also meet his readers—who for centuries have found in Montaigne an inexhaustible source of answers to the haunting question, "how to live?" <>

Montaigne in Barn Boots: An Amateur Ambles Through Philosophy by Michael Perry [Harper, 9780062230560]

The beloved memoirist and bestselling author of Population: 485 reflects on the lessons he's learned from his unlikely alter ego, French Renaissance philosopher Michel de Montaigne.

"The journey began on a gurney," writes Michael Perry, describing the debilitating kidney stone that led him to discover the essays of Michel de

Montaigne. Reading the philosopher in a manner he equates to chickens pecking at scraps—including those eye-blinking moments when the bird gobbles something too big to swallow—Perry attempts to learn what he can (good and bad) about himself as compared to a long-dead French nobleman who began speaking Latin at the age of two, went to college instead of kindergarten, worked for kings, and once had an audience with the Pope. Perry "matriculated as a barn-booted bumpkin who still marks a second-place finish in the sixth-grade spelling bee as an intellectual pinnacle . . . and once said hello to Merle Haggard on a golf cart."

Written in a spirit of exploration rather than declaration, Montaigne in *Barn Boots* is a down-to-earth (how do you pronounce that last name?) look into the ideas of a philosopher "ensconced in a castle tower overlooking his vineyard," channeled by a midwestern American writing "in a room above the garage overlooking a disused pig pen." Whether grabbing an electrified fence, fighting fires, failing to fix a truck, or feeding chickens, Perry draws on each experience to explore subjects as diverse as faith, race, sex, aromatherapy, and Prince. But he also champions academics and aesthetics, in a book that ultimately emerges as a sincere, unflinching look at the vital need to be a better person and citizen.

**Montaigne and the Tolerance of Politics**  
by Douglas I. Thompson [Oxford  
University Press, 9780190679934]

Toleration is one of the most studied concepts in contemporary political theory and philosophy, yet the range of contemporary normative prescriptions concerning how to do toleration or how to be tolerant is remarkably narrow and limited. The literature is largely dominated by a neo-Kantian moral-juridical frame, in which toleration is a matter to be decided in terms of constitutional rights. According to this framework, cooperation equates to public reasonableness and willingness to engage in certain types of civil moral dialogue. Crucially, this vision of politics makes no claims about how to cultivate and secure the conditions required to make cooperation possible in the first place. It also has little to say about how to motivate one to become a tolerant person. Instead it offers highly abstract ideas that do not by themselves suggest what political activity is required to negotiate overlapping values and interests in which cooperation is not already assured. Contemporary thinking about toleration indicates, paradoxically, an intolerance of politics.

Montaigne and the Tolerance of Politics argues for toleration as a practice of negotiation, looking to a philosopher not usually considered political: Michel de Montaigne. For Montaigne, toleration is an expansive, active practice of political endurance in negotiating public goods across lines of value difference. In other words, to be tolerant means to possess a particular set of political capacities for negotiation. What matters most is not how we talk to our political opponents, but that we talk to each other across lines of disagreement. Douglas I. Thompson draws on Montaigne's *Essais* to recover the idea that political negotiation grows out of genuine care for public goods and the establishment of political trust. He argues that we need a Montaignian conception of toleration today if we are to negotiate effectively the circumstances of increasing political polarization and ongoing value conflict, and he applies this notion to current debates in political theory as well as contemporary issues, including the problem of migration and refugee asylum. Additionally, for Montaigne scholars, he reads the *Essais* principally as a work of public political education, and resituates the work as an extension of Montaigne's political activity as a high-level negotiator between Catholic and Huguenot parties during the French Wars of Religion. Ultimately, this book argues that Montaigne's view of tolerance is worth recovering and reconsidering in contemporary democratic societies where political leaders and ordinary citizens are becoming less able to talk to each other to resolve political conflicts and work for shared public goods.

**The Renaissance Rediscovery of Intimacy**  
by Kathy Eden [University of Chicago  
Press, 978-0226526645]

In 1345, when Petrarch recovered a lost collection of letters from Cicero to his best friend Atticus, he discovered an intimate Cicero, a man very different from either the well-known orator of the Roman forum or the measured spokesman for the ancient schools of philosophy. It was Petrarch's encounter with this previously unknown Cicero and his letters that Kathy Eden argues fundamentally changed the way Europeans from the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries were expected to read and write.

The Renaissance Rediscovery of Intimacy explores the way ancient epistolary theory and practice were understood and imitated in the European Renaissance. Eden draws chiefly upon Aristotle, Cicero, and Seneca—but also upon Plato, Demetrius, Quintilian, and many others—to show how the classical genre of the "familiar" letter emerged centuries later in the

intimate styles of Petrarch, Erasmus, and Montaigne. Along the way, she reveals how the complex concept of intimacy in the Renaissance—leveraging the legal, affective, and stylistic dimensions of its prehistory in antiquity—pervades the literary production and reception of the period and sets the course for much that is modern in the literature of subsequent centuries. Eden's important study will interest students and scholars in several areas, including classical, Renaissance, and early modern studies; comparative literature; and the history of reading, rhetoric, and writing.

**Nietzsche and Montaigne by Robert Miner [Palgrave Macmillan, 9783319667447]**

This book is a historically informed and textually grounded study of the affinities and tensions between the work of Friedrich Nietzsche and Michel de Montaigne. It explores these connections in the context of Nietzsche's reverence for Montaigne, a reverence he maintained for no other author.

Robert C. Miner considers the ideas of the *Essais*, and the (sometimes quite different) ideas they produce in the work of Nietzsche. Beyond questions of "influence," substantive and interesting points of contact between these two writers exist and demand reflection. To identify these points and demonstrate their importance is the task of this book.

**Montaigne and Shakespeare: The emergence of modern self-consciousness by Robert Ellrod [Manchester University Press, 9781526116857]**

This book is not merely a study of Shakespeare's debt to Montaigne. It traces the evolution of self-consciousness in literary, philosophical and religious writings from antiquity to the Renaissance and demonstrates that its early modern forms first appeared in the *Essays* and in Shakespearean drama.

The book points out an anticipation of the dissolution of the self in some modern authors. However, contrary to postmodern assumptions, this early calling into question of the self, did not lead to a negation of identity. Montaigne acknowledged the stable nature of his personality and Shakespeare, as Dryden noted, maintained 'the constant conformity of each character to itself from its very first setting out in the Play quite to the End', which proves true even when an evolution is perceptible as in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Lear*.

The historical development of subjectivity is also traced in the apprehension of time, culminating in the *Essays* and in the *Sonnets*. The presence of the new currents of skeptical thought in Montaigne's *Essays* and in the 'problem plays' of Shakespeare, emphasized in recent studies, is acknowledged, but tempered by their constant adherence to permanent humanistic values: truth, friendship, tolerance for 'the other', sympathy for men of low birth and the destitute, an aversion for all 'inhumanity' and an interest in 'essence' and 'transcendence'.

This illuminating volume will appeal to all students of literature, and any reader with an interest in the evolution of modes of thought.

**The Oxford Handbook of Montaigne edited by Philippe Desan [Oxford University Press, 9780190215330]**

In 1580, Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) published a book unique by its title and its content: *Essays*. A literary genre was born. At first sight, the *Essays* resemble a patchwork of personal reflections, but they engage with questions that animate the human mind, and tend toward a single goal: to live better in the present and to prepare for death. For this reason, Montaigne's thought and writings have been a subject of enduring interest across disciplines. This Handbook brings together essays by prominent scholars that examine Montaigne's literary, philosophical, and political contributions, and assess his legacy and relevance today in a global perspective.

The chapters of this Handbook offer a sweeping study of Montaigne across different disciplines and in a global perspective. One section covers the historical Montaigne, situating his thought in his own time and space, notably the Wars of Religion in France. The political, historical and religious context of Montaigne's *Essays* requires a rigorous presentation to inform the modern reader of the issues and problems that confronted Montaigne and his contemporaries in his own time.

In addition to this contextual approach to Montaigne, the Handbook also establishes a connection between Montaigne's writings and issues and problems directly relevant to our modern times, that is to say, our age of global ideology. Montaigne's considerations, or essays, offer a point of departure for the modern reader's own assessments. The *Essays* analyze what can be broadly defined as human nature, the endless process by which the individual tries to impose

opinions upon others through the production of laws, policies or philosophies. Montaigne's motto -- "What do I know?" -- is a simple question yet one of perennial significance. One could argue that reading Montaigne today teaches us that the angle defines the world we see, or, as Montaigne wrote: "What matters is not merely that we see the thing, but how we see it."

**Montaigne: A Life** by Philippe Desan,  
translated by Steven Rendall, Lisa Neal  
[Princeton University Press,  
9780691167879]

One of the most important writers and thinkers of the Renaissance, Michel de Montaigne (1533–92) helped invent a literary genre that seemed more modern than anything that had come before. But did he do it, as he suggests in his *Essays*, by retreating to his chateau, turning his back on the world, and stoically detaching himself from his violent times? In this definitive biography, Philippe Desan, one of the world's leading authorities on Montaigne, overturns this longstanding myth by showing that Montaigne was constantly concerned with realizing his political ambitions—and that the literary and philosophical character of the *Essays* largely depends on them. The most comprehensive and authoritative biography of Montaigne yet written, this sweeping narrative offers a fascinating new picture of his life and work.

As Desan shows, Montaigne always considered himself a political figure and he conceived of each edition of the *Essays* as an indispensable prerequisite to the next stage of his public career. He lived through eight civil wars, successfully lobbied to be raised to the nobility, and served as mayor of Bordeaux, special ambassador, and negotiator between Henry III and Henry of Navarre. It was only toward the very end of Montaigne's life, after his political failure, that he took refuge in literature. But, even then, it was his political experience that enabled him to find the right tone for his genre.

In this essential biography, we discover a new Montaigne—caught up in the events of his time, making no separation between private and public life, and guided by strategy first in his words and silences. Neither candid nor transparent, but also not yielding to the cynicism of his age, this Montaigne lends a new depth to the Montaigne of literary legend.

**The School of Montaigne in Early Modern Europe** [set of 2 volumes]: Volume One: The Patron-Author and Volume Two: The Reader-Writer by Warren Boucher  
[Oxford University Press,  
9780198739678, set; vol 1,  
9780198123743; vol 2,  
9780198739661]

This major two-volume study offers an interdisciplinary analysis of Montaigne's *Essays* and their fortunes in early modern Europe and the modern western university. Volume One focuses on contexts from within Montaigne's own milieu and on the ways in which his book made him a patron-author or instant classic in the eyes of his editor Marie de Gournay and his promoter Justus Lipsius. Volume Two focuses on the reader/writers across Europe who used the *Essays* to make their own works, from corrected editions and translations in print, to life-writing and personal records in manuscript.

The two volumes work together to offer a new picture of the book's significance in literary and intellectual history. Montaigne's is now usually understood to be the school of late humanism or of Pyrrhonian scepticism. This study argues that the school of Montaigne potentially included everyone in early modern Europe with occasion and means to read and write for themselves and for their friends and family, unconstrained by an official function or scholastic institution. For the *Essays* were shaped by a battle that had intensified since the Reformation and that would continue through to the pre-Enlightenment period. It was a battle to regulate the educated individual's judgement in reading and acting upon the two books bequeathed by God to man. The book of scriptures and the book of nature were becoming more accessible through print and manuscript cultures. But while access was being mediated more intensively by teachers such as clerics and humanists, by censors and institutions, by learned authors of past and present, and by commentaries and glosses upon those authors. Montaigne enfranchised the unofficial reader-writer with liberties of judgement offered and taken in the specific historical conditions of his era.

The study draws on new ways of approaching literary history through the history of the book and of reading. The *Essays* are treated as a mobile, transnational work that travelled from Bordeaux to Paris and beyond to markets in other countries from England and Switzerland, to Italy and the Low

Countries. Close analysis of editions, paratexts, translations, and annotated copies is informed by a distinct concept of the social context of a text. The concept is derived from anthropologist Alfred Gell's notion of the "art nexus": the specific types of actions and agency relations mediated by works of art understood as "indexes" that give rise to inferences of unique varieties. Throughout the two volumes the focus is on the nexus in which a copy, an edition, an extract, is embedded, and on the way that nexus might be described by early modern people.

Excerpt:

For the writer and ex-teacher Philip Pullman, the fundamental difference between democracy and theocracy is the fact that the former knows how to relate to books, and the latter does not:

Consider the nature of what happens when we read a book—and I mean, of course, a work of literature, not an instruction manual or a textbook—in private, unsupervised, un-spied-on, alone. It isn't like a lecture: it's like a conversation. There's a back-and-forthness about it. The book proposes, the reader questions, the book responds, the reader considers. We bring our own preconceptions and expectations, our own intellectual qualities, and our limitations, too, our previous experiences of reading, our own temperament, our own hopes and fears, our own personality to the encounter.

And we are active about the process. We oversee the time, for example. We can choose when to read; we don't have to wait for a timetabled opportunity to open the covers; we can read in the middle of the night, or over breakfast, or during a long summer's evening. And we're in charge of the place where the reading happens; we're not anchored to a piece of unwieldy technology, or required to be present in a particular building along with several hundred-other people. We can read in a bed, or at the bus stop, or (as I used to do when I was younger and more agile) up a tree.

Nor do we have to read it in a way determined by someone else. We can skim, or we can read it slowly; we can read every word, or we can skip long passages; we can read it in the order in which it presents itself, or we can read it in any order we please; we can look at the last page first, or decide to wait for it; we can put the book down and reflect, or we can go to the library and check what it claims to be fact against another authority; we can assent, or we can disagree.

So our relationship with books is a profoundly, intensely, essentially democratic one.... Furthermore, it isn't static: there is no final, unquestionable, unchanging authority. It's dynamic. It changes and develops as our understanding grows, as our experience of reading—and of life itself—increases.... Of course, democracies don't guarantee that real reading will happen. They just make it possible. Whether it happens or not depends on schools, among other things. And schools are vulnerable to all kinds of pressure, not least that exerted by governments eager to impose 'targets', and cut costs, and teach only those things that can be tested.'

In Pullman's scene, to read a work of literature in private is to act in a specific fashion with one's mind and body. It is not purely a matter of reading for pleasure. The literary book is both a form of cognitive activity modelled on oral discourse and an object that is handled in distinctive ways at moments of leisure. The properties of this kind of text, in this form, give rise to interactions that happen in particular spaces.

Thanks to the portability and efficacy of the technology (the codex), the reader can converse freely and healthily, in his or her natural person, with like-minded authors from distant times and places. The conversation is a ceaselessly questioning one; there is no final authority, no lecturer at a podium. The reader does not have to be in a monastic cell, a study, or a library to participate. The book is not a folio chained to a lectern, or confined in some other way to an institutional study-space visited under certain conditions—though other books are available in a public library for fact-checking.

It is a *vade mecum* ('go with me'), a companion with whom idly to stroll and talk away from the business of the world, a recreational tool for use wherever one finds oneself in everyday life (up a tree, at a bus stop). It is part of the reader's lived experience, a relationship that changes and grows. Could any other object perform this function with quite the same magic? E-readers ape the properties of the portable printed book. But do readers feel they support, as fully, the relationship with a literary work that Pullman prescribes?

The scene is, of course, symbolic. It represents the cognitive and social value of non-institutional study of literature. To use the book in this way is to be immune from state and church regulation; as an object, it indexes an unhindered capacity to think, move, and associate. The reader is enfranchised with the freedom to participate in frank and open

conversation, and to judge for themselves. The agency exercised in cognitively processing literature with this innate liberty becomes, by transfer, the liberty of a citizen of a democracy.

It is a democracy made up of individuals whose capacity to reason critically is developed through their access to the leisure, spaces, and time necessary for 'free' reading and writing.' For just as Pullman's citizen is not subject to any order intrinsic to the book and the written words, so he or she is not subject to other unchanging forms of authority. The outcome is a social good: a healthy, because free, society. Advanced literacy is a means to the end of universal cultural enfranchisement. Books are the essential tools of a democratic civilization

But there is an ominous background. Whether 'real reading' happens still depends in part on institutions, such as schools and the governments that pressurize them. Conversation of this kind, Pullman believes, is constantly under threat from agents of oppressive state and church schooling, from lecturers, grammarians, and theologians who would remove the learner's freedom of judgement, restrict them to a timetabled classroom lesson, and instruct them to read pragmatically, dogmatically. They would tie them to unwieldy and oppressive technologies such as computer monitors and LCD screens. And they are winning. In a world of increasingly technocratic and theocratic societies, 'real' reading—Pullman believes—is increasingly rare. If real reading of literary books is the practice that artificially conserves and extends democratic conversation in the absence of the reality, then the stakes are high indeed.

Pullman goes on to visualize his argument by reminding us of the moment when President George W. Bush received the news of the second strike on the World Trade Centre. As the perpetrators hurled the plane at the tower, 'their minds intoxicated by a fundamentalist reading of a religious text', the leader of the free world sits in a classroom reading with children. Did the scene illustrate the difference between democratic reading and totalitarian reading? After all—something Pullman does not mention—the President was sitting beneath a chalked mantra that stated '[r]eading makes a country great'. Unfortunately, however, thanks to his own government's educational policy, the book in the President's hands is *My Pet Goat*, 'a drearily functional piece of rubbish designed only to teach phonics'.

Advocates of phonics for state schools insist on its utility as a method that can teach all children to read

and write, a method that can enfranchise all the citizens of a democracy by giving them the basic skills they need to learn and participate autonomously. But the problem for Pullman is that *My Pet Goat* is a technical reader, not a literary reader. Children brought up to think that that sort of thing is a real book, and that that sort of activity is what reading is like, Pullman believes, will be vulnerable to indoctrination. They will not be formed from the earliest stage for the kind of frank philosophical conversation that keeps democracy alive. Militancy against heretics can flourish, whether in Bush's America or in Islamist theocracies.

Even contemporary teachers of the arts and humanities who still believe that the future of democracy rests on the relationship between literary subjectivity and political enfranchisement might find Pullman's thesis questionable. If he can be taken to be saying that real reading is essentially democratic—liberal-democratic—are we led to conclude that there were no such readers in the ancient world or in the republics and monarchies of ancien régime Europe? Or, conversely, that they were all liberal democrats *avant la lettre*? This would be awkward. Free reading and normative reading, reading in private spaces and reading in public institutions, reading for pleasure and reading for doctrine—these practices have co-existed throughout literary history, sometimes in tension, sometimes in tandem, according to the social and cultural conditions of the time, the particular understandings of private and public, of official and unofficial learning, of clerical and lay personae.

Despite the warnings of Pullman and others, it might be argued that members of modern liberal elites still take the privilege to read and write in their personal ways, in private spaces they control, for granted. But the gaining of this freedom has a long, agonistic history, a history that became particularly vexed between the Reformation and the early Enlightenment. For Pullman's idea that secular reading can be a leisurely but educational conversation nourished by unregulated, un-spied-on, private book use has a firmly pre-modern provenance, in part bourgeois, in part aristocratic, mostly male.

There are precedents amongst the elite, cultivated classes of the ancient Roman world, who read at leisure, beyond the exercise of any public function, in their villas and gardens.' In more recent history, it goes back at least 900 years, to the moment when we first find records of practices of private reading and writing and vernacular manuscript circulation not confined to the institutions and disciplinary systems of

the official (scholastic, professional, ecclesiastical) Latin culture. This provenance points to a gendered process of enfranchisement that is not so much one of democratization through universal literacy, as one of acculturation and ennoblement through unofficial self-schooling.

Also implicit in Pullman's scene is a pre-modern history of increasing dependence of all kinds of formal and informal schooling on the technology and distribution of manuscript and printed books. The use of 'conversation' to figure practices of reading originated in monastic contexts, in relation to biblical and devotional texts.<sup>1</sup> During the late medieval period, the 'freedom' of religious conversation came for the educated elite to depend on continuous private interaction with personally compiled and owned liturgical books or breviaries, outside the walls and rule of a monastery or convent.

By the early modern period, an equivalent dependence had developed in relation to secular literature. The way in which an individual's private reading and writing, their cognitive interaction with books, informed their conversation outside formal institutions of learning was a marker not only of their Christian vocation, but also of their nobility of soul and mind. Where early sixteenth-century Germany saw widespread public recognition of the lay Christian whose religious life was shaped in and through private reading and writing, later seventeenth-century France saw the invention of the *honnête homme*, whose library shaped his conversation in society, whose reading in literature was itself a form of conversation.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, throughout the second millennium CE, 'rigid, professional, ordered practices of reading', with 'specific rituals for the readers' behaviour and for the use of books that require environments with special furnishings and particular equipment and instruments', were 'opposed by free, relaxed, unregulated practices', 'freer reading habits' associated with court society, and less constrained modes of reading used by bourgeois people who read in the vernacular. The former 'order of reading', as Armando Petrucci calls it (adapting Foucault's 'order of discourse'), acknowledges and tolerates, attempts to assimilate, the latter modes of reading ('alone, anywhere in the house, in total liberty'), but can also take them to be potentially subversive.

The relationship between these complementary opposites is the relationship, then, between the way philosophical books were studied in institutional libraries and read by formal lecture and disputation

in public schools, or the way religious books were consumed according to the rule of a monastery, and the way they were read and discussed not only at leisure but in other, non-professional settings—settings that could also, however, be described in particular circumstances as schools or academies, and include members of the clergy or clerisy.

It was not just reading, but also the associated practices of religious devotion and philosophical learning indexed by reading that could be more or less institutionalized. The history of philosophy was understood in the early modern period in terms of the history of informal schools of wise men that evolved into public institutions of state and church, which were challenged in the sixteenth century by new, extramural forms of learning that returned to the original sources of ancient wisdom. Chapter XLVI of Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651), a challenging and parodic inversion of scholastic versions of that history, makes this clear.

When peace and leisure allowed the ancient Greek cities to come together, 'then began Seven men, of severall parts of Greece, to get the reputation of being Wise; some of them for Morall and Politique Sentences; and others for the learning of the Chaldaëans and Egyptians, which was Astronomy, and Geometry. But we hear not yet of any Schools of Philosophy.' This history was current in the sixteenth century. Michel de Montaigne was hailed by Justus Lipsius as a modern French incarnation of the first of these famous seven wise men of antiquity (Thales)—an informal, unofficial philosopher.

The key point is that before people began to talk of schools of philosophy, there were just men occupied with other business who got reputations for being wise.

The aim is not therefore to offer—as Villey and Boase did—a comprehensive treatment of the making and transmission of the *Essais*. A venerable tradition in intellectual history, connected above all in Renaissance studies with the name of Paul Oskar Kristeller, insists that statements about the influence of a great work in the history of ideas must be grounded in comprehensive collections of empirical data about the transmission of manuscripts and books. Funding bodies backing humanities research in the United Kingdom are currently favouring such projects.

This is all well and good. But we need at the same time to develop new models for qualitatively rich analysis of selected data of transmission. Otherwise, we cannot test and challenge Kristeller's premise that



the creation of thought is distinct from its faithful transmission. One such model is offered here. It uses what I have elsewhere called 'applied data', data derived from historical documents (e.g. paratexts, correspondence, journals, annotations) that place artefacts in interactive settings—nexuses, in Gell's terms—at particular moments: Lancre watching Delrio interacting with *Essais* I 20; the copy of the 1580 *Essais* carried to Italy, confiscated and debated in ways registered in a manuscript journal; Maillefer's manuscript memoir changing its course when it begins to register passages from the final chapters of the *Essais* (2.5.6). These represent specific instances in the complex and various processes that Darnton systematizes—from the point of view of a generalized history of the book—as a 'circuit of communications'.

Some work in the history of the book uses a rather depersonalized or inert methodology focused either on manufacture and material formats (ignoring the phase of authorial composition and the text itself) or on circuits and networks and the types of 'players' that sustain them. One problem with the Darnton model and its progeny is that they posit (with some exceptions) a unidirectional flow of agency around the circuit from publisher to printers to shippers to booksellers to readers to author to publisher. Individuals should fit tidily into one of these roles. Receptions of all kinds—readings, translations—are absorbed within the lifecycle of the original work.<sup>96</sup>

The Gellian model used in this study is meant both to counter and to complement these tendencies. It helps to bring out the diversity of the possible descriptions of agency relations in various nexuses mediated by literary and verbal artefacts, and allows each participant (including the artefact) to be an agent or patient in a particular role just for the instance in question. This may mean, for example, that a reading or a translation, far from being absorbed within the lifecycle of the original work, becomes a work, subordinating or even ignoring the actors and actions involved in the source's production.

For there is one very important distinction between the two models: Darnton's model and its derivatives aim to be objective historical models of the communications circuit; Gell's is a way of theorizing participant-observers' descriptions of particular nexuses and the contingent relations of agency and patiency that they comprise at a given moment, from a given perspective—hence my insistence throughout that Petrucci's 'free literate' is not a recognizable social type in the early modern period, at least until

Montaigne becomes canonical. It must be taken, rather, as shorthand for a personal act of reading and writing undertaken in specific, unofficial, private, or otherwise irregular circumstances. It is hoped the result is a new way of posing and answering questions about the genesis and influence of the *Essais*—and, by extension, of other books—in early modern literary and philosophical culture.

The resulting study does not treat its subject matter in chronological order. It is divided into two volumes, one of which focuses more on authorial contexts (Volume 1, 'The patron-author'), and one on case studies of reader-writers of the book in different European locations (Volume 2, 'The reader-writer'). But the two volumes work together as a single study: they constantly cross-refer; they overlap in many respects. Viewed as a whole, the study is organized thematically in three concentric circles around a core. The core comprises the last chapter of Volume 1 and the first chapter of Volume 2.

These two chapters deal with the two moments at which the *Essais* travelled with their author to encounter readers and censors in Rome and Paris. They are placed in the middle rather than at the beginning or end because the study of the particular literary nexus is the central task throughout. In the outermost circle, 1.1 and 2.7 work together as broader essays on this study's approach to early modern literary history. They also delineate instances of people reading and writing, keeping and reviewing records, in non-institutional contexts of study and recreation. Both chapters draw on contrasts between Montaigne and Francis Bacon, who together define a whole range of ways of describing the persona and social setting of an independent investigator or reader-writer.

Moving inwards to the next circle, 1.2 and 2.6 both deal with the modern university tradition of the *Essais*, which inevitably mediates our relationship to the historical sources discussed in the more central chapters. The next and widest circle includes—and places in dialogue—chapters which focus on the agency of Montaigne and his collaborators in the making and the reception of the *Essais* (1.3 to 1.6), and chapters which focus on the agency of early modern reader-writers of the *Essais* (2.2 to 2.5). However, all of the chapters in this circle were conceived and written in relation to one another.

For, again, one cannot ultimately dissociate study of authors and other producers from that of their readers and rewriters; the two groups are always in relations of one sort or another. If Montaigne becomes

a patron-author through the *Essais* it is by means of the agency of Gournay and others. So, the chapters in Volume 1 constantly invoke the agency of rewriters and disseminators beyond the authorial milieu, the chapters in Volume 2 the agency of the author and his friends and family. In the core chapters (1.7 and 2.1), the two categories of agents examined in the following and preceding chapters come together in dramatic live encounters, as Montaigne meets his censors and readers at Rome and Paris/Blois.

The premise throughout the two volumes is that the *Essais* make sense in relation to the conditions that shaped private reader-writers' extramural participation in humane letters and practical philosophy, and in the closely associated culture of personal record-keeping (self-study or self-accounting). In the authorial contexts, the pairing of the *Essais* and the *Journal* makes this latter association clear. Montaigne was in the habit of keeping personal written records (in this case of a voyage), sometimes with the help of a secretary, and this habit shapes the *Essais* and its claim to distinctiveness in important ways.

The prominence given in Volume 1 to Montaigne's insistent description of his work as a registre or personal book of record emerged in tandem with research, described in Volume 2, on L'Estoile's juxtaposition of the *Essais* and his own compilation of registres *journaux* (2.5.3-5), and on Slingsby's use of Florio as a source and model for his own manuscript 'book of remembrance' (2.4.2-3). There are many other such connections. The prominence given to Lipsius in Volume 1 follows not only from his place in Gournay's 1595 'Preface', but from his role in the story of Van Veen's Montaigne in Volume 2 (2.4) and of L'Estoile's Montaigne (in which Lipsius's works serve as a *vade mecum*, alongside the *Essais*) in 2.1 and 2.7.

Together, the two volumes trace a transnational itinerary between various locations and cities. In Volume 1, we spend more time on the estate at Montaigne, at Bordeaux, and at other locations in the southwest region of France. But we also follow the author on his Italian journey to various thermal spas, and through cities such as Florence, Urbino, and Rome. And there are non-authorial diversions to London, Louvain, and Stavelot. In Volume 2, we move from Paris and Blois, to Geneva, then via northeastern Italy to southeast England. From the north of England we go to the northern Netherlands, then back to Paris and Rheims.

Use of the term 'transnational' should not, however, be taken to mean that we are travelling across clearly defined borders between national territories and corresponding national literatures and cultures—these borders were not firmly in place until the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

We also travel across a social spectrum. In Volume 1 we explore the ways in which Montaigne's status as a noble d'épée and one-time magistrate shaped his approach to travel and to books. Marie de Gournay was the daughter of a trésorier who acquired a noble estate and who briefly entered into epistolary relations with one of the princes of the European republic of letters, Justus Lipsius. We also encounter high-ranking noblewomen from Lady Anne Clifford to Madame de Duras, and aristocratic patrons in various cities in Italy. We explore the mentalities of witch-hunting magistrates in southwest France (Pierre de Lancre) and the southern Low Countries (Pierre Dheure). Many of Montaigne's associates and friends, such as Pierre de Brach and La Boétie were parlementaires, counsellors, or lawyers in his region or in Paris. Having met a number of high-ranking diplomats and clerics in Rome at the end of Volume 1, we explore the world of these robe intellectuals across France at the beginning of Volume 2.

Thereafter, in the rest of Volume 2, we encounter: senior Genevan pastors (Goulart and Perrot); a minor diplomatic servant in Ferrara (Naselli); a university philosopher and academician in thrall to his own uncle and to powerful court patrons (Querenghi); an educated household servant and language teacher, his poet brother-in-law (Florio and Daniel), and the noble patrons they served; a baronet caught up in the British religious wars in Yorkshire (Slingsby); a middle-ranking lawyer in Holland who was a client to the famous humanist Lipsius (Van Veen); a humanist and retired parliamentary official in dire straits in the Paris of Henri IV (L'Estoile); a wealthy merchant of Rheims with little formal education and muted aspirations to noble status (Maillefer); a bishop (Camus) and a theological canon in the French provinces (Charron) who causes a stir with a book published in Paris.

This is not, then, a matter of switching from study of an autonomous literary 'creation' in Volume 1 to study of the fortunes and interpretation of that creation in Volume 2. The focus throughout is on the dynamic process of reading and rewriting in a sequence of social nexuses and geographical locations. The *Essais* are addressed at all times in The School of Montaigne as an interactive index of practical self-study and

self-accounting; all the chapters explore (as William Sherman puts it), 'the interface between "the text itself" (the words on the page) and the broader social and material matrix of "the extended work" (the contexts and collaborative efforts involved in creating meaning)'.

Across the two volumes we find aristocratic patrons, doctors of theology, pastors and friars, humanists and philosophers, noble professionals, *honnêtes hommes/dames*, gentlemen (including Montaigne himself) and gentlewomen participating in relations near the *Essais*, and making use of the tools of reading and writing for self-study and self-accounting. We also find that many of them relate to the *Essais* as an ethical touchstone of the effects of self-consciously natural franchise and *liberté*, whether they do so in positive, guarded, or negative terms.

This means I conclude—perhaps surprisingly—that Villey was right to identify the perennial significance of Montaigne's work with what he conceptualized from his own vantage point as the enfranchisement of a critical thinker. But the aim of *The School of Montaigne in Early Modern Europe* is not to restore Villey's mantra. The overall study aims, rather, to specify the historical circumstances in which the early modern reader-writer's relationship to the technologies of letters—and via letters to the Book of the world—came to perform a special function for those with noble pretensions. These were often individuals whose subjection (willing or otherwise) to the expanded jurisdictions of early modern states and churches in times of crisis rendered older models of liberty, noble and bourgeois, inapplicable—especially if they were women. Even in contexts of violent civil conflict and poisonous religio-political controversy, they could materialize their innate nobility, their franchise and *liberté*, by means of the judgement with which they read, collected, copied, wrote, and circulated texts.

The origins of Pullman's questioning reader of literature lay not in the circumstances that gave rise to free societies in the modern sense of liberal democracies with universal suffrage and literacy. They lay in the history that begins with the free literates of Petrucci's late medieval period. It continues through the early modern period with the process to which reader-writers such as Gournay in France and Slingsby in England point us in different, gendered ways: the troubled enfranchisement of the unofficial, private 'judge' within the literary culture of practical philosophy and self-accounting.

Volume 1 analyses Montaigne's persona as the patron of his own book and of the 'free literate' in both the early modern and modern periods. Though it draws on the reception studies that feature more heavily in Volume 2, its primary focus is the authorial milieu, the earliest editions of the *Essais*, and the *Journal de voyage*. However, as I explained in the 'General Introduction' to both volumes, authorial and reception contexts are not dissociated at any point. The whole two-volume study is structured as three concentric circles of chapters around an inner circle comprising two chapters (1.7 and 2.1). In the outermost circles, 1.2 combines with 2.6 to analyse the *Essais* as an object of modern scholarship and pedagogy, and 1.1 and 2.7 combine to analyse early modern literary culture and the *Essais'* place within it.

The first chapter of this volume is a prologue to the whole two-volume study. It applies the Gellian model of social context (introduced in the 'General Preface') to the documentary record of Montaigne's role as an unofficial, private judge or mediator in the elite culture of the time. It does this by analysing two anecdotes about artefacts given by scholars to the head of household at Montaigne. The two gifts are very different in kind: one is a medical amulet inscribed with characters, the other a philosophical book inscribed with letters. But both come with instructions for their use as prophylactics. Both end up being put to modified uses in new circumstances. Montaigne re-uses one and rewrites the other (in French). The gifts themselves, what is done with the gifts, and the anecdotes as printed in the *Essais*, together exemplify the indexing of agency relations within early modern types of art nexus.

The second chapter contrasts the results of this analysis with those of more traditional approaches. Brunetière and Villey inaugurated twentieth-century study of the *Essais* within the context of controversies about teaching the literary and philosophical classics in the state institutions of the Third Republic of modern France. I show how Villey abducted Montaigne's critical agency in a manner shaped very much by the pedagogical culture of his own moment. He looked to the *Essais* for a shifting picture of what pedagogues of the time called *la culture générale de l'intelligence*. Villey said that studying the *Essais* was a way of being present at the formation of the man of letters and of the critical thinker.' This could be put more strongly: it was a way of re-enacting that formation in the cultural conditions of 'the Third Republic of Letters' in France in the early decades of the twentieth century.

With Chapter 3 we begin a series of case studies centred on the *Essais* and the *Journal de voyage*. As we heard in the 'General Introduction', my research on Florio's (2.3.1) and Querenghi's (2.2.11) relationships to their patrons suggested a different, more historically informed approach to the question of how to take Montaigne's self-portrait. The postmodern literary theorists who challenged Villey departed from the traditional modern notion of the author understood as the integral and self-sufficient subject who writes a text. They then deconstructed it. Chapter 3 departs, by contrast, from the traditional early modern notion of the author: the patron or privileged consumer whose moral and intellectual virtues, whose nobility of mind and soul, are apparent in the art—including books and records—they cause to be made or which they are seen to collect and dispose. This notion is seen to inform both the *Essais* and the *Journal de voyage*. The former text offers a new description of the possible relations between the patron-author, the book, and the reader-writer.

Chapter 4 argues that the Montaignean *essai*'s transformation of literary precedents was understood by contemporaries to be the performance of an unofficial role or unnamed office on the part of a nobleman who had fashioned a distinct philosophical persona. The office was that of private judgmental mediator between expert knowledge and lived experience—both his own experience and that of his 'friends and family'. The persona was named by some of Montaigne's contemporaries to be that of a 'wise man' or sage, on the model of those ancient men occupied with other business who happened to get reputations for dispensing moral and political *sententiae* when at leisure.

The chapter begins with the English Montaigne published by John Florio in 1603. From the perspective offered by that edition, we can better see the *Essais* as an enactment of the nameless philosophical role (office sans nom) that Montaigne played in the local knowledge economies of sixteenth-century France and Italy, especially in relation to elite women. Montaigne uses his pursuit of self-knowledge to filter the arts of sixteenth-century experts. He does this for himself, certainly, but also on behalf of contemporary patrons of knowledge from named noble patronesses such as Madame de Duras to new 'friends and family' who get to know him via his book. Once again, in this chapter, we concentrate on the conjuncture in the early 1580s of Montaigne's composition of the privately kept *Journal* and of his defense and revision of the *Essais*.

Chapter 5 is complementary to Chapter 4. It shows in detail how the material and social process of noting, extracting, collecting, and redeploying literary and verbal artefacts indexed—for early modern participant-observers—both internal discourse (the cognitive operations of human consciousness in inventing and judging *sensibilia* in the rational mind) and external discourse and conversation. It starts with Pierre de Lancre's and others' judgements of the *Essais*, then follows the trail from Lancre to intellectuals and magistrates in the Low Countries (Delrio and Dheure). The result is a view of Montaigne's entrance into late sixteenth-century learned conversation as a nobly virtuoso, freestyle registrar and comptroller of literary and verbal artefacts from classical citations to anecdotal *expériences*. The chapter complements the discussion, to follow in the second volume (2.2.7), of the uses made of the *Essais* by Simon Goulart in his printed miscellany.

Chapter 6 aims to show that two issues traditionally considered to be separate are in fact facets of one another. One appears to be about the meaning of the work: the increasing boldness and independence of tone in the *Essais* after 1580. The other appears to be about the fortuna of the text: how the earlier version of the book was received. The analysis integrates them. It uses Gournay's 1595 edition to describe how participants in sixteenth-century literary culture routinely cared for their own and others' critical fortunes. It goes on to show how Montaigne sought and obtained a reputation, via dissemination of his book, as a more authentically 'naïve', unpremeditated philosopher, and to ask to what end he did this. It is Lipsius and Gournay who give this new kind of philosopher the ancient name of a sage, a wise man. The chapter also makes a further contribution to one of the overall arguments of *The School of Montaigne*: that an important cultural condition of the authenticity claimed by the *Essais* is the medieval and early modern practice of self-accounting, of writing and transcribing private *mémoires* of miscellaneous matters in tables and manuscript registers.

The seventh chapter is an apt end to Volume 1's study of the patron-author, because it deals with the best-documented occasion on which Montaigne's behavior in life and in his book, converge, at Rome in 1580-1. But it is also complementary to the first chapter of Volume 2, as I mentioned at the beginning of this Introduction. Chapters 1.7 and 2.1 are at one and the same time the last chapters that take Montaigne's and his friends' intentions as the primary object of study and the first chapters that focus on the stories of

copies or editions received or produced by others beyond his most immediate milieu. They deal with the work's fortunes in Rome and Paris, the two most important cities in Montaigne's world. Chapter 1.7 relates the transmission and evolution of the work after first publication (1580) to the story—told in the *Journal*—of Montaigne's enfranchisement as a noble citizen of Rome at Easter 1581. The chapter is also the conclusion to Volume I's overall concern with the combination of the *Essais* and the *Journal*, of printed literary register and private manuscript register, of writing and travel in the early 1580s.

The material focus is provided by the copy of Bordeaux 1580 that was confiscated at the gates of the city, recommended for expurgation by experts, but then returned to the author on condition that the next, revised edition mark his loyalty—rewarded with the title of *civis romanus*—to the Roman Catholic Church and its values. So, from the papal court and curia's point of view, Montaigne is granted freedoms in exchange for his loyalty to established authorities. This is arguably the primary social transaction indexed by the *Essais* from 1588. The *Essais* and the *Journal* are resituated as registers of the 'natural' franchise and liberty of judgement of a noble gentleman's conversation. They are registers which take the very different forms of an authentically private manuscript journal and of a printed book—a printed book that of course masquerades in its later editions as a new kind of private register intended for friends and family only.

## Volume 2

In Paris in early 1609, as he began a new volume of his registres, Pierre de L'Estoile adapted Varro's Latin to describe his existence evading the effects of melancholy in private: 'So I fashion a life reading and writing' (*Sic legendo et scribendo Vitam Procudo*). He was no monk or scribe, but a layman keeping a personal archive of what he heard and read—including extracts from Montaigne's *Essais*.

In Volume 2 we switch focus from the patron-author to the reader-writers of the *Essais* across Europe. These are seventeenth-century descendants of the free literate of the late medieval period.<sup>2</sup> The *Essais* become a context for their works, instead of vice versa. The primary objects of study are less, now, nexuses involving Montaigne and his collaborators than those involving various commentators, imitators, promoters, translators, and their networks of friends and family. We are concerned less with Montaigne's book than with their books—whether printed,

manuscript, or a hybrid of both, whether literary works or personal records.

The early modern printed book was less protected, less fixed, more open to changes in form and use, from edition to edition, from copy to copy, than its modern counterpart. Early modern individuals who took advantage of this openness displayed a whole range of behaviours when they interacted with books in circulation. On the one hand, anyone from individual readers and translators to publishers and official censors could take what would now be considered extraordinary liberties with the published and unpublished writings of others. They could correct and expurgate or prohibit them, fragment and re-use them without acknowledgement, republish them without permission.

These dangers grew more severe once a greater variety of regulatory authorities were put in place after 1560. Any text, the persona of any author, could be subverted for confessional or commercial reasons when they circulated through international centres of differing religio-political hues, from Paris and Lyons, to Geneva, Frankfurt, and Rome. The instruments that could be used to protect against this, from royal privileges to friendly epistolary networks, were not guaranteed to work, as Jacques Auguste de Thou discovered after the first publication of his universal history in 1604.

In the case of new works by relatively unknown authors, users and publishers could, without acknowledgement, appropriate and reproduce parts or all of the work, with account taken neither of the meanings of the text in its original context nor of authorial intentions. The fate of La Boétie's most famous text in the hands of Huguenot propagandists (see 1.6.13) is a case in point: they disguised its true intentions (from Montaigne's point of view) by setting it amongst texts of a rebellious nature.

On the other hand, everyone from correctors in the printshop to readers in the marketplace could be described as intervening to help make a book what it had to be to survive unscathed. From this perspective, they could be said to be participating in the composition and revision of rounded moral, intellectual, and social stories about the making and transmission of a work (see 1.1.12). A simple example of such a story would be the enfranchisement of its writer with the persona of a noble author of good faith, by means of rhetorical praise. This could mean placing the work in meaningful relation to other works and personae in ways that shifted its understood significance as it moved from location to location.

The third chapter of Volume 1 (1.3) began with an analysis, in these terms, of the first printed response to the publication of Montaigne's book and of an anecdote concerning Henri III's reception of the work. The final chapter (1.7) featured another occasion upon which a specific copy of Montaigne's book was received as a recommendation of the memory of its author: the author's stay in Rome in 1580-1, and the return of the copy seized for examination at the gates.

Together, the two occasions suggest an outline of the kind of judgemental and anecdotal framework within which an elite consumer or patron might have been expected to place Montaigne's book, of the kind of inferences that might conventionally have been made. In both cases, a certain kind of story is told—by a royal bibliographer (La Croix du Maine), by papal authorities—about the author and what the book is doing for his public reputation. The book is received as an index of Montaigne's performance in the conversation of the time, as it centred on great contemporary patrons such as the King of France and the Pope, and on great classical patrons such as Plutarch and Seneca.

Volume 2 will ask what other stories were told with the *Essais* by early modern reader-writers in different locations across Europe. It mines some of the richest veins of evidence concerning the participation of the *Essais* in others' projects, for the fully evolved *Essais* were intended to facilitate sustained private commerce with the author on the part of a diverse public ('divers visages') of friends and family, of honnêtes hommes and dames who would frequent his book—as they might have frequented him in person—in their cabinets.

Putting to one side (except for Charron) the frequently studied philosophical texts of well-known public philosophers from seventeenth-century France (Descartes, Malebranche, Pascal), I assemble a sample public of reader-writers from across Europe. It is only a sample. With still more space, more might have been included about, for example, Spanish and neo-Latin contexts of reception and transmission. Nevertheless, as will become clear in the concluding chapter (2.7), the selected case-studies do provide a set of historical coordinates by which to plot a reading—against the grain of more abstract modern interpretations—of the *Essais*' place in wider cultural history.

So, the chapters in Volume 2 address: the most important early elogia of Montaigne, and readings of his text, by parlementaires in France; the three most

important early vernacular translations in Italy and England (Naselli, Florio, Canini); the early Genevan editions, including Goulart's corrected text of 1595; the three manuscript journals with the best evidence of private readers' use of Florio's *Essayes* in England and the *Essais* in France (Slingsby, Yorkshire; Maillefer, Rheims; L'Estoile, Paris); the two copies (Van Veen, The Hague; Maillefer, Rheims) which offer the richest evidence of the text's use as a personal instrument of self-study or practical philosophy over a lifetime; the set of printed *Discorsi* (by Flavio Quereghni) that best reveal use of Naselli's translation as a *vade mecum* in Italy; the printed work which systematized the text as an instrument of practical philosophy for the seventeenth century (Charron's *De la sagesse*); the seventeenth-century account of the *Essais* (in Bishop Camus's *Diversitez*) which, along with Gournay's preface, offers the most telling insights into its relationship to the contemporary culture of reading and writing.

In each case there is enough documentary evidence to reveal the social networks and conditions that shaped individuals' use of the *Essais*, as well as the purposes and outcomes involved.

The first chapter is complementary to the final chapter of Volume 1; together they comprise the core of the two-volume study. Chapter 1.7 was about how Montaigne's self-portrait in print worked in conjunction with his person in Rome. Chapter 2.1 is about how it worked in Paris and across the parliamentary network of intellectuals centred on the capital, with people who knew him—or of him—personally. We follow Montaigne on his trip to Paris in 1588, this time with the copy text for the new quarto edition of the *Essais*.

In Rome in 1580-1 there proved to be a close relationship between Montaigne's reception in his physical person by the curial elite and the reception of his book. But in this case the physical encounter is less immediately significant. It emerges that Montaigne, in his persona as the author of the *Essais*, did not properly 'arrive' in Paris, as far as the parliamentary elite were concerned, until the posthumous publication of Paris 1595. And even then he was not accorded the position of a patron-author, which was held only by great lawyer-scholars such as L'Hospital. His persona and his text were re-written for the early seventeenth-century purposes of a whole community of parlementaires.

Indeed, until the 1600s, he was very much in the shadow of the friend whose works he had edited and addressed to parlementaires in the early 1570s: La Boétie.

When he did arrive (by means of Paris 1595, and the subsequent octavos), he was welcomed in terms that were complementary to but different from those used by Gournay, and which retrospectively inserted the author and his book into a politique context. The similarities and differences in ethos and fortunes between the *Essais* and that truly politique book, de Thou's *Historiae*, are explored, especially with respect to the latter book's own fortunes in the same two cities of Rome and Paris.

Montaigne and de Thou represent opposite ends of a range of choices available to free literates wanting to keep records of personal or historical matters. The important point is that de Thou and the other politiques understood Montaigne's book to witness to a certain kind of free discursive behaviour, which they rooted in the author's noble persona as an ex-conseiller and private court mediator who was amenable to peace, and who saw the true causes of the wars of religion (not religion, but aristocratic factionalism).

The comparison between the circulation of Montaigne's and de Thou's books across France and Europe leads naturally to a broader consideration of the *Essais*-in-transmission across various countries and cities. The second chapter uses the English poet Samuel Daniel's famous description of the cross-border 'intertraffique' of the mind to ask whether the 'franchise' of Montaigne's worth was indeed recognized in cities from Geneva in Switzerland to Ferrara, Padua, and Venice in northeastern Italy.

The official and unofficial culture of correction had an important role to play in all these locations, as 'negotiated censorship' (Ingrid Jostock's phrase) resulted in different outcomes in different cities. In Geneva, we need to attend to the relationships between ecclesiastical censors and libraires, and between the book trades in Paris and Lyon, to account for the fact that the *Essais* were first published in a heavily censored edition, before appearing unexpurgated—both times with false title pages.

Despite his activity as a censor, it is Simon Goulart who prepares us for the later chapters by revealing the market of free literates for whom Montaigne was judged to be writing. His 1595 edition combines with other evidence to show how one of the most significant early reader-writers of the *Essais* (Goulart himself) corrected and used the work.<sup>6</sup> Scaliger received the edition as part of the oeuvre of Goulart, and of the city of Geneva he served. There are some parallels with the first Italian translation, which was also published in the period following the poorly

distributed edition of Paris 1588, and which we can also see as part of the oeuvre both of its translator, Naselli, and of the Ferrarese court.

As we move to Padua-Venice we again find secular and regular clerics active in the mediation of the informal, 'academic' culture of practical philosophy. They become involved via courts, academies, and bookseller-publishers with the articulation of philosophical personae for themselves and their elite patrons. In the late 1620s and early 1630s, clerics called upon the *Essais* to assist in the fashioning of virtù civile and models of the philosophico-religious life for the noble elite of the Veneto. Flavio Quereghni used Naselli's translation not in his public lectures on moral philosophy, which he delivered ex-officio, but in his discorsi, which draw on his private reading and writing in the settings of the accademia.

The third chapter analyses the English school of Montaigne. For most of the seventeenth century, this derived in large part from the way John Florio and his associates, especially Samuel Daniel, enfranchised the essayist as a participant in the aristocratic culture of private learning in late Elizabethan—early Jacobean noble and royal households—especially the female sphere of these households (including Queen Anna's court).

The *Essais*' arrival in England is associated in modern historiography with an abstractly conceived rise of scepticism, individualism, or self-consciousness. At the time, however, it was associated more with the ambivalence surrounding the role and outcome in elite social and cultural reproduction of this free, family-based style of noble schooling and learned leisure—which extended to theatrical entertainments.

This type of schola was based on practical experience and on reading and writing fed by recent European vernacular literature (including romances in prose and verse), as much as by standard humanist tuition in the Graeco-Roman classics. Though designed to enfranchise those not training to be schoolmen from enslavement to both scholastic and humanistic couplings of grammar and logic, its outcomes and applications were uncertain, even undesirable (especially in the case of women), in many critics' eyes.

Florio's translation originated in a manuscript version of Montaigne's chapter on the 'institution' or education of a young nobleman, addressed to the Countess of Bedford. The first edition (1603) was dedicated to six noblewomen, and the second (1613) to Queen Anna of Denmark. It consequently became a kind of

sophisticated breviary for the institution and learned entertainment of the Jacobean gentry and nobility, especially for witty critique of the tyrannies of custom and fashion. This fact was brilliantly lampooned in Ben Jonson's stage caricature of a 'would-be' politic Lady who uncritically follows all court fashions, including the reading of Montaigne and other non-curricular continental texts. By relating this to the use of Florio's text in Samuel Daniel's *The Queen's Arcadia* (performed 1605), we gain a better understanding of the context of Shakespeare's use of the same text in *The Tempest* (1610-11).

The fourth and fifth chapters explore the relationship between the European transmission of the *Essais* and non-institutional cultures of record-keeping. What kind of book was in practice dedicated to what Montaigne describes (in 'Au lecteur') as a domestic and private end? Villey established the relationship between the *Essais* and printed miscellanies of 'readings' or *leçons*. Chapters 2.4 and 2.5 complement this by exploring—in the vicinity of the *Essais*—the relationship between reading and various kinds of miscellaneous private writing and self-accounting.

In 2.4.2, a Yorkshire gentleman caught up in the late 1630s in the beginnings of the British wars of religion starts to keep a book of personal commentaries modelled on Florio's English Montaigne. In the second half of the chapter we switch to the religious wars in the Low Countries in the 1580s, where Pieter van Veen's copy of the *Essais* first becomes a 'Memoire' of its owner—as it still is in the 1620s. It is a memoir not only in the specific sense that he writes a narrative of his life in the back, but also in the more general sense that it is designed to be an index of a son's active remembrance and perpetuation of his father's character and virtues. Van Veen's extraordinary copy reifies an early modern understanding of the *Essais* as a work of art made for friends and family.

Chapter 2.5 begins with Pierre Huet's early-eighteenth-century description of the school of Montaigne, which he says has been flourishing for more than a century. He denounces the *Essais* as 'the breviary of urbane loafers and ignorant pseudointellectuals', of undisciplined, over-free literates who do not want to pursue proper scholarship and knowledge. The chapter goes on to offer two further case-studies of such free literates in early modern France. Both read Montaigne's work while writing paper journals to domestic and private ends; both combined reading and writing in books with the keeping and reviewing of personal records.

Ultimately, I aim to persuade the reader of this study that the manuscript records of L'Estoile and Maillefer, when combined with those of Slingsby and Van Veen, have as much to tell us about the historical meanings and uses of the *Essais* in early modern Europe as the printed philosophical responses of Descartes, Pascal, and Malebranche.

The final two chapters are complementary to the first two chapters of Volume 1. In 2.6, we return to the subject of 1.2: modern scenes of reading, teaching, and translation analogous to the early modern scenes described in the intervening chapters. It features two modern reader-writers of Donald Frame's American English translation of the *Essais* (Gore Vidal and David Denby).

We consider a range of related intellectual contexts for Frame's *Essays*: modern, pedagogical versions of 'human philosophy'; the educational goals of elite institutions such as the *École Normale Supérieure* and Columbia University; the legacy of Pierre Villey's work in twentieth-century Montaigne studies; and 'Frame's Montaigne' as a composite product consisting of biography, translation, and critical study. We see how, in the twentieth century, generations of humanists in America and Europe called up the real person 'Montaigne' from behind his text and made him explain that text's value to idealist programmes of general literary education. In Frame's day, these programmes aimed to protect humane values against the reductive forces of 'progressive' modern society, to enfranchise the inner man.

The 'Epilogue' (2.7) picks up the discussion from the 'General Introduction' (in Volume 1) and the 'Prologue' (1.1) and extends it across a broader historical canvas. I ask how the case-studies in previous chapters, and new ones in this chapter of Bishop Camus and Pierre Charron, might revise the sketch of the *Essais* offered in Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis*. The history of Montaigne's text and persona is related to the wider, post-Reformation battle over the enfranchisement of the unofficial reader-writer, the person who in particular circumstances is freed to use literary materials for their own purposes, in their own way.

I argue that the fundamental issue at stake in the early modern making and transmission of the *Essais* is the issue that is explicitly raised by Marie de Gournay in her preface of 1595, and, in a different style and context, by Charron's use of Montaigne in *De la sagesse* (1601, 1604): how best to preserve and regulate the well-born individual's natural *liberté* of judgement, their franchise or frankness, through



reading and writing, in an age of moral corruption and confessional conflict. <>

## Essay: Michel de Montaigne, a Profile.

Michel de Montaigne, the author of the *Essais*, was the first generation of his family to qualify as belonging to the sixteenth-century French military aristocracy (noblesse d'épée) by his grandfather's purchase of the Montaigne estate (near Bordeaux) three generations prior. (Ownership of the estate entailed military obligation to the king of France; membership in the noblesse d'épée required that a family had not engaged in commercial trade, except for the sale of estate wine, for at least three generations.) During his lifetime, which included three decades of French religious civil war between Catholics and Protestants (Huguenots), Montaigne served two consecutive terms as mayor of Bordeaux (an office normally reserved for military aristocracy), and also served as a reliable negotiator for kings of France, notably Henry of Navarre, later Henry IV. He also may have seen military combat at close quarters for the Catholic side at his own request; his funeral statue shows him in full armor, and the people of Bordeaux never criticized this as the act of an imposter.

He was raised by a caring father, who saw that he learned Latin before French and had him nursed in a peasant village in order that he gain appreciation for the insights of the "common people." At the age of thirty-eight, following the death of his dear friend, Etienne de la Boétie, he first attempted to retire to his study at Montaigne to write and reflect. Although called to public service, he persisted in this effort, producing the first edition of his *Essais* in 1580, continually revising and expanding them until his death in 1592. The Frame translation of the *Essais*, which I have used for this book, follows the convention of indicating successive textual revisions of the *Essais* through the notation, "A" (earliest), "B," and "C" (latest). The *Essais* are organized into three volumes and range in length from less than a page to almost 150 pages. Book I contains fifty- seven generally short essays; Book II, thirty-seven essays, including the very long "Apology for Raymond Sebond"; and Book III, thirteen rather long essays.

Early on, the subject of Montaigne's reflections became himself and his relation to the world. Although the style and length of essays changed over time (the later ones long and more outspoken), how much Montaigne's substantive views (versus his momentary

emphases) changed or evolved is a matter of scholarly dispute, characterized in the concluding bibliographic essay of this book. Montaigne's reasons for writing the *Essais* are complex and may have evolved as well. He tells the reader that they were written for private purposes (to explore and console himself; to provide friends and relatives memories of him after he is gone), yet he caused them to be published, continually revised them (including new material to entertain previous readers), and made presents of them to royalty. In my view, it is beyond doubt that Montaigne hoped and expected to have some general effect on his readership then and posthumously, though this was not his overriding purpose in writing the *Essais*. As we shall see, Montaigne eschewed strictly instrumental purposes in most things.

Lively commentary on and criticism of the *Essais* began in Montaigne's own time and continues to this day. The breadth of views in this commentary is engendered in part because Montaigne's meaning in the disparate and ostensibly "rambling" *Essais* is not always clear, and often appears contradictory. The reasons for these apparent contradictions are themselves open to interpretation—a faithful reflection of Montaigne's own internal inconsistency, a controlled employment of skeptical rhetorical technique to induce suspension of judgment in the reader, the mere surface of a coherent but hidden argument, and so on.

The view of the *Essais* presented in this book is meant to encourage a "naïve" reading by liberally educated general readers in the interest of gaining an appreciation of Montaigne's approach to the "art of living." Some of the issues raised in the secondary literature are important and become interesting when held up against the reader's own analysis of the full meaning of the texts in question. Since one of Montaigne's points is often followed by an apparently contradictory one, secondary literature which adduces scattered quotations to support a particular theme can be misleading. The soundest approach is to read each essay from beginning to end, including the long "Apology for Raymond Sebond," the major subject of this book's chapter on Montaigne's religious views.

Montaigne's subject in the *Essais* is himself, of, and vis-à-vis the world. Although he is impressed with the natural diversity and changeability of the world—human and nonhuman—and distrustful of the limited capacity of human reason and human generalization to grasp and explain this diversity and flux without

explaining it away, still, "by accident," in exploring himself he comes upon the more abiding aspects and characteristics of his own personality. For example, he finds that it is the essence of his being to prefer open and extensive communication; that he dislikes cruelty of any sort, even toward dumb animals; that he prefers pursuits of the private realm, such as friendship and conversation, in which people and actions can be taken on their own terms rather than as more instrumental means to future ends; that when he must perform public duties he tries always to do so in "as private a manner as possible," and so on.

At least part of the adventure in reading and studying Montaigne's *Essais* is the attempt to make sustainable generalizations—that is, meaningful and accurate generalizations—about his orientation to living, his "art of living" (a Cartesian phrase for a very anti-Cartesian viewpoint). He tells us that he changes so much from moment to moment that he does not paint his being, but his movement. Yet, if Montaigne were really just a series of instantaneous states of consciousness given continuity merely by being housed in the same mortal coil, readers would quickly lose interest in what he has to say owing to its lack of meaning. And, at any rate, as we've just observed, Montaigne himself begins to see the "ruling pattern" in his own personality, which strives to assert and preserve itself in the face of the internal and external changeability that constantly challenges it.

The approach of this interpretation of Montaigne's *Essais*, then, is a rather formal one (especially in contrast to various postmodernist readings), which looks for patterned meaning in the *Essais*; which presumes that there are criteria for these meanings outside the *Essais* themselves, in at least the phenomenological structure of the world as Montaigne perceived it; and which resists the view that Montaigne's meaning is deeply hidden or disguised as part of some practical or instrumental project, or that his literary persona is widely divergent from his actual one. In my view, this approach makes the most coherent sense of the evidence about himself and his views and is the most likely to give us a faithful portrait of Montaigne's own intentions in writing the various essays (a criterion outside the essays themselves).

In this context, the view to which a reading of some of the best secondary literature and a complete re-reading the *Essais* has led, is the following. In spite of differences in emphasis over the decades during which the *Essais* were written and revised, there is evident a fairly consistent approach to the "art of

living," that is, living well, appropriately, and happily as a human being immersed in a world of contingencies, internal and external. The first thing to be observed about Montaigne's approach is its goal or general orientation, which is clearly as much repose or tranquillity in the soul (his language) available to us when we accurately match our individual capacities and our general capacities as human beings with what we can realistically achieve in life. (One can imagine, by contrast, other orientations—lives directed above all else to duty, or moral rectitude, or patriotism or military glory, or literary fame, or sensual appetite, or scientific mastery of nature, and so on.)

In combination with other considerations—Montaigne's lack of decisive executive ability, his poor memory, his instinctive candor, the civil war around him, among others—he is led to an appreciation of private life, for it is in private life that it is most appropriate to do things for their own sake—to live in the present moment—and this is the key to psychic repose for Montaigne. Practical and political schemes that require complicated, instrumental planning and scheming and manipulation of men and events force one to live for the future (a very uncertain, alienated future) and do not lend themselves to internal repose. Montaigne appears to believe that only very great individuals (like Alexander and Caesar) can take on grand instrumental projects and not be so consumed by them that they are unable to do other things for their own sake.

Another reason why Montaigne eschews complicated instrumental projects is his assessment of the paucity of human intellect and reason (hence his penchant for arguments and tropes of the ancient skeptics). Like St. Augustine (but unlike either the Pyrrhonian and Academic Skeptics), Montaigne appears to believe that the proper focus for the reasoning powers of a creature of body and soul immersed in an earthly flux of time and contingency is human conduct and human meaning. He clearly does not foresee the modern scientific project to master nature through steady and controlled accumulation of "data," nor anticipate its degree of success in this endeavor, though this does not mean that his assessment of the ultimate futility of this kind of project (from the standpoint of human repose and psychic harmony) is off the mark. (The answer to that question is not in yet).

Montaigne's assessment of the limited capacities of human reasoning in combination with his insight (borrowed in part from Horace 6 and Seneca) about the importance of living in the present moment, as well

as the realization of the flux and changeability of his own personality, lead Montaigne to an appreciation of the ritualistic aspects of life and to a rather conservative approach to the basis for political legitimacy and religious orthodoxy (though, as we shall see, some of his personal views would be considered "progressive" by modern liberalism). Montaigne's religious and political views are a subject of scholarly dispute, with interpretations ranging from the view that he was an atheist and Machiavellian of sorts to the view that he was a religious and political conservative. In between are views that Montaigne's religious and political conservatism was purely instrumental, intended to mollify the effects of the civil war. These controversies are the reason for devoting separate chapters in this study to Montaigne's religious and political views. For the present, suffice it to say that in coming to decisions about religious and political controversy, Montaigne counsels an approach that weights or privileges one's religious and political inheritance, precisely because it is inherited. Also, for the present, it is sufficient to indicate that the interpretation favored here is that Montaigne was sincere in his defense of his inherited Roman Catholic faith and practice, and of the French monarchy; and also sincere in his advocacy (at least for himself) of a private over a public life, and of a truly private life rather than one utilizing time and energy in private for future public or political and social purposes and projects. Montaigne implies that if his *Essais* could have a 'salutary effect on his civilization, so much the better, but that he was not prepared to craft them with that end constantly in mind.

Another of Montaigne's important and influential themes concerns the cultivation of his own individuality for its own sake, though not in the willful and excessive way characteristic of the subsequent Romantic movement or of Nietzsche's writing. He implies dramatically (by the time and energy he devotes to the project of exploring and essaying himself) that his individuality is important simply for itself and not for the universal characteristics it illustrates or deviates from, though it is reflective of these as well. In the terms of medieval scholastic philosophy, he implies that his particular "existence" is not simply "accident," but an integral part of his "essence," and that this is true of all individuals as particular concretions of body and soul. Thus the importance for Montaigne of an individual learning to belong to himself or herself, of making a life all one's own in conformity with one's "ruling pattern" (*forme maîtresse*) against the constraints and impulses of the universal human condition—material, physical, and

spiritual—and the contradictions inherent in the structural tensions of the public realm of appearances. In exploring this last thought, this study shows some comparison with the thought of Rousseau, who gives a fuller and more developed account of these contradictions than does Montaigne. In drawing out Montaigne's appreciation of the ritualistic aspects of life and of actions done for their own sake in the present moment, this study draws comparisons with the more developed and consistently presented views on the same subject of the twentieth-century English philosopher, Michael Oakeshott.

Montaigne's choice and cultivation of the essay form of writing (of which he is one of the creators) is reflective of the skeptical tenor of his thought and writing. His thought is often tentative and exploratory, though it is certainly more than simply the depiction of successive or serial states of consciousness. Following the convention of his time and exploiting the advantages of his agility in Latin and the resources of his personal library, themes are often spun around passages from ancient authors, such as Pyrrho, Plutarch, Seneca, and Horace, among others. The theme of an essay is often not apparent, especially judging from the title, and there are many apparent digressions. It is not always clear what his purposes are, though as this study tries to show, there are discernible and recurring themes and patterns throughout all three books of the *Essais*. And although Montaigne is important, historically speaking, in the sixteenth-century revival of ancient Pyrrhonian and skeptical arguments, it is clear that he uses their tropes and techniques for his own purposes (including, arguably, a defense of the truths of religious revelation), and not simply to induce a suspension of the reader's judgment on all questions he considers.

For this reason, this exposition of Montaigne's views in the *Essais* relies heavily on quotation from individual essays and provides textual context for the quotations as well, in order to get at Montaigne's meaning. In most cases, secondary commentary and critique are relegated to the bibliographic essay and notes. For readers primarily concerned with issues of scholarly controversy or interested in making judgments on issues of scholarly controversy as they read the *Essais*, the bibliographic essay might be the best starting point. For readers who already feel akin to the idea of seeking delight in the present moment (where appropriate) and who are interested in reading Montaigne to make him their own, this latter advice is not intended.

Readers with some French who wish to read the *Essais* in French alongside the English will find them surprisingly straightforward, both syntactically and conceptually, especially in comparison with the more elaborate eighteenth-century style of a writer such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (though getting used to the archaic Renaissance spelling, e.g. "moy" for "moi," takes a moment). The French editions usually cross-referenced in Montaignian English-language secondary literature are the one-volume Pleiade edition (which also includes Montaigne's travel journals and other materials) and the three-volume Villey edition<sup>9</sup> (which has an interesting appendix with collected reactions to the *Essais* over the centuries). I have used the Villey edition for the French text of the *Essais* in this book.

With regard to the question of Montaigne's *Essais* as a choice for inclusion in a series on great works of Western civilization, several observations may be made. If "Western civilization" is taken in an historical way to be simply the evolved synthesis of the Greek, Roman, Hebraic, and Christian inheritances of the countries of Western Europe and the civilizations elsewhere that they spawned, then Montaigne's *Essais* are clearly an important work. They are part of a Renaissance humanist-intellectual tradition that generated a revived interest in Greco-Roman writers and tried to smooth out the differences between those writers (with more and less success) and their inherited religious traditions or to use them to modify their religious inheritances. And, as we've noted, for the long essay "Apology for Raymond Sebond" alone, Montaigne has been seen as an important figure in the sixteenth-century revival of classical Skeptic arguments that animated (in one direction or another) subsequent Western thinkers such as Descartes, Hume, and Kant.

Yet if Western civilization is taken in a more philosophic sense to indicate a distinctive general orientation toward human life and its relation to the divine and to the world, then Montaigne is arguably an even more important figure, for he takes an important logical potential in the Western synthesis and concretizes it in detail in the *Essais*. Let us unpack this idea.

Arguably, the Western synthesis of Greek rationalism, Roman pragmatism, and Judeo-Christian revelation has produced an orientation toward the individual and toward the individual event in history, which is distinctive. Arguably, this orientation is impelled to take the unique individual and the unique event in history as valuable in themselves and to cherish and

cultivate that uniqueness, while at the same time hold that unique person or event in time in view against the backdrop of eternity, or something that transcends time and local mischief. Metaphorically speaking, the complex Western impulse is to stand both within and without the stream of time and flux. This outlook is first clearly discernible in the trinitarian reflections of St. Augustine on human beings as unities of body and soul, traveling on a pilgrimage through a secular time-stream devoid of meaning without the insight ignited by the conferral of God's grace.

At first glance, Montaigne might seem like an unlikely candidate for inclusion within this civilizational paradigm. He is wary of human appeals to transcendental grounds in their practical activities, implying that this orientation may lead to arrogance, cruelty, and what we would call ideological fanaticism. He often tries to remind human beings of how much they share with the lower animals (rather than with the divine) as a way of recalling them to their littleness, in the interest of moral and social balance. And he cultivates his own individuality just because it is his, not because it is a reflection of some quality transcending his human nature. Yet this same Montaigne also (in a mixture of Greek and Christian theological conceptions) describes a neo-Platonic, timeless, unchanging, distant God, who without changing bestows his grace on human beings, beings who without that grace can never rise above the contradictions and obstacles of earthly life. The cultivation of his individuality for its own sake (a logical possibility entailed in the very idea of created beings whose existence is a part of their essence"), against the backdrop of an unchanging, timeless God, puts Montaigne squarely within this orientation as one who began to develop—in mundane, phenomenological terms—the unique, contingent pole of the Western existential tension, a tendency Tocqueville subsequently associated with democratic cultures. And on the general subject of Montaigne and Western civilization, we may also espy in the *Essais* an orientation within that civilization that rejects in advance (as futile from the standpoint of human repose) anything like the Cartesian and Baconian project for mastery and domination of physical and human nature. <>

Essay: Me, Myself, And I: What made Michel de Montaigne the first modern man? by Jane Kramer [New Yorker September 7, 2009 Issue]

Montaigne's essays chart the course of twenty years of self-investigation.

Every French schoolchild learns the date: February 28, 1571, the day a well-regarded and uncommonly educated nobleman named Michel de Montaigne retired from "the slavery of the court and of public duties," moved a chair, a table, and a thousand books into the tower of his family castle, near Bordeaux, shut the door, and began to write. It was his thirty-eighth birthday, and, by way of commemoration, he had the first two sentences he wrote that morning painted on the wall of a study opening onto his new library—announcing, if mainly to himself, that having been "long weary" of those public duties (and, presumably, of his wife, at home in the castle, a few steps across the courtyard) Michel de Montaigne had taken up residence in "the bosom of the learned Virgins, where in calm and freedom from all cares he will spend what little remains of his life, already more than half expired." His plan, he said, was to use the second half looking at himself, or, as he put it, drawing his portrait with a pen. He had his books for company, his Muses for inspiration, his past for seasoning, and, to support it all, the income from a large estate, not to mention a fortune built on the salt-herring and wine trades, which, in the last century, had turned his family into landed gentry. (His full name, as most oenophiles can tell you, was Michel Eyquem de Montaigne.)

Montaigne's pursuit of the character he called *Myself*—"bashful, insolent; chaste, lustful; prating, silent; laborious, delicate; ingenious, heavy; melancholic, pleasant; lying, true; knowing, ignorant; liberal, covetous, and prodigal"—lasted for twenty years and produced more than a thousand pages of observation and revision that he called "essais," taking that ordinary word and turning it into a literary occupation. When he died, at fifty-nine, he was still revising and, apparently, not at all surprised, since *Myself* was a protean creature, impossible to anticipate but also, being always at hand, impossible to ignore. I like to think of the essays as a kind of thriller, with *Myself*, the elusive prey, and Montaigne, the sleuth, locked in a battle of equals who were too close for dissimulation and too smart for satisfaction. And it may be that Montaigne did, too, because he often warned his readers that nothing he wrote about himself was likely to apply for much longer than it took the ink he used, writing it, to dry. "I am myself the matter of my book," he said, when the first two books of essays appeared, in 1580. "You would be unreasonable to spend your leisure on so frivolous and vain a subject."

He was wrong. By the time he finished a third book, eight years later, everyone in France with a philosophic bent and a decent classical education had read the first two—lured, perhaps, by the writer's promise that "my defects will here be read to the life, and also my natural form, as far as respect for the public has allowed"—and, given that some ninety per cent of the French were illiterate, that probably means that everyone who could read the essays did. By sixteenth-century standards, Montaigne had produced a best-seller, although he maintained the pretense that he wrote only for himself or, at most, "for a few men and a few years." ("The public favor has given me a little more confidence than I expected" is how he described the effect on him.) News of the essays travelled fast. The first known English translation, by an exuberantly prolific language tutor named John Florio, went on sale in London at the turn of the seventeenth century, in time for Shakespeare to buy a copy. It was followed, in 1685, by the poet Charles Cotton's lovely version—the one that most Englishmen and Americans read until 1957, when Donald Frame, a Columbia professor who went on to become Montaigne's preëminent American biographer, produced his own translation. Thirty years later, the Oxford professor M. A. Screech did the same for Britain. I have used all three, along with, in French, my old, dog-eared Flammarion copy of the essays and the seriously intimidating new *Pléiade* edition, which came out in Paris in 2007, doubled in size by nearly a thousand pages of endnotes and annotations incorporating four hundred years of Montaigne research. (I admit to tweaking a few of the English quotes, in the spirit of competition and interpretation.)

However you read them, Montaigne's books were utterly, if inexplicably, original. They were not confessional, like Augustine's, nor were they autobiographical. You could call them the autobiography of a mind, but they made no claim to composing the narrative of a life, only of the shifting preoccupations of their protagonist in an ongoing conversation with the Greek and Roman writers on his library shelves—and, of course, with himself. His belief that the self, far from settling the question "Who am I?" kept leaping ahead of its last convictions was in fact so radical that for centuries people looking for precedents had to resort to a few fragments of Heraclitus on the nature of time and change—or, eventually, to give up and simply describe Montaigne as "the first modern man." It didn't matter if he was quoting Seneca in an essay called "To Philosophize Is to Learn How to Die" or, a

few pages later, in an essay about imagination, musing on the vagaries of penises: “We are right to note the licence and disobedience of this member which thrusts itself forward so inopportunistly when we do not want it to, and which so inopportunistly lets us down when we most need it; it imperiously contests for authority with our will: it stubbornly and proudly refuses all our incitements, both of the mind and hand.” He followed himself wherever his attention settled, and his regard was always the same—intent, amused, compassionate, contrarian, and irresistibly eclectic. (He could jump from Plato’s discourse on the divinatory power of dreams to dinner at the castle — “a confusion of meats and a clutter of dishes displease me as much as any other confusion”—and do justice to them both.) One of his favorite philosophers, starting out, was the skeptic Sextus Empiricus, who had famously cautioned his followers to “suspend judgment” on everything but the experience of their own senses. Voltaire called Montaigne one of history’s wise men, but when it came to the big philosophical questions that absorbed him—the nature of justice, say, or morality—he seemed to be saying, like Sextus, that there may be no truths, only moments of clarity, passing for answers.

The best way to read Montaigne is to keep watching him, the way he watched himself, because the retired, reclusive, and pointedly cranky Michel de Montaigne is in many ways a fiction—a mind so absorbingly stated that by now it can easily pass for the totality of Montaigne’s “second” life. In fact, he went to the best parties in the neighborhood. He attended all the important weddings—and never mind that, by his admission, he’d practically been dragged to his own; the bride was a suitable Bordeaux girl named Françoise de la Chassaigne and the alliance more or less arranged. (His view of marriage, he wrote in the essay “On Some Verses of Virgil,” was that he was “not so fit for it” but had acquiesced for “posterity,” and he held to the common wisdom that the secret of a peaceful, companionable marriage was to keep one’s wife permanently unaroused, the better to fix her thoughts on the details of hospitality and “sound housekeeping.”) He had everybody’s ear. He corresponded with beautiful, educated women who read his drafts. He dined at the castle with wellborn men who had learned to value his advice and, more to the point, his tact during his years of “public duties,” both as a local emissary to the court of Charles IX, in Paris, and as a magistrate at the law court known at the time as the Parlement de Bordeaux.

He claimed to have forsworn his youth, which was apparently so unruly that eight years of it are missing from the public record; “I burned myself at [lust] in my youth, and suffered all the furies that the poets say come upon all those who let themselves go after women without restraint and without judgment” was how he described those years, when he was in his fifties. But he never forswore women or, for that matter, the thrill of watching a good battle, or any of the other indulgences of his class. (“For the intimate companionship of my table I choose the agreeable not the wise; in my bed, beauty comes before virtue,” he once said.) He left his tower in 1580 for a year of travelling. He left it again in 1581 to become the mayor of Bordeaux—at the time the country’s third-largest city and its richest port. Two years later, he agreed to a second term. And, while an avowed Catholic royalist (whether by conviction or, as a few of the essays suggest, because of a suspicion that taking a leap of faith on the big loyalties of his time was the best way to clear his mind for more enticing subjects), he was also a close friend and confidant of the Protestant Henri de Navarre, and was Navarre’s emissary to the Catholic court of Charles’s brother and successor, Henri III. His lifetime encompassed the spread of Calvinism through France, and the eight Catholic-Protestant wars provoked by conversions like Navarre’s within the royal family. And if Montaigne did not take sides in those wars, it may be that he thought of them as a family matter, which in a way they were. The Henris were both directly descended from Louis IX—the paterfamilias of three hundred years of French kings—and by 1584, with the death of Henri III’s brother, Navarre was himself first in line to the French throne. “My house, being always open, easily approached and ever ready to welcome all men (since I have never let myself be persuaded to turn it into a tool for a war in which I play my part most willingly when it is farthest from my neighborhood), has earned quite a lot of popular affection,” Montaigne wrote, about a year later, in the essay he called “On Vanity.”

Authors are, of course, sneaky. (Montaigne put it nicely: “All is a-swarm with commentaries: of authors there is a dearth.”) They lead you exactly where they want to go, and no farther. By the end of the essays, you know a great deal about Montaigne’s mind and temperament, but, as for his promise that “my defects will here be read to the life,” you are still waiting for the details of that life and most of the people in it. His evasions are legendary. He writes a great deal about the tyranny of laws but nothing about his fourteen years as a magistrate or his four years as a mayor,

or even about his response, as mayor, to the plague that struck Bordeaux toward the end of his second term, leaving a third of the population dead. (He fled.) He writes a great deal about wives but rarely refers to his own and never by name, though he claims to have made himself “fall in love” to marry, a task perhaps made briefly pleasant by the fact that Françoise is said to have been an exceptionally beautiful and lively girl. Montaigne, at the time, was thirty-two and, he says, ready to be a dutiful and respectful husband. But he was not much interested in Françoise—nor, it may be, she in him, since some scholars have thrown her into the arms of his younger brother Arnaud, a good-natured and sporty Army captain who died young, from a tennis ball to the ear. Montaigne himself rarely slept in his wife’s bed, except for purposes of procreation; she gave him six daughters in thirteen years, and only one of them, Léonor, lived past infancy—a fact he dismissed with the unnerving remark (Montaigne experts are still arguing about why he made it and what it meant) that he had “lost two or three.”

As for his mother, he alludes to her twice, but only in passing. Her name was Antoinette Louppes de Villeneuve. She came from a far-flung merchant clan, similar to the Montaignes in wealth and influence, but with the notable exception that, while the Montaignes were then solidly and safely Catholic, some of the Louppes were Protestant, and the family themselves were Sephardic conversos from Saragossa, where their name was Lopez de Villanueva. (Several had left Spain before the expulsions of 1492, and were thriving in Europe as properly minted Christians, or, as the new Pléiade edition chooses to put it, a Christian family “anciennement convertie.”) Antoinette grew up in Toulouse. She arrived at the castle a reluctant bride of sixteen, to marry Pierre Eyquem, an eccentric but apparently exemplary chatelain (and a future mayor of Bordeaux himself), and, once having settled her duty to her children by bearing them, she was attached mainly to herself. She claimed that Michel had exhausted her getting born—eleven months of pregnancy, by her calculations—and was furious to learn that, by her husband’s last will, he was not only heir to but steward of the estate she had expected to manage in her lifetime. Their relations were, by anyone’s standards, sour. The year after Pierre died, she threatened to sue Michel over the ownership of a family necklace; he discovered it in his wife’s jewel box and gave it back, hoping to avoid the scandal of a court case—after which she spent a long, bitter, and contentious widowhood in the company of a

granddaughter who seems to have been the only relative she liked.

But Montaigne was not much interested in family histories of any sort, and his own was apparently untouched by not only the anti-Semitism that attached to the children of “new Christian” immigrants like the Louppes but also the Catholic-Protestant wars at home. Some of Montaigne’s siblings became Protestant, with no evident disruption to the family—even during the St. Bartholomew’s Day massacres of 1572, when thirty thousand French Calvinists died. He doesn’t mention those massacres in the essays, either. For him, the subject of Protestants and Jews (who had been barred from practicing their religion in France since the end of the fourteenth century) seems to have been, at most, food for his meditations on the absurdities of persecution and the fatal distractions of disharmony. He efficiently wrote off Martin Luther for leaving behind in Germany “as many—indeed more—discords and disagreements because of doubts about his opinions than he himself ever raised about Holy Scripture.” He quoted Josephus and admired the Maccabees. But, when it came to see an old Jew herded naked through the streets of Rome, he remained a reporter—curious, compassionate, but not particularly disturbed. He did not expect much better from the world. Relatives, to his mind, were accidents of birth, consideration, and proximity. The genealogy that interested him was the genealogy of thought. He was far more interested in thinking about religion with the Sophists and Skeptics in his library than he was in the part that religion, even his own Catholicism, played in him.

For all that, he was a passionate traveler. His search for the spa that would cure his kidney stones—the disease had killed his father and would eventually help kill him—took him to Switzerland, Austria, and Germany. His love of the classics took him to Italy. In Rome, where his own copy of the essays had been seized by the Inquisition, he walked the streets of his dead mentors: “I like thinking about their faces, their bearing and their clothing,” he said. “I mutter their great names between my teeth and make them resound in my ears.” (Latin, by his father’s decree, was not only his first language but the only one he could speak for his first six years.) He prowled the ghetto, visiting a synagogue, watching a circumcision, and happily cross-examining the rabbi. (By the end of his visit he had met the Pope and was made an honorary Roman citizen.) Today, we would call him a gentleman ethnographer, more enchanted than alarmed by the bewildering variety of human practices. “Yes. I admit it,” he wrote in “On Vanity.”

"Even in my wishes and dreams I can find nothing to which I can hold fast. The only things I find rewarding (if anything is) are variety and the enjoyment of diversity." He was interested in all things unfamiliar and exotic, from immolations in India to cannibalism in the New World. In the essay, he called "On the Cannibals," he described "a very long talk" he had once had with a Tupi chief, brought to France from Brazil and, at the time, on display in Rouen for a royal visit. He admired the Indian's gentleness and his evident perplexity at the pomp and the poverty and the cruelty displayed so indifferently and indiscriminately to him. "I think there is more barbarity in eating a man alive than in eating him dead," he wrote, "more barbarity in tearing apart by rack and torture a body still sentient, in roasting him little by little and having him bruised and bitten by pigs and dogs (as we have not only read about but seen in recent memory, not among enemies in antiquity but among our fellow-citizens and neighbors—and what is worse, in the name of duty and religion) than in roasting him and eating him after his death." No one has said it better.

"Anyone can see that I have set out on a road along which I shall travel without toil and without ceasing as long as the world has ink and paper," Montaigne wrote at the beginning of "On Vanity," his late and perhaps greatest essay. "I cannot give an account of my life by my actions: fortune has placed them too low for that; so I do so by my thoughts." He compares himself to a nobleman he once knew who would keep his chamber pots for a week to display, seriatim, to his friends—"He thought about them, talked about them: for him any other topic stank"—saying, "Here (a little more decorously) you have the droppings of an old mind, sometimes hard, sometimes squittery, but always ill-digested." He starts to extrapolate—"Scribbling seems to be one of the symptoms of an age of excess. When did we ever write so much as since the beginning of our Civil Wars? And whenever did the Romans do so as just before their collapse?"—and catches himself in time to add that "each individual one of us contributes to the corrupting of our time: some contribute treachery, others (since they are powerful) injustice, irreligion, tyranny, cupidity, cruelty: the weaker ones bring stupidity, vanity, and idleness, and I am one of them." He accuses himself, a little pridefully, of pride—in writing at all, with his country at war, and in the small, stubborn habits with which he flaunts his disregard, saying that "if one of my shoes is askew then I let my shirt and my cloak lie askew as well: I am too proud to amend my ways by

halves. . . . The words I utter when wretched are words of defiance."

Montaigne called "On Vanity" one of those essays which, being quite long and not at all confined by the titles he gave them, "require a decision to read them and time set aside." It is a meditation on dying and, at the same time, on writing—or, you could say, on writing oneself to life in the face of death, on getting "lost" in words and in "the gait of poetry, all jumps and tumblings" and in the kind of space where "my pen and my mind both go a-roaming." ("My mind does not always move straight ahead but backwards too," he says. "I distrust my present thoughts hardly less than my past ones and my second or third thoughts hardly less than my first.") And it draws pretty much the whole cast of characters from his library into the conversation—the kings and philosophers and poets and historians and statesmen and assorted saints and scoundrels whom he introduced on the first pages of Book I, with the words "Man is indeed an object miraculously vain, various and wavering. It is difficult to found a judgment on him which is steady and uniform." Since then, they have appeared and reappeared through the essays like characters in a novel, demolishing one another's arguments. Now, in a way, he both honors and discards them, along with their cluttering truths, their most congenial wisdom, and the deceptive comfort they sometimes bring.

Thus his ruminations on vanity move quickly from disreputable shoes (and the way that the "forlorn state of France" mirrors his "forlorn age" to Petronius, Horace, and Lucretius, each discoursing, in Latin, on the metaphysics of droughts, storms, crop failures—the deaths of nature. But he isn't interested. He interrupts them to complain about the burden of managing his own land, and the difficulty of economizing, in lean years, for someone "used as I am to travel not merely with an adequate retinue but an honorable one." He says that, unlike Crates, who "jumped into the freedom of poverty . . . I loathe poverty on a par with pain." He prefers the freedom that money gives him to go away. "I feel death all the time, jabbing at my throat and loins. But I am made otherwise: death is the same for me anywhere. If I were allowed to choose I would, I think, prefer to die in the saddle rather than in my bed, away from home and far from my own folk. There is more heartbreak than comfort in taking leave of those we love. . . . I would willingly therefore neglect to bid that great and everlasting farewell." He considers the case of Socrates, who, preferring death to banishment, took the hemlock—and then nails him with praise as one of



those “heaven-blessed” men whose qualities are “so soaring and inordinate that . . . I am quite unable to conceive them.”

At the same time, he worries, or pretends to, about his inattention at home. He agrees with Diogenes, who said that the wine he liked best was always the wine somebody else had made, but then, typically, berates himself. He describes the good husbandry of his father: “I wish that, in lieu of some other part of his inheritance, my father had bequeathed me that passionate love for the running of his estates. If only I can acquire the taste for it as he did, then political philosophy can, if it will, condemn me for the lowliness and barrenness of my occupation.” (Pierre, he said, was “the best father that ever was”; he had studied law to please him, and once spent more than a year translating Raymond Sebond’s enormous treatise “*Theologia Naturalis*” from Latin to French so that his father, who rued the lack of Latin in his own education, could read it.) A few lines later, he remembers that he is a father himself—and he turns to the problem of finding “a son-in-law who would fill my beak, comfort my final years and lull them to sleep, into whose hands I could resign the control and use of my goods . . . provided that he brought to it a truly grateful and loving affection.” But he doesn’t mention Léonor, or, for that matter, his dead children. When he thinks about loss now, at fifty-three, it is his father he mourns and, more than anyone, his “soul’s” friend Étienne de la Boétie, a Bordeaux poet who was arguably the love of his life and whose early death, he once said, drove him to marriage in the hope of solace and then into his tower for escape. They are the absent interlocutors of “On Vanity”: the people he talks to about death, talking to himself; the only ones he describes with what could be called a deep sense of relationship.

How to describe the dazzling ramble of “On Vanity”? For nearly all of its sixty pages, it has no arguments, personal or philosophical, to expound, no revelations on the nature of man to offer, no path to salvation to propose. What we get, instead, is the gift he has given himself: “scope and freedom” of interpretation; language that is “blunt” and “raw”; and, most of all, the experience of Montaigne thinking. (Ralph Waldo Emerson, in a classic essay on Montaigne, wrote that the “marrow of the man reaches to his sentences. . . . Cut these words, and they would bleed.”) He can move in a few paragraphs from the admonitions in I Corinthians 3:20—“Those exquisite subtleties are only good for sermons: they are themes which seek to drive us into the next world like donkeys. But life is material motion in the body, an activity, by its very

essence, imperfect and unruly: I work to serve it on its own terms”—to a riff on the corruption of judges, the hypocrisy of moralists and diet doctors, and the secret sex lives of Greek philosophers, as described by an exceptionally expensive fourth-century-B.C. courtesan named Lais, who said, “I know nothing of their books . . . but those fellows come knocking at my door as often as anyone.”

You could call this intellectual free association, but it is far too sterile a term for the mind of Michel de Montaigne running after itself, arguing against argument, reading his thoughts and his aging body at least as carefully as he reads his books. (His copy of Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura*, at the Cambridge University Library, is filled with enough Latin and French margin notes to make a book themselves.) But he thinks of himself as a browser, and in a way he is, because, by his account, a couple of interesting thoughts or stories in one book will always remind him of something smarter, or more interesting—or, better still, contradictory—in another book, and he opens that. By the time he begins “On Vanity,” most of his favorite quotes have been carved into the beams and woodwork of the tower—for inspiration, fast access, and, perhaps, distraction. (He would have loved Google.) Those words are the preferred company of his old age, however spurious their counsel. He wants to “die, grinding [his] teeth, among strangers,” and what more accommodating strangers than dead ones, speaking across millennia from his rafters—the kind of strangers who, like paid companions to the old and frail, “will leave you alone as much as you like, showing you an unconcerned face and letting you think and moan in your own way.” Death, he says, “is not one of our social engagements: it is a scene with one character.”

But the truth is that writing about death—surrounded by the books that he says “console me and counsel me to regulate my life and my death”—has put him off dying. The world intrudes on his gloom, battles for his attention, and almost always wins. He longs to revisit Rome. His wife must have been against this, because he says, “Truly, if any wife can lay down for her husband how many paces make ‘far’ and how many paces make ‘near,’ my counsel is to make him stop half-way...and let those wives dare to call Philosophy to their aid.” Like the clueless Professor Higgins, he wishes that women were more like men. “In a truly loving relationship—which I have experienced—rather than drawing the one I love to me I give myself to him,” he says, remembering La Boétie. “Not merely do I prefer to do him good than to have him do good to me, I would even prefer that he did good to himself

rather than to me: it is when he does good to himself that he does most good to me. If his absence is either pleasant or useful to him, then it delights me far more than his presence." The question, of course, is what the absence called death means.

The penultimate pages of "On Vanity" are an homage to Rome (and perhaps to himself, since he quotes in full the papal bull that made him a Roman citizen). But he ends the essay in the oracular heart of Greece, with the Delphic admonition to "know thyself," and in a few pages turns the idea of vanity on its head, defending his pursuit of himself, however fractured, transitory, or imperfect, as the only knowledge he, or anyone, can hope to gain. It is the one argument for a "truth" he makes in a hundred and seven essays: "Nature has very conveniently cast the action of our sight outwards. We are swept on downstream, but to struggle back towards our self against the current is a painful movement; thus does the sea, when driven against itself, swirl back in confusion. Everyone says: 'Look at the motions of the heavens, look at society, at this man's quarrel, that man's pulse, this other man's will and testament'—in other words always look upwards or downwards or sideways, or before or behind you. Thus, the commandment given us in ancient times by the god at Delphi was contrary to all expectations: 'Look back into your self; get to know your self; hold on to your self.' . . . Can you not see that this world of ours keeps its gaze bent ever inwards and its eyes ever open to contemplate itself? It is always vanity in your case, within and without, but a vanity which is less, the less it extends. Except you alone, O Man, said that god, each creature first studies its own self, and, according to its needs, has limits to his labors and desires. Not one is as empty and needy as you, who embrace the universe: you are the seeker with no knowledge, the judge with no jurisdiction and, when all is done, the jester of the farce."

When Montaigne moved his books to the third floor of his tower, he moved a bed to the floor below. He would cross to the castle for dinner, after which he would say good night and leave. It is tempting to imagine him at his desk then, pen in hand, books scattered around him, and candle flickering, but in fact he never wrote or read after the sun set—a habit he recommended to his readers, saying that with books "the soul disports itself, but the body, whose care I have not forgotten, remains inactive, and grows weary and sad." He was seven years into the essays when he suffered his first serious attack of kidney stones, writing that illness and sleep, like madness, "make things appear to us otherwise than they

appear to healthy people, wise men, and waking people." He lived in fear of the next attack, and, even more, of what he called "emptiness." He was the man who (pace Roosevelt and Thoreau) first said, "The thing I fear most is fear . . . it exceeds all other disorders in intensity."

Toward the end of his life, he claimed to have accepted emptiness. He had once called his essays "monstrous bodies, pieced together of diverse members, without definite shape, having no order, sequence, or proportion other than accidental," and blamed the fact that "my ability does not go far enough for me to dare to undertake a rich, polished picture, formed according to art." But there is every indication that, growing older, he missed the statesman's life. When Navarre succeeded to the throne, in 1589, becoming Henri IV of France—and, after four more years of religious war, making a shrewd conversion to Catholicism with the words "Paris is well worth a Mass"—Montaigne wrote to volunteer his services again. Henri replied, delighted, and in January of 1590, when his letter arrived, Montaigne wrote back, saying that he had always wished for the succession, "even when I had to confess it to my curate," and then offering the advice that "where conquests, because of their greatness and difficulty, could not be thoroughly completed by arms and by force, they have been completed by clemency and magnanimity, excellent lures to attract men, especially toward the just and legitimate side." The passage is vintage Montaigne: a prescription for wise rule lurking in a few fine, flattering phrases about the fruits of victory; a strategic detour into the real world to say that "if rigor and punishment occur, they must be put off until after the possession of mastery"; and, finally, an appropriate classical example—in this case, Scipio the Elder. In July, Henri summoned Montaigne to Paris, but by September, when he had hoped to go, Montaigne was too sick to travel. <>

East of Asia Minor: Rome's Hidden Frontier by Timothy Bruce Mitford  
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The north-eastern frontier of the Roman Empire—one of the great gaps in modern knowledge of the ancient world—has long eluded research. It has defied systematic exploration and been insulated against all but passing survey by wars, instability, political sensitivities, language, and wild, remote mountains accessible in the main only on horseback or on foot. Its path lay across eastern Turkey, following the Euphrates valley northwards from Syria, through

gorges and across great ranges, and passing over the Pontic Alps to reach the further shores of the Black Sea. Vespasian established Rome's frontier against Armenia half a century before the building of Hadrian's Wall. Five times the length of the Wall and reaching more than seven times its height, the frontier was garrisoned by four legions and a large auxiliary army, which was stationed in intermediate forts linked by military roads.

The two volumes of [East of Asia Minor: Rome's Hidden Frontier](#)—based on research, and on more than forty years of field work conducted largely on foot—document the topography, monuments, inscriptions, and sighted coins of the frontier, looking in detail at strategic roads, bridges, forts, watch and signalling systems, and navigation of the Euphrates itself. Study of the terrain provides a foundation for interpreting the literary and epigraphic evidence for the frontier and its garrisons. Military activity, which extended to the Caucasus and the Caspian, is placed in the context of climate, geography, and Ottoman trade routes. 28 colour maps and over 350 photographs, plans, and travellers' sketches not only document the region's history as a frontier region of the Roman Empire, but also reveal an ancient way of life, still preserved during the 1960s and 1970s, but now almost obliterated by the developments of the modern world.

It is a particular pleasure to provide a brief Foreword for this book, which literally represents a lifetime's work, and which opens up before the reader a panorama of the formidable territory of mountains, valleys, and rivers in eastern Turkey through which the Roman frontier ran. That is to say northwards from Commagene, over the Taurus and, broadly speaking, along the course of the upper Euphrates, to reach the Black Sea coast at the ancient Greek city of Trapezus (Trabzon).

In terms of Roman history, there are probably few, if any, other areas which combine the features of having been of immense strategic importance, of being so little known to modern scholarship, and of having hardly been visited even by specialists in Roman frontier studies. It contained four legionary fortresses, a large number of auxiliary forts, and a road system established over some 200 miles, as the crow flies. But, of course, it was not a matter of direct movement, but of a complex process of adjustment to a landscape marked by severe contrasts of elevation, so that the effective length of the frontier road will have been much greater.

Tim Mitford's decades of work, which began while he was a doctoral student in Oxford in the 1960s and continued through the course of his service in the Royal Navy, reach their termination now. The book offers a completely new, and very detailed, conception both of this remote and mountainous area itself, of the way in which Roman forces were distributed along the frontier, and of the network of Roman roads, both those which stretched (more or less) south—north and those running west—east to link this frontier zone with the Roman provinces of central and western Anatolia. For those students of the Ancient world who (like, alas, the present writer) have never visited these areas (except for Commagene and Melitene/Malatya) a vivid impression of their remoteness, and of the very slight presence there of the ancient city, can be gained from the magnificent colour maps in the Barrington Atlas of the Ancient World.

But with these two volumes we reach a completely new level of understanding both of strategic structure and of detailed topography, with ample illustrations and a unique set of local maps, based on knowledge which could only be gained by a lifetime of repeated visits, involving arduous movements, including those on horseback or on foot, or on a raft travelling down the Euphrates gorge through the Antitaurus.

As the author's Preface brings out so vividly, the reader is also brought into contact with a world which has itself been transformed in recent decades, with the extension to the villages of electricity and of earth roads. We thus gain a last glimpse of a rural society where the means of transport were essentially the same as those in Antiquity, with goods being carried by pack animals, including camels, and flocks and herds being driven along tracks rising and descending over a mountainous terrain. It is not only students of Roman military antiquities who will find opening before them here a world which is new to them, but which within living memory still reflected the social conditions of life in this remote and dramatic landscape through which a major section of the frontier of the Roman Empire ran.

There is much detail here, on the traces of Roman roads which climbed to a height of well over 8,000 feet, on isolated forts and signal-stations, on the remains of the few ancient cities in this area, on inscriptions, and on coins. For the modern reader, in his or her armchair, the journey still demands close attention, with particular attention to the illustrations and the unique series of maps, from the more general to those which set out the features of individual localities.

But, inspired by the author's evocative Preface, bringing to life both the sometimes hazardous course of his researches, conducted at intervals over more than four decades, and the dramatic and rapidly changing region where they took place, the reader will find him- or herself entering on what is, in more than one sense, a new frontier in our understanding of the Empire. Fergus Millar

Excerpt: In 1962 I was urged by Sir Ian Richmond, matchless in humanity and learning, to search out Rome's imperial frontier along the upper Euphrates, in an attempt to fill one of the great gaps in our knowledge of the ancient world. This project has taken longer than anticipated. Between Syria and the Black Sea, the Cappadocian limes has eluded research, insulated from all but passing survey by wars, instability, sensitivities about Armenians, Greeks and Kurds, language, and wild, remote mountains accessible only on horseback or on foot.

It was into this terra incognita, heavy with history, that I ventured in 1963, into a land ravaged since Roman times by nearly three hundred years of Arab raids, the onslaught of the Selcuks in the eleventh century, the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth and fourteenth, and in the north the Russians in 1916. I was equipped with a general letter of introduction from Michael Gough, Director of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, in which I held the Scholarship in 1963-64, and the Fellowship in 1964-66; and with Cumont's epigraphic notebooks, compiled in eastern Pontus and Armenia Minor in 1900 and entrusted to me by Professor Henri Grégoire.

I was drawn by my mother's cousins, Frank and Jim Thomson, infantry officers younger than I, fallen valiant in the Royal Scots' charge at Gallipoli; and by the advice and example of my own Velius Rufus, Vespasian's centurion, unrivalled in experience of mountains and their peoples: Gallipoli and spectata militia carried alike in silence to the grave. From SOE2 school graduating 'a fine shot and good in silent killing', my father was sent to Crete in October 1940, to plan clandestine operations, and later, with Pendlebury, to prepare the resistance in the event of a German invasion. He set up a sabotage school on Souda Island, raided by caique Italian garrisons and gun positions in the southern Aegean, and organized the defence of Rethymno airfield against the German parachutists. Saved from Crete, he established the SOE station in Aleppo; and from its prison raised a band of convicted murderers, Kurds and Armenians, trained them in demolitions in the school of irregular warfare on Mount Carmel, with the cover-name

'Trans-Jordanian Scouts', and organized SOE work for eastern Turkey, where they were to form a resistance force.

But the German advance stalled at the Caucasus. Taking his Kalpaks, a small private army of devoted assassins, into 1st SAS, he anticipated the main invasion of Sicily with the Special Raiding Squadron under Paddy Mayne, and in the Dodecanese, shared with the Sacred Squadron, raided with SBS under Earl Jellicoe. There in February 1944 he eliminated the German garrison of Patmos, exsiliu of St John, and brought food to the starving islanders; an exploit commemorated between the Patmian heroes of the War of Independence, overlooking the harbour. He then returned to SOE and Crete, to the White Mountains with the ferocious Paterakis band, in a mist miracle saved by St Katerina from ten thousand Germans; and, as the 'Red Major', to battles outside Canea as Liaison Officer with the Communist ELAS. Restored by caring fortune to St Andrews, where he became Professor of Archaeology, he invited the German Academy, in an unspoken act of reconciliation, to select two scholars, Franz Maier and Jörg Schäfer, both gravely wounded in Russia, to join his excavations at Old Paphos; and later with George Bean unravelled the epigraphy of Rough Cilicia.

My Velius showed me how to travel light and on foot, how to behave in villages, and how to persist. This is the only way to meet people and talk at length, to understand distance and gradient, terrain and context, to walk in the steps of those who built and defended the frontier, to comprehend its scale and geography. Contact and conversation brought generous acceptance among villagers who had never seen a European and in the 1960s had rarely ventured from the upper Euphrates, Armenia Minor, and the Pontic mountains. They knew where to find coins and pottery and written stones, and used the ancient paths that still linked villages and climbed over the mountains. As they were in Armenia for Xenophon, Antony, and Bruttius Praesens, local guides and knowledge have been critical for this study.

This was not the fleeting, cocooned fieldwork of landrovers, day trips, and hotels, or the confined archaeology of the green fields and building sites that offer up the minutiae of Roman life in northern Europe. The task was exploration. At times it seemed endless: walking in the early years from village to village, living among their people, carrying epigraphic and survey equipment. Accompanied in 1965 in Commagene by the Revd John Miller, and in the Caucasus by John Lancaster, and in more recent

times escorted often by jandarma or Representative, I was otherwise alone. Under skies of crystal clarity, this was a huge and almost untouched canvas starting four hundred miles east of Ankara, against a background (glimpsed in some of the Plates) of cheerful discomfort and the unexpected.

Here were villages without roads or electricity, mud-brick houses with walls caked in drying ox-dung, and windows sometimes narrowed to postcard size, sure sign of blood feuds. Threshing floors with wooden ox-drawn sledges, studded with sharp flints, unchanged since the Eclogues. Men in white tunic and salvar harvesting with scythes below the Samosata aqueduct. Women with latticed eye slots gliding through the evening darkness in Kemaliye, veiled in black from head to toe; and at dawn horses bearing long sheets of unleavened bread reaching almost to the ground on either flank. Families of Zaza Kurds living in a Roman tower and tombs on the slopes of the Taurus. Great trays perched on the legs of stools turned upside down and crowded with communal bowls: yogurt, bulgur, beans, tomatoes, cucumber, peppers, eggs, honey, chicken and goat, and occasional dynamited fish. Prayers in place of food during Ramazan in the Taurus gorge. Churches converted into homes. Quilts laid on hard earthen floors.

Bears lurked in the remote oak forests of the Taurus and the tangled ravines of Armenia Minor, and captured cubs played under the seats in the antiquated bus to Melitene. Boars large as small donkeys in the evening shadows where the Roman road comes down to Dascusa. A mile-long line of water buffaloes steaming patiently in frost before sunrise at Sebastopolis, drawing carts piled high with sugar-beet, with huge, solid wooden wheels. The last caravans, camels festooned with cooking pots and hollow beehive logs, high on the frontier road across the Antitaurus. Beekeepers rich in local knowledge, and the lovely, hated song of bee-eaters wheeling above Roman roads. Lines of telegraph poles crowned with eagles, ghosts, it seemed, of legionary standards.

Heat stroke in Commagene, carpets of crocuses piercing the snowfields high above the Zigana pass, blizzards at 9000 feet in Armenia Minor. A goatskin raft lit up by lightning in the Antitaurus gorge. Lignite smoke billowing from the labyrinth of rail tunnels below the Munzur Dagları. Through the Iron Curtain by train from Kars: car loaded on a flatbed wagon in front of an ancient engine, and pushed to another flatbed, waiting at the Armenian frontier and surrounded by guards with Kalashnikovs. Countless

journeys overnight from Ankara, passing in the dawn ravines strewn with the wreckage of buses twice missed the previous evening. The menace of scorpions, shepherd dogs, village guards and PKK. Police suspicions in Erzincan of the codeword "Salata", corrupted for Satala in a secret fax from Ankara. Death threats and parties of armed Kurds in the Taurus gorge. Arrests as an Armenian or other form of spy. Governors jeeps and red-legged partridge shoots, and Special Teams of jandarma, armed to the teeth, chasing birds fiercely uphill. Bronze Age settlement mounds, and treasure hunters unearthing skulls and fragments of fine pottery. Roman coins reused as barter, inscriptions as doorposts, steps or fireplaces. Interminable conversations over tea, of crops, religion, money, gold, Armenian treasure, football. Old men who remembered the caravans, and the passage of the Armenians down to the Syrian desert. Adulation in his time of Bobby Charlton, and a conviction in the Taurus gorge that the Queen is Elizabeth Taylor.

Such was the background, graced by astonishing generosity and grave hospitality, to a personal study which seeks to reveal the bones of the Cappadocian limes: to discuss the topography, to set out the monumental evidence, structural remains, inscriptions, and sighted coins; and to relate them in outline to the literary evidence for the history, organization, and garrison of the frontier. The result is in truth preliminary, but may in some measure repay the early support of BIAA, and provide a basis for future research.

I was fortunate in the period. The evidence was still on the ground in 1963, a time of richer local interest by now almost vanished. There was yet no sign in the east of the YSE programme—beneficial but disastrous for antiquity—to bring road, water, and electricity to every village. Ancient artefacts, coins, inscriptions had no commercial value. There were few roads, and villages were approached by mere tracks, suggesting the changeless pattern and spread of population in ancient times. Rarely was there electricity. Tractors were almost unknown. Animals and the land supported a way of life unchanged in essence since Roman times. Satala was crowded with water-buffaloes. At Keban was one of only three road bridges over the Euphrates between the great ranges of the Taurus and the Antitaurus. The watchman had a pocketful of denarii from Körpinik Hüyük, for Roman coins were still in use around Agin as a form of barter currency, for things like vegetables or tobacco. The great dam at Keban was marked in outline on the

rocks, but the Karakaya in the Taurus and the Atatürk below Samosata were not yet contemplated.

All this has changed. The agricultural credits of the later 1960s swept away the ancient way of life. The ubiquitous ox and water buffalo were slaughtered to make way for tractors and a need for money to operate them. The arrival of electricity brought bills, and a subsistence economy based on an almost feudal social structure was eroded by development and undermined by escalating drift to the cities of the west. A large part of the frontier itself has disappeared: the once-great city and fortress of Samosata and its surrounding valley, the bed of the great Taurus canyon, the plains that stretched beside Melitene, the rich pastures around Agin and the Kemaliye gorge, all have vanished under water.

There has been political instability too. This study began before the violence and suspicions of the 1970s, resumed after the restoration of law and order by the military in 1980, and with their support continued through the early years of PKK turmoil in the south-east. But by the 1990s, the window of permission was closing again in many of the vilayets along the limes. Erzincan, covering much of Armenia Minor, was and remains particularly sensitive. Guns and squeeze-brush are uneasy companions.

In the steps of Sulla, I sighted the Euphrates for the first time on 8 September 1963, embarking on a task that has taken half a century: longer than it took, from the accession of Vespasian to the early years of Hadrian, to construct, garrison, and consolidate the frontier itself. Time has been drawn out by its huge scale and inaccessibility, visit and revisit, political and bureaucratic difficulties, naval duties, and the rape of many years of fieldwork.

Despite my rudimentary Turkish, the 1960s were thoroughly productive. My survey permit covered most of the eastern vilayets: blank cheques so generous had not been previously and are no longer issued for research in eastern Turkey. Except in the Caucasus fieldwork was on foot and at little cost. It was vigorously encouraged by Michael and Mary Gough, and generously supported by the Royal Navy, which the Naval Attaché enabled me, beguiled by National Service afloat in the Mediterranean, to rejoin in 1965. Then and later the Navy, in need of Turkish language interpreters, gave me time in 1966 to walk over the Antitaurus, in 1967 to revisit Dascusa, and in 1972 to clamber through the great gorge of the Taurus; and thus, supervised latterly by Professor Frere and Dr Levick, to complete my thesis.

Then stirred, alas, the dark shade of Arrius Varus, and a decade of fieldwork fell victim to institutional and bureaucratic difficulties. No support, no permit. Fieldwork projected in eastern Turkey in 1974, with naval leave and British Academy funding, was vetoed by the British Ambassador, and I was confined to Istanbul during a long summer of language training in 1976. Meanwhile, the Euphrates valley flooded above Keban, and a huge lake began to rise above Karakaya. Swathes of the Roman frontier, unsurveyed by me or by others, vanished forever.

In 1981, I returned to Ankara as British National Representative in the Headquarters of the Turkish Navy. In BIAA in London Professor Oliver Gurney and Sir Bernard Burrows cut a Gordian knot, and with their concurrence in 1983 the British Ambassador, Sir Peter Laurence, advised by Roger Short, applied on my behalf directly to the Turkish authorities. To all four this study owes the deepest debt of gratitude. Permission came rapidly, early in 1984, with support at the highest Turkish levels. The Turkish Navy had no problem with a 'obi like archaeology. As a serving officer I was permitted 'to carry out research on the eastern frontier of the Roman Empire, and on the classical inscriptions of north eastern Anatolia, in the vilayets of Adiyaman, Malatya, Erzincan, Gümüşhane, Trabzon, Sivas and Tokat, to take photographs and measurements, and to copy inscriptions in and outside museums'. This was comprehensive, generous, and without time limit. Fieldwork resumed, and, with permission, continued vigorously during the later 1980s.

In 1988 baseless opposition emerged briefly in the Antiquities Department: I was not an archaeologist, and I had worked without a permit. Leaving the BIAA frontier tour in Erzincan, I was aware for the first time of police surveillance following me from the bus station and into the museum in Sivas; and in 1989 men in a white car, identified by my temsilci as MIT, attempted from a great distance to keep me in sight in the Taurus. Despite support at MGK level, something was going wrong.

The 1990s started badly. In late 1992, the Director General of Security in Ankara reported that several foreigners were using research as a cover for espionage. His list appeared on the front page of Milliyet. One, searching Mt Ararat for Noah's ark, claimed to have found anchors. They were in fact, he explained, Armenian tombstones. Another had collected 'Armenia bugs' and 'Kurdistan bugs'.

I headed the list. It revealed that I had investigated terrorist incidents, and used a map which, hateful

word, 'divided' Turkey into two. The first charge was absurd. The second, innocently shown to police and other authorities, showed my work on the Euphrates frontier. The revelation came as a surprise, for I had recently interpreted over separate weeks in London for each of the Turkish Chiefs of Staff and the Minister of Defence, and had just returned from Diyarbakir, Gordyene, and Adiabene as chief interpreter with 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines, 3RPIMA, and CRAPs.

Whatever the source, this confection caused severe and lasting damage. Application, the Embassy was advised, had now to be made through the Turkish Embassy in London. There the support of successive Ambassadors was strong and unfailing. But it took until 1996 to obtain a permit to work even in tranquil Gümüşhane. Over a period of eight years, despite constant support from the British Embassy, and only with the help of torpils of great influence, I was permitted to work in the vilayet of Erzincan, covering much of Armenia Minor, only once, in 2000, for a total of twenty-eight days arbitrarily reduced by the Director of Ancient Monuments and Museums, in my presence, to eight days: even these salvaged only by the production of a personal letter to me from the Minister of Culture. In that year MIT was again my shadow. 2002 was a bad year. Kâmrân İnan, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, wrote personally to the Prime Minister, Bülent Ecevit, on my behalf. There was no reply. Talat Saral, once Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, identified a further difficulty: my applications since 1996 had been headed 'Corpus Christi College Centre for the Study of Greek and Roman Antiquity', and were in Turkish. Any official could see at a glance that I was working for a Christian agency interested in Pontic Greeks, and that, as a Turkish speaker, I must be a spy. So each year, for seven years out of eight, usually in July and too late to recover, my applications had been found inappropriate. In the summer, powerful support in the MFA was overruled, and the decision was taken by others, citing a considerable amount of concern from local, security, and other authorities about my previous studies, that it would be inappropriate, again, to agree my application that year, or in the future. Permits, even applications, to look for Romans in sensitive vilayets, particularly in Armenia Minor, had brought me too close to the heat and reporting of suspicious minds. It was an Icarus moment.

After so much time, effort, and support it was a pity to be treated by some, not as a longtime friend, but as an enemy of Turkey. My limes study had advanced

too far to be abandoned. Important gaps remained to be filled. Now too old under new regulations even to direct myself in my own solitary survey, I wasted no more time with applications so readily derailed, and worked differently, travelling with an official guide accredited to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. A patriot of the highest integrity, Taner Demirbulut had been selected by the vali of Trabzon to accompany Professor Valerie Manfredi and myself on the trail of Xenophon in 1999. Combining remarkable energy and organizational skills with sensitivity and discretion, Taner knew always how to behave. We called on muhtars and took local guides. As Taner explained, he had been a jandarma corporal, and I was a retired colonel writing a book, a hobi, if a strange one, which meant tracing the Silk and caravan roads on foot. I spoke Turkish because I had served with the Turkish Navy.

So I was received with respect, enthusiasm, and amused tolerance; a happy change from the suspicion and often ill-concealed contempt aroused on occasions in officials in the east by the presence of a temsilci. Most villagers knew perfectly well that we were treasure hunters. Released from the lions' den of officialdom, I was free at last from bureaucracy and boundaries. Our many journeys, hundreds of miles from Ankara, passed almost entirely without incident, and were hugely productive.

The limits of this personal study are flexible in place and time. Geographically they embrace much of eastern Turkey, and extend to the foothills of the Caucasus and the Caspian shore. In time they start with the establishment of an organized limes under Vespasian. But the frontier itself endured without substantial modification for five centuries. To accommodate in this study the Mithridatic wars and the policy inherited by Augustus, as well as the later monumental evidence, the chronological limits extend, where necessary, from the first century before Christ to the repairs and campaigns of Justinian and beyond. Roman involvement along the upper Euphrates began a generation before Caesar landed in Britain, and continued for two centuries after that distant province was abandoned.

If the Cappadocian limes has remained almost undisturbed by fieldwork, it was no backwater. The frontier is closely documented by the ancient geographers, its garrison in large part known from the Notitia Dignitatum and inscriptions. Its remains provide clear evidence that this section of the imperial frontier was on a scale to match its importance. From the Syrian plains and Samosata, it stretched for

almost five hundred miles up the Euphrates valley and over the Pontic mountains to reach the Black Sea at Trapezus. From there a chain of strategic anchorages, protected by forts, extended eastwards as far as Sebastopolis and the western foothills of the Caucasus. On its way the frontier road passed over the Taurus to Melitene, crossed the two main ranges of the Antitaurus to Satala, and climbed over the Pontic mountains at altitudes not encountered by any other section of the imperial frontiers. Although the bed of the upper Euphrates lies at a median altitude of some 3,000 feet, the right bank is inaccessible in many sections, and impassable in several gorges of spectacular depth; and the main frontier road is driven high above and in rear of the river.

Between Samosata and Trapezus the frontier stretched for five times the length and reached more than seven times the height of Hadrian's Wall. Ultimately, it was garrisoned by four legions, at Samosata, Melitene, Satala, and Trapezus, and by a large, permanent auxiliary army stationed in intermediate forts linked by a military road. In place of disordered tribes the limes faced, in northern Mesopotamia, the Parthian and, from the third century, the Sassanian empires; in the east the Armenian kingdom; and in the north the movement of barbarians, coastal tribes and whole peoples pressing across the Caucasus.

The frontier was crossed in Ottoman times by the great caravan route which linked the Aegean, through Satala and Erzerum, with northern Persia. At Tokat an important route diverged. Passing through Sivas, it joined the line of the Persian Royal Road at Eski Malatya (Melitene), crossed the Euphrates, and continued below Harput (above Elazığ), to northern Mesopotamia. A third, minor route passed northwards up the Euphrates valley from Aleppo, through Adiyaman, Eski Malatya, and Egin (Kemaliye), to Armenia Minor and the Black Sea at Trebizond. All these routes were essentially Roman, but their constant use has been everywhere destructive of antiquity.

Several European travellers passed along the main caravan routes, but their accounts make little or no mention of passage across or along the Roman frontier. Only Brant (in 1838) and Taylor (in 1861 and 1866), both consuls at Erzerum, Hogarth and Yorke (in 1894), and Cumont (in 1900) have left reports of archaeological value. Hogarth and Munro planned to explore the Euphrates in 1891, but accident and cholera obliged them to abandon their project. Three years later, with Yorke, Hogarth was

the first, and indeed the last, to journey along the limes itself with the specific purpose of identifying and documenting its remains. Rumours of renewed cholera, fear of arrest, and the sheer distance across mountainous and virtually unexplored country rendered their observations hurried and incomplete. Indeed, by bad luck or poor judgement, they failed to record any certain trace of the military road or of its forts; or any sure evidence for an organized frontier outside the legionary fortresses. Von Moltke passed through the Taurus gorge by raft in 1838; and in two intrepid voyages in the spring and summer of 1901 Huntington followed the Euphrates from Egin to Gerger. His careful accounts are of the greatest interest, for the river bed has by now been almost completely submerged.

More than a century ago, Yorke wrote: 'Our journey (from Samsat) as far as Trebizond was made entirely on horseback.... It is not possible to cross the districts through which we travelled, except for very short distances, in any other manner.... It is a rare exception in this part of Turkey for any road to be practicable for wheels.' Still largely unfollowed by modern roads and tracks, the line of the frontier does not lend itself to passing, wheel-based survey; and new research has in consequence been more speculative than productive.

Satala itself was carefully investigated and excavated by Biliotti, vice-consul in Trebizond, in 1874; and in three days in 1900 Cumont recorded a mass of Greek and Latin

inscriptions. But from that year, for more than two generations, the ancient frontier remained unvisited and unresearched. Its details lay undisturbed, and, for some, doubt continued to surround its very existence.

Hogarth and Cumont passed through a land where the earliest beginnings of Christianity had taken root and flourished for more than sixteen centuries; through villages of Armenians and Greeks with a closer affinity for the ancient world. Many preserved ancient place names, and Greek and Latin monumental inscriptions and architectural fragments survived as structural curiosities in houses and churches, notably below Harput, at Satala, and in Trebizond. In the Taurus, Armenian villages alternated in reasonable harmony with villages of Zaza Kurds, and along the Euphrates valley with Turkish. In the 1960s, the same villages survived, their lost inhabitants replaced by Turks. But many of the place names were in the process of deliberate change, and memories of the old were already beginning to disappear. To avoid confusion this study prefers the old names,



recorded by travellers, preserved on Turkish Army maps revised from Ottoman surveys, and still used by villagers. It describes the frontier broadly from south to north, following the direction in which the empire expanded and the legions advanced.

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**The Rise of Rome: From the Iron Age to the Punic Wars** by Kathryn Lomas  
[History of the Ancient World, Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press, 9780674659650]

By the third century BC, the once-modest settlement of Rome had conquered most of Italy and was poised to build an empire throughout the Mediterranean basin. What transformed a humble city into the preeminent power of the region? In [The Rise of Rome](#), the historian and archaeologist Kathryn Lomas reconstructs the diplomatic ploys, political stratagems, and cultural exchanges whereby Rome established itself as a dominant player in a region already brimming with

competitors. The Latin world, she argues, was not so much subjugated by Rome as unified by it. This new type of society that emerged from Rome's conquest and unification of Italy would serve as a political model for centuries to come.

Archaic Italy was home to a vast range of ethnic communities, each with its own language and customs. Some such as the Etruscans, and later the Samnites, were major rivals of Rome. From the late Iron Age onward, these groups interacted in increasingly dynamic ways within Italy and beyond, expanding trade and influencing religion, dress, architecture, weaponry, and government throughout the region. Rome manipulated preexisting social and political structures in the conquered territories with great care, extending strategic invitations to citizenship and thereby allowing a degree of local independence while also fostering a sense of imperial belonging.

In the story of Rome's rise, Lomas identifies nascent political structures that unified the empire's diverse populations, and finds the beginnings of Italian peoplehood.

Excerpt: In the ninth century Rome was merely one among a number of settlements developing in Latium.' It may have been larger than many of its neighbours, but it had no particular claim to prominence even within the region, let alone beyond it. The most powerful and dynamic communities in central Italy at this period were to be found in Etruria, to the north of the Tiber. By the third century, however, Rome had evolved into a powerful city-state, had established control over the rest of Italy and was poised to conquer a Mediterranean-wide empire. This book will explore the development of Rome from its origins to the mid-third century, the nature of its control over Italy and the reasons why it was able to achieve this level of domination. Although the earliest history of Italy and Rome is very distant in time, it addresses some surprisingly modern concerns. Problems confronting these societies include the stresses and tensions of multi-ethnic communities, how to deal with wide social, political and legal inequalities, and the interface between ordinary civil society and an international elite. By the third century Rome was also grappling with the moral and practical questions posed by rapid imperial expansion.

Rome did not develop in isolation, and it cannot be understood without this broader Italian context. One of the aims of this book is to introduce the wider history of Italy, its peoples and its cultures, as well as exploring their relationships with Rome. Our evidence for Rome is, of course, much more complex than for

other Italian communities, as we have extensive ancient accounts of its early development as well as much archaeological evidence, although both pose interpretative problems. The principle on which this book is organised is to alternate chapters on Italy, which introduce the broad themes, with chapters examining Rome specifically, and eventually the relationship between Rome and its neighbours.

The sources for this early period are deeply problematic. There is a wealth of archaeological data from most areas of Italy, but the archaeological record from Rome itself is fragmentary and difficult to evaluate, thanks to the continuous occupation of the site since Antiquity. The textual sources pose equally difficult issues. There are some contemporary references to Italian and Roman history in fifth- and fourth-century Greek sources, but the earliest Roman historians, whose work survives only in fragmentary form, wrote in the late third and second centuries.<sup>1</sup> Some authors of the mid- to late Republic and empire whose work does survive, such as Polybios (second century), Cicero and Varro (both first century), included comments on early Rome in their work, but the earliest narratives of the period are those of Livy and Dionysios of Halicarnassus, writing in the late first century. This lack of contemporary textual evidence inevitably means that the writers of the surviving sources had, at best, limited knowledge of the period from the twelfth to the fourth century BC, and at worst, no authentic information. The Romans kept official state records and archives, but the date at which systematic record-keeping began is unclear, and private or public records and archives are likely to have been limited or non-existent before the beginning of the Republic, as well as vulnerable to damage. An introduction to the ancient accounts of early Rome, and a discussion of some of the problems posed by them, can be found in A Note on Sources.

Ancient Italy was a region of great diversity, with a broad range of climate, natural resources and topography, ranging from the alpine regions of the far north to the plains of Latium and Campania and the arid mountains of Calabria. Fertile plains along the coast and in some of the river valleys, notably that of the Po, are interspersed with more mountainous areas. The Apennines, which form the spine of Italy, are a ridge of high and inhospitable terrain stretching the length of the peninsula and dividing Italy into two distinct halves. The natural barriers to communication between the Adriatic and Ionian coasts ensured that these areas had different trajectories of cultural and economic development.

Italy occupied an advantageous position in other ways. It was at the crossroads of long-established trade routes: by sea, from Greece and the eastern Mediterranean to Spain, France and North Africa, and by land, across the Alps and into Europe. Its long coastline was well supplied with natural harbours, and it provided a short and convenient crossing point for people and goods travelling from western Greece and the Dalmatian coast, as well as for people travelling around the islands of the western Mediterranean. Italy and its inhabitants were connected to a wide-ranging network of contacts reaching from the Middle East and Egypt to central Europe, a fact reflected not just in Greek and eastern imports but also in the influence of Greek and eastern contacts on many Italian cultures. This is vividly illustrated by Rome's willingness to borrow and adapt cultural styles and customs from across Italy and the Mediterranean, while never losing sight of its own essential Roman identity.

The coastal plains were densely populated, characterised by early development of the city-state as the main social and political organisation, and by a high density of urban settlement (map i). During the period from the ninth to the seventh century, proto-urban settlements were established. Unlike Greece, however, where the natural territorial boundaries of each city were fairly clear-cut, the Apennines are the only major topographical barrier. Some lower-lying regions are divided by ranges of hilly terrain, but there are large areas where there are no clear natural boundaries, creating much potential for territorial conflict and inter-state wrangling. Most lowland areas were rich in fertile territory and mineral resources, so it is unsurprising that warfare in these regions was more or less endemic, as growing cities competed for an ever greater share of land and wealth.

Urbanisation is a key concept for understanding the development of Italy, but it is a tricky one to define and there are a wide range of scholarly approaches to it. Even in the ancient world there was considerable variation: in Classical Greece the character of a city was defined by the character of its people as well as by the nature of its physical form, but later Greek writers defined cities in terms of possession of certain physical characteristics, while the Romans defined them in legal terms, as communities possessing a charter granted by Rome.<sup>1</sup> Modern approaches are no less varied, but the most recent and comprehensive attempt is that of the Copenhagen Polis project, which defines ancient cities as settlements with a population of no fewer than 1,000 people and a territory of not

less than 30 km (11.5 square miles), sharing a common name and common legal, social and political structures. All of these approaches agree that the ancient city was a city-state, comprising a central settlement and the surrounding territory controlled by it, which supported it economically. To be considered urban, a settlement must be large enough to have a degree of economic diversity and specialisation that lifted it beyond the level of a subsistence economy; political organisation and social hierarchies; and a concept of citizenship or state membership above and beyond membership of a family or kinship group. Features such as formalisation of urban layout, or monumental buildings, are not essential attributes of cities but frequently form part of urban development, and are useful diagnostic criteria as they demonstrate the existence of both an economic surplus and the political authority and collective will to harness it for large projects. Urbanisation was preceded, in many areas of Italy, by the development of settlements which were clearly larger and more substantial than villages but not fully nucleated, and which had not yet reached the level of complexity required by a city. These, which often consisted of interconnected clusters of habitations sharing communal space (often for religious use), are termed proto-urban settlements and regarded as the precursors of urban development.

Thanks to its rugged terrain, Apennine Italy developed on a very different pattern from lowland Italy. High-level valleys did not have the resources to support large concentrations of population. The peoples of the mountainous regions lived in smaller communities than those of the lowlands and relied on a mixture of small-scale agriculture and pastoralism. The isolation of the region contributed to the development of a distinctive social and cultural identity that was remarkably resilient in the face of pressure. Although it was well populated with small settlements, Apennine Italy remained largely non-urbanised until after the Roman conquest. Its indigenous political and social organisation was based on loosely knit federal organisations of small communities, which were well adapted to the nature of the region. The region developed at a different pace from that of lowland Italy, but these differences arose from adaptation to the local environment, not from backwardness or barbarism. Their effectiveness at resisting Roman expansion is in itself a testament to this. Apennine communities developed a form of statehood that was in many respects similar to that of the city-state but without the large population centres.

The ethnic and cultural diversity of ancient Italy was no less notable than its geographical variety. It was

populated by many different groups, each with its own language, religious cults and material culture, mostly of indigenous origin, with the exception of the Greeks who settled in southern Italy and Campania. The two most important groups in central Italy identified by ancient authors are those known to us as the Latins (Latini) and the Etruscans (Etrusci in Latin, Tyrrhenoi to the Greeks and possibly Rasenna in their own language). The cultures associated with these groups can be found (respectively) in central Latium and in the area between the Rivers Tiber and Arno from an early date. There are lingering questions about the origins of the Etruscans, thanks to their peculiar language, which bears little resemblance to any other Italian language and is probably not Indo-European, and to Herodotos' statement that they were colonists from Asia Minor, although this is contradicted by other ancient sources. They are now generally assumed to have been an indigenous people, although studies of ancient DNA samples reveal some intriguing findings. These show similarities between the populations of ancient Etruria and central Anatolia, as well as differences between Etruscan DNA and that of medieval and modern Tuscans. However, it is a step too far to take this as confirmation of Herodotos' belief that the Etruscans were colonists from Asia Minor, and DNA studies of Etruscans remain controversial, to say the least; other studies show that discontinuity between the DNA of people from different periods is common in Europe and should be attributed to population movements over long periods, not short-term colonisation of the sort envisaged by Herodotos.

In southern and upland Italy ethnic and cultural identities were more complicated. Sources for the location of Greek settlements in southern Italy, and about the culture and ethnicity of the inhabitants of the Salentine peninsula, are broadly consistent. Beyond this, however, it is impossible to draw an accurate ethnic map of Italy before the fourth century. Ancient sources, mostly written long after these cultures ceased to exist, disagree as to who lived where, and even on which parts of the peninsula could be defined as Italy. A period of mass migration in the fifth century, during which some groups disappeared from the historical and archaeological record and new ones emerged, complicates the picture even further. Although it is clear from the archaeological record, and from inscriptions, that many different languages and cultures co-existed in Italy, it is much more difficult to pin down the concept of ethnicity. Ancient writers routinely describe Italy as a region of tribal societies to which they ascribe ethnic labels, but

it is far from clear whether the Italians regarded themselves as belonging to well-defined ethnic groups, and archaeological evidence points to the city-state as the primary form of social and political organisation in the region. Many people may have identified themselves with their family, village or state, rather than with a broader ethnicity, and collective identities seem to have been fairly fluid. New groups emerged from the migrations of the fifth century, while others expand into new areas. The Volsci, Hernici and Aequi, all troublesome neighbours of Rome, appear at this date but disappear equally abruptly after the Roman conquests of the fourth century. Celts from beyond the Alps settled in northern Italy, Etruscans moved into the Po valley, and peoples from the central Apennines migrated en masse into Campania and southern Italy. By the end of the fifth century the cultural map of Italy had changed considerably, and during the fourth century clearer ethnic identities began to emerge, but even at this point most people may have regarded themselves as primarily belonging to a particular state or community rather than an ethnic group — for instance, as a Tarquinian or Volaterran rather than as an Etruscan.

During the period of its rise to power Rome had only the administrative apparatus of a city-state at its disposal. Although this developed in complexity during the period from the fourth century to the second, administrative resources were limited. Roman power was maintained by a network of arm's-length relationships interspersed with areas of closer control, rather than by direct rule. Many Italian communities retained a measure of autonomy, although Rome was able to help itself to some of their resources, especially military manpower. Although Rome was indisputably the leader of the Italians by 270 BC, and dealt with any challenge to this position very firmly, Roman Italy was not a directly ruled empire. Regional and ethnic identities remained important, but were also fluid. Greek, Etruscan and Roman cultures all had an impact on the other peoples of Italy, just as Roman culture was itself influenced by those of the Etruscans and Greeks. The cultural Romanisation of the peninsula did not take place until the late second and first centuries; until then, the rest of Italy retained its own local languages and cultures, and the phenomenon of cultural convergence which is sometimes termed Romanisation was not yet prominent. Given the late date of most of our sources and our reliance on material written from the Roman point of view, it is easy to forget that Rome did not exercise Italian-wide dominance until the early third century, and that the establishment of this dominance

was by no means a foregone conclusion. Even during the Punic wars there is a distinct sense that the will of Rome was only one factor among many in determining the actions of other Italians, and it is only with the reassertion of Roman authority after the defeat of Hannibal that Rome fully established domination of Italy. During the period covered by this book we can see the emergence of Rome from being merely one among many Italian states to a position of dominance, but the wider Italian context is essential for understanding this process.

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## Cities of Power: The Urban, The National, The Popular, The Global by Göran Therborn [Verso, 9781784785444]

Why are cities centers of power? A sociological analysis of urban politics. In this brilliant, very original survey of the politics and meanings of urban landscapes, leading sociologist Göran Therborn offers a tour of the world's major capital cities, showing how they have been shaped by national, popular, and global forces. Their stories begin with the emergence of various kinds of nation-state, each with its own special capital city problematic. In turn, radical shifts of power have impacted on these cities' development, in popular urban reforms or movements of protest and resistance; in the rise and fall of fascism and military dictatorships; and the coming and going of Communism. Therborn also analyzes global moments of urban formation, of historical globalized nationalism, as well as the cities of current global image capitalism and their variations of skyscraping, gating, and displays of novelty.

Through a global, historical lens, and with a thematic range extending from the mutations of modernist architecture to the contemporary return of urban revolutions, Therborn questions received assumptions about the source, manifestations, and reach of urban power, combining perspectives on politics, sociology, urban planning, architecture, and urban iconography. He argues that, at a time when they seem to be moving apart, there is a strong link between the city and the nation-state, and that the current globalization of cities is largely driven by the global aspirations of politicians as well as those of national and local capital.

With its unique systematic overview, from Washington, D.C. and revolutionary Paris to the flamboyant twenty-first-century capital Astana in Kazakhstan, its wealth of urban observations from all the populated continents, and its sharp and multi-faceted analyses, *Cities of Power* forces us to rethink our urban future, as well as our historically shaped present.

Excerpt: This is a book about meetings and relationships between four social forces: the urban, the national, the popular and the global. We shall be watching how they meet and how they change the urban habitat during the lifetime of the national, up until now. The urban is old: cities have existed for thousands of years, but they have been transformed by the arrival of the national in the form of nation-states, just over two centuries ago. The national transformation of cities has focused on the urban center of the nation-state, its capital, which is the object of this study. Mostly pre-national cities of different kinds were changed into national cities, but sometimes nation-states built new cities for themselves. Nation-states arrived at their chosen capitals along different historical pathways and after long or short, rough or smooth journeys. These historical experiences left enduring marks on each capital city.

Nationalism and nation-states were part of a much larger epochal change, the rise of modernity as a new historical era, rejecting authorities and institutions of the past (inner-worldly ones above all) and trying to create new societies, new cultures, a new world. The national and the global first met in this context, as global nationalism. Major meeting-places of this encounter were the national capitals, which now had to adapt to global models of a capital 'worthy of the nation', taking in the avenues of Second Empire Paris, the infrastructure of London, in some places the Mall and the Capitol Building of Washington.

Nations developed and changed, and the constitutive elites of nation-states were faced with popular challenges from the ascendancy of originally subaltern classes, ethnicities/races and gender groups. Occasionally these challenges were strong and successful enough to create distinctive popular moments of power, manifested in urban history. National struggles for power could take extreme and violent forms, not only destructive and ephemeral, like wars and riots, but also, for a time, forms cemented in the capital city, which we shall also look at.

In recent times the global has taken center stage, first in the form of global, transnational capitalism. To not a few contemporary authors, the national is on the verge of becoming an extinct species, particularly in big cities. We shall consider those claims, skeptically but seriously, trying to disentangle the intertwined dynamics of the global, the national and the local in the new style of globalist urbanism, of verticality, novelty and exclusivity. At the very end we shall venture a glance into the future of our four forces.

Underlying my interest in the choreography of the urban, the national, the popular and the global are old analytical interests in forms and relations of power and in meanings, ideology and symbolic forms. Cities affect us by their spatial structuring of social relations and by their provision of meanings of social life. This might be urban power, but cities in the nation-state era are not actors of power of the same weight as the national, popular and global forces. Cities of our time had better be approached as manifestations and representations of power. Our main research question here is: What kind of power does the urbanity of the capital cities under investigation manifest and represent?

The study is global and historical, from the first national capitals, revolutionary Paris and Washington, D.C., up to today and the flamboyant new capital of Kazakhstan, Astana. But it is, of course, neither an encyclopedia of the capitals of the world nor a world history of power. It deals with a set of significant examples of the four major kinds of nation-state and national capital formation in the world, with some historical moments of power change and with how capitals of the different national types have had to confront the challenges of popular and global moments.

This has been a project long in coming, arising out of free time in Budapest in 1996, as the incumbent of a temporary European Chair of Social Policy at the ELTE University and many times interrupted by seemingly more urgent obligations. It was initially inspired by a history of the drama of the city's Heroes' Square. A first study analyzed the processes and symbolic transformations which turned major dynastic residence cities of Europe into national capitals. Due to a couple of editorial mishaps it was published only in 2002. Then I managed to get some funding (from two now-defunct Swedish public research funds, FRN and HSFR, and from the INTAS of the EU, also passed away) and to link up with urbanist colleagues of various disciplines from all over the world, resulting in a series of joint regional publications.' As always, my research is the product of an individual craftsman, not an industrial output by a factory of research assistants.

Without original intention, this book has become part of a tetralogy of global studies, which started with *Between Sex and Power: Family in the World, 1900-2000* (2004). It was followed in 2011 by *The World: A Beginner's Guide* and in 2013 by *The Killing Fields of Inequality*.

For me this book has been an immensely stimulating and enriching learning experience, one which

included, of course, the opportunity to visit the cities treated here. Critical analyses of power more often make one angry than happy. But I do hope that I will be able to convey also something of the excitement at learning about cities and their diversity in time and space.

During this long process, I have piled up an enormous debt of gratitude. My wife, Sonia Therborn, has accompanied me on most of my often-strenuous urban explorations since she retired from clinical psychology (and often before) and has transferred her sharp psychological eye onto urban anthropology, enlightening a myopic macro-sociologist.

## Cities and Power

Cities emerged as concentrations of power, and of wealth, some five thousand years ago. Lewis Mumford once defined a city as a 'point of maximum concentration for the power and culture of a community;' and later began his list of 'chief functions of the city' with 'to convert power into form'. Cities now contain more than half of humankind; power and wealth are reaching unprecedented degrees of planetary concentration. At the dawn of planetary urbanization, understanding the inscriptions of power in our built urban environment is not only a scholarly, but, even more, a civic imperative.

Despite Mumford's declarations, power has slipped out of the grasp of mainstream urban history and social science more often than not, or it has been relegated to the past. After the Baroque, Mumford's own interests veered to technological and economic change. A recent (and good) collective work with the seductive title *Embodiments of Power* both starts and stops with the Baroque.' Leonardo Benevolo's monumental *History of the City* makes the European revolutions of 1848 a divide between the 'liberal' and the 'post-liberal' city, but Benevolo loses most of his interest in power after 1848. The late Sir Peter Hall presents a cultural axis in *Cities in Civilization*, but his *Book Four* on the 'urban order' is not very concerned with the political order.

The great historian-cum-sociologist Charles Tilly was a sharp critical analyst of power, but a resolutely materialist network structuralist with little interest in meaningful forms, whether of cities - which he mainly saw as sites of capital concentration - or of states. He never grasped, or thought important, the difference between Baroque, absolutist, dynastic states and states of nations, with their national capitals. In his view, after Charles V's imperial abdication in 1557,

'nation-states began to get priority', particularly after 1700.

Synergetic encounters of political theory/history and urbanism have been few and fragile enough to allow the great urbanist, Peter Hall, to get away - twice or thrice, first in 1993, then in 2006, with a paperback repetition in 2010 - with the following typology of capital cities:

1. Multi-function capitals
2. Global capitals
3. Political capitals
4. Former capitals
5. Ex-imperial capitals
6. Provincial capitals
7. Super capitals

With all due respect, this list reminds me of a list of animals which Michel Foucault, without citation, claimed Jorge Luis Borges had excavated from an ancient Chinese encyclopedia, according to which the animal kingdom comprised the following types:

- a. belonging to the Emperor
- b. embalmed
- c. tamed ...
- e. sirens
- f. fabulous ...
- j. innumerable ...
- n. which from afar resemble flies

In the currently prevailing urban discourse, power is submerged in conceptions of economic nodality, certainly a legitimate and important research topic in itself - but with city power measured by the zip codes of major corporations and/or business services firms. For all its other merits, which are many and have been deservedly applauded, this approach has two limitations in a context of cities and power. Its economism leaves out the power manifestations of the urban built environment itself. Even the most imaginable capitalist city is not only business offices and their connections to business offices elsewhere. Second, the political economy conception of world/global cities seriously underestimates the power of states in the current world.' After all, this is a world where the latest US president (Barack Obama) has been at war for the whole of his two terms of office, longer than any president in US history, making war in seven different countries of the world.'

The analytical framework deployed here - forms of state formation and their consequences, combining structural and symbolic perspectives on the city, identifying and exploring moments of major historical

urban change worldwide - does not seem to have been used before. But no claim to originality is made with regard to studying power dimensions of contemporary cities. Apart from the vast monographic literature, which will be referred to repeatedly below, there are a number of distinguished comparative contributions. As this is not an academic thesis requiring a literature review, I shall confine my collegial respect to a short list only.

The portal work in the modern field is Lawrence Vale's *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, a masterly study of architecture and capital city design in a wide range of national contexts, focusing on 'capitol complexes' of governmental buildings, with a critical political sense and the professional eyes of a city planner." Contemporary and intercontinental in scope are also Wolfgang Sonne's deep-digging Swiss dissertation (Habilitation) *Representing the State on the early-twentieth-century design of some capital cities, from Washington to New Delhi*, and the collective overview edited by David Gordon, *Planning Twentieth-Century Capital Cities*. An impressive global study on the relocation of capitals is Vadim Rossmann's *Capital Cities: Their Development and Relocation*, similar to this book.

Incisive, non-parochial analyses of power in contemporary cities have also come significantly from outside the academia of urban history and social science, from architecture and architectural criticism. Two works have blazed the trail: Deyan Sudic's *The Edifice Complex* and Rowan Moore's *Why We Build*," both focusing on architects and their patrons. From a similar milieu also comes Owen Hatherley's remarkable *Landscapes of Communism*.

All built environments in human settlements are manifestations of the power relations among the inhabitants. Two sources and several kinds of power are highlighted in this book, which is not meant to be a general treatise on power. With its focus on the capital cities of nation-states, political power is naturally central. But political power in itself means no more than power by coercion and/or persuasion through institutions and processes of government. We are here explicitly interested in the character and the operation of political power in capital cities of the world.

Modern processes of urban power form a quadrangle of competing actors and types of influence. In one corner is political authority - national and/or urban - identifying the character of which is a major aim of this study, with variable powers and resources of design and regulation; in a second corner is capital,

global as well as national, with economic power and resources of design and 'development'; third, there are the classes of privilege, with their desires, fears and resources; and finally, there are the popular classes, with their grievances and their capacities of resistance and of change.

We begin with the national elites' political power, emerging from the welter of nation-state formation. In this macroscopic global analysis, the national elites will be approached through the specific contexts of nation-state construction and the latter's relationship to prevailing capitalism.

Then we shall look into two types and two eras of challenges to the historical national elites. One is a popular challenge, coming out of the rise of social and political forces once excluded from the nation-making process. The other is a global challenge of non-national forces and issues. The former is clearly a different kind of political power; the latter may posit a supremacy of economic power.

Political power can, of course, take many different forms, from the same or similar social roots. Here we shall look into the apotheosis of national elite power under perceived popular threat, i.e., at fascism and kindred military dictatorships. Furthermore, we shall analyse urbanistic Communism as an enduring radical popular challenge to historical elite rule, and into post-Communism as a new kind of political power.

After World War II there was concern with democratic versus non-democratic architecture and urban design, especially in West Germany." This is here taken into account, but it would not work as a master distinction, given the fact that most of the nation-states of the world for most of the 225 years covered in this book were non-democracies.

Popular political power has asserted itself in different ways: in access to institutional power, as in 'municipal socialism', welfare-state cities or, recently outside Europe, in city governments by middle-class coalitions with the urban poor, but also in successful protest moments: stopping the ravages of the 'Car City' in the North Atlantic of the late 1950s to 1970s and, even more recently, in a spate of urban revolutions - or better called, given their basically ambiguous (but always non-working-class) social character, extra-constitutional regime changes. It may also make up bargaining power in cities where public participation in urban planning and development is recognized.

Capital cities are by definition sites of political power. But popular challenges mean that they are often also sites of resistance, of political counter-



power, of protest rallies and headquarters of opposition movements, parties and trade unions.

Most of the constitutive national elites were capitalist or pro-capitalist, and their imprint on their nation and its capital is duly taken into account. But there is also the raw economic power of capital and wealth outside political channels. This - economic - is the second source of power we have to pay attention to. It operates in two major ways in our story. One is its imprint on the spatial layout and on the patterning of buildings, and most specifically through skyscrapers. The other refers to the urban exclusivity of wealth and economic prosperity, as manifested in gating and private cities of the privileged.

At some level, all systems of political power need representation, in the sense of public display. Power needs public representation to be recognized, respected, awed or admired, in order to be obeyed and followed. A new reign of power is publicly and ceremoniously inaugurated. Secondly, modern nation-state power (in particular) needs representation in order to give direction to the self-identity, thoughts, beliefs, memories, hopes and aspirations of its citizens. This is the second function of monumentality, as well as of flags, cocardes, symbolic pins, public banner slogans and rhetorical addresses to the nation.

Economic power as such needs no representation; money is force enough in itself. Many times it is wiser to let it operate in the dark rather than in broad daylight.' Corporations and capitalists often want to display their wealth, though, and to bask in admiration of their buildings.

'Representation' has a connotation of intent, which would be much too narrow a perspective for what we are trying to do here. Basically, our interest is in manifestations of power. Representations make up an important part of the latter, but there are also power manifestations through ignorance, neglect or rejection of certain areas or parts of the population, and there are power manifestations of order and disorder, of competence and incompetence.

**Routledge Handbook of Cosmopolitanism Studies** edited by Gerard Delanty  
[Routledge: 9781138094659]

Over the past two decades there has been great interest in cosmopolitanism across the human and social sciences. Where, earlier, it had largely been a term associated with moral and political philosophy, cosmopolitanism has now become a widely-used term

in the social sciences. It is now integral to much of cultural, political and social analysis.

This is the first comprehensive survey in one volume of the interdisciplinary field of cosmopolitan studies. With over forty chapters written by leading scholars of cosmopolitanism, this book reflects the broad reception of cosmopolitan thought in a wide variety of disciplines and across international borders. Both comprehensive and innovative in the topics covered, the *Handbook of Cosmopolitanism Studies* is divided into four sections:

- major theoretical debates, where the emphasis is on recent developments
- cultural topics in the social sciences
- the politics of cosmopolitanism
- major world varieties of cosmopolitanism.

The *Handbook* answers the need to take modern cosmopolitanism out of its exclusive western context and relate it to the historical experiences of other world cultures. This is a major work in defining the emerging field of cosmopolitanism studies.

Throughout, there is a strong emphasis on interdisciplinarity, with essays covering philosophy, literary theory, history, international relations, anthropology, communications studies and sociology. The *Handbook's* clear and comprehensive style will appeal to a wide undergraduate audience across the social sciences and humanities.

### The emerging field of cosmopolitanism studies by Gerard Delanty

A volume such as this, bearing the title *Cosmopolitanism Studies*, is in need of some justification. Over the past two decades there has been very wide interest in cosmopolitanism across the human and social sciences. Where earlier it had been largely a term associated with moral and political philosophy, cosmopolitanism has now become a widely used term in the social sciences. In many ways cosmopolitanism constitutes an interdisciplinary area for the human and social sciences. As invoked in this volume, the idea of cosmopolitanism studies — or cosmopolitan studies — does not proclaim anything more than the recognition of potential interdisciplinarity. Currently it would appear to be the case that cosmopolitanism has been taken up variously by most disciplinary traditions, but not all mean quite the same thing. Cosmopolitanism in anthropology, for instance, is quite different from

cosmopolitanism in sociology and in political philosophy. While the diverse literature often appeals to some classic texts, there is nonetheless considerable variety of interpretations and applications. In general, these vary from highly normative approaches to more empirical applications. There is much to be gained by greater dialogue between the various disciplines that have taken up the idea of cosmopolitanism. It is in this somewhat limited sense of interdisciplinarity that the notion of cosmopolitanism studies can be uncontroversially used. The present volume is largely in this mold. As several chapters demonstrate, philosophical debate about the normative characteristics of cosmopolitanism does not engage seriously with the anthropological and sociological literature on actual cosmopolitanism.

There is also a second and stronger sense in which the idea of cosmopolitanism studies can be used. This would be to refer to an emerging post-disciplinary studies area that exists beyond disciplinary traditions. Whether or not cosmopolitanism studies today constitute such a domain of inquiry that goes beyond the assumptions of interdisciplinarity cannot be so easily concluded. For adherents to disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, there will be some resistance to such moves, which will be judged to lead to a loss of theoretical and methodological rigor.

Yet, in whatever sense the term cosmopolitanism studies is used there is some justification for it in that cosmopolitanism, despite the absence of theoretical and methodological agreement, is certainly an object of research and reflection across a very wide range of disciplines. For the time being it will probably remain an interdisciplinary field and thus a contrast to, for instance, the related domain of global studies where the post-disciplinary moment is more pronounced.

Cosmopolitanism, it could be argued, is but an aspect of global studies and thus does not justify being designated a distinct domain of inquiry. However, such a charge is not quite warranted for cosmopolitanism has a different focus and background. Global studies, as the study of globalization, is a relatively recent development while cosmopolitanism has a long history as a concept and a literature that goes back to Ancient Greek thought. While it lacks the scope of global studies, its historical and philosophical background, diverse as it is, arguably provides greater focus. One of the defining aspects of cosmopolitanism is its normative orientation and it is this that distinguishes it from globalization, which in itself is not a normative concept. It is difficult

to use the term cosmopolitanism without intending in some sense a normative stance. It is precisely this normative orientation that will meet with opposition from those who would rather separate social and historical analysis from philosophically grounded concepts. But the attraction that cosmopolitanism has today is not unconnected with the implicit tension between cosmopolitanism and globalization, with cosmopolitanism suggesting a critique of globalization. The world may be becoming more and more globally linked by powerful global forces, but this does not make the world more cosmopolitan. If the normative underpinnings of cosmopolitanism are taken seriously, it must be apparent that it is not reducible to the condition of globalization.

In the broadest sense possible, cosmopolitanism is about the extension of the moral and political horizons of people, societies, organizations and institutions. It implies an attitude of openness as opposed to closure. For Eduardo Mendieta, in his chapter in this volume, it is now a challenge to the anthropocentric and zoomorphic assumptions that ground human exceptionalism. The political philosophy of cosmopolitanism has always upheld the spirit of openness and a perspective on the world that emphasized the extension of the bonds of inclusivity. Cosmopolitanism is therefore a condition that is more likely than not to be exemplified in opposition to prevailing conditions and thus signalling in some sense the exploration of alternatives to the status quo. This tension between the status quo and the imaginary of an alternative has often been taken to mean that cosmopolitanism is a purely ideal aspiration not rooted. The opposite is the case, for such projections are themselves real and products of concrete experiences. The growth of cosmopolitanism today is undoubtedly due to considerable disquiet about the impact of globalization, on the one side, and on the other the recognition that a globally connected world must find solutions that take into account the perspectives of others beyond one's own immediate context. Aspirations to improve social justice and find solutions for global environmental challenges are not simply unrealistic ideals unlinked to political practice, but in many ways have become a part of the social imaginaries of almost all societies in the present day. For this reason, then, as Chris Rumford has argued in his chapter, cosmopolitan opportunities do not appear ready formed as the antidote to the 'iron cage' of nationalism, but should be seen as potentials within the present. In similar terms, Ian Woodward and Zlatko Skrbis argue that cosmopolitanism is never an absolute or fixed category that resides simply within

some individuals more than others, but a dimension of social life that must be actively constructed through practices of meaning-making in social situations. But normative visions of alternative ways of organizing societies persist and these are discussed in the chapters by Gillian Brock and Daniel Weinstock who look at some of the debates within political philosophy on global justice.

Another, and older objection, is that cosmopolitanism reflects a disdain for the local and is an elite preoccupation. In this view, cosmopolitanism is simply a global ideology or an embracing of the world of the mobile global elite. The nature of cosmopolitan thought in recent years contradicts this criticism. We find a strong emphasis on cosmopolitanism as rooted as opposed to being a rejection of real communities. The notion of a rooted cosmopolitanism has been variously defended by theorists as different as the moral philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah and the sociologist Ulrich Beck and was also advocated by Hannah Arendt. The reception of cosmopolitanism in the social sciences as well as in post-colonial thought, whereby cosmopolitanism becomes linked with empirical social phenomena, makes it difficult to claim that cosmopolitanism is only an elite phenomenon. It is increasingly associated with the claims to rights of groups previously excluded from political community. Thus, for instance, in the chapter by Hensby and O'Byrne, it is associated with marginal groups and in the chapter by Walter Mignolo with de-colonialism, while Patrick Hanafin sees in terms of the right to have rights. It is also worth recalling that in its classical origins in Ancient Greece the cosmopolitan current represented by the Cynics gave expression to anti-elite and anti-institutional notions of belonging and citizenship, a contrast to the Stoic tradition that fits more easily into the new Hellenistic empire of Alexander and the nascent Roman empire. The tension between popular and elite conceptions of cosmopolitanism has persisted in the subsequent history of the idea and can also be found in the discord between moral individualist positions and aspirations for new cosmopolitan world institutions. The chapter by Nigel Rapport in this volume can be seen as a plea for the former and a defense of the relevance and autonomy of the individual. Thus education, as Noah Sobie argues, provides one of the best arenas for examining the articulation of actually-existing cosmopolitanisms with cosmopolitanism as a normative moral and/or political ideal. Schools are, after all, places where educators struggle daily to impart, inscribe and actualize in their charges various visions of the proper individual and the good society.

The popularity of cosmopolitan today, it might be suggested, lies in its relevance to an understanding of major social change throughout the world (see the contributions in Part I by Gerard Delanty, Andrew Linklater and Piet Strydom and, in Part IV, by Maurice Roche on Europe). It is particularly relevant to an understanding of shifts in the social imaginaries of societies and the emergence of ethical and political responses to global challenges. Related concepts, such as internationalism, globalization and transnationalism do not quite offer a framework of interpretation and not all aspects of major social change can be understood with reference to these concepts. Cosmopolitanism concerns ways of imagining the world and thus it is more than a condition of mobility or transnational movement. It is particularly bound up with the expansion of democracy and the extension of the space of the political. But it is also an imaginary present in modern world literature, as Pheng Cheah discusses in his chapter on world literature as a form of world-making. He explores this in Goethe's idealist formulation and the challenge that Marx's materialist understanding of the world poses to the concept of world literature. These two models of world-making, he argues, suggest that the world ought to be rigorously distinguished from the globe.

The revival of cosmopolitan thought today has much to do with the tremendous changes that occurred in the 1990s in the aftermath of the end of communism in USSR and central and eastern Europe. In this period, which also saw the end of apartheid, the Tiananmen Square movement, and, extending into the present day, the movements towards democratization of the Arab world, cosmopolitanism in all these arenas has wide appeal as framework of interpretation. The two hundredth anniversary of Kant's 1795 work *Perpetual Peace* in 1995 was an important movement in the revival of cosmopolitanism since this work was the defining text in modern cosmopolitan thought with its central notion of a principle of hospitality as the basis of a cosmopolitan political community. The 1990s were marked not only by such major political events of global significance, but in addition by the arrival of the internet and an epochal revolution in communication technologies which led not only to the transformation of everyday life and politics but of capitalism too. The sense of epochal change was enhanced with a sense of a new millennium.

As with previous periods of major social and political transformation, the new millennium began with cosmopolitan and anti-cosmopolitan movements colliding. From 11 September 2001 with the emergence of the 'war on terror' to the global crisis of

capitalism that began on 14 September 2008 with the collapse of the Lehmann Brothers, anti-cosmopolitan tendencies emerged to reshape the world according to new doctrines of security and capitalist crisis. The rise of ethnic nationalism in central and eastern Europe since the early 1990s is a further reminder that global change does not lead only to cosmopolitan outcomes. However, one should not see cosmopolitanism in terms of a zero sum game of a choice between atavistic nationalism and religious fundamentalism, one the one side, and on the other cosmopolitan ideals. Both are part of the contemporary world. Cosmopolitanism is expressed in degrees as opposed to being a condition that is either present or absent; elements of cosmopolitanism can be found in all societies. It may be suggested that every political community contains both cosmopolitan and anti-cosmopolitan orientations; or, in other words orientations towards openness and closure are part of the make-up of all collective entities. Viewed in such light, the political cultures of societies, both in the past and in the present, are never entirely cosmopolitan in much the same way that they are never entirely democratic. For the same reasons it is a mistake to see cosmopolitanism in terms of a model of decline. It is arguably the case that despite widespread anti-cosmopolitan trends, there has been a worldwide increase in cosmopolitanism and the carriers of it may be oppositional movements or movements in the direction of global democratizations, as discussed in the chapters by Richard Vernon and Raf Marchetti, as well as the chapter by Alexander Hensby and Darren O'Byrne.

Cosmopolitanism is thus best seen in light of a larger framework of analysis than something that can be accounted for in terms of attitudes. While the term cosmopolitanism goes back to the Stoics, and earlier, it is best understood as part of the social imaginary of the modern world. In this volume, Strydom situates cosmopolitanism in the context of an account of modernity. This approach is reflected in the general association of cosmopolitanism with post-Kantian conceptions of political community. Balibar, in his chapter in this volume, argues that the Kantian tradition needs to be seen along side the Marxist project of internationalism and that these two models may have reached their limits today. But these are only two models within western cosmopolitanism and need to be situated along the influential liberal heritage of cosmopolitanism. This all immediately raises a different question, namely the relation between cosmopolitanism and different models of modernity, since modernity does not consist of one

dominant form, as in the Kantian tradition of European political modernity or its various liberal alternatives.

A problem for cosmopolitan studies is the term itself and its western genealogy. Most conceptions of cosmopolitanism emanating from the Kantian idea, which in turn derives from the original Stoic philosophy, presuppose a largely western approach to history and modernity. Is cosmopolitanism therefore unc cosmopolitan in being a product of the West? Unfortunately, insufficient attention has been given to this in the existing literature, which on the whole tends to ignore the historical experience of non-western parts of the world. In this volume, the problem of translating cosmopolitanism is specifically addressed in the contributions by Walter Mignolo and Bo Strath, as well as in the chapters that constitute Part IV, on world varieties of cosmopolitanism, such as Yoshio Sugimoto's chapter on Japan where he makes the argument that the concept of *ō* translates the western notion of cosmopolitanism or Lisa Rofel's discussion of the Chinese notion of *Tianxia*. In view of the diverse interpretations of cosmopolitanism, a starting point is to recognize that cosmopolitanism is an open-ended approach and not based on a fixed standard of values. It is also plausible to suggest the term is no longer confined to its western genealogy, but should be related to the experiences that roughly correspond to it in the histories of other world cultures. This is where cultural translation becomes a consideration for a genuinely cosmopolitan approach which must embrace global history and where the most promising and innovative developments can be made in cosmopolitan inquiry in the future. In this volume, for instance, Lisa Rofel explores the Chinese equivalent of the western concept of cosmopolitanism and Sudarsan Padmanabhan undertakes a similar analysis in the case of the cosmopolitan cultures of India, as does Yoshio Sugimoto with respect to Japanese cosmopolitanism.

This approach is not without its risks. It would not be helpful if the universalistic impulse within cosmopolitanism were pluralized to a point that we end up with a diversity of cosmopolitan cultures or a counter-western cosmopolitanism. As Daniel Chernilo argues in his contribution to this volume, cosmopolitanism necessarily requires a certain degree of universalism, though such a universalism must be differentiated and qualified. There is also the separate question whether normative or descriptive claims are being made. A possible way forward that will avoid the pitfalls of relativism and universalism is to locate the cosmopolitan imaginary as an

orientation or self-understanding that exists within all world cultures and while taking a diversity of historical forms is always a response to the widening of human experience and the broadening of political community. In his chapter on cosmopolitanism in Africa, Richard Werbner avoids any discussion of a civilizational particularism and concentrates on a new kind of civic cosmopolitanism among activists. This is an interesting contrast to Andrew Hartman's characterization of American cosmopolitanism in terms of a model of decline arising out of a pluralism which has not in fact led to greater cosmopolitanism. Whether or not such a sense of a decline in the fortunes of American cosmopolitanism is warranted, his chapter is a reminder that cultural pluralization is not always a basis for cosmopolitanism. In much the same terms, Keith Jacobs and Jeff Malpas claim that in the case of Australia and New Zealand both societies have been led, not towards more inclusive social and political formations, but instead to policies that have encouraged increased insularity, individualization, and exclusion. From a different theoretical framework, Maurice Roche writing on Europe suggests that it is necessary to maintain a clear distinction between the concept's normative and analytic meanings, and to focus on the latter. His argument is that the concept of 'cosmopolitan order' can be useful in addressing the social context of cosmopolitanism in terms of cultural mixtures, social openness and common power regimes, rather than focusing on attitudes and values. He claims that deep and long-term trends in Europe and the EU have operated to promote cosmopolitanism in the form of cosmopolitan social orders.

As is apparent from above mentioned chapters in Part IV, it is possible to find a way to conceive of varieties of cosmopolitanism in ways that do not entail the negation of universality and it is possible to do this in both historical and contemporary perspective. The key to this is the identification of alternative conceptions of what constitutes community as co-existence and as a broadening of horizons whether on national or transnational levels. This at least is a starting point for a basic definition of cosmopolitanism, which must be seen as extending into more complex levels of critical awareness and different orientations. And as several chapters argue, cosmopolitanism is not an historically invariable condition, but has shifted several times in history, as is vividly clear in the case of South America, China and India. The interrelation of European and non-European cosmopolitanism cultures should also be considered, a theme that is more present in Aurea Mota's account of Latin American

expressions of cosmopolitanism and, too, in Huon Wardle's discussion of ethnographies of cosmopolitanism in the Caribbean. Wardle, for instance, points out how widespread horror at Caribbean slavery played an important role in the emergence of European Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. Aurea Mota argues for the global relevance of the adoption of the liberal project in early nineteenth-century South America after independence and the idea of a Latin American cosmopolitanism that can only be seen as part of a wider world phenomenon of which it was a part. This corrects a major Eurocentric view of world history that liberal democracy was primarily a European development when, in fact, one of the most extensive experiments with democracy occurred in Latin America in the nineteenth century. According to Humeira Iqtidar, if cosmopolitanism is understood as a distancing of the self, the ability to re-evaluate one's own norms and practices, then it can be found in many instances of Islamic culture where the groups in question have developed those capabilities. In this view, Bryan Turner argues that cosmopolitanism is neither new nor necessarily secular. Stoicism, for instance, contributed significantly to the origins of cosmopolitanism, but its real driving force was religious. This is, too, a reminder that cosmopolitanism should not be equated with diverse and transnationally mobile urban populations, including in global cities, as Yeoh and Lin argue, for cosmopolitanism is about engaging with others and is to be found in locations that are not necessarily global spaces.

Considering the above reflections, a cosmopolitan approach does offer an alternative way to view major social change today to some of the dominant approaches, of which there are essentially three. One view is that because of global transformations there is increased homogenization in the world today. This thesis of homogenization has been reflected in diverse views ranging from implausible notions of the 'end of history' as a condition in which liberal democracy has become the dominant political system to more convincing arguments about societal convergences or the increasing importance of a 'world culture' or a dominant global culture eroding national or local cultures. Contrary to this is an approach that would see less convergence than greater divergence and, eventually but not inevitably, polarization. In the extreme it amounts to a notion of a clash of civilizations. Clearly both processes of convergence and divergence are in evidence in almost every part of the world and any account of social change will

need to account for both. However, it is out of dissatisfaction with these accounts that alternative accounts have been put forward which see as the distinctive feature a process of hybridization in which cultures merge in a continuous creation of new forms. Cultures do not collide, but borrow from each other and adapt in different ways without an overall convergence being the result. This is often taken to be a case for cosmopolitanism. However, cosmopolitanism properly defined is not a condition of hybridization, but one of the creative interaction of cultures and the exploration of shared worlds. As such it, suggests heightened reflexivity.

While it can be argued that all cultures are in some way the product of cultural mixing, a point is generally reached whereby the cultural form ceases to be conscious of its hybridity and with the passage of time it takes on a more solidified character. At this point, the cultural entity in question will take on another character and the result may be surrender to a global culture, or itself become a global culture, or a process of polarization sets in. Distinct from the aforementioned processes, a fourth scenario is thus possible and can be termed a unity in diversity. In this case the distinctive development is less a mixing of cultures and the production of new hybrid forms, than a reflexive interrelation of cultures whereby the cultures undergo some change as a result of exchange. Diversity is not eradicated by mixing but also does not result in polarization. While diversity is preserved, there is also a degree of unity between the elements but without a dominant culture taking over. So, instead of a single culture emerging, the cultures co-exist through the creation of frameworks of solidarity and integration. This is essentially what cosmopolitanism seeks to identify and, as I argued in my contribution to this volume, the approach that describes it is a critical cosmopolitanism.

Does this mean that cosmopolitanism no longer has any relation with the political tradition that it is most commonly associated with it, namely the liberal legacy? In modern political philosophy cosmopolitanism has been in part allied with liberalism in that the moral and political values associated with cosmopolitanism are an extension of the liberal values of freedom, tolerance, respect for the individual, egalitarianism, etc. It has been mostly the case that cosmopolitan virtues have been espoused within the context of a broader embracing of liberal values. Despite the turn to cultural context today and the recognition of a multiplicity of cosmopolitan projects, one should not conclude that liberalism and cosmopolitanism have entirely

decoupled, as Aurea Mota has argued in her chapter on Latin American cosmopolitanism. The liberal legacy itself has been diverse and like cosmopolitanism it is open to different interpretations.

The chapters written for this volume reflect the broad reception of cosmopolitan thought in a wide variety of disciplines, ranging from philosophy, literary theory and history to international relations, anthropology, communications studies and sociology. Part I presents generally theoretical approaches in which some of the major developments in recent theorizing are discussed. Given the wide literature that currently exists on the history of cosmopolitanism and the aspiration to present in this volume new thinking on cosmopolitanism, the chapters concentrate on recent developments, including the relationship between cosmopolitan theory and empirical social research, as in the two chapters by Victor Roudemetof and Ian Woodward and Zlatko Skrbis. David Inglis's chapter offers a succinct account of how much of the classical legacy can be reclaimed. The next two sections contain chapters respectively on the cultural and political conceptions of cosmopolitanism. Despite the arbitrariness of the distinction, it is in line with what is still a significant division within the literature on cosmopolitanism, which overall tends to be divided between largely cultural approaches and those that derive from normative political theory. The chapters by Sassatelli and Paperstergiadis are good examples of attempts to link normative and empirical approaches with respect to cultural analysis. Of all the social sciences, anthropology has been at the forefront in advocating cosmopolitan interpretations and in the chapter on this topic by Pnina Werbner there is a strong emphasis on the ethical significance of cosmopolitanism. Other topics include, communications, religion, cities, aesthetics, education and memory. The chapters in Part III on cosmopolitics typically address aspects of political community such as citizenship, human rights, democracy, equality and justice, solidarity, humanitarianism, and global civil society. Finally, Part IV, as discussed above, offers wide-ranging accounts of world varieties of cosmopolitanism. The rationale here is that cosmopolitanism today must be taken out of its exclusive western context and related to the historical experiences of other world cultures. In this vein, there are chapters on cosmopolitanism in the Caribbean, Latin America, China, Japan, and Africa as well as in major parts of the western world, such as Europe, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Another chapter by He and Brown deals specifically with more general Asian perspectives on cosmopolitanism that

go beyond specific civilizational and national forms. Indeed, in their account normative transnationalism is one of the most important expressions of Asian cosmopolitanism. Although not a regionally based cosmopolitanism, the final chapter by Laurence Miller and Scott Ury looks at Jewish cosmopolitanism as a major world variety.

Given the diversity of approaches and applications an overall synthesis or summary is difficult. As I suggest in my own contribution, cosmopolitanism can be characterized as comprising three dimensions. First, cosmopolitanism concerns empirical phenomena, which can be best described as forms of experience. In this sense, cosmopolitanism can be said to be real in that it concerns real experiences. Second, cosmopolitanism concerns particular kinds of experience that entail their own interpretation. In this second sense, the normative component of cosmopolitanism is an empirically grounded one. It is on this level that the social imaginary of cosmopolitanism can be located. Third, it is possible to speak of a higher level of interpretations that goes beyond those that are rooted in people's experiences of the world, namely evaluations, by which is meant philosophical and social scientific reflections on cosmopolitanism. In other words, cosmopolitanism is both a reality as well as a moral and political interpretation, but it is also an approach to the analysis of the social world.

[The Routledge Handbook of Cosmopolitanism Studies](#) aims to showcase some of the most innovative and promising developments in recent writing in the human and social sciences on cosmopolitanism. <>

### Rome Measured and Imagined: Early Modern Maps of the Eternal City by Jessica Maier [University of Chicago Press, 9780226127637]

At the turn of the fifteenth century, Rome was in the midst of a dramatic transformation from what the fourteenth-century poet Petrarch had termed a "crumbling city" populated by "broken ruins" into a prosperous Christian capital. Scholars, artists, architects, and engineers fascinated by Rome were spurred to develop new graphic modes for depicting the city—and the genre known as the city portrait exploded.

In [Rome Measured and Imagined](#), Jessica Maier explores the history of this genre—which merged the accuracy of scientific endeavor with the imaginative aspects of art—during the rise of Renaissance print culture. Through an exploration of works dating from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, her book

interweaves the story of the city portrait with that of Rome itself.

Highly interdisciplinary and beautifully illustrated with nearly one hundred city portraits, [Rome Measured and Imagined](#) advances the scholarship on Renaissance Rome and print culture in fascinating ways.

[Rome Measured and Imagined](#) traces the history of monumental printed maps, or "city portraits," of Rome throughout the early modern period. While not neglecting the gradual professionalization and growing accuracy of the maps produced, it differs from previous publications on this topic by also focusing on the "vision" these maps offer of the city, with all her timeless and unique qualities. To this end, Maier not only analyzes the prints themselves, but also discusses their makers, their audiences, and the contexts in which they were produced and appreciated. This leads her to consider these city portraits as a separate genre that peaked in the early modern period, balancing measurement and imagination in a way that is foreign to our modern understanding of cartography.

She thus counters two widespread misunderstandings on the genre under discussion: unlike modern maps, these printed city portraits hardly served utilitarian purposes, like wayfinding. Their size alone suggests they were rather of a commemorative nature, to be displayed in the palazzi of an elite audience. Moreover, the growing level of measured accuracy of these maps does not necessarily mean a growing objectivity. For example, many of these maps present the Vatican as a visual anchor in the left lower corner, reflecting the primacy of the papacy in the early modern city. Likewise, many maps draw a sharp distinction between the "abitato" and the "disabitato", reflecting the comparison between old and new Rome. In addition to her analysis of these methods of representing the city itself, Maier sees the material on the margins of the maps as voicing current ideas about the political, cultural, and religious place of Rome in the world—even if they are not outright propagandistic. By stressing these aspects, Maier's book on maps fits neatly in current trends in the study of early modern antiquarian scholarship.

In her ensuing narrative, Maier focuses on two aspects that appear crucial for understanding the rise and fall of the city portrait genre. The first aspect is the technical representation of the city, whether it is executed on an orthogonal plan (i.e., seeing the city exactly from above), or rather as a pictorial view (i.e., seeing the city from, e.g., a hilltop). The second aspect is the way in which the interaction between ancient and new Rome is reflected on the map.

Following these two aspects--of form and content, if you will--in the period under discussion, this book shows how they were constantly debated, combined, and adapted rather flexibly. If each chapter represents a different stage in these negotiations, the story ends when the boundaries between the various options have become rigid rather than fluid.

The first chapter, "Toward a New City Image," brings together the earliest city images from the Quattrocento and introduces the two trends of orthogonality and pictorialism in their nascent stages.

While Leon Battista Alberti's *Descriptio Urbis Romae* (c. 1450) explains how the city and its monuments should be measured, Francesco Rosselli published a picture (c. 1485) that, even though it is now lost, had immense influence on how people imagined the unique city of Rome.

The second chapter, "Putting Rome in Drawing," gives us the humanist antiquarian scholars, fervently measuring and drawing the ancient city in order to preserve its memory and to serve as basis for new architectural projects. Although both goals were clearly aligned in their wish to let new Rome be reborn from the old, they did in fact elicit different approaches. Architects, like Sebastiano Serlio, favored and further developed orthogonality, whereas the pictorial mode served the memory formation of ancient Rome, as the work of Andrea Fulvio shows. Interestingly, the primary protagonist of this chapter, Raphael, seems to have gradually changed his mind with regard to this debate.

The third chapter, "Syntheses," is devoted to Leonardo Bufalini's Plan of Rome (1551). It is no coincidence that this map occupies the middle of Maier's narrative, since it functions as the point toward which earlier city images develop, and the point from which later plans can be seen to both derive and diverge. Bufalini's map is indeed remarkable, and counterintuitive if considered from a traditional teleological viewpoint. With Maier's framework in mind it makes more sense. In the debate between orthogonality and pictorialism, Bufalini takes a radical standpoint, choosing the first without hesitation. However, with regard to Rome's chronology, his map fuses all time layers into one map, making it an image of "sixteenth-century Roman culture, where the past is sometimes encroached on the present, and mathematics could be pressed into the service of the imagination" (p. 78).

The fourth chapter, "Antitheses," discussing prints by Pirro Ligorio and Stefano Du Păarac among others, shows how maps printed in the century after Bufalini distance themselves from him, but still build on him. The "anachronistic" mingling of old and new Rome is

put to the wayside in favor of separate images of "Roma antica" and "Roma nuova," gradually shifting the focus to the second. Furthermore, although the purely orthogonal representation of Rome is not followed, the contours of the city measured by Bufalini are taken as the standard for pictorial plans and views. They thereby do benefit from the advances in technology, and become more lifelike as result.

The fifth chapter, "Before the Eyes of the Whole World," continues on this note, showing what a combination of pictorialism with further exactitude in measuring and representation can amount to. Prints by Antonio Tempesta, Giovanni Maggi, Lieven Cruyl, and others represent the variation that is still possible in a genre in which topicality is ever more valued. Baroque Rome appears the sole protagonist of these maps, often by mediation of the church, and by now finds a still larger audience also outside of Rome.

Presenting Battista Falda's *Pianta grande* (1676) as the ultimate peak of this development, the epilogue considers how in the eighteenth century the two trends finally and definitively grow apart, with on the one hand the orthogonal map by Giambattista Nolli (1748) and on the other the famous *Prospetto* by Giuseppe Vasi (1761). However, Piranesi reminds us that there always remains room for creativity and flexibility.

Each of the maps discussed in [Rome Measured and Imagined](#) has already received rigorous treatment in other publications, which may be more suited for a detailed appreciation of their artistry. However, this book is also adorned with fine images: the most important ones collected in a quire of color plates, and others throughout the book to support Maier's observations. Most importantly, this book lets us set our modern preoccupation with exactitude aside when we think of cartography. Instead, we can now consider these city portraits as an early modern genre, that is best appreciated in its interaction with other scholarly, artistic, and literary genres. To see that maps of Rome, just like antiquarian treatises, drawings, or poems, also represent a certain perspective, this book is most valuable.

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The Fate of Rome: Climate, Disease, and the End of an Empire by Kyle Harper (The Princeton History of the Ancient World Series: Princeton University Press)

Here is an account of how one of history's most conspicuous civilizations found its dominion over nature less certain than it had ever dreamed.

[The Fate of Rome](#) is the monumental retelling of one of the most consequential chapters of human history: the fall of the Roman Empire. This is the first book to examine the catastrophic role that climate change and infectious diseases played in the collapse of Rome's power – a story of nature's triumph over human ambition.

Interweaving historical narrative with cutting-edge climate science and genetic discoveries, Kyle Harper traces how the fate of Rome was decided not just by emperors, soldiers, and barbarians but also by volcanic eruptions, solar cycles, climate instability, and devastating viruses and bacteria.

Harper is professor of classics and letters and senior vice president and provost at the University of Oklahoma. Harper in [The Fate of Rome](#) takes readers from Rome's pinnacle in the second century, when the empire seemed an invincible superpower, to its unraveling by the seventh century, when Rome was politically fragmented and materially depleted. Harper describes how the Romans were resilient in the face of enormous environmental stress, until the besieged empire could no longer withstand the combined challenges of a 'little ice age' and recurrent outbreaks of bubonic plague.

Original and ambitious.... [Harper] provide[s] a panoramic sweep of the late Roman Empire as interpreted by one historian's incisive, intriguing, inquiring mind. – James Romm, Wall Street Journal  
Ingenuous, persuasive.... Lucidly argued. – Publishers Weekly

A view of the fall of Rome from a different angle, looking beyond military and social collapse to man's relationship to the environment. There is much to absorb in this significant scholarly achievement, which effectively integrates natural, social, and humanistic sciences. – Kirkus, starred review

[A] sweeping retelling of the rise and fall of an empire, [that] was brought down as much by 'germs as by Germans.' – Keith Johnson, Foreign Policy

This beautifully written book is ground-breaking stuff, both for its method and content, and one of the most important of the year. – Adrian Spooner, Classics for All

Harper argues his case brilliantly, with deep scientific research into weather, geology and disease. – Harry Mount, The Spectator

An ambitious and convincing reappraisal of one of the most studied episodes of decline and fall in human history. – Ellie Robins, Los Angeles Review of Books

This is the story of a great civilization's long struggle with invisible enemies. In the empire's heyday, in 160 CE, splendid cities, linked by famous roads and bustling harbors, stand waiting for the lethal pathogens of Central Africa and the highlands of Tibet. Yet, under the flickering light of a variable sun, beneath skies alternately veiled in volcanic dust or cruelly rainless, this remarkable agglomeration of human beings held firm. Harper's account of how the inhabitants of the empire and their neighbors adjusted to these disasters is as humane as his account of the risks they faced is chilling. Brilliantly written, at once majestic and compassionate, this is truly great history. – Peter Brown, author of *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350–550 AD*

In this riveting history, Kyle Harper shows that disease and environmental conditions were not just instrumental in the final collapse of the Roman Empire but were serious problems for centuries before the fall. Harper's compelling and cautionary tale documents the deadly plagues, fevers, and other pestilences that ravaged the population time and again, resulting in far more deaths than ever caused by enemy forces. One wonders how the empire managed to last as long as it did. – Eric H. Cline, author of *1177 B.C.: The Year Civilization Collapsed*

This brilliant, original, and stimulating book puts nature at the center of a topic of major importance – the fall of the Roman Empire – for the first time. Harper's argument is compelling and thoroughly documented, his presentation lively and robust. – Peter Garnsey, coauthor of *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society, and Culture*

Kyle Harper's extraordinary new account of the fall of Rome is a gripping and terrifying story of

the interaction between human behavior and systems, pathogens and climate change. The Roman Empire was a remarkable connector of people and things – in towns and cities, through voluntary and enforced migration, and through networks of trade across oceans and continents – but this very connectedness fostered infectious diseases that debilitated its population. Though the protagonists of Harper's book are nonhuman, their effects on human lives and societies are nonetheless devastating. – Emma Dench, author of *Romulus' Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian*

[The Fate of Rome](#) is a breakthrough in the study of the Roman world – intrepid, innovative, even revolutionary. – Walter Scheidel, *The Great Leveler: Violence and the History of Inequality from the Stone Age to the Twenty-First Century*

Learned, lively, and up-to-date, this is far and away the best account of the ecological and environmental dimensions of the history of the Roman Empire. – J. R. McNeill, author of *Something New under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*

A poignant reflection on humanity's intimate relationship with the environment, [The Fate of Rome](#) provides a sweeping account of how one of history's greatest civilizations encountered and endured, yet ultimately succumbed to the cumulative burden of nature's violence. The example of Rome is a timely reminder that climate change and germ evolution have shaped the world we inhabit – in ways that are surprising and profound.

*The Peoples of Ancient Italy* by Gary Farney and Guy Bradley [De Gruyter Reference, De Gruyter, 9781614515203]

This handbook, [The Peoples of Ancient Italy](#) endeavors to be a resource for archaeologists, historians, and other scholars interested in investigating ancient Italic groups from the earliest period they are detectable to the time when they begin to assimilate into the Roman states. It includes both archaeological and historical perspectives on each people as well as chapters on themes that cut across all Italic groups.

Excerpt: Although there are many studies of specific ancient Italian groups, we noticed at the

beginning of this project that there was no work that takes a comprehensive view of each of the ancient groups — the famous and the less well-known — that existed in Iron Age and Roman Italy. Italian scholars, of course, have been prominent in the studies of the individual peoples, although significant works have also been written in English. Other recent works that have treated more than one Italian group have only dealt with some of them, and they have not had as their purpose to address thematic topics of importance for most, if not, all groups. In order to discover basic information about some of the less well-known Italic peoples, modern scholars often have had to resort to the short, inadequate entries that exist for many (but not all) of these groups in the Oxford Classical Dictionary, the Encyclopedia of Ancient History, or Pauly-Wissowa's Real-Encyclopädie, or even one of the Laterza archaeological guides. For detail, one had to track down periodic archaeological site reports, of which there has been a veritable explosion in recent years, particularly in central and southern Italy. In addition, many important articles about some groups are only found in local Italian presses, of which there were only a few copies ever made. Moreover, some studies have focused on the material evidence for these groups, while others on what the literary sources say about them in particular in more "historic" periods when they are interacting with Rome.

Nevertheless, many wonderful resources are now available, and help to make this book possible. Most notable, Fasti Online has been a great resource for finding up-to-date excavation notices and information, coupled with the Italian Ministry of Culture's new push to put all of the publications of the various soprintendenze online. It is also hard to overstate the importance of Crawford work in collecting and publishing inscriptions in a variety of early Italian languages readily accessible. As one will see in each chapter, this work touches nearly every corner of ancient Italian group studies.

At any rate, the current volume has been conceived of as a resource for archaeologists, historians, philologists and other scholars interested in finding out more about an Italic group, or groups more generally, from the earliest period they are detectable (the early Iron Age, in most instances), down to the time when they begin to assimilate into the Roman state in the late Republican or early

Imperial period. As such, it endeavors to include both archaeological and historical perspectives on each group, with contributions from the best-known or up-and-coming archaeologists and historians for these peoples and topics. Of course, some unevenness of content from chapter to chapter is to be expected, as, for example, archaeologists tend to talk more about material culture and historians about literary sources, and some groups are only really known from material or literary sources. The language of the volume is English, but scholars from around the world have contributed to it, distilling their incomparable knowledge from a variety of research materials (many, of course, in Italian). An attempt has been made to make the information contained in Greek and Latin writers, as well as in the various ancient Italian languages, accessible to non-specialists and beginners.

We have restricted our geographical limits to the Italian mainland south of the Alps. It may appear arbitrary to exclude the islands. Sicily and Sardinia are part of the modern state of Italy, and were closely linked to ancient Italy. For instance, the indigenous peoples of Sicily, the Siculs, were thought to have had a presence on the mainland as well as on Sicily in mythical prehistory, while Sardinia was closely linked to cities on the Tyrrhenian seaboard before the Roman conquest. Nevertheless, from the third century BC onwards mainland Italy was conceived as a distinct unit that did not normally include the islands, and under Rome the islands were governed separately as provinces. Our focus, therefore, has been on this idea of Italy, Italia, in its more restricted ancient sense.

What do we mean by the "peoples" of ancient Italy? Some debate has gone into the terminology we use. We have titled the work 'peoples' as we believe this is a useful and relatively neutral term, although the modern conception tends to carry with it much greater implications of political unity. Chapters often discuss "ethnic groups," reflecting the impact that thirty years or so of study of the ethnicity of the ancient Italian peoples has had in undermining many previous certainties about the unity and strength of collective identity. Older scholarship echoes the tendency in ancient sources to talk of Italian peoples as clearly defined blocks, who migrate or are founded, or are destroyed (Dionysius of Halicarnassus has a catalogue of

these in the first book of the Roman Antiquities). More rarely do they talk of peoples losing their identity in a gradual sense, or gaining an identity in a contrastive situation. For unusual examples, see Aristoxenus and Strabo on colonial Greeks who are no longer Greek, or Strabo on Campanians and northern Italians, who despite their diverse roots, are "all Romans". Much modern scholarship has tended to be suspicious of such "monolithic" pictures, and suggested that identities were more malleable. These new perspectives have been influenced by the work of anthropologists and sociologists such as Fredrik Barth and Anthony Smith, demonstrating that it is not a given attribute, and not biological, that the strength of ethnic identities varies, and that interaction at boundaries enlivens senses of ethnicity.

There are also, by necessity, chapters on elements, or themes, running through the identities and realities of various ethnic groups — their religious beliefs, languages, nomenclature, and so forth. Critical historical "moments" are also addressed, like the Roman conquest of Italy, the Hannibalic War, and the Social War. There has been some attempt to analyze the presence of these groups in literature, i. e. in the mythology handed down through the Greek and Roman tradition, and in the important writings of the geographer Strabo. And, of course, we feel several of our authors have made significant contributions to discussion of ethnic identity in an ancient Italian context.

Various key points can be said to emerge from the volume as a whole. The volume illustrates the diversity of ancient Italy, in terms of its language, its complex and varied ethnic groups, and its material culture. This diversity is evident not only at the level of regional ethnic groups, but also in the persistent individuality of each polis or community. Pliny records over four hundred individual Italian communities in book three of his Natural History, most of whom seem to have maintained a strong sense of their former independence, even under Roman hegemony. The volume also illustrates the commonalities amongst the peoples of ancient Italy. This can be seen in terms of war and imperialism, where Rome now seems far less unique than it once did; religious structures, where our authors explore the similarities as well as the differences between Italian and Roman cults and institutions; and levels of state and city formation, and some of its

correlates, such as (generally partial) literacy. The importance of interconnectivity and mobility amongst Italian peoples preceding the conquest is highlighted in many chapters, and lies behind the commonalities mentioned above. Italian communities also display many close links to neighbouring regions and other Mediterranean areas, especially Sardinia and Sicily, Greece, and southern France. Those on the coasts are also closely connected to Carthage and the Phoenicians, or to the Illyrians and other Adriatic dwellers. Naturally, many chapters cover the impact of Rome, in terms of conquest, colonization and alliances, and cultural change such as Hellenization and Romanization

One will notice that our authors differ greatly on many important points about the study of ancient Italian groups, which reflects the vibrant debates within scholarship on early Italy. One of the greatest differences is the amount of confidence or skepticism placed on the reliability of the ancient literary sources (e. g. the role of the Sacred Spring ritual in the foundation stories of many Italian groups; the literary accounts of Regal Rome). There are also differences on how far Greco-Roman views of the Italian peoples should be taken as valid pictures, given that they provide an "etic" rather than "emic" perspective, in anthropological parlance. This reflects the influence of cultural critics such as Edward Said, whose examination of alterity in Western views of the Orient has led to a much more critical attitude towards "outsider" sources. Also, many wish to see the Etruscans as essential intermediaries between the Greeks and various ethnic groups (the Romans included), whereas others see the interaction between these groups as more a complicated process.

A variety of positions is taken on the emergence of regional Italic identities, which some see as developing into full form by the late Bronze Age or early Iron Age, and others as critically affected by the events of the Roman conquest. Various authors examine the usefulness of concepts of "crisis" in Italian societies, such as the state of the Tyrrhenian coastal districts in the fifth century BC, or that of southern Italy after the Roman conquest and the Hannibalic War.

Our authors also reflect the variety of approaches that have been taken towards the Roman conquest and its aftermath. Many recent perspectives have been influenced by post-colonialism, which has

questioned the nature of imperialism, and the self-justifying rhetoric of empires, placing more emphasis on the perspective of "subaltern" populations outside imperial power structures. For some scholars the Roman conquest is a process of imperial expansion, the creation of an empire from foreign peoples; other scholars have emphasised the wide variety of means for extending Roman power, from the relatively rare use of pitched battle to coercion and negotiation with other elites. Following on from the conquest, there is still a huge debate about the extent of "Romanisation" and the process by which the pre-Roman peoples became Roman inhabitants of Italian regions. How far did these peoples become Roman and lose their previous identities? To what extent did older notions of identity persist or flourish under Rome? These are questions that remain at the forefront of current research, and are far from being resolved. Finally, the problem of the nature of Italic resistance in the Social War is still widely discussed. How extensive was the allied rebellion against Rome, and what exactly were the allies fighting for? Should it be regarded as a foreign rather than civil war, or something in between?

These debates thus go on in other areas of ancient studies, of course, not just in those relating to ancient Italian groups. We invite the reader to draw their own conclusions, or (better) to keep both in mind as research continues and ideas develop.

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Explaining Civil Society Development: A Social Origins Approach by Lester M. Salamon and S. Wojciech Sokolowski [Johns Hopkins University Press, 9781421422985]

This capstone of the significance of civil society for the effective functioning and development of democratic institutions and polity shows the value of academic

institutional support. Anyone who wishes to effectively reform our society should closely read this report.

The civil society sector—made up of millions of nonprofit organizations, associations, charitable institutions, and the volunteers and resources they mobilize—has long been the invisible subcontinent on the landscape of contemporary society. For the past twenty years, however, scholars under the umbrella of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project have worked with statisticians to assemble the first comprehensive, empirical picture of the size, structure, financing, and role of this increasingly important part of modern life.

What accounts for the enormous cross-national variations in the size and contours of the civil society sector around the world? Drawing on the project's data, Lester M. Salamon, S. Wojciech Sokolowski, Megan A. Haddock, and their colleagues raise serious questions about the ability of the field's currently dominant preference and sentiment theories to account for these variations in civil society development. Instead, using statistical and comparative historical materials, the authors posit a novel social origins theory that roots the variations in civil society strength and composition in the relative power of different social groupings and institutions during the transition to modernity.

Drawing on the work of Barrington Moore, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and others, [Explaining Civil Society Development](#) provides insight into the nonprofit sector's ability to thrive and perform its distinctive roles. Combining solid data and analytical clarity, this pioneering volume offers a critically needed lens for viewing the evolution of civil society and the nonprofit sector throughout the world.

This book represents the capstone of a 25-year saga undertaken to rescue a crucial component of the world's social and organizational infrastructure from the virtual obscurity to which it had been consigned in the world's academic institutions, policy discussions, media coverage, and statistical systems. The social and organizational infrastructure in question is the vast collection of private, but not-for-profit, schools, clinics, hospitals, social service agencies, symphonies, human rights groups, environmental organizations, think tanks, professional associations, disaster relief and development organizations, and dozens more groups that make up what is variously termed the nonprofit, voluntary, noncommercial, civil society, or nongovernmental sector and the charitable giving and volunteering that help to support it. Few sets of institutions have been more important to improvements in the quality of life around the world, yet few have been more invisible in basic data systems, neglected

in scholarly and media attention, and consequently either largely ignored or enveloped in a variety of misleading myths.

This saga started when two intrepid academics, one a young, German-born sociologist and the other an American professor who had recently completed the first economic analysis of this sector in the United States, found themselves invited to an intimate gathering of major charitable foundation leaders from around the world in Bonn, Germany, in 1991. In attendance were 10 or 12 senior foundation executives from Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, and the Netherlands.

Discussion at this session focused on the inability of those in the nonprofit sector to attract the attention of policymakers, the media, or the academic community, let alone to represent themselves effectively to their citizens and the world. Each of the foundation leaders had been asked to come prepared to describe the scope, scale, and situation of this nonprofit or civil society sector in his or her own country, but as the meeting proceeded it became clear that there was a serious problem. Everyone had a different idea of what this sector contained, most of them quite partial or confusing. Only the Americans had even the sketchiest idea about its contours, scale, or sources of support, and even that was relatively recent and far from fully understood.

Midway through this awkward discussion, the American professor sheepishly raised his hand and, after being given the floor, called attention to this embarrassing point. I suggested that there was a way to remedy the problem but cautioned that this would require a serious, systematic, comparative effort and a willingness to set aside a variety of myths and misperceptions. A deafening silence followed. Unmoved, the senior leaders continued their groping effort to portray the sector they were part of but had little solid basis to understand.

But my remarks apparently sank in with one of the participants. At a celebratory dinner in honor of his birthday that evening, the leader of a major US charity bellowed out: "Salamon, how much would it cost to finance the kind of project you were describing this afternoon?" I did some quick mental calculations and responded with a rough estimate. "Good, let's raise that right here," he announced, and he went around the table pressing each of the participants to pledge their support for such a project. After some hemming, hawing, and temporizing that included the signing of a written agreement with the chairman of the meeting's host organization stipulating the exchange rate between Deutschmarks and dollars at

which the German contribution would be paid, all the parties agreed. Thus was launched the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, for which this book is the capstone product, though not everyone present realized they had made a binding commitment, so that it took more than a year to convert that night's pledges into actual support.

Once launched, the Johns Hopkins CNP set about assembling an exceptional team of dedicated research partners, the CNP Local Associates. This trailblazing group of scholars took on what seemed at the outset to be an impossible and unrewarding task of assembling empirical knowledge about a set of institutions and behaviors for which little solid information was available and that was off the beaten academic track. The project also began assembling local advisory committees in each of the countries in which it worked.

A central premise of the project was that in order to gain visibility in policy and media circles, it was necessary to add to the moving individual stories of this sector's accomplishments solid and reliable empirical figures describing the size and economic weight of the nonprofit sector. This meant that sector stakeholders could illustrate the importance of this sector in terms that policymakers and the media find most compelling and easy to comprehend. From the outset the project also had a number of other, even more ambitious, objectives: to test, and potentially challenge, some of the myths surrounding this sector and some of the early theories and beliefs purporting to explain why nonprofits arise and how they are financed; to legitimize the nonprofit sector as a field of study and foster a robust global community of scholars knowledgeable about this field and committed to work in it; and, most ambitious of all, to bring this sector into visibility in official statistics produced by national statistical agencies for the first time by changing the way the institutions and activities of this sector are treated in global statistical guidance systems.

Early on, the project had to confront the challenge of identifying a consensus definition of the sector it was proposing to measure. Such a definition needed to identify the same types of entities and activities in the enormously varied countries to which it would be applied, despite the enormous diversity of this sector and the vast differences in legal structures, economic circumstances, and cultural traditions that these different countries embodied. What is more, it had to do so in a way that could ultimately be incorporated into official international statistical systems. No wonder the whole enterprise met with considerable skepticism, and even some considerable derision, including within the sector itself.

But the project team persisted, thanks in important part to our Local Associates. Our commitment to a bottom-up process empowered them to start with the realities on the ground in our local sites and find the commonalities that would allow us to see the outlines of a true sector among the welter of individual organizations, behaviors, and national peculiarities. To our joy and amazement, as the first set of data began to hit the streets, other countries clamored to get into the project. As a consequence, the initial 8 countries with which we started this journey quickly grew to 13, and 13 to 23, and from there to 36, finally reaching well over 40 as of this writing, with good prospects of expanding further. As each group of countries joined the project, we repeated the same rigorous process of assembling reliable research partners, forming knowledgeable local advisory committees, testing our definition, assessing potential data sources, and making needed adjustments in the light of new information. Along the way, the project produced an entire book series published by Manchester University Press; 66 working papers; over 200 other articles, comparative reports, and book chapters; a series of project overview books; and two landmark additions to the official global statistical system—the Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts (the UN NPI Handbook for short), published by the United Nations Statistics Division in 2003; and the Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work, published by the International Labour Office in 2011.

Inevitably, an undertaking of this scope and duration collects many debts to others without whose ingenuity, hard work, persistence, and support this project would never have achieved its promise. Altogether, 16 talented people worked at various times on the project's core staff during its 25-year life, somewhere between 150 and 200 international researchers worked on various aspects of the project in the CNP partner countries under the guidance of our remarkable group of Local Associates, another roughly 300 individuals served on the project's national and international advisory committees, and 94 separate organizations provided financial support. Partly out of this work as well has come a vibrant new international association dedicated to research on the global "third sector." <>

## Essay: The Puzzle of Civil Society Development by Lester M. Salamon

This book seeks to unravel a puzzle that has emerged from work that the present authors have undertaken over the past two decades to document the scope and structure of the nonprofit, or civil society, sector in countries throughout the world. That puzzle simply

stated is this: How can we explain the enormous variations in civil society/nonprofit sector size, structure, financing, and role revealed by the powerful body of comparative data that this work has generated in more than 40 countries scattered widely across the world? Why is it, for example, that the nonprofit workforce varies from a low of barely 1 percent of the working-age population in Pakistan to over 15 percent in the Netherlands? The level of development likely plays a role here, but why, then, does the paid workforce of the civil society sector stand at nearly 10 percent of the country's working-age population in Belgium but only 2.5 percent in Sweden—even though these two countries are at comparable levels of development? Why does government account for 65 percent of nonprofit revenue in Germany and only 36 percent in nearby Italy? And how is it that the overall size and structure of the Mexican nonprofit sector is virtually identical with that in Russia, a country seemingly worlds away?

Answers to these questions are crucial to a proper understanding of the nonprofit sector and its evolution and role. But their importance goes well beyond this. With government resources barely growing or in decline while the problems of poverty, distress, and environmental degradation are deepening daily, private, nonprofit, or civil society organizations have come to be viewed as crucial allies in the struggle to improve the quality of life on a global scale. Because of their unique combination of private structure and public purpose, their generally smaller size, their connections to citizens, their flexibility, and their capacity to tap private initiative in support of public purposes, these organizations are increasingly being called upon to perform a number of critical functions: to help deliver vital human services; to empower the disadvantaged; to bring unaddressed problems to public attention; to give expression to artistic, religious, cultural, ethnic, social, and recreational values and impulses; to build community and foster those bonds of trust and reciprocity that are necessary for political stability and economic prosperity; and generally to mobilize individual initiative in pursuit of the common good.

Reflecting this, the accomplishment of the vast majority of the seventeen "Sustainable Development Goals" recently identified by the United Nations as the priority objectives of the international community's "post-2015 development agenda" seem likely to depend critically on the contributions of private, civil society organizations.<sup>2</sup> Understanding the factors that give rise to such organizations and shape their contours and roles may therefore hold the key to the success of this post-2015 agenda.



More fundamentally, unraveling this puzzle promises to provide the missing link in recent efforts to explain why nations fail. In a recent book with this title, Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson argue that "[w]hile economic institutions are critical in determining whether a country is poor or prosperous, it is politics and political institutions that determine what economic institutions a country has." But what is it that determines the kind of politics and political institutions a country has? According to one promising line of research, a major part of the answer to this question lies in the presence of civic traditions emphasizing norms of trust and reciprocity—traditions that turn out to be associated with the presence of robust networks of associations, what we have termed nonprofit or civil society organizations. But what is it that gives rise to robust networks of civil society organizations? It is this question that this book seeks to answer.

Our answer departs, however, from the prevailing theories that have long dominated the academic literature on the nonprofit sector, and it challenges as well a number of popular beliefs that these theories, at least implicitly, have helped to sustain. These theories would have us believe that what gives rise to nonprofit organizations are the market-based preferences of individual consumer /voters and producers of goods and services and/or the sentiments bequeathed by cultural traditions of altruism and caring.

More specifically, the preference theories argue that nonprofit organizations emerge to fulfill unsatisfied demands for collective goods on the part of consumers /voters caused by inherent limitations of the market system and democratic political institutions, particularly in heterogeneous societies. Also at work, they argue, are the preferences of various social entrepreneurs or religious zealots who come forward to provide the supply of organizations to meet this demand because they see in the creation of nonprofit organizations a way to attract adherents to their religion or cause. The sentiment theories emphasize instead certain cultural values, frequently arising from religious beliefs, that incline individuals toward altruistic behaviors that require nonprofit institutions for their fulfillment.

Both of these sets of theories have a certain surface logic to them. Beyond that, they have conveniently supported a variety of firmly held popular beliefs about the nature and character of nonprofit institutions—such as the belief that nonprofit institutions are fundamentally supported by private charity and that they are a peculiarly American phenomenon and are far less prominent in countries that have established highly developed "welfare states" instead.

In the absence of solid comparative data on the scope and structure of the civil society sector around the world, it has been impossible to subject these theories to serious, cross-national, empirical testing. It has therefore been possible to believe them on faith or on the basis of their logical consistency with classical economic reasoning. But thanks to the work of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project in which I and an international team of collaborators have been involved for the past two decades, a robust body of solid, comparative data has been assembled on the civil society sectors in over 40 countries scattered broadly around the world using a common definition and common data-gathering protocols (table I.<sup>1</sup> lists these project countries).<sup>5</sup> As a consequence, we now have systematic data on the size of the workforce, both paid and volunteer, of the civil society sector; the fields in which these organizations work and the scale of activity in each; the revenues of these organizations, both overall and by major source; and the economic impact these organizations generate.

As these data have come online, they have rescued the global nonprofit sector from its long-standing position as the invisible subcontinent on the landscape of modern society. In the process, we have come to recognize how far the realities of nonprofit operations globally diverge from some of the most fervently held popular beliefs that existed about this sector when we began this work. Included here were beliefs such as the following:

That no such thing as a distinctive nonprofit "sector" truly exists, but rather a confusing congeries of institutions and behaviors that blur too completely with other social institutions—market producers, governments, and households—to be capable of conceptual differentiation, let alone empirical study. To the contrary, the work we carried out through the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project has validated the existence of a set of institutions exhibiting a common set of objective definitional features in well over 40 countries that are scattered broadly throughout the world and that represent widely divergent levels of economic and social development as well as patterns of religious belief.

That the civil society sector, whatever its social importance, is not a significant economic presence. In fact, this sector is a major economic force, with a workforce that ranks among the top two or three industries in a wide range of countries.

That to the extent a nonprofit sector exists, it is largely an American phenomenon, reflecting the extraordinary generosity of the American public and the unusual American emphasis on individualism. In



fact, the United States turns out to be not only not the sole country with a sizable nonprofit sector but not even the country with the largest such sector measured in terms of the relative size of its nonprofit workforce.'

That unlike the United States, which developed a robust nonprofit sector to handle social-welfare provision, the countries of Europe have created "welfare states" dominated by governmental provision of such services. In fact, what many of the countries of Europe have developed are "welfare partnerships" featuring extensive reliance on private nonprofit groups to deliver state-financed welfare services. In the process, the resulting nonprofit sectors have grown much larger in relative terms than their US counterpart.

That private charitable contributions—from individuals, foundations, and corporations—are the key to sustaining a vibrant set of nonprofit institutions. In fact, however, charitable contributions now account for a relatively small fraction of nonprofit revenues. Even in the United States, where many organizations do still rely heavily on charitable support, at least during their start-up periods, the sector as a whole, as defined in this project, receives less than 13 or 14 percent of its revenue from all sources of charitable giving combined. Far more important is the nearly 40 percent of all support coming from government and the 50 percent coming in the form of fees and charges. And the situation elsewhere is even more dramatic, with government accounting for 60 or 70 percent of the income of nonprofits in the countries with the largest and most fully developed nonprofit sectors.

More importantly for our purposes here, we discovered enormous variations in almost every dimension of the civil society sector on which we were able to generate reliable data—variations that do not seem consistent with either the preference or sentiment theories dominant in the literature. For example, as will be detailed more fully in chapter 3, the presence or absence of robust nonprofit institutions does not seem to correspond with the level of diversity of national populations, as predicted by the preference theories. What is more, we could find no religious tradition that failed to emphasize personal altruism, making it unlikely that variations in popular sentiments of caring or altruism could explain the wide variations in the size or shape of the civil society sector among countries that our data revealed. Indeed, some of the countries with the strongest religiously inspired traditions of charity and giving have some of the least fully developed civil society sectors.

As this evidence mounted, it forced us to rethink prevailing theories of the growth and development of civil society institutions. More generally, we came to the conclusion that the narrow focus on the rational choices of individual actors maximizing their preferences for goods or services or responding to abstract cultural values emphasized in the preference and sentiment theories, whatever its value in selected circumstances, was inadequate to explain the varied dimensions of civil society development revealed by our data. In particular, these existing explanations suffered from a more general shortcoming common to classical and neoclassical economics—a shortcoming that theorist Mark Granovetter has termed "an atomized, under-socialized conception of human action." As Granovetter puts it: "Actors do not behave or decide as atoms outside a social context, nor do they adhere slavishly to a script written for them by the particular intersection of social categories that they happen to occupy. Their attempts at purposive action are instead embedded in concrete, ongoing systems of social relations."

Fundamentally, we will argue that this concept of "embeddedness" applies forcefully to the development of nonprofit institutions. Choices about whether to rely on the market, the civil society sector, the state, or kinship networks in the provision of key human services are not simply made freely by individual consumers or service providers in an open market, as the preference theories seem to imply. Nor are they determined solely by freestanding cultural or religious traditions. Rather, these choices, and these cultural traditions, are heavily constrained by existing social and political relationships that are inherited from the past and shaped by complex interrelationships among the varying social strata and social institutions that make up any society. These outcomes are therefore heavily affected not simply by sentiments and preferences but also by the exercise of political, social, and economic power among key social groupings and institutions at critical turning points in societal development.

This is not, of course, an entirely new observation. As Seibel has reminded us, nonprofit organizations "are not only providers of goods and services but important factors of social and political coordination." As a consequence, they do not float freely in social space responding merely to sentiments and preferences, as the prior theories seem to suggest. Rather, they are firmly embedded in prevailing social, political, and economic structures, often serving, in Seibel's words, as "the knots within networks of elites with reputation, finance, and power." Civil society theorists such as John Hall have acknowledged this point as well, despite not working out its full implications. Hall thus ascribes the emergence of civil

society in Europe to "the peculiar balance of forces among kings, nobility, and urban middle-class elements." Similarly, Gramsci points to civil society organizations as crucial components of "the 'trenches' and the permanent fortifications of the front in the war of position ... between the forces of revolution and the forces of restoration." More recently, Howell and Pearce similarly emphasize civil society's character as an arena where "power relationships" are "reproduced" as well as "challenged."

Yet embeddedness in power relations has been conspicuously absent from the dominant academic theories purporting to explain the scope and character of the nonprofit sector. To be sure, some observers have commented on the role of civil society as a potential source of power. But whether because of the heavy emphasis that sentiment theories put on civil society as an expression of cherished values of altruism or solidarity, or some other factor, the possibility that the civil society sector could also be a product of power relations has largely been downplayed or ignored.

It is the argument here that this inattention needs to be corrected if we are to comprehend the puzzling variations in the size, form, structure, and financing of civil society organizations globally. But which power relationships are most relevant?

Fortunately, we are not completely at sea in searching for possible answers to this question. One important clue is offered by political scientist Robert Putnam, who found himself drawn "deep into the contrasting pasts of Italy's regions" in order to explain the striking variations in civic traditions and civil society development that he argues lay behind the considerable variations in the performance of Italian regional governments in the 1970s and 1980s. This comparative historical approach and its emphasis on "path dependence"—the durability of historically rooted social relationships—is even more fully reflected in the pioneering work of Barrington Moore, Jr., and Dietrich Rueschemeyer and his colleagues on the "social origins" of fascism and democracy as well as in the work of Gosta Esping-Andersen and Theda Skocpol on the origins of the modern welfare state.

Using this mode of analysis, Moore discerned in the historical records of England, France, Germany, and China three distinct "routes to the modern world"—democratic, fascist, and communist—each of which could be attributed to a particular constellation of relationships among landed elites, the rural peasantry, urban working and middle classes, and the state. Focusing on Latin America, Rueschemeyer and his colleagues extended the range of relevant power relationships beyond indigenous social classes to

embrace international actors such as colonial powers and a variety of essentially political structures—such as governmental institutions and political parties—that can magnify or lessen the power and influence that different social groupings can wield. This latter perspective emphasizing the role of such political filters can also be found in the works of Esping-Andersen and Skocpol in explaining various patterns of "welfare regimes" in Europe and the United States.

While neither Moore nor Esping-Andersen applies his analysis to the variations in the development of the civil society sector, and Rueschemeyer et al. and Skocpol do so only in part, there are strong reasons to believe that the mode of analysis they utilize should have considerable relevance to this question. This suggests the need for a more complex, historically rooted "social origins" analysis to account for the varied size, composition, and structure of the civil society sector in different societies.

Drawing on these insights, we formulate and test such a "social origins" explanation of global civil society development here. As is spelled out more fully in chapter 4, this explanation posits two fundamental propositions: first, that underlying the apparently random cross-national variations in key dimensions of the civil society sector lie some identifiable patterns that invite an attempt at explanation; and second, that these patterns are strongly associated with distinctive constellations of power relationships among a variety of socioeconomic groups and institutions, including landed elites, middle-class commercial and industrial interests, peasants, workers, and the institutions through which these groupings come together and express their interests and perspectives at critical moments in the histories of their societies. These critical moments often set a path, or establish propensities, that affect the evolution of important societal institutions and behaviors—including particularly civil society organizations and behaviors—for decades afterward.

## Structure of Presentation

To explore these hypotheses, the discussion in the balance of this volume falls into two parts. Part I, which follows this introduction, consists of five chapters that carry the main thrust of the book's message. Taken together, these chapters first outline in more detail the set of facts about the development of the civil society sector that this book seeks to explain and then test the ability of both the prevailing theories and the hypothesized social origins theory to explain these facts.

Thus, chapter 2 details the basic contours of the global civil society sector in the more than 40 countries on which systematic data have been assembled through the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (CNP Project). Two central conclusions emerge from this chapter: first, that the global civil society sector is far larger and more significant in more places than previous portrayals and popular assumptions suggest; and second, that some striking variations exist in many different facets of this sector, raising the intriguing possibility that these variations may hold important clues about the causes of civil society growth and development. Readers who have followed previous publications on these findings will be interested to find that the account here provides data on 10 additional countries either newly added to the project's database or on which updated data have become available.

Against this background, chapter 3 outlines the various strands of the prevailing sentiment and preference theories and offers a first empirical test of the ability of these two sets of theories to account for the striking variations in civil society sector size and contours that chapter 2 documented. The central conclusion that emerges from these tests is that, at best, these dominant theories of civil society development account for a highly limited range of the observed variations, and at worst they support expectations that are the reverse of what the observed facts show.

Chapter 4 then lays out the proposed alternative social origins theory and the hypothesized patterns of civil society structure and functions that grow out of it. As suggested above, the heart of this theory is a model that sees the scope and structure of the civil society sector as the outcome of particular constellations of relationships among key social actors whose power is magnified or moderated by a number of important intervening factors during critical periods of development in different countries. Viewed through the lens of this theory it is possible to hypothesize the existence of at least five different patterns of civil society development and to identify the social origins likely to be associated with each.

Chapter 5 then tests this theory against the empirical data we have assembled on the size, composition, funding, and workforce structure of the civil society sector in our 41 CNP countries. It does so first by testing the extent to which the five patterns of civil society development hypothesized by the theory actually appear in the empirical record of these countries, then by determining the extent to which the factors that the theory hypothesizes to be responsible for the emergence of these patterns are actually evident in the historical record of these countries, and

finally by assessing the ability of the theory to explain why some countries do not seem to fit any one of the five patterns and what development trajectory they may be on. In doing so, the chapter tests the ability of this theory not only to account for past developments but also to account for ongoing changes.

A concluding chapter to this central part of the volume—chapter 6—then summarizes the book's major conclusion, fundamentally validating the social origins theory's explanation of the causes of the different observed patterns of civil society sector development observed in the data, acknowledges the limitations that this major conclusion nevertheless also confronts, and suggests how this theory can be deployed not only to explain the past but also to predict likely future developments.

Part II of the volume then turns from the analytical task of explaining the widespread variations in patterns of civil society development to a detailed look at the scale and shape of the civil society sector in the 10 individual countries newly added to the CNP Project's research base or for which we now have updated data. This follows a practice of profiling newly added countries set in previous volumes in the series of books generated by this project. Given the analytical thrust of the present volume, however, we have extended the discussion in these 10 chapters to comment at least briefly on how well the social origins theory developed in the body of the book seems to account for the patterns that are evident in these additional countries. Since some of these are countries on which we now have data illustrating changes over time, we also assess the ability of our social origins theory not only to explain civil society sector realities at a point in time but also to understand what might be causing observed changes.

## Caveats

As with any empirical study, important decisions have had to be made about the scope of this inquiry, the variables about which it has been possible to generate solid data, and the tests that could consequently be run. In particular, our focus is on what we consider to be the organizational heart of the civil society sector—the set of institutions and associated individual behaviors that lie in some sense outside the boundaries of the market, the state, and the household and that meet a set of defining features worked out through a collaborative process involving an international team of scholars at the outset of this project and then subsequently tested in each of the over 40 countries on which we conducted empirical research. As outlined more fully in appendix A, this definition focused our attention on entities that are (i)

organizations, whether formally or informally constituted and whether legally registered or not; (ii) institutionally separate from government; (iii) prohibited from distributing any profits they may generate to their investors, managers, or directors; (iv) self-governing and able to put themselves out of existence on their own authority; and (v) noncompulsory, that is, engaging participants without compulsion.

We are well aware of the fact that alternative types of organizations and individual behaviors are sometimes considered parts of the civil society sector and that many other terms are often used to depict these entities and activities. When the work described here was initiated, however, the idea that any distinguishable sector of society could be identified outside the boundaries of the state and the market—let alone that it might be possible to gather systematically comparable data on it across a broad range of countries—was widely doubted and, at least in some quarters, vehemently resisted. Under the circumstances, it seemed prudent, and also highly useful, to focus on what we ultimately found through a bottom-up research process to constitute the institutional heart of this sector in the widest set of countries, recognizing that others could build on this foundation as they felt appropriate to encompass other types of institutions (e.g., cooperatives and mutuals that do not adhere to the non-distribution constraint incorporated in our definition) or other types of behaviors (e.g., unstructured forms of citizen engagement). Also weighing on our decisions was the hope that our work could influence existing official statistical systems, which had fundamentally buried the civil society sector in national economic statistics until the work of this project was able to demonstrate its true scope and size. It was therefore important to utilize a definition that could potentially be incorporated into the System of National Accounts, which guides official economic statistics around the world—a decision that paid off handsomely in the adoption by the United Nations Statistics Division in 2003 of a Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts that incorporated our project's definition and approach, in the issuance in 2011 by the International Labour Organization of a Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work, and in a new edition of the UN NPI Handbook in 2017 that extends the reach of the initial UN NPI Handbook to a broader range of so-called social economy institutions and direct volunteer activity.

Given the breadth and exploratory nature of this inquiry, moreover, it was necessary to impose some limits on the range of variables on which to focus. We selected variables that most clearly reflected the forms and levels of activity of our defined civil society

organizations. We thus did not spend much time gathering data on the number of such organizations, since such data are notoriously misleading and inaccurate. Rather, we focused on employment, both paid and volunteer, expressed in full-time equivalent terms as a share of the economically active population in order to make them cross-nationally comparable;<sup>22</sup> on the shares of revenue from various sources (philanthropy, government, and service fees); and on the fields in which organizations operate, classified using a special International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations (ICNPO) that built upon, but elaborated on, the International Standard Industrial Classification system used in most international economic statistics. Most of the data reported here were generated over an 18-year period stretching from 1995 through 2012. In a number of countries, time series data are available covering significant portions of the period, while in others work was undertaken more recently and earlier data are not available.

Despite these limitations, we are convinced that the data assembled and analyzed here represent the most detailed and reliable cross-national empirical picture of the global civil society sector available in the world. The data were generated using exacting standards of comparability by teams of researchers guided by a common set of research protocols and an agreed-upon common definition and were carefully monitored by a skilled staff. What is more, the data gain further credence from the fact that the project's procedures and definition were subsequently incorporated into the official Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts, issued as a publication of the United Nations Statistics Division in 2003, and adopted to date by 20 countries ranging from Canada to Kyrgyzstan and from New Zealand to Norway. We therefore believe that this body of data, while far from perfect, is sufficiently robust, reliable, and comparable to sustain the analysis presented here and that it offers important insights into the patterns of development of civil society institutions in an exceedingly wide range of countries embodying widely disparate levels of economic development, extensive regional diversity, and virtually every major religious tradition.

Finally, although we believe this book makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the dynamics of civil society sector development by calling attention to a set of factors that has been overlooked or downplayed in previous accounts, we are well aware of the enormous complexity of the social processes our book attempts to unravel and are not suggesting any single causal explanation. Indeed, the social origins theory elaborated here itself embraces a diverse mixture of factors that interact in

complex and dynamic ways. Nor do we expect that the tests we have been able to generate on this theory constitute a definitive proof for all countries for all time. As we note again in the conclusion, data on countries not covered by this study may yield new evidence that will require modifications or even substantial revisions of this approach. Our contention, rather, is that the factors associated with this theory seem to help significantly in accounting for the known facts and should therefore no longer be ignored.

With these caveats in mind, we turn now to what these data tell us about the scope, structure, financing, and role of the global civil-society sector and about the country-by-country variations in these dimensions that are also powerfully apparent.

## Conclusion and Implications by Lester M. Salamon and S. Wojciech Sokolowski

As the previous chapters show, the social origins theory of the civil society sector carries us considerably far down the road toward explaining the diverse size, shape, functions, and support structure of the civil society sector around the world, and does so considerably better than the existing theories that have been deployed up to now. What the analysis here reveals is that while the civil society sector may be a conduit for altruistic sentiments and personal preferences, the size of the sector and the shape that it takes depend heavily on the broader structures of power relationships in society. Restoring considerations of power to the center of analysis of civil society thus emerges as a central imperative if we are to understand the path that civil society development takes.

Of course, this corroboration in a number of representative cases does not represent a definitive proof. Further inquiry is needed to provide additional evidence and to test alternative explanations and causal relations. Data on countries not covered by this study may yield new evidence that will require modifications or even substantial revisions of the social origins of civil society theory.

As it stands, however, the social origins theory goes beyond the prevailing explanations of civil society development stressing the presence or absence of various sentiments or preferences by emphasizing the embeddedness of civil society institutions in prevailing power relationships in society as these relationships evolve over time. In the process, this theory proves able to explain developments that these other theories cannot. One of them is the robust growth of the civil society sector in countries with generous public welfare programs. Another is the relatively small size

of the sector in countries where government public welfare programs are minimal or virtually nonexistent. And yet others are the peculiar variations in the functions carried out by the sector, the revenue sources on which it relies, and the levels of volunteer participation it engages from place to place.

Also of particular interest within this refrained explanation of civil society development is the significant connection that emerges between the growth of the civil society sector and the strength of labor movements and their political extensions. This connection is often missed in public perception, as civil society and organized labor are often seen as two separate social institutions pursuing wholly disparate, if not mutually antagonistic, goals. But the contribution of the labor movement to the development of the civil society sector is significant and takes two different forms. In the first place, organized labor has created a wide array of self-help groups and clubs serving the needs of the working class. And in the second, organized labor's demands have often leveraged government policies that create favorable conditions for general civil society sector growth. This observation brings us back to the observation of Kwame Nkrumah, cited in chapter 2, that helped explain our emphasis on the organizational core of civil society. As Nkrumah put it: "We must organize as never before, for organization decides everything."

A final implication of the analysis here is the realization that civil society institutions, broadly conceived, can function not only as sources of protection and support for those at the bottom of the social and economic pyramid but also as convenient excuses for evading more robust forms of assistance to those in greatest need or, worse yet, as instruments for suppressing more radical forms of social and political activism. In its heyday, the liberal pattern of civil society development functioned very much in the former way, while the early development of the welfare partnership pattern had elements of the latter—and there is a danger that recent appearances of this pattern in Russia and China could evolve in the same way.

The social origins of civil society theory seems able to explain not only why some culturally different and geographically distant countries fall into the same patterns of civil society development but also why certain others deviate from the initially hypothesized patterns. The key to this explanation for both sets of countries is the analysis of the dynamics of power relations among key social actors, socioeconomic classes, and institutions representing or mediating their class interests.

The real promise of the social origins of civil society theory may ultimately lie elsewhere, however. For if this set of factors can explain what has happened in the past, it may also be capable of yielding reasonable hunches about what might be lurking on the horizon if present trends continue.

Stated differently, the social origins of civil society theory can not only explain the past but also help forecast the future. This can offer valuable insights into possible outcomes in rapidly changing parts of the world. For example, what might the social origins of civil society theory suggest about likely developments of the civil society sector in such turbulent regions as Central and East Asia or the Middle East? In Central Asia, a number of former Soviet republics seceded from the Russian Federation, forming new sovereign countries and potentially opening new space for civil society development. At the same time, China instituted a series of reforms that radically liberalized its economy. A rather different development occurred in the Middle East. Following the example of Turkey, many Middle Eastern countries instituted statist regimes in the 1950s and 1960s to promote rapid modernization of their traditional societies and economies, but, unlike Turkey, most of them failed to achieve that objective due to a combination of international and domestic factors. This failure to produce the promised results undermined the legitimacy of the statist regimes and fueled growing popular dissent, manifested by the Arab Spring and, in other places, by fundamentalist religious movements.

Despite their fundamentally different natures, developments in both of these sets of regions spurred renewed interest in the potential of civil society, creating a wave of optimism about its future in Asia and the Middle East. Yet the social origins of civil society theory suggests a much more sober, and perhaps more realistic, view of the situation. Despite far-reaching political transformations, the power relations in many of the countries in these parts of the world have not been transformed that much. In the newly independent states of Central Asia and in China, the state still holds the hegemonic power it did throughout the second half of the 20th century. In the Middle East, the military exercises hegemonic power in countries ruled by both secular regimes, like Egypt, and by fundamentalist theocracies, like Iran or Saudi Arabia. The social origins of civil society theory would therefore predict that the civil society sector in these countries will continue to face constraints and is likely to remain caught in the statist pattern—with its characteristic features of small size, limited volunteer participation, and low government support—for the foreseeable future. On the other hand, the collapse of the central state in countries like Libya, Syria, or Iraq

is likely to perpetuate the traditional pattern of civil society development, or perhaps a fundamentalist variant of it characterized by tight control by clerical authorities, private philanthropy as a major, but confining, revenue source, and a growing reliance on religiously based charitable organizations that utilize access to human services as a vehicle of social control and religious mobilization.

But prescient as it might be about future outcomes in the absence of changes in prevailing structures of power, the social origins of civil society theory is also available as a guide to the steps needed to alter the current trajectories. If by bringing a fresh set of insights into our understanding of the important social phenomenon represented by the global civil society sector, this book succeeds in bridging the gap that has long existed between the study of civil society and the study of the broader dynamics of social reality with which it is so intimately intertwined, it will have served its purpose well. This, at any rate, would be our hope.

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## Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America by Steven J. Ross [Bloomsbury USA, 9781620405628]

The chilling, little-known story of the rise of Nazism in Los Angeles, and the Jewish leaders and spies they recruited who stopped it.

No American city was more important to the Nazis than Los Angeles, home to Hollywood, the greatest propaganda machine in the world. The Nazis plotted to kill the city's Jews and to sabotage the nation's military installations: plans existed for hanging twenty prominent Hollywood figures such as Al Jolson, Charlie Chaplin, and Samuel Goldwyn; for driving through Boyle Heights and machine-gunning as many Jews as possible; and for blowing up defense installations and seizing munitions from National Guard armories along the Pacific Coast.

U.S. law enforcement agencies were not paying close attention--preferring to monitor Reds rather than Nazis--and only Leon Lewis and his daring ring of spies stood in the way. From 1933 until the end of World War II, attorney Leon Lewis, the man Nazis would come to call "the most dangerous Jew in Los Angeles," ran a spy operation comprised of military

veterans and their wives who infiltrated every Nazi and fascist group in Los Angeles. Often rising to leadership positions, this daring ring of spies uncovered and foiled the Nazi's disturbing plans for death and destruction.

Featuring a large cast of Nazis, undercover agents, and colorful supporting players, *Hitler in Los Angeles*, by acclaimed historian Steven J. Ross, tells the story of Lewis's daring spy network in a time when hate groups had moved from the margins to the mainstream.

*Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America*, by Steven J. Ross, shows how seriously the Nazis in power in Germany took the influence of Hollywood movies—not only on Americans, but on their own population.

Georg Gyssling was a German diplomat whose function was to see that no anti-Nazi films were released by the Hollywood studios. He succeeded in finding out what films were scheduled to go into production and if they contained any criticism of the Nazi regime.

Gyssling made it explicitly clear that Nazism wasn't exportable (Europeans living under Mussolini or Franco might not agree) and he was "The Most Charming Nazi in Los Angeles."

*Hitler in Los Angeles* describes the actions of different power centers—the (mostly Jewish) movie moguls who, except for Warner Bros., accommodated the Nazi regime for as long as they could in order to keep their European business functioning; Nazi diplomats in Los Angeles who threatened actors, writers, and producers, and who tried to blacklist Jewish stars like Edward G. Robinson; Martin Dies and other members of the House un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), who were investigating subversive Nazi activity in the United States; and fifth columnists who worked for the Germans or their American agents.

It's also the story of anti-Semites like Senators Gerald Nye and Bennett Clark, who investigated what they considered anti-Nazi propaganda in films. Members of America First, they turned their hearings into anti-Semitic rallies.

A campaign to impeach President Roosevelt was reaching its climax when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and Germany declared war on the United States.

The Nazis became the enemy, a state which many of the people described in *Hitler in Los Angeles* had long

recognized. (American citizens of Japanese descent also became the enemy, proving that racism was not a uniquely Nazi phenomenon.)

Many Americans had worked before the war to provide the US government with information about Nazi threats and turned after the war to fighting for civil rights for other groups. Unfortunately, many, like Leon Lewis, saw society become less tolerant, not more.

The main lesson author Steven J. Ross takes from this story is that every American is responsible for protecting every other American.

### The Social and Political Philosophy of Mary Wollstonecraft, edited by Sandrine Bergès and Alan Coffee [Oxford University Press, 9780198766841]

Interest in the contribution made by women to the history of philosophy is burgeoning. Intense research is underway to recover their works which have been lost or overlooked. At the forefront of this revival is Mary Wollstonecraft. While she has long been studied by feminists, and later discovered by political scientists, philosophers themselves have only recently begun to recognise the value of her work for their discipline. This volume brings together new essays from leading scholars, which explore Wollstonecraft's range as a moral and political philosopher of note, both taking a historical perspective and applying her thinking to current academic debates. Subjects include Wollstonecraft's ideas on love and respect, friendship and marriage, motherhood, property in the person, and virtue and the emotions, as well as the application her thought has for current thinking on relational autonomy, and animal and children's rights. A major theme within the book places her within the republican tradition of political theory and analyses the contribution she makes to its conceptual resources.

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), a famous and prolific writer whose work was translated into several languages during her lifetime, reflected on the philosophical and political issues connected with the topics current at that time. Her ideas focus on important themes such as how a community organizes itself and what is wrong with the general positions of women in society. Today, her writing serves as an example of a proto-feminist approach which articulates this special problem of the sexes as an elementary moment in political philosophy. Nonetheless, although these issues have continued to be relevant, Wollstonecraft's position is debated within feminist theory. Her writings satisfy the claims of the feminist approach insofar as they contain a decisive critique of patriarchal dominion which points

to political misogyny, presented in just as decisive a critique of Rousseau's double morals in his political representational claims and the educational and political model he had drafted for women. Rousseau's model excluded women from egalitarian participation, which was defended by Wollstonecraft in a general and radical claim for the participation of everyone, male or female.

What makes Wollstonecraft so controversial among feminist thinkers is, above all, her critique of women's weaknesses and their acceptance of their own slavery, seemingly begging for food instead of freedom. Women, she wrote, subject themselves to domination, "creeping in the dust" and relinquishing their dignity. Consequently, Wollstonecraft's sisters in gender, emphasizing the need for unity among the suppressed sex, called Wollstonecraft herself a misogynist. This feminist critique pointed out the masculinity of (her) reasoning. One of their main arguments was that with reference to the ideal of reasonability, Wollstonecraft had denied or neglected the female perspective, the importance of otherness, in feminist political and social reasoning. Under this polemic arc, the authors of this collection have gathered material to sketch the current discussion on topics of feminist political and social philosophy.

With this background in mind, the contributions endeavor to engage with this outstanding writer. Wollstonecraft's thoughts are redefined in today's language, reflecting today's questions. The authors present a wide variety of perspectives on a group of texts which emerged at a time when questions that still occupy us today were articulated for the first time. Today these questions are subjected to a multi-faceted interpretation which arises from the problems we face today. The essays do not praise Wollstonecraft as the forerunner of proto-feminist ideas, nor do they interpret her as a self-confirmation of modern convictions. In general, a prudent approach to explaining and understanding Wollstonecraft's daring ideas is offered.

In reading Wollstonecraft today, and taking her thoughts into account from today's perspective, one is struck by the power of this philosopher. Leaving aside biased interpretations of female or male dichotomies, stigmatized political demands, or the extensively discussed reason-emotion dualism, we find a differentiated and deliberate presentation of Wollstonecraft's thoughts, which for that reason seem much more familiar to the philosopher of the 21st century. Beyond the one-dimensional justification of a feminist, or rationalist and therefore misogynist, philosopher of the 18th century, we discover a discussion beyond the pro or contra of sexist-driven politics.



Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) is a standard text for feminist political philosophy and has become important and influential in this field. Wollstonecraft is a political philosopher who carried on discussions with contemporaries such as Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine and Catharine Macaulay at their levels. Wollstonecraft's writings were widely available then and still are today, a tradition nearly uninterrupted. Today her writings are also accessible as printed material and online. There is no doubt that this satisfies one of the main conditions for integrating her ideas into the canon of philosophy. Due to this easy and varied availability, the contributors do not quote from the same sources, which seems acceptable.

The collection is basically divided into three conceptual approaches. The editors start by presenting a somewhat chronological attempt at historic positioning -- papers occupied with Wollstonecraft's own references to historic political philosophy. Wollstonecraft's thoughts on classical authors are included. Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics frame this kind of deliberate reinterpretation and repositioning of Wollstonecraft's thoughts. Sylvana Tomaselli investigates the analysis of inequalities with regard to love, esteem and respect, referring hereby to the 18th century debates on platonic topics dealt with in the works of Burke and Price, and reviewed by Wollstonecraft in her journalistic analyses. This contextual re-positioning results in what has been called a more deliberate and differentiated approach, which does not allow the propagation of general claims such as the radical abolishment of inequality, as "she did not in fact seem to believe the eradication of the consequences of innate differences possible," as Tomaselli states (p. 17). Astonishing statements, among them that Wollstonecraft had never claimed "women were equal or unequal to men" are found and explained (p. 21). As inequality could only be identified with regard to the task of being a woman, Tomaselli tries to explain and to break through the dichotomist clusters of political and gender classification. Nancy Kendrick follows with an article rereading Wollstonecraft's interpretation of how a marriage should be conceptualized in a sphere of equality or complementarity, reflecting Aristotle's ideas on marriage and friendship (p. 49).

Finally, in the third article taking this historical approach, Martina Reuter definitely denies that the dichotomous clustering between reason and passion, mind and emotion, could contribute to an original understanding of Wollstonecraft's intentions. According to Reuter, Wollstonecraft's interpretation of passion and its strong dependency on reason demonstrates how she conceptualizes the dependency of reason on nature. This interpretation may be seen

as a fundamental key to a new way of reading Wollstonecraft today -- as a kind of relational thinker, here traced back in her origins to one of her most admired idols, Catharine Macaulay, and to Macaulay's reference to the Stoics (p. 65).

The second part offers re-interpretations of social and political demands and expands on Wollstonecraft's ideas, which were constrained between individual liberty and egalitarian values. Catriona Mackenzie rebuts the earlier feminist critique of Wollstonecraft's "masculine" claim on autonomy and considers it a necessary precondition to a self-determined and meaningful life. Wollstonecraft's interpretation of women as both despots and slaves "allowed her to look beyond slavery as a relation of total powerlessness on one side and total power on the other, and to open up the space for complicated questions of complicity, resistance, and agency" (p. 134). The author shows that a one-dimensional understanding of Wollstonecraft cannot do justice to her dynamic and particularized point of view. Beyond all defensible critique of a patriarchal suppression, Wollstonecraft focuses on the ideal of the individualist as a central democratic endowment for citizenship (p. 69). Rights and duties, sketched out by Wollstonecraft and compared to Burke, Rousseau, Bentham, Kant and others, allow the reader to experience her thoughts through the canonical classics in the discussion of rights for women, children and animals (p. 92).

The collection concludes with essays on republicanism, a topic widely discussed by women philosophers of the early modern period. From the early 18th century with Mary Astell until the end of the century, whether in England with Catharine Macaulay, or in France, where Olympe de Gouges and Sophie de Grouchy publicly took part in the discussion, the prolific outcome of women's contributions to this topic has become widely acknowledged. In fact, Karen Green in [A History of Women's Political Thought in Europe, 1700-1800](#). [Cambridge University Press, 9781107085831] has pointed out that the political democratic movement cannot be satisfactorily understood unless the writings of women are considered. Women's protest about having been systematically excluded from the benefits of citizenship and deprived of their voices is a core theme of that period, shared by women as well as male intellectuals.

Philip Pettit continues with ideas on the question of domination in marriage using Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House*. Susan James delivers a fruitful comparison of Wollstonecraft's concept of rights in her *Vindication of the Rights of Men* and the *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, two main volumes published within two years of each other. Answering the general claim that the second book does not treat the concept of rights at all, James offers a conceptual interpretation of what

Wollstonecraft determines rights to mean in the specific context of women's divestment in the political area. The reader's perspective on Wollstonecraft is broadened by the introduction of the role of natural rights and natural law as functional elements of Wollstonecraft's republican idea of liberty. Lena Halldenius concludes this part by insisting that political representation is not symbolic but the claim for a "direct share in government."

Particularly in the closing contributions of the editors, but also in the general framework of the book, the philosophy of Wollstonecraft is presented in the context of current discussions, from a feminist as well as from a general political perspective. The collection abandons the schemata of fruitless one-dimensional interpretations that position Wollstonecraft as either a proto-feminist or a rationalist misogynist. Her feminist ideas are embedded in a broader reflection that begins by retracing her sources back to the classics, and follows by positioning her thoughts with the republican ideas of natural laws, pointing to the relevance of her ideas in identifying questions about rights and duties in a socially and politically diverse society. Moreover, the collection shows the necessity of an exegesis of the philosophy of women. It confirms Wollstonecraft as an inspirational writer of the Enlightenment period whose ideas sketch out future concepts, the relevance of which scholars are only beginning to discover. The importance of her writing on the perspectives of women's issues in the broader republican and democratic context, the question of representation and egalitarian participation, are becoming increasingly necessary for feminism, and therefore for the political discussion. Reviewed by Ruth Hagenruber, Paderborn University.

## Perpetrators: The World of the Holocaust Killers by Guenter Lewy [Oxford University Press, 9780190661137]

"Monsters exist, but they are too few to be truly dangerous. More dangerous are the common men, the functionaries ready to believe and to act without asking questions." Primo Levi's words disclose a chilling truth: assigning blame to hideous political leaders, such as Hitler, Himmler, and Heydrich, is necessary but not sufficient to explain how the Holocaust could have happened. These leaders, in fact, relied on many thousands of ordinary men and women who made the Nazi machine work on a daily basis--members of the killing squads, guards accompanying the trains to the extermination camps, civilian employees of the SS, the drivers of gas trucks, and the personnel of death factories such as Auschwitz. Why did these ordinary people collaborate and willingly become mass murderers? In [Perpetrators: The World of the](#)

[Holocaust Killers](#), Guenter Lewy tries to answer one of history's most disturbing questions.

Lewy draws on a wealth of previously untapped sources, including letters and diaries of soldiers who served in Russia, the recollections of Jewish survivors, archival documents, and most importantly, the trial records of hundreds of Nazi functionaries. The result is a ghastly, extraordinarily detailed portrait of the Holocaust perpetrators, their mindset, and the motivations for their actions.

Combining a rigorous historical analysis with psychological insight, the book explores the dynamics of participation in large-scale atrocities, offering a thought-provoking and timely reflection on individual responsibility for collective crimes. Lewy concludes that the perpetrators acted out of a variety of motives--a sense of duty, obedience to authority, thirst for career, and a blind faith in anti-Semitic ideology, among others. A witness to the 1938 *Kristallnacht* himself and the son of a concentration camp survivor, Lewy has searched for the reasons of the Holocaust out of far more than theoretical interest: it is a passionate attempt to illuminate a dismal chapter of his life--and of human history--that cannot be forgotten.

### Flawed Justice

Over seventy years have passed since the liberation of the notorious Nazi concentration and extermination camp at Auschwitz by the Russian army in January 1945. Yet, even today, the German state continues to convict and sentence former SS guards who served at Auschwitz--a symbol of the Holocaust--despite the advanced age and declining health of both perpetrators and witnesses. Has Germany always demonstrated the political will to try such perpetrators, decades after the commission of the acts? What about the uniformity of sentences imposed? In an insightful new work, Guenter Lewy examines these key questions as well as others, focusing specifically on the perpetrators--their crimes, their motivations, and justice received. His book, while a difficult read, makes an important contribution to our understanding of the Holocaust.

As one can perhaps surmise by its title, [Perpetrators: The World of the Holocaust Killers](#) is a grim and unrelenting work, which, like most of its predecessors, spares no detail in order to illuminate the horrific acts associated with facilitators of the Holocaust at the ground level. The author writes, "Much of the book, unfortunately, reads like a catalogue of horrors." Thus, the focus of Lewy's book is on the killers themselves, as opposed to bureaucrats or staff members who enabled the Holocaust from a distance,

avoiding close contact with the victims. It is in the tradition of earlier works, among them Christopher Browning's [\*Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland\*](#) (1992), Daniel Jonah Goldhagen's [\*Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust\*](#) (1996), and Saul Friedlander's [\*Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945: The Years of Extermination\*](#) (2007), the second of a two-part history. Each of these describes in graphic detail the nature of the perpetrators' roles, and each draws its own conclusion as to what motivated the killers. Lewy follows suit in [\*Perpetrators\*](#).

The author brings several unique perspectives to his survey of Holocaust perpetrators. He witnessed Kristallnacht as a child and his father survived a short internment at the notorious Buchenwald concentration camp. For Lewy, "taking up the subject of why so many ordinary Germans participated in Nazi crimes was ... of more than theoretical interest. It illuminates a chapter in my personal life that I cannot and should not forget." Lewy is passionate yet objective throughout the book, despite the one-sided nature of his subject matter. Also unique is his source material; the author relies heavily on evidence not previously available in the English language.

Most important here are the German court trial records of many of the Nazi functionaries and perpetrators, particularly those that focus on crimes committed during the years 1939-45. Of course, the German legal system continues to try perpetrators, as mentioned above, so the author also references those trial transcripts. In addition, Lewy includes other non-English-language sources, such as letters from German soldiers assigned in the East to their families back home; diaries; and eyewitness accounts, previously untapped, from Jewish survivors of the Holocaust. Collectively, Lewy's sources and personal insight add depth and value to the growing literature focusing specifically on the Holocaust perpetrator perspective.

[\*Perpetrators\*](#) is organized clearly and logically. Following an introduction that contains a useful survey of the literature to set the context, Lewy divides the book into seven chapters. The first four analyze categories of killers: concentration camp guards, members of the mobile task force death squads (Einsatzgruppen), and those who served in death camps--those designed specifically to kill rather than "concentrate" Jews and other persons deemed unworthy of life by the Third Reich. Chapter 5 provides valuable insight on what options were available for those who chose not to participate in the killings, and how the chain of command dealt with them. In the penultimate chapter, the longest and perhaps most useful, Lewy effectively describes the inadequacies of postwar judicial systems that resulted in "flawed justice" for the perpetrators as a whole. (It is one of Lewy's central arguments and provides the

title for this review.) The final chapter provides the author's conclusions as to what motivated "ordinary people" to kill, essentially adding to the conversation established over time by Browning and Goldhagen, among many others.

The strengths of [\*Perpetrators\*](#) are the added depth and breadth the book brings to Holocaust discussions. While descriptions of the atrocities are familiar to specialists, Lewy's use of court records includes eyewitness accounts that convey a very personal, ground-level view of what transpired. Accounts of participants, victims, and eyewitnesses regarding the mass killings, crimes against women and children (as well as infants), and medical experimentation are particularly devastating, harrowing to read, and difficult to imagine. The author includes accounts of well-known as well as obscure perpetrators, whether members of the SS, the Wehrmacht, or other national contingents who willingly participated in the mass murder of Jews. Collectively, the accounts encapsulate the horrors of the perpetrator world and are perhaps necessary to gain an understanding of the magnitude of the crimes committed on behalf of the Nazi state. They also help to put into context the extent of justice doled out to the perpetrators once put on trial.

This leads to perhaps the book's greatest contribution: Lewy's insights on "flawed justice." The author shows us that in many cases justice was either not served or served unevenly at best. As an example, Lewy shows that through the year 2005, (West) German authorities had brought charges against 16,704 alleged perpetrators, from an estimated population of well over 100,000 potential killers in the organizations most involved. Of these, only 981 were accused of offenses involving killing, and of that small number only 182 received the maximum sentence--life imprisonment--under German law (pp. 88-89). (Note that Germany abolished the death sentence in 1949; relatively few German courts administered that penalty prior to that time. By comparison, the Allied military tribunals in the western zones of occupation executed a far greater number of convicted perpetrators--approximately 6,500--before 1949.)

Lewy posits several reasons for this seemingly dismal record. Among them were the difficulty in finding and trying defendants in the chaos of the immediate postwar period, the ebb and flow of German public opinion that favored perpetrators during much of the Cold War, and the political-military climate of the Cold War itself. Another reason is the differing legal standards between the Allied military tribunal system and the German civil system; the Allies employed a "common design" framework in which defendants could be charged based on membership in a killing organization or assignment at a death camp, regardless of their specific role in the machinery of

killing. Most useful are Lewy's insights into the inner workings of the German court system, with the ebb and flow of judicial rulings, legislative changes, and reaction to public opinion. Lewy characterizes the postwar German judiciary as "tainted." For example, many postwar judges were members of the Nazi Party, and the state retained many of them despite the Allies' systematic denazification program. Hence, those who escaped justice themselves were sitting in judgment of others. As a result, many judges were sympathetic with defendants, resulting in inconsistent or reduced sentences. Of course, complicating all of this was the political-military atmosphere within Germany, especially with the onset of the Cold War. The Allies, in need of West Germany as a bulwark against the Soviet Union, ceased the aggressive pursuit of war criminals, also resulting in commutations or reduced sentences.

In the decades since, with generational changes and shifts in German attitudes, the German state today continues to convict Holocaust killers with marked determination. However, as Lewy notes, the opportunity for future trials is rapidly diminishing with the passage of time.

Finally, the author adds his personal take on what motivated the perpetrators to kill so many innocents, particularly women, children, and infants. Indeed, by simply mentioning the term "ordinary men," Lewy enters the intellectual fray with the other authors previously mentioned. Lewy, like others before him, argues that "there was no typical perpetrator." He disagrees with Goldhagen's thesis regarding eliminationist anti-Semitism: "With regard to the motivational cause of the Holocaust, for the majority of perpetrators, a monocausal explanation does suffice." Lewy contends that there is no single explanation for why perpetrators killed, nor was there any single murderous prototype. He recites a litany of potential reasons, then discounts them one by one as singular causes. The author does agree, however, with many Browning's social constructs that existed within such organizations as the Reserve Police Battalion 101, which made it easier for killers to kill, although he would argue that anti-Semitism played a larger role in perpetrator motivation than Browning argues in *Ordinary Men*. (Browning focuses primarily on structural reasons, such as the Nazi indoctrination policy regarding the Jews, rather than any latent anti-Semitism on the part of ordinary Germans, as more critical in motivating perpetrators.) Lewy's argument is thus nuanced and based on multiple influences, none of which is pre-deterministic: "None of these factors creates causality or dictates a person's behavior.... There remains an element of personal agency".

Some may question the book's length; it is only 136 pages, excluding notes and index. Perhaps it could

have been published as a chapter or journal article, or made longer with additional depth, evidence, and insight provided by Lewy's excellent source material. Regardless, the author makes a valuable contribution by providing detail on the perpetrators and by offering his views on what motivated the killers. His embellishment of each chapter with specific court case evidence and/or testimony is particularly noteworthy.

Due to its specialized nature, [Perpetrators](#) will be of most interest to students of the Holocaust and perhaps not as much to the general reader, who may turn to different sources for a broader portrayal--one focusing beyond the world of the killers themselves. Nevertheless, the book represents the most recent scholarship on these critical topics, and readers will benefit from Lewy's valuable insights on how the German justice system dealt with perpetrators, a subject still relevant seventy-two years after the liberation of Auschwitz and the end of World War II.

Citation: Mark Montesclaros. Review of Lewy, [Guenter, Perpetrators: The World of the Holocaust Killers](#). H-War, H-Net Reviews. November, 2017; URL: <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=50477>

Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, [Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust](#) [New York: Knopf, 9780679446958]

This groundbreaking international bestseller lays to rest many myths about the Holocaust: that Germans were ignorant of the mass destruction of Jews, that the killers were all SS men, and that those who slaughtered Jews did so reluctantly. Hitler's Willing Executioners provides conclusive evidence that the extermination of European Jewry engaged the energies and enthusiasm of tens of thousands of ordinary Germans. Goldhagen reconstructs the climate of "eliminationist anti-Semitism" that made Hitler's pursuit of his genocidal goals possible and the radical persecution of the Jews during the 1930s popular. Drawing on a wealth of unused archival materials, principally the testimony of the killers themselves, Goldhagen takes us into the killing fields where Germans voluntarily hunted Jews like animals, tortured them wantonly, and then posed cheerfully for snapshots with their victims. From mobile killing units, to the camps, to the death marches, Goldhagen shows how ordinary Germans, nurtured in a society where Jews were seen as unalterable evil and dangerous, willingly followed their beliefs to their logical conclusion.

The German Historians: Hitler's Willing Executioners and Daniel Goldhagen by Fred Kautz [Black Rose Books, 9781551642123]

In 1997, Daniel Goldhagen published his groundbreaking international bestseller entitled *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, which he believed would lay to rest many myths about the Holocaust: that Germans were ignorant of the mass destruction of Jews, that the killers were all SS men, and that those who slaughtered Jews did so reluctantly. Drawing on a wealth of unused archival materials, principally the testimony of the killers themselves, Goldhagen took his readers into the killing fields where Germans voluntarily hunted Jews like animals, tortured them, and then posed cheerfully for snapshots with their victims. From mobile killing units, to the camps, to the death marches, Goldhagen showed how ordinary Germans, nurtured in a society where Jews were seen as evil and dangerous, willingly followed their beliefs to their logical conclusion.

An explosive work, exhaustively documented and richly researched, it offered irrefutable proof that should have forced a fundamental revision in our thinking and recording of events, but instead of seeing this work as a chance to seriously re-evaluate what happened in Germany, the influential German historians angrily rejected it with accusations of a lack of scholarship, to a reaction against its popularity. This investigative work deals with that historical bias and the resulting complicity.

Fred Kautz could not understand why leading professional German historians refused to take up the gauntlet thrown by Goldhagen. *The German Historians* is the result of his attempt to get to the bottom of this mystery. First he presents an overview of Goldhagen's work, then he subjects the public, and private, utterances, and the written reviews of three prominent German historians—Hans Mommsen, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, and Eberhard Jackel—to a very close examination, and finally he draws some conclusions and warnings about how we record history.

Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland by Christopher Browning [HarperCollins, 9780060190132]

Shocking as it is, this book--a crucial source of original research used for the bestseller *Hitler's Willing Executioners*--gives evidence to suggest the opposite conclusion: that the sad-sack German draftees who perpetrated much of the Holocaust were not expressing some uniquely Germanic evil, but that they

were average men comparable to the run of humanity, twisted by historical forces into inhuman shapes. Browning, a thorough historian who lets no one off the moral hook nor fails to weigh any contributing factor--cowardice, ideological indoctrination, loyalty to the battalion, and reluctance to force the others to bear more than their share of what each viewed as an excruciating duty--interviewed hundreds of the killers, who simply could not explain how they had sunken into savagery under Hitler. A good book to read along with Ron Rosenbaum's comparably excellent study *Explaining Hitler*

On June 13, 1942, the commanding officer of Reserve Police Battalion 101 received orders to round up the Jews in the Polish town of Jozefow and shoot all but the able-bodied males. Major Wilhelm Trapp, who wept over the order, gave his troops the extraordinary option of "excusing themselves" from the task. Of the 500 in the unit only a dozen did so, and the rest slaughtered 1500 women, children and old people. Thus, began the career of one of Nazi Germany's most efficient extermination units. Drawing on postwar interrogations of former Battalion members, Browning reconstructs the 16-month period from the Jozefow massacre to the Battalion's participation in the brutal "Fall Harvest Jew Hunt" in November 1943, during which these ordinary men, mostly middle-aged working-class people from Hamburg, shot to death some 38,000 Polish Jews and sent 45,000 others to the Treblinka gas chambers. In the vast Holocaust literature, this short work stands out with breathtaking impact, for it reveals how average Germans became mass murderers. "If the men of Reserve Police Battalion 101 could become killers under such circumstances," asks the author, "what group of men cannot?" <>

OASE 96: Social Poetics: The Architecture of Use and Appropriation (Oase: Journal for Architecture / Tijdschrift Voor Architectuur) edited by Els Vervloesem, Marleen Goethals, Hüsnü Yegenoglu, Michiel Dehaene [NAi010 Publishers; Bilingual edition, 9789462082809]

OASE 96 examines the revival of architectural practices that focus on reuse and appropriation of buildings, environments and materials. What is the possible positive or negative social impact of these interventions?

In *Building in Time*, Marvin Trachtenberg describes the many ways in which the design, the construction and the afterlife of historical monuments were completely

intertwined. Important buildings such as cathedrals could only be completed through the work of many generations. The building masters were passers-by in a creative process: their efforts were inevitably part of the continuity of the course of history. Building did not take place based on a definitive plan, but by continuously amending an edifice under construction, making sense of the changes in the lifeworld to which a building belonged. Trachtenberg describes the emancipation of architecture from the Renaissance onwards as a conceptual, artistic endeavor that gradually created an ever-growing distance between the actual work of construction and the changing environment of the building. He illustrates this new design ethos with a reference to the work of Leon Battista Alberti, who states in a well-known section of *De Re Aedificatoria* that a design is finished when anything that is added or removed produces a lesser result. This statement reduces design to a conceptual work on paper that precedes the building process. Everything that follows constitutes a possible threat to the highpoint that had been reached in the design process. The incompetence of the builders, as well as the lack of understanding of the users.

The intellectual rift between thinking and acting, between the drawing and the life of the building, created a distance between what makes sense to the architect and what makes sense to the proverbial other. This divide gave the architect a dubious reputation. Admired as a genius, but also dismissed as otherworldly, impractical and ill-adjusted. The architect is faced with an impossible task: to make buildings ready for an unpredictable life, always out of reach. Jeremy Till describes in *Architecture Depends* how difficult it is for the majority of architects to cope with what escapes their control, while architecture is typically defined by contingency and the uncertainty created by external factors — people, circumstances, events. Fighting this state of dependency and aiming for autonomy and false perfection only leads to the further marginalization of architects in society. Instead, Till suggests embracing it and seeing it as a chance for architecture to actively relate to this ever-contingent reality.

The tension between the intentions of the designer and their effects in practice, between the ways in which a building is conceived and subsequently used, is a recurring theme within the discourse on architecture that developed in the second half of the twentieth century as a critique of the modern tradition. We are thinking of three strands of this critique in particular, each with a different take on the notion of use: the critique of the hegemony of design (and the

designer), with as the alternative design practices that places the user in the center (Jacobs, Gehl); the critique of vulgar interpretations of functionalism, supporting an open interpretation of the relationship between form and use (Rossi); and the critique of the commodification of architecture (and the city), placing the focus on the accumulated use value rather than the exchange value (Lefebvre). In these three positions use is rendered in very different terms, but all three ideas point to the relative autonomy of an aspect of use: the autonomy of the user, the autonomy of the city as an inalienable

collective good, the autonomy of (architectural) form with respect to use, that is, the possibility to put a form to different use and the openness of form to perpetual re-appropriation. By emphasizing use these three positions, each in their own way, distance themselves from a one-sided functionalistic approach.

These historical positions offer the intellectual comfort of clarity. As radical points of departure they structure the debate on use and appropriation. They do have the tendency, however, to turn into caricatures of a potentially critical practice. There is the risk of the populist glorification of the user as the sole source of legitimacy, detached from any historical, cultural, social or political frame of reference. There is the absolute fascination for an architectural form that presents radical design choices as political choices and speaks about possibilities of use on paper as if they are real. There is the glorification of the informal city, as a self-organized reality, looking at form mainly as a source of alienation, restraint and repression.

This issue of OASE brings a variety of practices that look at the contradictions inherent to this subject, not as a nuisance, but as the core of a socio-poetic process from which architectural meaning may be derived. Together they do not add up to a singular position, but define a common quest for an architecture of use and appropriation, capable of articulating these inherent contradictions, giving them form, making them manageable. The architecture of use and appropriation brings together the 'architecture for architecture's sake' with the wayward user and the historical incongruence of the city. The fascination for form and aesthetics, the care for everyday use patterns, the appreciation for the poetic beauty of all the unintended, accidental corners of the city are not necessarily in contradiction.

The meaning architecture may derive from use and appropriation is the central focus of the call for contributions at the basis of this issue of OASE. We

asked authors to retrace this quest for meaning in concrete practices. We received more than 60 reactions and selected 15 contributions. Despite the high degree of heterogeneity, all texts in one way or another give content to the rather fluid notion of the architecture of use and appropriation. Reading across the various contributions we see about five different ways in which use and appropriation are mobilized as a source of architectural meaning.

Many of the practices addressed in this volume find meaning in some form of collective making. The designer as the evident hero of the design and building process recedes to the background and makes room for an intensive exchange between a broader constellation of actors, civic as well as market, public and other institutional players. The distance between designers and other 'space producers' is reduced. The traditional boundaries of the architectural profession are opened. Various authors discuss in detail the varieties of meaning and relations that emerge through the process of (sometimes literally) building together. This partly happens by finding points of connection in a project within the capabilities of (future) users. Furnishing, decoration, the permanent adaptation of the building are no longer a threat but are part and parcel of the building process. It also involves, however, the mounting of processes in which collective ambitions are formulated, well before an actual design is produced. This alternative position does not imply that the spatial expertise of the architect is no longer valued. It requires architects to leave their comfort zone and to act in an open way during the various stages of the building process, in the same way that users are asked to take on an active role and enter into a dialogue with the designer.

A second source of meaning is found in the search for a sensible relationship with the big and urgent social questions of our time. In contrast to universalist or generalist approaches, we are looking at specific, focused and humble efforts to relate to the turbulent societal context. The evident spatial implications of big challenges, such as climate change, the limitations of our health care system, or the need to bring back the manufacturing jobs in our cities, helps to foster the belief in the capacity of design to formulate alternative answers. The meaning of architecture is enhanced by its ability to address these issues. Sue Anne Ware goes as far as identifying herself as a 'design-activist'. Through landscape interventions that are generally co-created by a variety of partners, Ware hopes to contribute to the political awareness regarding themes such as the refugee crisis, poverty,

substance abuse and homelessness. In other contributions, the question of 'What world are we designing for?' is also leading. Kathy Velikov and Geoffry Thün, for example, seek to address questions of social in- and exclusion in their project 'Protean Prototypes'. The project 'Parckfarm' also demonstrates through spatial interventions on the ground and intensive interaction with the neighborhood, the possibilities of an alternative form of public space that frames the needs of the multi-ethnic neighborhood, not in abstract terms but by articulating them in concrete form.

A third reservoir of meaning is the careful interpretation and reinterpretation of the context in which design takes place. These practices aspire to have meaning for that context, which starts by creating context. This manifests itself in the development of a broad and varied range of analytic and representational techniques and methods, with the aim of rendering our everyday lifeworld more visible and more intelligible. Several designers invest in empirical research and fieldwork, participative observation and interviews. Cynthia Susilo and Bruno De Meulder show how a seemingly generic shopping mall shapes the multi-coloured lifeworld of varying groups who find an evident place of encounter there. Ariane d'Hoop shows how the importance attributed to the kitchen and to cooking together in a psychiatric ward can be traced in the seam between two different tile patterns. This heightened amount of attention paid to use and appropriation implies a strong sensitivity to the potential of space to contribute to the construction of alternative social spaces that 'make sense' in different and changing ways. Hence visual material and text are given equal weight in this issue of OASE. In many contributions patterns and rituals of use have been extensively documented. Viewing buildings and larger environments through the lens of use and appropriation opens up a world of design possibilities.

Fourth, use and appropriation derive meaning from the symbolic order of the architecture itself. This may happen directly through the appropriation of form within a semiotic landscape, but may also concern the monumentalizing of sublime uselessness. Luc Deleu makes the argument for a flexible and beautiful structure that makes room for change, because all and everyone finds purpose in it. Deleu and T.O.P. office investigate possibilities of use, but they stay away from the study of the actual use. Other authors wish to directly interfere in the lifeworld of the user, and research and test in detail which possible use and



meaning may be particularly pertinent. They enter conversations with people because meaning in the end comes in the form of a personal meaning. Several contributions show the importance of individual as well as collective narratives, which may reinforce or activate patterns of use, or alternatively change or alter them.

Finally, we see how use and appropriation are never static, but form over time like sediment, layer by layer. Caroline Dionne, about the work of Patrick Bouchain, speaks of the expansion in space and time of what architecture is like. The projects 'Holding Pattern' and 'Parckfarm' also investigate how temporary cultural events may nevertheless produce a lasting impact on a neighborhood. This happens not only through social exchange and interaction, but also by investing in direct actions and experiments that challenge existing conventions, settled ideas and policy arrangements. Working with time produces a nice mix of aspects of design, building, maintenance and use. The conceptual world of the designer and the lifeworld of the user may start to blend.

The selection of practices in this issue is deliberately diverse. We do not formulate a spectacularly new paradigm, but enter an irreducible question, surround it with commentary, and produce a little theory of practice. We are witness to a rather relaxed and emancipated treatment of the subject by a new generation of designers that was raised on long-lasting, often charged discussions regarding participation, use and appropriation, but is no longer haunted by it. We are looking at a generation that has been educated by the pioneers from the participation movement, had architectural theory as part of their curriculum, neither approaches the matter in a naïve nor cynical way, but that does take the question of use and appropriation seriously and mobilizes a broad design register to incorporate aspects thereof in their personal practice. The result is a kind of architecture that does not preach participation through formal rhetoric, but lets the world in, without giving up the commitment to a personal and purified design language.

This editorial is preceded by a visual essay, composed of 13 images, that were taken from the more than 60 contributions, and that illustrate dedication to the architecture of use and appropriation in all its relaxed, formal plurality.

- Social Poetics: The Architecture of Use and Appropriation

- Tobias Armbrorst, Daniel D'Oca, Georgeen: Holding Pattern
- Thierry Kandjee, Petra Pferdmenges, Bert Gellynck: Curating the City-Making Process
- SueAnne Ware: Asylum for a Design Activist
- Ariane d'Hoop: Design Through Use for Alternative Psychiatry
- BAVO (Gideon Boie & Fie Vandamme): The Only Good Architect Is a Dead Architect
- Ruth Baumeister: Design Your Kitchen versus Kitchen Design
- James Longfield: Making Byker
- Casey Mack: From Bi-nuclear to Ince-rental
- Caroline Dionne: A Leap of Faith in the Realm of the Possible
- Fabio Vanin: Use as Form, An Open Question
- Marleen Goethals & Paul Vermeulen: Social Space Under Construction Urban Renewal in Broek, Vilvoorde
- Gabriel Cuéllar: The Freedmen Churches, Renewing Collectivity from the Margins of the City
- Kathy Velikov & Geoffrey Thün: Protean Prototypes, Urban Platforms for Appropriation
- Cynthia Susilo & Bruno De Meulder: Trickle-Down Globalisation versus Supralocal Collective Space
- Notes on the Shopping Malls of Manado, Indonesia
- Luc Deleu: Why Nautical Mile Is Still Just a Skeleton
- Abstracts/ Samenvattingen
- Biographies/ Biografieën

Statistics for Research in Psychology: A Modern Approach Using Estimation by Rick Gurnsey [Sage Publications, 9781506305189]

Television shows, websites, and scientific journals frequently assert that the result of some research study or other is 'statistically significant.' Statistical significance seems to be the scientific community's way of saying that the result is significant in the everyday sense of being important or meaningful, but, according to Rick Gurnsey, this is not so. Results may be statistically significant without being meaningful. Furthermore, it is increasingly evident that statistical significance is widely misunderstood not only by



students and laypeople but also by researchers themselves.

Gurnsey is a professor in the Department of Psychology at Concordia University, Montreal. Gurnsey's research has been funded by federal and provincial agencies continuously since 1989. He has taught introductory and advanced statistics for 15 years.

[Statistics for Research in Psychology](#) offers an intuitive approach to statistics based on estimation for interpreting research in psychology. This text covers topic areas in a traditional sequence but gently shifts the focus to an alternative approach using estimation, emphasizing confidence intervals, effect sizes, and practical significance, with the advantages naturally emerging in the process.

This approach encourages readers to attach meaning (practical significance) to the size of some measured effect in the context of a specific research question, and discourages reliance on the context-independent notion of statistical significance. When researchers have to explain the meaning of research results without using the term 'statistically significant,' they recognize how heavily they have leaned on it.

Gurnsey says that instructors interested in making a shift to this syllabus must be able to do so without rebuilding their courses from scratch. A glance at the table of contents shows a reassuringly traditional sequence of topic areas. This is because estimation and significance tests rest on the same foundations, even though they differ in emphasis. The goal of [Statistics for Research in Psychology](#) is to explain both approaches but shift the emphasis to estimation. Rather than devoting the main body of each chapter to testing hypotheses about population parameters, with estimation mentioned as a niche alternative, the focus is squarely on estimation, followed by a discussion of how confidence intervals (and test statistics) can be used to test null hypotheses.

The people who developed the statistical methods routinely used in psychological research are introduced in Part 2 of [Statistics for Research in Psychology](#). As most statistics instructors know, the so-called Fisher-Neyman hybrid model of statistical decision making would have pleased neither Fisher nor Neyman. Therefore, a historical perspective on statistics shows how some current confusion arose from blending two quite different philosophies. Unlike others, this text devotes a chapter to the problems associated with significance tests, including the file-drawer problem, *p*-hacking, and basic misunderstandings about *p*-values. The message to students is that statistical reform in behavioral research will be the responsibility, and accomplishment, of their generation.

Each chapter has a clear through line and typically uses a single research question to aid its development. To avoid diversions from the main story, additional material is presented in end-of-chapter appendices.

These include discussions of precision planning for estimation, power, and other technical material such as collinearity, bootstrapping, and probability density.

Many useful tools for performing statistical analyses are also discussed in appendices. The two most important tools are Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics. Instructors will have different opinions about which of these is most appropriate for their classes. Students using [Statistics for Research in Psychology](#) as part of an advanced course may need to have experience with SPSS in the likely event that they go on to conduct an independent research project. Students in an introductory course will benefit from a good grounding in Excel, because it provides a simple way to check hand calculations and provides useful tools for working with normal and *t*-distributions. Furthermore, Excel is in wide use in settings beyond universities. Additional appendices show students how to use R to put confidence intervals around statistics that have complex distributions, such as Cohen's *d* and *R*<sup>2</sup>. Finally, there are appendices showing how to use G\*Power for prospective power analysis and sensitivity analysis.

The password-protected Instructor Resources site features author-created tools designed to help instructors plan and teach their course. These include an extensive test bank, chapter-specific PowerPoint presentations, and lecture notes. The open-access Student Resources site provides eFlashcards, web quizzes, access to full-text SAGE journal articles with accompanying assessments, and multimedia resources. Frequent opportunities for practice and step-by-step instructions for using Excel, SPSS, and R in appendices help readers come away with a better understanding of statistics that will allow them to more effectively evaluate published research and undertake meaningful research of their own.

The material in [Statistics for Research in Psychology](#) is structured in a way that allows the advantages of estimation to emerge naturally. All of the standard material on significance testing is presented, but estimation is shown to be the more general method. Innovative in its emphasis on estimation, [Statistics for Research in Psychology](#) is written in an engaging conversational style that addresses students directly. Sections include learning checks with questions for students to answer in order to assess their understanding before moving on to new material. There are also many end-of-chapter exercises, including definitions and concepts, true or false questions, calculations, and scenarios. Each chapter includes brief model reports of statistical analyses that follow American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines. <>

The Social Origins of Language by  
Robert M. Seyfarth, Dorothy L. Cheney,  
edited by Michael L. Platt [Duke Institute  
for Brain Sciences Series, Princeton  
University Press, 9780691177236]

How human language evolved from the need for  
social communication

The origins of human language remain hotly debated. Despite growing appreciation of cognitive and neural continuity between humans and other animals, an evolutionary account of human language—in its modern form—remains as elusive as ever. [The Social Origins of Language](#) provides a novel perspective on this question and charts a new path toward its resolution.

In the lead essay, Robert Seyfarth and Dorothy Cheney draw on their decades-long pioneering research on monkeys and baboons in the wild to show how primates use vocalizations to modulate social dynamics. They argue that key elements of human language emerged from the need to decipher and encode complex social interactions. In other words, social communication is the biological foundation upon which evolution built more complex language.

Seyfarth and Cheney's argument serves as a jumping-off point for responses by John McWhorter, Ljiljana Progovac, Jennifer E. Arnold, Benjamin Wilson, Christopher I. Petkov and Peter Godfrey-Smith, each of whom draw on their respective expertise in linguistics, neuroscience, philosophy, and psychology. Michael Platt provides an introduction, Seyfarth and Cheney a concluding essay. Ultimately, [The Social Origins of Language](#) offers thought-provoking viewpoints on how human language evolved.

Excerpt: The origins of human language, arguments from religion notwithstanding, remain hotly debated. From a scientific standpoint, human language must have evolved. As the great biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky said: "nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution." Yet, so far, evolutionary accounts have largely failed to provide a comprehensive explanation for why and how human language could have emerged from the communication systems found in our closest primate cousins. This dilemma reflects the fact that communication in human language arises from the union of semantic—words have referents—and syntax—words can be combined according to a set of rules into phrases and sentences capable of generating countless possible messages. Put simply, there is no single nonhuman animal—primate or

otherwise—whose natural communication system possesses both semantics and syntax.

This apparent discontinuity has led some to propose that human language appeared fully formed within the brain of a single human ancestor, like Venus springing from the head of Zeus, solely to support self-directed thought. Only later, according to this view, after language was passed down to the offspring of this Promethean protohuman, did language become a tool for communication. This solipsistic account, however, ignores emerging evidence for continuity in cognitive functions, like episodic memory, decision-making, empathy, theory of mind, creativity and exploration, counterfactual thinking, intuitive mathematics, self-awareness, and conceptual thinking, and the neural circuits that mediate these functions—though, to be sure, other discontinuities remain, in particular the ability to refer to the contents of representations (so-called ostensive communication or metarepresentations: Sperber and Wilson. Despite growing appreciation for cognitive and neural continuity between humans and other animals, an evolutionary account of human language—in its full-blown, modern form—remains as elusive as ever.

[The Social Origins of Language](#) attempts to provide a new perspective on this quandary and chart a novel pathway toward its resolution. We contend that any biologically and humanistically plausible answer to the question of the origins of language must reflect the combined wisdom of multiple disciplines, each providing a unique but related perspective. In this brief volume, we provide an open dialogue among experts in animal communication, neurobiology, philosophy, psychology, and linguistics that began with a two-day symposium convened by the Duke Institute for Brain Sciences in 2014, at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. The symposium and accompanying book orbit a keynote lecture by Robert Seyfarth and a provocative target article coauthored by Seyfarth and his long-time collaborator Dorothy Cheney.

Seyfarth and Cheney are well known for their long-term studies of the behavior of monkeys and baboons in the wild, in which they use audio playback of communication calls to probe how primates think about their worlds. In their much-heralded and popular book, [How Monkeys See the World: Inside the Mind of Another Species](#) (1990, University Of Chicago Press, 9780226102467), Seyfarth and Cheney provided strong evidence that vervet monkeys in Amboseli National Park, Kenya, use communication calls that seem to function much like human words, effectively labeling important objects and events in the environment such as predatory eagles and snakes. Taking a fresh look at their own work on social communication among baboons in the Okavango Delta of Botswana, which was originally described in their book [Baboon Metaphysics: The](#)

[Evolution of a Social Mind](#) (2007, University Of Chicago Press, 9780226102443), Seyfarth and Cheney argue that the grunts given by baboons in advance of friendly interactions, and the shrieks given in response to aggression, demonstrate not only a richness and complexity in how these animals think about others in their groups but, more surprisingly, that baboons seem capable of combining a small number of communication calls with the large number of individual relationships within the group to produce a vast number of possible messages about social interactions. Seyfarth and Cheney provocatively suggest that these findings provide evidence that the interaction of primate communication systems with cognitive systems representing social knowledge effectively translate into a rudimentary "language" capable of both semantics and generative grammar. For Seyfarth and Cheney, the key elements of human language emerge from the need to decipher and encode complex social interactions in a large, multilayered group.

This bold hypothesis serves as the jumping-off point for a targeted series of responses by symposium participants from several distinct disciplines. These rejoinders situate Seyfarth and Cheney's hypothesis, and the evidence upon which it is based, within the relevant contexts of linguistics, sociology, philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience. The authors find sometimes surprising consilience in the comparison, and sometimes equally surprising contrasts as well. For example, John McWhorter, a linguist with broad interests in creole languages, finds great resonance with Seyfarth and Cheney's arguments. In the chapter, *Linguistics and Pragmatics* by John McWhorter finds commonality in the pragmatics of language—the ways in which context and emphasis markers add new layers of meaning to an utterance—and the complex layering of structured communication in baboon social communication. He argues against a naively Chomskyan "syntactocentrism" and favors theories of language evolution in which pragmatics and semantics precede formal grammar, a view aligned with Seyfarth and Cheney's. In his view, focusing on the complexity of modern languages with a long history of development may be a red herring. After all, pidgin languages possess minimal grammatical machinery yet efficiently convey precise information via pragmatic markers, consistent with a socially based origin for full-blown language.

By contrast, *Where Is Continuity Likely to Be Found?* by Ljiljana Progovac, a linguist who specializes in Slavic syntax, flips Seyfarth and Cheney's approach on its head by arguing that rather than look for the antecedents of human language in animal communication, we ought instead to look for elements of animal communication systems in human language. Such "living fossils" as it were, for example, two-word combinations that function as a protosyntax, invite the

possibility of continuity in the evolution of human language from primate communication.

*Fluency Effects in Human Language* by Jennifer E. Arnold, a psychologist who focuses on prosody—the timing, pitch, rhythm, and acoustic properties of speech—sympathizes with this perspective as well. Her research emphasizes the impact of subconscious processing routines that somewhat automatically shade spoken language by altering speech timing, pitch, and rhythm. Such markers can betray informational redundancies or statistical regularities that may be exploited by listeners in conversation. It's easy to imagine that the baboons studied by Cheney and Seyfarth use contextual information attending grunts and shrieks to develop a savvy understanding of their social worlds.

Notably, the two more biologically oriented commentaries—*Primates, Cephalopods, and the Evolution of Communication* by Peter Godfrey-Smith, a philosopher of biology, and the other, *Relational Knowledge and the Origins of Language* by Benjamin Wilson and Christopher I. Petkov, both neuroscientists—find some agreement with Seyfarth and Cheney but identify significant challenges to their proposal as well. Both chapters make the clear distinction between sender and receiver, and that what is unique about human language is that syntax allows for generative creation of an infinite number of messages by the sender and their interpretation by the receiver. The generative nature of baboon social communication appears to reside entirely within the receiver. Wilson and Petkov compare the impressive sensitivity of baboons to social order as expressed through sequences of calls with Artificial Grammar studies showing monkeys and other animals are sensitive to ordered sequences of arbitrary stimuli, and suggest that in fact social communication may be the prerequisite for the evolution of human language. They also sketch an outline of the neural circuits involved in sequence learning and production, and speculate that these circuits may interact with brain regions involved in social information processing when baboons or other animals make inferences about the interactions of others based on sequences of calls they hear.

Godfrey-Smith provides the most provocative challenge to Seyfarth and Cheney's hypothesis by way of comparing the social communication system of baboons with the social communication systems of cephalopods—squid, octopuses, and cuttlefish. In his view, all the sophistication in baboon communication lies within the receiver. When a baboon emits a call, she surely intends to signal something about the environment—response to a threat, approach to a dominant baboon—yet the possible sets of messages are limited. Nevertheless, baboons listening to sequences of calls made by others can draw far more sophisticated conclusions about their social worlds, which Godfrey-Smith describes as a fortuitous

consequence of baboon social ecology and the statistical regularities of vocalizations within the group. By contrast, certain species of cephalopods have evolved elaborate, combinatorial patterns of sequential coloration changes on their skin that, apparently, have very little effect on receivers and, instead, appear to be fortuitous byproducts of internal processes. The comparison of baboons and cephalopods highlights the importance of both sender and receiver in communication, and the fact that all elements of human language—semantics, syntax, pragmatics—must be considered in any account of its evolution.

In the final chapter, Seyfarth and Cheney provide a synthesis of the chapters written by the other authors in response to their own target article. Seyfarth and Cheney find common ground with the other authors in the importance of pragmatics, in addition to semantics and syntax, for shaping the meaning of communication signals. Indeed, all authors seem to agree that primate communication systems provide a rich pragmatic system for representing information about the social world. Ultimately, Seyfarth and Cheney contend, the need for our primate ancestors to represent and convey information about social context was the biological foundation upon which much more complex aspects of human language were scaffolded by evolution.

The foregoing overview makes plain that we have much to learn about how we came to be the only animal on earth with true language. The chapters included here provide a thought-provoking set of interrelated lenses through which we might catch a glimpse of how human language evolved. The ideas summoned in this brief, yet powerful, book endorse the hypothesis that we will answer this, and other challenging questions, only through interdisciplinary dialogue and investigation. <>

**Deciphering Reality: Simulations, Tests, and Designs** by Benjamin B. Olshin [Value Inquiry Book Series / Cognitive Science, Brill Rodopi, 9789004352599]

He who dreams of drinking wine may weep when morning comes; he who dreams of weeping may in the morning go off to hunt. While he is dreaming he does not know it is a dream, and in his dream he may even try to interpret a dream. Only after he wakes does he know it was a dream. And someday there will be a great awakening when we know that this is all a great dream. Yet the stupid believe they are awake, busily and brightly assuming they understand things, calling this man ruler, that one herdsman—how dense! —ZHUANGZI, trans. BURTON WATSON

## Reality as a Problem: Thinking about Reality

This book explores a series of ideas concerning the nature of reality. The intention here is not a book of philosophy, nor a work of physics. Rather, the chapters here are concise presentations and studies of particular questions for those curious about what we are all apparently in—that is, reality itself. The book is designed for those with an interest in philosophy and in science, but is also intended for those who might, by chance, stay up at night wondering about the nature of what this book calls our “apparent reality”—the fact that there seems to be something out there, and the idea that it may, in fact, not be out there.

This book does not escort the reader through philosophical explorations in ontology, realism, and the nature of truth. Nor does this work delve into quantum theory, multiverses, and black holes—such subjects have been treated in other works that are available to those who are curious. Instead, this work aims to provoke and inform the reader by assembling different—and sometimes unlikely—sources to look at the question of reality. This book includes primary sources quoted at length, since it is a work that is also designed to promote further investigation through those sources, which are also cited in an extensive bibliography.

The reader will find here the thoughts of the physicist David Bohm, the musings of the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, the thoughts on the nature of reality found in the final writings of Mark Twain, and insights from an early Daoist text. These are no mystical, “New Age” explorations, however: rather, the ideas here take the form of exercises in shifting perspectives, and in reframing questions. But there is philosophy here, and there is science: these fields provide a background for ways to address the title of the project: deciphering reality. There is indeed the assumption in this book that our apparent reality has the qualities of a cipher in every sense of that word: that it is cryptic, and that it is disguised—less due to some malicious creator than to our own inability to comprehend it from the inside or wherever we actually might be located. Another, earlier meaning of “cipher” was “zero”, from the Arabic: that is highly relevant, too, as near the conclusion this book suggests that “zero” just may be the clue we are looking for.

## Access and Analysis

The title of this chapter, “Reality as Problem”, is a reference to two thinkers: the philosopher Martin Heidegger and the educator Paulo Freire. Heidegger, in his famous book *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*), includes two sections that center on this idea of the “problem” of reality: one is entitled “Reality as a

Problem of Being and the Demonstrability of the 'External World'" and the other is entitled "Reality as an Ontological Problem".<sup>1</sup> In language that is not always easy for a non-specialist reader to comprehend, Heidegger wrestled with the interlocking issues of consciousness and an awareness of reality, a reality independent of that consciousness, and, finally, the "possibility of an adequate ontological analysis of reality". In addition, Heidegger addressed "the primary kind of access to what is real".

That question of "access", as is suggested in subsequent chapters here, pervades everything from digital models of reality to Daoist thought. In discussing the "ontological problem" of reality—the nature of being in a given reality, in one respect—Heidegger notes the idea of "resistance". This strikes the reader almost as an experiential, feeling-with-one's-hands-in-the-dark exploration of our apparent reality: that reality, Heidegger notes, is "something [which] already must have been disclosed", even as it is characterized by "ontic indefiniteness".<sup>5</sup> One can see even in such a brief citation how Heidegger struggled with writing about something so comprehensive—that is, reality itself—and our strange relationship to it. We are aware of reality, and in it, yet cannot objectively talk about our precise relationship to it.

While the ideas of Heidegger may be familiar to many readers, especially those with a background in philosophy, an interesting concept concerning reality expressed by Paulo Freire may be less well known. Freire's focus was on education, and that topic may seem remote from the question of the nature of reality. But there are echoes of Plato here: the idea that we have been educated to see a certain—highly constructed—reality. Freire's pedagogical philosophy puts it similarly; as one study notes, Freire's approach is to present aspects of people's lived reality as a problem. Issues that have become invisible due to their ubiquity and as such seem to be unchangeable are seen with new eyes. They become the focus of critical dialogue.

Although Freire was thinking about sociological concerns, his perspective works just as well for the approach to the question of reality taken by this book. Reality is a problem, if the way we engage in it, live in it—and even study it scientifically—makes it essentially invisible. Freire's own words apply even more accurately:

[C]ooperation leads dialogical Subjects to focus their attention on the reality which mediates them and which—posed as a problem—challenges them. The response to that challenge is the action of the dialogical Subjects upon reality in order to transform it. Let me reemphasize that posing reality as a problem does not mean sloganizing: it means critical analysis of a problematic reality.

Again, while Freire is talking about sociological concerns in education, the precise framework outlined

here can be applied to philosophical and scientific inquiries into the nature of reality. Freire's "Subjects" are like both Plato's cave dwellers and our contemporary scientists and philosophers. Reality mediates them, but at the same time, in dialogue, that same reality can become the focus of critical analysis. But as Freire implies, that is not a simple task in sociological terms—and it is equally difficult in philosophical and scientific terms. There is a tendency even in these latter fields, despite their objectivity and care with language, to "sloganize" the problem—that is, to build models, attach labels to those models, and then engage the models and labels as actual descriptions of reality, or even take them as reality itself.

In contrast, what is needed—and more difficult to obtain—is a way to provide Freire's "critical analysis" here: taking apart and analyzing something in which we are so completely and utterly immersed. It is the classic philosophical problem of asking a fish what it thinks about water: its response would simply be, "What's 'water'?"

The German philosopher Paul Deussen framed the problem this way:

The whole of religion and philosophy has its root in the thought that (to adopt the language of Kant) the universe is only appearance and not reality (*Ding an sich*); that is to say, the entire external universe, with its infinite ramifications in space and time, as also the involved and intricate sum of our inner perceptions, is all merely the form under which the essential reality presents itself to a consciousness such as ours.

We perceive an appearance and not reality. As for reality itself, we do not know "the form in which it may subsist outside of our consciousness and independent of it". Deussen very precisely parses the problem, too, then, of the project of philosophy versus the project of science:

For all philosophy, as contrasted with empirical science, is not content to learn to know objects in their circumstance and surroundings, and to investigate their causal connections; but it rather seeks beyond all these to determine their nature ... This fact, then, that philosophy has from the earliest times sought to determine a first principle of the universe, proves that it started from a more or less clear consciousness that the entire empirical reality is not the true essence of things, that, in Kant's words, it is only appearance and not the thing itself.

It is difficult to say at what point in their long history human beings actually felt that their everyday reality was not the "true essence of things", but this is certainly an ancient idea. Early thinkers such as Pythagoras and Plato wrestled with this idea; it is interesting to consider that mathematics, myths, and symbols were believed to have some relationship to that essence. Proclus, in his analysis of Plato, had a view that is worth keeping in mind here: he believed that the fundamental truth of reality was not hidden

by the “veils” of mathematics. Rather, Proclus believed that the veils, like theological myths and Pythagorean symbols, serve as a means of transition to the study of ontologically higher objects that are not immediately accessible—provided of course that we have the proper preparation and guidance.

What this means is a more subtle, even relational approach to the question of the “real” and our connection to it. In dealing with symbols as a transitional way of accessing reality, one is reminded of mathematical physics—where the equations are reflections of our approaches to the actual functioning of the physical world. The equations do not “veil” that world, but rather allow our minds to take an intermediate step towards (a potentially) complete understanding.

However, that “understanding” still seems remote. Physics has long held the mantle of the project of investigating “empirical reality”, but even thousands of years after Plato, we are still struggling to find the essence—the “thing itself”, in other words. Moreover, as subsequent chapters here describe, trying to consider the objects in our apparent reality and “determine their nature” is difficult given that, among other things, it is not clear where “we” are in the grand scheme of things. What is subject? What is object?

If the goal of philosophy, as Deussen states, is “to determine a first principle of the universe”, how can that be achieved? Moreover, if human beings at some point in their history had “a more or less clear consciousness that the entire empirical reality is not the true essence of things”, that means that somehow we have the capacity to return to such an understanding. Potentially, we could go from a consciousness of this difference between empirical reality and essence, to a consciousness of the actual “essence of things”. This is an idea explored in the discussion of Daoism in this book; in the meantime, there are other considerations—from scepticism to simulation.

## Reality Won't Go Away

So, the problem of deciphering reality is a complex one, particularly in the sense of where even to start. The science fiction writer Philip K. Dick investigated the nature of reality in many of his works, but perhaps he addressed the problem most directly in a 1978 speech entitled, “How to Build a Universe That Doesn't Fall Apart Two Days Later”.<sup>12</sup> In the first part of the speech, he notes:

It was always my hope, in writing novels and stories which asked the question “What is reality?” to someday get an answer. This was the hope of most of my readers, too. Years passed. I wrote over thirty novels and over a hundred stories, and still I could not figure out what was real. One day a girl college student in Canada asked me to define reality for her,

for a paper she was writing for her philosophy class. She wanted a one sentence answer. I thought about it and finally said, “Reality is that which, when you stop believing in it, doesn't go away”. That's all I could come up with.

Dick's answer implies that there is a reality “out there” somewhere, that is independent of whether one believes in it or not, or is even aware of it or not. He was also interested in social and political control of our perception of reality, so it is not surprising that in his comments above, he is putting forward a Platonist view.

But in the same speech, Dick also questions the idea of an ultimate reality behind all appearances. In discussing the conflicting concepts of Parmenides and Heraclitus, and noting the paradoxes of Zeno, he comments that, “as you begin to ask what is ultimately real, you right away begin to talk nonsense”. Dick, in his cautious—even paranoid—way, made it clear that the very obscurity of reality allowed humans to wield the dangerous power of creating what he called “pseudo-realities”.

Wrestling with the puzzle of what might be found behind our apparent reality, or the world that we perceive every day, Dick played with all kinds of ideas, even supposing that time itself had stopped circa A.D. 50 and that the present is entirely an illusion! Indeed, the author was famous for the variety and dreamlike quality of his ideas: perhaps such a wide-ranging and organic approach is necessary in the face of a problem as profound as that of the decipherment of reality.

The concept of scepticism is often invoked when the topics of reality and illusion are addressed. To generalize, scepticism in this context would dictate that we have no firm way of telling what is real and what is not. There has been a backlash against scepticism in some respects—the idea that we are in a dream or simulation of some kind seems almost too childish to be taken seriously in philosophical or scientific terms. Even otherwise speculative writers on the subject of reality seem to reject anything hinting of solipsism, with one author stating flatly that the existing evidence “is sufficient to ensure that other observers do exist, and not just appear to exist”. Although Dick himself did not say so, one could conjecture that he would have responded to such human self-assurance by saying, “I'm sceptical of those who aren't sceptics”. Anti-scepticism, in its very attempt to apply a kind of “Occam's razor” to arguments about reality as illusion or dream, makes a series of presumptions. It implies that we have sufficient information—and that we know that we have sufficient information—to dismiss the idea that our apparent reality might be an illusion, a dream, or a computer program. But leverage inside the box to move the box is impossible.

In a discussion of the movie *The Matrix*—a film that portrays the idea of reality as a simulation quite

clearly—one author cites the arguments of the philosopher Bernard Williams:

Williams soothes our fears of being locked in a perpetual Matrix-like dream-prison by pointing out that the fact that we can make a distinction between dreams and waking experiences itself presupposes that we are aware of both types of experience and of the difference between them. We can talk sensibly about the difference between the two only because there is a difference between them, a difference that we are aware of.

But how do we make that distinction? From the most basic perspective, the only difference is consistency: in our apparent “waking” world, physical laws and other phenomena are consistent and predictable, while in the “dream” world, this is not the case. But who is to say that consistency is the defining characteristic of reality? As presented later in this book, a famous Daoist text known as the Zhuangzi (莊子) recounts the completely reversible story of the man who dreamed that he was a butterfly. For the Daoists, consistency is not a deciding factor for anything.

## The Approach

While there have been innumerable books concerning the nature of reality, the present study takes a very particular approach. This book is not a traditional philosophical study of reality in metaphysical terms. While some standard philosophical concepts make appearances here, this book more particularly uses certain philosophical frameworks to examine a series of problems. In addition, the book connects aspects of the scientific approach to the nature of reality with the philosophical approach in a different way. This is not a traditional “philosophy of science” path; instead, philosophy—particularly Chinese philosophy—is used to talk about the testing and modeling of reality. Moreover, this book does not examine at length the often-discussed relationship between reality and consciousness. Such themes have been explored in other works, both scientific and speculative. Instead, the more critical issue of the definition of such terms is explored. This is connected with other more fundamental questions raised here—questions that until now perhaps have received insufficient attention, and that are the focus of this book. Those questions include how we use visual models in talking about reality, and how deeply our conceptions are fixed to what one could call arbitrary preconceptions as to how reality is structured. In short, while not calling for a radical change, this book suggests—if indirectly—that there are other ways to frame questions about reality, rather than always returning to the usual discussions of physicalism, the role of consciousness, and so on.

This book also examines specific problems in an attempt to provide tools for further exploration in both philosophy and science. Each chapter focuses on a particular challenge to modeling what the term “real” means in any useful sense, and how we might better approach modeling this reality for the purposes of philosophical and scientific investigation. The problems presented here include those concerning digital simulations and interactions with virtual realities. These have been explored in other works, but in this book two very particular scenarios are presented, since they are formative to discussions of how we frame terms and use language, another theme relevant to a discussion of the nature of reality. The language issues in question here involve the definition of objects, the concept of “mediated” reality, and the definition of a “simulated” world. Looking at everything from data storage to Daoist texts, the questions of how to talk about something as remote and as intimate as reality are investigated.

## A Series of Problems

What are some of the specific problems in discussing the nature of reality? The first problem, which is examined in Chapter 1 (“Reality as Simulation”), concerns spacetime in the context of a simulation. A number of authors have raised the idea that our experience of reality might be taking place in some kind of simulation, such as that run on a computer. This idea is not new, and even has been explored in popular culture. But there are a number of questions that remain only partially addressed—for example, what exact form would such a simulation take? Some writers assume that it would look like the simulations that we ourselves run, although with far more computing power. But why would those creating this massive simulation necessarily behave as we do, and develop and employ technology in the same way? Moreover, how precisely would a simulation manifest the physical phenomena that we see around us? Aspects of such questions have been explored by figures such as Konrad Zuse, Stephen Wolfram, and others, and the chapter here on simulations builds upon their analysis to explain what terms such as “real”, “simulation”, and even “computer” might actually mean. More particularly, this first chapter asks, “What exactly is the difference between that kind of simulation and what we currently believe to be our physical reality?” To begin to frame an answer to this question, it is necessary to investigate spacetime and temporality (our sense of time) in the context of a simulation. Such an investigation reveals some surprising possibilities about a simulated universe, including the fact that inside the simulation, there is actually no difference between making a physical machine and just conceiving it. The second problem—discussed in Chapter 2 (“Reality to the Test”)—takes us into some basic physics, and

brings up specific questions concerning virtual reality or simulated environments of the type discussed in Hilary Putnam's "Brain in a Vat" scenario and depicted in the popular film *The Matrix*. The discussion here addresses in simple terms this idea: Is there a test that one could devise to see if we are living in a simulation of the sort depicted in Putnam's "Brain in Vat" or *The Matrix*?

The third chapter, "Reality by Design", investigates what is termed here the "prepositional model" or "locative model" of reality. These models of reality are very pervasive, not only in philosophy, but also in physics. Human descriptions of reality tend to be visual, and work on the basis of very concrete depictions—even when we claim to talk about transcendental "configurations" beyond our common physical senses and reason. These visual-biased models include "levels", concentric rings, configurations of "inner" and "outer", wholes made of component parts (such as atoms), substrates (such as "quantum foam"), and so on. This chapter provides a critique of such models, discussing how they contain an inherent bias that may prevent the development of better epistemological tools for studying the nature of reality.

Chapter 4, "Reality for the Daoists", uses Daoist texts—particularly the *Zhuangzi*—to suggest other models for talking about the nature of reality. The discussion draws together philosophical approaches and scientific methods, but seeks to avoid a facile equating of early Chinese philosophical concepts with contemporary models in physics. Instead, the genuine similarities are presented: contemporary physics and certain aspects of Daoist philosophy both are seeking to provide a model of how reality functions and how we engage with that reality. Early Daoist thinkers did not possess an understanding of modern scientific principles; however, they were keen observers of our apparent reality, and were aware of the role of human consciousness in engaging whatever that reality might be.

The fifth and final chapter, "Reality in Conclusion", recapitulates the idea of new models for thinking about the nature of reality. The discussion in that chapter concerns "reframing inquiries about reality"—the idea that the problem is not only epistemological, but also investigative. In other words, the problem is not only one that involves the origin and nature of knowledge, but also the question of how we construct and carry out investigations of reality. Noting that the way that we currently frame our philosophy and science both empowers and limits the potential scope of investigations of reality, this final chapter puts forward the idea of taking the decipherment of reality even further. Is there something even beyond digital simulations, the prepositional models of reality, and Daoist philosophy? Are there other ways—subtler or more radical—to look at the decipherment of reality?

## Concepts and Definitions

In investigating a subject as philosophically challenging as the nature of reality, it is vital to outline some basic concepts and definitions. This book's investigation is very specific, in the sense that it approaches the question of the nature of reality in the form of what are essentially a series of chapter-length essays, as described above. Different aspects of reality are examined—the idea of simulation, the problem of modeling, and so on. In taking this approach, inevitably there are things left out—but the idea here is to present some ways of thinking about the process of investigation itself. This is the conceptual scope of this book.

But what is being investigated? "Reality" is a very broad term—indeed, it is one of the broadest terms that a language could articulate. Definitions of "reality" are almost as varied as the fields used to inquire about the word itself: philosophy and religion, physics, psychology, linguistics, and so on. In considering the studies presented in this book, the reader should note that the operative term here is "apparent reality". This is the reality that we experience every day, the experiential world of sights, sounds, and so on. This may seem limited, but it allows a reasonably close pairing of both philosophical and scientific approaches to the question of reality. Philosophy, even in some of its more abstract forms such as Daoism, deals with how we experience the world around us. Science approaches reality through the modes of the senses, and works with observable or, more precisely, detectable phenomena. In the simplest terms, this means that the study here is an investigation of what might be the more subtle nature of—or "behind"—that which we experience.

For Plato, the answer to this question of what we are observing was "shadows", and finding the reality behind those shadows has been one of the goals of philosophical inquiry. In parts of this book, there is indeed the implicit assumption that there is something "behind" or "beyond" what we experience on a daily basis, and even something "behind" or "beyond" what scientists observe, measure, and assess. The analysis here frames the study of this apparent reality in this way. However, even that assumption eventually must be questioned, since the terms "behind" and "beyond" dictate a particular investigative framework—one implying that reality is structured in hierarchical layers—that may be completely misguided. Reality may not even be structured at all, or at least not in the way human beings think about structure.

## Philosophy and Physics



As pointed out above, this book does not take a strict, traditional philosophical or science-based approach to the question of reality. However, it is important to make clear what philosophy and science actually do in terms of engaging reality. Philosophy engages reality by taking head-on the question of the source of what we observe every day—that is, our apparent reality—as well as any possible underlying foundations for what we experience. Philosophy employs epistemology not only to ask, “What do we know and how do we know it?” but also, “Can we know?” Moreover, philosophy may even offer postulates as to the existence of an ultimate reality—a final, incontestable and transcendental truth, an (eidos) or “Form” of the kind described by Plato. For philosophers, there is some mystery as to the nature of reality, because at least the initial epistemological answer to an understanding of reality as a whole is negative. That is, it seems impossible, as this book discusses later, to understand the system from within the system.

The seminal philosopher Heidegger, cited earlier, framed a similar problem in his discussion of Descartes and the concept of *res extensa* or “corporeal substance”.<sup>18</sup> For Descartes, there was the subject, which engaged in thinking, distinct from the object of such thinking. Heidegger rejected this distinction between subject and object, arguing that there exists no such subject distinct from the external world, because of *Dasein*—a more comprehensive idea than that found in Descartes: existence as “being-in-the-world”.

From the viewpoint of physics, and of science in general, there is no mystery as to the nature of reality. Physics deals in observables and things that are measurable. Reality, as far as physics is concerned, is the apparent reality defined above—what we seem to experience around us every day. Again, that reality can be observed, measured, tested, and modeled. There is still a mystery in the sense that physicists would like to know why our apparent reality is the way that it is—why do we have these particular physical laws, why do things have the form that they do, and why does mathematics seem to describe our apparent reality so well. There is also some mystery in terms of structure: how the forces of nature are related, how time and space fit together, and how quantum-level structures might be related to larger-scale structures. But these are less “mysteries” than they are simply projects for physics to undertake, using its traditional methods of modeling, experimentation, and theory formation. The project of physics is to build models and make predictions, preferably predictions that can be tested. However, even physics has a role in this book, where the chapters tackle reality as something to be deciphered or understood. That is because physics—just like philosophy—is an intellectual tool. Thus, as with any tool, there arises the question of whether or

not we have the “right tool for the right job”. In physics, part of this means asking if the models being used are correct, or if there might be some other way of making models that would allow us to explore reality further. In a certain respect, this was the approach of the physicist David Bohm, some of whose ideas also are discussed in this book. Moreover, this issue of models means asking if traditional answers to observations in physics—such as the appearance of interference patterns in the double-slit experiment—could be re-examined with a different model to yield quite different insights into the nature of our apparent reality.

Many physicists might say that the role of physics is almost Voltairean in nature: it is about experimentation and formulation of theories in the examination of specific phenomenon, a modest but careful and diligent tending of *notre jardin*. Physics is not in the business of deciphering reality as a whole, nor opining as to its ultimate nature. But if physics indeed goes down that road, one can critique more specifically some aspects of a traditional physics approach to the nature of reality. Since certain kinds of physics have moved beyond our capacity to test theories experimentally, a new conceptual approach has appeared: the creation of increasingly complex and untestable models—what physicist Carlo Rovelli has called pejoratively the “physics of the ‘why not?’”. This is a kind of holistic approach, one that advances new ideas only in the sense of postulating other dimensions, or hidden forces or fields. It is not a physics of traditional data-gathering, nor building theories that are subject to empirical methods. One writer has even written of “transcendence as a tool in scientific theory formation”—an interesting epistemological concept. But, in short, that kind of speculative approach is problematic as a potential foundational philosophy for physics.

The philosopher Paavo Pykkänen goes so far as to say, “Physics, from a philosophical point of view, is ... characterized by a great deal of conceptual confusion”. His essential point is valid—the problem is one of concepts, that is, how physics conceptually frames and terms the phenomena it encounters or wishes to model. Discussing quantum physics in particular, Pykkänen notes:

The concept of “elementary particles”, and the images it may evoke, is thus actually very limited in its ability to help us capture what is essential about what we might call the more fundamental architecture of the physical world, as revealed in quantum and relativistic phenomena. We need new concepts and images that can better illuminate features such as wave-particle duality, non-locality, and the discontinuity of movement. But there is not yet agreement as to what such concepts should be, and consequently, a great deal of confusion prevails in attempts to discuss the more fundamental structure of the physical world.

Indeed, the discussion of “the more fundamental architecture of the physical world” has been going on for millennia, with contributions at least as far back as the philosophy of the ancient Greeks. Different concepts, from the Hellenistic four-element model to string theory, have been put forward. Modern physics certainly is a far cry from Greek models of the universe: physics allows the in-depth investigation of phenomena, as well as precise mathematical predictions. Nonetheless, we still cannot claim to have the proper tools to discuss any “fundamental architecture” of reality, or even determine that there is such a basic structure.

Prior to Pylykänen, the British philosopher Owen Barfield commented that the results of physics have not been fully reconciled with perception and human cognition in “building up the general ... picture of the nature of the universe”. Barfield felt that reality should be understood as a “system of collective representations”. With great precision, he perceived the problem that reality can be approached with more than one method, leading in sense to more than one reality:

We can think that what physics tells us is true, is true when we are studying physics, and untrue when we are studying something else. The objections to this course are obvious to me, and will be equally obvious to some of my readers.

In his book *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry*, Barfield sought to explain how human consciousness might experience the “unrepresented” world—the noumenal reality behind the world of appearances. Barfield felt that while physics clearly articulated the existence of an “unrepresented” world, such a world might be approachable by a process he called “figuration”, so as to make, in the end, the noumenal become phenomenal. Such “figuration” does not play a role in contemporary physics, but it is related to Bohm’s ideas about physics, discussed later in this book.

Returning to Pylykänen’s analysis, it is important to see that he critiques not only approaches in physics, but also in philosophy, stating that in philosophy there has been a strong tendency to look to the natural sciences when trying to resolve traditional philosophical issues, a tendency known as “physicalism” ... In a nutshell, physicalism says that our general concept of reality ought to be some sort of a generalization of what the natural sciences, especially physics, tell us ... But as a matter of fact, most physicalist views currently on offer seem to have a very weak relationship to modern quantum and relativity theory. Physicalism thus does not yet manage to do what it says it ought to do.

The “weak relationship” more generally comes from the fact that the project of philosophy and the project of physics are not actually the same, as pointed out above. In dealing with the natural sciences, Pylykänen is also critiquing the belief that we should be able to

use the methods of physics, for example, to talk about our “general concept of reality”.

This book draws from the issue that Pylykänen describes, in that it argues that there might be very different models that have yet to be formulated. Those models could yield more insights into the nature of reality, even while still functioning within the realm of the sciences. This book provides some suggestions of what other models—such as those involving simulations, and non-hierarchical or relational structures—might imply in terms of new foundations for scientific inquiry.

A recent popular science book by a physicist, *A Universe from Nothing: Why There Is Something Rather than Nothing*, tackles the question of apparent reality in examining the question of the origins of the universe. But in some sense, this is a speculative exercise: it is impossible to use experimental methods to investigate a remote time before there was anything—before there was even space itself. This is philosophical speculation through physics, but the physics is not really helpful here since its methodological toolkit does not apply. Again, the reconciliation of the philosophy and physics is difficult, because the goals, if that is even the right word, are different.

Pylykänen continues his critique of philosophical approaches:

This “hollowness of contemporary physicalism” creates a great deal of frustration in philosophy. There are difficulties in the very attempt to formulate problems, let alone in the various attempts to solve them. For when physicalists formulate a philosophical problem, they typically make a reference to the physical world. Questions that are formulated and debated today include: What is the relationship between mental phenomena and the physical processes in the brain and matter more generally? What is the relationship between meaning and the physical items that carry meaning? However, as long as there is no coherent notion of what the physical means, the very problems making a reference to the physical will be out of focus.

Again, this book addresses some of these issues of “formulation”—that is, what questions should be asked, or what questions make sense to ask. The discussion of simulations in this book addresses the particular problem that Pylykänen implies in the passage cited above: that as we have “no coherent notion of what the physical means”, the matter that we observe in our apparent reality may be no more than thought. Moreover, as the discussion of simulations will show, such a conclusion is not reached through some kind of mystical approach, but rather a simple, computational one.

The famous physicist Sir Arthur Eddington articulated the problem of scientific approaches to the nature of reality quite elegantly in a lecture entitled, “Science and Mysticism”:

We have acknowledged that entities of physics can from their nature form only a partial aspect of reality. How are we to deal with the other part? It cannot be said that the other part concerns us less than the physical entities.

In another lecture, "The Nature of the Physical World", Eddington brought up a similar point, worth quoting in full:

The physicist brings his tools and commences systematic exploration. All that he discovers is a collection of atoms and electrons and fields of force arranged in space and time, apparently similar to those found in inorganic objects. He may trace other physical characteristics, energy, temperature, entropy. None of these is identical with thought. He might set down

thought as an illusion—some perverse interpretation of the interplay of the physical entities that he has found. Or, if he sees the folly of calling the most undoubted element of our experience an illusion, he will have to face the tremendous question: How can this collection of ordinary atoms be a thinking machine? But what knowledge have we of the nature of atoms which renders it at all incongruous that they should constitute a thinking object? The Victorian physicist felt that he knew just what he was talking about when used such terms as matter and atoms. Atoms were tiny billiard-balls, a crisp statement that was supposed to tell you all about their nature in a way which could never be achieved for transcendental things like consciousness ... But now we realise that science has nothing to say as to the intrinsic nature of the atom. The physical atom is, like everything else in physics, a schedule of pointer readings.

The key term here is "intrinsic nature": physics is not designed to say anything about the intrinsic nature of things. Physics is set up to both observe and model our apparent reality, with the hope, perhaps, of revealing something about a deeper structure if there is one. But most scientific statements about such structure will be provisional or conjectural.

This does not mean that we should stop asking questions. Perhaps an investigation of our apparent reality and its source is best served not by a synthesis of philosophy and physics, nor even a new philosophy of physics, but by a more diffuse approach. Past attempts to combine philosophy and physics have been undertaken as a way of attacking the question of reality holistically, and often have yielded only weak science and simplistic philosophy. As Eddington put it, philosophy and physics are dealing with different "entities", or at least very different aspects of those "entities". So, in a more diffuse approach, one might look at different "entities", and in a modest way see what they tell us about our apparent reality, without trying to build a "theory of everything" that somehow unites philosophy and physics in one grand scheme. This book takes precisely this diffuse

approach: a few, selected examinations of certain ideas concerning reality. It is a process wherein one pulls at but a single thread—and yes, perhaps at some point, that thread might untangle the entire mystery. <>

## Essay Our Contemporary, Montaigne: He Pioneered the Personal Essay and Made Candor Literary by Danny Heitman [HUMANITIES, March/April 2015 | Volume 36, Number 2]

*Creating classic works from passing thoughts*

In 1837, Ralph Waldo Emerson gave one of the most important speeches in American history, an address at Harvard University in which he urged students to fulfill the country's political independence by being intellectually and culturally independent, too.

Through his "American Scholar" speech, Emerson suggested that his fellow citizens should test the ideas of the Old World against experience, and not simply embrace them through habit. "It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into nature; that the world was finished a long time ago," said Emerson. "As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it."

Emerson found the courage to question accepted wisdom in many places, but an important model for his critical thinking came, oddly enough, from Michel de Montaigne, an icon of the European literary tradition Emerson regarded so skeptically. In the early days of his career, as Emerson was seeking the best way to think and write, he looked to Montaigne, the sixteenth-century French essayist, as an inspiration. Later, Emerson wrote an essay about his hero, "Montaigne; or the Skeptic."

Montaigne and Emerson are an unlikely literary pair. Emerson, an often earnest New Englander with a Brahmin's sense of propriety, once took Walt Whitman on a walk and advised the poet to tone down the "sex element" in *Leaves of Grass*. Montaigne, by contrast, could be unabashedly frank, mentioning his track record with various enemas ("farted endlessly") and treating sex with matter-of-fact candor.

That sensibility sometimes left Emerson breathless. "Montaigne is the frankest and honestest

of all writers. His French freedom runs into grossness," Emerson observes, with quite possibly a sigh, "but he has anticipated all censure by the bounty of his own confessions." Montaigne's occasional explicitness, although not to Emerson's taste, seemed to express his willingness to see things clearly.

Emerson first encountered the French writer as a young man. He had inherited a volume of Montaigne's essays from his late father's library, but he had neglected it for years, only opening the book one day not long after he graduated from college. Reading Montaigne was a revelation.

"It seemed to me as if I had myself written the book, in some former life, so sincerely it spoke to my thought and experience," Emerson declared. "I know not anywhere a book that seems less written. It is the language of conversation transferred to a book. Cut these words, and they would bleed; they are vascular and alive. One has the same pleasure in it that he feels in listening to the necessary speech of men about their work, when any unusual circumstance gives momentary importance to the dialogue. For blacksmiths and teamsters do not trip in their speech; it is a shower of bullets."

Emerson's feeling of finding himself in Montaigne's essays has been a common one for Montaigne fans. Shakespeare appears to have read Montaigne's essays and worked their insights into his plays, so that to watch the Bard is to see Montaigne just beyond the stage lamps, winking with approval. Virginia Woolf compared reading Montaigne to looking at a portrait and seeing your own image. "For thirty years," Gore Vidal told readers a few years before his death, "I have kept Donald M. Frame's translation of *The Complete Works of Montaigne* at, if not bedside, hand. There are numerous interlocking Olympic circles on the maroon binding where glasses were set after I had written some no longer decipherable commentary in the margin or, simply, 'How true!'"

The late Lewis Thomas, one of America's celebrated modern essayists, was another admirer. "For the weekend times when there is nothing new in the house to read," said Lewis, "and nothing much to think about or write about, and the afternoon stretches ahead all bleak and empty, there is nothing like Montaigne to make things better."

This is all tall praise, indeed, for a writer who seemed to do exactly the opposite of what was required to achieve literary fame. Born in 1533, Montaigne came from a wealthy family and held important government positions, including work as an adviser to

three French kings. He studied law and served as a magistrate and mayor of Bordeaux. Even after ostensibly retiring, he continued to keep a hand in public life, mediating France's religious strife and serving once again as Bordeaux's mayor.

When Montaigne retreated to his country estate at age thirty-eight, instead of writing about his life at the center of power, he wrote mostly about what he saw from his tower library. The fruits of that period of relative seclusion secured his place in posterity. As the *New Yorker's* Jane Kramer has pointed out, every French schoolchild learns the date of Montaigne's "retirement"—February 28, 1571—because of its significance to the literature of France and, indeed, the world. "He had his books for company," writes Kramer, "his Muses for inspiration, his past for seasoning, and, to support it all, the income from a large estate, not to mention a fortune built on the salt-herring and wine trades, which, in the last century, had turned his family into a landed gentry."

At first glance, the musings from a man of leisure didn't seem the most promising material for a best-seller. Instead of penning an epic poem, a historical narrative, or an imposing treatise on government, a project for which he was eminently qualified, Montaigne decided to simply follow his thoughts wherever they led. The complete edition of his *Essays* is about thirteen hundred pages, but there's no obvious plot or design. Topics include everything from sadness to sleep, lying to Cicero, and drunkenness to the pleasure of books. Montaigne even includes a lengthy essay on thumbs, of all things. Like many educated men of the Renaissance, Montaigne looked to Greek and Latin classics for inspiration. "His first tutor spoke only Latin to him, and Montaigne himself spoke no French until he was five years old," notes scholar Kia Penso. In his writings, Montaigne quotes the Greek commentator Plutarch so often that the ancient historian and moralist presides over the essays like a favored uncle at the dinner table. But while Montaigne, ever the lawyer, leans on precedent when useful in making his case, he also embraces the Renaissance enthusiasm for close personal observation as an avenue to truth. He's one of the world's great noticers, his essays suffused with the texture of everyday sensation.

A quick look through the essays turns up one gem after another. "I have never had any trouble except in the management of my own affairs. Epicurus says that to be rich is not the end, but only a change, of worries," he laments at one point. "Nature seems to have inclined mankind to social intercourse above all

else. And its supreme point of perfection, I find, is friendship,” he observes in another passage. Another turn of the page reveals this thought: “I can dine without a tablecloth, but hardly without clean napkins, as the Germans do; for I soil them more than they or the Italians, since I make little use of a spoon or fork. I regret that the royal custom of changing napkins, together with the plates, after every course, is not more widespread.” And then one dips in and finds Montaigne bridging the ageless subjects of sex and death with cutting concision: “Everyone, certainly, flees from seeing a man born, and everyone rushes to see him die. To destroy a man we use a large field in open daylight. But to make a man we sneak into as dark and secluded a corner as we can.”

The quotidian quality of Montaigne’s essays, in fact, is their biggest appeal. They seem so drawn from life that they look effortless. Penso recalls that philosopher Eric Hoffman once tried to share Montaigne’s essays with some acquaintances, to no avail: “One man flipped through the book for a while and handed it back, observing that it was nothing special—anybody could have written it. Montaigne would have liked that.”

When Montaigne changed his mind about a subject, instead of revising his views seamlessly, he’d often just tack an addendum on his previous statement, leaving the original one intact. One can easily imagine a contemporary literary agent surveying this merry mess, then pitching it into the trash can.

If Montaigne doesn’t seem obviously concerned with pleasing an audience, it’s probably because he wrote his essays at least as much for himself as anyone else. Montaigne’s temporary withdrawal from public affairs came about because of what we might today call a midlife crisis. He’d faced some losses that made him wonder about his own mortality and the point of existence. “His firstborn daughter had died at the age of only two months (the first of five to die in infancy),” Montaigne scholar Saul Frampton notes. “His younger brother had been killed, absurdly, tragically, by a blow from a tennis ball. His best friend, Etienne de La Boétie, had died of the plague in his early thirties. And his father, whom he adored, had recently suffered a prolonged and agonizing death from a kidney stone. Moreover, violent religious warfare was spreading across the country, setting light to Montaigne’s region, pitting Catholic against Protestant, father against son, massacre against murder.”

Feeling overwhelmed, Montaigne, a Catholic respected by both sides in the conflict, retreated to his

estate near Bordeaux, financially secure enough, as he put it, to “pass what may be left of (my) life already more than half spent.”

Soon Montaigne grew restless. Today, he might have talked to a social worker or sought a prescription for his anxiety, but lacking that option, he improvised his own form of therapy, recording his thoughts on paper. Others had written in the first person before Montaigne, but they typically offered their opinions from positions of authority. Montaigne simply wrote as himself: a guy at the apparent midpoint of his life trying to sort himself out. He called his compositions “essays,” which translates as a trial or attempt, and seemed like a shrewd way to lower expectations. Montaigne offered his prose as a first stab at wisdom, a work in progress rather than an intact philosophical system.

Someone writing randomly about what he’s thinking for hundreds of pages sounds pretty dull, but Montaigne pulls it off. “How does it happen that Montaigne is not ever, not on any of all those pages, even a bit of a bore?” Thomas asks, and then answers his own question: “He likes himself, to be sure, but is never swept off his feet after the fashion of bores.”

While boredom grows from the same thing again and again, Montaigne expresses his own personality—and, by extension, the rest of humanity—as a richly varied organism: “I contain in some fashion every contradiction, as the occasion provides. Bashful, insolent, chaste, lustful, talkative, silent, clumsy, fastidious, witty, stupid, morose, gay, false, true, wise, foolish, liberal, greedy, prodigal: I see myself somewhat all of this as I turn myself around—and so will everyone if he does the like.”

The titles of Montaigne’s essays are often mere launching pads for compositions that, like human thought or table talk, allow frequent and seemingly accidental changes of scene or subject. One of Montaigne’s lengthiest essays, “An Apology for Raymond Sebond,” is typical of his technique. Although ostensibly a solemn defense of a religious philosopher of the period, the essay encompasses much more. “Raymond Sebond is the least of concerns; having given a dutiful nod to his father and Sebond in the first paragraphs, and an obligatory homily on the usefulness of reason for arriving at truth, Montaigne simply turns his mind loose and writes whatever he feels like writing,” said Thomas. “Mostly, he wants to say that reason is not a special, unique gift of human beings, marking us off from the rest of Nature. Bees are better at organizing societies. Elephants are more concerned for the welfare of other elephants, and

cleverer at figuring things out; they will fill up the man-dug elephant trap with timber and earth in order to bring the trapped elephant to the surface. . . . It is the greatest fun.”

Not everyone has found Montaigne’s penchant for digression so charming. In the 1930s, scholar Marvin Lowenthal undertook one of the more eccentric projects in literary history, deconstructing Montaigne’s far-flung observations, then reassembling them through an elaborate cut-and-paste job into a standard memoir, *The Autobiography of Michel de Montaigne*. It’s a charming read, but Lowenthal treats Montaigne’s meandering style as a lapse to be repaired rather than a method to be explored.

Woolf, though, suggested that Montaigne’s improvising sensibility was a deft expression of how the human mind actually works. She reminded readers that this kind of thing is much easier said than done.

There is, in the first place, the difficulty of expression. We all indulge in the strange, pleasant process called thinking, but when it comes to saying, even to someone opposite, what we think, then how little are we able to convey! The phantom is through the mind and out of the window before we can lay salt on its tail, or is slowly sinking and returning to the profound darkness which it has lit up momentarily with a wandering light. . . . It is for this reason that Montaigne stands out from the legions of the dead with such irrepressible vivacity. We can never doubt for an instant that his book was himself.

“Montaigne’s writing could . . . be said to be the first sustained representation of human consciousness in Western literature,” said Frampton. “This is not to say that people had been unconscious in the periods before, or that accounts of individual lives had not been written, such as by Augustine or Abelard. But no one had paid such attention to the actual experience of living, or seen life as providing a moral lesson—in justifying political and religious tolerance and providing a reason to continue to live.”

If Montaigne’s essays seem revolutionary, it’s perhaps because they were born of revolutionary times. With the emergence of the printing press, Montaigne had more books at his fingertips than many earlier readers might have seen in a lifetime, a reality that greatly empowered him to indulge his curiosity. Montaigne’s intimate, first-person narrative of a mind sorting itself out seemed to reflect a growing acknowledgment among Renaissance thinkers that personal intuition, and not just institutional orthodoxy, could be a path to knowledge. That idea, shimmering

throughout Montaigne’s essays, obviously resonated with Emerson, a Transcendentalist who suggested that individuals could have a direct relationship with the cosmos. In this way, Montaigne, the friend of French kings, expressed the early stirrings of a democratic spirit that would, two centuries later, drive the American and French revolutions.

While Montaigne was scribbling away at his desk, exploration of the New World was dramatically enlarging the globe’s known boundaries. “It is no wonder that Montaigne and his contemporaries—like Shakespeare and Cervantes, or Copernicus and Galileo in science were so brilliantly glib—they had brand new material to write about!” author Hilary Masters notes. “To fly to the dead orb of the moon and return is an amazing feat but only that. On the other hand, to return with stories of an alter world populated with people just like us, who are going about their odd religions, raising zinnias and putting the Julian calendar into stone steps—now, that’s the stuff of supermarket tabloids! Some inspiration! It is like the past catching up with the present to make an entirely different here and now.”

Montaigne was fascinated by what lands across the Atlantic could teach him. In “On the Cannibals,” he considers the cannibals of Brazil and suggests that these man-eaters might be more ethically pure than residents of the Old World, a radical notion within European society. “I am sometimes seized with irritation,” he wrote, “at their not having been discovered earlier, in times when there were men who could have appreciated them better than we do.”

That’s pure Montaigne—the bracingly subversive thought that seems delivered on the fly, as topical as a sound bite. The continuing appeal of Montaigne, in fact, is that he can seem urgently contemporary. One can read him randomly, too, as if web-surfing, confident that any page will yield something pungent, pithy, or profound. “You may wander about almost at will in Montaigne,” literary critic Clifton Fadiman remarked. “He should be read as he wrote, unsystematically.”

As Thomas observed in the 1970s, “It is one of the most encouraging aspects of our civilization that Montaigne has never gone out of print.” Some four decades later, the appeal of the man who essentially invented the personal essay remains as strong as ever. Shakespeare’s Montaigne, a selection of essays from the Elizabethan translation of Montaigne by John Florio, appeared in 2014. More modern and accessible English translations of Montaigne’s essays by Donald Frame and M. A. Screech still sell well. In

recent years, two popular studies of Montaigne by Frampton and Sarah Bakewell have promised to inspire a new generation of readers. “Although the Essays present a different facet to every eye, everything in them is united in that one figure: Montaigne,” Bakewell writes. “This is why readers return to him in a way they do to few others of his century, or indeed to most writers of any epoch. The Essays are his essays. They test and sample a mind that is an ‘I’ to itself, as all minds are.” <>

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